

GURU GOBIND SINGH

—A STUDY.

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TO
Sardar Bishan Singh
&
Smt. Prem Kaur,
My Parents,
who kindled in me
the light of Sikhism.



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INTRODUCTION

This book has been specially written on the occasion of Guru Gobind Singh Tri-Centenary Birth Day. Guru Gobind Singh, (1666-1708) the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, died at an age of only 42. For about less than two centuries, the successors of Guru Nanak (1469-1539) had been goading Sikhism and all of them made contributions for the advancement of this new religion. But Guru Gobind Singh, the creator of Khalsa, was one of the greatest revolutionaries of India. He gave to Indians a "Steel-framed-Patriotism". If the life of the Guru be studied on the broad canvass of our national struggle for Independence, the readers will feel that Guru Gobind Singh was the first national leader, who was the great champion of the liberties of the people. He accepted the growing challenge of the reactionary forces and preached lessons of fearlessness and freedom. He possessed a clear vision and courage of determination. For his whole life he worked for creating the sense of self respect in every individual. He unmasked the batteries of liberalism, attacked traditions, false beliefs and abuses. His brilliant commonsense appealed irresistably to the minds of the down-trodden and oppressed people. By creating Khalsa he created a formidable force that swept away the false fabric of society and also levelled all its inequalities that had hitherto existed. He was original in his methods and had a magnetic power of conversion. He had an ardent desire for the improvement of mankind.

His life history is the story of a man, who sacrificed himself, his father, his mother, his all the four

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sons and many others to exterminate the enemies of this country. His was a personality with a marvellous combination of so many qualities. He was a great reformer, a master statesman, a lover of humanity, a householder, a scholar, a warrior, a law giver, a social reformer, a military general and religious leader.

To form a proper estimate of the life and contribution of Guru Gobind Singh, it is very essential that the readers must be acquainted with the works of all the predecessors of Guru Gobind Singh and that they should also be given an insight into the philosophy of Sikhism. In this book, therefore, in the first place "The Background and Genesis of Sikhism" has been dealt with to provide an insight to the readers into the philosophy of Sikhism. Thereafter the life history of Guru Gobind Singh has been given, which includes a special chapter on all his wars. Perhaps no earlier work on the life of Guru Gobind Singh deals with the literary aspect of his personality as such as has been done in this book. The details provided in the relevant chapter indicate how Guru Gobind Singh surpasses all the literary figures of his age and shines like a lone star in that age of darkness.

A map showing various important places connected with the activities of Guru Gobind Singh has also been given at the end. A genealogical table of the Guru's predecessors has been incorporated to give at a glance to the readers an idea about the relationships of different Sikh Gurus. A table of important places, dates and events has also been incorporated to enable the readers to know in nut-shell the activities of Guru Gobind Singh.

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In the wake of the danger that we face on our borders, India to-day needs very badly the martial spirit, which was released by Guru Gobind Singh by his life-time work. He had taught his followers to revere sword—the symbol of the sense of power and self respect. He took up sparrows and taught them to hunt down the imperial falcons. Guru Gobind Singh stands in Indian history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future. His role is like that of an arch, which spanned the gulf between ancient orthodoxy and modern humanity, between superstition and rationalism, between despotism and democracy. He spoke words that can never be unspoken and he kindled hopes that can never be extinguished.

This book is a valuational and historical study of Guru Gobind Singh. If the reading of this book can create interest in the minds of the readers to study Sikhism in detail, the purpose of writing this book is served. I must offer thanks to various authors, whose works I had had the privilege to consult and quote.

I am deeply indebted to my wife Pritpal Kaur, who, while suffering all alone the deep pangs of her bereavements on account of the sad demise of her parents in quick succession, continued to inspire me to complete this work.

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K. Jagjit Singh

THE BACKGROUND AND GENESIS OF SIKHISM

Religions differ in details but all of them agree on fundamentals. Almost all religions proclaim with one voice that human personality does not come to an end with the disintegration of the body. Religion means belief in certain doctrines and as such it is an intellectual comprehension of certain truths. One who believes in a religion makes attempts to live one's life according to certain convictions with the hope of attaining the supreme bliss as a reward after death.

God is not an unknown element according to Sikh scriptures. In being conscious of one's own existence one becomes conscious of Him also. "In Him we live, move and have our being". God-vision does not mean, the soul coming in contact with something external to its own being. It means rather that the soul dives deep into its own being to realise the Fundamental Reality. "He that pervades the universe, also dwells in the body and he who seeketh, shall find him" is repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Granth of the Sikhs.

Atma or soul is an "Essential" in all religious thoughts. All of them point to the state of existence where pain and misery cease to trouble the individual. *Olympus, Vaikunth, Swarg, Nirvana, Para'dise, Bahisht, Suchkhand* are all the variations of local colouring, but they all try to express the same fact,

Religious thought postulates a conscious entity as the source of the whole creation, and every religion recognises a purpose in all that is going around us.

In science, all that we observe in ourselves and in our environment has been classified under three distinct heads namely, matter, life and consciousness. The scientific explanation of the universe describes them as three stages of evolution. It is an accepted theory that all varieties of matter are ultimately composed of two elementary constituents namely, protons and electrons. A proton is described as a charge of positive electricity while an electron is described as a charge of negative electricity. The latest theory about the formation of protons and electrons is that they are produced by the different waves of energy in 'Ether'. Thus ultimate analysis of science has also come to believe in one substance as the source of manifold existence seen all round us.

The Sikhs do not boast of many doctrines. The Sikh religion is simple and may be conveniently summed up in four words; *Unity, Equality Faith and Love*. The first two words namely, 'Unity and Equality' express their ideas about God and man, the last two namely, 'Faith and Love' determine the course of Sikh conduct for the realisation of the ultimate goal.

Originally the roots of Sikhism can be traced in various Indian religions that had made their appearance in India in the 15th and 16th centuries. All of them preached love and truth. Nanak, Ramananda, Kabir and Chaitanya all agreed as to fundamentals

but there were differences in detail. Whereas the other schools developed, on traditional lines, and after short periods of popularity, quieted down into mystical sects, "Sikhism went off at a tangent and ultimately evolved what has been called a church-nation."

All religious thinkers of the 15th and the 16th centuries except Guru Nanak appear to have been so impressed with the nothingness of this life that they deemed the amelioration of man's social condition unworthy of a thought. "They perfected forms of dissent rather than planted the germs of nations, and their sects remain to this day as they left them". 'It was left for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reforms and to lay those broad foundations which enabled his successors to carve out a new nationality." In the beginning Sikhism was thus a faith which was based on the teachings of Guru Nanak. Its main objective was social emancipation and religious uplift, but in course of time it also became political in its aims and militant in its methods. With the persecution of Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur the fifth and the ninth Sikhs Gurus, Sikhism was bound to react to the changing environments and evolve ideals of a more circumscribed and sectarian character. As time passed Sikhism became more and more popular and its growing popularity alarmed the theocratic state. It became increasingly difficult for the Sikh Gurus to maintain the earlier peaceful character of Sikhism. Whole character of the movement had to be renovated and the peaceful sect was gradually turned into a military order, and the Sikh devotees were developed

into the *Soldier-Saints*. As time passed Sikhism detached itself from Hinduism. It developed ideals and institutions which came to acquire definite meanings. Sikhism on its own part had no quarrel either with Islam or the established State.

All other Indian reformers of the 15th and 16th centuries thought of God in metaphysical terms whereas Guru Nanak's conception of God was based on more popular allusions. Shankaracharya for example taught that God is the origin of all things, and is in reality unchangeable in form. He variously becomes manifest as vitality and matter. He does so as *Maya*, but ultimately He is like a mirror reflecting all things, yet remaining itself the same. Life and the Soul are one in this system, and salvation means absorption by Him. The doctrines of Guru Nanak, were based on the abstractions of Sufism and the Vedanta philosophy. To him God was not a convenient hypothesis to explain the riddle of this universe, but was a *Reality* in which we live, move and have our being. "All our ills result from our forgetfulness of the Lord", and "Peace and joy reign in our hearts when we have known him".

The whole system of Nanak, stood distinguished from other reform movements by two important peculiarities, its non-sectarian character, and secondly, its reconciliation with secular life. Guru Nanak, put the seal of his sanction and approval on all wordly pursuits, provided that they were not indulged in at the cost of righteousness and truth. Guru Nanak did not believe in showing miracles. "Fight with no weapon",

said he, "save the word of God. A holy teacher hath no means save the purity of his doctrine."

Guru Nanak was a man of pious disposition and reflecting mind. In his youth he made himself familiar with the popular creeds both of the Hindus and the Muslims and had gained a general knowledge of the Quran and of the Brahmanical Shastras. "Displeased with the indifference of the learned, or with the refuge which they sought in the abstractions of philosophy, the heart of the pious Nanak sought hopelessly for a resting place amid the conflicting creeds and practices of men." Guru Nanak, therefore, went on long travels and visited many countries. After each visit he returned enriched in experience and wisdom and soon he succeeded in forming his own image of God.

Instead of the circumscribed divinity, Guru Nanak loftily invoked the Lord as the *One, The Sole, the Timeless Being, the Creator, the Self-existent, the Incomprchensible, and the Everlasting*. He likens the God to Truth, which was before the world began, which is, and which shall be for ever, as the ultimate idea or cause of all we know or behold. By doing so, "Nanak extricated his followers from the accumulated errors of ages, and enjoined upon them devotion of thought and excellence of conduct as the first of duties. He left them, erect and free, unbiased in mind and unfettered by rules, to become an increasing body of truthful worshippers." He adopted the philosophical system of his ccun'rymen and regarded bliss as the dwelling of the soul with God. "Life",

he says, "is like the shadow of the passing bird, but the soul of man is like the potter's wheel, ever circling on its pivot."

It was Guru Nanak, who in modern times tried to emancipate the Indian mind completely from the fetters of mythology. He reminded the Hindus that there was not only one God, but he was free from the bondage of birth and death, that He was above Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva and was the creator of Rama and Krishna. He declared that God alone was to be worshipped. To make his images was to degrade him. He was to be worshipped by constantly meditating over his *Name*, and feeling and realising His presence in every place and at every time.

The only way of salvation according to him lay through devotion to God combined with good actions. The reading of the Vedas or of the Quran, the mere performance of *Pooja* or *Nimaz* were not the means of salvation. He declared that truth was greater than all sacrifices and all pilgrimages and the love of God better than all religious rites and ceremonies. He proclaimed that the Brahmans and the Mullahs, who followed religion as a profession were not the real guide. They were like the blind leading the blind. Nanak made a powerful attack on the priestly classes and declared that all people were equal in the eyes of God, who, is the common father of all. "Men are brothers," he said, "and they must live as brothers, guiding their actions by justice and love."

Guru Nanak refused to nominate his eldest son, Sri Chand, as his successor because of the other-

worldliness of his character. He nominated Guru Angad as his successor before his death and this proved to be a measure of far-reaching consequences. "It gave Sikhism a definite leadership which was of supreme importance in the history of its evolution. The Guruship came to acquire in Sikhism a meaning quite its own and the personality of the Guru supplied a nucleus around which the Sikhism could gradually develop."

The compilation of the Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs, completed the separation of Sikhism from mythology and tradition and by the time of Guru Arjan, the fifth Guru, Sikhism had come to acquire, a centralised organisation. The sense of solidarity among the Sikhs was considerably strengthened under him and the Sikhs were also made more fit to play the part that was in store for them in the future. By this time the Sikhs had become accustomed to live their religion and they did not merely profess it. They formed a separate brotherhood of their own. But the development of the Sikh ideal of brotherhood is intimately bound up with the history of the gradual consolidation of the Sikh community. Circumstances compelled a gradual but definite departure from the orthodox Hindu fold and the Sikhs were welded together into a new community, united by common ties of privileges and duties. "Religion consisteth not in patched coat of a Yogi or in ashes smeared over the body; religion consisteth not in wearing ear-rings, or in shaving head, or in the blowing of horns." This all was done in India by the 'Hindus to get happiness in

future. Sikhism on the contrary emphasizes the present value of religion. "A Sikh lives in the present. This is the essence of his conduct. The Sikhs become happy in this world, and also get joy in the world hereafter."

A reference may also be made to a Sikh formula of *Nam*, *Dan* and *Isnan*. The trio stands for the entire message delivered by Guru Nanak for the uplift of mankind and it also gives in a nutshell the essentials of Sikhism. The word *Nam* or *Name* can be variously interpreted. But in fact, *Nam* stands for devotion to God and His worship. *Dan* ordinarily means charity but here it means service, and *Isnan* which actually means bathing, is used here to convey the idea of purity. *Nam*, *Dan* and *Isnan* of mind, body and soul thus stand for devotion to God, service to humanity and purity of mind. Guru Nanak condemned selfishness, greed, lust, pride and worldliness, and he also denounced those, who unwilling to fight the battle of life, retired from the world under the pretence of cultivating spirituality. Some of his fiercest attacks were directed against those who, shirking the responsibilities of life sought refuge in renunciation and aimlessly wandered from one place to another. Guru Nanak was himself married and had children. He had been working as a man of business for a considerable part of his life and had thus shown by his own example, how one could live in the world and yet not be of the world.

It is often said that Sikhism, as founded by Guru Nanak, was a sect of peaceful disciples, and that it retained its original character until the ministry fell

into the hands of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru. He was, it is said, an ambitious man, and transformed this sect of peaceful devotees into a band of fanatical warriors. The aspirations of the Sikhs, no doubt, became more pronounced under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh. But a careful study of the Sikh history shows that the process of transformation had begun long before the times of Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Gobind Singh himself and his work, were the natural products of the process of evolution that had been going on ever since the inception of the Sikh brotherhood. "The Seed which blossomed in the time of Guru Gobind Singh had been sown by Nanak and watered by his successors". "The sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was, undoubtedly, forged by Guru Gobind Singh but the steel had been provided by Nanak". In Punjab centuries of subjection had broken and crushed the spirit of the people, who lived there. They were unable to tread on the honourable path of social freedom, political independence, and lofty ideals. The rulers, who happened to be autocratic and despotic, were plundering their homes, lifting their women, desecrating and demolishing their temples, making thousands of them relinquish their faith, and subjecting them to innumerable indignities and debasing tyrannies. "So weak and demoralised had the people become, that the inhuman treatment to which they were subjected roused in them no thoughts of any protest, or of any resistance". In addition to this external oppression the masses also suffered social tyrannies at the hands of their co-religionists, which had no parallel elsewhere. The caste system had lost its

original flexibility, and had become extremely rigid. It was a source of a good deal of evil and misery. It was abused most mercilessly by the privileged classes. The great body of the population had no access to the holy and sacred books. The lower classes found it far better to join the ranks of the Muslim oppressors rather than to bear the burden of caste-system. "Religion and superstitions associated with it, had divided the Hindu community, vertically and horizontally, into innumerable water-tight compartments". Instead of acting as a unifying force it had become the cause of the disruption of the Hindu society. Guru Nanak, who was born in 1469 at Talwandi (a village in a district of Shaikhupura in the West Punjab) was a contemporary of Babur the founder of the Mughal empire in India. He seems to have thoroughly diagonised the case of the Indian society of his time. To him religious convictions based on humanitarian principles was the only remedy which could save Indians from impending destruction. At that time the Muslim Government was most firmly established in India. The wave of proselytism had spread all over the country with an overwhelming force. The Punjab being on the borders of India contained the largest number of converts to Islam. The government itself was an instrument of conversion on a very large scale. In conversion of the people persuasion was substituted by force. In fact converts were made on the field of battle with the sword at their throat. "Tribes were in a single hour convinced of the truth of the new faith, because they had no alternative but extermination." Temples were levelled to the ground. Schools

and colleges were converted into mosques. The sacred threads were broken. Those who escaped conversion lost almost all that lent dignity and grace to life. The Hindus could never even imagine of fighting against their common enemies. The mutual antagonism of their different divisions rendered them incapable of acting in unison for any common purpose.

Politically also the people of the land had no control over the rulers. The will of the sovereign—if not flagrantly opposed to the Quranic injunctions, was the law of the land. The Governors and Lieutenant-Governors followed the examples set by their kings at Delhi. The Courts, if they at all existed, were centres of corruption and were manufactories of oppression and extortion, and where offences against the state were concerned, there was not even a semblance of justice. "The Government was an absolute despotism maintained by the sword."

The popular religion about the time of Guru Nanak's birth, was confined to peculiar forms of eating, drinking, peculiar ways of bathing and painting the forehead and other such mechanical observances. The priests alone could study the scriptures, and to them alone were accessible the higher truths and consolations of Hindu Philosophy. Guru Nanak, who found the people of the Punjab in this condition at once made up his mind to devote his life to the service of his nation. He wanted to give them a religion of simplicity and sincerity. His objective was to wean them from the worship of stock and stone, and make them able to stand their ground as a nation.

Except for a short while the Hindus were deprived of all State patronage throughout the Muslim rule. They were excluded from all government offices. A capitation tax, known as the *Jaziya* was imposed upon them. They were forbidden to go in palanquins or ride Arab horses. Centuries of invasion, foreign misrule and persecution had produced the greatest depression and the spiritual subjection amongst them. They were demoralised to an enormous degree. The priests, the hereditary guardians of Hinduism, had become lazy and lifeless. They

failed in uniting all Hindus together.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, the Hindu mind was no longer stagnant or retrogressive. It had been leavened with Muhammadanism, and had changed and quickened for a new development. A number of attempts were made all over India to emancipate the people from priestcraft or grossness of idolatry. But those efforts were futile and those movements did not sufficiently contribute to national progress. It happened like that mainly due to other worldly-character of almost everyone of them. The Bairagis of Ramananda, propagated renunciation which was no solution to the problem. Gorakh Nath Yogis were strictly enjoined to lead a life of celibacy which was impracticable. Kabir was a married man himself, but he also showed contempt for the world and worldly belongings. Thus Ramanand, Gorakh, Kabir and even Chaitanya were all impressed with the nothingness of this life. But Guru Nanak perceived new principles and with their help he laid the foundation of Sikhism on which his successors built a new nationality and "gave practical

effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest in race as in creed." The seeds which Nanak sowed produced a richer harvest than that of others. . . . because he realized what others had failed to realize. To him, a religion, if it was to be a living force, must be a practical religion. Religion, according to him, must teach mankind, not how to escape from the world, but how to live worthily in it; not how evil is to be avoided, but how it is to be met and overcome. Nanak possessed qualifications for the tremendous task of awakening the depressed, demoralised, superstitious and priest-ridden people. He worked for the redemption of his race. He was almost illiterate. But he was, like Muhammad, richly endowed by nature with a powerful intellect and strong common sense. "He displayed the genius of a master mind and whenever he argued a point, his practical wisdom and strong common sense always prevailed over the logic and theology of his opponents. His criticism of other systems was not academic. Practice rather than doctrine, formed the subject of his attacks upon the existing creeds." His wisdom and knowledge were immensely increased by his life-long travels and discussion with scholars and saints, both of his own community as well as those of the Muhammedan world.

To awaken the masses, to inject in their minds new ideas, to persuade them to lead a life based on practical principles, to give them courage of conviction and to prepare them for fighting against tyranny and face all the eventualities were all the results of a process of evolution, which began with Guru Nanak

and which reached its culmination in the times of Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Sikh Guru. The history of the Sikhs under their Gurus is the history of this process of evolution. Guru Gobind Singh and his work were thus the natural products of this process of evolution. But before his death Guru Gobind Singh prepared his Sikhs for their further growth. He was sure that the Sikhs no more required spiritual guidance from living gurus. Thus with himself he ended a chapter in the history of the Sikhs. But that was not the end of the Sikh community. It was to be the beginning of their glorious career for which they had been created. To understand the life and the worth of Guru Gobind Singh it is necessary to study briefly the contribution of all the nine Sikh Gurus, who were his predecessors. Each one of them worked for the growth of the community and left legacy to his successor which was much more than his own heritage.

PREDECESSORS OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

As already seen Guru Nanak left the Hindus of the Punjab immensely better than he had found them. "Their belief had been ennobled, their worship purified, the rigidity of caste broken, their minds emancipated, and they were now more fit to enter on the career of national progress to which Guru Nanak's successors were destined to lead them". By his noble life and teachings he had produced a new atmosphere in Punjab. He appointed as his successor a Khatri, *Lehna* by name, one of his own disciples, whom he preferred to his own son. *Lehna*, seated on

Gaddi was known as *Guru Angad* (1538-52). Sikhs believed that spirit of Guru Nanak had been incarnated in each succeeding Guru. His first and the most important contribution to organise the followers of Guru Nanak, was the introduction of *Gurmukhi* characters which became the special script of the people of Punjab and in which all their sacred books are written. It is this language which was recognised as one of the fourteen languages in Indian Constitution. When all other states in India were reorganised on linguistic basis, the people of Punjab also demanded the same and got it after a long struggle. Punjabi script could be more easily understood by the people of Punjab than any other script. It became a means of asserting their individuality as a community. It also gave a crushing blow to the position of the Brahman—who had been using Sanskrit as a means of exploiting the innocent masses at the time of all religious ceremonies. Sanskrit had not been the language of the masses in India for more than a thousand years.

Guru Angad also urged the people of Punjab to follow a *Middle Path* which was shown by his predecessor. Guru Nanak had struck out a *Middle Path* between asceticism and worldliness. In choosing his successor Guru Nanak had passed over both his sons, one for overworldliness, and the other, who was the founder of *Udasism*, for his asceticism and thereby he had given to the people *Middle Path*. Guru Angad also started the institution of *Langar* — free kitchen. The system had already been set on foot by Guru Nanak and was simply enlarged and expanded by Guru Angad.

The Sikhs, now, began gradually to drift away from the orthodox Hindu society and form a class, a sort of new brotherhood, by themselves. It is stated that Humayun, the second Mughal emperor, came to meet Guru Angad and sought his blessings. Guru Angad died in 1552 and he left the progress of his people in the hands of his successor Guru Amar Das.

Guru Amar Das (1552-74) was a devotee of God Vishnu before his conversion. He constructed a *Baoli* at Goindwal which is an important place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs. He prohibited the custom of *Sa'i*, condemned *Purdah System* for women and asked his followers not to take wine. He also tried to banish the caste-restrictions, caste-prejudices, and the curse of untouchability arising therefrom. He divided his spiritual empire into 22 parts called *Manjis*. A pious and influential Sikh popularly known as a *Masand* was placed at the head of each part. These centres helped in administering the religious needs of the Sikhs.

Guru Amar Das also found an attentive listener in Mughal Emperor Akbar, who held him in high esteem. Akbar's friendship with the Guru must have enhanced the prestige of the Guru and also made his mission more popular with the higher classes of the society. It was Guru's fame which brought Akbar the great to his doors at Goindwal, where he took his meals in the free kitchen alongwith all others. Mirza Jaffar Beg, the Governor of Lahore had been deeply impressed by the piety and noble character of Guru Amar Das and when his son, Tahir Beg, joined the forces of Akbar in the seize of Chittor,

which proved impregnable, Akbar felt the need of divine intercession (see FARISHTA, p. 490) Tahir to the Emperor in the most glowing terms about Guru Amar Das. Akbar then sent a trusted official, named Bhagwan Das, a Khatri of Sirhind, to beseech the Guru to pray for his success.

Guru Amar Das was succeeded by his son-in-law called *Ram Das* (1575-1581) and thereafter Guruship became hereditary in the family of Guru Ram Das. "This changed the whole character of Guruship and materially contributed to the growth of Sikh power, for henceforward the Guru was looked upon by his disciples not only in the light of a spiritual guide but also as a worldly lord and a ruling sovereign." Guru Ram Das also had very cordial relations with Akbar. It is stated that he laid the case of peasantry before the Emperor who at the Guru's instance agreed to remit the revenue of Punjab for one year. In 1577 he obtained a grant of the site of the Golden Temple together with 500 Bighas of land from Akbar, on payment of Rs. 700|-. He started excavation of a pool at Amritsar, where Golden Temple was built later, and it soon acquired a reputation for sanctity. Soon the followers of the Guru started migrating to the spot. A small town known at first as *Ramdaspur* or *Guru-ka-Chak* gradually grew up. The pool improved and formed into a tank, acquired the name of Amritsar *Tank of nectar or immortality*. Sikhism gained popularity during his period.

After Guru Ram Das there appeared on the scene a man, who was a born poet, a practical philo-

sopher, a powerful organizer and a great statesman. During the ministry of *Guru Arjan* (1582-1607) the principles of *Guru Nanak* took firm hold on the minds of his followers. *Guru Arjan* was perhaps the first *Guru*, who clearly understood the wide import of the teachings of *Nanak*, or who perceived how they could be made applicable to every state of life and to every conditions of society. He made *Amritsar*, the proper seat of his followers, the centre, which should attract them from their worldly longings for a material bond of union. The representatives of *Guru Arjan* were spread all over the country to demand and receive the contributions from the faithful, which they proceeded to deliver to the *Guru* in person at an annual assembly. The most important work of *Guru Arjan* was the compilation of *Adi Granth* — the Holy Book of the Sikhs. He collected together all the available works of his predecessors. The writings of 16 Hindu Bhaktas and Saints were also included. The compilation occupied many years of *Guru Arjan's* life, and, when completed, it at once became the central object of Sikh worship and reverence. The book was written for the guidance of his followers and when completed it was installed in the Golden Temple at *Amritsar*. *Adi Granth* has become the source of Sikh prayer and it is more a book of divine wisdom than a mere word of God. It is the only scripture in the world compiled by the founder of the religion himself and its authenticity has never been doubted. The compilation of *Guru Granth* was an attempt to have synthesis of ancient religious and cultural thinking. The writings of five Muslim saints namely *Baba*

Farid, Satta, Balwand, Bhikhan and Mardana were also included. Of the other contributors, Kabir was a weaver, Dhanna — a cultivator, Sadna — a butcher, Namdev — a Calico printer, Ravidas — a shoemaker, Saina — a barber, Pipa — king and Trilochan — a Brahman. It is also interesting to note that Namdeo, Trilochan and Parmanand hailed from Maharashtra; Surdas, Kabir, Ramanand, Ravidas, Saina, Bhikan came from U.P., Jaidev from Bengal, Pipa and Dhanna from Rajasthan and Beni from North India. Relations between Guru Arjan and Akbar were cordial but the things changed after the accession of Jehangir. It is stated that Jehangir was annoyed because Guru Arjan gave his blessings to his rebel son Prince Khusru. It is also stated that Khusru fled to the Punjab in 1606 and took refuge with the Guru there and requested the Guru for help. The Guru had not yet initiated a policy of military organisation, but it is alleged that he advanced a considerable sum of money to the prince, and lent him his moral support by praying for his success in the civil war. But mainly Jehangir did not like the growing popularity of Sikhism. He took strong objection to the conversion of Hindus and Muslims to Sikhism. To quote Jehangir, "They called him Guru and from all sides, people crowded to worship and manifest complete faith in him. For three or four generations of spiritual successors, they kept their shop running. Many a time, it occurred to me to put a stop to this vain affair or to bring him into the assembly of the people of Islam". It is also stated that Chandu — the Diwan of Lahore, wanted to marry his daughter to Har Gobind, the

son of Guru Arjan, but the latter refused. Chandu poisoned the ears of Jehangir, who ordered Guru Arjan to pay a fine of Rs. 2 lakhs or meet his death by torture. Guru Arjan preferred death and was tortured to death at Lahore. He was made to sit on hot sand and in boiling water. *The manner in which he was put to death convinced the Sikhs that they must arm themselves and fight if they want to live. His martyrdom became the turning point in the history of Sikhism.* The Sikhs were to be no more merely devotees but were now also expected to become warriors.

Har Gobind (1607-44) was not, perhaps, more than eleven years of age at his father's death. Both the temper and the circumstances of Har Gobind prompted him to innovation and he had his father's death to move his feelings. Har Gobind is commonly said to have worn two swords, one to denote his spiritual, and the other his temporal powers. To the symbols of asceticism he added the paraphernalia of royalty such as the sword, the crest, the hawk and the umbrella. He also wore the dress of a soldier. He made his darbar resemble a princely court in its splendour, and by the organisation that he affected, he was able to evolve a spiritual, but not a temporal state. With the Guru at its head as the *Sacha Padshah* or the True King the whole community was well organised. In fact the Sikhs had already become accustomed to a form of self-discipline.

During the ministry of Har Gobind the Sikhs increased greatly in number and that had also added

to their growing strength. Instead of accepting money from his followers, the Guru asked them to offer horses and weapons to him. He fortified Lohgarh at Amritsar. He enrolled a large number of armed volunteers and even Pathans were welcome to join.

Har Gobind was the first of the Sikh Gurus to have entered upon a military career. He made it clear to his followers that all worldly pursuits were quite compatible with the deepest religious spirit and to bear arms in defence of their homes and hearths was also their paramount duty. Continued successes in the succeeding years made his followers realise their own power and also the weakness of the Mughal Government. The policy of *armed resistance* had become imperative as the situation had changed with the death of his father. The policy of the Guru had henceforth to be adjusted to the new environments. Akbar, who believed in the policy of religious toleration was no more there. Jehangir could never tolerate the militant policy of Har Gobind. He therefore got Har Gobind arrested in the fort of Gwalior. But the faithful Sikhs continued to follow their leader. They flocked to Gwalior, and bowed themselves before the walls which retrained their persecuted Guru, till at last he was released. The Guru was released on the intervention of a Muslim Saint Mian Mir. It is alleged by certain historians that Guru Har Gobind had incurred Jehangir's displeasure, firstly by his over-independent character and secondly, by breaking the forest laws to which he was led by his great passion for hunting. Besides this the fine imposed upon his

father had never been paid. The result was that he was arrested and deported to Gwalior. It is also stated that afraid of the rising power of Har Gobind, Chandu Shah instigated the Emperor to send Har Gobind to the fort of Gwalior to offer prayers for His Majesty to avert an impending calamity which astrologers, bribed by Chandu, had predicted for the Emperor. The Guru's captivity, according to some authorities, extended over one year only, but according to Dabistan of Muhsin Fani it lasted for twelve years.

The quarrels, which originally started during the lifetime of Guru Har Gobind over horses and hawks between the Mughal officials and the Sikhs, subsequently led to bloodshed on a large scale. Battles were fought at Amritsar, Kartarpur and other places. But all this did not stand in the way of the Guru's personal friendship with Muslims. Har Gobind was on the most friendly terms with some of the leading Muslims of the time. Muhsin Fani, the author of Dabistan, being one of them. He had in fact been brought up by a Mohammedan nurse. He also built a mosque for his Muslim followers at Gobind Pura.

Guru Har Gobind was victorious in his all expeditions against the Mughal officials. He also succeeded in winning over Jahangir, but he fully realised the gravity of the situation and to face the impending danger he prepared his followers for the coming struggle. He also did not think it safe to live any more in the plains. Consequently he retired to Kiratpur on the Sutlej in the hills, where he lived in perfect peace till he died in 1644 A.D.

