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Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia: Founder of the Historic Ad Dharm Movement

(Invited Editorial cum Article on the 138th Birth Anniversary of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia)

B Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia is to Punjab what Mahatma Jyotirao Phule is to Maharashtra. If the Maharashtra Dalit movement owes its origin to Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, the Punjab Dalit movement is similarly indebted to Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia. Mahatma Jyotirao Phule was influenced by the writings of Thomas Paine, the famous English-born American political activist, theorist, philosopher and revolutionary of the nineteenth century. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia also learnt his lessons of equality and freedom from the proclaimed democratic and liberal values of the United States of America wherein he came into contact, during his sojourn, with the revolutionary freedom fighters popularly known as Ghadri Babas, of the historic Ghadar Lehar. This further cemented his resolve to fight for a dignified life for the masses by liberating India from the clutches of the British Empire, and to establish in its place democratic and egalitarian home rule with equality and freedom for all irrespective of caste, class, creed, language, gender and regional differentiations.

Like his nineteenth century Maharashtrian counterpart who was also a revolutionary social thinker of the so-called lower castes, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia established the first school of its kind in his native village of Mugowal for the children of those self-same socially excluded sections of the society that later came to be designated Scheduled Castes (SC) under the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) order, 1936, which contained a list (or schedule) of castes throughout the British-administered provinces. He also faced stiff opposition, like his predecessor in Maharashtra, from the so-called upper/dominant castes of Punjab in his fierce struggle against oppressive structures of domination including untouchability – the most egregious one among them. Following into the footsteps of his revolutionary Ghadrite leadership in the United States of America, he aspired to both fight against the caste-based social evil of untouchability and to replace it with an all-encompassing social freedom, as well as to join the fight to free the subjugated India and return to it its political freedom.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, a household name among the Scheduled Castes (SC) of Punjab, was the main architect of the formation of Ad Dharm movement in the province of Punjab in the mid 1920s. He literally took the movement to the doorsteps of the untouchables in the region and soon emerged as a cult figure of the lower castes in Punjab. Like the

Satyashodak Samaj movement in Maharashtra, the Ad Dharm movement soon became a household name among the SCs of Punjab. It was for the first time in the forgotten history of the lower castes in the state that a golden opportunity knocked at their doors to get them united on a common and distinct platform under the leadership of their fellow-travellers to fight for the most sought after goal of dignified life and to collectively press their long-pending claim for a



share in the local structures of power. The Ad Dharm movement was the only movement of its kind in the Northwestern region of India that aimed at creating a dignified space for the lower castes by constructing a distinct socio-cultural and political SC identity through religious regeneration, spiritual empowerment, cultural transformation, and political assertion. The main objective of the Ad Dharm movement was to carve out a separate identity for those who were socially excluded from all spheres of mainstream power structures. It was during this movement that the image

of Guru Ravidass, who was already well known among the lower castes of Punjab, was systematically projected in order to concretize the newly conceived lower caste cultural space in the region. His struggle against the system of untouchability, anchored in an enlightened vision of *Begampura*, at a time when no one could dare to speak for the socially excluded sections of the society, made him a messianic figure of the lower castes. Under the adept leader-

Consequently a total of 418,789 persons registered themselves as Ad Dharmis in the Punjab census of 1931. Eventually, this newly found religion of the lower castes dwindled into a separate



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caste – Ad Dharmi – that now comprised 11.48 per cent of the SC population of East Punjab as per 2011 Census. Since then, Ad Dharmis have organized themselves into various Guru Ravidass Sabhas (societies) and established a large number of Ravidass Deras, which began emerging in Punjab in the early twentieth century. The emergence of Ravidass Deras is often seen as an index of rising Ravidassia identity in the state. There are over sixty Deras in Punjab that have an exclusively Ravidassia identity. A vernacular field study completed in 2003 put their number as around 100. Since then, many more such Deras have come into existence in East Punjab. More than half of the Ravidass Deras are located in four districts – Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar, Kapurthala and Nawanshahr of the Doaba region of Punjab lying between two rivers: Sutlej and Beas – also known for highest concentration of SC population. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia belonged to Hoshiarpur district. Seth Kishan Dass of Boota Mandi, another reputed name in the Ad Dharm movement, belonged to Jalandhar district. Hazara Ram Piplanwala, Hari Ram Pandori Bibi, and Sant Ram Azad, the other original founding members of the Ad Dharm movement, were also from Hoshiarpur district.

The phenomenon of Ravidass Deras is equally popular among the SC diaspora as well. They have established Ravidass Deras in different parts of the world. Some of the most prominent among them are in Canada in the cities of Vancouver, Calgary, Brampton, Toronto, and Montreal; in the United States in the cities of New York, Sacramento, Pittsburgh, Seattle, Fresno, Fremont, Houston, Selma, and Austin; and in the United Kingdom in the cities of Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Bradford, Coventry,

ship of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, the Ad Dharm movement had tactically cashed in on his mass appeal by using his pictures as its emblem, reciting his bani, and narrating legends about him as illustrations of the power, pride, and glory of oppressed segments of society.

Ensnared in the glory of the messianic image of Guru Ravidass, the Ad Dharm movement, despite all sorts of pressures and local resistance, succeeded in prevailing upon the British regime to declare a separate religion (Ad Dharm – primeval religion) for the lower castes in Punjab.

(Contd. on next page)

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia: Founder of the Historic Ad Dharm Movement

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Derby, Lancaster, Southall, Southampton, Kent, and Bedford. Since 2010, many Ravidass temples/gurdwaras have also been built in Austria, Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Holland, New Zealand, Greece and Lebanon.

Different both from the Hindu temples and Sikh gurdwaras, Ravidass Deras provide an alternative religious domain where their followers need not hide their identity and meekly suffer caste-based social exclusion. Their distinctiveness also lies in the fact that they neither take refuge in any of the mainstream religions nor emulate the dominant socio-cultural ethos of upper-castes. On the contrary, they not only proudly distinguish themselves from the mainstream religious systems, but also contest the long imposed supremacy of other castes. These Deras, in fact, have been functioning as missions to sensitise lower castes and to facilitate their empowerment. The entire array of religious and cultural activities in Ravidass Deras revolve around the teachings and life of Guru Ravidass, and his statues/figures are installed and worshipped in the sanctum sanctorum of almost all such Deras. In some Deras affluent devotees have donated golden *palkis* (canopies) for the purpose of covering statues/figures of

Guru Ravidass. Free food (langar/community kitchen) and state-of-the-art medical health facilities are also provided in some of these Deras. The social developmental reach of Ravidass Deras is not confined to the health facilities alone – some Deras have opened English medium model middle/high schools, complete with modern teaching technology. To underline their separate identity, Ravidass Deras have formulated their separate rituals, ceremonies, slogans, symbols, auspicious dates, customs, *ardas* (prayer), *kirtan* (musical rendering of sacred hymns), religious festivals and iconography.

It was the Ad Dharm movement that paved the way for the emancipation and empowerment of the lowest of the low not only in Punjab, but also became a role model for the radical Dalit movement throughout India. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia stood with Babasaheb Dr B. R. Ambedkar like a rock during his struggle for separate electoral status for the Depressed Classes (later designated as Scheduled Castes) at the London Round Table conferences. Again it was this very Dalit movement that gave SC a counter-public in the form of their distinct religion called "Ad Dharm". Another equally great achievement of the Ad Dharm movement was that under the able leader-

ship of the Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, it contested Punjab Provincial assembly elections in 1937 & 1946, which made the SC of Punjab equally an important stake-holder in the state legislature, perhaps for the first time in the history of the political power structure of the colonial India. Ad Dharm had its headquarters at Jalandhar city and was financially supported by Seth Kishan Das of Botton Mandi where Babasaheb Dr B.R Ambedkar gave his first electoral address on October 27, 1951 as a prelude to the first general election in Independent India. The next day Babasaheb held mock parliamentary debate at the campus of DAV College Jalandhar where he addressed the students and the faculty together. In

very urge, which got further sharpened under the stewardship of Babasaheb Dr B.R Ambedkar. If one has to make sense of socio-political consciousness among the SC community in Punjab, s/he has to refer to the pioneer work done by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia that he commenced after returning from the United States of America (USA) after going through hard times at places on foreign lands. The story of Ad Dharm and its originator, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, would remain incomplete without acknowledging the seminal contribution made by Mark Juergensmeyer, reputed Social Anthropologist and Political Scientist of the University of California, Santa Barbara, the USA, who did his PhD thesis on this

very movement, which finally culminated into his classic: "Religious Rebels in the Punjab: The Social Vision of Untouchables". It was after the publication of his field-based study of the movement and its founding father that the people of the region came to know the significant role played by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia towards the upward social mobility of the lower castes in Punjab.

In recognition of his invaluable contribution in the Ghadar movement, Dr. T. V. Nagendra Prasad, the Consulate General of India, San Francisco (CA), installed the picture of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, presented by Prem Kumar Chumber, Editor-in-Chief, Ambedkar Times and Desh Doaba Weeklies, in the Ghadar Memorial Hall, 5 Wood Street San Francisco (CA) during Ghadar Mela celebration on July 24, 2022. The Ghadar Mela was organised by the Consulate General of India, San Francisco (CA), in the memory of the Ghadri Babas and their great vision for the freedom, unity and prosperity of India. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia was one of five Ghadri Babas who were assigned the herculean task of taking weapons from North America to India on SS-Maverick Ship to liberate India from the British rule. He was captured on board SS Maverick along with his other accomplices and eventually sentenced to death. However, destiny saved Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia somehow and finally he was able to return to his native village after spending many years incognito at different places. Appreciating the act of installation of the picture of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia in the Ghadar Memorial Hall, Mark Juergensmeyer was of the opinion: "Very nice! It is an appropriate and long overdue recognition of the important role of Baba Mangu Ram in the Ghadar movement, and I'm glad that he is receiving this belated recognition."

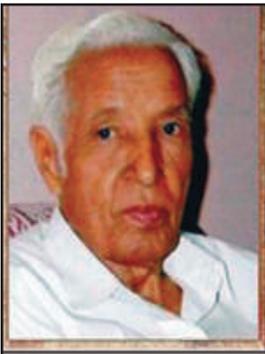


fact, the tremendous response to the call of Babasaheb Dr B. R. Ambedkar from the politically mature land of Punjab was the direct outcome of the fertile political ground prepared by the Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia.

The Ad Dharm movement began its historic journey on its maiden Conference, organised on June 11-12, 1926 at the ground of the Ad Dharm School, Mahilpur, Hoshiarpur district, Punjab. In the poster announcing the first annual conference of the Ad Dharm movement, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, along with Swami Shudranand and Babu Thakur Chand, devoted the entire space to the hardships faced by the *Moolnivasis* (original inhabitants) at the hands of the caste Hindus. He also made an appeal to the Moolnivasis to come together to chalk out a programme for their liberation and uplift. Addressing them as brothers, he said: "We are the real inhabitants of this country and our religion is Ad Dharm. Hindu Qaum came from outside to deprive us of our country and enslave us. At one time we reigned over 'Hind'. We are the progeny of kings; Hindus came down from Iran to Hind and destroyed our Qaum. They deprived us of our property and rendered us nomadic. They razed our forts and houses, and destroyed our history. We are seven crores in num-

towards us. Never consider ourselves as Hindus at all; remember that our religion is Ad Dharm" (*Kaumi Udarian*: 1986: 21-22). Keen readers of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia have observed that he was conflicted on the issue of the British Raj – on the one hand he feared even greater oppression under Hindu majoritarian rule than under the British –whom he also viewed as possible partners in facilitating a more equal Indian society – buton the other hand he aspired for the dignity of national independence, which necessitated the removal of the British. This remained a recurring paradox in his political approach till the achievement of Indian independence in 1947. In his brilliant article entitled *Achhut da Swaal* (Untouchability Question), Shaheed Bhagat Singh supported the Ad Dharm leadership in its tirade against the caste system, but at the same time had cautioned them to keep their distance from the British.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia played a dominant role in chiseling the distinct markers of the separate SC identity in Punjab. He restored the lower castes their lost heroes, gurus–Bhagwan Valmik Ji, Satguru Namdev Ji, Satguru Kabir Sahib and Satguru Ravidass Ji – rich but lost cultural heritage, and brought forth an urge to become rulers themselves. It was this



D. C. Ahir

The Ad Dharm Movement and Dr. Ambedkar

When in 1915 Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was giving final touches to his Ph.D. thesis at Columbia University in New York, a Punjabi youth, who

had gone to America a few years earlier, was involved in a dangerous mission of smuggling guns from California to the Punjab for inciting mutiny in India. This Punjabi youth later became famous as Babu Mangu Ram, the founder of the Ad Dharm Movement. Mangu Ram was born in a small village Mugowal in district Hoshiarpur, Punjab on 14 January, 1886 in an untouchable family; his father was a leather merchant. As by then the doors of education had been opened to all by the British rulers, Mangu Ram was sent to the school in the nearby village, Mahilpur, but the treatment meted out to him by the Hindu teacher was far from human. Like Bhim Rao in Satara, Mangu Ram too was made to sit outside the classroom. Not only that, even the teacher would not teach him directly; he was invariably given lesson through a Muslim student. Somehow, Mangu Ram passed his middle examination and joined high school at Bajwara, a nearby town. Here too. He was subjected to the same humiliation, and was made to sit outside the classroom. One day, it rained so heavily that in spite of taking shelter under a tree, Mangu Ram was completely drenched. And when the snow-balls, accompanied by high velocity winds, fell like missiles on him, he was unable to bear it any longer. So, he ran to take shelter inside the classroom. As soon as he had entered the room, the teacher saw him, and instead of showing any sympathy, he started beating him with a stick for having come inside. Weeping and crying, Mangoo Ram went out, and somehow reached his home.

Unmindful of the insult and beating, Mangu Ram again went to the school next day. As soon as he reached there, he was surprised to see the teacher in the process of purifying the classroom by sprinkling water on the wooden table, chair and the tats on which the students used to sit. On seeing him, Brahmin teacher cried out, "Oh Chandal, you have come again". Fearing another beating, Mangoo Ram hastened back, never to go again to the school. And that was the end of his education.

With his education coming to an abrupt end, Mangu Ram became unemployed, and bit frustrated too. In 1909, he, along with some other young men from the village, went to California, U.S.A. in order to earn some money by working in the Peach Orchards of Fresno and elsewhere in the San Joaquin valley of central California. Instead of earning money, he, however, became involved in the activities of the Ghadar Party, an international network of militant Punjabi

nationalists led by Lala Hardayal. By his sheer devotion and sincerity to the cause of India's freedom, he came to be regarded as the most dependable and reliable member of the organization. In 1915, Mangu Ram volunteered to be one of the five Ghadarites accompanying a shipload of guns and propaganda material headed for India. This ship was unfortunately intercepted by the British as Batavia, and was sealed. It remained sealed for nearly a year, with the five Ghadarites as prisoners inside. In the meanwhile, they were prosecuted in absentia, and sentenced to death for taking out the weapons illegally on the ship. On hearing the capital punishment, some patriot Indians in Germany decided to help the imprisoned Ghadarites. Somehow, they managed to smuggle the prisoners out from the sealed ship, and sent them in different directions. Mangu Ram was put in a ship going to Manila. By mistake,



however, the ship reached Singapore. Unfortunately for Mangu Ram, here he was recognized by some traitor Indians who had earlier worked for the Ghadar Party. They informed the Police. By now, for running away from Batavia, death warrants had been issued by the British Government to be executed wherever any one of them was found. Accordingly, the Singapore Police began preparing for his execution. Then a miracle happened. Just half an hour before his execution, a gentleman named Barde, whom Mangu Ram had never seen or met, came, caught him by the arm, took him out of the Thana, and putting him on the same ship in which Mangu Ram had come, he asked the Captain of the ship to sail for Manila. By the time the Police swung into action, the ship had crossed the Singapore Port Limits. Having failed to intercept the ship, the police caught hold of some drunkard; executed him to cover up their lapse, and announced that Mangu Ram had been executed. This news was later published in the Indian Newspapers.

For the next 7-8 years, Mangu Ram hid in the Philippines, and during this period he had no contact with his family as no letters could be written

for fear of being intercepted. Taking him, therefore, as dead, his wife married Mangu Ram's elder brother, who was a widower. The validity of the death warrant issued by the British Government lapsed in 1924. Then Mangu Ram thought of returning to India. Accordingly, he came back to Punjab in 1925. Soon thereafter, Mangoo Ram became involved in another kind of freedom struggle, the liberation of the untouchables, the people among whom he was born, and the people who were meekly suffering the atrocities of the Hindus. Babu Mangu Ram's association with the Ghadar Party had broadened his outlook, and sharpened his skills as an organizer. Soon he found a band of like-minded young men involved in the social work, and began organizing them in order to liberate the downtrodden from the clutches of the Hindu social slavery.

Encouraged by the response to his



ideas, Babu Mangu Ram convened a Conference at his village Mugowal in district Hoshiarpur on 11-12 June, 1926. Addressing the largely attended Conference, Babu Mangu Ram proclaimed that the Untouchables constituted a separate Qaum, a religious community like the Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus, and those they were the original inhabitants of this country. Hence, the movement was named as Ad Dharm; and its leaders devised distinctive costume, bright red turbans and shashes; coined a new sacred mantra or symbol, "So-hang" and exhorted the people to call themselves as Ad Dharmis.

The primary object of the Ad Dharm was to give the untouchables an alternative religion. Its another object was to reform the society from within. As social movement, the Ad Dharm exhorted the people to abstain from immoral practices; to lead a life of purity and piety; to discard the use of alcohol, drugs, give education to boys and girls, and to treat all men and women equal in the society. On the whole, the movement was aimed at giving the untouchables a sense of pride and dignity as members of the Ad Dharm.

The headquarters of Ad

Dharm Mandal were established in Jalandhar city from where the movement was organized in a systematic manner, and the devoted missionaries spread the message far and wide in the Punjab, and even beyond. Since the Mandal had accepted Sahib Shri Guru Ravidass Ji as its spiritual leader, the movement became primarily popular amongst the Chamars, and they readily adopted the nomenclature of Ad Dharmi.

At the time, Babu Mangu Ram was organizing the untouchables of the Punjab under the banner of Ad Dharm; Dr. Ambedkar was fighting a similar battle in another part of the country. Though they were thousands of miles apart, yet their ideas and methods of struggle were almost identical. Both believed that the present day Scheduled Castes are not Hindus, and that their salvation lies only in being independent of the Hindu religion. Both believed in self-help and advocated peaceful means to achieve their goal. Both laid the greatest emphasis on 'education'. Babasaheb considered "education" the key to all progress, and Mangu Ram says that only "education can lead us to Sachkhand (the realm of truth)." Again, Babasaheb exhorted the people to follow the Three Commandments of 'Education, Agitation and Organization' to gain power. According to Mangu Ram, the poor have three kinds of power: "Qaumiat (collective solidarity), Mazhab (spirituality) and Majlis (organization)".

Within a year of its founding, the Ad Dharm movement created quite a stir in the Punjab by constant rallies and conferences, if forced the Government of the day to take notice of the problems of the untouchables. One of the reasons of the poverty and exploitation of the untouchables was the pernicious system of beggar, the system under which they were forced to live at the beck and call of others and were obliged to do a great deal of work without any remuneration whatsoever. The Ad Dharm Mandal agitated against the system of beggar, and demanded its abolition. The Mandal also agitated for repealing the Punjab Land Alienation Act which prohibited the untouchables from buying even a small piece of land. The Ad Dharm movement reached its peak at the time of 1931 Census. As a result of their sustained propaganda, more than half a million untouchables declared themselves as Ad Dharmis. This showed the organizational skill of its leaders. "The massive support", as says Mark Jueregensmeyer, "created political capital, and Mangu Ram used that capital in political ways. Ad Dharmi candidates stood for public offices and an alliance was created with the Unionist Party. In both instances, scheduled caste leaders supported by the Ad Dharm organization achieved public positions".

Courtesy: Dr. Ambedkar and Punjab by D. C. Ahir

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

A Crusader for Social Justice



Arun Kumar

(General Secretary Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations, UK)

. Bheem Ramji Ambedkar, popularly also known as Babasaheb Ambedkar. He was one among the tallest leaders in the world who fought for the dignity of all humans irrespective of all artificial barriers – caste, race, gender, religion, ethnicity etc. He is no less in stature than Dr King, Nelson Mandela, or anyone else who

fought for the human dignity. Lately he is becoming a world phenomenon and the oppressed people across the Globe get inspiration from him. Whole of his life he struggled for the basic human rights of millions of people living in the Indian sub-continent. Schools opened in the name of Ambedkar in Hungary by the Roma community are an evidence of his growing popularity. Contribution of Dr. Ambedkar to eradicate caste based discrimination (CBD) and his work to improve the conditions of nearly 300 million oppressed people in India alone are being recognised in academic and political circles not only in India but also all over the world. On the demand of Dalit network Netherlands, on 30th June, 2011, Dutch Parliament adopted a motion by two third majorities requesting the Minister of Foreign Affairs to continue an active approach to combat CBD and improving the position of over 300 million Dalits in South Asian countries. It was also requested to raise issue on the European Union, UN organisations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Parliament was further asked to accept Ambedkar Principles framed by International Dalit Solidarity Network, Netherlands as an integral part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy of Dutch and the European companies including in the supply chain who are active in the countries where CBD is practised.

Dr. Ambedkar was an Indian jurist, political leader, philosopher, thinker, anthropologist, historian, orator, prolific writer, economist, scholar, editor, a revolutionary and one of the founding fathers of independent India. He was born as untouchable community which is considered inherently so much low and inferior that their mere shadow polluted others. Overcoming numerous social and financial obstacles, Ambedkar became one of the first so-called outcastes to obtain a college education in India and earning law degrees and multiple doctorates for his study and research in law, economics and political science from Columbia University and the London School of Economics. Despite all his learning, he was still considered low. He fought

ideological wars with his opponents (including Gandhi) to get minimum human rights for his people. Overcoming all prejudices, he became the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution and which was adopted on January 26, 1950. Ambedkar's work on the constitution provided the legal framework for the abolition of many oppressive features of Indian society and transformed the lives of over three hundred million people by abolishing age old scourge of humanity- Untouchability in modern India.

Ambedkar gave preference to social reforms over political reforms. After his education in London, he started a social movement to improve the conditions and social status of Untouchables. He started newspapers and authored many books to highlight the plight of untouchables. As they were not allowed to enter into temples and fetch water from common water tanks, he started campaign to enter into these places and drink water. Their admission in schools was prohibited. In 1927, he led the Mahad March at the Chowdar Tank at Colaba, near Bombay, to give the untouchables the right to draw water from the public tank where he burnt copies of the 'Manusmriti' Hindu scripture advocating caste based discrimination) publicly. This marked the beginning of the anti-caste and anti-priest movement. The temple entry movement launched by Dr. Ambedkar in 1930 at 'Kalaram Temple', Nasik is another landmark in the struggle for human rights and social justice.

