THE PANJĀB—(Etymology)

The word Panjāb derives from two Persian words “Panj” and Āb (— >/) meaning “five” and “water”, respectively. Thus, etymologically it means the Land of Five Waters (Rivers). Ibn Battuta, who entered India at the beginning of the year A.H. 734 (13th September, 1333 A.D.) writes, “We reached the Valley of Sind known as the Panjāb, which mean five waters.” Generally it was taken to be the tract lying between the rivers Indus and the Jamuna. The boundaries of the Panjāb have been shrinking and swelling from time to time over the last many centuries. In the Vedic period, the province was known as “Sapt-Sindhu” as it included all the territory covered by the seven rivers, namely the Indus (Sindhu), the Vitasta (Jhelum), the Asuki (Chenab), the Parushni (Ravi), the Vipas (Beas), the Sutdrā (Satlej) and the Saraswati. After some time, when the Greeks occupied this province, they called it Pentapotamia, “Penta” from Greek “Pente”, meaning five and “Potamos” meaning rivers. In those days, there were thirty seven flourishing cities and towns, but a few centuries later, i.e., after the Greek occupation, the Panjab was named as Taki “The Kingdom which Hwen Thang calls Tse-Kia or Taki, embraced the whole of the plains of the Panjab from the Indus to the Beas, and from the foot of the mountains (Himalayas) to the junction of the five rivers (Panjinad), below Multan. It was called “Taki” after a powerful tribe of that name which ruled here for a pretty long time.

It seems quite certain that the name must have been derived from the tribe of Taks or Takkas, who once were the undisputed lords of the

1. —De sa Hoy, p.1
3. It rises in Tun, close to the borders of Ambala District.
4. The Greeks name these rivers as Hydaspes (Jhelum), Akesines (Chenab), Hydroteus (Ravi), Hyphasis (Beas), and Zaradros (Satlej).
6. The Ancient Geography of India—Cunningham, p.170
Panjab, and who still exist as numerous agricultural race in the lower hills between the Jhelum and the Ravi. In the seventh century the kingdom of Taki was divided into three provinces, namely, Taki in the North and West, Shorkot in the East, and Multan in the South. According to A.C. Cunningham: "The province of Taki comprised the plains of the Panjab, lying between the Indus and the Beas, to the north of Multan district, or the whole of the Chaj Doab, together with the upper portions of the three Doabs of Sindh-Sagar, Rechna and Bari."

During the Mughal period, this province was given the name of Subah-Lahore. Abul Faiz, the court historian of Akbar, describes its boundaries as under: "It is situated in the third climate. Its length from the river Satlej to the river Sind is 180 kos. Its breadth from Bimbar to Chaukhandi, one of the dependencies of Satgarh, is 96 kos. It is bounded on the East by Sirhind; on the North by Kashmir; on the South by Bikaner and Ajmer; on the West by Multan. It has six principal rivers which all flow from the northern mountains."

Manucci who visited India in the reign of Aurangzeb has described the Panjab in these words: "It should be known that close to Shakkar seven rivers unite, - five issuing from the kingdom of Lahore, which have their sources in the mountains of Srinagar and Kashmir, and reach the province of Lahore by five openings. This is why the Kingdom of Lahore is called the Panjab, that is to say 'FIVE WATERS'." Sujan Rai Bhandari, (a resident of Batala, Gurdaspur District) the author of a celebrated contemporary work, entitled Khulasa-ut-Tavarikh describes the boundary of the Panjab during Shah Jahan's reign: "In its length the

1. The Ancient Geography of India-Cunningham, P.176
2. India and Pakistan-O.H.Sinnot, P.463
3. Al-Ahbar-Vol.II, Jarrett-Sarker (1949), P.185
4. The great city of Lahore, which has been the capital of the Panjab for nearly nine hundred years, is said to have been founded by Lava, the son of Rama, after whom it was named Lahavas. Under this form it is mentioned by Abu Nihan, but by the present form of the name Lahore which was soon adopted by the Muslims, has now become the universal.  
5. India of Aurangzeb-S.W.Sarker, P.LXXI
Ill

The Panjab extended from the river Satlej to the river Indus, a distance of 180 kgs. and in its breadth extended from Himber to Chaukhandi (Gujrat District) distance of 86 kgs.