Har Rai (1645-1662) the grandson of *Har Gobind*, succeeded his grandfather as the seventh Sikh Guru. He was endowed with a peace-loving nature and reflective mind. He preferred the solitude of hills and quiet meditation to the excitement of wars. In 1658 A.D. when *Dara* was being hotly pursued by *Aurangzeb's* troops he resorted to the Guru for help. It is said that Guru *Har Rai* sent out a detachment of his men, who contested with *Aurangzeb's* troops, and prevented them from crossing the river *Beas* until *Dara* had reached a place of safety. *Aurangzeb* never forgot this affront from an unexpected quarter. As soon as he was established on the throne of *Delhi*, he summoned the Guru to his persence. Guru *Har Rai* did not answer the summons in person but he sent his eldest son *Ram Rai* to explain the matter to the Emperor. *Ram Rai* was treated kindly but was detained as a hostage at the court to ensure the tranquility of the Punjab. *Ram Rai* cared more for the Emperor's pleasure than for the truth as stated in *Adi Granth*. There is a line in the *Granth* which means, "The dust of the Muslim's body also becomes potter's clay and is turned into bricks and pots and when it is put in the fire it raises a cry of agony". *Aurangzeb* asked *Ram Rai* why the word *Mussalman* had been thus abused in the sacred book. *Ram Rai* at once said that it was a mistake of the scribe and the word really meant was *Baiman*, or an infidel, and not *Mussalman*. *Aurangzeb* was pleased and satisfied at this. For *Ram Rai*, however, his cleverness proved suicidal. The Guru, who was displeased to hear at what cost of truth safety had been purchased by

Ram Rai, disinherited his son, and appointed Har Krishan, a minor as his successor.

Har Krishan (1661-64) was only of five years of age when he became the Guru. Ram Rai, his elder brother, who had been disinherited by his father was very much dissatisfied at this. He was a favourite at the court of Aurangzeb, and he complained to the Emperor against his father's decision of setting aside his superior claims to the *Gaddi*. He pointed out to the emperor how under the rule of a minor, the whole work of his ancestors would go to wreck and ruin. The Emperor summoned the infant Guru to his presence. Guru Har Krishan reached Delhi. It is stated that Har Krishan was an exceptionally bright child. Many anecdotes illustrating his religious intelligence are given by Sikh writers. Cunningham says that he was once taken into the royal palace at Delhi because the ladies of the harem wanted to see him. He was surrounded on all sides by ladies, who were equally well dressed, and was asked to find out the Empress, who was also among them. Har Krishan at once recognised her. While in Delhi, he got an attack of small pox and died.

Guru Har Krishan was succeeded by *Guru Tegh Bahadur* (1664-75), the father of Guru Gobind Singh. He inherited the hostility of Aurangzeb and was executed at Delhi. As his execution had left a deep impression on his son Guru Gobind Singh, the account of his life and work is given in a separate chapter. Before reading the life accounts of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh, it is essential to point out something about the realisation of God in

Sikhism. Sikhism is a religion and God occupies in it the foremost place. But the men of God are known, for their peace-loving nature whereas the Sikhs are militant. It is therefore also essential to explain why the Sikhs became militant. In every religion, the founder is given the highest place. As Sikhism is the product of the work of the ten Sikh Gurus, it is also essential to study the place of the Gurus in Sikhism. And as Sikhism found a fertile ground in the Punjab, it is necessary to know about the racial stock of the Punjab. An attempt is made in the following pages to discuss all these pertinent questions.

REALISATION OF GOD IN SIKHISM

The Sikh Gurus condemned the priests and priest-crafts of both Islam and Hinduism because they used their influence to hamper the natural life. To the Sikh Gurus the spirit of love was the life in religion, and according to them when love was replaced by fear it gave birth to superstition, which had its roots in ignorance of God. They said that it was self-love, which made this life a hell because it engendered jealousy, fear and hatred. They said, "The real love, which is giving, opens the gates of paradise and makes earthly life a heaven. To love God is to lose all sense of self". Thus love for God was the sole aim of a Sikh's life and this made him fearless and selfless.

Every Sikh believed in the unity of God. He had single-hearted devotion to Him as the only means of salvation, and he desired to have gentle, fearless

and clear-headed living. The Gurus held "Where love is, there is freedom. The hearts in which love dwells, forgiveness reigns. Devotion to God is the test of all actions. Those, who are devoted to God are free from sin, and those, who follow the dictates of their own minds can never escape its snares." To make things more clear, the Guru said, "God, the omnipresent is supreme if man's mind is confusion about Him, man's whole life is confused." Explaining what God is, they said, "He is one without an equal. He is also a unit. He is not the sum-total of so many forces bundled together, but He is one that makes the existence and manifestation of all the forces possible." Without Him creation is impossible, whereas He is possible without creation. Creation is the manifestation of individuality. When a Sikh utters the word 'God', he means an existing reality and not an abstract idea existing nowhere but in people's minds which human senses cannot perceive. The Sixth Gurus said that a human mind cannot know Him, and soul alone can commune with Him. The Sikhs do not believe in any salvation attainable after death. They believe that they must be saved in this life. And the function of a Guru is that of a loving father. Sikhism believes in right life. The Sikh Gurus say, "He who lives the right life is my disciple, nay, he is my master and I, his servant". The Sikh Guru never taught their followers to shirk the worldly responsibilities. Instead of retiring to jungles and making the body devoid of all its energies they chalked out a path that would take their followers to the path of God. All Sikh Gurus said with one voice, "Why goest thou about

searching? Search in thy own heart. God dwelleth with thee why wanderest thou from forest to forest? Throw down thy heap of terrible egoism in the company of the Saints; so shalt thou find rest, abide in peace, and blest with the sight of God". Further it is said, "Abide in God amid the temptations of the world; thus shalt thou find the way of religion." Criticising the various ways adopted by the people in the past the Sikh Gurus say, "Some become clean shaven, some Sanyasis and others become Yogis, some pose as Brahmacharis and some consider themselves Jatis. Some call themselves Hindus and some Mohammedans, some call themselves *Rafzis* and others Shias. But know the race of man as one, *Karta* and *Karim* are the same. He is Razak and Rahim. Don't believe, even by mistake, that there is any difference between them. All have to serve the One. The Gurudeva of all is one. All have the same form, the light in all of them is also the same". Talking about the oneness of all mankind, it is said, "Hindu temple and the mosque are the same. *Pooja* and *Namaz* are the same. All men are the same, but only they look different. The distinction between the gods, the demons, *Yakshas*, the *Gandharvas*, is due to their residence in different countries. They have the same eyes, the same ears, the same bodies, and the same build. All are composed of earth, air, fire and water. *Allah* and *Abhekh* are the same. The Puranas and the Quran are the same. All have got the same form and the same constitution." To explain that God alone is the source of all the creatures, it is said, "Millions of sparks fly from one fire. They become separate, but they all again merge in it. From

one dust millions of particles fly, but they again unite with dust. In one river millions of waves arise, all of them are called water. So out of uncreated come all living beings, coming out of Him they return to Him again." Further it is said, "I neither observe fasts nor the month of *Ramzan*. I serve Him who protects in the end. The same who is *Allah* is also my *Gosayin*. Thus I settle with both Hindus and Mohammedans. Neither I go for *Haj*, nor for worshipping at holy places. I recognise one and serve no second. Neither do I engage in *Pooja* nor say *Namaz*. In my heart I bow to one Formless One. I am neither Hindu nor Muslim. My body and life are of *Allah* and *Ram*." (Rag Bhairo, Guru 5.) Writing about those hypocrites who believe in outward show and do lip-repetition of the *Name*, the Sikh scripture says, "Many men engage in the lip-repetition of the *Name* but there are few, who give it a place in their hearts. Salvation and redemption are obtained by those alone in whose hearts the *Name* dwells". *Name* is a term, like *logos* in Greek, bearing various meanings. Sometimes it stands for God Himself and sometimes it means God as revealed in His manifestation. In another sense, the *Name* is 'the word recorded in the Holy scripture.

Socially India of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries was torn into different economic classes on the one hand and was divided into a number of castes on the other hand. Men in their zeal to prove that caste was God-created institution invented stories to say that Brahmins came out of the mouth of *Brahma*, Kshatriyas out of His arms, Vaishyas

out of His thighs and Sudras out of His feet. The Sikh Gurus did not subscribe to this view. "All men have descended from the same Being and His light fills them all," was the view of the Sikh Gurus. "Just as the light of the sun spreads everywhere through its rays, so the Lord fills every entity like warp and woof. The one Lord dwells everywhere. Brotherhood of man is the necessary outcome of the unity of Godhead. "There is one Father and we are the children of one". This is the key-note of the teachings of the Sikh Gurus and the social relationship of the Sikhs with the rest of mankind. "The creator Pervades its creation and the creation has its being in the Lord. Whom to call low, when there is none without Him". The Sikh Gurus were not speculative philosophers. They gave the idea of the unity of the Spirit and practically proved that all men are equal.

WHY SIKHS BECAME MILITANT ?

It is interesting to note why Sikhism, which had retained its peaceful character till the death of Guru Arjan, became suddenly militant under Guru Har Gobind. It remained peaceful so long as the state did not interfere. It was only a reaction to the martyrdom of Guru Arjan that Har Gobind resorted to the policy of armed resistance. Under Har Gobind's successors the new policy was relaxed and Sikhism almost receded to its earlier path. But the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur was responsible for more disciplined militarism of his successor. The transformation of Sikhism was primarily a reaction to the policy of persecution adopted by the rulers.

of India. It must be noted carefully that this sudden transformation to militarism was of a purely defensive character. "Arjan had seen clearly that it was impossible to preserve the followers without the aid of arms. His last injunction, therefore, to his son, Har Gobind, was to sit fully armed on his Gaddi and maintain his own military force that he could muster". This step was taken mainly as a precaution against future contingencies rather than with any idea of revenge. But due to the hostility of Ram Rai, who had never ceased to conspire against the legitimate Gurus since his father had nominated his younger brother Har Krishan to the Guruship in preference to him and also of other Sodhi Khattris, notably Dhir Mal, the elder brother of Guru Har Rai, Tegh Bahadur found his position insecure even at Makhwal and, for a time, went out on travels". It became imperative, therefore, to face the opposition both of the State and of the rival claimant to the Gaddi and save Sikhism from extinction. The Sikhs realised that Aurangzeb's avowed policy of religious persecution was a great challenge to Sikhism and that the limited militarism of the days of Guru Har Gobind would no longer be sufficient.

It will be seen in the following pages how Guru Gobind Singh succeeded in injecting a new spirit in the Sikhs and it is he who converted Sikhism into *Khalsa* — a militant sect, which became one of the greatest eye-sores to Aurangzeb. It was this militant outlook which revolutionized the entire thinking of the Sikh community and thus the Sikhs became a factor to be counted in the political developments

of North India and have remained so till this day. It was this militant character which helped Maharaja Ranjit Singh to become the Maharaja of Punjab. But Sikhs have never used force to convert people of other religions nor did they ever try to establish any theocratic state. They have always remained secular in their outlook in dealing with the people of other religions and no discrimination was ever made by them on the basis of religion.

THE PLACE OF THE GURUS IN SIKHISM

It is a matter of great importance to understand what the term *Guru* means in Sikhism. It was Guru Nanak, who had declared that without the Guru there could be no salvation and it appears that in Nanak's compositions the *Guru* is taken as the vehicle of communion between God and man or as the medium through whom the *Name* and the grace of God are made available. The Guru is in possession of the immortal wealth and he alone can give it. According to him, Guru is a *boat of Salvation*, a *ladder to reach one's Home*, a *key to open the Lock*, and the one, who brings union of man with God. The Guru is thus indispensable in Sikhism but he is not an end in himself. Guru Ram Das, the fourth Sikh Guru, compared the Guru to a wholesale merchant, who deals in the Name and ferries across the retail dealers. The Guru is the mediator or the intercessor and without the true Guru, God's name is not found even though one performs thousands of ceremonies.

It may be noted that conception of the Guru as the mediator and the belief in his indispensability are as old as the days of the Upanisads. But the

Guruship in Sikhism has assumed a unique character. It is important to observe that most of the other sects of the medieval period, notably the Kabir Panthis, allowed freedom of choice and inculcated great care in the selection of a Guru. There was room in them for the simultaneous existence of a number of *Gurus*, each exercising undisputed sway over his own disciples. But the position in Sikhism was absolutely different. The question of selection or choice was not there at all. Each successive Guru was nominated by his predecessor. The Guru, also occupied the position of a sole and supreme religious leader. Like the Roman Catholic Pope and the Islamic Khalifa, a Sikh Guru was without a rival. It may also be observed that the Sikhs believe that all their Gurus were one and the same. There was no change of spirit in them, only there was change of the image. It is stated in the old Janamsakhi that when Guru Nanak finally resolved to make Lahina his successor, 'he put five Paisa before Guru Angad and fell at his feet'. It only shows the impersonal character of the Guruship. The personality of the Guru was detached from the spirit of the Guruship, which was always regarded as one, indivisible and continuous. The Guruship was something apart from the personality of the Guru and this would explain how the successive Gurus could be regarded as identical.

Sikhism lays great stress on selfless service. Guru Arjan says that the essence of wisdom is the service of humanity. Service to the Guru was also expanded into service to Sikhs in general, and this

way, Sikh brotherhood was ushered into being. Tradition proves that the Sikh Gurus showed the sincerity of their leadership by their willing deference to the wishes of their followers. When Chandu Shah, the Diwan of Lahore offered his daughter in marriage to the son of Guru Arjan, the Guru refused the alliance mainly, on the ground that his Sikhs were not in favour of the proposal. He was fully alive to the dangers of incurring the displeasure of Chandu Shah. When threatened, Guru Arjan said: "It is the Guru's rule to comply with the wishes of his Sikhs". It is interesting to note that on the one hand, there is unconditional surrender of the Sikh to the Guru and on the other hand there is equally unconditional deference on the part of the Guru to the wishes of his followers. The climax was reached when the Sikhs were identified with the Guru himself and when Guru Har Gobind told his disciples. 'Deem the Sikh as your Guru, who comes to you with the Guru's name on his lips'.

It is interesting to note that in Sikhism Guruship has always been regarded as of divine origin and having its inauguration in the will of God. It is in *Vachitter Natak* that Guru Gobind Singh explains in detail the circumstances leading to his birth in this world and there he directly claims a divine sanction for his mission. It is not quite clear whether he claimed the same for his predecessors as well. At the same time one must not forget that Guru Gobind Singh had warned his followers that all those who would call him the Supreme Being would fall into the pit of hell and that he was

merely a servant of God who was sent to this world to behold the wonders of His creation.

In Sikhism, therefore, the conception of the Guru was somewhat complex. But as the Guru occupied the foremost place in the life of every Sikh and as he was the sole spiritual guide, Guruship became the centre of the whole Sikh community and as such it was responsible for the proper and healthy growth of Sikhism.

THE RACIAL STOCK OF THE PUNJAB

For centuries together the plain of Punjab, where the Brahmins and Kshatriya had developed a peculiar civilization, was overrun by Persian or Scythic tribes. From the age of Darius and Alexander to that of Babur and Nadir Shah, the people of the land were attacked by different invaders. The main features of these attacks were the introduction of Islam and the long antecedent emigration of hordes of jats from the plains of upper Asia.

India has been called a melting pot of many cultures. All those who conquered India in the past, were in course of time absorbed by the Indian. In the lapse of centuries the Jats also became essentially Brahmanical in language and belief. Along the southern Indus they soon yielded their conscience to the guidance of Islam, while those of the north retained their idolatrous faith. In Punjab, that particular part of the country where Sikhism found a fertile ground lies around Lahore, Amritsar, Gujrat and Bhatinda. The one tract is pre-eminently called Majha or the middle land, and the other is known as Malwa. The Jats who lived there were known

in the north and west of India as industrious and successful tillers of the soil, and as hardy yeomen equally ready to take up arms and to follow the plough. In the 15th century the central tract in the Punjab stretching from the Jhelum to Panipat, was inhabited chiefly by Jats while Peshawar and the hills, which surround it, were peopled by various races of Afghans, known as Yusufzais, Khalils, Afridis, and Khattaks. The hills south of Kohat, and the districts of Tank and Bannu, were also peopled by Afghans.

Around Multan, the population was partly Baluch and partly Jat. It was intermixed, with other tribes such as Aroras and Rains. Towards the mountains of Suleiman some Afghan tribes had settled. There in the waste tracts between the Indus and Sutlej were found Juns, Bhutis, Sials, Kurruls, Kathis and other tribes

Between the Jhelum and Chenab, were perhaps the people who were first inhabitants of the country. They represented a tribe of ancient invaders or colonizers who had yielded to the more powerful than themselves. The tracts along the Sutlej, about Pak Pattan, were occupied by Rajputs, while lower down were found some of the Langah tribe, who were once the masters of Uch and Multan.

The hills between Kashmir and the Sutlej were possessed by Rajput families. The Muslim invasions seem to have thrust the more warlike Indians, on one side into the sands of Rajputana and into the hills of Bundelkhand on the other side. But the mass of the population of Jammu and Kashmir was

a mixed race called dogras. Those who occupied the portion of Punjab adjoining to the Jammu hills boasted of Rajput blood and took pride in thier belonging to the high castes of India.

It was this racial stock which was used as raw material by the Sikh Gurus. The Sikh Gurus successfully worked on them and convinced them that the human beings are the same all over the world and that they are all the creation of one God, who is the common father of all.

GURU TEGH BAHADUR'S EXECUTION

When Guru Tegh Bahadur succeeded Guru Har Krishan as the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, Aurangzeb had been securely established as the Emperor of India for about six years. Aurangzeb had completely reversed the policy of conciliation, which was initiated by Akbar the Great, and he vigorously re-enforced the campaign of relentless oppression which was reintroduced by Jehangir. "His cruel and homicidal treatment of his father, brother and their families on the one hand, and the cold-blooded murders of pious and liberal-minded Muslims as Soofis and Shias on the other hand, had earned for him the disapprobation of the saner section of the whole Muslim World." Spurred in part by the fanatic and short-sighted Mullas, and prompted by his merciless heart and hardened conscience, he vowed to carry on a regular and systematic *Jehad* against the non-Muslim population of India. His ideal was the extermination of the idolatrous Hindus. He began his task with his wonted vigour and persistence. All the political and social disabilities ordained for the non-believers were imposed on Hindus. *Jazia* or poll-tax was imposed as compensation money for their being permitted to breathe in the Muslim State. Reimposing of *Jazia* by the state was to increase the number of Muslims by putting pressure on the Hindus. As the contemporary observer Manucci noticed, "Many Hindus, who were unable to pay, turned Mohamma-

dan, to obtain relief from the Collectors". If political sagacity had induced Akbar to follow a policy of conciliation, religious fervour of Aurangzeb impelled him to launch a vigorous campaign for the conversion of the entire population and the extinction of every form of dissent.

Guru Tegh Bahadur had thus to face a very powerful foe in the person of Aurangzeb. Guru Tegh Bahadur was a man of great humility and simple tastes in private life. He, on his part, would not have given any occasion to Aurangzeb for a misunderstanding. But Ram Rai was still a favourite at the Imperial Court and had never ceased to cherish a hope to be one day installed in his father's place. Aurangzeb on the other hand only wanted a pretext to get rid of a formidable man like Guru Tegh Bahadur, who stood in the way of his Islamic zeal. Thus when a representation was made to Aurangzeb by Ram Rai, Guru Tegh Bahadur was summoned to Delhi. But Raja Ram Singh of Jaipur was one of the Guru's admirers. He interceded on his behalf and Aurangzeb did not take serious action against him. Guru Tegh Bahadur thereafter accompanied the Raja to Assam and helped him in gaining victory over the Raja of Assam. He also availed of this opportunity to visit all sacred places in the Eastern part of India. With the object of spreading his principles and teachings, he undertook a wide tour of the country. His family accompanied him. He visited all the important holy places of the Hindus, as was done by Guru Nanak long before him. It was during this tour that a son named Gobind Rai, who later became Guru Gobind Singh, was born to his

wife at Patna. He is stated to have met the Raja of Kamrup — Assam and to have made him a believer in his mission. After completing his tour Guru Tegh Bahadur returned to the Punjab. He bought a piece of land on the bank of the Sutlej from the Raja of Kahloor and founded the village of Makhwal later known as Anandpur — a place near Bhikina-Nangal Dam—and settled there. This place was quite close to Kiratpur, the chosen place of his father Guru Har Gobind.

While at Makhwal Guru Tegh Bahadur spent a few years peacefully. His popularity had made him the acknowledged head of the Hindus and of Punjab. But his personal influence and popular propaganda formed a great obstacle in the way of Aurangzeb's proselytising campaign. Aurangzeb had vowed to convert or exterminate the non-Muslim population of his empire. In Kashmir more than half of the people had been converted to Islam and now the Pandits of Kashmir were given the historic choice between Islam and death by the viceroy of the province. Some enemies of Guru Tegh Bahadur advised the pandits to visit Anandpur and pray to the Guru for help. The Sikh Gurus were known for not refusing any thing to people in woe and distress. Thus when the Pandits visited Anandpur the tale of their woes and sufferings plunged the Guru in deep thought. He had before him the same problem that was faced by Guru Arjan earlier. After having given a serious thought to the problem Guru Tegh Bahadur found out the way and thought that a person with the purest and the holiest soul must sacrifice his life in

an attempt to rouse the sleeping soul of the Emperor. Such a sacrifice alone, according to him, could produce an ennobling effect on the oppressed. He could not himself say that he was the needed person for meeting the challenge given by the Kashmir's Vice roy. When the Guru was absorbed in these thoughts a personality as great as he himself, set all his doubts at rest. Returning from his sport Gobind Singh, his son, who was only nine years old at that time, discovered that his father was absorbed in some anxious thought. When Gobind Singh enquired about the cause of anxiety, his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, explained to him the cause and also told him about the solution, which he had thought of. His son Gobind Singh immediately replied, "Who can be holier than you?" And those, who were present, were left breathless. Guru Tegh Bahadur was now convinced that he must resolve to go to Delhi and do what he could to reform the Mughal Emperor. Addressing the Pandits, the Guru told them to go and tell the Viceroy and the Emperor that they would embrace Islam if their leader Guru Tegh Bahadur would do so first. The Pandits lost no time and appraised the Mughal authorities about their decision.

'Against the Hindus, the Muslim rulers always had a readymade pretext. Hindus worshipped innumerable gods and goddesses, whom they represented as sharing power with God. This was infidelity according to Islam. The Quranic injunctions against the infidels were quite clear on this point. But the Sikhs believed in only one God. So far as their religion was concerned, there could be nothing very

objectionable. Thus, unless the Guru committed some offence against the laws of the state, religious or secular, there could be no pretext for hauling him up. Representation made by the Pandits gave an opportunity to the Emperor for involving the Guru and bringing him within the purview of the Quranic injunctions against the infidels. He was not an infidel himself, but by pleading the cause of the Pandits he had become an obstacle in the path of the progress of Islam. Quran says, "When the sacred months are passed, kill those who join other deities with God, wherever you find them.... But if they shall convert,. . . then let them go their way". (ix. 56). "Say to the infidels, if they desist from their unbelief, what is now past shall be forgiven them. But if they return to it, fight then against them till war be at an end, and the religion be all of God" (viii. 39-42).

On the receipt of the news that the Pandits of Kashmir would be represented by Guru Tegh Bahadur, Aurangzeb despatched some soldiers to inform the Guru that he desired his presence at his court. The Guru had however already started towards Delhi. He had decided to meet the Emperor and try to dissuade him from oppressing his Hindu subjects. After reaching Delhi, when Guru Tegh Bahadur met Aurangzeb, he advised him to give up his bigotted and inhuman policy of forcible conversion and torture. But Aurangzeb remained unshaken. He gave to the Guru two options either to embrace Islam or face death. The Guru, who had always been preaching the unreality and impermanence of the human

form, preferred death to apostasy and decided to give his head, but not his faith. He was beheaded publicly at Chandani Chowk in Delhi in 1675. The body of the Guru was thereafter left exposed in the streets to serve as a lesson to all those of the Guru, who would oppose the imperial decrees. It is said that a severe storm blew on that day. His body was afterwards removed by a daring Sikh and cremated by him in a nearby village by setting his house on fire. The head was taken to Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur and was cremated there.

When Guru Tegh Bahadur was put to death, his only son was in his ninth year. The violent end of his father made a deep impression on the mind of the child and in brooding over his own loss and the fallen condition of his country, he became the irreconcilable foe of the Mughal Government.

In his death, Guru Tegh Bahadur had suppressed anything that he had done in his life. He was quite popular in Upper India and was highly revered by Rajput princes. He was actually worshipped by the peasantry of the Punjab and was generally looked upon as a champion of the Hindus. His well-known verse in the Adi Granth "*Bal Chhutkio bandhan paryo kacchhu na hot upai*" is probably a reference to the impending disaster which he was going to face when he went to Delhi in response to Aurangzeb's summons. He faced his death with a courage worthy of the then spiritual head of the Sikhs. The state of his mind at the time is well depicted in one of the stanzas: "*Sir dia sirr na dia*" which means

sacrifice your head but do not give up your religion. His execution was regarded by the Hindus as a sacrifice for their faith. Whole of Punjab began to burn with indignation and revenge. After the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur the people of the Punjab only wanted a leader under whose banner they could assemble and avenge the insult done to their religion. This leader they were to find in youthful Guru Gobind Singh. With the death of Guru Tegh Bahadur it had become clear to the Sikhs that the power of an autocratic state had to be broken up and the sword had to be wrenched from the tyrant's hand. Then only could the fanatic rulers be taught to live peacefully with their non-Muslim neighbours.

“Nanak had emancipated the minds of the people of Punjab from superstition, Angad had given them an individuality of their own, Amar Das saved them from drifting into ascetism and aimlessness of life. Ram Das extended the power and influence of his sect. Arjan made it into a theocratic community and gave it a code, a capital, a treasury and a chief in the person of the Guru. Har Gobind had organized a sort of army and by his victories had demonstrated to his followers the strength which they could gather. The work of military organisation was checked by the peaceful nature of the succeeding Gurus and the vigour of Aurangzeb's rule. But this interval of peace was followed by the execution of Tegh Bahadur which had stirred once again the people of Punjab and especially the Sikhs.”

Often it is said that the power and pelf of the world remained at a distance of twelve miles from

Guru Nanak and six miles from Guru Angad. But it knocked at the door of Guru Amar Das and it fell at the feet of Guru Ram Das while in Guru Arjun's time it got admission to the house of the Guru. The fable undoubtedly describes the gradual growth of the social and political power of the Sikhs but it in no way means that the Sikh Gurus ever thought of building a state of their own.

GURU GOBIND SINGH — EARLY LIFE

As already stated, Guru Tegh Bahadur, along with Raja Ram Sing, had left for the East along with his family. When he reached Patna, he left his family there and he himself went further to Bengal and Assam. It was at Patna that Gobind Singh, or Gobind Rai, as he was then called, was born on the 22nd December in the year 1666 A.D. There is not much known to us as authentic which can throw some light on the days of his childhood. However, he was fond of playing on the banks of the river Ganges and he would often divide his mates into two groups and engage them in contests of skill, power and patience.

In his childhood Guru Gobind Singh greatly impressed Pandit Shivdat, who had been for long a worshipper of idols and Gods. It was believed that he had acquired that stage where God was beheld face to face. In his childhood only Raja Fateh Chand Maini and his wife also became his devotees. They had no son and the child had impressed them in a singular manner. Nawabs Rahim Baksh and Karim Baksh, were the most well-known devotees among his Muslim admirers at Patna. A garden and a village were offered by Rahim Bakhsh and Karim Bakhsh to the Guru and they are to this day attached to the Gurdwara at Patna. When Guru Gobind Singh was of six years age, Guru Tegh Bahadur called him to Anandpur where he had gone earlier leaving his infant son at Patna. The Guru's family started from

Patna in March 1671. The people were naturally unwilling to part with the child, who had so endeared himself to them. They all started with the party, and went as far as they could. By evening, the party reached Danapur. The party visited all the holy places along the way, and made pretty long halts at each. Benares, Allahabad, Ayodhya, Lucknow, Kanpur, Brahmavart, Agra, Mathura, Bareilly, Pilibhit, Nanak Mata and Hardwar, were some of the places visited by them on the way. In about five months' time, the party reached Lakhnau, a place in the Ambala District of the Punjab. Here they received Guru Tegh Bahadur's order that the party should stay there till they were sent for.

In Lakhnau, one day Gobind Singh was playing with his mates and one Pir Araf Din, who was held in high esteem by the Muslims of Punjab, happened to pass that way. On meeting Guru Gobind Singh he was greatly impressed. Another renowned Muslim faqir named Sayyed Bhikhan Shah also came to see Gobind Singh at Lakhnau. Sayyed Bhikhan Shah wanted to study the inclinations of the child. He, therefore, sent for two little baskets of sweets, one from a Muslim and the other from a Hindu confectioner and placed both of them before the child. The latter placed a hand on each, and then, having sent for a third, placed his both hands on that. Sayyed Bhikhan Shah was highly impressed and he concluded from this that the child was destined to be a unique leader of men. By keeping his hands on both the baskets he had shown that to him both the Hindus and the Muslims were equal. But he was also to perfect a new order distinct from both. This

anecdote only shows what thoughts were playing in the mind of the lad Gobind Singh, who was to take his father's place as the Guru.

When about seven months had passed at Lakhnaur, Gobind Singh had grown almost impatient to see his father. At last the order came and the party started from Lakhnaur for Makhawal. On way, they halted for two or three days at Kiratpur which had been the abode of Guru Har Rai. When the party reached Anandpur, the whole city poured out to welcome them.

During the first few years of his life at Patna, Gobind Singh had picked up the accent and dialect, which was peculiar to that part of the country. As the Sikhs had never been to that place, they regarded his speech as a charming novelty and were delighted to hear him talk.

At Anandpur proper arrangements were made for his education. Munshi Sahib Chand was deputed for teaching him Gurumukhi. The Guru could already repeat from his memory many sacred compositions of his predecessors. In his childhood he made a thorough study of all the sacred writings of his predecessors. He also learnt Sanskrit and Hindi. Persian was taught to him by Qazi Pir Mohammed. Special arrangements were also made for training the child in horsemanship and the use of arms. He displayed a keen interest in riding and hunting. He would often accompany his uncle Kirpal and others on hunting expeditions. He always kept on his person miniature arms, which he used with a skill

quite unknown to a child of his age. Soon he acquired mastery in riding and shooting, and he also became adept in the use of the bow. He was also a very good swimmer. Having lived most of his life on the banks of the rivers Ganges, Sutlej and Godavari, it was natural that he would learn swimming. He accustomed himself to fatigue and hardy life. When he grew up a little, he procured all sorts of weapons and arms. He practised their use not only himself but also made his followers do the same. He devoted his mornings and evenings to divine worship, but the time in between was passed in the narration of martial exploits, hunting, shooting, racing, and other soldierly exercises. He was also a great lover of music and was skilled in playing on *Tans*.

As already stated Gobind Singh was only nine years old when the Kashmiri Pandits, who were the victims of the oppressive bigotry of Aurangzeb, approached Guru Tegh Bahadur at Anandpur. This child of nine years, who spent most of his time in martial exploits, had also suggested his father to lay down his life for the defence of those petitioners. As already seen, Guru Tegh Bahadur left for Delhi and was later executed there, Gobind Singh was thus left fatherless. The situation in which he was placed as a child was one of unprecedented difficulties. The Sikhs as a community were still in the state of infancy. "The whole Sikh community moved with the Guru as its pivot". With the death of Guru Tegh Bahadur it was felt that the Sikh community was left almost leaderless. But soon it was realised that Gobind Singh was equal to the task and that

he was strong enough to meet the challenge thrown to him by the circumstances.