Dr. Ambedkar, organised the Independent Labour Party, participated in the provincial elections and was elected to the Bombay Legislative Assembly. During these days he stressed the need for abolition of the feudal system and pleaded for workers' right to strike.

He attended all Round Table Conferences held in London to negotiate more political rights to the Indians. Each time, he forcefully projected his views in the interest of the 'untouchable'. He also exhorted the downtrodden sections to raise their living standards and to acquire as much political power as possible. In 1930s, the British government set up Simon Commission to give representation in the government to various groups.

Ambedkar pleaded his case for the untouchables. The British Prime Minister, Ramsay McDonald announced the findings of the Commission and as a result several communities including the 'depressed classes'(Untouchables) were given the right to have separate electorates. But Gandhiji didn't want to see the Hindu community divided and went on a fast unto death against separate electorate. Pressure was put on Ambedkar to abandon his demand and save Gandhi's life. Consequently on 24th September 1932, Dr.

Ambedkar and Gandhi reached an agreement by which reservations (quotas) were provided for untouchables in Government jobs and legislative assemblies. This agreement carved out a clear and definite position for the down-

trodden on the political scene of the country. It opened up opportunities of education and government services for them and also gave them a right to vote. During the Second World War, he called upon Indians to join the Army in large numbers to defeat Nazism, which he said, was another name for Fascism.

Before Independence of India, Ambedkar was appointed the Labour Minister in the Viceroy's Council. As a Labour Minister, he fixed the working hours of the labourers. He also stopped pregnant women working in the mine industry.

As Law Minister in the Independent India, he framed a Hindu Code Bill by which Indian women received equal rights at par with men. For the first time she could inherit the parents property.

She was given a right to divorce to leave an unhappy married life. Because of the pressure from the conservative population, the govern-

ment was not prepared to pass this bill. Rather than compromising on this issue, he resigned from the government. Later on this bill was passed in instalments.

On 14 October, 1956, he embraced Buddhism along with nearly half a million of his followers and three months later on 6 December 1956, he passed away.

In 1952, Columbia University from where he



earned his MA in 1915 and PhD in 1927 presented him with an honorary doctorate for his service as "a great social reformer and a valiant upholder of human rights'. In 1995 a bronze bust of Dr. Ambedkar was installed in the Lehman library of the Columbia University. Similarly a bronze bust of Ambedkar also adores the London School of Economics from where he obtained a DSc degree in Economics. Ambedkar was also posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, in 1990. On 24 September, 2015, Government of Maharashtra acquired a property in London where Dr Ambedkar stayed during his studies in 1921-22. The proposal was submitted by the Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations, UK to convert this house into an Ambedkar Memorial.

This house was opened on 14 November 2015 by the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narinder Modi.

AD DHARM IN PUNJAB ELECTIONS

Prem Kumar Chumber

Editor-In-Chief: Ambedkar Times & Desh Doaba Weeklies

Ad Dharm movement of Punjab gained tremendous importance within a short period after its foundation in 1926. That it got recognition for a separate religion for the so called lowest if the low from the British Government speaks about its great strength. In 1931, about 500, 000 Scheduled Castes (SCs) got recorded Ad Dharm as their distinct religion. Thereafter, its record victory in the 1937 Punjab Provincial Assembly elections reinforced its popularity among the SCs. Its victory in the 1946 Punjab Provincial Assembly election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly assigned it an independent political identity. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, the founder of the Ad Dharm movement, was elected from Hoshiarpur constituency. It contested both the above-mentioned assembly elections in collaboration with the Unionist Party.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia also contested the Punjab Legislative Assembly Election of 1951, but as an Independent contestant from the Garhshankar Constituency.

He was offered a ticket by the Congress to contest the assembly elections as its nominee but Babu Mangu Ram Ji refused to contest the election on the Congress ticket and the same was given to Mr Kartar Singh of village Langeri of Hoshiarpur District.

MEMORIES OF BABU MANGU RAM MUGOWALIA

During the younger days of my life, whenever there was a talk in the family about the life struggles of Guru Ravidass Ji or Babasaheb, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the name of Babu Mangu Ram Muggowalia also used to be at the lips of our ancestors, with an exciting tone, saying that persons like Mangu Ram Mugowalia are unique and rare and are born once in a blue moon. He was incomparable. Ever since my childhood days the pictures of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia's Struggle for the liberation of the enslaved and the down trodden people of Punjab, were engraved on the screen of my delicate mind with great aspirations to have this great person in our lives. With the lapse of time this longing slipped into oblivion (Forgetfulness).

In 1970 the weekly Newspaper "RAVIDASS PATRIKA" published from Jalandhar, revealed the fact that Mangu Ram, lovingly and popularly known as Mangu Ram Muggowalia, was still alive. It was very hard to believe and no one in the family believed either. Anyway, after a while this hearsay turned into reality when this great man was seen hale and hearty in person in the office of Ravidass Patrika. He was a man with a small stature (height) but very fair in facial complexion, looking quite healthy in physical appearance, in spite his advanced age. He was wearing a woolen Kashmiri cap and a round-necked Jacket with a charming personality. Babu Mangu Ram was really sitting in a chair right in front of me, but still I could not believe that the person sitting face to face with me, was the same person, Babu Mangu Ram who was a king without crown of my childhood memories. I was so gratified to see and meet him which can hardly be put into words. Sometimes this first time meeting looked so dreamlike and imaginative, as if a movie was playing on a screen. But, in fact, it was Babu Mangu Ram Ji sitting in front of me and gently answering my questions. Even at the age of about 85 years, I could see a glare of hope in his eyes regarding a bright future of the Dalit community.

After that I had many more opportunities to meet and exchange views with Babu Ji. His life history and his struggles still inspire me to continue my struggle in life. I still feel very anxious to expose the selfish and Fox-walk style people who forced Babu Ji to be helpless into leading a life of anonymity. But our goal was not to expose the futility and hollowness of these selfish leaders driven by hunger and lust for personal power.

In 1925, after return from USA, he undertook the herculean task of consolidating the Dalit community to launch their struggle under the banner of Ad Dharam Mandal.

Babu Ji, with untiring efforts and help of the civilized, self-conscious and farsighted people, ignited a new spark (Flame) in the minds of the untouchables of Punjab to secure their rights, and in a span of few years it assumed the form of a social and a political conflagration.

While the leaders of Ad Dharam Mandal were engaged in transforming the political, social and religious conditions of Punjab, they were also extending their full help and cooperation in the struggle carried on by their Messiah (prophet), Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

To determine the magnitude and success of their leading ideology in the contemporary Punjab, the Punjab Ad Dharam Mandal issued its first report in 1931 and some of its salient features are mentioned below.

1. This public organization unanimously makes an appeal to the Gov-



This article Punjabi to English was translated by Mr. O. P. Balley.
Courtesy: Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Souvenir 1985
published by Mr. C. L. Chumber

ernment that untouchables should be counted neither as a part of Hindus nor as a part of Hindu religion but, instead, should be treated as a part of Ad Dharam religion. We are neither Hindus nor Hindus are part of us.

2. This public organization makes an appeal to the Government that the Shastras (Vedic scriptures) and Manusmirities of Hinduism which define Untouchables as slaves, prohibited from making any progress and social uplift, should be legally banned.

3. As provided in Ad Dharam Mandal the sons and daughters should have equal rights to claim their ancestral properties.

4. Without any caste discrimination the entire Ad Dharmi Community should cooperate and intensify their mutual love and trust for each other.

5. We should shun idol worship, stop witchcrafts, black Arts and refrain from superstitious beliefs.

A review of the above said proposals shows that our society was

still gripped with these social ills and to think and talk about ending these evils about 60 years ago, was a very significant and a farsighted move for uplifting the society.

Under the dynamic leadership of our great leader, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Government under the British rule was made to agree to the ideals of Ad Dharam Mandal, admitting that we, who have been suppressed, enslaved and tortured for centuries, were neither Hindus nor Aryans who came from another country, but we are native inhabitants of this land and Ad Dharam is our religion. In 1931 it

was with the efforts of Babu Mangu Ram Ji that we had our separate identity in Punjab. This was not a small achievement on his part. In accordance with the provisions of the Poona Pact agreed to between Dr. Ambedkar and Mr. Gandhi there were eight seats reserved for Scheduled Castes for Punjab state Assembly elections,

out of which seven seats were won by Ad Dharam Mandal candidates for Vidhan Sabha Lahore in 1936-37. It was a very marvelous victory for the founder of Ad Dharam Mandal with the help, guidance and cooperation of Babasaheb, Dr. Ambedkar.

Babu Ji made the city of Jalandhar as the center of his activities, where, in spite of financial hardships but, with the help and cooperation of Seth Kishan Dass of Bootan Mandi Jalandhar, he managed to buy a piece of land in Bootan Mandi and set up the office of his organization but some cunning, greedy and selfish politicians who exploited and built up their political muscle through Ad Dharam Mandal, wanted to perpetuate their personal but fallacious leadership thus played fraud and betrayal of trust with the Dalits of Punjab who were loyal to Ad Dharam Mandal, by stabbing them in the back which forcing Babu Mangu Ram to lead a life of anonymity. They even indulged in spreading the fake news of Babu

Mangu Ram's death, to keep the new generation deprived and away from the accomplishments of Ad Dharam Mandal. To sum up, the sacrifices of this brave soldier started to fade into oblivion.

How - ever, in 1970

with the publication of Ravidass Patrika (Weekly) from Jalandhar, Babu Ji once again came out of his death-like life of anonymity. Being the Editor of Ravidass Patrika I had many opportunities for exchange of views with him.

Now when I recall my old memories of my meetings with him I could perceive how much dedicated and loyal he remained till the last moment, with a deep yearning and excitement inside, to stay united under one flag of Ad Dharam.

I remember when on April 14th, 1974, I, accompanied by Mr. Mangu Ram Jaspal (Chief Editor, Ravidass Patrika), went see Babu Ji in Garhshankar to enquire about his health and well-being, he just finished talking about his health in a few minutes but kept talking with me about the regeneration and revival of Ad Dharam Scheduled Caste federation and again on April 23rd, 1974, his statement under the title "APPEAL AND ANNOUNCEMENT" was published in Ravidass Patrika wherein he initiated to reconstitute this organization under an Ad-Hoc Committee at Punjab level.

In 1975, at the time of publishing a Souvenir to commemorate 50th Anniversary of Ad Dharam Mandal, many messages were received from various political leaders in which an attempt was again made to spread the fake news of Babu Ji's death, in spite of the fact that Babu Mangu Ram Ji Mugowalia was physically present at the venue of the function where the Souvenir was being released. Particularly it hurts me to know that in 1980 at the time of performing the ceremony of Babu Ji's last rites, none of these arrogant and self-styled leaders who had exploited various benefits as members of Ad Dharam Mandal, had even the courtesy of showing up to pay their tributes to the departed leader at his residence, though they were specially requested to attend.

But with the release of this Souvenir I feel a sense of satisfaction and a ray of hope that attempts are underway to restore the accomplishments of Babu Ji. In June 1984 during my visit to United Kingdom, I was pleased to note while attending some special gatherings of Ad Dharam brotherhood and Shri Guru Ravidass Ji's functions in Wolverhampton, indicating that Babu Ji was still alive in their hearts.

"I salute that our great savior."



Prof. G.C. Kaul
Former Editor Ravidass Patrika

"I salute that our great savior." MY PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

While translating the above article from Punjabi to English, written by Prof: G.C. Kaul, I had an opportunity to grasp the social conditions which inspired Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia to launch a movement for the emancipation of the people, who, inspite of being the original inhabitants of India, were subjected to inhuman treatments and social humiliations for centuries. Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia



were contemporaries and suffered from these social discriminations and prejudicial treatments at the hands of so called upper classes, in their personal lives.

We can very well understand the real reasons which led to the decline of such a vigorous and well organized campaign led by Babu Mangu Ram and it was our own so called leaders who exploited the movement for their personal greed and power and resorted to spread even the false rumors of Babu Ji's death, who, otherwise, was well and alive to lead the caravan to its cherished goals.

Though the movement was established almost a hundred years ago but still it has not lost its authenticity and the vigor, it was started with.

Our Strong Media: There is no doubt in affirming the role of our own Media to mobilize a strong public opinion for the success and flourishing of the ideals, originally generated and fostered by a legendary personality like Babu Mangu Ram Ji Muggowalia.

I applaud Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber Editor-in-Chief of "Ambedkar Times" (English) and "Desh Doaba" (Punjabi), the weekly publications for their motivational role in keeping the community enlightened about the historic role played by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia in the establishment of our identity as the original inhabitants of India.

Again with best wishes for celebrating the 138th Birth Anniversary of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji, just 3 days before, on January 14th, 2024.



O. P. Balley
Founder Member,
Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha,
Pittsburg (CA) USA

BABU MANGU RAM MUGOWALIA ARCHITECT OF AD-DHARM MOVEMENT

Ad-Dharam Movement founded by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia on June 11th-12th, 1926, was established with a missionary zeal to live a dignified life as a separate entity for the neglected segments of society who were the original and the real inhabitants of ancient India. Before paying our tributes to this noble mission envisioned by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia it becomes imperative for us to have a few glimpses of the trials and tribulations which he had to confront during this arduous struggle.

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia was born in a small village, (Muggowal) in Hoshiarpur District of East Punjab in Doaba Area in an untouchable family on January, 14th, 1886. His father, Mr. Harnam Dass and mother Mrs. Attri had a flourishing business in leather hides because of increasing demand from British Army. Realizing the lack of adequate education as an hindrance in the growth and marketing of his business, his father wanted his son to be well educated to help him in his growing business.

CASTE DISCRIMINATIONS AND SOCIAL PREJUDICES: - The stigma of caste system codified by Manusmriti for thousands of years was the greatest hindrance for untouchables to seek higher education. Among all the social limitations and carping humiliations Mangu Ram Mugowalia was able to complete his high school education as a good student in three different schools.

MIGRATION TO USA: - In 1909 his father who, being financially stable in his business managed to send his son to USA to better his prospects in life. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia, who had an impassioned fervor of patriotism, joined the Ghadar movement in California, fighting for freedom from the British rule, pioneered by prominent leaders like Lala Hardyal and Sohan Singh Bhakna. While in USA Babu Mangu Ram experienced a spirit of relief and social equality which he aspired to see back in his home country too.

JOURNEY BACK TO INDIA: - After a few years of his active participation in the activities of Ghadar party in USA he was chosen with four other members of the party to smuggle a shipment of weapons to India for use by Ghadarites in India. On being captured by British agents on his way back to India, he was lucky and cleverly escaped with the help of some German supporters and remained in hiding for many years including Manila in Philippines during the First World War period.

BACK IN INDIA: - While travelling back to his home in India he passed through many towns in South India where he was shocked and dismayed to see social discriminations worse than slavery which agitated his conscience to start his crusade for social emancipation. On reaching back his home village he felt a new spark to work against social degeneration, so rampant in the entire spectrum of social order. He wrote back to Lala Hardyal and Sohan Singh Bhakna, the pioneers of the Ghadar Movement apprising them of the social deterioration who agreed with him to work for the freedom of his brethren from the shackles of the higher caste tyrannies.

AD-DHARAM MOVEMENT FOUNDED:- On June 11th and 12th, 1926 Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia convened a large conference of his supporters in the primary school where he was a teacher too, from every nook and corner of Northern India and announced the foundation of Ad-Dharam Mandal of which he was chosen as president, the position he retained during the entire journey of his struggle.

Since this article is specifically dedicated to commemorate the foundation of Ad-Dharam Movement, some of the salient and structural features of his mission which became a legacy for future generations, are as under:

The most important and significant contribution of his movement was the establishment of a Separate and a Distinct Society of Ad-Dharmi community, completely separate from Hindu hierarchy, claiming to be the Original and Native inhabitants of India long before the invasion of ARYANS from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Ad-Dharam Mandal soon became a household name with awakened conscience for Dalit mobilization and empowerment, throughout the entire North-

ern India with its headquarters at Jalandhar-Punjab.

Greeting salutations of Jai Gurudev and Dhan Gurudev as the symbols of unity and fraternity were the products of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia's innovative mind.

DR. RAJINDERAPRASAD'S VIEWS ON AD DHARM: - A very authentic book written by Dr. Rajinder Prasad, first president of free India, more than seventy five years ago contains a very vivid illustration of Ad-Dharam as a separate religion for the first time like Jains, Parsies, Jews and Christians based on the report of Census Commissioner in 1931. This completely negates and invalidates the assertion that untouchables and other lower castes are parts of Hinduism. It also reduces their numerical strength which they always claimed with untouchables as part of Hinduism.

POPULARITY OF AD-DHARAM MANDAL: - Ad-Dharam Mandal became so strong and popular as a separate entity that in 1937 Babu Mangu Ram's party won seven out of eight seats in the provincial legislature of pre-partition Punjab. Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia believed that the real way of breaking the centuries-old caste system was to destroy the religious notion upon which the system is based and thrives.

REVELATIONS BY PROFESSOR MARK JUERGENSMEYER: - A renowned professor and an eminent scholar of international fame, now accredited with the University of Santa Barbara, met Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia personally more than fifty years ago and made an extensive research on Ad-Dharam Movement as illustrated in his book "RELIGIOUS REBELS IN THE PUNJAB THE Ad-Dharam challenge to caste".

STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF BABASAHEB FOR SEPARATE ELECTORATES:- Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia and Babasaheb were contemporaries and he supported Babasaheb strongly like a rock in his efforts for Award of separate electorates for the backward classes in the Round Table conferences in London by sending telegrams, reiterating that Babasaheb was their national leader and the sole representative of the depressed classes, thus rebuffing the claims of Mr. Gandhi that untouchables were the part of the Hindu community. He even started his counter fast against Mr. Gandhi's ending in the signing of Poona-pact in 1932.

PERSONAL MEETING WITH BABU MANGU RAM MUGGOWALIA:- In the year 1963 I happened to meet Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia in person in a wedding ceremony. He narrated to me the entire history of his life struggle. As I learnt from him, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia saw no possibility ever of untouchability going away from the social structure of India. Hence the movement launched by him almost a century ago, carried a very meaningful message but its luster which seems to be fading for lack of leadership and other reasons, needs to be reinvigorated to live a life of dignity and honor.

THE AD-DHARAM POPULARITY IN FIJI ISLANDS: - The Ad-Dharam movement was so popular and impacting on the minds of our ancestors in 1930's and 1940's that first Sri Guru Ravidass Gurughar outside India was built in SUVA FIJI Islands by Punjabi migrants and registered under the name of Ad-Dharam. This fact was personally ratified by late Mr. Devraj Singh Sandhu a long-time resident of FIJI Islands before his migration to USA, in an interview held with him by Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber himself at our Sri Guru Ravidass Temple Pittsburg on September 1, 2018. (Which can be also verified at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/281660605268327/videos/1794754177307074>)

I also appreciate Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber, Chief Editor "Desh Doaba" (Punjabi) and "Ambedkar Times" (English) (Both Weekly Newspapers) for inspiring me to write this article for the esteemed columns of his publication.

With best wishes and congratulations on the occasion of 138th Birth Anniversary of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia Ji.

O.P. Balley
Founder Member
Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha
Pittsburg (California)



Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia – A Tribute

The birth anniversary of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia (January 14, 1886 – April 22, 1980) falls on January 14. I have been writing off and on in the Ambedkar Times and my Blog: diplomaticbits.blogspot.in on the life and mission of Babu Mangu Ram "Prophet of dalit struggle in Punjab" as termed by Prof Ronki Ram of the Punjab University, Chandigarh. I thought of remembering the great dalit icon Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia again as a humble tribute to him for his pioneering contribution for the emancipation of the marginalized sections of the society in the early years of the 20th century under the banner of Ad-dharam Movement which was founded by him in 1925-26 on his return from the democratic world abroad and his sterling role in the Gadar Movement in the USA for the independence of India.

Initially, the ad-dharam movement was initiated by Vasant Rai, Achutanand among others as a 'reform movement' of Hindus under of Arya Samaj to counter Christians, Muslims and Sikhs who were targeting dalits to join them under the arrangements of communal divide initiated by the British rulers in 1909 and further strengthened in 1919 which ultimately resulted in the 'Communal Award' of PM Ramsey MacDonald in 1932 after the Round Table Conferences.

It goes without saying that the Communal Award was the outcome of untiring efforts set in motion of the Memorandum of Ad-dharam Mandal submitted to the Governor of Punjab in 1929 which was rightly called "Magna Carta of dalits" and aptly pleaded and registered by Babasaheb Ambedkar in the Round Table Conferences against a stiff opposition by Mahatma Gandhi and the Hindu leadership at large who wanted to keep dalits under the subjugation of upper caste Hindus. The Ad-dharam Mandal under the stewardship of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia stood by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar when he was struggling for registering his

view point for the emancipation of the depressed classes from the tyranny of caste Hindus. The rest is history.

With Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia's expose to the liberal ideas of the USA and his work and interaction with the Gadari Babas made him revolt against the social discrimina-



tion of the caste Hindus against the depressed people under the caste system. He founded Ad-dharam Mandal, in cooperation and coordination with his likeminded colleagues and declared the following as their motive and agenda, as written by Prof. Ronki Ram in one of his articles on the subject,

"The leaders of Ad Dharm thus chose to restore dignity and freedom to the untouchables by detaching them completely from Hinduism and consolidating them into their own ancient religion – Ad Dharm— of which they had become

oblivious during the long domination by the 'alien Hindus'. In fact, the task of reviving their ancient religion was not an easy one, for the untouchables had forgotten their Gurus and other religious symbols during long period of persecution at the hands of the Savarnas. They had been condemned as impure and declared unfit to have their own theology. Thus, to revive Ad Dharm was tantamount to developing a new religion for the Achhuts. Mangu Ram's claim that the Dalits were the real inhabitants of this land made an enormous psychological impact on the untouchables, providing a theological podium to sustain and reinforce the new Dalit identity." Manyawar Kanshi Ram, a dalit icon who brought the marginalized sections of the society to the political map of the country in recent times to carry forward the mission of Babu Mangu Ram, explained the agenda and rationale of Ad-dharam Movement in one of his public speeches in Hoshiarpur and said,

"What is Ad-dharm? To tell people about this, I have called this meeting at this place. The Ad-dharm movement was the movement of rebellion against the Hindu religion. It was the movement against the Manuwad. A religion that mistreated and exploited Chamars for years and years, Ad-dharm movement was the movement against that oppression. It was the rebellion against all those atrocities. Ad-Dharm movement was the revolt against the Hinduism."

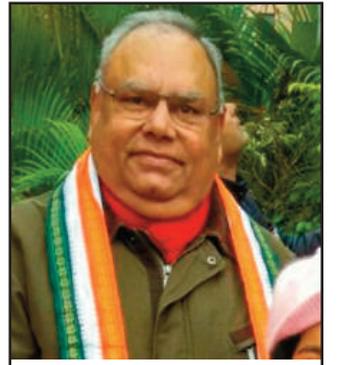
The agenda and mission of Ad-dharam Movement and Babu Mangu Ram was clear and candid in

establishing the dalit identity separate from the Hindus and Sikhs as Moolnivasis of the land. The contribution of Babu Mangu Ram and Ad-dharam Movement in this regard was immense and appreciable.