The Panjab, under the British rule lay between 37° 30' and 34° 2' N. and 69° 23' and 79° 2'E. On the north the Himalayan ranges divided the province from Kashmir and the North-West Frontier province. On the west the Indus formed its main boundary with the later province, except that the Panjab included the strip of riverain area which formed the Isa Khel Tahsilk of Mianwali District, west of that river. Its southwestern extremity also laid west of the Indus and formed the large district of Dera Ghazi Khan, thereby extending its frontier to the Sulaiman range, which divided it from Baluchistan. On the extreme south-west the province adjoined Sindh; and the Rajputana desert formed its southern border. On the east the Jumna and its tributary Tons divided it from the Utra Pradesh, its frontier north of the sources of the latter's rivers being contiguous with Tibet.

III

The natural divisions of the Panjab

The Panjab is a triangular piece of land, lying between the Indus and the Jumna. It was bounded in the north by the vast Himalayan range on the west by the Sulaiman and Khirthar ranges, in the east by the river Jumna and in the south by the Sind and the Rajputana deserts. On the basis of the natural divisions, the Panjab may be divided into the following regions:

1. Mountain
2. Submontane
3. The Plains
   1. Chaggar Plain
   2. Indo Panjab Plain, Eastern
   3. Indo-Panjab Plain, Western
   4. The North-West Upland

1. India Of Aurangzeb-J.M. Sarkar, P. LXII
2. Cambridge History of India, Vol.I, P. 32
   The Panjab And Province A Kashmir-Douie, PP. 3-8
   JAMSHAD-BALA Mar-ali-din, P. 183
1. **MOUNTAIN RANGES:** This region is built up by the Himalayas and the Sulaiman-Koh. The Himalayas run across the whole of northern India from Assam in the East to Afghanistan in the West. They run in a south-east curve all along the northern front of India and separate from the plateau of Tibet, include several parallel ranges of lofty mountains, with deep valleys interspersed. They cover a region about 1,500 miles long and 150 to 300 miles in breadth. They served the purpose of a great wall of defence and protected Panjab from the cold bleak winds of the North. The mean summer temperature does not exceed 82°F. - cold in winter with heavy summer and winter precipitation. It has an elevation of twenty thousand feet. Tibet, which from the point of view of physical geography includes a large and little known area in Kashmir to the north of Karakoram range is lofty, desolate, windswept plateau with a mean elevation of about fifteen thousand feet. In the part of it which is situated to the north of the north-west corner of Nepal lies the Mansarovar lake, in the neighbourhood of which three great Indian rivers, the Brahmaputra, the Satlej and the Indus take their rise. This region always remains covered with snow.

The Hindu-Koh mountains which run from the Pamirs in a south-westerly direction was regarded as the natural boundary of India in the north-west. Further south, Safed Koh, Sulaiman and Kirthar mountains were generally regarded as the north-western boundary of India, separating it from the tableland of Iran.

2. **SUB-MOUNTAINS:** This region is the lesser Himalayas, with an elevation of six to seven thousand feet. It has a rainfall from thirty to forty inches, the greater part of which is received during the period of summer monsoon. In its lowest ridges, the Himalaya drops to a height of about five thousand feet, but it is a zone of the lowest hills.