After his father's death Guru Gobind Singh still remained in retirement at Anandpur, amidst the lower hills on either side of the Jamuna. For many years he continued to keep himself busy in hunting expeditions. He had by now acquired sound knowledge of the Persian language. He had also stored in his mind those ancient legends, which described the mythic glories of his race. His memory was always filled with the deeds of primeval seers and heroes; his imagination dwelt on successive dispensations for the instruction of the world, and his mind was filled with a belief in his own earthly destiny. "Study and reflection had enlarged his mind, experience of the world had matured his judgment, and, under the mixed impulse of avenging his own and his country's wrongs, he resolved upon awakening his followers to a new life, and upon giving precision and aim to the broad and general institutions of Nanak". In the heart of a powerful empire he set himself to the task of uplifting the society from the midst of social degradation and religious corruption. He called upon the people to practise simplicity of manners, singleness of purpose, and enthusiasm of desire.

The neighbouring hill chiefs who ruled over small states became impressed by the high sense of superiority of Guru Gobind Singh. By the whole of North India was terror-stricken under the active bigotry of Aurangzeb. For the time being it was not safe for Guru Gobind Singh to come down and ven-

ture into the plains of Punjab. The hills were the only parts of the province which had not been thoroughly subdued by Aurangzeb. Their inaccessibility and comparative barrenness had saved them from annexation. Guru Gobind Singh thus remained in those natural fortresses and he quietly matured his plans for emancipating his down-trodden race. In this obscurity Guru Gobind Singh remained for the major portion of his early life. The news of the Guru's fondness for warlike pastimes soon spread all around. His orders went forth to all his followers that of all presents he liked most were horses, arms, ammunition, and other materials for military equipment. These orders were zealously obeyed, and soon his armoury became full of weapons of various types. All those persons whose parents had fought on the side of Guru Har Gobind flocked around him and soon he had an army of devoted Sikhs at his command.

In 1680 A.D. he received from his followers in Kabul, Kandhar, Balkh, Bukhara and Ghazni, a number of presents which were peculiar to that part of the world, such as rugs, carpets, woolen blankets, etc. Amongst those presents was a woollen tent on which were embroidered, in gold and silver, numerous objects and scenes of beauty and splendour. The tent was an offering of a Sikh from Kabul named Duni Chand. Raja Rattan Rai, the son of Raja Ram Rai of Goripur in East Bengal, whom Guru Tegh Bahadur had met earlier, had developed a great fascination for Guru Gobind Singh when he was a child. He caught a unique elephant and had trained it to perform various acts of service. The elephant was

black in colour but it had a white strap stretching from the tip of his trunk, right up to the tip of his tail. The Raja also got prepared a singular weapon—'five in one'—out of which five sorts of arms could be made—pistol, sword, lance, dagger and club. Raja Rattan Rai also trained five beautiful horses with splendid trappings. When all was ready the Raja arrived at Anandpur on the occasion of Diwali, and presented all the things which he had brought with himself. The Raja stayed at Anandpur for about five months. He was of the same age as was the Guru whose company charmed him. He accompanied him on his various hunting excursions during his stay at Anandpur.

While at Anandpur, Guru Gobind Singh got up daily about 3 hours before dawn. After bath he attended religious gatherings where hymns were sung. As Aurangzeb had banned music in his empire many talented musicians had taken refuge in the Guru's darbar. When this was done, the Guru would give a discourse to the assembly. He would then receive the Sikhs, who had newly come from outside places. By this time the *Langar* would be ready. A drum was beaten to invite all to the kitchen. Food was then distributed to all, who came, without any sort of distinction or discrimination. All sat in rows. The Guru himself supervised the distribution of food to the people and took great delight in watching them. Then he took food himself. After a few hours' rest, the activities of the day began again. The bards would sing the glorious deeds of heroes of the past, the poets would read their poems, and the stalwarts would perform feats of valour and would display their

skill in riding and in the use of arms. The general army was then drilled. The Guru had invented a form of drill suited to his men and times. The evenings were again devoted to *Kirtan* or divine music and prayers. When the *Langar* was served the whole party retired for the night.

While at Anandpur the Guru gave orders for the construction of a big war-drum. This work was entrusted to Diwan Nand Chand." In those days no king or chief would allow anyone to march through his territory with the beat of a drum. But Guru Gobind Singh had decided to go undaunted. He decorated his tall, slim and active body with shining armour. On his head he would put a glittering plume. He would always proudly carry a white perching hawk on his uplifted arm and would ride on a noble blue steed. All these were the symbols of his sovereign power, which an ordinary man, who lived as a subject in a princely state in those days, would never dare to do. But the object of the Guru was never to establish a state. His objective in doing so was to challenge all those, who had established autocratic governments all over India and had been suppressing the subjects under crushing burden of tyranny. He wanted to inject confidence, courage and boldness in his followers by setting an example of his own.

In India, *Holi* is a festival of innocent mirth and grand rejoicings. It marks the end of winter and the arrival of the pleasant days. People throw coloured water on one another on the *Holi* day to exhibit their happiness. But not following the traditional ways of celebrating the festival, Guru Gobind Singh started arranging big nam-gatherings, musical

and poetical contests, feats of power and skill, sports, games and martial display. He renamed Holi and called it *Holla*. The celebration had one very interesting feature. In the evening, the Guru would divide his troops into two groups distinguished by the colour of their dresses. One of these was put in charge of an enclosure, which represented a fort. The other group, with the Guru as its head would start from a fixed place to capture fortress. Killing or wounding was forbidden on both sides. The generals of both sides were supposed to display their knowledge of warfare. There were attacks and counter-attacks, till the fort was stormed and taken over. Like Holla, Diwali and Baisakhi festivals were also celebrated at Anandpur.

In *Vachitter Natak*, a book which contains Guru's writings and is somewhat like an autobiography, the Guru writes that when he became major he promoted religion to the best of his ability. But afterwards he left that country—Anandpur, and went to Paunta, where he enjoyed himself on the bank of the *Kalindi* (Jamuna) in amusements of various kinds, particularly in hunting various sorts of game in the forest. But once Raja Fateh Singh, of Garhwal, became angry with him and came to blows with him without any reason. The Raja was taught a lesson by the Guru. But in order to remain on the safe side the Guru was forced to collect an army. But when the Guru was busy in strengthening his resources a quarrel also broke out between him and Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur. With the help of other hill chiefs attempts were made to drive out the Sikhs from the cities in the hill areas. Their gur-

dwaras were ordered to be demolished and their holy places desecrated. Earlier Guru Tegh Bahadur had been publicly executed by the Imperial government at Delhi. Sikhism was thus threatened with extinction, root and branch. The Sikhs would have relapsed into a peaceful religious community of quietists if they would have been left alone. But now there remained no other method of self-defence except the aid of arms. "Thus a purely religious movement which had acquired certain accretions distinctly of a socio-political character took a turn, from which there was no going back." Compelled by the circumstances, Guru Gobind Singh was forced to revive the policy of his grandfather. The policy of *armed resistance*, which had been almost wholly abandoned by the successors of Guru Har Gobind, again became predominant under Guru Gobind Singh. But these measures for self-defence were evidently considered inadequate. It was mainly due to this reason that the Guru had retired farther into the hills and taken up his residence at Paunta, situated in the territories of the Raja of Nahan.

Guru Gobind Singh thus took up the hard task of rejuvenating the people of north India. He wanted them to forget their differences and to present a united front against the tyranny and persecution to which they were exposed. "He earnestly hoped to make a living nation out of them to enable them to regain their lost independence."

GURU'S MARRIAGES

It is often stated that the Guru Gobind Singh had three wives. But whether it is historically cor-

rect, it is yet to be seen. His whole life was the most rare and unique example of an idealistic detachment from the worldly pleasures. Even the accounts given by some contemporary writers which are prejudicial and malicious do not ascribe three marriages to the Guru. It is said by some writers that the first marriage of the Guru took place on the 15th of Jeth Samvat 1730, and the second in 1741. There are others including Macauliffe, who say that the first marriage took place on 23rd of Had, Samvat 1734 and the second, a year or two later. It is quite possible that the betrothal ceremony had taken place in 1730 and the marriage had taken place four or five years later. What was actually betrothal ceremony has been described as the first marriage of the Guru by some historians. Jito Ji was the original name of the Guru's first wife; and in accordance with the usual practice which persists even today, she was, after her marriage, renamed as Sundri. Thus Jito and Sundri are the two names of the same person. The reason for the second marriage is often given that the first marriage had in the past eleven years, yielded no issue. But there was fairly a long interval between the births of the first and the second son of Guru Gobind Singh.

As for the marriage, it was no marriage as it is commonly understood. Guru's mind was throughout his career completely absorbed in missionary work on one side, and wars and preparations for war on the other. It is said that in 1698, a Sikh named Bhai Ramoo of Rohtas, (In the present district of Jehlum) came to visit the Guru and he brought his young daughter with him. He said that since her birth h's

daughter Sahib Devi, had been engaged by him to the Guru and thus the Guru must accept her as his wife and servant. When Guru Gobind Singh refused to accept her, the followers of the Guru intervened saying that as she, since her very birth was dedicated to the Guru she was called *mata* or mother by all the Sikhs and hence none would marry her. There was thus no place for her except in the Guru's house. The Guru thus made her the mother of *Khalsa*—the entire Sikh community—and kept her with himself. Every Sikh is told at the time of his baptism that henceforth his caste will be Sodhi (Guru Gobind Singh's caste) and his parents would be Guru Gobind Singh and Mata Sahib Kaur.

Guru Gobind Singh had four children namely Ajit Singh born in 1686, Jujhar Singh born in 1690, Zorawar Singh born in 1696 and Fateh Singh born in 1698.

CREATION OF KHALSA

Guru Gobind Singh's personality is a harmonious combination of so many good and manly qualities which are seldom found blended together in one person. His many-sided talents and accomplishments are sometimes considered but a myth.

Guru Gobind Singh must be counted among the greatest of Indians of all ages. His object was the emancipation of the Indians from the oppression and persecution. The means which he adopted, were such as a comprehensive mind could alone have suggested. "To an atmosphere of gloom and utter degradation he had brought a message of hope and deliverance. He brought into being a moral force of an intensely dynamic character and kept before his followers two options either to live with dignity and stand for righteousness or die for the same." There was no third course open for them. Guru Gobind Singh had discovered that the martial spirit which was injected into the hearts of the Sikhs by his grand father, Guru Har Gobind, had through the essentially pacifist policy of the later Gurus gone to slumber. "The iron hand of Aurangzeb had smitten the general people with terror." If Guru Gobind Singh had asked his followers to take up arms and follow him forthwith into the field of battle, perhaps the Sikhs would have done so with hesitation. The Guru realised that he must infuse a new life into the dead bones of the people and produce in them a daring soul. The Guru was, there-

fore, constantly busy in preparing himself and the people for his great mission, which required a well conceived scheme that the Guru could put before his followers. "A sense of self-respect and self-reliance could not be accomplished at once. It meant years of calm and steady preparation and training. The Guru's problem was to put an end to the process of disintegration which had become a feature of Sikhism after the death of Guru Har Gobind and also to revitalise the Sikhs by giving them a new ideology and a new programme of action."

MAN OF MISSION

That he had a mission can be traced back to his early career when Guru Gobind Singh made himself thoroughly familiar with the Hindu literature relating to incarnations and other divinities. He was deeply impressed by the idea, which runs throughout the Pauranic literature, viz., the idea of the saviour appearing from time to time to uphold righteousness and destroy unrighteousness, to uproot evil and establish good, to destroy the oppressor and rescue the weak and the innocent. "The sad plight in which he found his followers, the persecuting policy of Aurangzeb and the prevailing corruption, ignorance and superstition had generated in his mind an earnest conviction that this was undoubtedly the time for the rise of a saviour." "The force of circumstances in which he was placed soon led him to work himself up into a belief that he himself was the man the times needed."

Speaking of the divine sanction of his mission, Guru Gobind Singh writes in *Vachitter Natak*, that

he was performing penance on the mountain of *Hem Kunt* and by his great austerities he had become one with God. But by the Lord's order he had to once again take birth though he himself was not willing to come. The Guru further writes about what the Lord had told him about the demons, the gods, the *Sidhs*, the *Sadhhs* and the *Rishis* whom He had created. After coming to this world none of them recognised the real essence and each became absorbed in himself. Indeed, "whoever was clever in the world established his own sect and no one found the Creator." The Lord also told him about the prophets, who became wrapped up in themselves and forgot to recognise the Supreme Being and finally the Guru says that the Lord said to him:

"I have cherished thee as My son, and created thee to extend my religion. Go and spread my religion there, and restrain the world from senseless acts."

If Guru Gobind Singh claims that he had divine sanction for his mission it may be noted that he clearly states in his writing that he was neither God nor His incarnation, nor a Rishi, nor a Superman. The Guru merely claimed that he was the chosen instrument of God for the redemption of the world. He points out: "All who call me the Supreme Being shall fall into the pit of hell. Recognise me as God's servant only; there should be no doubt that I am the slave of the Supreme Being and have come to behold the wonders of the world."

In *Vachitter Natak* he further expounds his

mission:

"As bade the Lord so do I proclaim,
 No religious garb doth please my heart.
 I sow the eternal seed of the Supreme Lord;
 To the worship of stones I'll never stoop,
 As bade the Lord, just so shall I act and speak,
 On the Eternal One will I meditate ever....
 For this purpose have I come into this world,
 To uphold and spread righteousness in
 every place,
 And to seize and destroy the doers of sin
 and evil
 Understand ye holy men fully well in
 your souls!
 That I took birth in this age, so that
 Righteousness may flourish,
 The good, and the saints, be saved
 And the villainous tyrants all be uprooted
 from the land."

Guru Gobind Singh had realized that in the circumstances of the time a mere negative policy of the type of passive resistance was unsuitable and thus the chief reliance was to be made on the power of arms. "He was also sure that unless a distinct form and appearance were given to the Sikhs there was every possibility of the Sikhs gradually merging into the great sea from which they had been taken out."

Gradual rise of the Sikhs as a power in Punjab under the Sikh Gurus had caused the Mughal emperors to follow a line of policy much like that adopted by the Roman Emperors when confronted by the rising organization of the Christian Church. This policy was one of repression and persecution.

"The simple altruism of the early days had become out of date and Guru Gobind Singh, therefore, decided to make the Sikhs a definite fighting force." Guru Gobind Singh resolved to prepare the Sikhs to meet the situation with their own unaided strength and this he did by bringing the Khalsa—a fighting force into existence. The word *Khalsa* is derived from the Persian language and it means "the selected one." "For this new force he changed the old ideal of humility and surrender into a new one of self-assertion and self-reliance. Guru Gobind Singh had realized that the Hindus as a race were too mild by nature, too contented in their desires, too modest in their aspirations and too averse to physical exertion." He was also aware of the fact that caste-system was a great barrier to unity of the Indians. Once when he had sent some of his disciples to one Pandit named Raghu Nath to study Sanskrit under him, the Pandit refused to teach them because they were not Brahmins. He was therefore bent upon casting away all differences between man and man. The privileges which were the monopoly of a few were undemocratic to him. He believed that all were created as equal by God and therefore every man must be restored to his natural position in society. Every man must, according to him should also be given confidence in his ownself and a sense of self-respect, which should give him enough strength to face any challenge. "Creation of Khalsa was the result of his deep and sustained reverie." Having prepared his plans, he had issued a general invitation to the Sikhs to muster stronger than usual on the occasion of Baisakhi Festival in the year 1699. He declared that he had to

deliver some important message of his Lord, which was of course the result of his long meditation. Sikhism had given him the ideal and the people of North India provided him the material. "Combining the two the Guru wanted to forge a dynamic force, which none could henceforward ignore." People of Punjab lacked national feeling and the only way to make a nation out of them was "to make nationalism their religion." Guru Gobind Singh thus made nationalism a religion with them, and by creating Khalsa he created a compact brotherhood in faith. The objective of the creation of Khalsa was not to take revenge for any personal wrongs or injury, for he had willingly sacrificed his father in the cause of preserving righteousness and he himself was also prepared to sacrifice his all for his lofty ideals. He did not advocate bloodshed for the sake of any 'realm or kingdom'. "If he wanted to dethrone and drive out the tyrants, it was out of his unbounded love for the down-trodden humanity and not for the sake of any political power."

BAISAQHI DAY

Now as the first day of Baisakh Samvat 1753 (April 1699) was approaching, people began to arrive at Anandpur from every part of the country. A few days before that festival the Guru held a great feast. For this feast Guru Gobind Singh did not give special invitation to the Brahmins. All were served as they came. When most of the people had dined, the Guru sent an invitation to the Brahmins. Being insulted, they refused to come. A day before the first of Baisakh Samvat 1756, a great gathering was

also held at Kesgarh in Anandpur. A tent was set up. After the daily religious formalities were over the Guru went inside the tent for a while and remained inside for sometime. Then suddenly he came out and with his glittering eyes, his naked sword shining in his uplifted arm, and his whole body transformed like that of a warrior and in a voice as that of thunder, he took all those present by surprise by asking for any one present in the assembly, who was ready to lay down his life at his call. When Guru Gobind Singh found no response to his first call, he called forth second time but again there was no response. His eyes flashed fiercier, his voice grew more terrible, and for the third time he asked for any one who would lay down his life at a call by him. At last a *Khatri of Lahore* named *Daya Ram* aged thirty, got up and offered his life. The Guru immediately took him into the tent with apparent hurry and in no time he came out of the tent with his sword dripping with fresh-drawn blood. The Guru asked for another head. The crowd was convinced that *Daya Ram* was killed by the Guru inside the tent and people were hesitant to respond like *Daya Ram*. *Dharm Das, a Jat of Delhi*, aged thirty-three, now stood up, and offered his head, on the third call. A stream of blood coming out from the tent convinced the terrified people that the second Sikh, too, had been killed. Many fled for their lives. The Guru came out and called for the third head. This time on the third call, *Mohkam Chand, a washerman of Divarka*, aged thirty-six, offered himself. Guru Gobind Singh came out again with the same sword dripping with blood, and asked for a fourth head.

All were dumb with terror and amazement. At last *Sahib Chand of Bidar*, a barber, by caste, aged thirty-seven, got up. He was likewise taken to the tent and now the Guru came out once again and on his third call, *Himmat Rai of Jagannathpuri*, a potter, aged thirty-eight, stood up and the Guru disappeared with him in the tent.

When the Guru came out of the tent, his sword was sheathed, his face was beaming with joy and satisfaction. After a short time to a great surprise of all present, the five Sikhs, who were taken inside the tent, were brought out. They were all dressed like the Guru in saffron coloured dresses. All the times, when Guru went to the tent with a Sikh his sword had been falling on goats that had been placed in the tent. It was the goat's blood that had been coming out from the tent and dripping from the sword. "The Guru had, in this unique manner, tested the fidelity and bravery of his followers." "He had ascertained that his followers had fully learnt the lesson of self-sacrifice and the unquestioning obedience to their leader." To these five, now the Guru bestowed the name of *Panj Piyare* or "Five Beloved"—as they came to be called. With them the Guru proceeded to lay anew the foundation of Sikhism. Next day the Guru initiated them according to the new rites that he himself introduced. The method of initiation, which had hitherto been current in Sikhism, was known as *Charanpahul*. According to this, a Sikh was initiated in Sikhism by drinking the water touched by the Guru with his toe. It was believed that this method of initiation developed

humility and politeness in the Sikhs. But Guru Gobind Singh wanted to add to these virtues of humility and politeness the virtues of self-respect, dignity, courage and boldness. He thus introduced absolutely a new method of initiation, which was a product of his own mind. For this new rite of initiation Guru Gobind Singh took pure water and *Patasa*s—sugar in, an iron vessel kneeling beside it, he kept stirring the water with a two edged sword called *Khanda* and recited over it the sacred verses that he had chosen for the ceremony. These verses were the *Japji* of Guru Nanak, the *Jap Sahib*—his own composition, *Anand Sahib* of Guru Amar Das and certain *Sawainyas* and *Chaupais* or quatrains of his own composition. The *Five Beloved* were asked to repeat *Waheguru* and the preamble of the *Japji*. He then gave them five handfuls of the *Amrit*—which means nectar. He sprinkled the water five times on their hair and their eyes, and asked them all to repeat *Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fa'eh*, which means that Khalsa belong to the Lord and to the Lord belongs the victory. As the outward sign of initiation by *Pahul* the Sikhs were enjoined to wear the five K's, viz., the *kes* (long hair), *Kachh* (short breeches), the *kara* (iron bangle), the *kirpan* (sword) and the *kangha* (comb). They were also give the common cognomen of *Singh* for men and *Kaur* for women. They were directed to regard Guru Gobind Singh and his wife Sahib Kaur as their common parents so that none could thereafter claim a position of pride on account of his caste. As some people took pride even on the basis of their place of birth, the Guru enjoined on all those, who were ini-

tiated to regard Anandpur as their place of birth. Guru declared that the locks of all the Sikhs must remain unshorn. Of material things, he said that the Sikhs should devote their finite energies to steel alone and arms should dignify their person. They should be ever waging war. He enjoined his Sikhs not to have any intercourse with the *Dhirmalis*, who had laboured to kill Guru Arjun and *Ram Rais*, who were responsible for the death of his father; and the *Masands*, who had undermined the strength of some of the Sikhs Gurus in the past.

ABOLITION OF CASTE SYSTEM

The destruction of caste prejudice was a step that Guru Gobind Singh took to bring about unity which is the first element of nationalism. Now the names of all the Sikhs ended alike and none could boast of his high caste in the new fraternity. He also gave to all of his followers one form of salutation. Whenever two Sikhs met they were to salute one another by saying "Wahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa, Wahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh". He gave to all his Sikhs Amritsar as a common place of pilgrimage where all classes of Sikhs whether Brahmans or Sudras are allowed to take bath in the tank and worship in the Golden Temple. To strengthen these bonds of union by certain still more mechanical devices, he gave those external forms and symbols which have been referred earlier. He knew what an inspiration, people often receive from a change in their outward appearance and thus thought it essential to give to his followers these external symbols.

By creating Khalsa the Guru struck at the root of all sorts of prejudices and in the society that he

contemplated caste distinctions had no place. "Guru Gobind Singh abolished caste-system by implication rather than by a direct enactment and he created a homogeneous society". All men, according to him, were equal, for they have the same eyes, the same ears, the same human nature and the same body—a compound of four elements namely earth, air, fire and water. He said that all men are alike for it is the one God who creates them all. Only good actions elevate human beings and distinguish them from one another. Abolition of caste prejudices, equality of privileges, common worship, common place of pilgrimage, common practice of initiation for all classes and common external appearance—these were the means, besides common leadership and the community of aspirations, which Guru Gobind Singh employed to weld his followers together. He had now bound them together into a compact mass and they were ready to be hurled against the Mughal Empire.

SWORD FOR DEFENCE

The Sword became an object of worship with the Sikhs, God himself being given the name of "All Steel". "God subdues enemies, so does the Sword; therefore the Sword is God, and God is the Sword". Naked sword became for the Sikhs the symbol of devotion to God, love for man, defender of the weak, and uplifter of the downfallen. Sword became substitute for rosary with which God was to be saluted and worshipped. "It was to strike terror into the hearts of the oppressors and infuse courage and

confidence in the hearts of the down-trodden." But sword was not to be wielded for spreading Sikhism. It was to be used for the defence of all religions. It was to be lifted not in self-aggrandizement, but in defence of honour and life. The Sikhs were henceforth to die for others, with the name of God on their lips and swords in their hands. Guru Gobind Singh cherished sword as an object of worship and some of his finest verses are those that he employed to invoke its aid. Devotion to the sword was thus regarded as an act of highest merit, which would bring power and prosperity to all.

GURU AND DISCIPLE IN ONE

With the creation of Khalsa, a distinct community had been created which stood distinguished from the rest of the society not only by a separate faith and form of worship, but also by the warlike spirit and intense patriotism. The Guru declared that God must be worshipped in truthfulness and sincerity and no material resemblance must degrade the Omnipotent. "The Lord could only be beheld," he said, "by the eye of faith in the general body of the Khalsa. The Sikhs must surrender themselves wholly to their faith and must look to God for guidance." Their words must be *Kritnash*, *Kulnash*, *Dharmnash*, *Karmanash*, which means the forsaking of occupation, family, belief and ceremonies. Guru Gobind Singh gave to the Sikhs a strong conviction that they were the chosen instrument of God, and the confidence which it inspired in them became the strongest guarantee of success for them. Guru

Gobind Singh believed that no leader could be fit to lead unless he was elected or accepted by his followers. The Guru, when he had initiated, the *Five Beloved*, was initiated by them in turn, taking the same vows as they had done, and claiming no higher privileges than those he had allowed them.

The Guru this time had asked his *Beloved Five* to prepare the *Amrit* as he had done, and administer it to him. The Guru stood up in an attitude of supplicant and with folded hands prayed to the *Five Beloved* to initiate him. When the Guru was initiated, he declared, "Khalsa is the Guru, and the Guru is the Khalsa. You and I are one for ever. I am now your *Chela* or disciple." After initiation Guru's name was also changed from Gobind Rai to Gobind Singh.

CODE OF CONDUCT

To initiate the Sikhs into the order of Khalsa was not sufficient by itself. Guru Gobind Singh therefore gave a particular code of conduct, which every Sikh was expected to follow. In *Tankhahnamā*, which was written by Bhai Nand Lal—a scholar, who lived in the Guru's court, reference has been made to the following code of conduct:

"The right conduct for a Sikh is to put his heart in naught besides meditation on God's name, deeds of charity, cleanliness of body, mind, and heart. He, who does not attend the congregation of the faithful every morning incurs a heavy fine. He, who does not invite the poor and the destitute to sit near him, incurs a heavy fine. He, who casts impure glances

at the mothers and sisters of others; he, who yields himself to anger; he, who weds his daughter without proper care and forethought; he, who misappropriates the wealth and property of his sister or daughter verily does suffer torments in the life to come. He, who robs the poor by deceit or force shall deserve no consolation or advantage from worship and penance. He, who does not employ one tenth of his income in the name of the Guru and God and he, who acquires wealth or food by falsehood or deceit, should never be trusted. He, who gives a word but keeps it not, will find no shelter here or hereafter. He, who starts on a journey or business without a prayer, eats without saying prayer, hankers after a thing once renounced, bestows not food and clothing on the poor and the needy, shall merit no honour in the Lord's presence. He, who fixes not his mind on divine music and religious discourses, utters foul words to a man of God, speaks evil of others and is addicted to gambling, robbery or theft, shall suffer severe torments at the hands of death. He, who visits the house of a prostitute, and contracts love with another's wife is not liked by the Guru.

"He is of the Khalsa, who speaks evil of none, whose thoughts dwell ever on God, loves his Guru, receives the enemy's steel on the front, aids the poor and the destitute, slays the evil-doer, ever mounts the war-horse and remains ever ready for war.

"As all living beings are God's creatures and belong to him, one should not give them pain or sorrow; when his creatures have to suffer, the creator feels the pang and is displeased.

Apart from the above-referred *Code of Conduct* the following may also be included in the list of the principles that governs the conduct of a Sikh. Whatever wealth a Sikh brings home should be of his own honest earning. Of this he should dedicate one tenth to the Guru's cause; thus alone can he acquire a good name in the world. The one, who regards another's daughter as his daughter, the wife of another as his mother, faithfully loves his own wife such a one is a true Sikh of the Guru. The one, who does not even look at wine, opium, tobacco in any form, or the meat of animals killed in the Mohammedan fashion, is a true Sikh. Sikh of the Guru should not wear the Hindu thread, nor paint any marks on the forehead. In every Sikh village there should be a *Gurdwara*—a house of God, where *Nam* gatherings assembly should be held and travellers and strangers should find free food and rest.

After initiation the Guru declared that all those, who had taken *Amrit* belonged to a new race of Kshatriyas. To help and serve the weak, the needy, and the oppressed, was to be their sacred duty. They were to practise the use of arms. They were to be *Sant Sipahi*—Saint-soldiers, worshipping both God and Sword. He erased their previous caste and told them that they all belong to one family. He asked them to live by the sweat of their brows. They were to bow their heads only to One Almighty God and not to worship stones, idols, tombs, gods or goddesses. They were not to beg alms or charity. Guru Gobind Singh also advised his followers to eat little, to sleep little and to love mercy and forbearance, to

practise mildness and patience and not to attach themselves to lust, wrath, covetousness and worldly love.

EFFECTS OF THE CREATION OF KHALSA

After the Khalsa had been created 'Lord's is the Khalsa, Lord's be the victory' became the watchword of the Sikhs. 'The Khalsa is the Guru and the Guru is the Khalsa' brought both the followers and the Guru at par. A new principle was established that any five Sikhs could represent the Khalsa and give initiation to a novice. The Guru, this way, merged himself in the Khalsa and the whole sect was invested with the dignity of *Guruship*. Guru Gobind Singh was also keen to see that Guru Granth should be regarded as the sole spiritual guide for all the Sikhs. The vesting of the spiritual leadership in the Guru Granth Sahib and of the temporal leadership in the Khalsa itself was the culmination of a process that had commenced in Sikhism at the time of its inception. Guru Gobind Singh had decided to leave the leadership to the collective wisdom of the community, because he was sure that as and when need would arise, it would throw up its own leaders. Thus *Sangat* was given a position and status, which was enjoyed by the Guru in the Sikh community. The original idea with regard to the *Sangat* appears to have been that of *Sat* or *Sadh Sangat*, i.e., association with the pious. Guru Nanak had defined *Sadhsangat* as 'that society where the Name of God alone is mentioned' and, as Sikhism developed, *Sadhsangat* came to mean association with the Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh de-

clared that the *Sadhsangat* was the image of the Lord.

Definite leadership of the community, high ideas of discipline and the institutions, which gave practical meaning to the teachings of the Guru were sufficient enough to leave the community on the road of natural progress and the Guru was confident that after him the Sikhs no more needed a Guru in the form of human body. Guru Gobind Singh himself prayed to the Almighty God to look after the community with a glance of favour. As for himself he said, "My body, my soul, my head, my wealth, my all is dedicated to its service."

"The followers of Guru Gobind Singh adopted militarism as an article of faith and as the leadership of the community was left to the community itself, a military commonwealth was created with the fullest of democratic freedom." Those men who had never touched a sword or shouldered a gun now became heroes. "Confectioners and washermen and sweepers and barbers became leaders of armies before whom the Rajas quailed and the Nawabs covered with terror". The Sikhs were taught as an article of faith to believe that God was always present in the general body of the Khalsa and wherever there were five Sikhs Guru was present with them. To give more confidence to the followers Guru Gobind Singh declared, "I shall send sparrows and the imperial falcons will fall before them. When each one of my Sikhs shall fight a hundred thousand of enemies then alone shall I be called Gobind Singh."