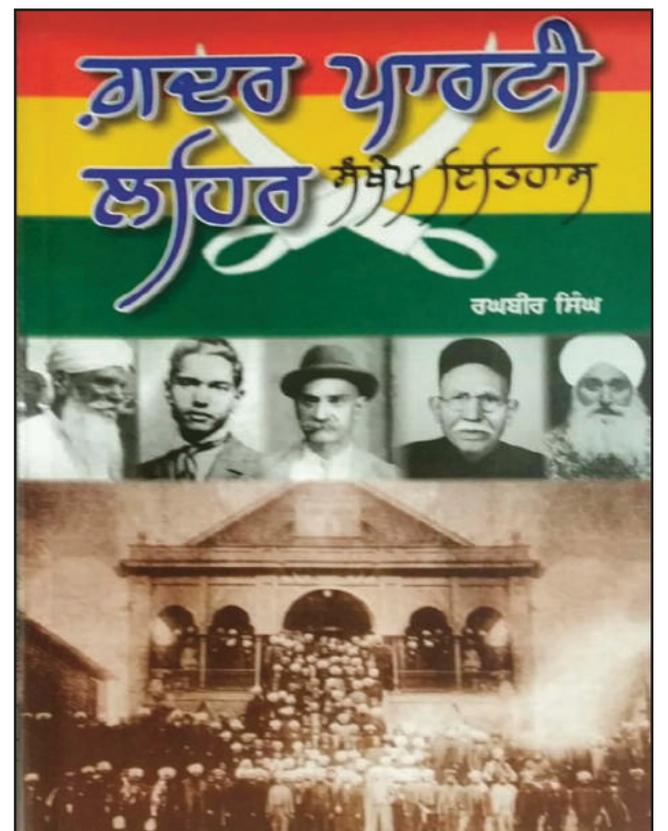
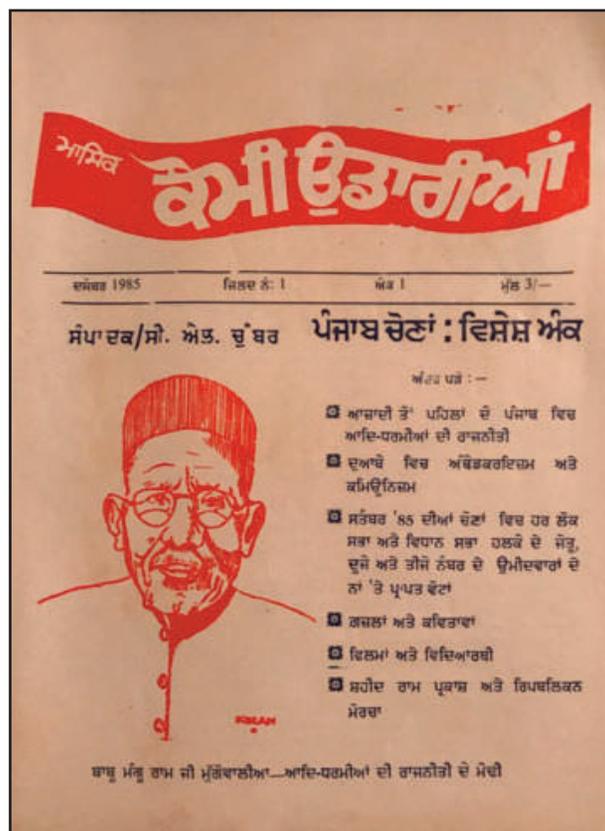
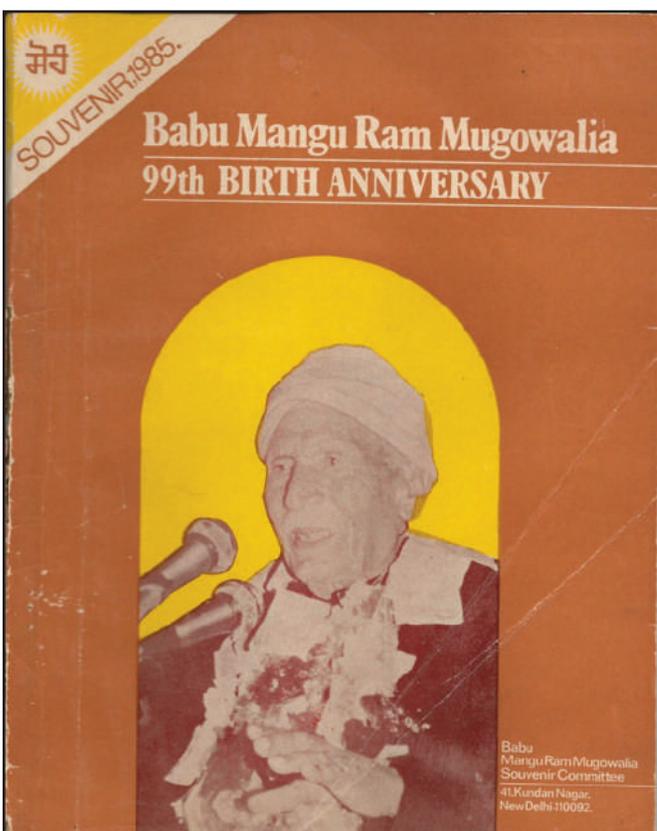
It must be recorded in history in its right perspective. The subsequent developments like the Poona Pact of 1932 signed between Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in the wake of the Communal Award, independence of India in 1947 and the new constitution of India and also Babasaheb Ambedkar's embracing of Buddhism in 1956 changed the political and social scenario which resulted in diminished relevance of Ad-dharam Movement. But the impact and contribution of the Movement, nevertheless, will remain in the dalit consciousness for long years to come.

It is a matter of satisfaction that the mission of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia with appropriate changes to cater to the needs of changing scenario is being followed and promoted by All India Ad-dharam Mission under the leadership of Sant Satwinder Singh Hira of Khuralgarh Sahib, historic site pertaining to Guru Ravidass ji, in Hoshiarpur district of Punjab and many other outfits. I take this opportunity to wish them all the best in realizing the lofty ideal of establishing a casteless and equitable society as visualized by Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia.

With this I close here with Naman to Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia on his birth anniversary as my humble tribute to the great leader. ਹਜ਼ਾਰੇ ਸਾਲ ਨਰਗਸਿ ਆਪਣੀ ਬੇਨੂਰੀ ਪੈ ਰੋਤੀ ਹੈ , ਬੜੀ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲਿ ਸੇ ਹੋਤਾ ਹੈ ਚਮਨ ਮੈਂ ਦੀਦਾਵਰ ਪੈਦਾ !



Ramesh Chander
Ambassador - I.F.S. (Retired)
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Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia - A Great Freedom Fighter, Revolutionary and Social Reformer

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia is such a historical legend in the history of Punjab whose contribution in the Freedom struggle of the country and liberation of the depressed sections known as Scheduled Castes and backward appears to have been covered under the dust of time. When the young Ambedkar was engaged in intellectual pursuits in the Columbia University, New York (1913-1916) to take on the irrational and degraded socio-economic system of his country, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia was bubbling with revolutionary zeal as a young founding member of the 'Ghadar Party' at Sanfransisco (California) to take on the mighty British Empire to liberate his mother land from the foreign yoke at the cost of his life. When Dr. Ambedkar took up cudgels for liberation of the downtrodden sections through his weekly 'Mooknayak' and social organization 'Bahishkrit Hitkarini sabha' in Maharashtra, Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia was creating history through his Ad-Dharam or Ad- Dharam Movement in the land of fiver rivers. While Dr. Ambedkar is shining as a pole star guiding the destiny not only of the depressed and crushed sections of the Indian society but of the humanity as a whole, Mangu Ram Mugowalia's contribution remains almost buried in the history. It is time to dust out the history and show the glittering pages of his struggle and sacrifice to his people as a real tribute to the great Freedom Fighter, Revolutionary and Social Reformer of this land on his 137th Birth anniversary.

Born on 14 January 1886 to father Harnam and mother Attri in a poor downtrodden family of Mugowal village of present Garghshankar Tehsil of Hoshiarpur District of Punjab, Babu Mangu Ram was the youngest of the three siblings. His mother died when he was barely three years. He suffered untold miseries on account of stigma of pernicious Hindu caste system right from his school days as suffered by Dr. Ambedkar. Deprived of the basic minimum human rights, his people lived in ghettos performing traditionally assigned jobs of lifting and skinning the dead cattle and doing other menial occupations mostly as bonded labors. Schools, temples and other public places were out of reach for them. His eldest brother was sent to Dehradun to engage in more lucrative business of hides. As the business required minimum knowledge of three Rs, his father had to face lot of difficulties in getting the supply orders and other correspondence read over to him by upper caste persons, who would do favor only on performing free manual labor for them. Though British Government had opened the schools for them but the caste continued to be their nightmare at the hands of both the Hindus and the Sikhs. His father managed to admit him in a school at Mahalpur on the condition that he would sit at the door outside the classroom; he would receive lessons indirectly through a Muslim student; he would never enter the class room in any eventuality and

he would carry sitting mat daily with him. He completed his primary education with third position even under those humiliating conditions. He took admission in the High School at Bajwara on the additional abominable condition that he would get lessons standing at the window outside the classroom. One day he took shelter in the class room due to heavy hail-storm outside. He was caned black and blue and thrown out of the room by the Brahmin teacher. When he

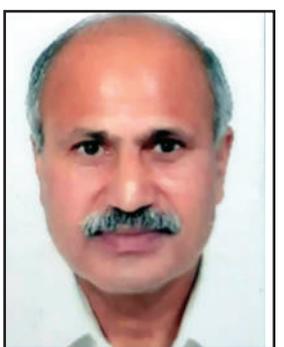


reached the school next day, he found the classroom furniture kept outside to wash out the pollution caused due to his entry in the classroom the previous day. The moment his teacher saw him, he shouted at him calling him by the caste name 'Chandala' and shooed him away. Mangu Ram ran away to escape the wrath of his teacher never to enter the school again. He was married in 1905. After assisting his father in the business for over four years, he was sent to America in 1909 for better economic prospects. He worked as a laborer in California (U.S.A) for about four years at the orchard of a relative of a landlord of his village. But he felt ill at ease working as a downtrodden under an employer suffering from the cancerous caste system even in a free democratic country like U.S.A. It was not a different experience for him than working as a landless laborer back home in India. Therefore, he left his caste-minded Indian employer and worked at different places like Fresno, Stockton, Sacramento

and Elcehro etc. in a free and democratic environment. Influenced by the European and American history of independence, some young Punjabi American migrants were charged with aggressive patriotic fervor in the mid 1913 to free their country from the British yoke through violent revolutionary means. Lala Hardyal was their inspiring and motivating force. As a result, a revolutionary outfit with the name of 'Gadar Party' was formed and full time members were

shipment of weapons was sent earlier also by the Party through a ship named 'Karyamaru'. But the ship was captured at Singapore. Therefore, the fresh venture to send the shipment of weapons to India was really a very

dangerous proposition. But the brave freedom fighters were not deterred. They reached Secorro Island where the shipment was to be loaded. But they were identified and captured by a Sydney military ship named 'Man of War'. Fortunately, they were released on the intervention of an American War Ship. Thus, escorted by the five lions of Punjab, the ship named 'Maverick' set sail for India from Mexico with the shipment of weapons. It made a brief stopover at Hawaii Island. When the ship reached near Java or New-Kalidonya in the East Indies Islands, it was captured by the Japanese soldiers. Japan being an ally of the British in the War, Babu Mangu Ram and his colleagues were imprisoned for one year. But the British Government ordered instant hanging of the Gadarites at the midnight on charge of treason. As luck would have it, they were rescued by an armed German soldier named Barde and made to escape with the help of Germans. They took different escape routes and Babu Mangu Ram and his two other colleagues found their way to Singapore. Unfortunately yet again, they were identified by the British spies who were the traitors of 'Gadar Party', and handed over to the British authorities. They were ordered to be shot dead with cannon fire. But this time also the lady luck smiled on them. They were once again rescued by the Germans and sent to Manila. It is believed that one namesake of Mangu Ram presented himself before the British authorities as Mangu Ram and sacrificed his life as a patriot. According to another version the local British officers hanged a drunkard person as Mangu Ram to save their skin for dereliction of duty. Babu Mangu Ram came to know from the Newspapers that he was awarded death sentence at Singapore on the charges of treason. Believing the news of death sentence true, his family married his wife to his brother. Babu Mangu Ram went from Island to Island hiding himself and saving himself from the British authorities with the help of his Party. In the meantime, World War came to an end in 1918. Babu Mangu Ram decided to stay in Manila and got a job in an American factory manufacturing shirts for the American market. The secret of his connection with the Gadar Party was revealed during the course of his employment in Manila, but he put the



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(Contd. on next page)

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia - A Great Freedom Fighter, Revolutionary and Social Reformer

(Continue from page 8)

blame on the Field Marshal. He continued to work in Manila till early 1925.

The revolutionary activities of Babu Mangu Ram were second to none of the great martyrs and freedom fighters of the motherland. He put his heart and soul in the freedom struggle of the country as a great patriot in the prime of his youth. Fully conscious of the life risk involved in the venture, he jumped into the fray without giving second thought to the consequences. The liberation of the motherland was his obsession that he pursued with passion. He was face to face with death twice but he faced it with courage and fortitude as a gallant soldier rather than seeking apology. As the adage goes "fortune favors the brave", the lady luck stood by him both the times. Alas! The heroics of the great revolutionary are not being remembered what to talk of being honored in the revolutionary history of his motherland! Is it because he was born in a family degraded as downtrodden under the evil-designed and perpetrated irrational and obnoxious Hindu Social Order? Nonetheless, he was destined to pursue a rather bigger cause of liberating his people from the thralldom of scriptures, and to make them live the life of human beings!

Babu Mangu Ram decided to return to his homeland in early 1925. He reached the Indian coast via Lanka and reached his motherland via Madurai, Madras, Bombay, Poona, Satara, Nagpur and Delhi. He was moved at the sight of heart rending conditions of the downtrodden people en-route. The continued miserable condition of his people in Punjab shook his soul. He decided to devote rest of his life to fight for the cause of equality, liberty, fraternity and justice for his people instead of the independence of India. He was of the firm belief that the liberation of his people was more important than the liberation of the country. The Headquarter of his erstwhile Organization 'Gadar Party' at San Francisco happily approved of his new venture of social reforms. Though the Gadarites were active in their revolutionary activities in Punjab, but he never met them during his social reform movement. The Arya Samajists were already active in social reform activities in Punjab prior to his arrival on the Punjab scene. The Depressed Classes' people of Doaba region were economically somewhat better off due to their leather business and some land holdings. Their social and political consciousness was better and some of their youth such as Basant Rai, Thakur Chand and Shiv Charan (Shudranand) were actively engaged in social reform activities. It is believed that they talked about Adi-Dharam for the first time in the Conference held at Jalandhar in 1925. The Congress Party was conspiring to convert the downtrodden people between the Hindus and Sikhs to serve their political ends. In the light of what Babu Mangu Ram experienced

and observed, he felt the need of an exclusive and a different organization totally committed to the cause of downtrodden sections of Punjab. His research led to the conclusion that his people were the aborigines of the land and their faith or religion was Adi i.e. original. They were subjugated and enslaved by the Aryan invaders and subjected to draconian and unhuman laws. Hence, they should be identified as a separate faith called Adi-Dharam, and they should liberate themselves from the thralldom of Hinduism. Education was considered to be the first important need of the people. Accordingly, he opened a school in the village with the help of village landlords. It was named 'Adi-Dharam School'. A Conference of all sections of the Scheduled Castes was held in the school on 11-12 June 1926. The Conference issued a declaration containing the features, aims and objectives of the organization. It was declared that the Scheduled Castes were a distinct community of aborigines with its distinct religion-Adi-Dharam. Teachings of the saints such as Ravidas, Kabir, Namdev etc. of Bhakti Movement in medieval India were adopted for spreading among its people. Rishi Valmik was accorded equally respectable place. Dalit saints were accorded the status of Guru instead of Bhakats. The word 'Adi' was picked up from the Arya Samajists' Granths and Guru Granth Saheb. Sohang or Soham was adopted as the religious symbol. Red color was opted for its flag and red turban was prescribed for the members. Jai Gurudev and Dhan Gurudev were adopted the words of greetings among the members. The foundation of Adi-Dharam movement was laid in the special Conference of the community held at Mugowal in November 1926 with its Head Office at Jalandhar. A spacious building with residential accommodation was constructed with the active support of Seth Kishan Das and other wealthy people of the community for the permanent office of the organization. Aims and objects of the Movement and other details as contained in the declaration ibid were adopted for the organization. A Newsletter titled 'Adi-Danka' was launched to propagate the activities of the Movement. All the prominent persons of the Depressed Classes of the region were enrolled as members/office bearers of the Executive/Organizing Committee. Babu Mangu Ram headed the Executive Committee as its President. Seth Kishan Das, Shudranand, Basant Rai, Hari Ram, Hans Raj, Thakur Chand and some others were the office bearers/members of the Executive Committee. Regional Branches were set up all over the State including the hilly areas of present Himachal Pradesh. A Branch was opened at Varanasi, the birthplace of Guru Ravidas. Babu Mangu Ram and his team frequently travelled the length and breadth of the State propagating aims and objects of the organization. Soon the Adi-Dharam Movement picked up and spread fast with its large following all over the

State. It became a force to be reckoned with.

Dr. Ambedkar, on the other hand, was in the thick of his battle since 1917 for the mission of liberation his people from the Hindu thralldom. In the second Round Table Conference (07 September - 31 December 1931) at London, Mahatma Gandhi represented the Congress Party. He made a statement in the Conference that he was the sole representative of the Congress and the Hindus including the Depressed Classes. It was an open challenge and affront to the position and leadership of Dr. Ambedkar who along with Rao Bahadur Srinivasan was representing the Depressed Classes. Reacting sharply, various organizations of the Depressed Classes in the country countered Gandhi's claim and sent telegrams to the British Prime Minister declaring Dr. Ambedkar as their sole representative. Babu Mangu Ram toured the State condemning Gandhi's claim. A large number of telegraphic messages with similar declaration were sent from Punjab also under Babu Mangu Ram's leadership. Hereafter Babu Mangu Ram wholeheartedly supported and followed Dr. Ambedkar. When Gandhi resorted to fast unto death against the Communal Award on 20th September 1932, Babu Mangu Ram took a bold decision and countered Gandhi's action by going himself on fast unto death against him and in favor of Dr. Ambedkar and the Communal Award. He broke his fast on the intervention of Dr. Ambedkar on signing of the Poona Pact. When Lothian Franchise Committee visited Punjab in 1932, about one lac red-turbaned Adi-Dharam followers held a demonstration and Babu Mangu Ram led a twenty member delegation to present a Memorandum to the Committee seeking acceptance of their claim of Adi-Dharam as a separate religion. It sounded an alarming bell for the Hindu organizations particularly the Arya Samajists who indulged in false propaganda against the Adi-Dharam Movement. Their counter-demonstration against the Adi-Dharam Mandal's claim had no effect on the Committee. The Lothian Committee accepted the demand of the Adi-Dharam Mandal. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was present in the Lothian Committee on this occasion. As a result of Dr. Ambedkar's presentation of true facts before the Franchise Committee of the Round Table Conference regarding the Depressed Classes, eight seats were reserved for the Depressed Classes in the Punjab Assembly.

In the first elections to the Provincial Legislatures in 1937, the Adi-Dharam Mandal contested nine seats in alliance with the Unionist Party and won eight seats. It lost one seat by merely seven votes. But the elections laid the foundation of friction and intra-organizational rivalry among the Adi-Dharam leaders. Seth Kishan Das, a prominent face of Adi-Dharam Mandal, contested election from Jalandhar with the support of Adi-Dharam Mandal. But Master Gur-

banta Singh, who was the General Secretary of the Mandal, stood against him on the Congress ticket and suffered heavy defeat. Subsequently, Seth Kishan Das founded the 'Punjab Achhut Federation' which was the Punjabi version of Dr. Ambedkar's 'Scheduled Caste Federation'. He appointed Gopal Singh Khalsa, M.L.A. Ludhiana as its Vice-President without taking Babu Mangu Ram into confidence. Taking advantage of the situation, Master Gurbanta Singh came closer to Babu Mangu Ram and founded a separate organization 'Ravidas Naujawan Sabha'. He contested Punjab Assembly elections again in 1946-47 against Seth Kishan Das and defeated him with the support of Babu Mangu Ram. Babu Mangu Ram won from Hoshiarpur with the support of Unionist Party. The building of Adi-Dharam Mandal which was constructed with the financial support from Seth Kishan Das went under the control of Master Gurbanta Singh. He converted it into 'Ravidas High School' and assumed its chairmanship. Thus, the Adi-Dharam Mandal fell prey to the individual political ambitions of its leaders. Babu Mangu Ram was offered Congress ticket in 1952, which he declined. But the Congress Party, Arya Samajists and the Scheduled Caste people themselves played an important role in weakening and ultimately wiping out the Adi-Dharam Movement. Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar visited Punjab and attended election rallies at Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Patiala from 27 to 29 October 1951. Had the Depressed Classes' people followed the footsteps of Babasaheb and faced the Congress Party and Aryasamajists as one united force, the history would have been altogether different.

Nonetheless, the Adi-Dharam Movement made a significant contribution in social reforms and welfare of the Scheduled Castes in Punjab. An appeal to the people was issued in Punjabi by the organization to project their problems. It resulted in flood of memoranda, proposals and problems concerning mainly the socio-economic issues haunting the marginalized sections. Some issues were within the Government's competence to address and some called for solution through awareness and initiative of the people. Babu Mangu Ram emphasized on the need for education as top priority and he made it incumbent of each Adi-Dharmi to get at least primary education as a minimum requirement. His demand for remission of full or half fees for the students of Scheduled Castes was acceded to by the Government. This facilitated the children of these sections to get admission in the schools and colleges with astonishing results. As per S.C. /S.T. report 1986 -87 (page 292) the literacy rate among these people was as high as 70%. As per the Punjab Alienation Act 1900, purchase of land by non-agriculturist communities was banned with the result that the Scheduled Castes were

(Contd. on next page)

Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia - A Great Freedom Fighter, Revolutionary and Social Reformer

(Continue from page 9)

confined to their traditional occupation and farm labor. They continued to be the victims of exploitation at the hands of the land owners. But as a result of long struggle by the people, the Act was amended facilitating them to buy land. The Scheduled Caste people were not allowed the facility of drinking water from the public wells, tanks, water sources and hotels since ages. As a result of persistent campaign by the Adi-Dharam Mandal, the public water sources were opened for them and violation of these orders was made punishable offence. Sign boards to this effect were put all over Punjab. Similarly bonded labor was got banned as a result of vigorous campaign against the evil by the Adi-Dharamis. Owing to

the Adi-Dharam Movement, the Government assumed liberal attitude towards appointment of Scheduled Caste people in Government jobs. As a result one Ishar Dass Pawar was appointed in PCS (judicial), thus, opening door for appointments in the lower cadres of civil and police departments for these people for the first time in Punjab. Apart from this, the Adi-Dharam Movement helped in minimizing the social evils such as dowry and extravagance in marriage expenditure etc. It laid thrust of fraternal bonding and moral values in life.