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1. The abode of snow.
2. *India and Pakistan* by K. Spate, pp. 463-467
interspersed sometimes with valleys or 'dunes'. These consist of
'settary sandstones, clays, and boulder conglomerates, the debris in
fact which Himalaya has dropped in the course of ages. To these hills
and valleys the general name of Shivalik is given. This region is
practually restricted to the Districts of Ambala, Hoshiarpur and
Kangra, with its adjoining Himachal States. The 'sal' tree, which is
not found elsewhere to the west of the Jamuna, survives in a single
'tra' (strath) connected with the Kangra Valley, but actually within
the northern border of Hoshiarpur District. The Kiarda Doon in Sirmur
State and the Kalesar forest in Ambala shelter a number of species that
are characteristic or abundant in the Shivalik tract east of the Jamuna.
The low hills of Attock, Rawalpindi, Pabbi hills in Gujrat, and Jhelum
districts belong to the same system, but the Salt Range is only in part
Shivalik. Altogether Shivalik deposits in the Panjab cover an area of
thirteen thousand square miles.

The mountain ranges of the Himalayas are a great boon for the
people of the province. These mountains formed an admirable defensive
rampart of the Panjab against the foreign invasions by land. They
present a formidable barrier to an army, though small bodies of traders
and missionaries had been crossing over them through difficult routes.
The mountains in the north-east, though not an equally effective
barrier, have for all practical purposes served India well. They are
so steep and so densely forest covered that to cross them is a task
of abnormal difficulty, and no considerable body of foreigners known
to have passed through this route to the interior of the country.

Mountains in the north-west, however, have proved to be more
vulnerable. There are several passes across the Hindu-Koh and along
almost all the chief rivers in this region, viz the Sutlej and the
Chitral running south, and the Kabul, the Kurram, the Tochi and the

1. The Gates of India—Thomas Holdich, pp. 135-36, 90-91, 343-44
The Panjab Peasant in Prosperity & Debt—H.L. Darling, p. 23
Cambridge History of India—Vol. 1, pp. 37-38
Comal, running east to the Indus. These passes have played a dominant part in the Indian history. The melting snow from these mountains provide water to the rivers of the Panjab which prosper the plains in many ways. The monsoon strike against the mountains and give plenty of rainfall. These are a vital source of the economic prosperity of the people since times immemorial and have also greatly added to the fertility and beauty of Panjab's landscape.

(3) THE PLAINS:

(i) The Chaggar Plain:— The eastern districts of the Chaggar Plain have a shorter and less severe cold weather than the western. The summer temperature ranges between 102° and 105° F. and gradually increases as one proceeds towards the west. The eastern half, being directly connected with the Gangetic basin, receives more rainfall than the western. The winter rains are scanty. This region covers the districts of Ambala, Patiala, Karnal, Rohtak and Hissar i.e. the commissionerly of Ambala. The Chaggar river was once a stream of much greater importance, and a tributary of the Indus, which it joined below the junction of five rivers of the Panjab near Mithankot; the dry bed of its old course can still be traced far into Bahawalpur territory. The Chaggar plain was later included in the province of Delhi during the period under our study.

(ii) The Indo-Panjab Plain Eastern:— This plain roughly formed the subah of Lahore including some portions of the province of the North-West Frontier Province. It had a long cold weather season. Summer temperature ranges between 103° and 107° F. Summer rainfall varied from 15 to 30 inches and the winter rainfall averaged about three inches. This comprised the commissionerlies of Rawalpindi, Lahore and Jullundur.

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2. The Land of the Five Rivers-Travaskis, p. 10
3. (i) Lahore: Lahore, Amritsar, Jurdaspur, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Shaikhu Districts.
   (ii) Rawalpindi: Rawalpindi, Shahpur, Jhelum, Gujrat, Attock and Mianwali Districts.
   (iii) Jullundur: Jullundur, Kangra, Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana, Ferozepur Districts and the other plain and Hill states.
(iii) The Indo-Punjaub Plain Western:- It formed the Subah of Multan, comprising the Districts of Montgomery, Layalpur, Jhang, Multan, Muzzaffargarh and Dera Ghazi Khan. This plain has a severe cold weather, with great diurnal range of temperature because of the prominence of the sandy tracts. Summer temperature is the highest in the province and ranges between 105° and 110° F. It has a rainfall of five to fifteen inches. It is the driest part of India excepting the Thar desert zone. It is not much benefited by any of the monsoon currents. At Multan there are normally only fifteen days in the year when rain falls.

