



THE LIFE OF SHIVAJI MAHARAJ FOUNDER OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

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Chapter 16

The Campaign of Shaista Khan, 1660-63

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While Aurangzeb continued as Viceroy of the Deccan, Shivaji had maintained a friendly and submissive attitude. For his raids upon Junnar and Aurangabad he had made his excuses and had received an assurance of pardon. Upon Aurangzeb's departure for Delhi, Shivaji had sued for the restoration of territories which had once been part of Shahaji's jahgir and had even asked for a free hand to make conquests in the Adil Shahi Konkan. These concessions had been granted in vague and indefinite terms. Abaji Sondev was asked to attend the prince's court.¹ Then followed the blood-feud in the imperial family. Aurangzeb was no longer a prince, but an emperor. He had waded through slaughter to the throne. He had thrown his father into captivity. He had warred with his brothers and executed them, or was preparing to execute them after mock-trials. His time was taken up with plotting and counter-plotting. He had little leisure to follow events in the south. But he had played the cautious game of intrigue, of treaties and embassies. Thus, while Shivaji was asked to send his envoy, Aurangzeb had been writing to the Adil Shaha to take steps against Shivaji. While he warned the Adil Shaha against Shivaji, he congratulated the latter on the overthrow of Afzul Khan and the Bijapur forces.

When Aurangzeb was about to celebrate the first anniversary of his accession to the throne, with festivities extending over two months (5th June to

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1. Vide Parasnis MSS., 5.

19th August 1659), it would seem that Shivaji sent an envoy to congratulate him on the occasion and make certain demands. In reply to these demands the emperor replied that he had now conquered all his enemies and by the grace of God had won everything he had wanted, and that he had just appointed the *Amir-ul-umara* Shaista Khan to the *subha* of the Deccan to whom Shivaji was referred for orders. The emperor sent to Shivaji the usual robes of honour.² This was in July 1659.

In July 1659, therefore, Shaista Khan was posted to the *subha* of the Deccan. He was the *amir-ul-umara*, or the premier noble of the Mogul court. He was, besides, a near kinsman to the emperor being his maternal-uncle. Already before he had governed the *subhas* of Malwa and the Deccan, and shortly afterwards he was appointed to the viceroyalty of Bengal. The principal task imposed upon him was to subjugate Shivaji, and particularly to wrest from him those territories which he had conquered from Bijapur. There was actually no war between Shivaji and the Moguls at the time. This then was the result of the treaties and the embassies.

The time was ripe for action. Seldom was a general more favoured by fortune than Shaista Khan was on this occasion. Shivaji was caught between two fires. He was already involved in the war with Bijapur. Shortly afterwards the Bijapur *darbar* elevated Sidi Johar to the title of Salabat Khan and sent him forth against Shivaji, with a threatened combination of the Sawants and the Abyssinians.

Towards the end of January 1660 Shaista Khan commenced his march from Aurangabad. He came down with an army of 100,000 strong. He announced his determination to subdue Shivaji and reconquer all the forts and territory that had passed into his hand. It is said his vast army comprised five to seven hundred elephants, about 4000 camels, 3000 artillery waggons drawn by bullocks and 2,000 drawn by horses, and specie aggregating thirty-two crores of rupees. With these vast encumbrances Shaista Khan's camp presented the appearance of a large movable town.

Shaista Khan reached Ahmednagar in February. Shivaji was just emerging from the Kolhapur and the Konkan territories after his conquest of Panhala, Shaista Khan's banners swept southwards from Ahmednagar along the eastern barriers of the Poona district. Shivaji's light horse retreated before

2. Rajwade VIII, 7.

the Khan. The Khan pressed forward to Supa. Shivaji left the place just before his arrival.³