Though there is some visible improvement in the educational and economic condition of the marginalized sections in Punjab, but it is too below par. The demon of caste, social

and economic discrimination continues to haunt. Poverty and social evils are perpetual fate of these people. Farm labor and social boycotts are their everyday nightmare. Illiteracy, unemployment and poverty are their bane. Sweeping, cleaning and other menial jobs are inseparable part of their life. Though their population is more than 35% in the State, their true representation in the State and Central Legislatures is almost zero. Their political representatives are mere play toys in the hands of political Parties of the upper castes. Millions of socio-political groups and outfits of these sections are the evidence of self-interest and ego of the educated and political class standing like a solid rock in the way of their unity. It is over seven decades of

country's independence, but the plight of these sections is grim. Needless to say that it calls for the leadership of Babu Mangu Ram Mugowalia's élan and the light of Babasaheb's beacon to break the glass ceiling.

(Source: Swaroop Chander Boudh, Sher-e-Punjab Babu Mangu Ram; Writings and Speeches of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar, Vol. 1, Vol.3, and Vol. 17, Pt.3; Dhananjay Keer, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Life and Mission; Mark Juergensmeyer, Religion as Social vision, p-25; , D, C, Ahir, Dr. Ambedkar and Punjab and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, India Divided, pp. 298, 303)



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CIRCULAR ISSUED AT CALCUTTA RELATIVE TO A CENTRAL FEMALE-SCHOOL

[Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for the Africa and the East, Twenty-Fourth Year, 1823-24]

When the idea of attempting to educate the Native Females of this country was first suggested, it appeared to be an undertaking so vast in its object and so hopeless in its nature, that many of the most zealous promoters of institutions for the improvement of India hesitated as to the expediency of the measure. Difficulties presented themselves on every side, such as seemed to preclude all rational expectation of success: the labour, too, appeared to be interminable; and it was even feared, that the effort to raise contributions for so apparently desperate a cause might not have a favourable influence on Missionary exertions in general. On the arrival, however, of a suitable person from England, who had consecrated herself to this specific object, the plan was proposed; and a commencement actually made, in the face of all discouragements. A full year has now elapsed, since the Calcutta Committee of the Church Missionary Society resolved on supporting Miss Cooke, in her endeavours to introduce the blessings of education among the Native Females of Bengal.

The Committee announce, with unfeigned thankfulness to God, that much greater success than could have been anticipated has hitherto attended the undertaking. The number of Female Schools already established is FIFTEEN; and ELEVEN SCHOOL-HOUSES HAVE BEEN ACTUALLY ERECTED. In all these schools, for some time after their establishment, the attention is exclusively given to reading and writing; but as soon as a

class has been formed who can read lessons in the Bengalee Book of Fables, instruction in needle-work is held out to the Girls as a reward, with a promise that they shall receive the usual remuneration for the work done.

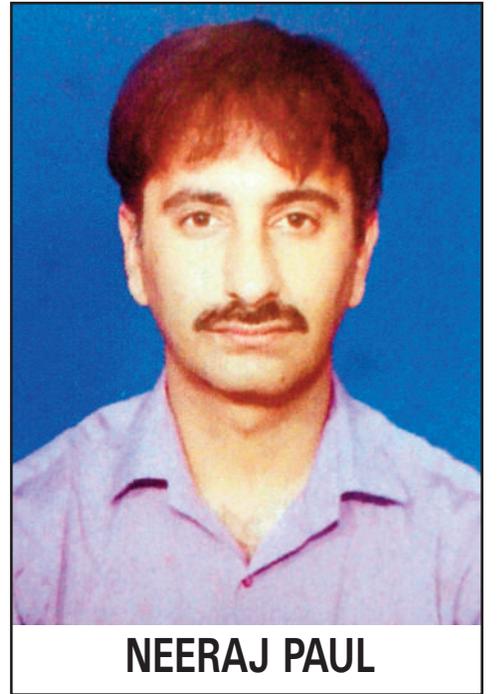
As the fruits of industry began to be enjoyed, the desire of learning to work became greater; so that in six schools, where some proficiency has been made, about 80 dozen of dusters have been hemmed, and some have become capable of executing finer work. In a few of the schools, knitting has been also introduced. Many applications have been made by Women unconnected with the Schools, for permission to attend in order to learn needle-work; but no female is taught to work, until she has made some progress in reading and writing.

Upward of 300 Female Children are now under a course of instruction. As the schools increase, the want of Teachers is naturally felt; and, in this respect, the schools begin to be productive. At first, only one woman could be found capable of teaching. Since the schools were opened, a respectable Widow has qualified herself for the charge of one of the new schools, and three Young Women are preparing themselves to act as teachers.

The Committee have indeed, every encouragement to proceed. While, therefore, they acknowledge, with great thankfulness, the liberality by which they have been enabled to enter upon this arduous career, they

feel assured that the disposition to give support to the cause will gather strength from its success. Under this impression, they would most respectfully and earnestly solicit the contributions of the community IN FURTHER prosecution of their plans. The time is arrived when a CENTRAL SCHOOL is urgently wanted. Hitherto Miss Cooke's initiatory labours have been carried on among detached schools, some of them separated from each other by considerable distances; and in the superintendence of which she has been indefatigable, visiting as many as her time and strength would admit, every day. As her schools increased, the labour of efficient teaching became proportionably greater. It is now become important to provide for the more easy and effectual management of her enlarged numbers. With this view, it is proposed to erect a school in some central spot, to be called the "Central School for Native Female Education". At present, Miss Cooke has to repeat often the same lessons to a FEW at once; whereas in a school centrally situated, the first classes might assemble from all the schools after their morning lessons, and receive together the instruction now given in detached parties. The saving of labour would thus be considerable, and the improvement of the children would also be much more rapid. The advantages of such a school are indeed too obvious to need specification.

The Committee, therefore, solicit the attention of their friends and the public to this point; and hope to



NEERAJ PAUL

be enabled to add the important measure of a Central Establishment, in aid of the schools already so auspiciously commenced. The benefits which must be conferred on Native Society by the improvement of the Female Character will be felt by all; and, now that that first difficulties have been removed, and Providence has so clearly opened the way for attempting this desirable object, the united motives of humanity, policy, and Christian Benevolence urge us to go forward.

(Signed) D. CORRIE, Secretary
Calcutta, Feb. 1823

Source Courtesy: Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for the Africa and the East, Twenty-Fourth Year, 1823-24

PILLAR TO COMMEMORATE THE BATTLE OF CORYGAUM

Bombay Castle, Dec. 13, 1824 - The erection of the pillar intended to commemorate the battle of Corygaum having lately been completed near the spot where the action took place; the hon. the Governor in Council is pleased, on the recommendation of Lieut. Col. Staunton, C.B., who commanded the British troops on that memorable occasion, to appoint Cundojee Mullojee, now a havildar in the 1st company of invalids, but late of the 1st bat. 2nd regt. N.I., and wounded in the action of Corygaum, to the charge of this pillar, and to declare the trust to be hereditary in his family forever; but, in case of the failure of any male issue to the person enjoying the grant, it will rest with the government to appoint a successor.

Cundojee Mullojee is promoted to the rank of jemadar, with the pay and advantages of that rank from this date, and will be borne on the books of the paymaster of the Poona division of the army.

A piece of land adjacent to the pillar, or an annual sum of money, will be further assigned, by government, for the future maintenance of the persons in charge of this trust.

Source Courtesy: The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies, Vol. XIX, January to June, 1825 (Published: 1825)

The Fight For Re-enlistment

(The Mahar Movement's Military Component - Richard B. White)

The 1895 petition argues that the Mahars as a group who are actually of the Kshatriya caste. This represents the Mahars attempt to change their position in the caste structure by "Sanskritization."

Our ancestors were Kshatriya. In about the year 1396 there was a great famine for about 12 years which was called Durhavedi famine. That time our ancestors survived by eating whatever they could find. Therefore, they were considered low case under the Peshwa rule.

The Mahars did not give up their positions in the Army easily. The British decision of Mahar "[d]elistment in 1893 had been a severe blow to them as a community, not only threatening their economic status, but also (in their view) giving official sanction to caste Hindu discrimination against them." Overcoming both of these threats was the focus of two different efforts to

petition the Government of India to reconsider its decision between 1894 and the start of the first World War.

The Mahars used two different strategies to influence the government; with both they tried to regain enlistment privileges in the army and an improved social status. Zelliott maintains that these efforts "illustrate the importance of army service to the Mahars. This was clearly the beginning of their efforts to induce government to intervene on their behalf, and their questioning of their traditional inferior status." In both instances, the movement was led by educated, former military officers.

The first organized attempt was in April 1895. Some of the details of the petition drive presented by Zelliott and Basham are speculative. Basham, who has completed the most recent study, states it was originally presented to the Viceroy, but was later returned for resubmission through the Bombay Government. It appears that the

petition was submitted by Gopal Baba Walangkar, a retired military officer, on behalf of the Anarya Doshpariharak Mandali, the non-Aryan committee for the rightings of wrongs, an Untouchable organization. Dr. Ambedkar, following the death of his father, found a copy of the petition in his papers. Ambedkar "believed that his father had obtained the assistance of Justice M. B. Ranade in preparing the petition." The petition compares Mahar actions to those of the higher castes and requests reinstatement in the military.

The petition's pleas were simple. The Mahars believed that, in 1859, the Government had declared that the castes who fought loyally for the British were to be given due preference for military enlistment. Therefore, they demanded:

In view of that promise, Government should employ in civil, military and police department without any discrimination these faithful and honest persons.

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THE MAHARS: WHO WERE THEY AND HOW THEY BECAME THE UNTOUCHABLES?

"Now, it is well-known that the Mahars are also called Parwari. This name has never gone out of name, and has continued to exist side by side with their name Mahar, although the name Mahar became more prominent. But in times past the name Parwari was more prominently used than the name Mahar. For instance, during the time of East India Company, Mahars were very largely employed in the Company's army as soldiers and officers. In their caste columns they were all designated as Parwaris. There is, therefore, no question that the Mahars had this their other name. And I venture to say that this was the name by which the Mahars were called before the name Mahar came into being."

In this paper, I propose to raise these questions, and attempt to give an answer to them which in my judgment are most appropriate answers. These questions are: (1) Who are the Mahars? (2) Why do they live outside the village? and (3) Why have they been classed as Untouchables?

I. Who are the Mahars?

Mr. Wilson derived the word 'Maharashtra' from the word 'Mahar' and suggested that Maharashtra meant the country belonging to the Mahars. This derivation of the term Mahars is sought to be supported on the analogy of 'Gujarashtra' the country of the Gujars and 'Saurashtra' the country of the Sauraj. An objection is taken to this derivation of the term Mahar on two different grounds, the one objection rests upon the view that the term Maharashtra does not mean the country of the Mahars but that it means the great country. The second objection that is raised to this derivation is based upon the view that the Mahars who are at present so fallen in their social status that it could not be supposed that they at any time in the course of history have had so exalted a position as to be the ruler of the country. It is my view that this derivation put forth by Mr. Wilson is unsupportable for two very different reasons. The first reason which leads me to reject the derivation suggested by Wilson may be formulated in the following terms : It is obvious that if Maharashtra meant the country of Mahars, it is obvious that the Mahars as a community distinct from the rest of the population must have been in existence from very ancient times and must have been known in history, by that name. Now is there any evidence to show that the Mahars are as a community known to history by the name Mahars ? Confining ourselves to the Bombay Presidency the three principal communities which comprise the Untouchable classes are: (1) The Mahars, (2) The Chambhars, and (3) The Mangs. Of these the Mahars form by far the largest group. It is extraordinary to find that while Mangs and Chambhars are known in history as existing communities, there is nowhere any mention of the Mahars as a community. Reaching back to Manu he mentions certain classes which in his time were recognised as Untouchable Communities. Among them the

Chambhars are specifically mentioned as an Untouchable Community. The Mangs are not mentioned by Manu. That is probably because Mangs were not to be found in the territory which was known to the author of the Manusmriti. But there is ample evidence in the Buddhist literature that the Mangs who therein referred to as Matangas existed as a separate community bearing a name which became well known to all. But neither in the Manusmriti nor in the Buddhist literature is there any mention of the Mahars as a community. Not only is there mention of the Mahars in this ancient lore but even the later Smritis of quite modern times make no reference to the Mahars as a community. Indeed upto the advent of the Muslims, one does not meet with the word Mahar. One finds it mentioned only once in the Dnyaneshwari which is 1100 A.D. Before him the name Mahar is simply non-existent. What are we to suppose ? Was there no such community as the Mahars in the ancient times before Dnyaneshwari ? Or, are we to suppose that there existed a community but then it was known by some other name ? Whichever the case is the non-existence of the name Mahars militates strongly against the view of Mr. Wilson. If the term Mahar was not known, much less could it become the basis of a name given to the country.

The second reason which leads me to reject the view of Mr. Wilson is based upon the considerations arising out of the totems which one finds existent in the Mahar community. Mr. Wilson's hypothesis if taken to be correct must necessarily lead to the conclusion that the Mahars are an aboriginal race inhabiting the country before the entry of Aryans in the country now known as Maharashtra. I feel certain that such a conclusion is untenable for reasons which I am sorry to say, have not been fully appreciated by those who allege that the Mahars belong to the aboriginal classes of this Province. As a first step in the chain of reasoning, I am depending upon in support of my view, I would like to point out one notable fact and it is this—there are no Marathas where there are no Mahars and wherever there are Mahars there are Marathas also. This link is not a mere matter of accident, that the link is integral, is supported by another piece of evidence which is also usually overlooked by students of ethnology. Now it is well known that the Marathas have a clan organisation. They have what they call their 'Kuls' : and they have also what is called a totem. The importance of the 'Kul' and the totem



will be obvious to every student of ethnology. A common 'Kul' and a common totem are indicative of kinship. Bearing this in mind a comparison of the 'Kul' among the Mahars and the Marathas yields a very significant result.

(The Table mentioned below is not found in the M. S. - Editors)

A glance at the table would show that there is no 'Kul' among the Mahars which does not exist among the Marathas and there is no 'Kul' among the Marathas which is not to be found among the Mahars. If anthropology can be relied upon in support of the proposition that the common 'Kul' is indicative of kinship then the Mahars and the Marathas form a kindred community and the Mahars could not be rejected as an aboriginal community unless one is also prepared to go to the length of saying that the Marathas also are an aboriginal community. Whether the Marathas are an Aryan or a Non-Aryan community is a question on which there is no unanimity. Risley held the view that the Marathas were not Aryans: and he rested his conclusions mostly on anthropometric measurements. Others have challenged this view and concluded that the Marathas are Aryans and have sought to meet the anthropometric objections of Risley by the argument that there were two waves of the

Aryan invaders and the Marathas belonged to the Second. That is the reason why their anthropometric measurements do not tally with those taken as standard by Risley. The second hypothesis seems to derive some support from the fact that in ancient times Maharashtra was called 'Ariake' on the ground that the Aryans formed the predominant population and also because in the Karnatak the Maratha is still called 'Arer Mated' (The Aryan Man). Be that as it may, there is no question that the Mahars are not an aboriginal people. In addition to what has been stated in support of this proposition there are other land-marks and survivals which can be relied upon in support of this view. The first thing to which attention must be drawn is the fact that a great number of the 'Kul' which indicate the status of a Rajput are also to be found among the Mahars. In the quarrels that have taken place between the Brahmins on the one hand and the Marathas on the other on the issue whether the latter were Kshatriyas or not, the test sought to be applied was whether the 'Kul' of the claimant was one of the 96 'Kuls' which were admittedly belonged to the Rajputs in whose status as Kshatriyas was beyond question. Now if this test was applied to the Mahars, there could be no question

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THE MAHARS: WHO WERE THEY AND HOW THEY BECAME THE UNTOUCHABLES?

(Continue from page 12)

that the Mahars would have to be pronounced as belonging originally to the Rajput that is to say to the Kshatriya class. It is suggested that the Mahars have been appropriating the 'Kuls' of the Rajputs since very recently with the idea of improving their social standing. That evidently is a mistake. There is a long tradition among the Mahars that they belong to what is called the 'Somavansh' which is one of the two branches of the Kshatriyas, that the Mahars have had these 'gotras' from long past and have not appropriated to them in recent times is clear from the fact that as long ago as the Court of Enquiry held by the Brahmins into the status of the last Maratha King of Satara, namely Pratapsing whom the Brahmins refused to recognise as a Kshatriya. One party of the Brahmins who favoured the side of Pratapsing contended that as the Bhonsale Kul was one of the 96 Kuls of the Rajputs, and as the Rajputs were recognised as Kshatriyas, Pratapsing must be pronounced as a Kshatriya. The other side in reply to this contention propounded a conundrum. It contended that if that argument was sound, all the Mahars would have to be pronounced as Kshatriya because they too had 'Kuls' like those of the Rajputs. Apart from the validity of the view as a test, the fact remains that the Kuls which the Mahars have appropriated is no new phenomenon. This is one consideration in support of the view that the Mahars are not aboriginals.

The second consideration in support of this view is the word of salutation which is peculiar to the Mahars. The word of salutation used by the Mahars is Johar. This word is undoubtedly a corrupt form of the Sanskrit word 'Yoddhar'. It is well-known that in ancient Vedic times the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas had adopted separate words of salutation. The Brahmins said 'Namaskar' : the Kshatriyas said 'Yoddhar'. It is difficult to conceive that the Mahars should have been allowed to use the term 'Yoddhar' as a word of salute if they were a body of low class ; or if they were aboriginals particularly because the word of salute among the Chamars and the Mangs is quite a different word having not the remotest connection with the status of the Kshatriya. The Mangs used the word 'Furman' which seems to be a corruption of the word 'Farman' meaning 'command'. The Chamars used the word 'Duffarao' a word of which I am unable to give the derivative : but the fact remains that only the Mahar Community uses as its word of salutation the word 'Johar' which as I have stated above was a word which was in exclusive use by the Kshatriyas as a word of salutation. There is no doubt that the Marathas too at one time used the term 'Johar' as a word of salutation. It was in vogue during apart of Shivaji's rule; and even Shivaji in the one and the only letter admitted to have been signed by him in his own hand and addressed to Maloji Ghorpade has used

the word 'Johar' as the word of salutation. It is well-known that the Marathas since after Shivaji began to use 'Ram Ram' in place of 'Johar' as a word of salutation. It is curious that the Mahars did not follow suit. Why the Mahars continued to use the word 'Johar' even when the Marathas had given it out and why were they allowed by the State to continue 'Johar' when the State enforced 'Ram Ram' on all others, are questions which require some elucidation. But the fact remains that 'Johar' is indicative of the status of a Kshatriya.

There is one other matter to which attention must be drawn because it militates against the view which I am supporting namely that the Mahars are not aboriginals and that they really belonged to the Maratha community and at one time were reckoned as Kshatriyas. The fact is the custom prevalent among the Mahars of burying the dead body when as a matter of theory and practice the Marathas and the Kshatriyas have the custom of burning the dead. The existence of this custom of burying the dead must be admitted but to admit the existence of the custom is not to admit the form of the conclusion that is sought to be derived from it. In the first place, there are indications that this custom of burying the dead is not original. But the original custom among the Mahars was to burn the dead seems to be supported by the fact that even though the Mahars bury the dead they still carry with them to the cemetery cinders and burning coal in an earthen pot along with the corpse.

There must have been some purpose for such an act and there could be no conceivable purpose except to use the fire for burning the dead. Why the custom of burning the dead gave place among the Mahars to the custom of burying the dead, it is difficult to give a precise reason. But it seems that the burying of the dead was a custom which was enforced upon the Mahars at some later date when the Mahars had become fallen in the status and classed as Untouchables. Considerable support can be found for this view from what the Padma-Puran contains. It is stated in the Padma-Puran that certain communities were prevented from burning their dead because burning the dead was a privilege of the three regenerate classes. If this is correct then the custom of burying the dead could not outweigh the overwhelming evidence which goes to show that the Mahars are not aboriginals and they might as well have been in times past part of the Marathas by race and Kshatriyas by status.

II. Why do they live outside the Village ?

It is notorious that the Mahars live outside the village. This is a fact which it is difficult to sense at any rate for foreigners for the reason that the village is generally built on an open site without any indication of its boundaries. But two things demonstrate incontrovertibly that the Mahars are reckoned as being outside

the village. Every villager makes a distinction between the village as such and the Maharwada meaning thereby that the Mahar-Wada, that is to say the settlement of the Mahars is not within what is meant by the village. A more ocular demonstration is afforded wherever village has its wall. Wherever a village has had a well known in vernacular as 'Gavkus' it will be noticed that the settlement of the Mahars is always outside the wall. Now this fact read in the light of what has been said in this paper in connection with the first question gives considerable significance to the second question. If the Mahars are not an aboriginals race why are they treated as the reject of the society, and made to live outside the village community. The most natural answer which strikes one as being a true answer is what one finds in the injunctions contained in the code of Manu. Speaking of the Chandal, Manu lays down that he should be compelled to live outside the boundary of a village. Generalising from what Manu has said about the Chandal it might be guessed that what was said by him of the Chandals was imposed upon all similar classes by the Hindu Rulers in all its rigour. On a deeper consideration I find that this cannot be the answer to the question raised. What Manu has stated is not so much the original command of the law-giver. What Manu has done in my judgment is to recognise what had happened as a result of the forces operating during the historical period and made the real his ideal because it suited the purpose he had in mind. The answer to the question must be looked for in quite a different direction. The direction in which a true answer can be found lies in my view in the field of study which relates to the period when a pastoral Community became a settled community. It must be a matter of common knowledge to all students of the growth of civilization that the form of the wealth of the community was the chief determining factor in determining the habits. The pastoral people never settled anywhere but lived a nomadic life migrating from place to place because their wealth consisted in sheep and cattle and the sheep and cattle moved from place to place those owned it also moved whenever their wealth carried them. A community which had learned the art of cultivating the land and valuing its produce gave up their nomadic life and settled at one place undoubtedly because their wealth consisted of immoveable property namely land. Now this process whereby nomadic life gave place to a settled life has been a long drawn out process : A process in which some roamed about and some were settling down. It must also be well known to students of early history of human civilization that all social life in those early days was organised into tribes and these tribes were often at war with one another. Now in the light of these considerations one must reach back to the beginning when communities or tribes began to cease to be nomadic and

became settled and imagine what must be the needs which they must have felt as the most supreme needs of the earth. Here was a tribe which had settled down and formed a settlement now spoken of as village. It is possessed of gray com. It is possessed of sheep and cattle. On the other hand, it is surrounded by tribes which are nomadic and which are casting covetous eyes on the grain and the cows and the sheep which it owns. Obviously the first and the foremost question to such a settled tribe would be to protect itself against the raids and invasions of the nomadic tribes. How could they protect themselves? How could they provide this protection ? Obviously they themselves cannot engage in constant warfare whether defensive or offensive for the protection either of their corn or of their cattle. For their energy is all absorbed in the pursuit of agriculture, an occupation to which they are new and for which they have to depend upon their own manual labour. The only way they could protect themselves is to look to their tribal chief. But how could the tribal chief protect his tribe which is settled and engaged in tilling the soil assiduously that it can find neither time nor men from its own who would take up arms on its behalf. The tribal chief must, therefore, look to some other source for raising a force to act under his command in defence of his tribe against the invasions of the nomads. From what quarters can the tribal chief secure recruits for his defence force. Obviously from one source. Here not very far there are tribal wars going on. One tribe waging a war against another tribe. In this warfare a tribe is routed and the men belonging to one tribe are broken up by defeat and parties of them small disheartened and fearful of their own safety are moving about in search of a safe place. How excellent would it be both for the chief of the settled tribe and the broken men of a defeated tribe if destiny would bring them together. The chief of the settled tribe would get the force he needs to protect his tribe without disturbing the occupation of the tribe. The men of the broken tribe would get an assured subsistence in return for service to the village community and also get the chieftain's protection. But having got the men from the broken tribe next question for the tribal chief to consider is where to settle these men. They could not be allowed to settle in the midst of the settled community because they belonged to a different tribe, and were not kindred. Only kindred could live within the settlement of the tribe.