(iv) The North-West Upland:- This plain extended up to the Hindu-Koh, the outer frontier of India. It has a longer and a colder winter and spring. The summer temperature ranges between 100° and 105° F. The winter rains are heavier than in any other part of the plains, and last till April. The summer rains are late, and diminish as one proceeds towards the west of the area. Average rainfall varies from thirty to thirty inches.

The Great Mughals had divided the plains of the Punjab into Doabs i.e. the tracts of land covered by two rivers. These were named as (i) the Sindh-Sagar Doab, the area between the Jhelum and the Indus. This area was not so fertile as others (ii) the Jech or Chaj Doab, the area lying between the rivers Jhelum and Chenab. It was more fertile than the Sindh-Sagar Doab. (iii) The Rachna Doab, covered the rich fertile area between the Ravi and the Chenab. (iv) The Bari Doab included the area between the Beas and the Ravi. This was the most important Doab, comprising the rich alluvial plain. (v) The Bist Jallandhar, included the territory lying between the Beas and the Satlej and had a very productive area.

The plains of the Punjab consisted of one vast alluvial plain,

1. India and Pakistan—J.H.K. Spate, pp. 463-465
3. The India of Aurangzeh—J.W. Garkar, pp. 92-102
broken only by the wide and often shifting channels of its five rivers. The average height of this area is not more than one thousand feet above sea level. The fine but rigorous climate of the province has helped in breeding a hardy martial race capable of enduring the extremes of climate. The dryness of the climate has given prominence to the question of water supply. The success or failure of a crop in the Panjab depended on water supply. Thus naturally, prior to the introduction of modern elaborate schemes of irrigation, the rivers played a very important part in the life of the people and were the deciding factors in the allocation of agricultural areas as well as the distribution of population. As agriculture has always been the mainstay of the inhabitants carrying sediment from the hills, the rivers of the Panjab have formed alluvial deltas, of considerable extent. Their perennial supply of water is an inexhaustible source of irrigation. Their long lazy courses through broad valleys have not only made the lands fertile, but have provided good highways of communication. The scantiness of rainfall affected the vegetable growth of the areas away from the river flooded areas and hence such tracts were used for grazing.

NORTH-WEST-FRONTIER PASSES AND TRADE ROUTES

The Panjab may be roughly described as a triangular plain by mountains on the west and north-east, and a desert on the south. To the north-east lies the Himalayas, the loftiest mountain chain in the world. The main line of the range, the Karakoram, lies far to the north-east, and the actual boundary of the Panjab is a lower range, the Pir Panjal, whose snowy crest, is the most conspicuous feature in the winter. Between these two ranges lies the famous valley of Kashmir, North of the apex of the triangle of the Panjab. Karakoram range merges into the Hindu-Koh, which consists of a single broad ridge backed by no plateaux and notched by some relatively low passes.

1. The Vedic Age-Naratiya Bhavan, P.114
The Land of the Five Rivers-Trevesakis, Pp.5, 242
The difficulties of access from Central Asia through the low-lands of Bactria and on the Oxus to the valley head of Kabul lie rather in the approaches to the North-West Frontier passes than in the passes themselves, but the invaders have been surmounting these difficulties, and the Hindu-Koh, though the natural boundary of India north-westward, has been no effective barrier either in a military or commercial sense. The Hindu-Koh forms the north-eastern bastion of the great plateau of Iran, comprising the modern Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Iran, which flanks India to the north-west.

One route for the invaders from the north-west, was from the Oxus valley over the Hindu-Koh to Kabul and thence down the Kabul valley to the Indus. Another led from the Caspian sea to Herat and thence straight through the mountains to Kabul, or by an easier detour skirting the Afghan high lands to Gandhar and thence through Jazni to Kabul. Between it and the Indus lies the Sulaiman range, skirting the Panjab and Sindh, and forming the western frontier of India. These mountains are as lofty and imposing as the Pir Panjal, but these are not so continuous, and are traversed by several routes, which though difficult, are quite practicable for large armies. "These are the outlets through Afghanistan by which Alexander the Great and all subsequent invaders have descended upon the low country of the Panjab; and any one who, after traversing the interminable hill and stony valleys of Afghanistan, has been, on surmounting the last ridge, the vast plain of India spreading out before him in the dusky haze like a sea, may imagine the feelings with which such a prospect was surveyed by those adventurous leaders, when they first looked down upon it from the Asiatic high lands."