The amir-ul-umara took Supa without a blow and left Jadu Rai (Jadhavrao of Sindhkhed) in charge of it. Supa was to be the base of supply to the advancing army. From this point the passage of the advancing army into the Maratha country became difficult. The Maratha light horse who had hitherto retired before the Mogul van now began a series of rear and flank attacks, and constantly cut off the Mogul commissariat. Shaista Khan detached a cavalry contingent of 4,000 horses to protect his baggage. But every day and in every march, as Khafi Khan has to admit, Shivaji's light horse swarmed round the Khan's baggage and falling suddenly upon it like Cossacks, they carried off horses, camels, men and whatever they could secure.⁴

Shaista Khan overran the entire district of Supa and capturing Poona in person, he occupied that town. He sent detachments of his army to storm the ghat of Katraj and the town of Shivapur, and scouting parties to reconnoitre the defences of the neighbouring forts, with a view to attack and conquer them seriatim, should they be reported upon as assailable.

The fort of Chakan stood in the way of Shaista Khan's communication with Junnar. He determined to reduce the fortress and advanced to conduct the siege in person. Shaista Khan in attacking that little fort with his vast armies had never bargained for the spirited stand made by its brave garrison under the command of its governor, Firangoji Narsala. The latter protracted the defence for nearly two months against overwhelming odds, until on the fifty-sixth day of the siege, the beleaguering army by successful mining operations exploded the outer tower at the north-eastern angle of the fort. The soldiers defending the bastion were killed to a man. A gaping aperture presented itself in the rampart, through which the besiegers pressed on to the assault. The valiant governor with the remnants of his defence force threw himself upon the invaders and successfully barred their way for the whole night. At day-break Firangoji saw it was impossible to prolong the defence.⁵ The fort and its

3. Vide Khafi Khan, (Elliot VII, 261). Most historians following Grand Duff and the bakhar chronicles place the campaign of Shaista Khan in the year 1662-63. But Khafi Khan says the campaign was begun in 1660, the fort of Chakan being captured by him about the middle of the year. Khafi Khan bases his narrative on the *Alamgir Namah*, which is the standard authority for the first ten years of the reign of Aurangzeb. The *Jedhe Chronology*, which is altogether independent of that authority, gives nearly the same dates and supports these Persian chronicles. The text follows the dates in this chronology.

4. Vide Khafi Khan, Elliot VII, 261.

5. According to Khafi Khan, in the final assault, 300 men of the imperial army were slain, besides sappers and miners. Six or seven hundred were wounded by stones and bullets,

noble governor fell into the enemy's hands. Shaista Khan received him with great honour, complimenting him upon his valour and perseverance, and requesting him to come over into the Mogul service, undertaking that he would watch in person over his prospects and promotion in the imperial army. An alluring bait, which the magnanimous Firangoji spurned with contempt. The Khan took his obstinate refusal in good part, perhaps with admiration. He released him to depart to his master, in the most courteous manner, with many marks of his favour and esteem in acknowledgment of his gallantry. Shivaji received him with much honour, congratulating him upon his loyal and valorous resistance and appointed him to the governorship of the fort of Bhupalgad.⁶

While Shaista Khan was besieging Chakan by throwing up trenches and mines, Shivaji himself was besieged at Panhala by the Bijapur forces under Sidi Johar. This will serve to explain the final cause of Firangoji's surrender. Shivaji being himself immured for a period of nearly four months at Panhala was unable to direct a sufficient relief force to come to the succour of the heroic garrison. However,⁷ on dark nights, the garrison frequently sallied forth into the Mogul trenches and fought with surprising boldness, and on some occasions the forces of Shivaji outside the fort combined with those inside to make simultaneous attacks in broad day-light and placed the Mogul trenches in great danger.

An interesting anecdote is told concerning this part of Shivaji's defence preparations. There were two deshmukhs at Poona, Babajiram and Honappa Deshpande by name⁸. These men having some cause of offence against Shivaji went over to Shaista Khan's camp. Shivaji was very angry when he heard of this defection. Now it happened that a relation of these revolted

arrows and swords. Firangoji made his surrender through an imperialist Rajput commander. The *Jedhe Chronology* gives the month *Ashwin* of the *shaka* 1582 (October 1660) as the date of the capture of Chakan by Shaista Khan.