Obviously the only way by which the chieftain could settle the broken men of another tribe whom he needs as a force to be employed in defence of the settled community was to settle them beyond the limits of the settlements made by his tribes. This is the process which alone can explain in my judgment why the Mahars live outside the limits of the village. The Mahars are broken men of
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THE MAHARS: WHO WERE THEY AND HOW THEY BECAME THE UNTOUCHABLES?

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tribes which in primitive times were warring with one another. They were taken hold of by the chief of the settled community namely the Patil of the village and were allowed to settle on the confines of his village. They did for him the duty of watch and ward, and were given in return certain sites. There is nothing strange in the Mahars living outside the village limits. There is nothing in that fact which can signify that they belonged to a lower status and that on that account they were made to live outside the village limits, that they were brought to the village by the village headman for the defence of his community and that they were made to live outside their village limits not because they were of a low status but because they belonged to another tribe is a conclusion which can be supported by reference to what has happened in Wales or Ireland. A study of the Brehon Laws of Ireland which gives the tribal organisation of the Irish discloses that the Irish too had their village community which was a settled community and on the borders of the settlement of the community there lived a body of people who were known as Boairs. The Boairs were remnants of a broken tribe which were brought by the village chieftain for service under him and in the interest of the protection of the community. Exactly the same state of affairs existed in the Wales villages known as Gwelleys. Every Gwelly had a body of strangers settled on his confines. They were called Alltuds. They too were parts of a broken tribe brought by the chieftain of the Gwelly for the protection of the Gwelly. This is in my judgement the only satisfactory answer to the question. The question, however, remains as to why the Mahars continued to live as a separate community when in Ireland and in Wales the Alltuds and the Boairs in course of time ceased to remain distinct communities, and became absorbed in the general mass of the village population. The answer to this question is not difficult. It is that, it was the development of the system of caste and Untouchability which has prevented this fusion. But this of course raises by anticipation the third and the last question which is raised for discussion in this paper.

III. Why are the Mahars classed as Untouchable ?

The origin of Untouchability is to be sought in the struggles of Brahminism against Buddhism. This is a strange answer to the question but there is no doubt that it is the true answer. In order to make matters clear it is necessary to explain the principles for which Buddhism stood. It is unnecessary to go into all the details. It would be sufficient to state that one of the things which Buddha opposed most strenuously was Yadnya which was the chief and principal form of religion of the Aryans. The Yadnya involved the sacrifice of the cow. The cow was the most important animal in the Aryan economy. The whole system of agriculture depended upon the cow. The cow gave

milk which formed the chief sustenance of the people and the cow gave birth to bullocks which served as animals necessary for the cultivation of the land. Although the Buddha's objections to the Yadnya were based on philosophical grounds the common mass of the people whose intellect could not travel beyond the realities of life gathered round the banner of Buddhism because they could see that it was intended to save the cow from the incessant slaughter to which that animal was subjected by the Brahmins for sacrificial purposes. The cow, therefore, became at first an object of special consideration and lastly of veneration. The Brahmins whose supremacy was seriously jeopardised by the people refusing to consent to the sacrifice of the cow had to devise some means whereby they could win back the heart of the masses who had gone over to Buddhism. How did the Brahmins do this? The reverence of the cow created by the Buddhist religion had gone so deep down into the minds of the people that it was impossible for the Brahmins to do anything else to do except to give up their Yadnya and begin instead to reverence and worship the cow as the Buddhists did. But that was not enough. The Brahmins in their struggles against Buddhism were not actuated by any pious motive of religious consideration. They were actuated by a purely political motive namely to regain the power and prestige they possessed over the masses and which had been transferred to the Buddhist Bhikkhus. They knew that if they were to gain any ascendancy over the Buddhist, they must go a step further than the Buddhists had gone, and they did go a step further, and proclaimed that not only they shall kill the cow but they shall not kill any animals or destroy any living creature. The origin of the vegetarianism prevalent among the Brahmins is to be found in the strategical move which the Brahmins of the past took as a means of outbidding the Buddhists.

Along with this, one other thing must be borne in mind. Before the Buddhist times and upto the period of Asoka beef was a food common to all classes, the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. There is nothing repugnant in that. The cow was just an animal as the sheep or the goat or the deer was. Consequently, although the population was divided into four classes, the four classes did not differ in the matter of their food, and particularly all ate beef. The only difference probably was that some ate meat of animals that were slaughtered. This was possible for those who could afford to buy. The rest who were poor were used to eat the flesh of dead animals either because the well-to-do did not care to use it as food. It is quite conceivable also that the village chieftain gave the carcasses of dead cows and dead animals to the men belonging to the broken tribes who had settled on the confines of the village by way of remuneration for the services which they rendered to the settled commu-

nity. Without doing any violence to truth, one could say that, before the Asoka period so, far as the eating of the cow's flesh was concerned, there was no difference whatsoever. All ate cow's meat. The only difference that existed was this namely that the village people ate slaughtered meat while those living outside the village ate the flesh of the dead cow. This difference must be noted, it had no religious or social significance. It was just the difference of the rich and the poor connotation. After the Buddhist times and especially in the period of Asoka an important change takes place. Cowkilling was either given up voluntarily or was stopped by the State. The result was a sharp difference arose. The villages ceased to eat beef because they lived on slaughtered meat and as the slaughter being stopped they ceased to eat beef. The broken tribe-men who lived on the border continued to eat the flesh of the dead cow. It was unnecessary to prohibit them because it did not involve the Himsa of the cow. Now, this division namely those who did not eat beef at all and those who did was not a mere economic difference. It was a difference which gave rise to religious considerations. The killing of the cow had become a notion which from the point of view of religion has become repugnant. And a class which dealt with the dead cow also became a repugnant class. Untouchability has its origin in this notion of repugnance. And that notion of repugnance is based upon the reverence or irreverence to the cow. The Brahmins who out of consideration of their own self-interest agreed to reverence the cow and worship it. It went so far as to treat any class which had anything to do with the cow in a manner incompatible with reverence to the cow, Untouchable are not worthy of association.

That, this is the origin of Untouchability and that this is the reason why Mahars have come to be regarded as Untouchables can be seen if any one who cares to prove into the subject and to find out what are the special pursuits of these communities in India who have misfortune of being treated as Untouchable communities. An enquiry into the subject would show that all-over India the Untouchables perform certain duties which are common to them. These duties relate to the carrying of the dead cow, skinning the carcass, eating the flesh, selling the bones etc. There is no exception to this proposition. It applies in all cases and to all provinces. Why there should be such close association between the dead cow and Untouchability ?

Why do the two go together ? My answer is they go together because one is the cause of the other. Untouchability has arisen out of the repugnance of the Hindu community, which as a result of Buddhism developed a reverence of the cow, towards those who have not ceased to eat the cow. The Mahars had not ceased to eat the dead cow and consequently became the object and victims of this repugnance.

* * *

The three questions propounded in this paper have now been answered. There, however, remains one more question and it is this : Why were the Mahars called Mahars ? Many have attempted to give a definition but of all the definitions the one given by Doctor Bhandarkar seems to be the correct one. According to Dr. Bhandarkar, the word Mahar is a corruption of the word Mrut Ahar-those who live on dead meat. It accords with what has been stated above in discussing the question of the origin of Untouchability. But in this connection there arise two other subsidiary questions. One is why was this particular feature of the Mahars, life taken as a basis for so designating them. The answer to this has already been given but it may be summarised here because it goes to strengthen the correctness of the derivation of the term Mahar. As I have already said the eating of the cow's flesh was at one time so universal that nobody ever cared to note the fact. Even when some ate slaughtered meat and some ate dead meat the difference had only economic significance but no religious or social significance. But when all had given up eating cow's meat those who continued to eat presented a difference which was noticeable to the naked eye and significant to the religious mind. It is, therefore, natural that the difference so obvious and so significant should have been made by the rest of the population a basis of designating that class. But this derivation of the term Mahar creates a difficulty which must be grappled with. If this is the correct definition of the term and if these are the reasons why it came into vogue, it must have come into operation when the difference became sharp and significant. What was the name by which the Mahars were known in history before they began to be called as Mahars ? That the name Mahar is a new name admits of no doubt because it does not occur anywhere either in literature or history before the time of Dnyaneshwar. This, however, makes the other question more important namely what was the name by which they were called before the name, Mahar became their common name. Now, it is well-known that the Mahars are also called Parwari. This name has never gone out of name, and has continued to exist side by side with their name Mahar, although the name Mahar became more prominent. But in times past the name Parwari was more prominently used than the name Mahar. For instance, during the time of East India Company, Mahars were very largely employed in the Company's army as soldiers and officers. In their caste columns they were all designated as Parwaris. There is, therefore, no question that the Mahars had this their other name. And I venture to say that this was the name by which the Mahars were called before the name Mahar came into being.

That this name Parwari is a
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A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE EVANGELISTIC WORK DONE BY THE AHMEDNAGAR BRANCH OF THE MARATHI MISSION OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS, IN THE HALF CENTURY, CLOSING WITH THIS YEAR OF 1881.

By Rev. S. B. FAIRBANK, D. D.

Evangelism by Natives.

When the Mission was begun in Ahmednagar, in December 1831, there were two native preachers stationed here. They were Babaji of the Brahman, and Dajiba of the Parbhu caste. Babaji was a very earnest preacher, but was allowed to remain in the work here only 1 year and 4 months. He died on the 17th of April 1833. Until the Lord gave the Mission the brothers, Haripunt and Narayan Khiste, who were Brahmans, and were converted and received to the membership of the church in 1839, Dajiba was the only Native preacher connected with the Mission. Then, for a few years Narayan was employed in preaching, and Haripunt in teaching and superintending schools. Afterwards Haripunt became the preacher and Narayan taught.

In 1842 Bhagoba Powar of the Mahar caste began to go from village to village singing his pade and telling of salvation by Christ. And Francis Fonceca, who was before a Goanese Romanist, was employed for a time at Ahmednagar. In 1842 Ramkrishnapunt Modak, a Brahman, and Marutiraw Sangale, a Wanzari, were received. In 1843 Khandoba Bhingardive, Rabirpanthiguru, and Sakharam Bharshankar, both Mahars, were received. In 1844 Lakhmanraw Shelake and Lakhiram Magade, also a guru of the Kabirpanth

sect, and Yesoba Powar, brother of Bhagoba, all three Mahars, were received. The same year Ramchandrapunt, a Brahman, was received at Sirur. In 1845 Raghoba Chandekar was received at Ahmednagar, and Shivaram, a gosavi, was received at Sirur. These were both Mahars. These were all employed by the Mission, and constituted its staff of Native Agents when I was allowed to find my home in Ahmednagar, in October, 1846. Eight of the ten were employed in evangelistic work.

In 1848 two of these native agents, Haripunt and Ramkrishnapunt, were formally licensed as preachers of the Gospel. The others, though men of ability and influence, had received only an imperfect education, and were of that class of Evangelists that we have since denominated Bible-readers.

The number of these Bible-readers was not much increased till 1855. "The Deputation from America" visited Ahmednagar and held a convention with the Mission in November and December, 1854. One of the results of that convention was the occupation of village stations by some missionary families, and the occupation of many outstations as homes by Bible-readers and School-teachers. Mr. Hari R. Khiste, usually known as Haripunt, was ordained as pastor of the first Church in Ahmed-

nagar, and Mr. Ramkrishna V. Modak, usually known as Ramkrishnapunt, was ordained as pastor of the second Church in Ahmednagar. Mr. Vishnu B. Karmarkar and Mr. Sidoba B. Misal, and, in 1857, Mr. Maruti R. Sanyale received licenses as preachers. Besides these there were in 1856, 38 native agents. More than half of these were usually employed as school teachers. But during some months of the year the scholars were obliged to work for their daily bread and could not attend school. At such times the teachers were employed as Bible-readers, and on this account it seems fairest to regard half the native agents as engaged in evangelistic work. The year 1857 begins the second half of the fifty years we have under review. But as the new departure was in 1855, it is best to divide the half century into unequal parts, the first of 23 years, and the second of 27 years.

During the first period, of 23 years, the total number of years of evangelistic work by our native agents is 128. Of these 16 were by licensed preachers and 112 by catechists, Bible-readers, &c.

During the second period of 27 years, the pastors wrought 195 years, the licentiates 75 years, and the Bible-readers, &c. 724 years, making a total of 994 years, or nearly 1000 years of evangelistic work. Besides this, for the last 18 years, na-

tive Christian women have been employed in evangelistic work for women, and the total amount of their service is about 170 years.

To sum up then the various items we have, work by Missionaries 100 years, by Missionary ladies 50 years, by native preachers and Bible readers 1,122, and by Bible-women 170, making a total of 1,442 years. This means a vast number of sermons, and addresses, and talks, and conversations, and discussions and exhortations. And many of them were prepared with study and care and were delivered with earnestness and with prayer that they might prove the means of salvation to those who heard them. Had they all been thus delivered, it would seem that their effects must have been far greater than those we see manifested in the churches and among the people of this region.

But we would not speak disparagingly of the results that have been attained, in giving the people such knowledge of Christianity that there is a general conviction of its truth and of its surpassing excellence. Were not this people bound, and held by the fetters of caste, we should see them coming in multitudes to profess Christianity.

Source Courtesy: Memorial Papers of the American Marathi Mission, 813-1881

ANNIVERSARIES OF BRITISH VICTORIES THE ACTION OF CORYGAUM, IN 1818

On the last evening of 1817, a small force, commanded by Captain Staunton of the 1st Bombay N.I., marched from Seroor to Poonah. It comprised an officer and twenty-six men of the Bombay Artillery, with two guns; the 2nd Battalion 1st Bombay N.I. [now 2nd N.I.], about 500 strong; and 250 "Auxiliary Horse."

Early in the morning of the 1st of January 1818, Staunton's progress was stopped, when he was near the walled village of Corygaum, by the appearance in his front of a large mass of the Peishwah's troops, estimated at 20,000 cavalry and 800 infantry. He succeeded in taking part of the village (its name is spelled in

half a dozen ways, from which my readers may choose for themselves), but not in time to prevent the Arabs of the enemy's infantry from occupying the other part. A continued struggle was maintained till nine in the evening, when the Peishwah's hordes, having failed to overpower or exterminate the comparatively small British force, finally retired. The Arabs gained momentary possession of one of the guns, but it was recovered under circumstances that call for special notice. Lieutenant Patterson, who was six feet seven inches in height, and of strength and courage in proportion to his towering stature, lay shot through the body and mortally

wounded; but when he heard that the gun had been captured, he rose to his feet once more. Seizing a musket near the muzzle with both hands, he used it with such effect that the Arabs recoiled beyond the reach of his terrible blows, leaving him in possession of the gun, and surrounded by those whom he had struck down in his expiring efforts. Of eight European officers, two were killed and three wounded (one mortally); of twenty-six artillerymen, twelve were killed and eight wounded; of the 2nd Battalion 1st N.I., fifty were killed and 105 wounded; and of the Horse sixty-two were killed and thirty-four wounded or missing. The enemy's

loss was estimated at 500 or 600. After so severe a conflict and such heavy losses, and with men who had had no food for two days, the march towards Poonah was deemed impracticable, and on the 2nd of January, Staunton marched back, unassailed, to Seroor. The name of "Corygaum" is borne by the 2nd Bombay N.I., and Poonah Horse. The anniversaries of the year may worthily begin with that of an action in which Bombay Sepoys emulated the heroism of their British leaders and comrades on the 1st of January 1818.

E. O'CALLAGHAN

Source Courtesy: The Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine, Vol.II, 1885

THE MAHARS: WHO WERE THEY AND HOW THEY BECAME THE UNTOUCHABLES?

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very ancient name is proved by the fact that it occurs in Ptolemy's. He uses the word 'Pauravardi' which probably is a misspelling or mispronunciation of the word Parwari*. What does the word Parwari mean? It is, of course, a difficult question to answer.

For all that one knows it means dependence which is the root meaning of the word 'Pariwar' of which 'Parwari' appears to be corruption. The broken tribes even undoubtedly dependent for their means of livelihood upon the village community

and the village community might very appropriately designated by the descriptive name 'Parwari' those broken tribe men who were strangers to the community but were dependent upon it. It might be mentioned here that the term 'Parwari' which was in vogue was not confined to what is known as the Mahar community. It was used in a general sense. As there is documentary evidence to show that at any rate it included also the community which is now known as the Mang community.

The term 'Parwari', therefore, seems to have been applied to all

men who came and settled as strangers to the village community. Not only the term 'Parwari' is a composite term but the term Mahar is also a composite term and does not connote a common origin.

The Mahar community appears to be composite community and includes within it a strata which is high in origin and a strata which is low in origin. This is indicated by the different 'Kuls' of the Mahars. Those whose 'Kuls' fall within the 96 belong to the higher strata, those whose 'Kuls' do not fall within them fall in the lower strata. But a common name

Mahar which has been in existence for the last so many hundred years has produced in them a consciousness of kind which has destroyed any notions of high or low. But it is just as well for students of ethnology that what is now known as Mahar community is in its origin a conglomeration of broken parts of different tribes who had nothing in common except that they were the 'Parwaris', that is, the dependents of the village community.

Source Courtesy: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol.17 Part-2

Reasons why so many of our Christians are from the Mahar Caste, and so few from the Brahman and other High Castes

The question arises, very naturally, why so many of our Christians are from the Mahar caste, and so few from the high castes, and I will now state some apparent reasons. When our first Missionaries came to Ahmednagar in 1831, Babaji, the first Brahman convert in the Bombay church came with them. In 1832 a Poor- House was established at Nagar, to which the blind, the lame, the diseased, the leprous, the aged and the destitute, came for support. At first only Mahar people were connected with this, and hence, afterwards, only Mahars, and a few others, who on account of destitution were willing to leave their castes and live among the Mahars, came to it. Thus the Poor-House became a place for Mahars and Mangs. It is to be expected that more Mahars would come to such a place than any other caste people, because the Mahars are more given to beggary than any others. The reason for this is that they have no regular occupation, but when they are able they gather grass, firewood, &c., or depend upon begging, by which they can gain a trifle for their support. And when their work fails them, or they have no strength to do it, they get their living, as best they can, by begging. Our Missionaries began their work of preaching the Gospel among the inmates of this Poor-House. Those people, being supported by the Missionaries, had plenty of leisure to listen to the preaching. Hence the first native converts that were received, were from the Mahars of the Poor-House. From

1832 to 1838 the few persons converted at Ahmednagar were all Mahars. A Brahman and his wife, a Parabhu and his aged widowed mother, all came from Bombay. The increase of a church is effected by means of those who are first received into it, and it was natural that the increase of this church, composed of Mahars, should be in the direction of the Mahar people.

Moreover, the Missionaries generally had servants of the Mahar caste, to whom they were accustomed regularly to read the scriptures and preach. A few high caste people were employed as teachers, pundits, &c., but they did not live in as close connection with the Missionaries as the Mahars did, and they received instruction less frequently, and this is one reason why more of them did not become Christians. Another reason is that, when a high caste man becomes a Christian his relatives expel him from his caste. The Mahars and Mangs, on the contrary, by becoming Christians, are not degraded, but are rather elevated. Their caste people do not expel them. In those days there was the most intimate intercourse, and even marriages were celebrated, between the Christian and the non-Christian Mahars. But if a high caste person once openly received baptism, or the Lord's Supper, he was regarded as defiled, and his friends would not afterwards touch him, or admit him to their houses. It was regarded as a disgrace to his family, and a hundred times worse than death. The reason why his friends regarded him as de-

filed and an "outcast from among men," was that he had gone and joined the company of the so-called Mahars.

Formerly under the Mussulman reign many Hindus became Mussulmans for the sake of gaining the favour of those in authority. Their caste-people regarded them as separated in religion, true, but they did not regard them as defiled and disgraced, as they do those who now become Christians. The Mussulmans were far higher than the Mahars, only a little below the Brahmans, Kunabis, &c., hence it was no great disgrace for a high caste Hindu to join them. There was constant intercourse between them, and if the Mussulman had a high Government appointment he was held in honor.

One reason for this is that the Hindu Shastras state that the caste of the reigning sovereign is a high caste. Hence it appears that if the first converts from the high castes had associated only with the Europeans, and not with the Mahars, their people would not have regarded them as so disgraced. They would have been separated only so far as religious rites are concerned. In other respects they would have been able to preserve friendly relations. It would have been advantageous to them in a worldly point of view to become Christians, just as now it is advantageous to the Mahars, and many of the higher castes would have become Christians. Hundreds of my acquaintances among the higher castes have told me that they would be baptized

today, and unite with the Christian church, if there were no Mahars or Mangs in it. Many, without manifesting any religious scruples, come to us and eat with us secretly, and they preserve friendly relations with our high caste Christians. I believe that if there had been no special caste difficulties the number of high caste Christians would, today, have exceeded the number of Mahars and Mangs that have been received into the church. I do not say that they would have been Christians of deep heart- experience, like the few of high caste who have now come into the church, purified, as it were, by fire. But as it was in the Roman Empire in the time of Constantine the Great, when it became advantageous to become Christians, many of the Romans became merely nominal Christians, so it would have been in this land. But I do not believe that it would have resulted in the real extension of the kingdom of Christ, or that it would have promoted the real welfare of this country. I believe that it is far better for converts from the higher castes to come into the church through difficulties, as true coin, purified by fire. By this means the true growth of the Christian church, the welfare of the land, and the glory of God, are promoted. We must understand therefore that the arrangement which has been established in the providence of God, is the best possible one.