Throughout the early Turkish period, the north-west frontier of India remained very vulnerable, for the conquering hordes from Afghanistan were always tempted to cross the Indus and invariably threaten the

1. The Rise of the British Dominion in India—Lyall, VIII-1
Panjab. In the north-west there are several passes across the Hindu-Koh and along almost all the chief rivers — in the region vis. the Swat, the Chitral, the Kabul, the Kurram, the Tochi and the Comal. Through these passes the invaders raided the Panjab from time to time and established their kingdoms here. A brief detail of these passes is given below.

1. **KHAIBAR PASS**— This has been the most leading pass, which begins near Jamrud, ten and a half miles west of Peshawar and twists through the hills for about thirty three miles in a north-westerly direction till it debouches at Dakka. The Khairbar mountains form, indeed, the last spurs of the Safed-Koh, as that mighty range sinks down into the valley of the Kabul river. This pass has always been the great northern route from Afghanistan into India and the most important points in this route are Ali Masjid, (ten miles from Jamrud), Landi Kotal, (the summit of the pass; ten miles farther); and Tor Khan.

The Mughal Emperors always attached great importance to this pass. Babar raided the Panjab, all the times passing through it. Humayun too had traversed this pass more than once. The Khaibar route leads directly across the plains of the Panjab to the interior through the narrow gap between the desert and the mountains. Hence this pass has been more frequently used by the foreign invaders of India, which explains the strategic position of Khaibar pass as the line of defence, and that of the narrow plains to the west of the Ramuna, above Delhi, as the second.

2. **KURRAM**— Next to Khaibar, lies the Kurram river which lies between the Paiwar Kotal in the west and the borders of Miranzai in the east. Its maximum length from that to the Paiwar Kotal is 72 miles as the crow flies and its breadth varying from twelve to twenty four miles. Bounded on the north by the Safed-Koh, which separates it from Singarhar, it adjoins para Chakani and the country of the Massosai on the

east, its south-eastern corner abutting on the Miransai country of
Kohat District. From Khost Khoram the highest peak of the Kurram river
range descends a spur through whose extremity the Kurram river appears
to have cut a passage opposite Sadda, and which divides the valley in
two parts, Upper and Lower Kurram. Rising in the hills near Ahmedkhel,
it flows at first south-westward, and then turns sharply to the east
entering the Agency of Kurram near Khar-tachi and thence flowing due
east to Kurram Fort. East of that place its trend is somewhat south-
ward; and at Sadda it turns sharply to the south until it reaches Maro
Khel, whence it curves south-east as far as Thal in Kohat District.

Humayun who held Kabul in 1562, occupied it before his conquest
of India, Under Akbar it formed part of the TOMAN of Bangash or the
Bangash, being known as Upper Bangash to distinguish it from Lower
Bangash, now Kohat District. The Afghans of this tract were the disci-
plines of Pir-i-Roshan and hence became known as Roshanias. These sectar
ies led the Afghan opposition to Mughal rule and Kurram formed one of
their chief strongholds. The line of advance into Afghanistan through
the Kurram Valley is easy, and Lord Roberts used it when he marched
towards Kabul in 1880. The road to Kabul leaves the river far to the
south before it crosses at Paiwar Kotal.