Where Guru Nanak had aimed at spiritual freedom and had laid stress on humility and prayer, Guru Gobind Singh stressed the need of self-assertion, extermination of tyrants and military glory. In the later history of the Sikhs it can be seen that threats, persecution, fine, imprisonment, deportation, torture, execution, outlawry, and massacre, all these weapons were employed one by one, against the Sikhs. "But the Sikhs faced every hardship with fortitude and courage and emerged from every ordeal purer and stronger with redoubled zeal and deeper vows of implacable hatred against the tyrants." To quote but one example, a reference may be made to the execution of Bhai Taru Singh, which took place in 1750. He was put on the wheel, and when his limbs were being crushed and he was half dead the alternative of Islam was placed before him and promises of material advancement were also made to him if he would become a Muslim. But all this did not move him an inch. When asked to cut his hair he simply said, "The hair, the scalp and the skull have a mutual connection; the head of man is linked with life and I am prepared to lay down my life with cheerfulness." His hair was then hewn off his skull and he was put to death after severe tortures. The struggle of the Sikhs for existence in the eighteenth century speaks of the inherent vitality of the community. Repeatedly repulsed and dispersed, prices laid down upon their heads, their holy places desecrated and their temples destroyed, massacred in thousands and driven to the wild jungles, wantonly persecuted by the Mughals on the one hand, and pillaged by the Durrani on the other, the Sikhs, in

the face of all this, succeeded in erecting a sovereignty of their own which once for all uprooted the long established, theocratic State in India. Survival of the Sikhs in the face of all these hardships and the war of extermination can alone be attributed to the lasting effect of the life work of Guru Gobind Singh, who had given them a new form, a new look, a new mission and also a sword to be raised in self-defence.

GODDESS DURGA AND MASANDS

India is a poor country in one sense but she is rich in the other. Hindus of India have countless gods and goddesses, who are worshipped every day. The believers in these gods and goddesses ascribed all their ills to the wrath of these gods. The only remedy, which they think can ameliorate them, is to appease these gods by worship and suitable offerings.

Guru Gobind Singh is also represented by some historians as a great devotee and adorer of goddess. Durga. There is a legend which says that he had performed a *Havan* in order to make her manifest in 1698. It is said by them that this *Havan* took him from one to four years and a Pandit named Kesho was invited from Benares to head the others, who took part in the *Havan*. It is alleged that the ceremony had cost the Guru more than two and a half lakhs of rupees. It is stated that Guru Gobind Singh had to undergo several austerities during the performance of the *Havan*. When the *Havan* was completed, it is alleged that Goddess Durga appeared before the Guru and gave him a sword. All the vic-

stories of Guru Gobind Singh are attributed to this gift of the Durga. Some people also say that Durga asked for human sacrifice and she wanted Guru's son. However, it is said that she agreed to have the head of one of Guru's Sikhs. The motive of the Guru in performing the *Havan* is said to secure for himself the aid of the goddess so that he could win battles and also succeed in founding a nation of soldiers. A careful study of the life and the work of the Guru, however, reveals that he had no faith in the powers attributed to the goddess. The Guru, if at all he had, performed the *Havan*, had done so to expose the hollowness of the faith and also to inculcate a spirit of self-reliance in the people. It is often said that when every detail of the ceremony was carried out in accordance with the wishes of the pandits, the goddess still delayed her appearance. The Pandits then told that a holy person's head was needed for pleasing the goddess to appear. They had Guru's son in view. They were also confident that the Guru would not agree to spare the life of his son and that they would find an excuse for the non-appearance of the goddess. Guru Gobind Singh, however, turned the tables on the Brahmins, saying "Who can be holier than the presiding Pandit, here?" The Pandit finding his life in danger found out a pretext to go away for a while and he disappeared from the place, never to come back. Others also followed him. When all had gone, the Guru ordered that the remaining material collected for the *Havan* should be thrown into the fire. A great flame, which resulted therefrom, was seen by the people far and near. People believed that in that flash the goddess

had appeared. The Guru took his sword from the sheath and declared, "The true goddess is this". It is said that the Guru was advised that when the goddess would appear to him, undaunted he should hail her and ask for fortune. However when the Goddess appeared, the Guru was terror-struck and he could but advance his sword, as if in salutation to the dreadful appearance. The goddess touched it in token of acceptance, and sword—a divine weapon, was seen amidst the flames.

It is said that Guru founded the Khalsa in obedience to the orders received from the goddess. In History of Punjab, Latif writes, "The Guru venerated Durga Bhawani, the goddess of courage, by whom he was directed to unloose his hair and draw his sword. The Guru in consequence vowed he would preserve his hair, as consecrated to that divinity, and directed his followers to do the same."

It is difficult to believe that there is any element of truth in all these stories that are attributed to Guru Gobind Singh. In all the writings of Guru Gobind Singh and also in those of his predecessors, there is not a line or verse which was written with the object of paying homage to various gods or goddesses that are the products of fertile Indian mythology. Repeatedly, it is declared by the Sikh Guru that all prophets, gods and goddesses are incapable of fully knowing the Lord. All Sikh Gurus prayed to only one God who is the Almighty Father of all. Guru Gobind Singh no doubt translated into poetic form several epics and classics in Hindi. His object in doing so was to remind the people the

heroic deeds of their ancestors and produce in them a desire to follow their examples in bravery. At the end of his book *Krishna Avtar*, Guru Gobind Singh writes, "I do not, at the outside, propitiate Ganesh, never do I meditate on Krishna or Vishnu, I've heard of them but acknowledge them not; It is only God's feet that I love."

To believe that Guru's motive in making the Goddess Durga manifest was to seek her aid in infusing a warlike spirit in his Sikhs is untenable. If Guru Gobind Singh had any faith in the Goddess, he would have made several references to her in his writings. He never invoked the aid of Goddess Durga in his wars and he also never expressed his gratitude to her after achieving his victories. On the contrary, he always prayed to the Almighty Creator, who is also the peerless Lord of the Universe. That Guru Gobind Singh was not an idol worshipper is also evident from his letter which he wrote to Aurangzeb in which he gives the cause of his quarrel with the hill chiefs and says, "they were idol-worshippers and I, an idol-breaker". Thus a devotee of Goddess Durga could never have done like this.

Amongst fifty two poets who were present at the Guru's darbar, there was one poet named Sainapati. Three years after the alleged worship of the goddess, he began writing a book named 'Gur Sobha' in which he gave detailed description of the events connected with the Guru's life. He makes no reference to the alleged worship of Goddess Durga. Even a Chronicler, who had sent his report to Aurangzeb about the Guru's address to his Sikhs on the first

day of Bisakh, in the year 1699 states clearly that the Guru had exhorted his followers to pay no heed 'to the Ganges, and other places of pilgrimage which are spoken of with reverence in the Shastras, and also not to adore incarnations such as Ram, Krishna, Brahma and Durga'.

Thus the alleged worship of Goddess Durga by Guru Gobind Singh and all the stories that are based on it are fictitious, unjustified and are inventions of some interested persons. Goddess Durga could never be an object of worship to the Guru for he reiterates, again and again, that it is Creator alone who should be worshipped and as Goddess Durga had been created by the Creator for the destruction of the demons, the question of her worship by the Guru does not arise at all.

MASANDS

As stated the Sikh Gurus were very keen about the spread of their mission in all parts of India. Guru Nanak undertook extensive tours in all directions and even went to many foreign lands. He tried his best to rouse the people from the slumber of ignorance and superstition. It was Guru Amar Das who had created a system of twenty two *Manjis*. For each Manji, a pious Sikh was appointed to act as a preacher of the Guru's word. Guru Arjan elaborated this system further. He gave these preachers the name of *Masands*, and made it their additional duty to receive from the disciples of their places the offerings meant for the Guru, and convey them to him at least once a year.

In the beginning, these Masands became the centres of light for the Sikhs in different parts of the country. They had strength of character and they conveyed faithfully to the Guru all the offerings that were received by them. These Masands brought to the Guru his revenues and became the main channel of communication between himself and his followers. As time passed, these Masands together with the Sangats, formed the pivot of the whole Sikh Organisation. For several decades, they creditably served the cause of Sikhism. They gradually became very influential. In many cases, as time passed, they became independent of the Guru, and had their own followings. "Thus it came about that Masands, who had been the foremost among the Guru's auxiliaries, became, in course of time, the greatest counterpoise to his authority." The lure of gold overcame their zeal for their Guru and they began to misappropriate what was entrusted to them for the Guru. They led lives of ignoble pleasures and sinful luxury. The Masands had become so headstrong that Ram Rai, a cousin of the Guru, appealed to the Guru to help his wife against them after his death. Later, Guru learnt that Ram Rai was burnt alive by them while he was in a trance and his widow was put to great troubles and torments by them. Guru himself went to Dehra Dun to know personally all that they had done. After verifying the facts, he punished them according to the seriousness of their crimes.

As usual when once Guru Gobind Singh was sitting in a large assembly at Anantpur some actors came there to stage a play. The Sikhs, who were greatly harassed by the misdeeds of the Masands,

had already asked those actors to act like Masands with the object of bringing to the notice of the Guru the depravity of his Masands and punish them. The actors at once started their acting, showing a Masand, mounted on a horse and who in the company of four or five men, came to the house of a Sikh. When the Sikh saw that a Masand of the Guru had come to his house, he thought himself to be fortunate that the Guru's agent had visited him. The Sikh sold some of his pots to bring gram and grass for the horses and prepared simple food for the Masand. The Masand on seeing the food, became very angry and threw away the food stating that such food was fit to be eaten only by his dogs. That Sikh, being very poor, sold his wife's golden rings and prepared everything again. The Masand having eaten and drunk asked for the offerings. The Sikh having pledged his counterpane, brought him a rupee. But the Masand threw it away and in a fit of anger, lost his balance of mind and started kicking the Sikh. Guru Gobind Singh was shocked to see the scene and he asked whether all other Masands actually behaved that way. In reply he was informed that the Masands gave even greater pains than that and as at that time some Masands were sitting in the assembly, from fear of them, their excesses could not be acted in full.

Guru Gobind Singh was so much moved by the high-handedness of the Masands that he immediately sent forth orders that all Masands should be arrested and brought into his presence. When they were brought before him, he impeached them, made them

admit their crimes and sins, and then punished them according to the gravity of their offences. Many of them were shut up in rooms, others were put to death and still others were killed by hunger and thirst. Some were tied up and slain, some were beaten, while others were seized and fried in frying pans filled with hot oil. Many Masands were denounced and excommunicated from Sikhism. However, some were pardoned also. This way he abolished the Masand system and saved his Sikhs from their tyrannies. He ordered that all the Sikhs thenceforth should bring their offerings direct to the Guru, whenever possible.

BATTLES OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

From 1685 A.D. to 1705 A.D. Guru Gobind Singh was engaged in about fourteen battles. He was victorious in almost all of them, except when he was outnumbered by large numbers of Imperial troops. Most of his battles were fought with the hill rajas, who were no more than big zamindars. The control of the Mughal Emperors was not so effective in these hill areas as it was in the plains of the Punjab and the hill chiefs remained without any interference in their internecine warfare for a very long time.

At the time of his father's death Guru Gobind Singh was a mere boy and his resources were slender and scanty. The mighty Mughal Government had declared itself the open enemy of his faith and the first result of that open breach was the execution of his father. The hill chief of Kahlur, in whose territories the Guru resided also raised difficulties about his continuance of stay there as he was afraid that it would involve him in troubles with the Mughal Government. The Guru left the place and retired farther into the hills. There he lived for some time in seclusion. But then the Guru came back to the State of Kahlur and lived at Anandpur, which henceforward became the centre of his activities.

All these years Guru Gobind Singh had been hearing from the people of Punjab the tales of their woes and wrongs. He had seen how Hindus were reduced to slavery and how forcibly their virgin daughters were taken away into the harems of the Muslim nobility. This all pained him deeply. He

was convinced that the oppressors had^o exhausted human tolerance and that time had come for the adoption of some plan of retribution. He, therefore, employed all the force of his eloquence in telling the people that they must not meekly submit to the tyranny. He told them to return blow for blow and not to rest till they wreaked vengeance on the oppressors.

The Guru was also convinced that he must always remain ready for war. He knew that his enemies were always on the look-out for an opportunity to surprise him. What to him were irreligious, and unbearable evils in Hinduism of the time, were to the Hindus the most sacred part of their religion. "He knew that the high caste people especially the hill chiefs, were all fretting and fuming at the liberating, equalizing, and anti untouchability movement that he had so vigorously set on foot." He had succeeded in attaining a perfect sway over the minds of his followers, who were now prepared to follow him in life and in death. He had achieved a commanding influence among the Rajas of the hill states and if he wanted, he could establish a principality in the hills to serve as a base of operations against the Mughal Empire. But he never thought of establishing a state. He wanted to fight against the state, which had become an instrument of oppression and tyranny. He built forts along the skirts of the hills between the Sutlej and the Jamuna, and established a military post at Paonta near Nahan. The names of the forts built by him are mentioned as Lohgarh, Anandgarh, Holgarh, Fatehgarh and

Kesgarh. Their construction was completed in 1689.

Earlier, Guru Gobind Singh made an attempt to organise the hill chiefs for a common cause, but their internecine quarrels and jealousies did not permit them to come together. The hold of the Imperial Government on the hill tracts was not so firm and there was no religious persecution on a scale that might goad them into common action. They were always busy in their own quarrels. They saw no wrong in acknowledging the supremacy of the Mughal Emperor at Delhi, provided they were left free. They were on the contrary jealous of the growing influence of Guru Gobind Singh and were afraid that the Guru might carve out a small principality for himself and establish a rival state which he would use as his base for operation against them. They thus made it their objective to turn out Guru Gobind Singh from the hill areas. The Guru, on the other hand, remained busy all these days in the peaceful work of religious and social reconstruction, which had been carried on for more than two centuries by his predecessor. He supplemented this work by giving the Sikh community a definite organisation of Khalsa and blended all his Sikhs into a brotherhood with common ideals. Among the castes, that were ever oppressed, he had discovered the material with which he could oppose the very highest in the social ranks. He wanted to give these oppressed people a proper organisation and instil into their minds the confidence that the lowest among them were equal to the highest. This task he had accomplished on the first of Baisakh in Samvat 1756 (1699 A.D.) when with a drawn sword he summoned those, who were pre-

pared to follow him even at the cost of death. It was a well calculated plan which helped Guru Gobind Singh in getting an army of dedicated, devoted and loyal Sikhs in the form of Khalsa. The institution of Khalsa was not a *Jehad* against Muslims. Khalsa was, on the other hand, created to bring about social equality in society and to fight against oppression and tyranny of the rulers. Soon after the creation of Khalsa the Sikhs became a powerful cause of the destruction of the Mughal despotism in North India.

In the new social order that the Guru had created, none could deem himself superior to another. "The four castes are like pan, supari, chuna and katha", he said. None of them, if taken by itself, could give ruddiness to the lips. When a low caste brought the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur from Delhi he embraced him publicly and said, "Rangreta Guru Ka Beta" which means that people from the low castes were his sons. Every man, who became member of this new social order, was full of a new spirit of optimism. The Sikhs were taught that "One Khalsa is equal to a lakh and a quarter of it" and that they are invincible and invulnerable. The creation by the Guru of a vast amount of literature on war was also a calculated move to achieve the same end. The Guru created mass-awakening in India and showed to the people that they were strong enough to check the tide of political tyranny and religious persecution. After the creation of Khalsa, one of the first acts of the Guru was to send his agents to different places in order to initiate the Sikhs according to the new rites and to spread the message of the new dispensation far and wide. Many enthusiastic followers

came to Anandpur and the hill chiefs saw before their very eyes what a powerful crowd was gathering around the Guru. They regarded the Guru as an intruder, and his continued presence in their midst was a standing menace to them. They became seriously alarmed when there was this phenomenal increase in the Guru's followers. The Guru's teachings were also a menace to the power of all the hill rajas. Such things they could not tolerate in their own territories. The holding of conferences, where men were taught to challenge the birth right of priests and princess and where the brotherhood of man was not only taught but practised, were unbearable insults to them. With one stroke Guru Gobind Singh had done away with distinctions that had engendered selfishness and manhatred. Humanity was all of a sudden roused into activity by him and it also became conscious of its strength. The followers of the Guru became staunch friends of the weak and the defenceless. They were respected and feared wherever they went and wherever they lived. When their souls were freed they turned their attention to the injustice in religion and politics and they also challenged the authority of the priestly classes and their adherents amongst whom were included the hill chiefs. With the abolition of caste, equality of privileges with one another and with the Guru, common worship, common place of pilgrimage, common method of initiation for all classes, common external appearance, common leadership and the community of aspirations, the Guru brought about unity among his followers and he bound them together in a compact mass. These factors fostered a common national pride and the

Sikhs hoped for success in every kind of competition. All those members of the four castes, who embraced Sikhism shared this pride and could carry arms on their person for their self defence.

All these years the centre of the Guru's activities was at Anandpur. The land had been purchased by his father Guru Tegh Bahadur from the Raja of Kahlur. In 1682 Guru Gobind Singh had ordered for the making of a large drum and when it was ready, he celebrated its completion and named it *Ranjit*—"Victorious on the battlefield". When beaten, its thunder could be heard far and away in the country. The beating of the drum was taken to mean by the hill chiefs that the Guru intended to set up an independent principality.

Guru Gobind Singh was essentially a man of peace and every time, battle was forced upon him, especially at a time when the need for the peaceful organisation of his new-born Khalsa was the keenest. Warlike activities suited neither his programme nor his convenience. *Khalsa* was not organised for aggression. The Guru had declared that the sword was to be lifted only as the last resort for self-defence. In the beginning the Rajas had also some faith in the Guru but when the Guru initiated the baptism and openly gave up the old traditions of caste, they became opposed to him. They were opposed to the Guru's mission on religious grounds. They disliked his amalgamation of the four castes, and resented his criticism of their gods and goddesses. The hill chiefs were also pitted against the Guru by the Emperor of Delhi, who himself was

away in the Deccan and had planned the annihilation of the Sikhs by using the hill chiefs as his tools.

Guru Gobind Singh was surrounded during his childhood by Hindu influences and as he grew in age, he found out the shallowness of this religion of multi-gods. The hills were the stronghold of Hinduism and the people, who lived there, were fanatically steeped in the *Devi Cult*. In Kangra alone there were local *Devis* numbering more than three hundred and sixty. They were all represented by images in the temples. Guru Gobind Singh was not a worshipper of images and he openly condemned worship. He said,

“Kahu lai pahan puj dhario sir kahu lai ling
gare latkayo,

Kashu lakhyo Har awachi disha men, Kahu
parchhah ko sis niwayo,

Kahu butan ko pujat hai pasu kahu mritan
ko pujan dhayo,

Kur kriya urjhyo sabhi jag sri Bhagwan
ko bhed na payo.”

(“Some people take idols and place them on their heads. There are others who wear the *Lingam* round their necks. Some search for God towards the east, some bow their heads toward the west. Some people worship images and some adore tombs. The whole world is entangled in false pursuits and the secret of the Almighty none has found out”). He thus saw God in all things and considered it a sacrilege to look down on any human being, however, humble or low-placed. His views were revolutionary and they pro-

voked hostility in all conservative centres. • For some time this opposition was not a pronounced one; but as the number of converts to the new creed increased the open disregard of old beliefs and rituals engendered a bitterness and it soon assumed a serious form. The hill chiefs regarded the Sikhs as heretics and joined hands together to nip the evil in the bud. But the coalition of the hill chiefs lacked leadership and the pride of clan and caste prevented them from joining under a single leader. The hill chiefs by themselves failed to cope up with the Guru, and they also could not get effective help from the Imperial Government in the beginning. The weakness of the hill chiefs had a lot to do with the success of the Guru.

In the Sikh Army, recruitment was made irrespective of caste and creed. The bulk of the army was composed of those, who had accepted the Sikh religion but both the Hindus and the Muslims also joined the army. The Guru kept a small force with himself at the time of harvest and during periods of inactivity. Those, who visited the Guru at Anandpur, were asked by him to join his army and those, who were willing to join could get their names registered. Enlistment to the Guru's army was voluntary. Most of the Sikhs did not accept any salaries. Some of them were paid either daily or six monthly allowances. The Guru paid closer attention to matters of military efficiency of his soldiers. Every Sikh was required to be armed with at least a sword and learn its use. The Guru arranged regular mock fights dividing his Sikhs into two parties. He would place some property in charge of one party and would ask

the other to loot it. They were, in this way, taught how to charge and defend themselves. The Guru also arranged big hunting expeditions. The Sikhs were engaged in single combats with wild beasts and this way they practised the use of their arms. The weapons used by them were bows and arrows, two edged daggers, spears, swords, lances, teghs, pikes, muskets, guns and the shields prepared from hide of the animals. They mainly fought on horse-back but the Guru also possessed one or two war elephants. An ordinary soldier could shoot one arrow at a time and its range was from 500 meters to 1000 meters. The match-locks and guns had limited range and were used for engaging at close quarters. Those days combats were frequently fought to meet the challenges of the individuals and it was the most attractive form of fight. It allowed personal heroism to come out glaringly and also prevented the unnecessary bloodshed. The combats between Kirpal and Hayat Khan, Guru Gobind Singh and Raja Hari Chand of Handur, Ude Singh and Kesri Chand, Guru Gobind Singh and Painsa Khan are only a few examples. Beseiging the garrisons and reducing them to surrender by starvation and exhaustion was the usual method of warfare. The Sikhs also followed a code of honour in wars and showed regard towards even the dead of the enemy. The dead bodies of the Sikhs were generally cremated and those of the Muhammedans collected and buried. The wounded were attended to with care without any discrimination. Bhai Kanhiya, a devotee of the Guru, for example, had been attending even the wounded enemies on the battlefield.

THE BATTLE OF BHANGANI (1687)

As Guru Gobind Singh wanted to live in peace, he selected a spot on the bank of the river Jamuna and constructed a fortress there which he called Paonta. He devoted his time there to the composition of poetry and the pleasures of the chase.

Sayyed Budhu Shah, who lived at Sadhaura, seven or eight miles from Paonta, had heard of Guru Nanak's mission and of the work that his successors had been doing. The Sayyed lived a life of austerities and had read many religious books. He became one of the greatest admirers of the Guru. Even Raja Fateh Shah came and stayed with the Guru at Paonta. Here a news was brought to the Guru that a wild lion was doing havoc in the adjoining hill areas. No one dared to kill the lion single-handed with the help of a sword and a shield. But Guru Gobind Singh did it while facing the lion on the ground.

Medni Parkash, the ruler of Nahan and Fateh Shah, the ruler of Srinagar, were mutual enemies. The latter had occupied some of the former's territory and wanted still more annexations. Fateh

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GURU GOBIND SINGH

Shah's daughter was to be married to the son of Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur, the strongest of the hill chiefs. To help Fateh Shah, Raja Bhim Chand had decided to take to the field against Raja Medni Parkash. But he was advised to wait till the marriage of his son was over. However, on the advice of Guru Gobind Singh, Raja Fateh Shah got reconciled with Medni Parkash and this old dispute between them was settled once for all.

Raja Bhim Chand, who had heard about the Guru's newly acquired *Ranjit Nagara*—war drum—and had an eye on the Kabuli woollen tent and *Pra-shadi* elephant which was presented to the Guru by the Raja Rattan Rai, once, came to the Guru's court. He was dumb with amazement at the splendour of the tent and was surprised to see the skill displayed by the elephant. He was also dazzled by the magnificence of the Guru's darbar. When he went back, he sent a message to the Guru asking for a loan of the elephant on the occasion of the betrothal ceremony of his son, Ajmer Chand. But the Guru informed his messenger that at the time of presenting the animal and other offerings, the Raja had wished that they were meant only for the Guru's service. At this Raja Bhim Chand's wrath knew no bounds. He gave orders that preparations for war should begin. His ministers pleaded for another effort at persuasion and a Brahmin Priest was sent to the Guru along with fused to abide by the wishes of Bhim Chand, the Raja ordered his army to get ready for war. The Guru also ordered Diwan Nanak Chand to get ready. It may be said that the real cause of the war was far deeper. One of these causes, which the Guru himself wrote in his letter to Aurangzeb, was that the hill rajas were idol worshippers, while he was idol breaker. They disliked his religious and social reforms and also did not relish his equalising of all castes. Raja Bhim Chand being the leading chief had in his heart the desire to win the pleasure of his gods as well as that of Aurangzeb.

In those days though the Hindus were excluded from the service of the Imperial Government, yet the

Hindus of position and rank had thrown their lot with the Government of the day. In order to retain their lands, they always sided with the Government. Thus although the masses of the Hindus were bitterly against the Government, the hill chiefs, who called themselves the leaders of the Hindus were most officiously loyal to the throne and most bitterly hostile to all progressive movements. They feared the loss of their positions and also the loss of land they ruled.

Though all preparations for the war were made, Bhim Chand marked time till the marriage of his son, who was to marry Raja Fateh Shah's daughter. Meanwhile, Raja Fateh Shah invited the Guru to the wedding. The Guru feeling that his presence at the same place as Bhim Chand might spoil the marriage festivities declined to attend the marriage personally but he sent his own persons to represent him there.

Meanwhile Bhim Chand started with the marriage party from Kahlur. The marriage party had to pass through Paonta as it was on the way. Bhim Chand, therefore, sent his minister to get permission of the Guru to pass that way. But as he had a large force with him the Guru did not allow them all to pass that way. He permitted only the bride-groom along with some of his officers to cross the ferry near the fort. The Guru had thought it inadvisable to allow two armies, amongst whom there was open enmity, to come to such close quarters. Later when the Guru's presents to the bride were announced, Bhim Chand got enraged because they excelled in price and magnificence all the gifts received from all the hill chiefs. Bhim Chand felt

insulted and he asked Raja Fateh Shah to choose between himself and the Guru.

After the marriage, Raja Bhim Chand appealed to all the confederate Rajas to help him in either killing the Guru or sending him in custody to Aurangzeb. The appeal was responded. Raja Bhim Chand of Kalhur, Fateh Shah of Srinagar, Kirpal Chand of Kangra, Bir Sen of Mandi, Kesri Singh of Jaswal, Hari Chand of Handur, Dayal Chand of Kot Garh and about twenty others put their respective armies in motion. On the side of the Guru, Mohri Chand, Kirpal Chand, Prohit Daya Ram, Jaita, Sanga Shah, Jowaharji and other veterans advanced to meet the allied forces. The Guru had also, on the recommendation of Sayyed Budhu Shah, employed earlier about five hundred Pathans, who had been dismissed by Aurangzeb. They were not engaged by anyone because of the fear of the Emperor. They were under five officers, namely, Haiyat Khan, Kale Khan, Najabat Khan, Umar Khan and Bhikhan Khan. When it was announced that the hill rajas were marching against the Guru, about four hundred Pathans deserted the Guru at that critical time. One of the officers, Kale Khan tried vainly to dissuade them from this faithless action. These four hundred soldiers and their four officers joined the enemy. When Pir Budhu Shah heard that Guru Gobind Singh was about to be attacked by the hill chiefs and that four hundred Pathans who were taken at his recommendation had deserted the Guru he hurried to the Guru's aid. He took with him his two brothers, his four sons and seven hundred disciples. About five hundred

Udasi Sadhus, who were daily fed in the Guru's kitchen were also dismayed on hearing the news of the impending danger. As they were afraid that Guru Gobind Singh might ask them to fight, all of them, except Mahant Kirpal of Hehar, ran away. Guru Gobind Singh was left with an army of a few hundred strong men. The enemies, far outnumbered them. When the forces of the enemies were advancing, the Guru left the fortress in the charge of a few persons and accompanied by his uncles Kirpal Chand, Sahib Chand, Lal Chand, Diwan Nand Chand, Lal Chand, confectioner, Udai Singh, Bachittar Singh, Alam Singh and Chandan Rai marched out at the head of his followers to give battle to the enemy. The opposing forces met on the field of Bhangani which stands at about 6 miles distance from Paonta on the plain between the Jamuna and the Giri, not far from the city of Rajpura on Mussoorie Road. The battle commenced with great vehemence.

Commandant Sango Shah advanced with half of the Guru's detachment and the other half was kept in reserve. Reinforced by five hundred horsemen, led by Prohit Daya Ram and Diwan Nand Chand, the Sikhs pierced the breasts of the hillmen. Budhu Shah, with four sons, two brothers and other fell upon a section of the Rajput army. The Guru had appointed Sango Shah, Jit Mal, Gulab Chand, Ganga Ram and Mohari Chand (his cousins) as commanders of his army. Praising Raja Hari Chand of Hendur, who fought on the enemy side, the Guru says in *Vachitter Natak*, "The brave Hari Chand then took the field. He planted his feet firmly in the field and

discharged arrows which killed whomsoever they touched". Sango Shah also engaged in a single hand to hand combat with Najabat Khan and before he fell down with a wound from the Pathan's sword, he killed him with his weapon". When Sango Shah had fallen, the Guru took up arms personally. The Guru writes in *Vachitter Natak*, "When I saw Lord of the Battle, Sango Shah die in the field, thy worm (Guru Gobind Singh) took up bow and arrow." He also writes about Hari Chand's attack on his own person. "Hari Chand was enraged and took up the bow. His first arrow killed my steed and the second one was aimed at me but the Almighty protected me. His third arrow struck my belt and tore open the armour. The point of the arrow touched my skin but no serious wound was caused. It is only God who saved me knowing me His servant. When the arrow struck me I was also enraged. I took my bow and discharged arrows in abundance. All my soldiers came running and did the same. Then I aimed at the young hero and struck him. Hari Chand was killed and his warriors were run over." Kale Khan, with his hundred men, was sent in aid of Budhu Shah, who was also busy in fighting. At this time Lal Chand Mahi, the Guru's wrestler, feeling a strong impulse, ran his horse into the thick of the fight. His example was imitated by Lal Chand, a confectioner, who had never handled a weapon. The arrival of two wooden batteries that had been prepared by a sikh carpenter, Rama, strengthened the hands of the Sikhs. Shells of stone rained upon the enemies and crushed them to death. Panic-struck, the enemy and they fled in all directions.

Sango Shah, the Guru's commander of the Force, Jit Mal, and many brave Sikhs had served the Guru with their lives. Two of Sayyed Budhu Shah's sons also fell on the field. Guru Gobind Singh writes in *Vachitter Natak* about his success in the battle in the following words: "The hillmen fled from the field of battle, all fears vanished and I, through the favour of the eternal God, gained the victory". The Guru's army sought the Guru's permission to attack Fateh Shah, conquer his land, and bring him captive before the Guru. But the Guru did not desire such conquests. He had no ambition to establish any kingdom or principality. After a short stay at Paonta, the Guru ordered his armies to proceed to Anandpur without having occupied even an inch of the territory of his vanquished foes.

From Paonta the Guru went to Lahar, by way of Sadhaura. He stayed near Lahar for about ten days and diverted himself in chase and hunt in the dense jungle. From there he went to Toda. Here a messenger arrived from Raja Medni Parkash with a message that the Raja would be coming to pay his homage at that place. But in fact the Raja was too afraid of his neighbouring chiefs. The Guru knew what thoughts were working on the Raja's mind. So he moved on without waiting for the minister.