6. The *Shivdigvijay* says that Firangoji was first dismissed by Shivaji for capitulating to a Mohamedan enemy, and having joined Shaista Khan in disgust was brought back by force through Netaji Palkar from Malkur, where Shaista Khan had put him in command with a mansab of 5000. But this story seems to be a confused version of a similar story about Sambhaji Kavji.
7. Khafi Khan, Elliot VII, 261-63.
8. Chitnis (p. 97) gives the names of these traitors as Sambhaji Kavji and Babajiram Hanappa. Sambhaji Kavji was the officer, who according to the bakhar accounts murdered Hanmant Rao More of Javli, under pretence of a marriage alliance. The *Shivdigvijay* makes a mess, of the latter part of this story, substituting the name of Firangoji Narsala in place of Sambhaji Kavji.

deshmukhs, Sambhaji Kavji by name, stood in high favour with Shivaji. To him Shivaji spoke about the treason of his kinsmen in feeling terms, declaring that he could scarcely continue to trust a man, two of whose faithful dependents and kinsmen had thus sullied their fair name with treason. The pointed sarcasm of this speech was resented by Sambhaji, who felt highly insulted. He in his turn now went over to Shaista Khan and was received with open arms. At his first interview with Shaista Khan he attracted the attention of the Mogul general by a display of physical strength almost superhuman. Among other feats of physical strength he seized a horse by the hoofs and raised him aloft from the ground. The Khan pleased with his great strength admitted him to his service and gave him a command of five hundred horses. Sometime later when this Sambhaji was encamped at Malkur in the Mogul service, Shivaji sent against him a small force under Netaji, a general who was a fellow-townsmen of the revolted chief himself. Sambhaji was defeated and slain and Malkur where he had encamped was reduced to dust and ashes.

The conquest of Chakan fort had cost Shaista Khan so many lives that he was compelled to give up the attempt to extend his conquests up to Junnar and return to Poona. The stubborn resistance offered by the little band of heroes in Chakan fort made him reconsider his programme. He had first lulled himself into the belief that Shivaji's forts would fall before him by the very magic of his name that no resistance was possible, that the new Maratha power would collapse at the first shock of his arrival like a house of cards. But a small hill-fort, like that of Chakan, was now found capable of occupying his vast army for two months, and though it had fallen at last, its fall had only been effected by the sacrifice of hundreds of soldiers from the besieging army. This single experience made him view the situation with a clearer and less clouded vision. He now discerned the magnitude of the task he had embarked upon of wresting the mountain fortresses from the grasp of Shivaji. Aurangzeb himself laboured under the same delusion. That august monarch was all along of the opinion that it was a very light matter to conquer these mountain forts and subdue such a foe as the newly grown Maratha power. The repeated victories of Shivaji and the tales of chivalrous valour on the part of his commanders made him revise his judgment and send reinforcements under Jaswant Singh, the Maharajah of Jodhpur, to co-operate with Shaista Khan. These new battalions remained encamped near Poona.

In 1661 the Moguls conquered the district of Kalyan-Bhiwandi. Moropant was ordered to recover this entire district and subdue the forts in the neighbourhood. Moropant carried these forts by storm together with other Mogul strongholds north of Junnar. Netaji Palkar carried his flying columns deep into the heart of the Mogul dominions, plundering town and village and levying war-fines upon market and emporium. Passing swiftly from town to

town upto the banks of the Godavari he despoiled Baleghat. Parande (Parinda), Haveli, Kalburga (Gulburga), Avse and Udgir on his victorious march.⁹ He raided the country upto the very gates of Aurangabad and subdued the districts all round.