Source Courtesy: Memorial Papers of the American Marathi Mission, 1813-1881

The Persecutions of Christians

So long as no Mangs were received into the church there was no persecution whatever of the Mahar Christians. But when some Mang converts were received, the Mahar Christians, who were associated with them, were regarded as defiled by the Hindu Mahars, who would no longer associate with them. They made difficulty about their food and water, but there was no special persecution beyond this. There has seldom been occasion for the high castes to persecute the Mahar Christians, except as in the village work the sepoys and labourers of the Patil and Kulkarani are Mahars. The Patil and Kulkarani generally have more or less intriguing going on. For example, they would bring pressure upon certain individuals and extort a small bribe from them, &c. In this work the Mahars employed by them give ready assistance. But a Mahar who was a true Christian would not assist in such work. Thus the Patil and Kulkarani have frequently persecuted the Christian Mahar, because he opposes their selfish purposes. They have prevented their getting regular village dues, ("huks,") hoping that they would thus become disgusted and give up the village work. If they would not give up this work then the Patil and Kulkarani have, in many cases, brought some false

charge against them, and so tried to get them punished by Government. The motive in all this was that the Mahar Christians might be induced to give up the village work, and cease to oppose them in their village intrigues. If they had done this the Patil and Kulkarani would not have persecuted them any more. Hundreds of other Mahar Christians, who have not done the village work, but have been day labourers, farmers, merchants, servants, &c., and thus supported themselves, have not been persecuted at all by the high caste people, either Hindus or Mussalmans, because by becoming a Christian they do not degrade themselves in the least.

But when a high caste Hindu becomes a Christian he is regarded as thoroughly debased, and he can never again associate with his own relations. Moreover, the family from which any one becomes a Christian is regarded with contempt, and as degraded in character. Therefore they are greatly incensed toward the convert, and persecute him severely. They regard it as a comparatively little thing that their Christian relative is cast out from them, but the degradation and dishonour is a very great trial. At present thousands of educated Hindus, graduates of the Government schools, having become

Deists, openly deny many things in the Hindu religion. They even secretly break their caste in many ways. Nevertheless, so long as they do not openly do anything contrary to the rules of caste, and so long as they deny that they have secretly broken caste, no one persecutes these apostates from their religion. They are simply regarded as followers of a new sect of Hinduism and are honoured among the people. But those who become Christians, openly break their caste, and on this account they rob their friends of the happiness of their companionship, and become the cause of great dishonour to them. Therefore all the high caste people are enraged with them and wreak their vengeance upon them by persecuting them.

* * * * Were it not for the just English Government there is no doubt but that thousands of native Christians would have been slain, in an open manner, and streams of their blood would have flowed in this land, just as it was, in ancient times, in the Roman empire. But thanks be to God that previous to the conversion of any to Christianity in this land, the English Government was established here, and that it has protected our converts from persecution so far as it could according to law. But though the Gov-

ernment is Christian, many of its officers are high caste native Hindus, and even some of its European officers are haters of the Christian religion. For this reason we have often failed to secure the justice and protection which we should have received according to law.

Nevertheless, on the whole, the English Government has protected the Christians greatly, and the cases of open persecution have become less and less. And as the older generation passes away, and the new and more educated generation comes forward, so we hope, in the course of time, that many of the forms of persecution will cease.

* * * The results of these persecutions have, on the whole, been for good. Those who have suffered worldly loss in becoming Christians, have been able to bear testimony to the truth before the heathen, as those who have not suffered loss, but, on the contrary, have found it for their worldly advantage to become Christians, could never do. Hence the persecution of our Christian people has resulted both in the purity of the Christian church, and in its increase in numbers.

Source Courtesy: Memorial Papers of the American Marathi Mission, 1813-1881

MEMOIR OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN INDIA DURING THE MAHRATTA WAR OF 1817, 1818 & 1819

BY LIEUT. -

COLONEL VALENTINE BLACKER
COMPANION OF THE MOST HON-
OURABLE ORDER OF THE BATH,
AND QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL
OF THE ARMY OF FORT
ST. GEORGE (1821)

Colonel Burr had, at this time, under his command three Native battalions, including one of the auxiliary corps, with some light artillery. Also Major Cunningham had arrived at Poonah, on the 28th of December, with seventeen hundred irregular horse, for the purpose of mustering and paying them there. The Colonel, doubtful of Brigadier-general Smith's movements, was only certain of his being at a considerable distance; which appeared so remote, as to favour the supposed designs of the Peishwah. In this state of affairs, he considered himself authorized to augment his means by calling to his aid another battalion of Native infantry from Serroor. Accordingly, at his requisition, Captain Staunton marched with the 2d battalion of the 1st Bombay Native infantry, two guns under Lieutenant Chisholm, of the Madras artillery, and Lieutenant Swanston's detachment of two hundred and fifty reformed horse.

Gallant Defence of Koreigaum

This detachment left Serroor, on the 31st of December at eight P.M.; and at ten the following forenoon, had reached the high ground overlooking Koreigaum, at twenty-seven miles distance from Serroor. Captain Staunton was now presented with a most cheerless prospect. In the valley below, lay the whole of the Peishwah's army, consisting of twenty thousand horse and nearly eight thousand foot, encamped on the right bank of the Beemah, above the village of Koreigaum; under the walls of which, the high road to Poonah crossed the river by a ford. Luckily for this detachment, the road to the village, which was on the left bank, was unoccupied by the enemy. Captain Staunton pushed for the walls of Koreigaum, and succeeded in gaining that position; before it fell entirely into the hands of the enemy. They were little aware of the approach of the detachment; but soon concluding what measure it would adopt, they likewise detached some infantry to secure the village. Both parties accordingly succeeded in occupying a part; and the village was immediately afterwards surrounded by bodies of horse and foot, with two heavy guns. The Peishwah ascended an eminence at some distance to await the contest, and to encourage the troops by his presence; while his principal chiefs gathering round him, flattered his hopes with the early destruction of this small but resolute band.

The village of Koreigaum is very irregular, and composed of terraced buildings, some of them substantial and surrounded with a wall. It also contains a small choultry, of which the British gained possession;

but the most commanding situation was left to the enemy. Good positions were however obtained for the two guns, to command the avenues by which the enemy might approach in force; but even this advantage was greatly reduced, by their being exposed to sniping fire from neighbouring walls. The village became extremely crowded; both horse and foot, as well as baggage, cattle, and followers, being obliged to take shelter in it; and a multitude of the enemy pressing on them with daring impetuosity. Situated as the two parties were, the British had every reason to

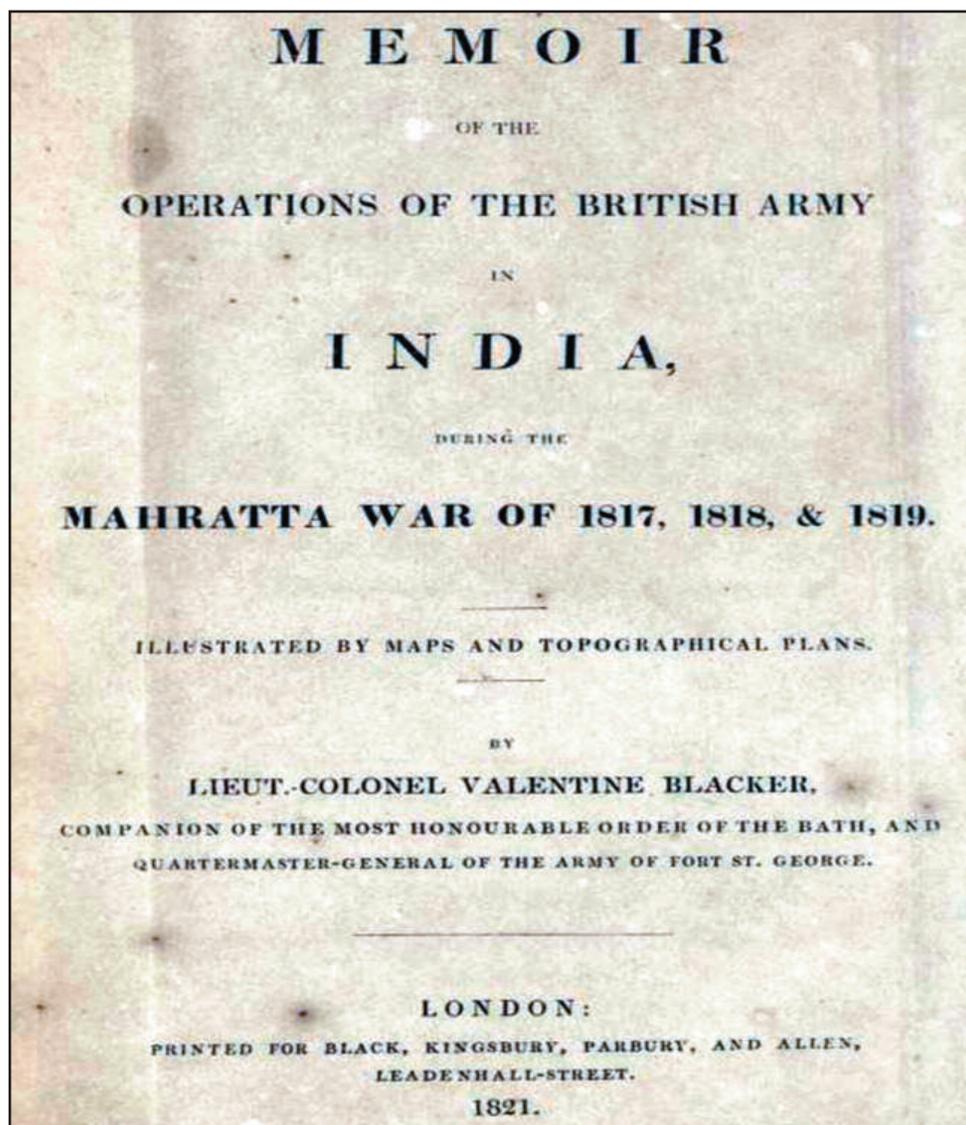
with the Peishwah was estimated at three thousand. No regular description can be expected of such a conflict, it consisted, on one side, of impetuous attacks, repulsed by desperate sallies from the other; for, when closely pressed, the detachment, in order to gain room, was obliged to charge with the bayonet. This measure, therefore, was frequently repeated, and with success; but as a charge must always be led by an European officer, the majority of these became disabled by death, or wounds, in successive attacks. So much execution was done by the

when Captain Staunton, Lieutenant Jones, and Mr. Wylie, the only officers left unhurt, vigorously charged the enemy in turn, recovered the choultry, with all the lost ground, and rescued the lives of their companions. Yet, with all the success which had hitherto attended the defence of Koreigaum, the loss was so great, and the exertion attended with so much exhaustion from want of water and refreshment, that some of the men, both European and Native, considered resistance hopeless; and expressed a desire to apply for terms. Their commanding officer, however, such is the result of education, formed a better judgment of the state of their affairs: while he encouraged them to persevere, he represented the forlorn prospect of a surrender to barbarous and cruel enemies, exasperated by the contemplation of their own losses. This exhortation had the desired effect, and the enemy began to doubt the success of further attacks. They however maintained their original position in the village till nine P.M., when they finally evacuated it to seek repose and refreshment; apprehensive, probably, of being exposed to attacks in their turn, if they remained longer. Under cover of the night the detachment got a supply of water, and made preparations for renewing the contest next morning, being now in possession of the whole of the village. But the enemy were satisfied with the attempts which had been already made and day-light on the 2d discovered them preparing to move off on the Poonah road. This had now become necessary, as on that day Brigadier-general Smith arrived at Chakun.

Successful Retreat to Serroor

From subsequent accounts it appears, that the Peishwah's army were to have marched, on the previous day, from Koreigaum, though their movement was deferred unusually late; and that, had the detachment arrived there an hour later, this severe contest would never have occurred. Captain Staunton was entirely ignorant of the position of the Fourth Division. It was therefore incumbent on him to provide for his retreat to the point from whence he marched. His want of ammunition and provisions precluded his remaining where he was, and the continuance of his progress to Poonah was impracticable, seeing the enemy already occupied that road. It seems, at the same time, that they expected this measure to be attempted, as they lay all that day and night at Loonee. They, also, endeavoured to induce the detachment to move to the same place, by sending in spies, as from Major Cunningham, with an invitation to meet him there, and to march into Poonah. Captain Staunton appeared to acquiesce, and made his arrangements for the conveyance of his sick; for some, who were able to rise, on bullocks, and for the remainder, in blankets slung to a pole, to be carried by their

(Contd. to next page)



expect, that even a desperate resistance must soon be overcome; and Captain Staunton failing in his endeavours to drive the enemy from their strong positions, was reduced to the measure of defending his own.

In this state was the detachment, at twelve o'clock at noon, cut off from the water, under a burning sun, after a long night march and no subsequent repose. On entering the village, it consisted of five hundred Native infantry, and twenty-six European artillery, besides the horse, who had no room to act, and were unsuitably armed for defence, when dismounted. These troops were commanded by eight European officers, including two assistant-surgeons, who were more usefully employed in encouraging the fighting men, than in attending the wounded. The infantry of the enemy, who advanced to the attack of the village, are represented as three bodies of one thousand men each. They were all, probably, Arabs, for that corps

guns, that the enemy found no important impression could be made till they were taken. These, therefore, became the object of all the direct attacks; as well as of the galling fire kept up, with aim, from behind some walls. In one of these assaults a gun was taken, Lieutenant Chisholm was killed, and his severed head sent off as a trophy to the Peishwah; but the gun was immediately afterwards retaken by a successful charge; and the enemy driven out with much loss by the way they came in.

In the course of the day, Lieutenants Swanston and Connellan, and Assistant-surgeon Wingate, who were severely wounded, were placed for safety in the choultry; but this small building fell into the enemy's possession in one of their successful attacks. Conceiving that this advantage ensured to them the victory, they gave way to the desire of plunder, and put Mr. Wingate to death, in a spirit of cruelty. The same fate awaited the two remaining officers,

MEMOIR OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN INDIA DURING THE MAHRATTA WAR OF 1817, 1818 & 1819

(Contine from page 17)

comrades. But, as night fell, instead of following the expected route, he took that of Serroor, and at nine o'clock the next morning the detachment entered that place, with their guns and wounded, with drums beating and colours flying. Lieutenant Patterson here died of his wounds, but the two remaining wounded officers recovered. Of twenty-six artillerymen, twelve were killed and eight wounded; of Native infantry, there were fifty killed and one hundred and five wounded; and of the reformed horse, ninety-six killed, wounded, and missing: while the loss of the enemy was estimated at six or seven hundred men. This will be easily accounted for, by adverting to the situation in which their attacks were necessarily made, in avenues raked by the two guns. On one of these occasions they are represented as having suffered a dreadful loss. An artilleryman serving his gun, half filled it with grape, and let them approach within a dozen yards of the muzzle before he applied the match; nor did it miss fire to disappoint his coolness, but discharged the unusual contents where no effect could be lost. It seems that this detachment marched with what would generally be held a superabundant supply of ammunition, both gun and musquet; the deficiency of which has been, on so many occasions, the cause of unavoidable surrender. The 2d battalion of the 15th Madras Na-

tive infantry, which had marched on the 23d of December for Peirgaum, returned by forced marches on the evening of the 2d to Serroor, having been called in from its insulated position, by repeated expresses, on the approach of the Peishwah.

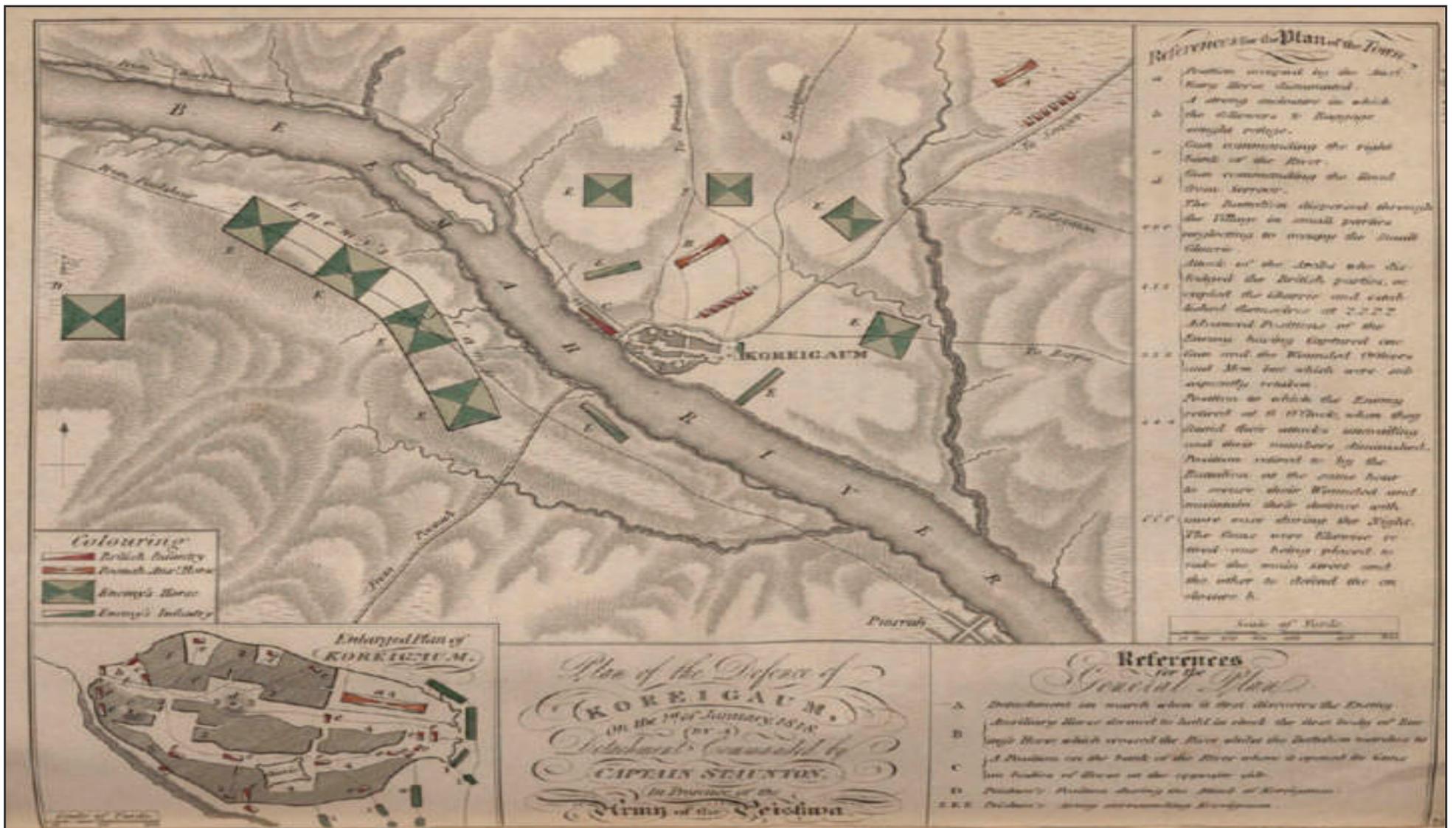
Reflections on this Exploit

It would be difficult to form any opinion but one, respecting the inflexible defence of Koreigaum. Thus the public, as well as every constituted authority, though differing in the expression of their sentiments on many occasions, concurred in bestowing their unqualified and enthusiastic commendation of the behaviour both of officers and men. In the general alacrity to acknowledge their services, the hackneyed expressions of applause appeared insufficient and unsatisfactory. In order to strain the imagination to the utmost, this brave detachment is represented as having defeated the attacks of the Peishwah's entire army. Such exaggeration, probably, arises from a common quality of the human mind, which renders it incapable of forming a distinct idea, when under the influence of admiration; for there can be no greater mistake than to imagine the attack of Koreigaum by all the Peishwah's forces. His choicest infantry, amounting to near four times the numbers of the British force, assailed them, on all sides, with an impetuosity and perseverance, to be surpassed only by that

with which the assaults were repelled. It does not even appear that this division of the enemy was ever relieved or reinforced. There were probably no more, brave enough to take their places. Reinforcement was also unnecessary, where already more were present than could act simultaneously. The twenty thousand cavalry were distributed over the plain, on both sides of the river; but none of this arm could be brought into action. The utmost effect which could have been produced by this development of the whole army, was to appal, through the eye, a handful of men, with whose numbers there was no parity. But this handful was composed of soldiers who required to be addressed through other senses, and despised a display which could only impose on the ignorant and untried. The unembellished report of the commanding officer, clear as it is modest, will always command, from the intelligent, higher admiration than any figurative exhibition. The facts were such, that their unadorned exposure presents the most forcible appeal for well-earned applause. If a similar defence occurred in European warfare, and proposed for its object the detention of the enemy from some other point of great importance, it would be justly appreciated on that account; but in the absence of that, or some other object of equal moment, it is a question if such determination would be held excusable. The apparent

hopelessness of the situation would afford sufficient arguments for the necessity of a surrender; and the detachment might, or might not, according to circumstances, be permitted to march out with the honours of war. But this reasoning applies to civilized warfare, where prisoners of war are treated with respect; whereas, with a Native enemy, no dependence can be placed on their promises of security. Whenever they have been trusted, immediate slaughter, or cruel treatment, has been the invariable consequence. The faith of a British officer is so well-established, that Native garrisons will surrender to a British force; but, perhaps there is no example of a body of troops, in the field, laying down their arms. When defeated, they expect no quarter; and the irregularity of their flight is such, as to afford no opportunity of offering them terms. Their chief is generally, on such an occasion, the first to fly; and there remains no one to be answerable for the rest, or to whom the victors can offer terms.

Select paras from Book II Chapter 1: PURSUIT OF THE PEISHWAH TO THE REDUCTION OF SATARA Source Courtesy: MEMOIR OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN INDIA DURING THE MAHRATTA WAR OF 1817, 1818 & 1819 BY LIEUT. -COLONEL VALENTINE BLACKER (1821)



Plan of the Defence of Koreigaum On the 1st of January 1818

By A Detachment Commanded by Captain Staunton In Presence of the Army of the Peishwa

THE BATTLE OF KOREIGAUM

After his defeat at Poonah, on the 16th November, 1817, the Peishwa fled to southern districts, followed up by General Smith, who conceived that he meant to shut himself up in one of his strong hill-forts and then withstand a siege. But, aware that all the petty rajahs of his dominions were ready to take arms in his behalf, he had a very different object in view. Suspecting, moreover, the Governor-General's intention of supplanting his authority by that of the rajah, who had long been detained as a mere pageant in the fortress of Wusota, not far from Sattara, he resolved to anticipate the attempt, by dispatching a party to carry him off, with all his family; he thus possessed, and had completely in his power, the persons whose legal claim, being better than his own, might have become formidable in the hands of the Marquis of Hastings. Bajee Rao then turned his steps westward to Punderpoor, in the province of Bejapore.