The Guru next halted at Tabra in the state of Ram Garh. The Raja of the State extended a warm welcome to the Guru. From there the Guru passed through various villages where he was received. At Kiratpur he visited the shrines of his ancestors. When the Guru reached near Anandpur, the whole popu-

lation poured out to receive him. All rejoiced at the Guru's return after an absence of more than three years. Guru Gobind Singh returned to Anandpur in October 1687.

Anandpur now began to grow into a big city. Besides the Sikhs, who formed the Guru's standing force and household, several shopkeepers came and settled there. The fame of the Guru's victory in the Battle of Bhangani spread far and wide, and disciples came in large numbers from every part of the country. After his severe defeat at Bhangani, Raja Bhim Chand thought it proper to secure peace with Guru Gobind Singh. He thus came and asked forgiveness for his past deeds. The Guru in return assured him of his friendship.

Though for about two years there was peace, Guru Gobind Singh had realised that in order to live in peace he must always remain prepared for war. He thus utilised his time in increasing, equipping, and organising the Sikh armies.

Some historians give 1689 A.D. (Samvat 1746) as the year of this battle. But the battle seems to have been fought in the year 1687.

BATTLE OF NADAUN (1688)

After the Battle of Bhangani Guru Gobind Singh remained busy for some time in putting his house in order. The battle had made a great impression upon the hill chiefs and they now began to regard the Guru's presence in the areas under their control as a great threat. The Guru's earlier stay at Anandpur was purely nominal but after the Battle of Bhangani

he had made it the real centre of his activities. The hill chiefs were now convinced that it was no easy matter to crush the Guru. They thought it prudent to court his favour. Their leader Bhim Chand, accompanied by the Minister, Parma Nand, came to the Guru at Anandpur and asked for forgiveness for his past misdeeds.

Meanwhile Aurangzeb who was at this time engaged in quelling disturbances in the Deccan, needed reinforcement from North India. When the Mughal armies were sent from Punjab for the reinforcement, the military strength of the province was considerably reduced. There was also a general laxity in the administration. This all encouraged the hill chiefs to stop the payment of tributes. Aurangzeb, who was fighting with Tana Shah of Golconda and others, could not afford to remain absent from Deccan. Mian Khan, an officer of the Emperor was thus appointed to collect the amount of the tribute and was sent to Lahore. Mian Khan sent his assistant Alif Khan to collect arrears of the tribute from the hill chiefs namely Kirpal Chand of Kangra, Ram Singh of Jaswal, Bhim Chand of Kahlur, Prithi Chand of Dadhwal and from others.

Commandant Alif Khan was advised to apply force and obtain the money. When Alif Khan marched against the Rajas, west of the Ravi, Kirpal Chand and Dyal Chand agreed to pay him the tribute. They also suggested him that the realization of the tribute from all the hill chiefs would become easier if their chief, Bhim Chand was taught to respect the imperial authority. Alif Khan then decided

to march against Bhim Chand. Bhim Chand on the other side flew into rage when he learnt that it was at the instigation of Kirpal Chand that the expedition was coming against him. The hill chiefs met together and decided to seek the Guru's help to meet the challenge. They despatched an embassy to Anandpur to secure the Guru's assistance.

When Parma Nand, the ambassador of the Raja of Kahlur, approached the Guru, he had realised that the time was not distant when he himself would have to offer resistance to the same imperial power. Moreover, the amount of the tribute was to be collected from the poor masses of the area and it was to be spent on blood-shed of the masses in the Deccan. Guru Gobind Singh, therefore, decided to offer assistance. The Guru writes about his assistance to Raja in *Vachitter Natak*: "The Raja called me to assist him in the war and I joined his side."

Guru Gobind Singh thus took his army with him and joined the hill chiefs at Nadaun—a petty town on the left bank of the Beas, 20 miles south-east of the Kangra town. As Alif Khan's army was encamped on a position of eminence and had also built wooden stockades for their protection, they had a great superiority of position. The attack was opened by Bhim Chand's troops, who did not wait to be attacked. Bhim Chand invoked the help of *Hanuman* (the Monkey God) at the opening of the battle. He collected his troops and those of his allies and also appealed strongly to the Guru, who had not so far gone to the front, to make a united attack. A furious battle now raged which inflicted a great loss on both

the sides. Describing the battle-scene in his own words Guru Gobind Singh states: "Then thy worm (the Guru) took up his gun and aimed it at the heart of a Raja. Fighting bravely he tottered to the ground. Even when falling the proud warrior in his rage shouted "kill". I kept aside the gun and took up my bow. I shot four arrows with my right hand and three with the left. I could not see whether they struck anybody. By that time God turned the battle in our favour. The enemy was driven nito the river. Arrows and bullets flew in abundance and it appeared as if the warriors were playing *Holi*, with one another." The enemy crossed the river and and camped on the other side. In the darkness of the night the enemy fled away leaving some camp-fires burning and also some men to beat the drums. Guru Gobind Singh stayed there for about eight days after the battle. Alif Khan had fled from the battlefield and the Guru's side was completely victorious.

After this battle Bhim Chand opened negotiations with Alif Khan without the consent of Guru Gobind Singh. This displeased the Guru, who then ordered his troops to return to Anandpur. Bhim Chand made a private treaty with Alif Khan. The date of this battle falls in 1688 A.D. or thereabout.

BATTLE WITH HUSSAIN KHAN (1695 A.D.)

After the Battle of Nadaun, Guru Gobind Singh spent a few years peacefully at Anandpur. During this period Guru Gobind Singh was busy in his religious works and hunting expeditions. In the meanwhile one Dilawar Khan became the Governor

of Punjab and he sent his son Rustom Khan with a large army to smash the power of the Guru and also to conquer the hill chiefs and collect the outstanding amount of the tribute. But Rustam Khan, who was badly defeated by the opponents, returned to Lahore to the great chagrin of Dilawar Khan. Now Dilawar Khan chose his adopted son, Hussain Khan, a fierce and unrelentful person, who commanded another expedition against the Guru. Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur and his ally Kirpal Chand of Kangra forgetting that it was the Guru's support of them that had led the Governor of Lahore to wage war on the Guru, joined Hussain Khan against the Guru. The combined armies tried to place Anandpur in a state of defence. Guru Gobind Singh was taken unaware. He at once ordered his troops to cross the Sutlej river at midnight. The enemy's troops tired with the march of the day and numbed with the coldness of the winter season were waiting to cross the river at midnight. They were unprepared for this sudden attack of the Sikhs and beat a retreat without giving battle. Hussain Khan himself now offered to take the field. With a large army he proceeded towards Anandpur plundering many villages on the way. Nobody being able to withstand him on the way he took away foodgrains by force from the villages and also subjected the people of the area to many atrocities.

Raja Gopal of Guler, on hearing that Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur and Kirpal Chand of Kangra had joined Hussain Khan, also desired to negotiate a peace with him. Accordingly like both of them he also offered to pay a part of the tribute. But as

Raja Gopal had the support of Raja Ram Singh of Jaswal he thought it better to fight rather than pay the heavy sum of Rs. 10,000|-, which Hussain Khan demanded from him. When the allied troops reached near Anandpur Hussain Khan ordered an attack on the city and fight began with an indescribable vehemence. But when the battle was raging at its highest pitch, Hussain Khan, who had boasted that he would take the Guru prisoner to Lahore and had personally killed a lot of persons on the enemy's side, was struck with an arrow and fell down dead. Raja Kirpal also fell fighting. Seeing this Raja Bhim Chand took to flight. "Thus", says the Guru, "Gopal was victorious and the battle came to an end. Dilawar Khan now sent Shaur Khan against Guru Gobind Singh with a large army, but his passage was opposed by Raja Ram Singh of Jaswal in whose territory a decisive battle was fought. Jhujhar Singh and Narain Chand, two Rajput warriors, who commanded Muslim forces, fell fighting bravely. Their death dispirited the Muslim forces, which, under the pretext of sickness, returned to Lahore. The expedition of Hussain Khan ended in complete disaster, and for this the rashness of the general was primarily responsible. The Guru tells us in *Vachitter Natak* that Hussain Khan had thrown all tactical considerations to the winds. In his blind fury and vanity he became reckless and the price he had to pay was terribly high. The Guru was thus saved from a contingency which could easily prove calamitous.

Aurangzeb was shocked to learn about the setbacks of the Mughal army in North India. He there-

fore took the matter seriously and sent his son Muazzim to manage the affairs of Punjab, which were all in a mess. Many of the *Masands* who were with the Guru were frightened to hear about the Prince's arrival and fled away to hide themselves in the hills. It is said that Guru Gobind Singh met Muazzim, who was convinced of the fact that the Guru was not trying to carve out a rival state in India and that he was only a religious leader of the Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh writes in *Vachitler Natak* "Both Guru Nanak's and Babur's families have been set up by God| The former should be regarded as Kings of religion and the latter as Kings of the State." It appears that some sort of understanding was arrived at between Muazzim and the Guru, which continued even after Aurangzeb's death. Later Guru Gobind Singh helped Muazzim in his war of succession and also stayed with him for some time, at Agra, when he had become the ruler of India. It is probable that Bahadur Shah's advisers might have seen the considerable influence that Guru Gobind Singh possessed in the Punjab and thus advised him not to molest him, for when the time of struggle for the succession to the throne would come the Sikhs would at least remain neutral in the struggle. Later when Muazzim was appointed as the Governor of Multan from 1696 A.D. to 1698 A.D. the relations between the two were more strengthened.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF ANANDPUR (1701)

Guru Gobind Singh had declared the absolute equality of every man in the eyes of God, and had

altogether prohibited the observance of caste distinctions when he created Khalsa in the year 1699. The initiation ceremony, which he introduced required persons of all castes to drink from a common vessel. This was more than what the high caste people could tolerate. The Brahmans went to the hill chiefs and roused them against the Guru. The Raja of Kahlur, who was always burning with jealousy against the Guru and always took lead in opposing the Guru, was the spokesman of the hill chiefs. The Rajas were determined to oppose the Guru because they thought that their ancient *Dharma* was being defiled. They were prepared to take the help of the Emperor of Delhi. As already explained the Guru's mission was to spread the law of *Dharma* and toleration in the land. The government of the time was bitterly hostile to all religions except the state religion. The non-believers were forcibly converted to Islam. Guru Gobind Singh knew that the hill chiefs were acting only as the tools of the Muslim Emperor and would allow him no peace. He therefore set up foundries to prepare weapons for his soldiers. Regular army was increased. Orders were sent around to all his Sikhs to offer only horses and arms to the Guru. It will be seen that peace was broken by the hill chiefs and open hostilities began in 1700 A.D., which continued to the end of the Guru's life. The hill chiefs and the imperial armies, made repeated attacks on Anandpur, got repulsed, and every time came back in larger numbers.

In the beginning the hill chiefs began obstructing the people carrying offerings such as horses,

weapons or cash to the Guru. Many a times the pilgrims to Anandpur were plundered on their way. The Guru thus ordered the Sikhs to go about armed and he took steps to train them in their use. This incensed the hill chiefs, who were already on the look-out for an opportunity to crush the Sikhs.

Due to the constant presence of the Guru at Anandpur the Raja of Kahlur began to fear that if the Guru would be allowed to continue to stay in the State he might become too powerful for him. The rulers of the hill states even feared that the Guru might try to take possession of the hill country.

The Raja of Kahlur, who was the most directly concerned, sought the advice of the Raja of Handur and it was decided that a messenger should be sent to the Guru with a letter demanding that the Guru should relinquish the land he was occupying in the State of Kahlur. The Guru refused to do so because the city of Anandpur was founded by his father Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Once, while the Guru was on an hunting expedition with a party of his followers he was waylaid by two hill chiefs namely Balia Chand and Alam Chand, who were laying in ambush with a considerable force. The suddenness of the attack and the overwhelming number of the enemies did not perturb the Sikhs. One of the chiefs was killed and the right arm of the other was chopped off. After the battle the Guru resumed his usual course of peaceful life. This signal defeat had roused the fears of the hill chiefs. They now met together and started making plans for concerted action. Their

thoughts were turned only in one direction. They regarded the Guru and his teachings, as an ever-growing danger to their power and religion and as same was the feelings of the Imperial officials. They decided to approach the Mughal Emperor for making the cause common. A messenger was accordingly despatched with a petition in which Guru Gobind Singh was represented as an enemy of the Hindus and the Muhammedans with ambitions to found large kingdom for himself.

Aurangzeb was away in the Deccan at that time. Subhedar of Delhi received the complaint and sent it to Aurangzeb with his strong recommendations for an immediate action. After some time the hill chiefs were informed that the Imperial army could be sent to help them if they were prepared to pay its expenses. The hill chiefs agreed to do so. Dina Beg and Painde Khan were sent with an army of ten thousands to help the hill chiefs. Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur, Bir Singh of Jaswal and Madan Pal of Sirmur joined the Imperial armies on way to Anandpur. The Guru, who had learnt about the designs of the hill chiefs had already made preparations to face the forthcoming danger. The Guru's army was commanded by the Five Beloveds, Ude Singh and Alam Singh. When the battle was at its height Painde Khan challenged the Guru for a single combat to settle the affair. Guru Gobind Singh accepted the challenge. Painde Khan was given the first chance. He shot two arrows but he missed the mark both the times. Then Guru Gobind Singh took aim and shot an arrow. It struck Painde Khan's ear,

whose whole body was covered with steel. When Painde Khan fell down wounded the Guru cut off his head with his sword. After the death of Painde Khan, the army of the hill chiefs took to heels. Dina Beg, however, continued the struggle for some time more. He was also wounded later and had to retreat. The Guru's troops pursued the allies as far as Khidrabad. Prince Ajit Singh, attended by veteran warriors, committed tremendous slaughter in this battle.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF ANANDPUR (1701)

The defeat of the hill chiefs in the first Battle of Anandpur had poured fuel over the burning fire and the hill chiefs were not going to pocket insult like that. They, therefore, lost no time and immediately met together to decide about the future common-line of action.

Another representation to the Emperor was considered to be of no use. It was decided to attack the Guru with the combined forces, and to invite to their assistance the *Ranghars* and *Gujjars* who were their subjects. The Gujjars were led by Jama-tulla. Invitations were sent to almost all the hill chiefs. Rajas of Kotoch, Jammu, Nurpur, Mandi, Kulu, Kainthal, Guler, Chander, Srinagar (Garhwal), Busher and Dadhwal immediately responded to their invitation. A letter was now sent to the Guru asking him to leave Anandpur or take up arms against them. The Guru replied that the land had been bought by his father and hence he had every right to remain in the city.

At that time there were two forts in Anandpur namely Fatehgarh and Lohgarh, which Guru Gobind Singh had constructed. Bhai Sher Singh and Bhai Nahar Singh with five hundred men each, were placed in charge of Lohgarh and Ude Singh was deputed for defending Fatehgarh. The allied army took up its position just outside Anandpur. As the invaders approached the city, Prince Ajit Singh with four thousand Sikhs fell on the Gujjars and Ranghars, who were advancing in a large number. Under the leadership of Daya Singh, Alim Singh, and Ude Singh, the Sikhs directed their attacks against the allies. Jamatulla, the leader of the Gujjars was killed on the very first day of the battle.

The Rajas were disappointed at the result of the battle on the first day and the Raja of Mandi suggested reconciliation with the Guru. But the Raja of Handur and Kesari Chand of Jaswal opposed the Raja of Mandi and offered to make a more determined effort the next day. Next day the hill chiefs with their armies advanced on the Sikhs, who offered them resistance. Ajit Singh, the Guru's son, again fought in the battle. The hill chiefs realised that they would not be successful in an open battle. They now decided to spend all their resources on the blockade of the city and to cut off all the supplies to the city. The Sikhs had to resort to night sorties. At night the Sikhs attacked the enemy's camp in darkness and carried away their supplies. The siege of Anandpur lasted for about two months. At last it was decided that an intoxicated elephant with its body fully covered with steel and a spear projecting

from the forehead should be directed against the gate of the Lohgarh fort, to enable the allies to get an opening to the fort.

When the Guru heard this, he appointed Duni Chand to attack the elephant the next morning. But Duni Chand, who was terribly frightened, fled from the Guru's camp at night. The Guru then asked one Sikh named Bachitter Singh, who, riding on a horse and taking his spear, struck it on the elephant's head with all his might. The elephant was severely wounded. The furious animal turned round, and ran about killing, wounding, and treading under foot the soldiers, who had relied on it. The battle that followed was severe and prolonged. Several noted chiefs lay dead on the field. At last Ghumand Chand, the Raja of Kangra, took the command of the allied forces in his own hands. But when Ghumand Chand was retiring for rest in the evening, he was struck by a bullet and was seriously wounded. This completely broke down the morale of the enemy and the hill chiefs took to flight under the cover of the night. This way ended the second Battle of Anandpur.

It may be noted that in both the Battles of Anandpur the hill chiefs were personally commanding their forces whereas the Guru's forces were led by those, who a few years back, were considered to be the low caste people of Punjab and were down-trodden for many centuries. These battles had demonstrated the hidden strength of the common man and the hill chiefs, who were merely feudal lords, found that their own existence was threatened by this rising force of the common man.

THE BATTLE OF NIRMOH (1701)*

When the hill chiefs saw no way of victory against the Guru, they decided to employ a little craft. They had no courage to admit open defeat. They appealed to the Guru in the name of the sacred cow, dharma, and the true Kshatriya spirit, to save them from the shame and humiliation involved in retreat. But the Guru refused to place any reliance on the words of the hill chiefs.

At last on the suggestion of Parma Nand, a priest at the court of the Raja of Kahlur, whose name has also been referred to earlier, the Rajas had recourse to a strategem. A cow and a letter were kept near the main gate of the fort Lohgarh. In the letter it was written that if the Guru vacated Anandpur for a day they would immediately at night raise the blockade and retire. The Guru, at the instance of his Sikhs, agreed to grant the appeal after some hesitation. The Sikhs on vacating Anandpur encamped at a place couple of miles away from Anandpur.

But the Guru left a body of brave soldiers to defend the fort, and took only a small bands of selected warriors with him to the place known as Nirmoh. At Nirmoh the Guru encamped himself on a place of eminence. The hill chiefs took advantage of the situation and throwing all their vows to the winds fell upon the Guru. The Sikhs resisted the attack with dash and vigour. The hill chiefs had another defeat in the battle.

Sarhind was only at forty-five miles distance from Anandpur and the hill chiefs now thought of

reinforcing themselves with the help of the Mughal army. The Rajas thus once again appealed for help to Wazir Khan, the Subedar of Sirhind. Having received the Imperial orders Wazir Khan proceeded with a large army to attack the Guru. It is stated that one day when the Guru was holding a *Diwan*, on a mound nearby, in the open, the hill chiefs noticed him and promised large rewards to a Muhammedan gunner if he would kill the Guru. The gunner took aim at Guru Gobind Singh and fired a cannon ball but the shot missed the Guru and struck an attendant named Ram Singh, who was standing just behind the Guru, and he was killed. The Guru lost no time and took up his bow and shot an arrow at the gunner. The arrow hit the gunner, who fell down never to rise again. With the second arrow the Guru killed the gunner's assistant, who was helping him in the operation. But still the Guru was in a very critical position. The hill armies were on his one side and Wazir Khan's troops were on the other and on the opposite side was the river Sutlej. The Sikhs stood faithfully by the Guru and fought for him. At last the allied armies made such a furious assault on the Guru's army that the Guru was obliged to find a new place to fight the enemies. As Anandpur was not so safe a place he decided to proceed to Basali, a small hill state on the other side of the Sutlej. The Raja of the state had invited the Guru a number of times. A desperate attack was made to seize the Guru when he was crossing the river Sutlej. But the Sikhs fought bravely and he did not fall in the hands of the enemies. The Guru now stationed himself in a fortress at Basali.

The allied troops became reluctant to pursue the Guru beyond the river and hence returned to their homes. The hill chiefs were now, greatly pleased because they thought that they had got rid of the Guru. They gave large presents to Wazir Khan, who returned to Sirhind.

BATTLE OF BASALI

As already stated when the Guru was crossing the river Sutlej to reach Basali some of the hill troops cross the river and attacked the Sikhs. It was only a small affair for the Sikhs, who put up a heroic defence again and chased away the hill troops.

The Guru remained quiet for some time but when repeated complaints were brought to the Guru that the inhabitants of Kamot, a nearby village, were harassing the Sikh soldiers, the Guru ordered a march towards that village. The Sikhs reached Kalmot and punished those, who were responsible for offending the Sikhs. While at Basali, Raja Dharampal, the ruler of the State, became a sincere admirer of the Guru. But the Guru soon decided to leave Basali with a view to reoccupy Anandpur. On the way, a halt was ordered at Bhambaur, a small state, with whose chief the Guru had become acquainted while at Basali.

When Guru Gobind Singh returned to Anandpur from Basali none offered him any resistance. Raja Ajmer Chand, who was now the ruler of Kahlur after Bhim Chand, and other hill chiefs thought it advisable to be at peace with the Guru. The Raja of

Kahlur sent some offerings to the Guru and a peace was reached between them. The other hill chiefs also followed suit and there was peace for some time.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF CHAMKAUR (1703)

When Guru Gobind Singh returned from Basali, Ajmer Chand, the Raja of Kahlur, sent Parma Nand to the Guru's darbar. Apparently he came in the capacity of an ambassador, but actually he was on a mission of espionage. One day, at the instance of his master, Parma Nand requested Guru Gobind Singh to go to Rawalsar where all the hill chiefs were to assemble. As it was an excellent opportunity for a heart to heart talk and the establishment of peaceful relations with the hill chiefs, the Guru agreed to visit Rawalsar.

In 1702 A.D., accompanied by his mother, family and many other followers, the Guru left Anandpur to attend an Eclipse Fair at Thaneswar. The Hindus had a belief that the offering of a cow facilitated the journey of a pilgrim, after death. Guru Gobind Singh did not believe in such superstitions. He offered an ass instead of cow and thereby exposed such superstitions and asked the people to look to God alone for protection, whether in this world or the next.

Though outwardly both Raja of Kahlur and Raja Bhup Chand of Handur were at peace with the Guru yet inwardly they were always busy in finding out means to destroy the Guru. Once when two

officers of the Imperial army, Saiyed Beg and Alif Khan, were on their way from Lahore to Delhi, Bhim Chand availed of the opportunity and promised them large sums of money for attacking the Guru. The Guru was at this time, camped near Chamkaur on his way back from Thaneswar and only a small contingent was with him. Both Saiyed Beg and Alif Khan had an army of ten thousand each, with them. When the generals demanded two thousand rupees a day, the hill chiefs agreed. The battle, which thus resulted, was long and severe. Alif Khan was wounded and moved by a feeling of admiration for the Guru. The desertion of Saiyed Beg took away whatever courage and resolve Alif Khan still had. He also gave up the idea of continuing the battle and went away.

In this battle both Saiyed Beg and Alif Khan could see Muslims fighting in the foremost ranks of the Guru's army. The hill chiefs were once again disheartened and they sent another representation to Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb was conscious of the serious effects that the Guru's activities and teachings were producing in Punjab. The Emperor now took the things seriously and decided to send Imperial army in a larger number to conquer and capture the Guru.

This Battle of Chamkaur had revealed that Guru Gobind Singh was neither fighting against the Muslims nor against the Hindus. It was mainly due Raja Kesrichand of Jaswal. But when the Guru resorted to this reason that Saiyed Beg joined the Guru and became his dedicated devotee for the rest of his life. The main reason of Guru's fighting was to subdue

all those who had been suppressing the common man. After this battle the Guru immediately returned to Anandpur.

After the First Battle of Chamkaur once a brahman came to the Guru with a complaint that when he was returning home, with his newly married wife, Jabbar Khan, a leading Pathan of Bassi, forcibly took away his wife and had detained her in his house. Guru Gobind Singh immediately ordered his son Ajit Singh to rescue the woman and bring Jabbar Khan bound hand and foot. Jabbar Khan was captured and brought to Anandpur by Ajit Singh. The brahman's wife was restored to him and Jabbar Khan was put to death.

THIRD BATTLE OF ANANDPUR (1703)

The Sikhs had been greatly offended by the treacherous conduct of the hill chiefs and they often had to raid the territories of the hill chiefs to undermine their strength, which they were gathering to fight against the Guru once again. These raids created a state of utter lawlessness in their states and especially the hill chiefs were afraid of the masses in their own states, who were bound to be greatly influenced by the teachings of the Guru.

The Raja of Kahlur once again decided to attack the Guru and he once again appealed to all other hill chiefs to join him. The hill chiefs of Haulur, Chamba, Fatehpur, Nahan and many other states joined him. All of them sent a combined letter full of threats to the Guru and without waiting for the reply they jointly attacked him. At that time the

Guru had only a few hundred soldiers with him. They had to fight against a large number of soldiers on the other side. Both sides suffered heavy losses. The Sikhs made a great rush and succeeded at last in putting the hill armies to flight. The hill chiefs had now tested the metal of the Guru's sword a number of times and had come to the conclusion that without active and full support of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor, they would not succeed in their mission. They, therefore, sent an envoy to the Emperor in Deccan with a large number of presents so that the Emperor's attention might be drawn to the trouble spot without any delay.

FOURTH BATTLE OF ANANDPUR (1704)

When the news of these repeated disasters reached Aurangzeb he clearly realised that something drastic had become absolutely necessary and accordingly he sent Mughal forces from Delhi, under the command of Saiyed Khan. This Saiyed Khan was the brother of the wife of Budho Shah, who had fought on the Guru's side in the battle of Bhangani. On his way to Anandpur Saiyed Khan met Pir Budhu Shah at Sadhaura and he heard a lot from Pir Badhu Shah about the Guru. Anyway, Saiyed Khan decided to fight against the Guru. The Guru had only five hundred men with him at that time. Maimu Khan, a Muhammedan, who was devoted to the Guru and had lived with him at Anandpur for some time, asked permission to face the enemy in the battle. The Guru was very much pleased at this and he sent him with other Sikhs to the field. Saiyed Beg, who had left the Imperial army in the

First Battle of Chamkaur, also joined Maimu Khan in the attack. He engaged in a single combat with Hari Chand, a hill chief on the enemy's side, and after a long struggle killed him. But just at that time one Dina Beg made a rush at Saiyed Beg and he fell down mortally wounded. Maimu Khan had also fought with great valour and had wrought havoc among the enemy's troops.

Saiyed Khan, the Commander of the army, left the field because he had realised that it was no use fighting against a saint. He left the field and went away. His place was then taken by one Ramzan Khan. Guru Gobind Singh took aim and shot an arrow at Ramzan Khan, who was mortally wounded. But as it was feared that the Sikhs would be overpowered it was decided to evacuate Anandpur. The Mughal forces captured the city and having plundered it, proceeded towards Sirhind. But now the Sikhs made a sudden attack on the enemy. It was quite unexpected and the army fell into confusion. Taking advantage of the situation the Sikhs got back the booty which the Mughals were carrying with them. The Sikh also succeeded in capturing Anandpur once again.

FIFTH BATTLE OF ANANDPUR (1704)

When Aurangzeb learnt about the sorry fate of his army, he became mad with indignation. His wrath against the Guru knew no bounds. He resolved that such an open and daring opposition would not be tolerated any longer. He was determined either to exterminate the Sikhs or to subdue them. After the battle

of Basali, three battles had been fought with the Guru. The hill chiefs, who were also defeated, had again gathered and made a strong representation to the Emperor. They represented to the Emperor that the Guru had assumed the title of *Sacha Padshah* or the True King and he often instigated them to join his religion and wage war against the throne of Delhi. They also said that as they proclaimed their loyalty to the Emperor and this was not tolerated by the Guru, this was the main cause of their enmity with the Guru. Aurangzeb, who was already thinking of putting a check on the rising power of the Sikhs, was further alarmed at this report of the hill chiefs and he at once decided to send a large army against the Guru.

It is necessary to note here once again, that Guru Gobind Singh did not want any political alliance, for he had no political ambition to carve out a kingdom for himself. Instigated by the hill chiefs and having firmly resolved to fight to the finish against Guru Gobind Singh, Aurangzeb sent urgent orders to the Viceroy of Delhi, Lahore, and Sarhind, to despatch all available troops against the Guru. The hill chiefs, whose enmity with the Guru was deep-rooted also prepared to array themselves against the Guru. The chief among them were: Raja Ajmer Chand of Kahlur, Ghumand Chand of Kangra, Bir Singh of Jaswal, and the Rajas of Kullu, Kainthal, Mandi, Jammu, Nurpur, Chamba, Guler, Srinagar, Bijarwal, Darauli and Dadhwal. The *Ranghars* and *Gujjars* also joined them. They by themselves formed a formidable host. The

armies of Delhi and Sarhind brought into the field by Wazir Khan, were double their number, Zabardast Khan of Lahore came at the head of an equally large and formidable army. The Mughal Commanders were instructed to raze Anandpur to the ground and bring the Guru a prisoner to Delhi. Mandates were issued under the royal seal to all defenders of the Faith in Punjab and its North-west border to crush this rising infidel power. Nawab Mohammad Khan of Maler-Kotla, Usman Khan of Qasur, Shams Khan of Bijwara, Najib Khan of Jullunder and a host of petty chiefs from Jhang, Multan, Bahawalpur and the centres of Gakhar influence, in the country now comprising the district of Rawalpindi, Attock and Hazara, also started for joining in the *Jehad*—holy war against the Guru. The two subedars joined their armies near Raupar and were joined later on by the hill chiefs. All the combined forces marched on to Anandpur on the 20th May, 1704.

Guru Gobind Singh had also made arrangements for the defence. All Sikhs who heard about the forthcoming struggle came and joined him from Majha and Malwa. Guru Gobind Singh made five divisions of his army. One contingent of five hundred was stationed in the fort Kesgarh. Another division of the same strength was placed under the command of Sher Singh and Nahar Singh to defend Lohgarh. The third division under Alim Singh and Ude Singh was deputed to look after Agampura and the surrounding part of the city. Mohkam Singh with four hundred other Sikhs took charge of the fort Holgarh. Daya Singh with his men was asked to look after the northern

ramparts, and the rest of his army the Guru kept with him in the fort of Anandgarh. On seeing the armies approaching the Guru ordered his artillery men to discharge their guns. But soon the Mughal commanders realised that they were unable to make much effect on the Sikhs in an open battle. They, therefore, decided to lay siege to the city and stop all communications of the Sikhs with the outer world. The Sikhs used in this battle two of their biggest guns, namely Baghan (Tigress) and Vijay Gosh (sound of victory) which compelled the enemy to retreat for a while.

As time passed, Guru Gobind Singh's supplies started failing. The Sikhs resorted to raids at night on the enemy camps to get provisions. Due to the long siege, provisions were exhausted. The stream, which supplied water to the city, was also cut off by Bhim Chand's men and there was acute shortage of water inside the city. The *Parsadi* elephant, on which Bhim Chand had an eye, the blue steed, which was always used by the Guru, and many other noble and precious animals, died lingering deaths for want of food. Overcome by hunger and fatigue, some of the Sikhs also threatened to desert the Guru. The Guru's stores were now completely finished and generally no ration was served to his troops. The Sikhs had to grind barks of the trees to survive. They also ate leaves of the trees found inside the fort. As the siege was getting prolonged and Aurangzeb had too many irons in the fire, he sent an autographed letter to the Guru assuring him safe conduct if he would leave the city and go to some other place. The

city had long since been vacated by the non-combatants. The sufferings of the Sikhs inside the forts had almost reached the limit of human endurance.