Mahakub Singh, the Mogul commander in charge of Aurangabad, incensed at these depredations, advanced upon Netaji with 10,000 men. A battle took place near Ahmednagar, in which the Moguls were completely worsted by Netaji. The Mogul horses, elephants, and war-stores were cut off by the Marathas. Laden with booty and successful beyond measure in this diversion against the Mogul strongholds in the Deccan, Netaji returned home.¹⁰

One of these Mogul strongholds was the fortress of Prabalgad, the commander of which was Keshar Singh, a Rajput officer. This Rajput chief refused to surrender the fort and Shivaji had to lead an attack against it in person. Keshar Singh defended the fort with bravery for a long time, but saw that he was helpless before the invader. The loyal warrior would not, however, outlive the defeat. Ordering the ladies of his *zenana* to perform the tragic *johar* – the self-immolation of Rajput ladies in a burning pile to escape the disgrace of captivity, the heroic warrior rallied his men and fell upon Shivaji courting a soldier's death. Not till the whole heroic band had fallen on the field of battle did Shivaji capture the fort of Prabalgad. Shivaji ordered the bodies of the heroic Rajputs to be burned with all honour according to the rites of the Hindu religion. The mother and daughter of Keshar Singh were discovered in one of the fortress towers, the sole survivors of the misfortune that had befallen their family. Shivaji received them with the honour and consideration befitting their rank and later on when they expressed a desire to return to their home in the north, he sent them away with a suitable retinue and handsome gifts of raiment and jewellery, as a mark of his esteem.

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9. According to Chitnis, Netaji Palkar had at this time been divested of the dignity of sir-nobut and Prataprao Guzar upon whom it was conferred was entrusted with this victorious campaign. Other versions about this change of title are that the title was transferred to Prataprao Guzar, about the time of Jay Singh's invasion, on account of Netaji Palkar's failure to obey certain orders of Shivaji. Parinda which is here described as one of the places plundered by Netaji Palkar had, according to Khafi Khan, been won by the Moguls without fighting from a Bijapur commander only in 1660. (*Vide* Jedhe Chronology, p. 185).
 10. According to the Rairi bakhar Mahakub Singh was watching these movements in silence, but roused to action by stringent orders of Aurangzeb took the field against Shivaji and was defeated and killed by Prataprao Guzar in a battle near Ahmednagar. The Mogul commander of Aurangabad, according to Khafi Khan, was Mumtaz Khan, left there during his own absence by Shaista Khan.

It is said that when Shivaji set out in a palanquin to examine the fort, his scarf got entangled in a cherry tree and fell to the ground. Shivaji ordered a halt, exclaiming that the omen which caused him to delay there probably showed that there was some treasure underground. He ordered the soil to be dug out where his scarf had fallen, and marvellous as it turned out, a buried treasure was indeed discovered there. The find was a jar filled with four lakhs of gold mohurs.

Netaji Palkar with his clouds of cavalry hovered about the confines of Ahmednagar and Aurungabad, carrying fire and sword into the Mogul territory, intercepting forage and provisions, and harassing the foe by systematic surprise attacks upon his outposts. The celerity of his movements baffled all pursuit. The enemy had to endure his rapid onslaughts without the power to reply to them. When the Mogul hosts on the defensive at their southern headquarters were found too feeble to withstand Netaji's incursions, Shaista Khan was compelled to send a detachment of his cavalry to put a stop to his attacks. A critical encounter followed between the opposed squadrons, in which Netaji, by reason of his inferiority in numbers, was defeated. But he fought bravely to avert the defeat, was repeatedly wounded and, exhausted as he was, he bravely escaped from the enemy's hands. It is believed that it was due to Rustom Jeman, the Adil Shahi commander, that he escaped being taken prisoner on this occasion.