3. THE TOCHI PASS:— Between the Kurram Valley and the Gomal river is a
large block of very rough mountainous country known as Vanisrtani after
the turbulent clan which occupies it. In the north it is drained by the
Tochi. Westward of the Tochi Valley, the country rises into lofty moun-
tains. The upper waters of the Tochi and its affluents drain two fine
glens known as Rirmal and Shawai to the west of the country of the
Mehsud Wazirs. The Tochi valley is the direct route from India to Chasni
and about nine centuries ago, when that decayed town was the capital of
a powerful kingdom, it must have often heard the tramp of the armed men

1. The Panjab H.W.P. and Kashmir, 1874, 268-26
Imperial Gazetteer of India H.W.P. 1881, pp. 336-339
The loftiest peaks of Tochi Valley are Waziristan, Shaidar, Pirghal overhang Hairmal. An alternative route from Kabul lies through Bannu and the Kurram Valley to a point lower down the Indus, where it joins by a route from Ghalmi through the Tochi Valley.

4. THE GOMAL PASS: East of Kajuri Kach the Gomal route passes through tribal territory from where it debouches into the plains of the District of Dera Ismail Khan. The Gomal route is the oldest of all trade routes. Down it there pours yearly a succession of caravans led and followed by thousands of well armed Pathan traders. This route leads along the valley of the Gomal river, through the southern Waziristan, from Murtaaz and Domandi, on the borders of Afghanistan and Baluchistan to the Afghan plateau. It is one of the oldest and most frequented trade-routes between southern Afghanistan and the Indus Valley.

5. THE BOLAN PASS: Far to the south lies this route from Qandhar through Quetta and the Bolan to Sukkar on the Indus. But here invaders, and the conquerors of the Lower Indus were blocked by the desert striking eastwards for the great cities of the plains of the province. This pass was less important as gateway of India than the others. For, just beyond the region where it debouches into the Panjab plain, stretches the great desert of Rajasthan, which bars access to the interior of India. The Khairbar route on the other hand as stated above leads directly across the plains of the Panjab to the interior through the narrow gap between the desert and the mountains.

6. MALA KANDI: This pass crosses the range north of Peshawar, and leads from Sam Ranzai into the Swat Valley. The pass is traversed by an ancient Buddhist road. Zain Khan Koka, a general of Akbar, built a fort there in 1587.

References:
1. Imperial Gazetteer-M.W.F. Province (1908), pp. 340, 347, 119
2. The Land of the Five Rivers-Travaskis, p. 7
4. Gates of India-Thomas Holdich, pp. 143-144
6. Imperial Gazetteer-Provincial Series M.W.F.P., p. 231
7. CHITRAL: - Chitral is the Pathan country which ends at the Lowari pass. Beyond, right up to the main axis of the Hindu-Koh is Chitral. It comprises the basin of the Yarkun or Chitral river from its distant source in the Shavar Shur glacier to Arnowai, where it receives from the west the waters of the Bashgul, and is thenceforth known as the Kunar. Its western boundary is the Durand line, which follows a lofty chain sometimes called the Kafirstan range. Another great spur of the Hindu-Koh known as the Shandur range divides Chitral on the east from the basin of the Yasin river and the territories included in the Gilgit Agency.

8. TIBET PASSES: - The trade with Tibet is carried over lofty passes. Among these are the following: - The Kangwa La (15,500 feet) on the Indian-Tibet Road, through Simla; The Mana (18,000 feet), Miti (16,570 feet) and Baloha Dhura in Garhwal, the Anta Dhura (17,370 feet), Lampuja Dhura (18,000 feet). These were the main passes of the Tibet side which were commonly known as trade routes. No foreign invader overcame through these passes so far but the Chinese are now trying to penetrate into India through these passes. Lieut Col. H.W. Gadwin Austin has given an admirable summary of the orography of the Himalayas.