At one stage, tired of their fruitless efforts, the Imperial Officers had almost determined to raise the siege. But the cunning hill Rajas prevailed upon them to employ craft and thus get rid of the hated foe. At the suggestion of the hill chiefs, two envoys—a Brahman and a Saiyed were sent to the Guru charged with the message that if he evacuated Anandpur, they would not molest him in any way and swore in the name of God to guarantee him safe passage. Guru Gobind Singh had no faith in the promises and he was not prepared to leave the city. When some Sikhs insisted on leaving the city, the Guru told them that if the result of the abandonment of Anandpur proved ruinous the responsibility would be theirs. He made them sign a declaration to that effect and then gave orders for the evacuation of Anandpur. The document of disowning the Guru is known as *Bedawa* in Sikh history. All these men repented and afterwards came unexpectedly to the Guru's assistance at the Battle of Khidrana. All of them also died fighting later.

The hill chiefs now formed various plans to induce the Guru to leave the fort. They sent envoys after envoys to the Guru with promises that their troops would not attack them while they vacated Anandpur. When the Sikhs, heard of this offer, they requested the Guru to accept their offer and leave the fort. The Guru, however, admonished his Sikhs

to wait a little longer. The Guru adopted a strange stratagem to explain the hollowness of the promises made by the allies to him. At night horses loaded with wastes and with torch lights put on them were sent out of the fort to give the impression that the Sikhs were leaving the fort. The allied forces attacked those horses. By such means, the Guru succeeded in keeping his Sikhs in the fort for seven months. Meanwhile an autographed letter was received from the Emperor in which he had vowed not to harm the Guru if he capitulated. The Guru was also asked to proceed to his court to have a talk with the Emperor, but if he did not like that, he was given the option to go wherever he liked. When the Sikhs came to know of this letter they again requested the Guru to leave the fort. When the Sikhs insisted on leaving the city, the Guru warned them that they would be killed if they left the protection of the fort. The Sikhs by this time preferred death outside the fort to the life within the fort. Pressed by his Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh had no other alternative but to leave. Thus fire was set to all that was valuable in the fort and the party prepared to leave at night. It was the first week of December in the year 1704. When it was pitch dark at night, Guru's party consisting of Guru's mother with his four sons, his wives and other men left the fort. The Guru first proceeded towards Kiratpur, which is situated at about five miles distance from Anandpur. But when the party reached Nirmoh, the allied army fell on them and attacked them from behind. The party had a plan to reach Rupar. On the way, there was

a river named Sarsa at about six miles distance from Kiratpur.

The assault was ordered by the Mughal Generals at the instigation of Raja Ajmer Chand of Kahlur. As resistance with such a large army in that open field was impossible the Guru and his party plunged into the flooded river Sarsa and escaped. When the Guru left Anandpur he was accompanied by about one thousand five hundred followers. Out of them, there were only about five to seven hundred horsemen. After crossing the Sarsa, the Guru had to fight against Pathans at Rupar. When the Guru and his two eldest sons, managed to reach Chamkaur, he was left with only forty Sikhs. Chamkaur is situated at about 15 miles distance from Rupar. While crossing the Sarsa, Guru Gobind Singh's mother Mata Gujri and his two younger sons Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh lost their touch with the Guru and his party in the confusion that followed. They were misled by one domestic servant of the Guru and were taken to the Governor of Sarhind.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF CHAMKAUR (1704)

When the Guru's army was crossing the Sarsa after saying farewell to Anandpur, the allied army continued to pursue the Guru and a fresh contingent was also on its way from Delhi to reinforce them. The Guru, who was proceeding towards Rupar, changed his course and hurried towards Chamkaur. On reaching there, he occupied a *Haveli*—the mud-built house of a Jat named Gariba. It was located on a place of eminence and could be used as a

miniature fort. The Guru deputed eight men on each side of the *Haveli* to protect the four walls. Soon, the enemy troops came in thousands and surrounded the house. Arrayed against such numbers the sikhs fought against sure death and not one of them was dismayed or discouraged. The Mughal Generals thought that best course for them would be to lay siege to the place and sit quietly. They were sure that in two or three days the Guru would be starved to submission. A large force was thus stationed to watch the gate from a safe distance. Two persons namely Nahar Khan and Gairat Khan tried to scale the wall but both were shot down by Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru's party had only limited ammunition with it. When ammunition was exhausted and no hope of escape was left, Guru Gobind Singh's eldest son Ajit Singh, who was about seventeen years old, begged leave to emerge from the fortress and die fighting. Guru Gobind Singh allowed him to go and fight. Ajit Singh thus went out and after killing many enemies died a glorious death. Then the second son, namely Jujhar Singh, who was not yet fourteen, took permission to go out and fight. But before he could go out of the *Haveli*, his lips parched and he stopped and asked for a cup of water. "Go Darling," said the Guru, "angles are awaiting thee with the water of immortality in their hands. Go! And take it in the company of thy brother."

Jujhar Singh thus also went out with five Sikhs. He also fought as valiantly as his brother had done. Having killed many he was overpowered and he died fighting.

When hardly eleven Sikhs were left alive in the *Haveli*, the Sikhs pressed the Guru to make good his escape. They felt that this unequal conflict could not be continued for a long. They thought that if the Guru could be saved, the seed of the Faith would be saved. Long ago, at the time of creating the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh had declared that the Khalsa had the status of the Guru and the command of the Sikhs in the form of a resolution namely *Gurmata* was to him the order of the Khalsa. The Guru had already declared "Khalsa is the Guru and the Guru is the Khalsa". It was thus decided by those present in the *Haveli* that three Sikhs, Daya Singh, Dharm Singh and Man Singh, should accompany the Guru and the rest should hold the fortress as long as they had life in them. At the dead of night when all was quiet outside, the Guru and his three attendants escaped eluding the vigilance of the guard and throwing dust into the eyes of the allies.

Next day morning when the battle started again a Sikh named Sangat Singh sat in the Guru's place with the Guru's plume on his head. As he used goldtipped arrows, he was taken for the Guru by the enemies. All the Sikhs died fighting at last. The officers of the imperial army were glad that they had at last killed the Guru when they found the dead of body of Sangat Singh. His head was cut off for sending the same to the Emperor. But soon the Mughal generals realised that they were mistaken. The viceroy of Sarhind soon despatched small bands of soldiers to search Guru Gobind Singh. People were warned of the dire consequences of housing or

helping Guru Gobind Singh. It is said that for sheer valour and endurance the battle of Chamkaur has scarcely any parallel.

EXECUTION OF THE TWO SONS OF THE GURU

As already noted, when Guru Gobind Singh left Anandpur he was attacked from behind and severe fighting had ensued near Sarsa. In the confusion that followed, the Guru's mother and his two youngest sons managed to escape with only one attendant. Guru Gobind Singh's two wives Sundri and Sahib Kaur, who were escorted by Bhai Mani Singh fled in another direction, and after a good deal of suffering managed to reach Delhi where they found shelter with one Sikh named Jawhar Singh. Prince Ajit Singh managed to arrest the progress of the enemy while the Guru's party was crossing the flooded Sarsa. When all had crossed, the Sikhs, who were engaging the enemy, under Ajit Singh also crossed the river and joined the Guru. The Guru, with his two eldest sons and other Sikhs proceeded towards Rupar. Most of the manuscripts which were the result of years of his literary labour were lost in the confusion and washed away by the stream. Guru's mother accompanied by the two younger sons of the Guru, namely Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh also got separated from the Guru's party. They took shelter under a Brahman named Ganga Ram, who was a discharged cook of the Guru and was a native of a place called Kheri near Sarhind. Ganga Ram, who had thought of making his fortune, went to the

Muslim Chaudhari of the village and he informed him about the presence of the Guru's mother and his sons in the village. He expected to get some cash reward in return for this service. The Guru's mother and his two sons were brought by the Choudhary to Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, who ordered them to be confined in a tower. Next day the two boys were brought before Wazir Khan, who asked them to embrace Islam if they wanted to save their lives. But the boys gave a reply worthy of their parentage. Wazir Khan was perturbed at this. A Hindu Minister, named Suchanand also advised the little princes to bow down before the great Nawab. When the two little sons both aged nine and seven respectively refused to yield to Wazir Khan, he sent information to the Mughal Emperor saying that the two sons of Guru Gobind Singh, who had set going the Khalsa sect, had fallen into his hands. But without waiting for the royal orders, the governor ordered that the two lads should be buried alive under the foundation of a building. The Nawab of Malerkotla told the Governor that the holy Quran did not allow the slaughter of helpless and innocent children and hence the children should be given milder punishment. But Wazir Khan insisted on executing his plans. A part of the outer wall of the town was thus dismantled and the children were bricked alive. It is stated that later when they became senseless they were taken out and their heads were severed from their bodies. This occurred on the 25th December 1705 A.D., i.e., 13th Poh, Samvat 1762. It is said that a rich man called Todar Mal,

having heard of the imprisonment of the Guru's mother and sons hastened to the court of Wazir Khan with the intention of ransoming them. But it was too late. Even Ganga Ram, who was rewarded by the Governor of Sarhind, could not enjoy his ill-gotten wealth for a long time. When the Muhammedans heard that he had acquired great wealth, he was deprived of his treasure, and was beaten to death.

When the Guru's mother heard of what had been done to her two grandsons she fell down senseless from the tower where she was confined and she never rose again. It is stated that the two persons namely Tiloka and Rama who had gone to pay the land revenue in the royal treasury at Sarhind cremated the bodies of the two sons and the mother of the Guru.

MACHIWARA AND 'UCH DA PIR'

After coming out from the *Haveli* of Chamkaur, Guru Gobind Singh reached the vicinity of Machiwarra, a town situated at about twenty-two miles distance from Ludhiana. It was quite dangerous to move in the day light, so when the sun rose, Guru Gobind Singh laid himself down under the shade of a tree. No water was within sight there. He quenched his thirst with the juice of the leaves of the *Aq*, a wild plant, and on account of intense fatigue he fell asleep. For days he had taken no food. For days he had been without a minute's rest or sleep. The thorns and pebbles on the way had lacerated and hurt his feet. He removed an earthen water-pot from a Persian well and used it as his pillow. Fortunately,

Dharm Singh, Man Singh and Daya Singh, who had travelled in the direction of the star, which, at the time of parting, the Guru had pointed out to them, reached the same garden and found the Guru fast asleep. The Guru was unable to move because of blisters on his feet. Blood was also flowing profusely from his feet. They drew out thorns from his feet and Man Singh, carrying him on his back, took him to a well close-by and attended to his bath there. The Guru and his three companions spent full day of the 23rd December and the night in taking rest over there.

When the party moved to the village Machi-wara the Guru met two *masands* named Gulaba and Panjaba, who received him kindly and entertained him. But they soon became afraid of the consequences of harbouring a man like the Guru and frankly told him of their apprehensions. Fortunately at this crisis the Guru met two men, named Nabi Khan and Gani Khan, who used to supply him horses at Anandpur and were friendly towards him.

As Gulaba was afraid for his safety he besought the Guru to take his departure. The Guru agreed to do so. Before departing, Guru Gobind Singh went to see an old lady Gurdevi who had been spinning and weaving cloth for him. She greeted the Guru and offered him a long piece of cloth. The cloth presented by Gurdevi was dyed blue and made into robes like those worn by a sect of Muslim faquirs. Thus disguised, the Guru was carried on a cot by Nabi Khan, Gani Khan, Man Singh, and Dharm

Singh. Daya Singh waved a *Chauri* over him. On way while in search of some safe place, one day the party accidentally met a detachment of the pursuing army. Resistance was out of question and safety lay in diplomacy. When asked the leader of the pursuing army was informed that the man seated on the cot was *Uch Da Pir*. The expression *Uch Da Pir* was used as a general religious title, or as a priest of *Uch*, a well-known Muhammedan city in the southern part of Punjab. In this manner the enemies were deceived and the Guru came to Kanech, a place in the eastern part of Ludhiana district. After walking for two days, when the danger of pursuit by the Imperial army was almost over, Nabi Khan and Gani Khan were sent back by the Guru to their homes with an autographed letter in appreciation of the services rendered by them to the Guru. When the Guru reached the village of Alamgir, he met the brother of the Bhai Mani Singh, namely Nigahia Singh who offered him a beautiful horse. When he went farther he met Rai Kalla, a Muslim Chieftain, on his way. The Guru now passed through Ghungrali and reached Lull (5 miles from Doraha). At Lull it was Sayyed Noor Mohammed of Noorpur who testified that the Guru was *Uch Da Pir* and he helped the Guru in proceeding to some safe place. The Guru still disguised himself in the blue dress of a Muslim Pir and speedily he reached the wastes of Bhatinda. Having reached this safe place the Guru gave up wearing of that blue robe and the Sikhs now started learning that the Guru was still alive. His disciples again rallied round him. From here

at the Guru's instance, a messenger was despatched to Sarhind to find out the fate of Mata Gujri and his two little sons. Mahi, the messenger, is said to have travelled the long distance to and fro in an incredibly short time and he brought the tragic news to the Guru. When Guru Gobind Singh learnt of the terrible tragedy that had been enacted at Sarhind, he remained unmoved and not even a single tear fell from his eyes. The Sikh records state that the Guru received the news with perfect composure and proceeded on his way as if nothing had happened.

From there the Guru Gobind Singh moved to Dina, a village in Ferozpur District of Punjab. Meanwhile thousands of Sikhs, who had now learnt about the whereabouts of the Guru started coming to the Guru, to pay their homage to him. It was at Dina that Guru Gobind Singh wrote a poetic letter to Aurangzeb namely *Zafar Nama*—"A Letter of Victory", which he sent through Bhai Daya Singh to Aurangzeb in Deccan. On the other side, when the Governor of Sarhind heard that the Guru was at Dina his wrath knew no bounds. He wrote a strong letter to Choudhary Lakhmir Sameer asking him to hand over the Guru to him. But the Choudhary did not pay any heed to it. Guru Gobind Singh, who was now having peaceful life, visited a number of places in Malwa. He passed through Rukhanwalla, Dodgam, Bander, Bargadi, Behbal, Seoram and organised his followers. Meanwhile the Guru was also busy in searching out some safe place from where, if attacked, he could once again

face the Mughal forces. He passed through Jhidi, Bhadaur, Bhagta, Patto, Jaito, Lumbhawali, Malookeda-Kot and reached Kot-Kapura. He was now accompanied by a number of his followers. Here those Sikhs, who had left the Guru at Anandpur during the last battle after signing the document of *Bedawa*, also came and joined him. The Guru having passed through Ramane, and Roopane headed towards Khidrana. Guru Gobind Singh had already received an information that Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, was advancing with over five thousand soldiers and was about to reach the place in a very short time. In that area water was scanty and for miles together there was no place except the tank of Khidrana, where one could get water. When Guru Gobind Singh reached Khidrana he found that the Mughal troops were just approaching. He asked his Sikhs to take their position and get ready for the defence.

ZAFAR NAMA

Aurangzeb had long been absent from the North. The Southern portions of India, which were his recent conquests, were to be consolidated in that distant quarter. During this period, Shivaji had roused the slumbering spirit of the Marathas in Deccan. He had converted rude herdsmen into successful soldiers, and had become a territorial chief in the very neighbourhood of the Mughal Empire. If *Spanish Ulcer* killed Nepolean, it was *Deccan Ulcer* which had killed Aurangzeb. The Marathas, in the Deccan used guerilla warfare and never fought pitched battles in the open field. Aurangzeb had thus to consolidate all his ener-

gies in the South and had to remain away from his capital till his death. In the North, Guru Gobind Singh had established his strongholds, which secured him against any attempts of his hill neighbours. Over half-independent chiefs he had obtained a commanding influence. Guru Gobind Singh had used Anandpur as the base for his operations against the Mughal Empire. He had no quarrel with the Mughal Government as such. In the *Vachitir Nataḥ* he even recognised the temporal sovereignty of the successors of Babur. But according to him there were also certain limits which a government worth its name must not transgress. It must be just, impartial and should in no way oppress its subjects. Such transgressions the Guru was not prepared to tolerate, and his quarrel with them was permanent. The Guru's principle was to take arms only in the last resort. He was a saint as well as a soldier and his ideal was a brotherhood of soldier-saints. He himself writes that he bore no enmity to any one. At the same time he was the eternal enemy of tyranny and oppression, whatever might be their brand or form. He had declared on them a never-ending war and had created the Khalsa to carry on this war.

It appears that before Aurangzeb's death a revolutionary change had occurred in his attitude towards Guru Gobind Singh, which had been responsible for direct correspondence between Aurangzeb and the Guru. While at Dina, Guru Gobind Singh received a letter from Aurangzeb asking him to meet him in Deccan. Guru Gobind Singh replied in a long letter written in spirited Persian verse stating all the wrongs

that had been done to him by the Mughal officials and he justified his recourse to the sword as the ultimate remedy. A line in the epistle says *Chu kar Az Hamah Hilate Dar Guzasht, Halalast Burdan Ba Shamshir Dast*. (When all remedies have failed, it is lawful to lay one's hand on the sword). These remedies, unfortunately, were not many in Aurangzeb's time, because there was no recognised system of ventilating popular grievances. Earlier Guru Gobind Singh had received two letters from the Emperor at Anandpur. It is probable that Aurangzeb might have been shocked to know about the excesses committed by his subordinates on the mother and innocent children of the Guru, and he might have resolved to make peace with the Guru. There is no doubt that some sort of understanding was arrived at between the Emperor and the Guru and both had started writing to one another. Even the Guru had made up his mind to acquaint the Emperor with the true details of all that had been happening in Punjab. With that object in view, he had sent Daya Singh to Aurangzeb. Daya Singh was particularly warned that the letter was to be given in the hands of Aurangzeb himself and by no means to anybody else. In this letter the Guru informed the Emperor that he was sending his messenger to him in order to acquaint him with the real story regarding himself, the imperial officers and the hill chiefs. He briefly stated in the letter how he was attacked without any adequate reason, by a widespread combination of the hill chiefs and how the local officials had sided with them. The Guru asked the Emperor whether he considered this fair.

He further said that a true man of honour always keeps his word even if he loses his life thereby but a treacherous man says one thing and does another and the Emperor's officials acted like the latter and wantonly broke their pledges. The Guru asked the Emperor, as a religious man, what answer he would give before God. Guru says, "Behold! what injustice you have done to me, who lived on a mountain peak, and had never molested any of your villages or towns. You, without any fault, first impressed my father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, and killed him, and then joining with other rulers, you sent armies against me; you killed my young children and thousands of my disciples. Remember that these injustices, which are committed in your threshold, are not allowed at the threshold of God; justice is most truly meted out there; kings and worms are held equal there. But if you say that you read the Quran, then what is the good? Unless one purifies one's heart with good deeds, the reading of the Quran with one's lips does no good, and the fire of hell is made still hotter for such a man. Again if you wrongly suppose that you hold fast the law of the prophet because you demolish Hindu temples and the temples of Shiva, and thus uproot idolatry, then listen, you have not done away with it, rather you have increased idolatry. And if you have this hope that as God is merciful, He will have mercy on you and deliver you, then listen: As you do not show mercy to people, but are bent on giving them pain, why should God show mercy to you? This can never happen, for a man, who sows sprouts of Ak (a bitter wild plant) can never reap

mangoes; rather it thus happens that whatever seed one sows, its fruit one reaps."

The Guru wrote further that the local officials had unnecessarily and unjustly interfered in the quarrels which the hill chiefs had forced on him. They also went to extreme which no canon of governmental ethics could justify. The crime of Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind particularly, was of such heinous and brutal character that the Guru would have been false to himself, if he would sit idle and take no steps for the punishment of the wrong-doer.

The Guru also described in his letter all that had happened at Chamkaur. How forty of his Sikhs had opposed the Emperor's mighty force and how he had successfully escaped through the thousands that were lying in watch all round the village. At the end the Guru reminded the Emperor of his promise to come to the Guru if the Guru would not go to him. Guru Gobind Singh accepted in his letter that Aurangzeb was a great monarch who styled himself as a king of kings and a famous general. But according to the Guru he was far from true religion. He had one thing on the lips and quite another in the heart. That was the height of irreligion according to the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh had openly remarked in the letter, "As you did forget your word, so will God forget you. God will grant you the fruit of the evil you did design. . . . Had you sworn a hundred times on the Quran I would not have trusted you in the slightest even for a moment. I will not enter your presence, nor travel on the same road

with you."

The Guru wrote to the Emperor that he would make him known in another letter the things which he had himself accomplished, namely, the glories of the Lord which he had witnessed, and his recollections or visions of his antecedent existence. "All that I had done," he said "has been done with the aid of the Almighty." Dr. G. C. Narang writes that when Daya Singh went with the Guru's letter to the court of Aurangzeb in Ahmed Nagar he neither bent his head nor uttered any word of salutation. He simply shouted, "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh" and handed the letter to the Emperor. The letter was delivered to the Emperor in the year 1706.

As Guru Gobind Singh had appealed to the Emperor's sense of justice and to his religious integrity, it is quite conceivable that in the light of the new knowledge that he now acquired about the affairs in the Punjab, of which possibly he had been mostly ignorant, his attitude underwent a drastic change. He could not but feel that some of his acts had been in fact, against the teachings of Islam. Thus the reading of the *Zafar Nama* had softened the Emperor's heart and led him to repent. The Emperor ordered that the Guru's messenger be allowed to return to his own country in peace and an official order for his safe conduct on the return journey was also issued in the form of a *Parwana*.

The Emperor invited Guru Gobind Singh to come and meet him personally in Deccan. The Em-

peror also issued orders not to put any obstacle on his way, not to molest him any more and that the Guru should also be allowed to go wherever he liked.

BATTLE OF KHIDRANA OR MUKATSAR (1705)

As already seen, after leaving Chamkaur Guru Gobind Singh had gone to Machhiwara forest, from where he went to Dina and there he wrote a letter to Aurangzeb in which he explained that he had taken up the sword only in self-defence. In the letter Guru Gobind Singh blamed the Emperor for breaking his promises after the Guru had evacuated the fort of Anandpur. The Guru also bitterly condemned the policy of religious persecution in his letter and advised the Emperor to leave the policy of troubling the innocent people for their religious beliefs. As already stated, Bhai Daya Singh was sent to the Deccan for delivering this letter to the Emperor. Meanwhile, many of the Sikhs who lived in the surrounding country had heard about the whereabouts of the Guru and they once again started gathering under his banner. Soon he had a considerable number of Sikhs under him. Wazir Khan of Sarhind, who had learnt about it, once again marched at the head of large army against the Guru. Hearing the despatch of troops, the Guru moved from Dina and took position at Khidrana (afterwards known as Muktsar now in Ferozepur District). The country was a desert all round and the only pool of water was where the Guru had camped. The Imperial troops soon reached the desert where the Guru lay encamped. To give an exaggerated idea of their number to the enemy,

the Sikhs threw their *Chaddars* (bed sheets) on the bushes and gave them the shape of pitched tents.

In this battle Mahan Singh, the spokesman of those Sikhs, who had left the Guru at Anandpur, also engaged the enemy. Even an old lady named Mai Bhago was seen fighting in the foremost rank. Wazir Khan tried his best to advance and take possession of the tank, but he did not succeed in this. Abandoning the dead and the wounded, where they lay, the Mughal army withdrew. The Sikhs were victorious in the battle. After the Mughals had gone away, Guru Gobind Singh came to the scene of action and found that Mahan Singh, who was fighting in the battle, had still some life in him. The Guru washed his wounds and asked for his last wish. He requested the Guru to tear off that document of *Be Dawa* which they had written at Anandpur. Those forty, who died here are called the *Muktas* or 'Forty Saved Ones' and are daily remembered in their prayer by the Sikhs. It may be noted that the Fifth Battle of Anandpur, the Second Battle of Chamkaur and the Battle of Muktsar, were all fought in quick succession. Khidrana has since been known as *Muktsar* or the tank of salvation and Sikhs in large numbers visit the place on the First of Magh, the anniversary of the battle.

After the Battle of Muktsar, which was fought in 1705, the Guru stayed for some time at Damdama where it is said that old atmosphere of Anandpur was reproduced. Before reaching Damdama, the Guru went to *Nange Di S'rai*, Nanthche, Bajid Pur, Roopane, Thehadi, Bhoondar, Haripur Kal Jharani,

Banbiha and Chateana. At Chateana, a Muslim faquir became convert to Sikhism and was renamed as Ajmer Singh. Having passed through Bajah (Patiala) the Guru and his followers reached *Talwandi Sabo-Ki*. At this time, the two wives of the Guru Sundri and Sahib Kaur came from Delhi along with Bhai Mani Singh and joined the Guru after about five months. When Guru's wife Sundri enquired about her all the four sons, the Guru replied, "Those four have been sacrificed for the sake of these millions of our sons. Care not if those four are gone. There yet live, and shall ever live, millions of our dear, brave sons in the form of Khalsa." Rama and Tiloka, the two brothers, who had under great risks cremated the dead bodies of Mata Gujri and the two younger sons of the Guru, also visited the Guru here. It was at this place that Guru Gobind Singh dedicated the Holy Granth to Bhai Mani Singh. It was also here that all the fifty-two poets, whom Guru Gobind Singh had sent away from Anandpur before the wars had started, came back and joined Guru Gobind Singh.

DEPARTURE FOR DECCAN

Guru Gobind Singh had sent *Zafar Nama* to Aurangzeb from Dina and the Battle of Mukatsar was fought subsequently. While fighting against the Marathas in Deccan, Aurangzeb had arrested Shambhu, the son of Shivaji, in January 1689 and had put him to death on the 11th March, 1689. But the Marathas had now resorted to guerilla warfare and when Aurangzeb found that it was useless to fight any more he decided to leave the struggle halfway and came to Ahmednagar on 31st January 1706. It was here that Bhai Daya Singh met Aurangzeb and had handed over the letter to the Emperor. Meanwhile the Emperor had also received a complaint against the Guru from Wazir Khan of Sarhind.

When Aurangzeb read in *Zafar Nama* the misdeeds of his agents in Punjab and the atrocities committed by his officials on the Guru, it wide-opened his eyes. Aurangzeb was afraid that what had happened in Deccan should not be repeated in Punjab. He instructed Wazir Khan not to harm Guru Gobind Singh any more. He was also keen to see that Guru Gobind Singh no more stayed in Punjab. He knew that the Guru was unquestionably the leader of the masses of Punjab. He, therefore, thought of removing Guru Gobind Singh from that scene of trouble diplomatically and wrote a letter in reply to Guru Gobind Singh inviting him to come to Deccan and see him personally. In North Guru Gobind Singh had learnt about the sufferings of the people in Deccan through many Mughal soldiers, who had been

returning from there after the failure of the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb. Bhai Daya Singh had also been sending him messages about the conditions that prevailed in Deccan. The Marathas, on the other side, learnt about the bravery and valour of Guru Gobind Singh through Bhai Daya Singh and as they did not have a capable leader to guide them in the hour of their darkness, it is probable that they also persuaded Bhai Daya Singh to request the Guru to come to Deccan.

But Guru Gobind Singh wanted to study the situation well and mark sometime before he could start for Deccan. Guru Gobind Singh thus stayed at Talwandi Saboki till he decided on the 20th October 1706 to leave the place and proceed to Deccan. He sent his two wives Sundri and Sahib Kaur along with Bhai Mani Singh back to Delhi. Having stayed at Talwandi Saboki for about one and a half years the Guru started for Deccan.

Guru Gobind Singh passed through Jherad, Sarsa (Dist. Hissar) and thereafter went to Nohar, Bhandra and Suheva. The Guru was now slowly marching towards the South. He reached Ajmer and stayed at Pushkar for sometime. From there, he went to a village Naraina and after passing through Lali, Ghamrauda reached Kulait—a place situated in Rajputana.

On the other side, the health of Aurangzeb had started declining rapidly after coming to Ahmed-Nagar. His eldest son Muazzim was in Afghanistan and the youngest son had already died in 1704. The

Emperor was accompanied by his two sons Mohmed Azam and Kam Baksh at that time. When Azam learnt that Aurangzeb's end was drawing nearer, he planned to kill Kam Baksh to pave way for his succession. When Aurangzeb learnt about this design of Azam, he sent away Kam Baksh as the Governor of Bijapur and also despatched Azam as Governor of Malwa. Aurangzeb died on 20th February 1707 in the morning never to rise again. Guru Gobind Singh had, in the meanwhile, crossed Arvali Hills and reached Baghan, where he learnt about Aurangzeb's death. After Aurangzeb's death, Azam hurried to Ahmednagar and having buried his father at Khulda-bad near Daulatabad, he hastened to Delhi. He was afraid lest Muazzim would reach from Kabul and occupy the throne. Guru Gobind Singh now decided not to go further and thus halted at Baghaur.

Azam occupied the Mughal throne on the 14th March 1707. He was not so popular a man. He started favouring officials, who were not liked by his army. The Mughal army, which he led to Delhi, was also not paid its salary for the last three years. Azam reached Gwalior on 11th June 1707. On the other side Muazzim had learnt about his father's death on the 22nd March at Jamrand. He also proceeded to the capital and when he was at about twenty-four miles distance from Lahore, he declared himself to be the successor of Aurangzeb and used the title of Bahadur Shah. Earlier Bahadur Shah had in his service Bhai Nand Lal, who was, at that time, one of the learned Persian Scholars at the Guru's court.

Through him Bahadur Shah knew about the large followings of the Guru in Punjab. Bahadur Shah very much relied on the Guru in this war of succession and thus he sent a message to the Guru to come with his Sikhs to his help. The message was sent from Bhathinda in Punjab and it was received by the Guru at Baghaur. Guru Gobind Singh on receiving the message decided to help Bahadur Shah. Immediately Sikh Army was sent under the command of Bhai Daya Singh and Dharm Singh and they joined Bahadur Shah's troops at Mathura. Guru Gobind Singh also reached in the battlefield later. Both the armies met at Jaujo on the 18th June 1707. Both Aam and his son Bedar Bakhat were killed in the war and Bahadur Shah now established himself as the Emperor of India. After winning the war Bahadur Shah proceeded alongwith Guru Gobind Singh to Agra. Guru Gobind Singh had agreed to help Bahadur Shah because there appeared to be nothing objectionable or against his ideals in helping a lawful claimant to the throne. Not giving active support to the rival claimant could also mean a great help in such critical times. Guru Gobind Singh remained at Agra for sometime. It is said that while at Agra, the Emperor gave to the Guru some costly presents. This is confirmed even by an entry in the *Bahadur-Shah-Nama* of the 2nd August 1707 in which it is written that "a jewelled scarf was presented to Guru Gobind Singh". At Agra the Guru resided in a garden about four miles away from the palace. He came on occasional visits to the Emperor, who always treated him with respect. While at Agra, one day

the Guru, who always rode on horse-back, and carried a hawk on his hand, and who also wore a crest on his head and had always with him five armed Sikhs, was refused to enter the fort with arms by the gate-keepers. When the Emperor heard that the Guru had come to meet him, he personally came to receive the Guru. During their stay at Agra, the Guru also told Bahadur Shah about the cruel and irreligious acts of the Mughal officials in Punjab and that the chief sinner in this respect was Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind. Bahadur Shah was greatly moved at this and had promised that after he got firmly established on the throne he would punish the murderer of the innocent children. However, Bahadur Shah did not keep his promise.