At Poona Shaista Khan took up his residence in the mansion expressly built for Shivaji by the guardian of his younger days, Dadaji Kondadev. This mansion was known as Lal Mahal or the Red Palace. The Khan knew well enough that Shivaji was near at hand at Fort Sinhagad, and might be expected to swoop down at any moment and by some unexpected *coup de main* raid the Mogul cantonment. Shaista Khan's proper tactics should have been to surround Sinhagad or carry it by storm with the chance of taking Shivaji prisoner. But the experience of Fort Chakan, which he had purchased at no small price, had sobered his ardour. The very fact that Shivaji had chosen to take shelter in this fort spoke volumes for its impregnability and the strength of its garrison in men and munitions of war. All that Shaista Khan could do and did, with the menace of a sudden onslaught by Shivaji hanging over him, was to observe the strictest precautions for the defence of Poona. The Mogul officers had orders not to admit any armed Maratha into the town without a pass-port, no Maratha shiledar was to enter his cantonment, exception being made only in the case of the small retinues of the Maratha nobility who claimed the Mogul allegiance. He denied personal interview or audience to any Maratha officer outside this circle. Sentinels and outposts were stationed at fixed intervals. Thus Shaista Khan lingered at Poona armed against all surprises, and concerting the plans of his future campaigns.

On the other hand, Shivaji watched his movements, perched on the summit of Fort Sinhagad. When Shaista Khan came down with his army to the south, resolved, to exterminate the Maratha power, Shivaji had held a council of war, to devise measures of defence in consultation with his great captains and ministers of state. The latter had urged the magnitude of the war operations with the over-whelming hosts of the Moguls and counselled a policy of peace and submission. But peace seemed to be out of the range of practical politics, as on the side of Shaista Khan there appeared to be no Rajput noble of position and prestige, who would up-hold the cause of the Hindu chief or Hindu religion and intercede for a peace in the councils of the Khan. As an uncle of the reigning sovereign, Shaista Khan was not a man to be won over by gold. To expect a promise of pardon and a personal conference was not to be thought of with an invader whose object was the utter defeat and chastisement of Shivaji. The Maratha leader had, therefore, to decide upon the policy which he had so far pursued, viz. on the one hand, not to commit his fortunes to a regular pitched battle to which he plainly saw he was not equal, considering the vast hosts he was confronted with; and on the other hand, to harass the enemy by all the means in his power, cutting off supplies and forage, surrounding and intercepting the conquering hosts in difficult defiles, and raiding them when they blockaded the Maratha hill-forts.

While in this suspense, Shivaji had another paroxysm of a psychical character, when he felt the afflatus of his guardian deity, and under this spiritual obsession he uttered words which were immediately taken down by the by-standers. The words were to this effect: "Let not my child be anxious on the score of Shaista Khan. Like Afzul Khan he too is doomed. Shivaji's is the hand that shall work the dire result. Away with anxious cares!" After his paroxysm had abated, Shivaji read the words and thought they augured well despite all hazards. His hopes began to mount in his breast His valour would yet triumph.

Shaista Khan's arrogance whetted this desire. While residing at the Lal Mahal, Shaista Khan got a Brahman who knew Sanskrit to write a taunting epistle to Shivaji the purport of which was as follows: "You are a wild ape of the mountains; your mischievous activities break out from the sheltered coverts of your mountain lairs, and at every challenge to a fair and equal fight you fly to your mountain solitudes. But I am come to draw you out of your lairs and shall never leave the pursuit till I have hunted you out. How long shall you, with your elusive tactics of cunning and cowardice, put off your inexorable fate." Shivaji answered defiance with defiance "Monkey, if thou wouldst call me, oh Khan!" thus ran Shivaji's reply, "learn that I am like unto that valiant one whose glories resound in the deathless verses of the Ramayan.