After garrisoning Poonah, under Colonel Burr, General Smith began his pursuit, and on the 29th of November had to force the Salpee Pass, leading to the tableland in which the Kistna has its source. This pass, Gokla, one of the Peishwa's bravest officers but most evil advisers, attempted to defend; but he was beaten, the pass cleared with ease, and the British troops pressed on. No fighting, but rapid and toilsome marches, ensued, the army of the Peishwa flying in a kind of zig-zag route, while he always kept two long marches in advance. With 5,000 of his best horse, Gokla was hovering near Smith's flanks to seize any advantage that might occur.

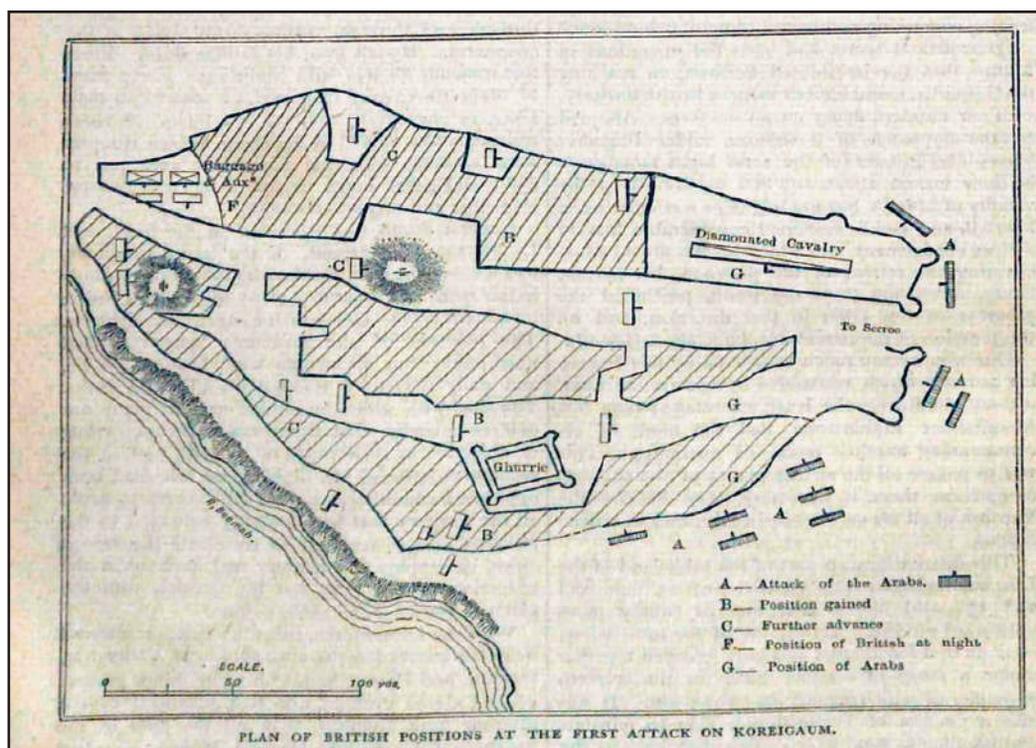
On the 6th of December, Bajee Rao was forced to quit Punderpoor finally, and succeeded in getting round the flank of the pursuing force. Passing mid-way between Seroor and Poonah, he continued his flight northward to Wattoo, on the Nassick road, where he was joined by his long-lost favourite, Trimbukjee Danglia, who brought him a considerable reinforcement of horse and foot.

Nassick seemed to be the point for which he was making. It is a populous city and the chief seat of Brahminical learning in Western India, having temples that are all picturesque and almost innumerable; but the Peishwa lost his opportunity by lingering at Wattoo for General Smith, who, in continuing the pursuit, marched considerably to the east, and proceeded so far on the 26th of December, that when the Peishwa was still at Wattoo, he was to the north-east of him, and advancing in a line, by which his further progress by the Nassick road would certainly be interrupted.

The Peishwa therefore, after wheeling to the north of Wattoo, returned to it, and on the 28th turned suddenly to the south, and retraced his steps to Poonah. Colonel Burr, who commanded in that city, apprehending an attack, solicited a reinforcement from Seroor. Accordingly, Captain Staunton (afterwards Colonel

F. F. Staunton, C.B.), of the Bombay army, was detached at six in the evening of the 31st December, with the 2nd battalion of the 1st Bombay Native Infantry, mustering 600 bayonets, twenty-six artillerymen under Lieutenant Chisholm, of the Madras Artillery, and 300 auxiliary horse, under Lieutenant Swanston.

At ten o'clock in the morning of New Year's Day, 1818, Captain Staunton's force, when marching along the heights above Koreigaum village, in Bejapore, seventeen miles north-east of Poonah, and situated on the Beemah river, saw the army of the Peishwa, consisting of 2,000 horse and 8,000 foot, covering the plain below. The latter portion of the



force, being mostly Arabs, were therefore greatly superior to the ordinary Indian infantry. Captain Staunton immediately endeavoured to gain possession of the village, the walls around which would render it inaccessible to cavalry, more especially as it was bounded on the south by the bed of the Beemah; and there he hoped to defend himself with his slender force - only 926 men in all - till succour came.

Aware of his intention, the Mahrattas sought to defeat it by pushing forward their infantry. Both parties entered the village about the same time, and a desperate struggle instantly ensued for the possession of it, and this actually continued from noon till sunset. Our troops were the first assailants in their attempts to expel the Arabs, but, failing to achieve this, they were compelled to defend what they had won; while the Arabs kept up a galling matchlock fire from a little fort of which they had possessed themselves, and from the terraced roofs of the houses at the same time, ever and anon rushing on, with the headlong courage of their race, upon the levelled bayonets of the sepoys, and also in the face of showers of grape from two guns, admirably served under Lieutenant Chisholm.

During this most desperate and protracted conflict, our troops, weary with their night march from

Seroor, had to encounter, in endless succession, fresh parties of the enemy, whose vast superiority in numbers enabled them to send on large detachments; and, moreover, they had to fight for bare existence the live-long day, without food or water, and ere evening drew nigh their position was perilous in the extreme.

Of their eight officers, Lieutenant Chisholm had fallen; Lieutenants Swanston, Conellan, and Pattinson, with Assistant-Surgeon Wingate, were wounded, so that only Captain Staunton, Lieutenant Innes, and Dr. Wylie remained effective. A great number of the gunners had been killed or wounded, and all who

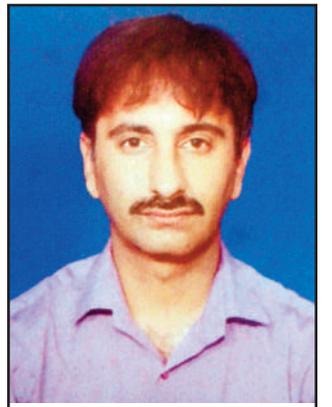
mortally wounded, being shot through the body, no sooner heard that the gun was taken, than getting up, he called to the grenadiers once more to follow him, and seizing a musket by the muzzle, rushed into the middle of the Arabs, striking them down right and left, until a second ball through his body completely disabled him. Lieutenant Pattinson had been nobly seconded; the sepoys thus led were irresistible; the gun was re-taken, and the dead Arabs, literally lying above each other, proved how desperately it had been defended."

Near it lay Lieutenant Chisholm, headless; on seeing this, Captain Staunton pointed to the corpse, and told his men that this fate awaited all who fell, dead or alive, into the hands of the enemy; and many who had been talking about surrendering now declared that they would fight to the last. Some water was procured about this time, and most grateful it proved to all, especially to the sepoys, whose lips were baked and dry through biting cartridges the entire day. The enemy now began to relax their efforts, and by nine in the evening had evacuated the village.

Captain Staunton and his brave little band passed the night undisturbed; and when day dawned, the Mahratta army was still in sight, but drawing off towards Poonah. No other attack was made on Koreigaum; for where the gallant, if ferocious, Arabs had failed, it would have been a useless task for the Mahrattas to have made any attempt. They were preparing for a general flight, in consequence of hearing that General Smith was approaching. Unaware of this circumstance, Captain Staunton believed that they were simply taking up a position to intercept his advance on Poonah, and therefore he resolved to retrace his steps to Seroor.

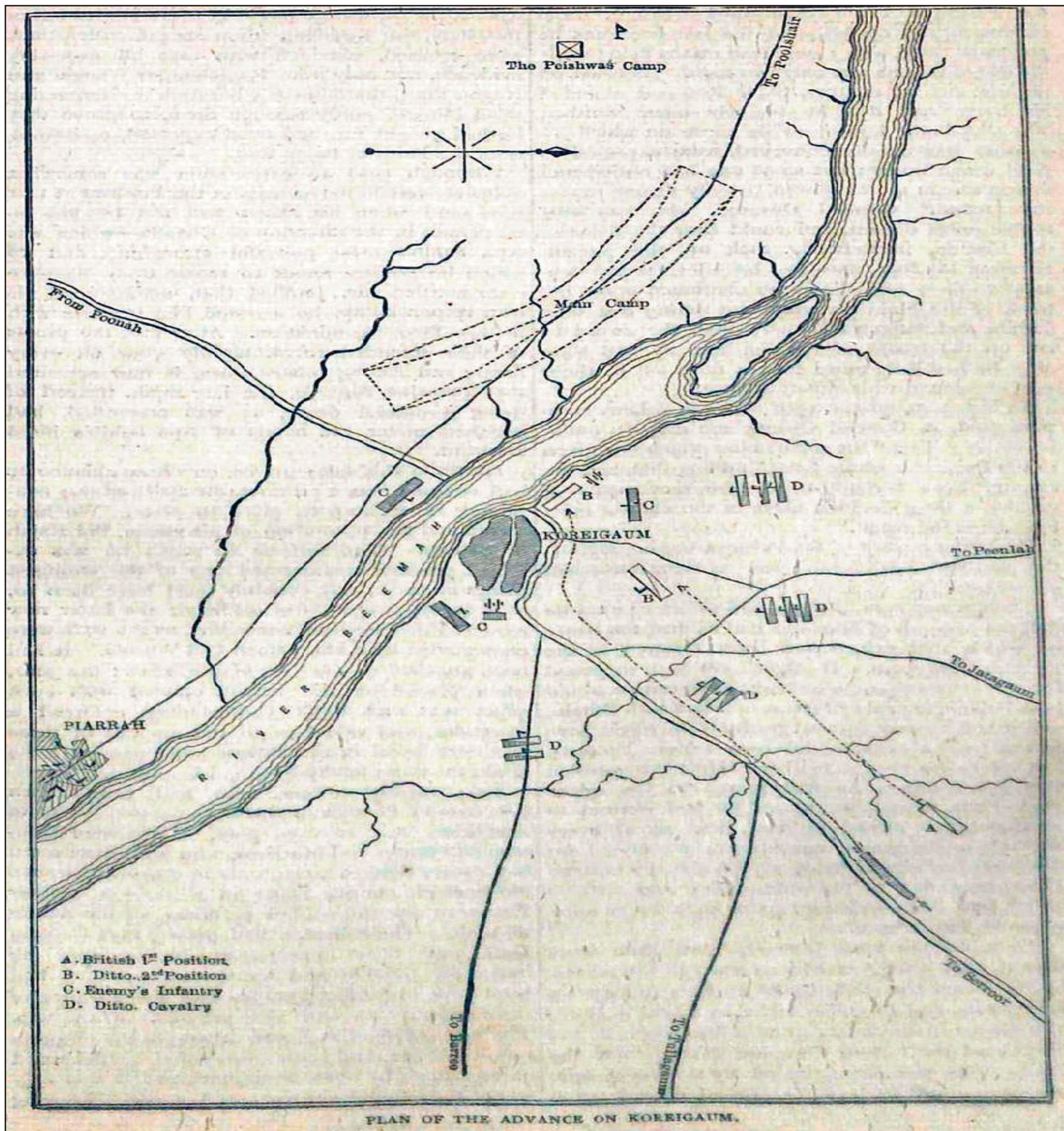
In the dark, on the night of the 2nd of January, he sacrificed much of his baggage to provide means for bringing off his wounded, whom he brought away with his guns, and with them reached Seroor by nine a.m. on the morning of the 3rd. Save a little water, the troops had received no food or refreshment since they began their advance on the 31st December. He had lost a third of the battalion and of the artillery in killed and wounded 175 in all; and a third of the auxiliary horse were hors de combat, or missing. Among his wounded was the gallant Lieutenant Pattinson, a very powerful

(Contd. on next page)



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THE BATTLE OF KOREIGAUM



(Continue from page 19)
man, of six feet seven inches in height, who expired on reaching Seroor; and, during his last moments, was in the deepest distress, from a belief that his favourite regiment had been defeated. The Mahratta loss at Koreigaum was above 600 men. Both Gokla and Trimbukjee Danglia were present in directing the attacks; and once the latter fought his way into the heart of the village. While the carnage went on, the cowardly Bajee Rao viewed it safely from a rising ground two miles distant, on the op-

posite bank of the Beemah. There he frequently taunted his officers by asking them, impatiently, where were now their vaunts of cutting up the British, if they were baffled by one battalion. The Rajah of Sattara, who sat by his side, having put up an astabgeer as a shade from the sun, the Peishwa, in great alarm, requested him to put it down, lest the British should send a cannon-ball through it. When the battle was fairly lost, and the advance of Smith became certain, he started off for the south, and never drew bridle till he

reached the banks of the Gatpurba river. The gallant conduct of Captain Staunton and his slender force was much lauded in India and Great Britain. The East India Company voted him a purse of 500 guineas and a splendid sword of honour, with an inscription panegyrising his courage, skill, and devotion to duty; but the rewards bestowed on his brave soldiers bore not the least proportion to their merits.

The place where our slain were buried, near the pretty village of Koreigaum, was long unmarked. The

native dead were thrown into an old dry well, and a covering of earth was strewed over them. Chisholm, Wingate, and the Europeans were buried on the bank of the Beemah, near the village; and a handsome pillar of polished granite marks the spot. It is seventy feet in height, and bears, in English, Persian, and Mahratta, the names of the brave fellows who died at Koreigaum on New Year's Day, 1818.

Source Courtesy: Cassell's Illustrated History of India By James Grant, Vol.1, 1890

Day School for Girls

[Seventh Paper: History of the Educational Operations of the American Marathi Mission from its commencement to 1881

By Rev. L. Bissell, D.D.]

The first school for girls of which we find mention was commenced by the American Mission in Bombay in March 1824. It was taught by a native woman named Gangabai. This, it is believed, was the first School of the kind on this side of India. As soon as it was opened, two English ladies in Bombay offered to pay all the expenses of the school. But in the month of May following, there was a serious and fatal outbreak of cholera, "and among the dying thousands in Bombay, Gangabai, the schoolmistress, was one. As no one could be found to take her place, the school was broken up."

We regret that no further mention is made of this Gangabai, the first native woman employed in Bombay to teach a Christian school. How did she herself learn to read? And in the face of the odium attaching to such an occupation, where did she get the courage to enter upon it? How mysterious the stroke which called her away when she was the only one to be found who could and would teach this school!

Not long after, however, these efforts were renewed, and several schools for girls were in successful operation, with male teachers superintended by the missionaries and their wives. At the close of 1825, the number of pupils was 75; and in August 1826 their report says:-

"We now have nine schools for girls attended by 204 pupils. Among these are several daughters of Brahmans, and many others of high caste. They are taught reading, writing and arithmetic; and commit to memory the Ten Commandments and a catechism prepared for them. About 80 of these girls have learned to write."

At the close of 1827, Miss Cynthia Farrar joined the mission, and engaged in earnest efforts to improve the schools for Hindu girls in Bombay. She labored incessantly for this object, and, considering the strong prejudices of the

natives at that time against female education, she achieved a wonderful success. In the report of the mission for 1829, it is stated that the number of these schools had been increased, so that there were over 400 girls in attendance, of whom 122 were good readers, and could write a fair, legible hand.

In 1832, a public examination of the girls was held, of which the following account was given in a native paper of that time. It first appeared in Guzarati in the Bombay Hurkaru and Wartaman, and the English translation appeared in the Darpan:

"Last Thursday, November 29th, there was an examination at the American Mission Chapel in Bhendi Bazar of the schools for Hindu girls. Many European ladies and gentlemen were present, and we also attended. At 11 O'clock the children were examined in Marathi, which they read fluently. They answered questions promptly, and sang a Christian hymn in a pleasant manner, seldom excelled even by English children. After the examination in reading was concluded, the girls' needlework, embroidery, and the stockings they had knitted, were exhibited; and these appeared equal to work of the same description performed in England. There were children's woollen stockings finer than those made in England. The ladies present praised the girls, and the lady who had taught them. The children having learned so much during the short period of six months, [the needlework, knitting, &c.] every one present felt convinced that they would soon learn to make many other useful things. We forgot to mention above that the handwriting of the girls was so neat as almost to pass for lithography.

A later writer says:-

"These schools attracted the attention and received the cordial and efficient support of the highest and best members of the European community. The Governor, the Chief Justice, Members of Council, the Archdeacon (afterwards Bishop,) of the Diocese, and ladies of rank, supported them by their presence at the examinations, and by liberal contributions. In one year Rs.1,880, and in an-

other Rs.2,000 were received for the support of these schools. Among the donations was one of Rs.500 from His Excellency Mountstuart Elphinstone, then Governor of Bombay, and another of Rs.300 from his successor, Sir John Malcolm."

These schools in Bombay were continued in efficient operation for several years. Changed circumstances made it necessary afterwards to reduce the number of them. Miss Farrar's health failed, and a visit to America became imperative for her. Other laborers coming to the mission found themselves drawn into other spheres of effort. When Miss Farrar returned to India, she went to Ahmednagar, and commenced the same line of effort there. In 1845 and 1846, it is said in the report, "Miss Farrar has had four girls' schools under her superintendence, containing over 100 pupils." She kept up several of these schools until 1862, the year of her death.

Miss Farrar's careful superintendence of her schools, and her persistent personal efforts, often secured a measure of success where others would have failed. The difficulties she encountered were such as would have deterred most ladies, at the outset, from attempting this kind of labor. Owing to the strong prejudice then existing against the education of girls, there was on the part of parents an utter want of appreciation of the value of the instruction received, and of the importance of regularity in attendance. Hence for any trivial reason the girls might be suddenly withdrawn, and kept at home, or sent to some distant village for a month or a six months' visit. The custom of marrying the girls in childhood was of itself nearly fatal to any plans for their proper education. The training under the tongue and hand of the *sásu*, (mother-in-law,) was thought more important than the teaching in school; and before the girl was old enough to receive the full benefit of any course of study, she was often taken out of school, and sent to the home of her husband, which means to the home of his parents. It was chiefly by gaining the love of her pupils, and making it pleas-

ant for them to attend her school, that Miss Farrar could keep them long enough to learn to read, and acquire a little knowledge of that truth which has done so much for women in Christian lands. Yet often did she lament that her lifework bore so little fruit, because the girls were withdrawn from her schools, and remanded to all the evil influences of an idolatrous home before there was time for the truth to gain a firm lodgment in their hearts.

Others besides Miss Farrar have felt the above difficulty with regard to this kind of missionary labor. Most of the ladies of the mission at the different stations have kept up one or more such day-schools for Hindu girls. In some places the old prejudice has so far yielded as to allow of the employment of Christian teachers. In such cases we may hope for better results. But to what extent this kind of effort has been helpful in promoting the great end we all seek, the Christianization of India, it is impossible to say. Individual instances occur here and there in which the truth learned in childhood, was recalled by a pupil in after years, and proved the very help needed to lead her into the way of life. But aside from these isolated cases, there is reason to believe these schools have been useful as a preparatory work. Who can doubt that they have done much to remove the strong prejudice against the education of women, and thus have prepared the way for other forms of effort which in the early stages of the missionary work in India were impossible. And although in their discouragement these toilers were often ready to say, we "have labored in vain, and spent our strength for nought," yet in the final summing up it may be seen that their labors held an important place in the system of operations for the overthrow of Hinduism.

Source Courtesy: Memorial Papers of the American Marathi Mission, 1813-1881

Presented at the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of the Commencement of the Ahmednagar Mission, October 26-30, 1881

The Fight For Re-enlistment

(Continue from page 11)

(They should also be given education and proper opportunity for suitable posts in the department.

The case they presented for reinstatement was more complicated than their demands. Much of their argument attempts to demonstrate that their identification as Untouchables was a mistake.

The 1895 petition argues that the Mahars as a group who are actually of the Kshatriya caste. This represents the Mahars attempt to change their position in the caste structure by "Sanskritization." The petition states:

Our ancestors were Kshatriya. In about the year 1396 there was a great famine for about 12 years which was called Durhavedi famine. That time our ancestors survived by eating whatever they could find. Therefore, they were considered low case under the Peshwa rule.

It continues by attacking the legitimacy of the higher castes. It claims, "The so called high caste and pure people's ancestors were as degraded as our people and were used [sic] to eat flesh of cow and beef. They wrote their own religious scriptures." Finally, the petition provides a "creation myth" about the high castes. It maintains:

The high caste people of the South are progeny of Australian Semitic Anaryas and African Negroes whereas the high caste people from North are mixture of several castes Several castes of foreign origin became high caste Hindus by giving up beef-eating.

The Chitpavan Brahmans of Konkan came

from the Jewish race. They fled from Africa for fear of their lives by the invaders and their ship was wrecked nearby Malabar coast. Their children and women drown and died in the sea. Those men who survived, married the native low caste women.... [W]hen they became rulers, they called themselves Brahmans.

The document's tenor shows the importance of military service to the Mahars and the use of Sanskritization tactics to show they were at least equal to the alleged high castes.

This campaign was unsuccessful. The Mahars were unaware of the debate "over recruitment policy or the acceptance of Lord Roberts views on martial races" which was the prime component in the British decision. However, Basham shows "the government of India took the petition seriously enough to request information about the Koregaon monument from the government of Bombay (presumably to verify the petitioners' claims). Eighteen months after the initial submission of the petition, the Indian government replied that it was "unable to rescind the orders which have been issued regarding the castes to be admitted to the Bombay Army." Shortly after the turn of the century, a second attempt was organized.

The second major petition was submitted to the government three times between 1904 and 1910. The document's "signatories included forty-two military pensioners" including Dr. Ambedkar's father. Basham's research found that "[s]everal of the signatories had also written letters to newspapers or

had signed at least one other petition, suggesting a long-term commitment and a willingness to agitate for change." This petition had a broader base of support than the one in 1895.

This campaign was more sophisticated than the first. The spokesman, Shivram Janba Kamble, spoke English (Walangkar could not). More importantly, the petition's "appeal for consideration was not on the basis of the Mahars' having been demoted from Kshatriyahood, but on the grounds of former service, English justice and human worth." This pragmatic approach attracted greater support than the earlier petition, and used arguments that were later refined by Dr. Ambedkar. In fact, Ambedkar took over leadership of the Mahars from Kamble.

The 1910 petition was more polite and less argumentative than the 1895 petition. The document states, "We do not aspire to high political privileges and positions, since we are not educationally qualified for them, but humbly seek employment in the lowest grades of the Public Service, in the ranks of Police Sepoys and of soldiers in the Indian Army." It continued:

We are making no new demands; we do not claim employment in services in which we have not been engaged before. Indeed, some few of our people do still hold positions in the Police Force, and have acquitted themselves most honourably. So also have our people been employed in the Indian Army from the very commencement of the British Raj in our country, and they have risen to the highest positions by their valour and good conduct.