Bahadur Shah now thought that this leader of Punjab could be usefully employed in opposing rebellious Marathas and some writers even baselessly say that Guru Gobind Singh received a military command from the Emperor and that he was in the pay of the Emperor. But according to these writers, Guru Gobind Singh soon refused to comply with the wishes of the Emperor and he separated from him for proceeding to Deccan. But considering the enthusiastic ardour of Guru Gobind Singh's mind and his active habits and the losses that were caused to the Guru by the Mughal rulers, who had put his father, mother, four sons and thousands of his followers to death, it is wrong to believe that the Guru had sunk into a servant of that government against which he had been in constant rebellion. Nor is it credible that such a leader as Guru Gobind Singh

could ever have been trusted by a Muhammedan Prince. Bahadur Shah no doubt, was friendly towards Guru Gobind Singh in the beginning. But still he could not afford to reverse the policy of his father which had been the general policy of almost all Muslim rulers. To believe that Guru Gobind Singh became a part of the very system which he was out to destroy root and branch, is altogether incredible. And if the Guru had joined Bahadur Shah he would not have commissioned Banda Bahadur, when he reached Nanded, for fighting against the Mughals in Punjab. His ability as a religious leader had been so amply demonstrated, that no Muslim prince could ever trust him with a position.

Guru Gobind Singh did not think of going back to Anandpur, because that would again involve warfare with Wazir Khan which would create anarchy for Bahadur Shah in his new acquired state. On the 19th October 1707 Guru Gobind Singh left Agra and started for Dhaulpur where he stayed for some time. On the 12th November 1707 Bahadur Shah also moved to Rajputana. Early in the year 1708, Bahadur Shah had to proceed to Deccan to deal with his rebellious brother Kam Baksh. Bahadur Shah this time again persuaded Guru Gobind Singh to accompany him. Guru Gobind Singh agreed to help him and he went from Dhaulpur to Ajmer and joined Bahadur Shah. Both of them passed through Chittorgarh and Ujjain together. Both of them also crossed the river Narbada together on the 17th May 1708. Wherever they went, both Bahadur Shah and Guru Gobind Singh lived in their own separate establish-

ments. After crossing the river Tapti, both of them reached Burhanpur, where Guru Gobind Singh was asked by the people of Burhanpur to stay for some time more. At Burhanpur the Guru met a *Sanyasi* named Jiwan Das, who told him about Madhō Das Bairagi of Nanded, whom the Guru met later. From Burhanpur the Guru went to Amravati and joined the Emperor at Hungoli. There, Guru Gobind Singh learnt that Kam Baksh had been deserted by many of his followers and that Bahadur Shah was free from the danger. Guru Gobind Singh then parted company from him and went to Nanded via Basmath Nagar. Both had parted on the 19th July 1708.

BANDA

While travelling in Deccan, Guru Gobind Singh had heard a great deal about an ascetic named Banda, who lived on the bank of the river Godavari at Nanded situated at present in the State of Maharashtra. The Guru decided to see him and after parting from Bahadur Shah he went there. Banda, who hailed from the North was born in 1670 A.D. at Rajowri, a village in the State of Poonch. His original name was Lachhman Das and he was a Rajput of the Dogra tribe. It is said that once when he went out for hunting, he killed a doe. As he cut her open, he saw two little cubs coming out alive. But they breathed their last in a few minutes. This pained him a lot and thereafter he became an ascetic of *Bairagi* Order and went on a tour of Pilgrimage. But later he settled at Nanded in Deccan. Banda was known to possess great occult powers. He was in the habit of playing practical jokes on simple men, who passed from that side. Often he would use his magic power to scare the visitors. It is said that Guru Gobind Singh walked straight to his house, but at that time he was not at home. When he returned, he used all his magic powers and when he failed in his designs, he fell at the feet of Guru Gobind Singh and became his disciple. From Lachhman Das his name was changed to Gurbaksh Singh. But in history he is still known by the name of Banda which he used for himself. The word Banda means a slave. When Banda had become a disciple of the Guru he threw himself en-

tirely at his service. Guru Gobind Singh appealed Banda to take up his work and avenge the blood of his Sikhs and innocent children. Having understood the aims and objectives of the Guru and also having known about the hardships and sufferings of the Guru in the North, Banda resolved to go to Punjab and settle accounts with Wazir Khan. Guru Gobind Singh gave him a letter addressed to the Sikhs of Punjab, asking them to acknowledge him as their leader and fight under his leadership. He had also put twenty-five of his chosen followers at his service. He sent them all to Punjab. In Punjab it was at Sarhind that the infant sons of the Guru were buried alive. Sarhind therefore represented to the Sikhs all that was mean and hateful. The Sikhs of Punjab burnt with longing for an opportunity to wreak their vengeance and they considered it their sacred duty to join Banda in the forthcoming campaign. By the time Banda reached near Sarhind, he had at his command a large army which, according to Khafi Khan, consisted of 4,000 horsemen and about 40,000 infantry. On his way Banda marched through Samana, the native village of Jalal-ud-Din, the executioner, who had put Guru Tegh Bahadur to death. The town was looted and many officers were punished for their tyranny and oppression. More Sikhs now gathered round Banda when he reached the north-west, bearing with him the arrows of Guru Gobind Singh as the pledge of victory. Banda put to fight the Mughal authorities in the neighbourhood of Sarhind. Wazir Khan, the governor of Punjab was caught and killed by him. All other

officials, who were also responsible for the death of the innocent children of the Guru were put to death by the avenging Sikhs. The city of Sarhind was plundered and razed to the ground. Banda next established a stronghold below the hills of Sirmur. He occupied the country between the Sutlej and Jamuna, and he laid waste the district of Saharanpur. In this struggle the religious zeal of the Sikhs had triumphed over the superior numbers of the Mughals. The generals of the Mughal army and the noblemen were all now afraid of Banda. The road from Panipat to Delhi lay open to the Sikhs. But the Sikhs did not go further.

As the treatment accorded by the Governor of Sarhind to the innocent sons of Guru Gobind Singh was horrible, it had become essential to pay him in the same coin. Banda had taken the responsibility to settle accounts with him and he was justified in taking full vengeance upon him and all others, who were responsible for the heinous and brutal crimes. Banda slaughtered people in hundreds, burnt down scores of villages. It appeared for a moment that he had shaken the very foundation of the Moghul Empire.

Bahadur Shah, who was then the Emperor of India, was away in Deccan and was busy in subduing the supporters of his rebellious brother Kambakhsh. He came to terms with the Marathas. He then proceeded to reduce the princes of Rajputana to their old position of dependence. But on his way he heard of the defeat of his troops and the sack of his city

by Banda. He hastened towards Punjab and on his way back he did not even pause to enter Delhi after his southern success. But in the meantime his generals had defeated a body of Sikhs near Panipat, and Banda was surrounded in his new stronghold. A zealous convert disguised like Banda allowed himself to be captured during a sally and Banda withdrew with all his followers from there. After some successful skirmishes, Banda established himself near Jammu in the hills and he laid the fairest part of the Punjab under his control. Bahadur Shah, who had by this time advanced to Lahore in person, died there in the month of February, 1712.

The death of Bahadur Shah was followed by another war of succession. His eldest son, Jahandar Shah, retained power for a year. But in February 1713, Jahandar Shah was defeated and was put to death by his nephew Farrukh Siyar. These commotions were favourable to the Sikhs. They again became united and formidable, and they built for themselves a big fort at Gurdaspur, between the Beas and the Ravi. The viceroy of Lahore, who marched against Banda, was defeated in a pitched battle.

Farruk Siyar, who had sworn to exterminate the Sikhs, issued a proclamation which declared all Sikhs to be outlaws. By an imperial decree, no one was allowed to grow long hair or a beard in Punjab. Any one, who refused to shave was, liable to be put to an instantaneous death. A scale of prizes was also fixed for co-operation in the extermination of the Sikhs. Anyone giving information leading to the

arrest of a Sikh was eligible for a reward of five rupees. The one, who helped in getting a Sikh arrested was paid rupees ten. Any one who brought a Sikh to a Police Station could get fifteen rupees. Any one who brought the head of a Sikh was awarded twenty-five rupees. For greater services jagirs were awarded. To entertain a Sikh or give him refuge in one's house or help him in any way was made an offence. The Golden Temple of the Sikhs at Amritsar was desecrated and a Muhammedan Taluqdar of Lahore held dances of the prostitutes within its sacred precincts. This was not only the hardest time, but was the bitterest ordeal for the Sikhs. They became homeless and wandered from place to place, without a shelter, without any food or clothing and also without knowing anything about their destination.

When the Governor of Sarhind was slain by Banda, Abdus Samad Khan, a Turani noble and a skilful general was asked to assume the command of the imperial forces in Punjab. Under his command, the balance turned in favour of the Mughals. The success was fully followed up. Banda retreated fighting valiantly and inflicting heavy losses on the enemies. At last he was compelled to seek shelter in the fort of Gurdaspur. He was closely besieged, nothing could be conveyed to him from without. After consuming all provisos, and eating horses, asses, and even the forbidden ox, he was reduced to submit in 1716. After the defeat of Banda many Sikhs were put to death, their heads were borne on pikes before Banda and others. Many Sikhs were marched to

Delhi with all the signs of ignominy which is usual with bigots, or barbarous and with half-civilized conquerors. In Delhi one hundred Sikhs were put to death daily, who were seen contending among themselves for priority of martyrdom. It is stated that even the wounded and the dying were not spared and were hanged by their hair on the trees with other prisoners of war (*Muhammad Qusim—Ibrat Nama and Tarikh-i-Farrukh Siyar*). Banda was then brought to Delhi in an iron cage with 740 of his followers. The procession was led by the persons carrying the heads of the Sikhs borne on pikes. After reaching Delhi, death sentence was pronounced for Banda. His son was placed upon his knees, a knife was put into the hands of Banda, and he was required to take the life of the child with his own hands. He did so silently and unmoved. His own flesh was then torn with red-hot pincers, and amid these torments he expired. The memory of Banda is not held in much esteem by the Sikhs because he endeavoured to introduce changes into the modes and practices enjoined by the Sikh Gurus. Much against the advice of Guru Gobind Singh, Banda claimed that the mantle of the Guru had fallen on his shoulder and the Sikhs must therefore accept him as their Guru. As this was contrary to what Guru Gobind Singh had said before his death, Banda lost the place, which he had won in the hearts of the Sikhs. After the death of Banda an active persecution was kept up against the Sikhs whose losses in battle had been great and depressing. All who could be seized had to suffer death or to renounce their faith. So vigorous were the

measures of prudence and vengeance followed up that many conformed to Hinduism, others abandoned the outward signs of their belief and the more sincere had to seek a refuge among the recesses of the hills or in the forests to the south of the Sutlej.

DEATH OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

While at Nanded, Guru Gobind Singh had a peaceful life. He used to give religious discourses and many people assembled around him daily. One day a Pathan came with the intention of murdering the Guru to the assembly that daily met around the Guru. He waited there for some time but as there were many persons there, he could do no harm. He went back and again came after two or three days. After this he came repeatedly for several days. He studied the situation and made up his mind as to what time would be the best for carrying out his design. He decided that evening time would suit him the most. So one evening he came. The Guru called him and gave him *prasad*. At that time there were no Sikhs near the Guru except one attendant, who had also gone to sleep. The Guru was also lying on his bed for rest. The Pathan, seeing his opportunity, took out his dagger and struck the Guru in his belly. He repeated the attack second time but before he could strike again, the Guru drew out his own sword and killed the Pathan on the spot. The Guru then called out his Sikhs, who hurried to him from all sides. Two companions of the Pathan had been waiting outside. They tried to escape but were captured by the Sikhs and killed. Till then no one knew that the Guru had been wounded but when he got up and staggered they came to know about the tragic event. All were struck with grief and anxiety. The Guru, however, consoled them and said that Almighty God had saved him and that they need not have any fears. The

wound was then washed and sewn. But when the Guru tried to raise himself the thread broke. The wound was sewn again and next day treated with ointments. Three or four days passed in this way. Many Sikhs came to see the Guru and at their request the Guru had been appearing in his darbar. A few more days passed like this. The Guru knew that his end was fast approaching. One night he retired to bed after taking a little food. But an hour and half after midnight the Guru got up and began to recite the *Name*. He then called his Sikhs and bade them the last farewell.

Before his death, when the Sikhs asked him to appoint his successor, the Guru reminded them that he had asked them to accept the Holy Granth as their sole spiritual guide. Having placed five paisas and a coconut before the sacred book he bowed down. This practice was observed every time, when a successor was nominated by any of the Sikh Gurus earlier. There is another story which says that many years before his death one day the Guru was apparently short of funds and a Pathan came and asked him for payment on account of some horses supplied to the Guru. The Guru told him to come some other day. But the Pathan pressed for immediate payment. He made angry gestures which provoked Guru Gobind Singh to strike him dead. The body of the slain Pathan was removed and buried, and his family seemed reconciled to the fate of its head. But his sons nursed their revenge and awaited many years for opportunity to fulfil it. They succeeded in stealing upon the Guru's retirement at Nanded in 1708 and stabbed

him mortally when he was asleep or unguarded. There is one more version of Guru's death which states that a young Pathan was deputed by the Nawab of Sarhind to murder Guru Gobind Singh.

According to Guru Sobha, a young Pathan was deputed by the Nawab of Sarhind to murder Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Sobha is written by Saina Pati, who was one of the fifty-two poets at the Guru's court. He began his book in Samvat 1758 and finished it some time after 1765. His book is the earliest account of the death of the Guru. He was not an eye-witness of the Guru's death. But his account is based on the reports of the many Sikhs who, after the Guru's death, returned from Nanded to the Punjab. After reading different accounts it can be said with certainty that Guru Gobind Singh died of the wound that was inflicted upon him by some Pathan, who was either a hireling or was instigated by someone to take revenge. The Guru did not die on the spot. His wound was sewn and he had sufficient time before his death for guiding his own followers about the future leadership of the community. It is also clear from the different versions, that Guru's death was caused by profused bleeding which resulted from the bursting open of the wound when Guru Gobind Singh was testing a strong bow. It is suggested that the young man, who attacked Guru Gobind Singh was the grandson of Paine Khan, who was killed by Guru Har Gobind, the Sixth Guru, who was also the grandfather of Guru Gobind Singh. It is believed that the man who stabbed Guru Gobind Singh was a hireling of Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, who had instigated the crime. Wazir

Khan was the greatest living enemy of the Guru. He felt that he was not safe so long as the Guru was alive. The execution of the two sons of the Guru was an unforgettable and unforgiveable crime which he had committed. As before the departure of the Guru for Deccan, his relations with the Mughal Emperor had improved, there was every possibility that the Guru would use his influence to get Wazir Khan punished. The increasing friendliness of the Emperor towards the Guru had unnerved Wazir Khan and he sent some Pathans to Nanded to kill him.

In the history of the Sikhs which is the English version of *Sikhan De Raj Di Viakhiya*, it is written: "After hearing the news that the grandson of Painside Khan had stabbed the Guru, to take the revenge of his grandfather, the King of Delhi became greatly distressed. Sending some of the royal physicians, he gave them strict injunctions, "You must do your very best to cure Guru Gobind Singh." When the surgeons arrived near the Guru, they sewed up all the wounds, and began to apply plaster and ointment. In a few days, all the wound healed up, and he obtained ease. One day the Guru fired an arrow at some game, and, as he pulled the bow with force, all the threads of that wound again broke, and the blood began to flow forth. The physicians on seeing his this condition, were much perplexed. They again applied many medicines, but he obtained no ease. The hakims, being helpless, returned to Delhi and the Guru, who became very helpless from the pain of that wound died". Guru Gobind Singh was stitched on 18th August 1708 and he died on 7th October 1708. Bahadur Shah learnt

about the sad news of the death of the Guru at Bidar on the 30th November 1708. A petition was received by the Emperor there from the local authorities of Nanded seeking his permission to confiscate the vast property of Guru Gobind Singh. But as Bahadur Shah was one of the greatest admirers of the Guru he did not grant the permission.

LITERARY ACHIEVEMENTS OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

It is a well known fact that Guru Gobind Singh was master of sword but it is perhaps not that well known that he was equally a master of pen as well. He was a man of letters and had full command over Sanskrit, Persian, Hindi and Punjabi. No other warrior or religious leader of the world has produced such a literature, which can rouse the dormant spirit of the people. Guru Gobind Singh has stamped the literature of his age with his own individuality. A man, who was all his life busy in fighting against innumerable enemies, could afford to get time for composing poetry, is difficult to imagine. If Guru Gobind Singh be judged only from his achievement as a man of letters, he would definitely surpass all literary figures of his age. Most of the literary achievements of the Guru that have come down to us are the works undertaken by him while he was at Damdama Sahib in Lakhi Jungle. Many of his Works which he carried along with himself were washed away by the flooded river Beas when he was forced to cross the same.

Guru Gobind Singh was fully aware that literature produces ennobling influence on the human mind and that it also uplifts the Society. He found that at that time Indians had no literature in their own language, which they could understand. All the great works were either in Sanskrit or in Persian. To give them what was wanted by them, he collected around him an army of poets and scholars. He learnt from

them all that they could teach him. He had himself inherited the gift of poetry from his forefathers. He now developed a style of Hindi poetry which has remained unsurpassed since his times. He engaged poets to render into Hindi poetry the warlike deeds of legendary heroes of India. He himself also found time for this work. These inspiring and heart-stirring poems were daily sung by the court bards in his darbar. Such poetry accompanied by martial music went straight to the hearts of the listeners and gave them a new spirit. Guru Gobind Singh also studied the ancient history and literature of India. More he studied, more he felt that the time was ripe for the appearance of one, who would come to the rescue of the weak and helpless people. And he felt that he himself was the man required by the times.

Guru Gobind Singh had a large number of scholars and poets in his service. He invited great scholars of Persian and learned Pandits of Sanskrit and gave them a place of honour in his court. As the news of his patronage of Scholars spread around learned people flocked round him to get his patronage. His *Darbar* became a centre of learning and it was called the Kashi or Benares of the Sikhs.

Guru Gobind Singh had received in his childhood the best practical education that the time could give him. In his spare time, he studied Persian and Sanskrit literature. He developed a class of poetry, unknown in Punjab before. His poetry is without any parallel in Hindi literature till this day. It reveals the lofty excellence of his genius as a poet.

and a thinker. Speaking about the poetry of Guru Gobind Singh, Latif writes: "It raised the dormant energies of the Sikhs, who, at that time, were a vanquished race, and urged upon them the necessity of leading an active and useful life. The author infuses into it his own fervour and spirit kindling the mind of the reader with lofty ideas of social freedom, and inflaming them to deeds of valour.....Gobind possessed a poetical mind, and his description of the heroic deeds of warlike men lays before the reader a vivid and sprightly picture of the fields of battle in ages gone by, and animates him with ideas of military glory and national honour and ascendancy."

Guru Gobind Singh was anxious to see that his Sikhs should be not only warriors, but they should also be scholars and men of letters. He therefore engaged Pandit Raghunath, who regularly gave public expositions of Sanskrit books like Mahabharat. He also sent a few Sikhs to Benares to study Sanskrit there. After seven years when they returned to Anandpur, they taught the language to others. These scholars later translated into Hindi the Mahabharat, the Puranas, the Upanishads and many other classic books.

It will not be out of place if a reference is made here to a great scholar of Persian, Bhai Nand Lal, who also lived in the Darbar of the Guru. He was a secretary of Prince Muazzim, the son of Aurangzeb. He had migrated from Kabul and settled at Multan. Later he joined the prince's service. It is said that one day there was a discussion at Aurang-

zeb's court about the proper interpretation of a certain verse in the Holy Quran. All scholars failed in satisfying the Emperor. When Prince Muazzim talked about the difficult verse to Bhai Nand Lal, he immediately gave his own interpretation of the same. The Prince next day gave the same explanation to his father. Aurangzeb was highly pleased and became keen to see and honour the scholar. When Aurangzeb came to know that the scholar was a Hindu, he gave orders that such an able man should not be allowed to remain an infidel and should be converted to Islam. When Bhai Nand Lal learnt about it, he fled from the court in the company of Giasuddin, a Muslim admirer and friend of Nand Lal. They both reached Anandpur and sought shelter there. Bhai Nand Lal has written many poetry books in Persian, praising the Guru and expounding his message of love and goodwill. These books are named, *Zindgi Nama*, *Tausif-o-Soma*, *Ganj Nama*, *Jot Vikash Farsi*, *Diwan-e-Goya*, *Dastur-ul-Nisha*, *Arz-ul-Ilfaz Khatma*, *Majmua-e-Anwar* and *Insha Dastur*.

As Adi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs, which was compiled by Guru Arjan was in the house of the Sodhis of Kartarpur, they had refused to give it to Guru Gobind Singh saying that if Gobind Singh called himself the Guru, let him, by his own power, make another new Granth. Guru Gobind Singh, therefore, while he was at Damdama, made himself busy in compiling a new recension of the Granth Sahib. He, from his intense meditation and fragments which he could collect, dictated the whole of

the Granth to Bhai Mani Singh. Other works were also composed by the Guru at Damdama. *Za ar Nama*—a letter to Aurangzeb was also written by the Guru there.

At Damdama he also occupied himself in composing a new Granth called *Daswin Padshahi Ka Granth* which he finished on Sunday, the 8th of Bhadon Samvat 1753 (1696 A.D.). Like the Adi Granth, this Granth also is metrical throughout but its versification frequently varies. It is written in the Hindi dialect, but is in the Punjabi character. The concluding portion is in Persian, while the alphabet continues to be in Punjabi. The Hindi used by Guru Gobind Singh is almost such as is spoken in the Gangetic provinces and has few peculiarities of the Punjabi dialect. One chapter of the book is narrative and historical, viz., the *Vachitler Natak*. The Persian Hikayats, or stories, also have the same character. The other portions of this book are more mythological than the first portion. It is alleged by some writers that only a portion of the Granth was written by Guru Gobind Singh himself and that the remainder was composed by four scribes in the service of the Guru.

The *Daswin Padshahi Ka Granth* forms a quarto volume of 1,066 pages. Each page consists of 23 lines, and each line is of 38 to 41 letters. Amongst the contents *Akal Ustut* or the Praises of the Almighty is a hymn commonly read in the morning.

The *Jap Sahib* is simply the supplement of the *Japji* of Guru Nanak—a prayer to be read or repeated in the morning. It comprises 198 couplets, and occu-

pies about 7 pages, the end of a verse and the end of a line not being the same. In *Vach ter Nitik*, i.e., the "The Wondrous Tale", the Guru gives, first, the mythological history of his family or race and then, an account of his mission of reformation. Thereafter he gives a description of his warfare with the hill chiefs and the Imperial forces. It is divided into fourteen sections; but the first is devoted to the praises of the Almighty, and the last is of a similar tenor, with an addition to the effect that he would hereafter relate his visions of the past and his experience of the present world.

Chandi Charitr (The Nature of Chandi) relates to the destruction of eight Daityas by Chandi the Goddess. It occupies about 20 pages, and it is understood to be the translation of a Sanskrit legend. This legend is narrated in a different metre also. *Chandi Ki Var* is a supplement to the legends of Chandi. *Gyan Prabodh* (The Excellence of Wisdom) praises the Almighty, with allusions to ancient kings and is taken mostly from the Mahabharat. *Chaupayan Chaubis Avtaran Kian* (Quatrains relating to the Twenty-four Manifestations) occupy about 348 pages.

In *Triya Charitr* (Nature of Women) there are 404 the names of the various weapons are recapitulated. In it the weapons are praised, and Guru Gobind Singh terms them collectively as his Guru or guide.

In *Istri Charitr* (Tales of Women) there are 404 stories, illustrative of the character and disposition of women. These stories occupy 446 pages, or nearly half of the Granth. The *Hikayats* (Tales) comprise

twelve stories in 866 sloks of two lines each. They are written in the Persian language and Gurumukhi character. They were written by him for opening the eyes of Aurangzeb. The tales were accompanied by a letter written in the pointed manner, which, however, does not form a portion of the Granth.

Dasam Granth is composed in many measures in the Hindi dialect. It includes many counsels from the Sastras on the manner of giving battle and making war, and about the wiles of women and their arts, and about devotion and the knowledge of God. The Granth reaffirms the statement that Guru Gobind Singh was an expert in the art of making poetry and his place in this field is unsurpassed till this day.

The names of the fifty two Poets, who lived in the Guru's Court, as written in *Mahan Kosh* are as under:—

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Udey Rai | 15. Hussein Ali |
| 2. Ani Rai | 16. Hans Raj |
| 3. Amrit Rai | 17. Kaloo |
| 4. Alloo | 18. Kuvresh |
| 5. Asa Singh | 19. Khan Chand |
| 6. Alam | 20. Gunia |
| 7. Ishar Das | 21. Gurdas |
| 8. Sukhdev | 22. Gopal |
| 9. Sukha Singh | 23. Chandan |
| 10. Sukhia | 24. Chanda |
| 11. Sudama | 25. Jamal |
| 12. Saina-Pati | 26. Tehkan |
| 13. Shyam | 27. Dharam Singh |
| 14. Hir | 28. Dhanna Singh |

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| 29. Dhian Singh | 41. Brij Lal |
| 30. Nanu | 42. Mathura |
| 31. Nishchal Das | 43. Madan Singh |
| 32. Nihal Chand | 44. Madan Giri |
| 33. Nand Singh | 45. Mallu |
| 34. Nand Lal | 46. Man Das |
| 35. Pindi Das | 47. Mala Singh |
| 36. Balabh | 48. Mangal |
| 37. Ballu | 49. Ram |
| 38. Bidhi Chand | 50. Rawal |
| 39. Bulland | 51. Roshan Singh |
| 40. Brikh | 52. Lakha. |

It may be noted that Alam, Hussein Ali and Jamal were Muslim Poets. All these poets were patronised by Guru Gobind Singh and were maintained. As Aurangzeb was against music it is just possible that he had driven out many poets from the Mughal court and that they had come to the Guru at Anandpur. Guru Gobind Singh loved these poets so much that when he found that Anandpur was going to be attacked by the Imperial forces, he asked them to leave Anandpur and to go to some safe place. However, when after some years the danger was over all these poets joined the Guru at *Sabo-Ki-Talwandi*.

Guru Gobind Singh was also a great lover of music. In fact music and poetry are the daughters of common parents. The Poetry which was composed by the poets in the Guru's court was daily sung both in the morning and in the evening. Special bands of singers were prepared who sang martial songs to the audience. Guru Gobind Singh was him-

self skilled in the art of playing Taus—a musical instrument. Due to his this knowledge of music, those, who sang in his court had to maintain high standards of performance and they also derived inspiration from his appreciation.

ESTIMATE OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

Guru Gobind Singh was born in an age, in which centuries of oppression had degraded and demoralized the Indians and they had come to regard the rulers as great as God himself. The ruling class in the country was brutally arrogant. It appeared that the state of affairs in India had past all remedies and especially the darkness of despair was the deepest in Punjab. Guru Gobind Singh took up the task of breaking the spell of the ruling classes. He created a new type of soldiers, the *Sant-Sipahis*, who would not care for their lives and would die fighting a tyrant rather than be indifferent spectators of his high-handedness. He infused in them a spirit which would never let them bow before the most inhuman oppression. The object he set before himself was the emancipation of the people from oppression and persecution, and "he adopted means which a comprehensive mind alone could suggest." Guru Gobind Singh hoped for success by a bold departure from usages which had been responsible for keeping the people in subjection for the last many centuries. He possessed the qualities of a *religious leader* and a *warrior*. He was a *law giver* in the pulpit and a *champion* in the field. He was the right man for the needs of the time. He taught a vanquished people how to obtain national freedom. He elevated and altered the constitution of the minds of his followers and injected martial spirit in the moribund bodies of the Indians of his age. He wanted his followers to revere sword and be always prepared to wield it in

self-defence and for the protection of the weak and the oppressed. Sword according to him was the symbol of power and self-respect. It was in order to rouse this *sense of power and self-respect* in his followers that he enjoined upon them the duty of never going about without a sword. The Guru enhanced the dignity of labour and declared that his Khalsa was to be *Kirt Nash*, which meant that no honest profession in itself was to be deemed ignoble or exalted, and no castes or classes were to be set up on the basis of the professions in the Sikh society. He also declared that the Khalsa was to be *Kul Nash*, which meant that no Sikh could take pride of his high descent and no stigma of low birth was to hold down any one of them. According to him, actions, and not descent, were to determine the position of a Sikh in the Society. He also said that the Khalsa was to be *Karam Nash*, which meant that he was not to get entangled in the countless rituals and ceremonials. No rituals, according to him, could help a man in his spiritual advancement. The initiation-ceremony, which he introduced, suited the need of the hour and to the fulfilment of the ideals, which he had in view. He knew that a spirit of humility alone was no longer sufficient. Having drunk steel dissolved in water, he imbibed in his followers the *spirit of steel-framed* patriotism. Even God he addressed as All-steel. He declared that any five members of the *Khalsa* could baptize others. He did not allow any particular class or set of people to hold the monopoly in such matter. He never wanted one class to act as the custodian of religious knowledge and religious rites as had been the practice in Hinduism. He wanted to create a

democratic society in which all were equal in all respects and in all spheres of life. Before giving to any five Sikhs, the rights to baptize others, he had decided that he would be the last of the Gurus in human form.

Guru Gobind Singh perceived the paramount necessity of giving his saint-soldiers a distinct appearance and a unique personality. He thus ordained that uncut hair must adorn the head and face of every one of his followers. The preservation of hair was not an innovation introduced by the tenth Guru. The Guru had realised that by keeping hair a Sikh could be distinguished from the rest of society and as he would be conspicuous everywhere, he would always remember his duties and would never be led by the temptations of the world. Most of the people consider that religion is a matter which concerns only the inner conscience of a man but Guru Gobind Singh wanted that the outer expression must coincide with the inner conscience of a man. A man, who kept uncut hair and believed in Sikhism, had to cultivate a courage of conviction. When Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed at Delhi and his body was exposed publicly at Delhi, none dared for some time to lift the body or the head. It was only at night that two Sikhs dared to risk their lives and they succeeded in taking away the body and the head. But now the Guru wanted that every Sikh must either have the boldness and courage to face the enemy or he must not call himself a Sikh. He did not want his followers to follow the policy of escapism. All Sikh Gurus looked at escapism with disfavour. To escape from the worldly responsibility and to go to jungles after

renouncing the world was condemned by Guru Nanak. Guru Gobind Singh never indulged in guerilla warfare tactics, while he was fighting against his enemies. He always fought a pitched battle and never took an undue advantage of the weakness of his enemies. He also never wanted his Sikhs to escape from the responsibilities, which he had entrusted to them. He told them to keep uncut hair and to allow them to grow their natural length so that a Sikh could be singled out from the rest of the society for the strength of his character which the very fact of his membership of Khalsa community gave to him.