If he destroyed Ravana, the Lord of Lanka, I shall rout your insolent hosts and rid the world of such an abomination.”¹¹

Shaista Khan's camp was safely guarded against a sudden assault and the large number of his soldiers made a fight impossible. Shivaji was, however, determined to make the Khan expiate his insolence with his blood. Without its leader the Mogul army was bound to melt away of itself. Shivaji succeeded in sending two of his agents to the Mogul camp at Poona with instructions to win over a Maratha cavalry officer there. This officer was instructed to give out that he was about to celebrate a marriage in his family and apply to the Khan for special permission to lead a nuptial procession. The permission being granted, he improvised a fictitious marriage in concert with his intimate friends and sent back Shivaji agents with assurances of help. Upon this Shivaji descended from Fort Sinhagad, with a picked body of fifteen hundred veteran Mavalis. On the way he fixed numerous torches to the trees growing on the ghat of Katraj as also to the horns of cattle. Bodies of trumpeters and horn-blowers were stationed upon inaccessible cliffs. The object was that at a given signal after a successful attack on Shaista Khan's camp, the torches were to be set ablaze, and the trumpets to blare and the torch-bearing cattle and trumpeters to set off in headlong flight, so as to lure the Khan's pursuing horsemen to a fruitless chase and to leave the way clear for Shivaji's retreat to Sinhagad. Shivaji placed his men in small companies along the way to Poona, advising them to gather on hearing a signal given by a flourish of trumpets. A troop of about five hundred soldiers was stationed under cover of the mango-groves outside the town and about two hundred just outside the Mogul camp.¹² True to the previously contrived plan, the wedding guests came in procession to the ramparts, when Shivaji with a handful of about twenty-five warriors, among whom were included his tried and trusty companions, Tanaji Malusare, Yessaji Kunk, Dadaji and Chimnaji Bapuji Deshpande, smuggled themselves into the procession.¹³ In those days Maratha soldiers carried their arms even at such a peaceful function as a wedding celebration. The presence of Shivaji's armed men in the procession did not, therefore, excite any suspicion.

11. Rairi bakhar. The Jedhe Chronology (Page 185) in one of its entries notes that Sonaji Pandit brought a message from Shaista Khan to Shivaji at Raigad.

12. According to Sabhasad, Netaji Palkar and Moropant were stationed with the army a little distance from the Mogul camp.

13. According to Khafi Khan a party of two hundred Marathas entered the town with the pretended bridegroom.

Shivaji was arrayed in a coat of mail concealed under the ample folds of a long white robe, and under his turban he wore a helmet of mail. In his hand he grasped his sword, while he was also armed with the famous tiger-claws and dagger. Shortly after Shivaji and his party had entered into Shaista Khan's camp, in the garb and under the pretence of wedding guests, night came down and silence reigned over the scene. The soldiers mounting guard inside the camp were themselves half asleep and well they might, as the vigilant watches maintained outside the camp and at the entrance-gates were so efficient as to give the inner watch a complete sense of security. As the palace chosen by the Khan was one that had long been the residence of Shivaji himself who knew it thoroughly, it could present no difficulty to Shivaji's people. Shivaji led his men straight to this mansion and effected an entrance through a kitchen window, which he knew to exist in the rear of the mansion though the Khan had taken the precaution to build it up. To dig a way through this window and leap cautiously in with two or three companions was for Shivaji the work of a moment. But the sound of treading feet awakened the ladies of the Khan's harem, who in their turn awakened their Lord. The different chronicles give different versions of the events that followed,¹⁴ as is but natural, considering the excitement under which they

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14. Chitnis gives the following version: - The Khan lived in a tent adjacent to the palace garden and was suddenly surprised by Shivaji with two of his comrades, while he was asleep. Shivaji sat on his breast and was about to kill him with his sword, when the Khan's wife interceded for his life. Upon this Shivaji got up still in an attitude to strike and compelled the Khan and his wife to follow him in silence. He cut off two of his fingers and let him escape, bidding him take a lesson by his experience and retire from Maharashtra.

Sabhasad and Chitragupta give the same version with a few variations: - When Shivaji entered the tent some ladies who were awake raised an outcry. The Khan was then awakened and hid himself among the ladies. While searching for him Shivaji discovered the Khan in the act of striking at him with a sword. But Shivaji anticipated his blow and struck at him. In avoiding the blow he had three of his fingers cut off. The Khan's men entering the tent in confusion, Shivaji managed to escape.

