

**RULERS OF INDIA.
AURANGZIB**

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Rulers of India. Aurangzib by Stanley Lane Poole

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STANLEY LANE POOLE

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Aurangzib

By STANLEY LANE-POOLE, B.A.

AUTHOR OF THE CATALOGUE OF ORIENTAL AND INDIAN COINS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM
THE LIFE OF VISCT. STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE, ETC.

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NOTE ON AUTHORITIES



THE most important contemporary European authority for the early part of Aurangzib's reign is the French physician Bernier, who lived in India from 1659 to 1666, and whose *Travels* have recently been admirably edited by Mr. Constable. Bernier writes as a philosopher and man of the world: his contemporary Tavernier (1640-1667) views India with the professional eye of a jeweller; nevertheless his *Travels*, of which Dr. Ball has produced a scientific edition, contain many valuable pictures of Mughal life and character. Dr. Fryer's *New Account of India* is chiefly useful as a description of the Maráthá power under Sivaji, for the author during his visit to India (1672-81) did not extend his travels further north than Súrat. Like Fryer, Ovington (1689-92) did not go to the Mughal Court, and his *Voyage to Suratt* contains little beyond what the English merchants of Bombay and Súrat (the only places he visited) chose to tell him. Something may be gleaned from Yule's elaborate edition of Hedges' *Diary* as to the Mughal provincial administration in 1682-4; and Dr. Gemelli Careri's visit to Aurangzib's camp in the Deccan in 1695 throws light on an obscure portion of the reign. Catrou's *Histoire Générale de l'Empire du Mogol* (1715), founded on the Portuguese memoirs of 'M. Manouchi,' would be invaluable if there were any means of authenticating it by comparison with Manucci's MS.; as it is, the work is too full of errors, and savours too strongly of the *chronique scandaleuse* of some maleficous and disappointed backstairs underling at the Mughal Court, to be esteemed as an authority. The contemporary Indian chroniclers, Kháfi Khán, Musta'idd Khán, 'Abd-al-Hamid Láhori, Ináyat Khán, Bakhtáwar Khán, and others, may be consulted in Elliot and Dowson's invaluable *History of India as told by its own Historians*, vol. vii. Elphinstone's *History of India* has been followed in its admirable account of the Deccan campaign. All dates are given in New Style, and the varying spellings of Indian names have been reduced to uniformity. I have to express my gratitude to Sir William W. Hunter, who had originally undertaken this volume of the series, for making over to me in the most generous manner all the MS. materials which he had collected in India for this purpose.

S. L.-P.

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NOTE ON THE VOWEL SOUNDS

The orthography of proper names follows generally the system adopted by the Indian Government for the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. That system, while adhering to the popular spelling of very well-known places, such as Punjab, Poona, Deccan, &c., employs in all other cases the vowels with the following uniform sounds:—

a, as in woman : á, as in father : í, as in kin : i, as in intrigue :
e, as in cold : u, as in bull : ú, as in rule.

AURANGZÍB



INTRODUCTION

THE HERITAGE OF AKBAR

THE greatest of Indian rulers, the Emperor Akbar, died in 1605. Third in the succession of his dynasty, he was first in his genius for government the true founder of the Indian Empire of the Great Moguls. He left a magnificent heritage to his descendants. His realm embraced all the provinces of Hindústán, and included Kábul on the west, Bengal on the east, Kashmír beside the Himálayas, and Khándésh in the Deccan. He had not merely conquered this vast dominion in forty years of warfare, but he had gone far towards welding it into an organic whole. He united under one firm government Hindús and Muhammadans, Shí'a and Sunnís, Rájputs and Afgháns, and all the numerous races and tribes of Hindústán, in spite of the centrifugal tendencies of castes and creeds. In dealing with the formidable difficulties presented by the government of a peculiarly heterogeneous empire, he stands absolutely supreme among oriental sovereigns, and may even

challenge comparison with the greatest of European kings. He was himself the spring and fount of the sagacious policy of his government, and the proof of the soundness of his system is the duration of his undiminished empire, in spite of the follies and vices of his successors, until it was undone by the puritan reaction of his great-grandson Aurangzīb.

Akbar's main difficulties lay in the diversity and jealousies of the races and religions with which he had to deal. It was his method of dealing with these difficulties which established the Mughal Empire in all the power and splendour that marked its sway for a hundred years to come. It was Aurangzīb's reversal of this method which undid his ancestor's work and prepared the way for the downfall of his dynasty.

Akbar had not studied the history of India in vain. He had realized from its lessons that, if his dynasty was to keep its hold on the country and withstand the onslaught of fresh hordes of invaders, it must rest on the loyalty of the native Hindús who formed the bulk of the population, supplied the quota of the army, and were necessarily entrusted with most of the civil employments. His aim was to found a national empire with the aid of a national religion. 'He accordingly constructed a State Religion, catholic enough, as he thought, to be acceptable to all his subjects. Such a scheme of a universal religion had, during two hundred years, been the dream of Hindú reformers, and the text of wandering preachers

throughout India. On the death of the Bengal saint in the fifteenth century, the Muhammadans and Hindús contended for his body. The saint suddenly appeared in their midst, and, commanding them to look under the shroud, vanished. This they did: but under the winding-sheet they found only a heap of beautiful flowers, one half of which the Hindús burned with holy rites, while the other half was buried with pomp by the Musalmáns. In Akbar's time many sacred places had become common shrines for the two faiths: the Muhammadans venerating the same impression on the rocks as the footprint of their prophet, which the Hindús revered as the footprint of their god¹.

The inscription written by the Emperor's friend and counsellor Abu-l-Fazl, for a temple in Kashmír, might serve as a motto for Akbar's creed:

O God, in every temple I see people that see thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise thee.

Polytheism and Islám feel after thee.

Each religion says, 'Thou art one, without equal.'

If it be a mosque, people murmur the holy prayer; and if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to thee.

Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque.

But it is thou whom I seek from temple to temple.

Thy elect have no dealings with heresy or with orthodoxy: for neither of them stands behind the screen of thy truth.

Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox,

But the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the heart of the perfume-seller.

He discarded the rigid tenets of Islám, and adopted

¹ Sir W. W. Hunter, *The Ruin of Aurangzeb*, 'Nineteenth Century,' May, 1887.