9. KASHMIR AND CENTRAL ASIAN PASSES: - These smaller trade routes which pass through Kashmir are among the Central Asian trade routes over the Western Himalayas. BABA LACHA: mountain pass through the Lahul canton of the Kulu sub division of Kangra District is a trade route from Darcha in Lahul to the Rupshu country in Ladakh. RORTANG PASS: in the Kulu subdivision of Kangra District, is across the Himalayan range which divides the Kulu Valley from Lahul. This pass leads from Koksar in Lahul to Rolla in Kothi Manali of Kulu. The high

1. P.
road to Leh and Yarkand from Kulu and Kangra goes over this pass, which is practicable for laden mules and ponies.

The effects of physical features of the Panjab have exercised a great influence on its history. Placed, as it is, by nature in a locality which gives it a crowning position, and serving as the gateway to India, every invader from the North has, by its possession, sought the road to fame. In pre-historic times, it was presumably, the Panjab that was first invaded by the Aryans from their camping beyond the snowy ranges of the stupendous Himalayas. Thus on account of its geographical position, the Panjab has played the role of a gateway of India, because it was through these passes that the invaders entered India.

The rivers of the Panjab also played an important part in the history of India. These rivers served as boundaries of power, during the period of our study. During the rainy season, they served as bulwark against the invaders who could not cross them. It was the main reason that Babar had to follow a more northerly route to Delhi, just below the Shivalik hills, where the rivers were narrow and the work of the bridge-building easier. It was also due to the geographical factor that almost all the decisive battles for the conquest of Delhi were fought in the plains of the Panjab. No effort was spared to check the invaders from the north-west by the rulers and the people of the Panjab but whenever they failed against their heavy odds they were always given tough fight by the rulers of Delhi in the battle fields of Sirhind Tarain, Kurukshetra and Panipat.

The fertility of the Panjab plains have always attracted the nomad invaders from the north. The Panjab being the gateway of India, had to bear the full brunt of these invaders and every invader gave the
people of the Panjab a rude shock which they absorbed alongwith the invaders in due course of time and made them a part and parcel of their social organisation. It is this fact that has given it the importance in Indian history which is out of all proportion to its productivity. It has been a crucible in which various racial strains, political systems and religious beliefs have mixed and melted and crystalised into new amalgams.

THE PRELUDE

True, Panjab had been the cradle of the rise and fall of a number of dynasties. Since the Pre-historic periods, battles and skirmishes had been bequeathed by one generation to the other, the life of the peasantry always unsafe and unsettled; the fortunes of business never too bright; laxity in morals resulting in unending court intrigues and lust for gold. It was the Panjab fermenting in social stagnation and moral depravity - a sure ground for the resurgence of the Bhakti cult and a full scale-war. Because, when men sink low in morals a saint arises to resurrect the soul and a warrior arises to cleanse the plethora by striking out quite a few.

In the first two decades of the sixteenth century, a great revolution had taken place in the history of Indig, which made the Panjab the potential arena of political struggle for the succeeding hundred years. The first and the most dramatic incident of this historic and bloody cockpit, began with the triangular conflict between Ibrahim Lodi, his uncle Alam Khan and Daulat Khan Lodi, the then governor of the Panjab as its leading characters. All of them were conspiring, each in his own way, to capture political power. Ibrahim Lodi having occupied the throne of Delhi after the death of his father Sikandar Lodi in 1517, began to torture and crush all the Afghan Chiefs and former supporters of the Lodi dynasty who, by strength of their high offices, had gained considerable influence and positions. This he
did with a view to attain political supremacy. Alam Khan who had looked forward to the death of his brother Sikandar Lodi, had high ambition to become the Emperor of India. But Ibrahim Lodi having sensed the sinister designs of his uncle, Alam Khan, was desperately after his life. At the same time he was keen to dislodge Daulat Khan, the governor of the Punjab, whose territory extended from Attock to Sirhind. Ibrahim wanted to entrust the governorship of this frontier province of India to one of his own men.

The Panjab has ever been the sword arm of India and has also been the main channel through which fine and brave soldiers recruited from beyond its frontiers, flowed into India. Without a complete domination over this region, no Emperor could ever feel secure on the throne. The court intrigues at Lahore and Multan had their repercussions on the general run of the people. They had no pole-star to fix their loyal ties unless some turned stoically indifferent to pleasure or pain. The full account of this drama played in the Land of the Five Rivers is given in detail in the pages to follow.