The Rairi bakhar tells the story of an intrigue with a *mali*, or gardener, next to Shaista Khan's residence. The mali undertook to introduce Shivaji at night to the Khan's bed-chamber. Shivaji came from Rajgad in haste to Poona and was accordingly admitted with a few followers. Twenty-five sentinels at the door and a eunuch still awake were cut down; but by mistake the mali led Shivaji into the chamber of the Khan's son. Shivaji killed him on the spot and compelled a servant-maid to lead him to Shaista Khan's chamber. Meanwhile the Khan had been awakened by the noise and was escaping by the window, when Shivaji struck at him and cut off one of his thumbs. Torches were now lighted and a crowd gathered. Shivaji returned by the way he had entered but found the garden surrounded. He charged one party and escaped, cutting down all that opposed him, and mounting his horse returned safe to Rajgad.

The Shivdigvijay gives a version which is a compound of the versions given by Chitnis and the Rairi bakhar. According to the Shivdigvijay Shivaji entered the chamber of the

took place. Most of the chronicles agree in giving an account of what happened as follows: The affrighted Khan being awakened by his ladies thought only of effecting his escape. He rushed to the window and almost escaped unscathed. Shivaji, however, noticed his stealthy flight and made for him at the window. He struck at him with his long sword as he was gliding out of the window and cut off one of his fingers. Meanwhile Shaista Khan's son with his special bodyguard rushed upon Shivaji. The latter received the attack with such promptitude that in a few seconds the corpses of most of his assailants were strewn on the floor. Shivaji now burst victorious from the palace (5th April 1663). Cries of murder and treason rent the air and the whole camp had now become a confused pandemonium. While a confused search was being instituted for the raiders of the camp, Shivaji and his party joined in the outcry and escaped safe out of the town. Collecting the soldiers whom he had stationed in detached outposts on the way, Shivaji made for Sinhagad. The trumpets gave the signal to kindle the torches in the Katraj ghat. The Khan's pursuing parties, as had been foreseen by Shivaji, were lured on in this direction, leaving the way open for Shivaji's escape to Sinhagad. The Mogul pursuers discovered late in the morning how they had been led on a fool's errand, when they saw the torches attached to the trees and the horns of cattle.¹⁵ Dispirited with the unsuccessful result of their pursuit, they turned back and feeling sure that by this ruse Shivaji must have

Khan's son and killed him. The wife of the deceased noble was awakened by the sound, and being asked as to the identity of the slain person, told Shivaji it was the son of the Khan. She had then to lead Shivaji to the Khan's chamber. Shivaji raised his sword to strike the Khan, but the light of the lamp flashing on it, awakened the Khan's wife. She interceded for the life of her husband, and both she and the Khan complied with Shivaji's order to follow him and a finger was cut off as in the version given by Chitnis.

Khafi Khan (Elliot VII p. 270) says that the Marathas entered the cook-house, where, it being the month of Ramzan, some cooks were at work, but were killed. The noise awoke a servant in the next room, but Shaista Khan did not mind his report. A maid-servant then awoke and took the report, when the Khan got up and armed himself. Just then a Maratha got up to him and cut off his thumb. The maid-servants in the end got the Khan to hide himself. Some Marathas worked their way to the *nagar-khana* or band-room and ordered the drums, to be beaten in the Khan's name. Others killed the drowsy sentinels, saying, 'This is how they keep watch'. Next day when Jaswant Singh came to express his condolence, Shaista Khan replied, "I thought the Maharajah was in His Majesty's service when such an evil befell me."