Despite the reasoned arguments, this petition demands, like the first, were denied. The manpower demands of World War I had a greater effect, and beginning in 1914 Mahars, again, were recruited into the Army and given their own Regiment, the 111 Mahars. The Regiment's three battalions "were formed the toward the end of the war, but they did not see action and their martial qualities were untested." Shortly after the war, the Regiment was disbanded by the British "on the excuse of the economy." More important, however, is that the petition drives provided an organization for Dr. Ambedkar to use after the war to improve the social status of Untouchables. Basham correctly concludes: Military service had been a significant factor for the Mahars in two respects. Education and skills acquired through military service created a class of community leaders, and the wish to retain the social and economic benefits derived from military service was a powerful incentive to organize behind these leaders and work for a common goal. A high level of organization and political activity in the Mahar community by the 1940s was therefore at least in part a consequence of their military past.[163]

The long association with the military gave Mahars an issue to organize around and the movement then worked to achieve more substantial achievements than just military service.

Source Courtesy: The Mahar Movement's Military Component - Richard B. White University of Texas at Austin

Report of Captain Staunton on the Affair at Koreigaum, 1st and 2d Jan. 1818

To Lieutenant-colonel FITZSIMON,
commanding, &c. Serroor.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, that in conformity to your instructions, I marched from Serroor at half-past eight P. M. on the 31st of December, in command of the following detachment: the 2d battalion of the 1st regiment, about five hundred, two six-pounders, and about two hundred and fifty auxiliary horse under Lieutenant Swanston. Having proceeded on my way towards Poonah, as far as Koreigaum, by ten A.M. on the 1st of January, my further progress was arrested by the appearance (according to information then obtained) of the Peishwah with a very large army, supposed to be about twenty thousand horse, and eight thousand infantry, with two heavy guns; the whole formed on the opposite side of the river Beemah ready to attack us. I continued my march until I reached the village of Koreigaum, in which I determined to make a stand; and accordingly took post, selecting commanding situations for the two guns. The enemy, perceiving my intention, sent three different bodies of Arabs, consisting of about one thousand each, under cover of their guns, and supported by large bodies of horse, for the same purpose; and I am sorry to say, from their superior information of the nature of the village, succeeded in getting hold of its strongest post; and from

which I was unable to dislodge them during the day. We continued incessantly engaged till nine P. M. when we finally repulsed them. At day-break on the morning of the 2d, we took possession of the post the enemy had occupied the day before, but they did not attempt to molest us. On the evening of the 2d, despairing of being able to make my way good to Poonah, and my men having been forty-eight hours without food, and no prospect of procuring any in the deserted village we had taken post in, I determined upon the attempt to retreat; and having collected the whole of the wounded, secured the two guns and one tumbril for moving, I commenced my retreat at seven P. M. being under the necessity of destroying one empty tumbril, and leaving the camp equipage. Under this explanation, I trust I shall be deemed justified in the steps I have taken. Our loss has been heavy indeed, but not more so than might have been expected in a struggle like this; and is as follows:

Killed .. Lieutenant Chisholm, Artillery
 _____ Assistant-Surgeon Wingate, 2d Batt. 1st Reg.
 Wounded, Lieutenant Patterson 2d Batt. 1st Reg. dangerously,
 _____ Lieutenant Connellan } badly, but not
 _____ Lieutenant Swanston } dangerously

50 men killed, 2d Battallion 1st Regiment
 12 men killed, Artillery
 62 killed, Auxiliary Horse, not included

 124

 105 men wounded, 2d Battalion 1st Regiment
 8 men ditto Artillery

 113 wounded

 Total, 175 men, Auxiliary Horse not included

In concluding this Report, I beg to assure you that it is utterly impossible for me to do justice to the merits and exertions of the European officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, that I had the honour and good fortune to command on this trying occasion.

I have &c. &c.
 (Signed)

F.F. STAUNTON
 Capt. 1st N.I.

Serroor, 2d January, 1818

APPENDIX.

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I. (p. 183.)

To Lieutenant-colonel FITZSIMON, commanding, &c. Serroor.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, that in conformity to your instructions, I marched from Serroor at half-past eight P. M. on the 31st of December, in command of the following detachment: the 2d battalion of the 1st regiment, about five hundred, two six-pounders, and about two hundred and fifty auxiliary horse under Lieutenant Swanston. Having proceeded on my way towards Poonah, as far as Koreigaum, by ten A.M. on the 1st of January, my further progress was arrested by the appearance (according to information then obtained) of the Peishwah with a very large army, supposed to be about twenty thousand horse, and eight thousand infantry, with two heavy guns; the whole formed on the opposite side of the river Beemah ready to attack us. I continued my march until I reached the village of Koreigaum, in which I determined to make a stand; and accordingly took post, selecting commanding situations for the two guns. The enemy, perceiving my intention, sent three different bodies of Arabs, consisting of about one thousand each, under cover of their guns, and supported by large bodies of horse, for the same purpose; and I am sorry to say, from their superior information of the nature of the village, succeeded in getting hold of its strongest post; and from which I was unable to dislodge them during the day. We continued incessantly engaged till nine P. M. when we finally repulsed them. At day-break on the morning of the 2d, we took possession of the post the enemy had occupied the day before, but they did not attempt to molest us. On the evening of the 2d, despairing of being able to make my way good to Poonah, and my men having been forty-eight hours without food, and no prospect of procuring any in the deserted village we had taken post in, I determined upon the attempt to retreat; and having collected the whole of the wounded, secured the two guns and one tumbril for moving, I commenced my retreat at seven P. M. being under the necessity of destroying one empty tumbril, and leaving the camp equipage. Under this explanation, I trust I shall be deemed justified in the steps I have taken. Our loss has been heavy indeed, but not more so than might have been expected in a struggle like this; and is as follows:

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 _____ Lieutenant Swanston }

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APPENDIX.

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 113 wounded.

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In concluding this Report, I beg to assure you that it is utterly impossible for me to do justice to the merits and exertions of the European officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, that I had the honour and good fortune to command on this trying occasion.

I have &c. &c.
 (Signed)

F. F. STAUNTON,
 Capt. 1st N.I.

Serroor, 2d January, 1818.

K. (p. 210.)

RETURN of CASUALTIES in the Detachment commanded by Major-general THOMAS BROWN, at the Assault of JAWUD, and Capture of JESWUNT RAO BHAO'S Camp and Guns, on the 29th of January 1818.

| CORPS. | Killed. | | Wounded. | | | | Missing. |
|--|----------------|---------|----------|------------|----------------|---------|----------|
| | Rank and File. | Horses. | Ensigns. | Havildars. | Rank and File. | Horses. | Horses. |
| European Horse Artillery | 1 | 1 | - | - | 4 | - | - |
| Native Horse Artillery | 1 | - | - | - | 4 | 1 | - |
| 3d Regiment Native Cavalry | 1 | 2 | - | - | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 4th ditto ditto | - | 6 | - | 1 | 7 | 1 | - |
| 2d Rohillah Cavalry | - | 1 | - | - | 4 | 4 | - |
| 1st Battalion 1st Regiment Native Infantry | 2 | - | - | - | 4 | - | - |
| Pioneers | - | - | - | - | 5 | - | - |
| Dromedary Corps | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 5 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 31 | 9 | 2 |

Officer Wounded.
 Ensign J. W. Patton, (commanding Dromedary Corps) severely, not dangerously.
 (Signed) EDWARD W. BEATSON,
 D. A. A. General.

(Signed) THOMAS BROWN,
 Major-general.

Monument to perpetuate the defence of Korygaum

The foundation stone of the Monument destined to perpetuate the defence of Korygaum was laid by Colonel Huskisson, on behalf of Major-General Smith, on Monday the 26th March. This interesting ceremony took place at half-past 5 o'clock in the evening, in presence of the chief, civil and military authorities in the Deccan. The party assembled in an adjoining suite of tents, and marched in procession to the spot, where they were, received under a general salute by a detachment of Artillery, two companies of Grenadiers from the 1st or Korygaum Regiment and the band of His Majesty's 47th Regiment.

A brass plate with the following inscription:

This Foundation Stone was laid
Anno Domini 1821.

The Most Noble the Marquis of
Hastings,

Governor-General of India.

And the Honorable Mountstuart
Elphinstone,

Governor of Bombay,

was then deposited in the foundation stone with a few British coins, and a scroll of parchment, containing the names of the persons present at the ceremony. The Colonel then ascertained with true masonic precision, the correctness of the level, when three volleys of musketry, and a royal salute from the Artillery, announced the termination of the proceeding. The party subsequently retired to an entertainment provided by Captain Nutt, of the Engineers (the officer under whose superintendence the Monument is erecting), where mirth and conviviality detained them till a late hour. There were many excellent songs sung, and the Band of His Majesty's 47th Regiment was, obligingly spared for the occasion.

After "The King" had been drunk, Captain Nutt rose, and addressed the company follows:

"Gentlemen: We are this day assembled together to commemorate an event which will no doubt be classed by future historians as one of the most brilliant military achievements recorded in the annals of this or any other country. The estimation in which the glorious defence of the village of Korygaum, on the 1st January 1818, was held by the present enlightened Governor of Bombay, and how fully his sentiments were participated in by the illustrious Nobleman who now presides over our Councils in the East, cannot be better exemplified than in the recommendation, and sanctioned by those high authorities respectively of that Monument, the foundation stone of which has this day been laid by the gallant Colonel on my left (Colonel Huskisson).

"It must ever, I presume, Gentlemen, be a proud reflection to the brave men who shared in the glories

of the day we are now speaking of, to know that their services on that trying occasion have not been only eulogized in public print, but that they are now about to receive the most lasting and distinguished reward a Government has it in its power to bestow. It must ever,

I say, Gentlemen, be a source of honest pride to every individual engaged in that arduous conflict, to know that he has not merely established for himself alone a just right to a niche in the temple of Fame, but that he has at the same time largely contributed to the glory and stability of the Government he served, as well as to the honor and reputation of that army to which he belonged.

"Familiar as must be the interesting events of the period we are now celebrating to all whom I have the pleasure to address, and deservedly as these events have called forth the applause and admiration of the public at large, I forbear expatiating upon them: though I cannot dismiss the subject altogether without briefly remarking, that we have each of us had full opportunity for inspecting every part of the village, as well as of contemplating the fatigues and privations to which the British detachment was exposed; and the more one reflects on all the circumstances of the case, the more I apprehend must our admiration be excited at the firmness, courage and devotion of that gallant band, which during a space of 36 hours, and labouring under the severest pressure of hunger and thirst, could not only resist, but finally defeat the repeated and desperate attacks of so numerous a foe. Such conduct, indeed, is above all praise, and I think I may thence be allowed to infer, that when the present and succeeding generations, shall have passed away, the defence of Korygaum will still constitute a theme of triumph and exultation amongst the sons of Britain, and be held up in her national schools and institutions, as equally worthy of emulation and example with the most valorous deeds recorded in the histories of either Greece or Rome."

Captain Nutt then gave, "To the memory of the brave men who fell in the memorable defence of Korygaum." This toast was drunk standing, in silence, after which the Band played the Dead March in Saul.

Captain Nutt again rose, and addressed the company.

"Gentlemen: Having endeavoured to do honor to the memory of those heroes who fell in defence of the village of Korygaum on the 1st January 1818, I now propose the health of Major Staunton, who commanded, together with that of his gallant associates in arms, and who, on the memorable occasion alluded to, so nobly upheld the character and

honor of the British Army at large, and of the Bombay Army in particular."

The toast was drunk with three times three. — Tune: Britons Strike Home.

The next toast was, "The Most Noble the Marquis Hastings, and may the illustrious Nobleman long continue at the head of our Government in India;" three times three. — Tune: Earl Moira's Welcome.

Captain Nutt prefaced the next toast with the following remarks:

"Gentlemen: In the toast I am now about to propose, I feel persuaded all present will join me with cordial approbation. In whatever, indeed, has relation to the late military events in the Deccan, the name of Mr. Elphinstone is intimately associated. It would ill become me, however, to stand forth as panegyrist of so distinguished a personage, his merits and his services are alike known in the western as in the eastern hemisphere, and could receive no additional lustre from any encomiums of mine."

"The Honorable Mr. Elphinstone, and success to his Government," three times three. — Tune: Scots wha hae, &c.

After this toast had been drunk with the enthusiasm it must ever excite, Captain Nutt rose, said:

"Gentlemen: From one scene of gallantry to another, the transition, I think, may be considered not only easy but natural; and it is with peculiar pleasure, therefore, I turn from the banks of the Bheemah, to the shores of Arabia. We, Gentlemen, generally speaking, have felt a more than ordinary interest in the success of the military operations in that quarter, inasmuch as the direction of the force was confided to the gallant General who has so long commanded this division of the army. How well he has acquitted himself of the trust reposed in him the recent official Despatches abundantly proclaim, and must convince the natives of that part of the world, that though a temporary ascendancy may be gained by treachery, yet the day of retribution will speedily arrive; and that no resistance, however desperate, can avail against the cool intrepidity of British troops when led on by an enterprising and skilful commander."

"General Smith." — Tune: 65th, Quick Step.

"The Commissioner in the Deccan." — Tune: March. Mr. Chaplin returned thanks in a neat and concise speech.

"Colonel Huskisson." — Tune: Quick Step.

"East India Company." — Tune: Money in both Pockets.

"Sir Thomas Munro." — Tune: March.

"Marquis Hastings and the Bengal Army." — Tune: Prince Regent's March.

"Sir Thomas Hislop and the Madras Army." — Tune: Quick Step.

"Sir C. Colville and the Bombay Army," — Tune: British Grenadiers, Band marching round the table.

"Duke of York and Army." — Tune: March.

"Duke of Clarence and the Navy." — Tune: Rule Britannia.

"Duke of Wellington and the heroes of the Peninsula and Waterloo." — Tune: Waterloo March.

"Colonel Elrington and the Poona Brigade."

The Colonel, in his usual strain of eloquence, returned thanks for the honor done him.

Captain Lodwick then rose and observed,

"Gentlemen: There is one toast I have to offer, and which I am sure you will all be disposed to drink with applause. Of the officers on the Madras establishment who were present at the defence of Korygaum, only two are now living: Captain Swanston and Dr. Wyllie. The former is known to most of us here, and on intimate terms of friendship with many. I therefore beg to propose the health of these gentlemen, and out of compliment to Captain Swanston, who has recently entered the matrimonial estate, that it be drunk to the tune of the Honey Moon."

Major Hull also proposed "The Ladies" as a toast, which of course was received with the loudest acclamation. Those who have the pleasure of the gallant Major's acquaintance will readily believe that he availed himself of the opportunity then afforded of paying the fair sex that tribute of applause, which is so justly their due, and so congenial to his own feelings. "I allude," however, he added, "more particularly to those of the Deccan, and who were at the village of Kirkhee amid the din of arms and roar of cannon during that memorable action;" and after complimenting them on their exemplary fortitude and resignation, he proceeded to descant on the heroic defence of Korygaum, and concluded by praising the attachment of our native army under the greatest privation.

Other appropriate speeches and toasts succeeded, and the party broke up at 2 in the morning, highly gratified with the entertainment. — Bombay Courier, April 7.

Source Courtesy: Selections from The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies,

Vols I to XXVIII, January 1816 to December 1829 (Published: 1875)

Bulletins of State Intelligence, & c., 1818

DIVISION ORDERS

by Brigadier-General Smith,

C. B dated Seroor, 7th January 1818.

THE Commanding Officer having received, the official accounts of an attack made by the Peishwah's army on a small detachment, commanded by Captain Staunton, of the 2d battalion 1st regiment Bombay native infantry, at the village of Coregaum, has great satisfaction in publishing the particulars for general information, and in holding it up to the forces as one of the most brilliant examples of gallantry and perseverance recorded in our Indian annals.

This detachment, consisting of a detail of Madras artillery and two six-pounders, 2d battalion 1st Bengal native infantry, about six hundred strong, and about three hundred auxiliary horse, the whole under Captain Staunton, marched from Seroor for Poona, at eight P.M. on the 31st December, and reaching the heights overlooking Coregaum about ten o'clock in the forenoon 1st January, from whence the whole of the Peishwah's army, estimated at twenty thousand horse and several thousand infantry, were discovered in the plain, south of the Bama River, Captain Staunton immediately moved upon the village of Coregaum, with the intention of occupying it, and had scarcely succeeded in reaching it with his detachment, when he was attacked in the most determined manner by three divisions of the Peishwah's choicest infantry, supported by immense bodies of horse, and with two pieces of artillery. The enemy's troops were stimulated to their utmost exertions by the presence of the Peishwah from a distant height, attended by the principal Mahratta Chiefs, who flattered His Highness with the prospect of witnessing the destruction of this gallant handful of British troops.

The enemy obtained immediate possession of the strongest posts of the village, from which it was found impossible to dislodge them, and possession of the remaining part was most obstinately contested from noon till nine P.M. during which time almost every pagoda and house had been repeatedly taken and retaken, and one of the guns at one time was in possession of the enemy. Towards the close of the evening the detachment was placed in the most trying situation; at this period nearly the whole of the artillerymen were killed or wounded, and about one third of infantry and auxiliary horse. The exertions which the European Officers had been called upon to make in leading their men to frequent charges with the bayonet

had diminished their numbers. Lieutenant Chisholm, of the artillery, and Mr Assistant-Surgeon Wingate, 2d bat. 1st, were killed, and Lieutenants Swanston, Pattinson, and Connellan, were wounded, leaving only Captain Staunton, and Lieutenant Jones, and Mr. Assistant-Surgeon Wyldie, nearly exhausted, to direct the efforts of the remaining part of the detachment, nearly frantic from the want of water, and the almost unparalleled exertions they had made throughout the day, without any sort of refreshment, after a fatiguing march of twenty-eight miles.

Under cover of the night they were enabled to procure a supply of water, and at nine P.M. the enemy were forced to abandon the village, after sustaining an immense loss in killed and wounded.

The British character was nobly supported throughout the whole of this arduous contest, by the European Officers and small detail of Madras artillery.

The Medical Officers also led on the sepoys to charges with the bayonet, the nature of the contest not admitting of their attending to their professional duties; and in such a struggle the presence of a single European was of the utmost consequence, and seemed to inspire the native soldiers with the usual confidence of success.

At day light on the 2d the enemy were still in sight, but did not renew the attack, although it prevented the troops, whose ammunition was nearly expended, from procuring any supply of provisions.

Captain Staunton, however, made preparations for moving according to circumstances, and the manner in which that Officer availed himself of the few resources which remained to him, after such a conflict, to prosecute his march, and bring away the numerous wounded of his detachment, is highly praiseworthy.

The detachment moved during the night of the 2d upon Seroor, which they reached at nine o'clock on the forenoon of the 3d, having had no refreshment from the 31st December.

Captain Staunton brought in nearly the whole of the wounded, and both the guns and colours of the regiment, which the enemy had vainly hoped to present as trophies to the Peishwah.

In concluding these details the Commanding Officer begs to offer to Captain Staunton, and the whole of the European and native commissioned and non-commissioned Officers and privates engaged at Coregaum, his best thanks

for their noble exertions and exemplary patience under every species of privation, which he will not fail to bring to the notice of Government and His Excellency the Commander in Chief.

The Commanding Officer deems it proper to record the names of the Officers engaged in this brilliant affair.

Madras Artillery - Lieutenant Chisholm killed.

Assistant-Surgeon Wyldie.

2. Batt. 1st Reg. - Captain Staunton, commanding detachment; Lieutenant and Adjutant Pattinson wounded (since dead); Lieutenant Connellan wounded; Lieutenant Jones, 10th reg. doing duty with the 2d batt. 1st reg.; Assistant-Surgeon Wingate killed.

Auxiliary Horse - Lieutenant Swanston, Madras Establishment wounded.

Copy of a Dispatch from Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Hislop to the Governor-General and Commander in Chief, dated Head-Quarters, Army of the Deccan, Camp at Maheidpoor, 22nd January 1818.

My Lord,

I have extraordinary satisfaction in transmitting, for the information of your Lordship, the official details of one of the most heroic actions which has ever been fought and gained by an handful of men over a large army.

The accompanying transcript of Brigadier-General Smith's dispatch, and of the General Order which I yesterday published to the army on this brilliant occasion, will place your Lordship in full possession of the particulars of the battle in which the 2d battalion of the 1st regiment of Bombay native infantry, aided by a small party of Madras artillery-men, with two six-pounders, and about three hundred auxiliary horse, have nobly sustained during a whole day, and finally repulsed the unceasing and vigorous efforts of the Peishwa's army, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty and privation, which render their exploit altogether unparalleled.

I need not again, in this place, recapitulate the names of the Officers who have aided the intrepid Captain Staunton, in gaining the victory of Coregaum; their individual merits are brought to your Lordship's notice in the accompanying documents, and they will be certain to receive from their Government and their country that admiration of, and gratitude for, their devoted gallantry to which they are so highly entitled.

I most sincerely congratulate your Lordship on an event which has, if possible, heightened the renown of the Indian army, and from which I cannot

but anticipate results of the highest political importance, since such a defeat must inevitably tend to paralyze the future exertions of the enemy, and prove to him the hopelessness of continuing a war, with any success, against a power which has such troops to oppose to him.

I have the honour to be, &c.
T. HISLOP, Lieutenant-General

(Inclosed in the preceding.)

**Head Quarters of the
Army of the Deccan,
Camp near Maheidpoor,
January 21, 1818.**

*GENERAL Orders,
by the Commander in Chief.*

IT is with feelings of inexpressible gratification that the Commander in Chief has to announce one of the most heroic and brilliant achievements ever recorded in the annals of the army, which took place at the village of Coregaum, between Seroor and Poona, on the 1st instant.

The official details of this glorious affair reached the Commander in Chief yesterday in a dispatch from Brigadier-General L. Smith, C.B. commanding the 4th or Poonah division of the army of the Deccan, and His Excellency is pleased to publish the Brigadier-General's Orders issued on the occasion, that the army may be placed in full possession of every particular of an event displaying so bright and distinguished an example of devoted courage and admirable constancy.

The Commander in Chief having published the foregoing Orders, in the sentiments of which he most cordially participates, feels unable to do greater justice to the merits of Captain Staunton, and his gallant detachment; but in conveying to that Officer and his brave troops the expression of his thanks and highest admiration, His Excellency intreats them to believe that the distinguished intrepidity and enduring fortitude they have so nobly shewn, under circumstances of the most trying privation, will forever remain deeply impressed on his heart, and be recorded as one of the brightest deeds in the annals of our Indian history.

It will be his Excellency's most gratifying duty immediately to bring to the special notice of his Excellency, the Most Noble the Governor-General and Commander in Chief in India, the particulars of this brilliant and glorious event.

**T. H. CONWAY,
Adj.-Gen. of the Army.**