Guru Gobind Singh diverted the attention of his followers from the plough to the sword and had put his seal of sanction on war and bloodshed if the cause of righteousness justified it. The Sikhs had to pay heavy price for keeping hair. In the eighteenth century, prices were laid on their heads, and whenever one was caught, no mercy was shown to him. It is said that when a mother was asked how many children she had, she would quite often say that she had four but one had become a Sikh. To be a Sikh was to be already among the dead. Those who chose to be Sikhs had to pass their days in the greatest hardship. They lived on roots, fruits and green vegetables in the jungles. Their families were left at the mercy of the rulers and there are many examples where even women were taken prisoners and tortured to death. *By creating Khalsa he had set the souls of his followers free and filled their hearts with a lofty longing for freedom.* He broke the charm of sanctity attached to the rulers of Delhi. *He had taken up*

sparrows and had taught them to hunt down imperial falcons. He had resolved to strike at the root of one of the greatest powers in the world and he executed his design with an unparalleled persistence. He was summoned by Aurangzeb three times. But he refused to obey the summons each time. On the contrary he sent to him a letter in which he gave all the details of the wrongs of his government. He fearlessly exposed and condemned the Emperor.

Sometimes Guru Gobind Singh's personality is equated with Shivaji. Both of them worked for the uplift of humanity and dedicated their lives for putting an end to the government by the aliens, which was based on tyranny, oppression and autocracy. Both were the products of the age in which they were born. If they had not fully succeeded in overthrowing the deeprooted theocratic Mughal State they had at least shaken its very foundation. If one worked in Punjab, the other one worked in Maharashtra. As the political developments ran almost parallel in both the places, it is probable that Guru Gobind Singh felt the need of coming to Deccan for accomplishing the unfinished work of Shivaji. The work of Shivaji was no doubt conducive to the community's welfare, but the mainspring of his activities was ambition for political power. Guru Gobind Singh's ideal, on the other hand, was absolutely free from any political ambition. He never worked for personal power. He dedicated his whole life for the extermination of the country's foes. Shivaji laboured for building a Maratha Empire but the Guru laboured for principles. Shivaji worked for political ascendancy, Guru Gobind

Singh worked for social, religious and political emancipation of the people. For the accomplishment of his designs Shivaji had to employ all sorts of means but as Guru Gobind Singh was a religious leader he always tried to conquer, like the true Kshatriyas of old, by fighting in the open battle field. *"Shivaji's victories attracted soldiers around him but the Guru created men for his victories."* Shivaji did not face as much opposition from the Hindus as the Guru had to face. The Marathas lost everything when they lost their political power but Guru Gobind Singh's work had a lasting effect, which will be traceable till eternity.

Guru Gobind Singh was an *able general* and an *efficient organizer*. He, in no time, transferred laymen into the sturdiest soldiers. Under his influence, those men, who had never touched a sword or shouldered a gun, became heroes. His marvellous capacity as a general is proved by the manner in which he could, with his handful of soldiers, inflict severe defeats on his enemies, and still more by the stout resistance that he offered to the imperial hosts at Chamkaur with only forty soldiers on his side. In his childhood only he had learnt the use of arms and had become skilled in the art of horse riding. He had been going on a number of hunting expeditions. It is believed that once he killed a lion only with a sword and a shield in his hands. In archery he surpassed the far-famed heroes of old. He could shoot his arrows over a long distance without missing his aim. It is stated by Bhai Nand Lal that the Guru was a greater archer than Arjun, the hero of Mahabharat,

and that the world had never seen another man, who could bend the bow so well as he did. In critical times he always exhibited unperturbed and dauntless courage. He remained undisturbed even in the midst of raining death. In forming an estimate of the military abilities of Guru Gobind Singh it should not be forgotten that there was a tremendous disparity in numbers of soldiers and resources of the Guru and his enemies. It is really amazing thing that he could fight so long. Guru Gobind Singh *withdrew his followers from that undivided attention which their forefathers had given to the plough, the loom, and he urged them to regard the sword as their principal stay in this world.* He asked them to venetrate sword because it gave them *power, safety and dignity.* By giving sword in the hands of laymen, he released a new dynamic force into the arena of Indian history and brought a new people into existence.

As a general, he never lost courage and was always hopeful of his victory. When he bade farewell to Anandpur with his ranks depleted and his family dispersed, his wives going in one direction and his mother with his two younger sons in the other, he knew not from where he found himself surrounded by the Mughals and the Hill Chiefs at Chamkaur. After a superhuman fight against the heaviest odds he saw his two sons and his chosen companions fall one after another. When he escaped from there, in disguise, and learnt about the brutal murder of his two younger sons and the tragic death of his mother, he faced all this with the most supreme composure and serenely went on with his work as if nothing

has happened. He had the rare quality of accepting all with a cheerful face and he never frowned at the death of all his sons. He had built a number of forts at Anandpur. The united forces of the hill rajas and the Mughal enemies did not succeed in capturing them. When the Guru went to Chamkaur, he converted a house into a fort within a few hours and with only forty persons on his side he gave a tough resistance to the enemies. It reveals in him a master-genius in strategy. With the limited resources that he had at his disposal to build such forts and give such a long fight also speaks of his capacity as a military organizer. He had organized his followers into a well knitted community, which survived the deadliest campaigns of extermination. He affected the organization of his community on the basis of most modern democratic principles. The society, which he created, gave equal status to all irrespective of the race, caste, creed, sex, place of birth or the profession of a person. It was this equality which gave to the Sikhs a compact brotherhood with its own inherent strength to survive.

Guru Gobind Singh was also a master statesman. But his statesmanship was based on truth and morality. He never employed deceit, craft, treachery, or falsehood to achieve his objectives. His was not a statesmanship of the modern times. His fortification of Anandpur was well planned and it was impossible for an enemy to surprise him or take him unawares. There are many examples, where the hill chiefs took oaths in order to trap the Guru. But the Guru was well-aware that those hill chiefs were trying to exploit

the situation by their hypocrisy. The Guru exposed them fully. Once when the hill chiefs undertook a pledge that they would not attack the Guru, provided that he would leave the fort of Anandpur, the Guru sent an advance party to test their fidelity. He showed that they never meant, what they had sworn. The Guru's statesmanship was based on the principle that both the ends and means must be justified. He did not practice diplomacy as advocated by Kautilya or Machiavelli. *He believed neither in deceiving others nor did he like to be deceived.* He was straight forward in his dealings. He was not scared of the consequences, when the cause for which he stood, was justified. He sent his own father to Delhi to sacrifice his life. He sacrificed his sons, his mother, his beloved Sikhs and almost every thing that was dear to him. Though the Imperial forces were more in number and his resources were limited, yet he remained undaunted and never submitted to any power other than that of the God.

Guru Gobind Singh was also a great *revolutionary*, who said that every individual must remain constantly at war with evil, tyranny and oppression. He said that every Sikh must have the name of God on his lips and a sword in his hand. He asked his followers not to follow the policy of passive resistance, and made it obligatory for them to take arms and fight. He knew that the policy of non-violence was of no avail in those times for the Government of the time was based on the strength of its power rather than on the consent of the people. He himself *believed in socialism*. He said that every one must

work and earn by the sweat of one's brow and that one must not live for one's ownself. He asked his followers to share their income with others and give help to those who were in need. He was a practical statesman, who was guided by idealism and morality. He did not employ double standards in his dealings with others. As he was more a man of God rather than a statesman, he never acted like the statesmen of the present age.

Guru Gobind Singh also possessed the qualities of a great patriot, who was always full of love for his country and humanity at large. He was the first Indian to be inspired with that noble sentiments. He was filled with unbounded grief at the sight of his countrymen. His heart yearned to bring about the emancipation of the people and he tried to break all the shackles that bound their minds and hearts. He had a passion to make his countrymen regain self-reliance and self-confidence. His life history is a long story of a man, who did all that he could, to bring about the moral up-lift of the people. He dedicated all that he had to his people. He said, "He belongs to the Khalsa and Khalsa belongs to the God." His love for the people was the main driving force which brought him in conflict with the hill chiefs and the Imperial forces. After the death of his father, he had seen himself the abject slavery to which his countrymen had been degraded. He had seen how all those people, who were not Muslims, were being converted at the point of sword. He was not against Islam or was not in favour of Hinduism. He believed in the religious freedom and wanted that

the state should not interfere in matters of religion. He himself was equally loved, both by the Hindus and the Muslims. In fact his life was saved by two Muslims namely Gani Khan and Nabi Khan, when he escaped from Chamkaur. In the Battle of Bhangani also he was helped by Pir Budhu Shah. He never aspired to build a kingdom or an empire. He never coronated himself. He never sat on a throne. He, at the same time, lived like a king, and was called *Sacha Padshah*. He believed in love conquests. He regarded himself as one of his people and never considered himself superior to others. After initiation his *Five Beloved* he requested them for initiating him. He was a great lover of people and he wanted them to rise to the occasion. It was he, who had suggested his father to take up the cause of the Pandits of Kashmir. He knew what would be results of such a step. But as love for the people always occupied the foremost place in his mind he did not care for the consequence and was ready to pay the cost. It was for the service of the society and the state that he created Khalsa. He had realised that the people, who had been ruled by the aliens for a number of centuries could never rise against the rulers, who never cared for them. He realised that the country needed a fighting force very badly and this he gave to the country by creating Khalsa. Those, who joined this commonwealth or brotherhood pledged to lay down their lives for justice. Those, who fought with the Guru in the various battles, were not the professional soldiers. They were rather those bravemen, who left their homes and families to fight under the banner of the Guru. The battles of the Guru were

not in the nature of *Jehad* that they were fought for converting the people to Sikhism. The Guru on the contrary had forbidden the use of sword for converting the people. His battles were also not in the nature of crusade as understood in the history of Christianity. All his battles were fought in self-defence. He had given special instructions to his soldiers not to molest women, harass children or old persons while fighting. He was a great lover of humanity, who was forced by the circumstances to take up arms and liberate the people. He could have won over the hill chiefs and lived a peaceful life. But he did not like to be a passive spectator of all that happened before his eyes. He could not tolerate wrongs and was bound to lead the people in war against tyranny. *He was the natural product of time and was the man of the hour.* He did not represent the cause of the *Rajas, Maharajas or Emperors*. He was never hireling of feudal lords or jagirdar. He was a *leader of the masses*, who was the symbol of their hopes, ideals and aspirations. *He gave them social and religious equality and they in return gave him their lives.*

Guru Gobind Singh was also a great social reformer. The society which he organised under his leadership was a society, which was to live within the larger society on the whole. The Sikhs were accustomed to a leadership of the Gurus from the time of their inception as a separate community. Guru Gobind Singh had realized that the time had come when the community had grown from its infancy to maturity. He therefore proclaimed that after his

death the community should find its own leadership. None could guide the Sikhs after him in the spiritual matter except that the Sikhs were to regard *Adi Granth* as their sole guide in the spiritual matters.

In temporal matter, the community was to act as a whole through its representatives and pass *Guru Matta*—resolution passed in the presence of the *Adi Granth*. These *Guru Mattas* were to be regarded by every Sikh as command of the Guru. The Guru gave to every Sikh a set of rules which were to guide his conduct. Every individual was asked to work according to the best of his ability and was to share the fruits of his labour according to the needs of others. The rules which he gave to them were based on the broad principles of democracy and socialism. He was a great lover of humanity and his own writings contain several passages which show that race, sex, caste, or creed, did not set limits to his love for humanity. To him all human beings were equally the sons of the Almighty God, and they worshipped Him in their own right in different ways. He writes in *Akal Ustat*, "Some are Hindus and some are Mohammedans; among the latter some are *Sunnies* and some *Shias*. But remember that human beings are all of one race. *Karta* (Creator), *Karim* (Beneficent), *Razik* (Sustainer), and *Rahim* (Merciful), all refer to one and the same God of all; let none make the mistake of supposing that there is any difference in them. All men have the same eyes, the same ears, the same body, the same build, a compound of earth, air, fire and water. *Allah* and *Abhekh* are the same, the *Purans* and *Quran* are the same. They are all alike;

it is the one God who created all."

He regarded himself also as one of others. He writes, "Those who call me God, will fall into the deep pit of the Hell. Regard me as a slave of His; And have no doubt whatever of this that I am a servant of the Supreme Being." He always invoked the help and grace of God. His seal bears the following matter in Punjabi: "God is one; may there always be victory to my cauldron (offerings) and sword, and may the victory be without delay; but victory to Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh is only from the help of the Immortal One." His religion was not confined to any one book or a prophet. He picked up various customs and habits, which he considered were good for giving strength to his own sect. He improved them and gave to his followers. In his life time more than 1,25,000 people embraced his sect and it may be noted that conversion by the use of sword was forbidden. Amongst those, who were brought by him within the folds of Khalsa, the name of a Muslim Faquir named Ibrahim may be mentioned. He met Guru Gobind Singh in the Lakhi jungle. He was so much impressed by the Guru that he decided to become a Sikh. His name was subsequently changed to Ajmer Singh.

Guru Gobind Singh was also a *householder*. He was an obedient son, a considerate father and loving husband. But he regarded not only his sons as his own. To him all the Sikhs were like his own sons. When he was told about the death of his sons, he said, "No, my sons are not dead. They live in the lap of the Beloving Father. And on this earth there

are millions of my sons in the form of the Khalsa." None but a person of saintly disposition and with a complete resignation to the will of God, could have behaved as he did during the most acute crisis of his life. Not a tear was shed by him and he had his bereavements with such a firmness of which no parallel is found anywhere. Throughout his life, he lived a honourable and dignified family life as was preached by Guru Nanak. He became father of four children. He, like the Mughal rulers of the time, did not maintain any harem. He could never tolerate a Sikh cast an evil eye on other's sisters and mothers. He expected every Sikh to lead a healthy family life and while living in the family worship God.

As a *scholar* he occupies a unique place in the Indian literature. He was a poet of no mean order and though a substantial portion of his works was lost in the Sarsa but what has survived is enough to establish his claims as a master of pen. It has been said that some of his works "deserve the highest place in the ranks of Hindi poetry of the narrative and epic kind". The Guru had realised what a vital part literature could be made to play in rousing the dormant energies of a vanquished and a degraded people. He took stories from the old Sanskrit literature and rendered them in Hindi to serve as an effective handmaid to execute his plans. To understand the writings of the Guru there was a demand for literacy amongst his followers and the people, who had never tried to learn anything, now drank deep at the source of knowledge by reading the works of Guru Gobind Singh. He compiled a new recension of the Granth

Sahib, and laid on it the foundation of Sikhism for future. A mere politician or soldier could not have done it. It is significant that after a very close contact with the Guru for more than a year Bahadur Shah treated him as a scholar and a *darvesh*. In the Guru's court, there were fifty-two poets, whom he had patronised. He went through the whole range of Epic literature in Sanskrit, and stored in his mind the soul stirring legends of the Mahabharata and the Puranas. He was deeply impressed by the idea of a saviour appearing from time to time to uphold righteousness and uproot evil. These stories made him feel that he himself was the man required by the time. He regretted that the various prophets sent by God in the past claimed divine honours for themselves. He said that he was only a servant of the Supreme Being. But it may also be noted that he always claimed that he had been sent by God on a divine mission. God had told him, he says, "I install and cherish thee as my own son, And create thee to form and spread the Panth; Go and spread the law of Dharma in every place and restrain people from senseless acts." He further states, "I stood, with my hands clasped, my head bowed and prayed that if He vouchsafest His assistance to me then will His religion prevail in the world." The Guru writes, "My wish was not to reappear for my thoughts were bent upon the feet of the Almighty. But God made known to me his desires."

The Lord said, "When mankind was created, the *Daityas* were sent for the punishment of the wicked, but the *Daityas* being strong, forgot me. Then the

Devtas were sent, but they procured worship for themselves as Shiva and Brahma and Vishnu. As all established ways of their own and misled the world, he had come to declare a perfect faith to extend virtue, and to destroy evil." He did claim that he was manifested, but he was only like other men, the servant of the Almighty, a beholder of the wonders of creation. He said that whosoever worshipped him as the Lord should assuredly burn in everlasting flame. The practices of the Muslims and the Hindus, he declared, were of no avail, The reading of Quran and Puranas was all in vain to him. "God," he said, "was not to be found in texts or in modes, but in humility and sincerity."

The study of both the Hindu and the Islamic literature gave him a deep insight in the different contemporary streams of thoughts. It also equipped him with a thorough knowledge of the main religions of India and prepared him for the role, which he played throughout his life. It is this study of literature, which enabled him to analyse the social, economic, political and religious evils. His own creative mind suggested him the remedies that he employed to cure them.

He was also a *nation-builder* and he taught his people to unite under one banner and take concerted action against common enemies. He taught them a corporate life and told them not to be guided by their individual interests. He established a system of democracy, which had never been thought of in India before. He gave to the whole community the power to frame rules and laws in accordance with the

fundamental principles of the Sikh religion. Even in his life time, he always abided by the wishes of his followers. He never took a step without prior consultations with his followers. He was the first Indian leader who taught democratic principles and asked his followers to regard each other as *Bhai* which means brother. He taught his Sikhs to consider themselves the chosen people destined to crush tyranny and oppression. He did not appoint any man as his successor, not because all his own sons were dead, but because he had immense faith in the community as a whole. He knew that every nation needs a leader and the best leadership is the one which is in the person of an elected leader. He therefore enjoined his Sikhs to be guided by the *Guru Mattas*—which was to act as a general counsel and the common conscience of the society. It has been seen in the later period of the history of the Sikhs that these *Guru Mattas* have always provided them with what was lacking and at no time of crisis the Sikhs have failed to find a leader, who would not be the man of the hour. *Guru Matta* is a democratic process and if one resolution can give power to a particular person the other can also take it back. Thus in the community, which Guru Gobind Singh had created, wishes of the people, were to be the sole guide and the Sikhs were not to follow the dictates of any particular individual.

In his personality there was a marvellous combination of varieties, fusion of virtues and confluence of many qualities, and accomplishments. He was a yogi, a house-holder, a poet, a scholar, a thinker, a

reformer, a general, an archer, a statesman, a patriot, an organiser, an administrator and a nation builder. He was also a lover of truth and purity, an irreconcilable enemy of tyranny and a friend of all weak and oppressed people.

A slow, steady and silent revolution, which began with Guru Nanak had suddenly grown in its dimensions in the lifetime of Guru Gobind Singh. The Sikhs became a revolutionary force in the country during the lifetime of the Guru. Even though they constituted a small percentage of the total population of the country, they soon started holding position and wielding an influence entirely out of proportion to their number. They owed their success to the spirit of rectitude, self-sacrifice, self-discipline and God-mindedness, which was instilled in them by Guru Gobind Singh.

IMPORTANT DATES, PLACES & EVENTS

- 1665 — Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Bihar, Bengal, Assam with Raja Ram Singh.
- 1666 — DECEMBER 22 (23rd Poh 1723) Birth of Guru Gobind Singh at Patna.
- 1670 — Guru Tegh Bahadur returned to Punjab.
- 1671 — March, Guru Gobind Singh and party started from Patna—
1. Reached Danapur (14 Kos from Patna).
 2. Passed through Ara, Dumraon, Buxer, Chotta Mirzapur (All these places are on the Southern side of the Ganges and are Railway stations on E.I.R.).
 3. Benaras and Badda Mirzapur, Allahabad, Ayodhya, Lucknow, Kanpur, Brahamvart, Bathoor, Agra, Mathura, Bareilly, Pilibhit, Nanak Mata, Hardwar.
- 1671 — Reached Luckhaur (Dist. Ambala).
- Aurangzeb issued discriminating orders against Hindus.
 - Met Saiyyed Bhikhan Shah of Ghuram (Patiala), Passed through Rano Majra, Kalaur, Roper.
 - Reached Kiratur, met Suraj Mal (His uncle).
- 1672 — Feb. (21st Magha, Samvat 1729) reached Anandpur.
- Taught by Munshi Sahib Chand and Quazi Pir Mohemmed.

- 1674 — Guru Tegh Bahadur approached by Kashmiri Pandits and left Anandpur.
- 1675 — (11th November) Guru Tegh Bahadur executed at Chandani Chowk, Delhi.
- 1676 — 15th October Muazzim went to Afghanistan with Bhai Nandlal, a Persian scholar, and returned on 20th January 1678.
- 1679 — 9th January — Aurangzeb went to Ajmer.
- 1679 — 2nd April Aurangzeb returned to Delhi.
- 1679 — 12th April Aurangzeb imposed Jazia.
- 1679 — September — Aurangzeb went to Ajmer.
- 1679 — November, Aurangzeb attacked Mewar.
- 1680 — 5th April, Shivaji died.
- 1680 — March, Aurangzeb returned to Ajmer.
- 1681 — 11th January, Akbar — Aurangzeb's son — joined Rajputs against Aurangzeb.
- 1681 — 8th September, Aurangzeb went to Deccan.
- 1681 — June, Akbar took shelter with Shambhu.
- 1682 — 'Ranjit Nagara' — a war drum made to the order of Guru Gobind Singh.
- 1684 — Bhim Chand of Kahlur (son of Raja Tara-chand who was released by Jehangir), at the instance of Guru Hargobind, started forming coalition against Guru Gobind Singh.
- 1684 — Guru Gobind Singh visited Rawalsar — (10 miles west of Mandi).
- 1684 — Guru Gobind Singh got married with Sundari Ji alias Jito ji d/o Harjas of Lahore.
- 1684 — October, The Guru left Anandpur.

- 1685 — Visited Sarmaur,
Arranged friendly relations between Raja
Medani Parkash and Fateh Shah.
- 1685 — November, established a Gurdawara at
Paunta Sahib on the bank of The Yamuna.
 - Wrote Jap Sahib, Akal ustat.
 - Met Pir Badhu Shah of Sadhaura — (25 miles
west of Paunta).
- 1685 — Jats revolted against Aurangzeb—The revolt
lasted till 1688.
- 1685 — The Guru visited Kapal Mochan.
- 1686-88 — Mian Khan attempted to collect tributes
from Jammu hill chiefs.
- 1686 — 12th September, Aurangzeb conquered
Bijapur.
- 1686 — Birth of Ajit Singh at Paunta.
- 1687 — October, (23 Asoo Samvat 1744) reached
Anandpur via Kiratpur.
- 1687 — 21st Feb. Aurangzeb arrested Muazzim and
his four sons.
- 1687 — Feb., Akbar went to Persia by ship.
- 1687 — September 21, Aurangzeb conquered Gol-
conda.
- 1688 — Aurangzeb banned all religious festivals of
Hindus.
- 1688 — Battle of Nadaun (20 miles eastern side of
Kangra).
- 1688 — Aurangzeb appointed Mahabat Khan as
Governor of Punjab.
- 1689 — Battle of Husseini.

- 1689 — Five forts constructed at Anandpur, Anandgarh, Lohgarh, Fatehgarh, Kesgarh and Holgarh.
- 1689 — January, Shabuji — arrested.
- 1689 — March 11, Shambhuji tortured to death.
- 1689 — Bhim Chand of Kahlur died — succeeded by his son Ajmer Chand.
- 1690 — Birth of Jujhar Singh.
- 1690 — Defeats of Mughals in South.
- 1695 — Muazzim released — appointed as Governor of Punjab, Sindh and Afghanistan and in 1699 even appointed as Governor of Multan.
- 1696 — Birth of Zorawar Singh at Anandpur.
- 1697 — Nandlal aged 74, joined Guru Gobind Singh.
- 1698 — Birth of Fateh Singh at Anandpur.
Accepted Sahib Kaur d/o Bhai Ramoo as his wife.
- 1699 — March 30 (Baisakh 1756) called a Congregation at Anandpur — followed by Creation of KHALSA.
- 1701 — Abolished Masand System.
- 1701 — First Battle of Anandpur — fought against Painde Khan, Dina Beg, Rajas of Kahlur, Jaswal, Sarmaur etc.
- 1701 — November, hill chiefs met at Bilaspur.
- 1701 — Second Battle of Anandpur.
- 1701 — Battle of Nirmoh (near Kiratpur).
- 1702 — Visited Lakhi Jungle — (Malwa).
- 1703 — First Battle of Chamkaur — Saiyyed Beg

left Imperial forces and joined Guru Gobind Singh.

1703 — Third Battle of Anandpur.

1704 — March, (Chet 5th Samvat 1761) Fourth Battle of Anandpur.

— Sed Baig died fighting on the Guru's side.

— Sed Khan left the command of Mughal armies in favour of the Guru.

1704 — Famine in Deccan.

1704 — 20th May, 5th Battle of Anandpur, Wazir Khan (Governor of Sarhind) Dilawarkhan (Administrator of Lahore), Zabardust Khan, Governor of Kashmir, joined by hill chiefs Gujjars and Rangars — attacked Anandpur.

— Surrounded the city for 6-7 months.

— Declaration of peace.

1704 — December (6-7 Poh 1761) The Guru left Anandpur via Kiratpur with about 1800 Sikhs.

— The Guru with 150 horsemen crossed flooded Sarsa (Sutlej) while he was attacked; his two younger sons and his mother Mata Gujri got separated; led by Ganga Ram—a cook of Khedi village, Dist. Hoshiarpur.

1704 — December, fought with Pathans at Raupar (11 miles away from Sarsa) Passed through Boor Majra, Baman Majra and reached Chamkaur — 15 miles south of Raupar and 37 miles away from Anandpur.

— December 22, Chamkaur surrounded by the enemies, Ajit Singh aged 17, Jujhar Singh

aged 15 killed while fighting. The Guru left with 11 Sikhs namely Daya Singh, Dharam Singh, Man Singh, Sangat Singh, Sant Singh, Ram Singh, Kehar Singh, Santokh Singh, Deva Singh, Jeevan Singh & Katha Singh.

- Khalsa given Guru ship.
- The Guru left with Daya Singh, Dharam Singh and Man Singh.
- Sangat Singh sat in the Guru's place at Chamkaur.
- 23rd December (9th Poh) The Guru reached Machiwarra (Dist. Ludhiana) 27 miles north east of Ludhiana).
- Met Nabi Khan & Gani Khan.
- Became 'Uch-Da-Pir'.
- December 25, (11 Poh), The Guru visited Ghungrali (12 miles south east of Machiwarra).
- December 26, visited Lull (13 miles from Ghungrali and 5 miles from Doraha Rly. station).
- 1704 — December 27 (13 Poh), Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh buried alive at Sarhind and killed by Wazir Khan, Governor of Sarhind, Mata Gujri also died of the shock.
- Tiloka and Rama of Maharaj (4 miles north west of Rampura Phul) cremated the bodies of the two sons of the Guru.
- The Guru reached Alamgir — 2 miles south of railway station Gill (Ludhiana dist.).

- 1704 — December, reached Hehar (Tehsil Jagraon, Dist. Ludhiana 6 miles from Chanki Man Railway station).
- reached Siloani (Tehsil Jagraon Dist. Ludhiana, 9 miles south of Jagraon Rly. Station, where he was shown due respect by a Rajpur convert to Islam named Chaudhary.
 - The Guru reached Rai Kala — learnt about the death of his two younger sons and also of his mother's death through Mahin.
 - reached Dina (Tehsil Moger Dist. Ferozpur).
 - wrote 'Zafar Nama' — a letter to Aurangzeb.
 - Visited 'Rukhanwala, Dod Ram, Bander, Bargadi, Behbal, Seoram and returned to Dina.
 - Wazir Khan prepares for war.
 - Search for new place.
 - Visited Jhidi, Bhadaur, Bhagta, Patto, Jaito, Labhanwali, Malooke-da-kot and reached Kot Kapoora.
 - went to 'Dilwan Kalan' (2 miles away from Kot kapoora).
 - Passed through Ramoane, Roopana while going to Khidrana — a safe place.
- 1705 — Jan. 12th, Reunion of Departed. Battle of Mukatsar.
- went to 'Nanga Di Sarai, Nanthehe, Bajidpur — (6 miles from Ferozepur). Returned to Roopane (4 miles from Mukatsar). Passed

through Thehadi, Bhoonderh, Haripur, Kal Zharani, Banbiha, Chateana.

- At Chateana converted a Syed Faquir named Ajmer Singh.
- Passing through other places reached Bajak (Patiala State, Dist. Bathinda).
- Reached Talwandi Saboki-stayed for 1 year.
- joined by Mata Sundri and Sahib Kaur who learnt about the death of all the four sons.
- Visited Bhagi Bunder, Bajak, Bhuchio, Bathinda, Mehma, Sameer.

1706 — January 31, Aurangzeb reached Ahmednagar.

- Bhai Daya Singh met Aurangzeb with 'Zafar Nama' from Guru Gobind Singh and the Guru was invited by the Emperor to meet personally.
- Guru dictated Guru Granth to Bhai Mani Singh.

1706 — 20th October (20th Kartak 1763) left Talwandi Saboki after sending Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Kaur to Delhi with Bhai Mani Singh.

- Passed through Jhorad, Sarsa (Dist. Hisar) Nohar Bhandra, Suheve (State Bikaner), Madhu Singhane, Pushkar (a lake near Ajmer), Naraina (50 miles south of Puskar), Lali Ghamrauda, Kulaet (Rajputana).
- Daya Singh met the Guru at Kalaet (Rajputana).

- 1707 — 20th February, Aurangzeb died.
— The Guru crossed Arvali Hills, reached Baghaur where he learnt about Aurangzeb's death.
- 1707 — 14th March, Mohd, Azam became Emperor at Ahmednagar.
— 17th March, Azam left Ahmednagar.
— 11th June, Azam reached Gawalior.
- 1707 — 22nd March, Muazzim learnt about his father's death at Jamrod.
— 12th June, Muazzim reached Agra.
- 1707 — 18th June, War of Succession at Jazo, The Guru helped Muazzim as he was contacted at Baglaur—Sikh army commanded by Bhai Daya Singh and Dhana Singh.
— Azam killed.
— The Guru returned to Agra with Bahadur Shah.
- 1707 — 19th October, The Guru left Agra — made Dhaulpur (30 miles south of Agra) the centre of his activities.
- 1707 — 12th November, Bahadur Shah left Agra to deal with Kam Baksh.
— The Guru invited to join.
- 1708 — April — Dhaulpur.
— went with Bahadur Shah to Ajmer, Chitorgarh, Ujjain.
- 1708 — 17th May, Bahadur Shah and the Guru crossed river Narbada.

- crossed Tapti and reached Burhanpur, The Guru persuaded by local Sikhs to stay.
- went to Amravati, Hingoli (10 miles south of Amravati).
- Kambaksh deserted by his supporters,
- Bahadur Shah no more in need of Guru's help
 - At Hingoli both parted. Bahadur Shah went to Hyderabad.
- 1708 — 19th July — Guru Gobind Singh passed through Basmath Nagar and reached Nanded.
- August 18, (Bhado 18, 1768) The Guru attacked by two Pathans—wounds sticked.
- Bahadur Shah sent Royal Physician to attend Guru Gobind Singh.
- 7th Oct. (Kartak 6, 1768) special congregation held at Nanded.
- Reaffirmed the end of Personal Guruship and made Holy Granth His Successor.
- 7th October — Guru Gobind Singh died. (Kartak 6, 1765).
- 1710 — May, Bahadur Shah returned from South.
- Wazir Khan, the murderer of Guru's son still unpunished.
- 1710 — May 22, Wazir Khan killed by Banda Singh Bahadur.

(1) **NANAK**
1469-1539