15. As regards the stratagem of the torches bound to the horns of cattle and set ablaze, the reader will recollect that the same stratagem was used by Hannibal to outwit Fabius Maximus in the pass of Tarracina (*Vide* Livy, Bk. XXII Ch. XII). This does not of course detract from the originality of Shivaji's plan, since he could not be accused of an acquaintance with the classics. It is, however, a striking parallel and shows how a kindred genius was shared in common by the Maratha and Carthaginian leaders.

ensconced himself again behind the shelter of the battlements of Sinhagad, they gathered in full force at the foot of that fortress. Shivaji permitted them to come within range of the fortress guns unchallenged. They came flourishing their swords and sounding their trumpets quite under the fortress walls, resolved to storm the fort and apprehend or slay Shivaji. But at length the Sinhagad cannon replied with a loud salvo, and with the first discharge carried dismay and panic into their disorderly ranks. Hundreds fell mortally wounded; others fled in a sudden panic; the elephant carrying the imperial standard was killed by a cannon-ball; none cared to stand by the standard; and a headlong fight ensued. While the siege was thus raised, the besiegers were themselves surprised by a detachment of horse sent against them by Netaji Palkar and Kartoji Guzar. Several hundreds of the Mogul combatants were cut down by Guzar.

Shaista Khan was beside himself with shame at this defeat and disgrace, – a defeat in which he had lost his son and the lives of so many of his zealous veterans. He had no hope left of a successful campaign. He dreaded to think what the next moment might bring forth, dealing as he was with so artful a raiding host as that of Shivaji. His good fortune had already saved him once from imminent death, and he felt it would be tempting his fortunes too much to court such perils any more. The rains made a siege of Sinhagad impossible. His soldiers had already become faint-hearted. They would scarcely entertain a proposal of further fight with Shivaji with any thing like spontaneous zeal and eagerness. To force them to fight at the point of the musket or by appealing to their sense of the gravity of the imperial mandate would be only like leading them to sure defeat and death, to the irremediable detriment of the imperial forces. To surround himself with further lines of entrenchments and remain in camp in expectation of a more favourable season to strike a final blow at the enemy was also vain. Shivaji had made his ingress into the Mogul camp through the lines of night guards and sentinels. Entrenchments and ramparts had not availed to bar his way. All this bred suspicion of treason in his own camp. Under the shadow of this fear he dared not abide longer to protract a campaign with the support of men about whose loyalty he had cause of suspicion. This would be to court the fate of Afzul Khan. He, therefore, resolved to evacuate Poona and march to a new encampment at Pedgaum.

His suspicions were directed against the Rajah Jaswant Singh. He wrote to the emperor that there was treason in his camp and that Shivaji had evidently corrupted Rajah Jaswan Singh, and that this was the cause of his unexpected reverses. Aurangzeb was in great dismay at the news of this defeat and the enterprising spirit of Shivaji, which enabled him to triumph over all the obstructions in his way and defeat the most eminent strategists of the

empire. His great campaign had only served to diminish the prestige of the Mogul name and jeopardized the safety of his southern-most subha. The emperor was convinced that there was no longer any possibility of friendly co-operation between Shaista Khan and Jaswant Singh. He recalled Shaista Khan and appointed Prince Muazzim in his place. The galled spirit of Shaista Khan was appeased with the governorship of the princely province of Bengal. The services of Jaswant Singh were retained as deputy to the prince, for fear lest the slur of a recall might throw him into the open arms of the Marathas.¹⁶ In truth, so acute was the tension of feeling in the southern subha that Aurangzeb might have been expected to take the field in person against Shivaji, but the sinister aspect of politics in Kashmir required his personal presence near the north-western frontier.

On the departure of Shaista Khan, the Rajah Jaswant Singh endeavoured to prove his loyalty and valour by a renewed siege of Sinhagad. But it proved to be labour lost. Shivaji's raiding bands terrorized the besiegers.¹⁷ The siege had to be raised, and Jaswant Singh with great losses made good his retreat to Aurangabad.

16. According to Bernier this Rajput prince, when at last recalled to Delhi, instead of going to the Mogul capital returned to his own state in Rajputana.

17. The siege of Sinhagad from December 1663 to about June 1664 (Jedhe Chronology).