



1434

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வாசக சாலை.

VIJAYANAGAR

CITY OF VICTORY

History of the Hampi Ruins)

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VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE SEXCENTENARY CELEBRATION at HAMPI near HOSPET RY. STATION

25th to 27th December 1936.

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THE LION AND THE LIZARD
THE COURTS WHERE JAMSHYD GLORIED AND DRANK DEEP;
AND BAHRAM, THAT GREAT HUNTER—THE WILD ASS
STAMPS O'ER HIS HEAD, AND HE LIES FAST ASLEEP.

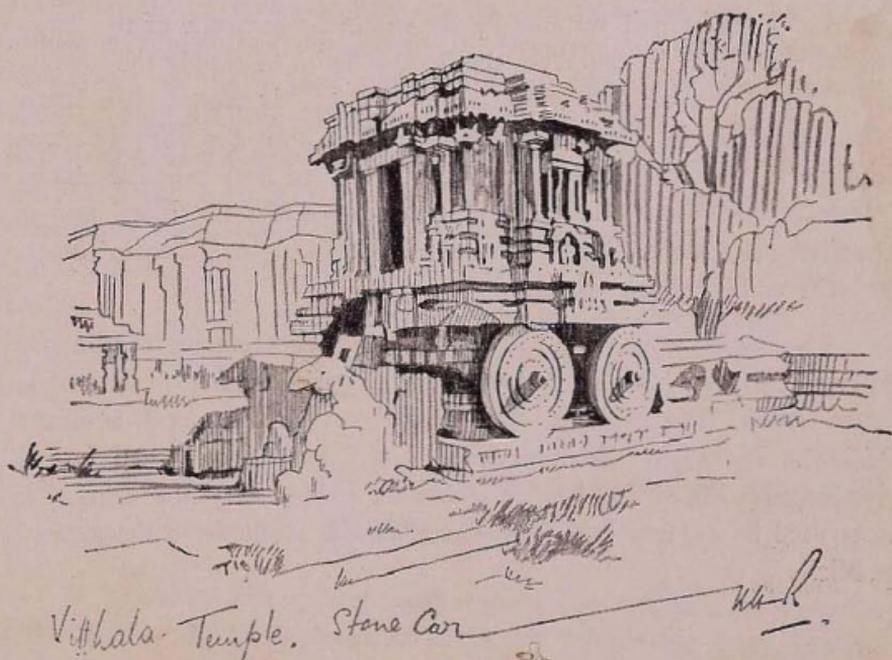


HAMPI RUINS

LOCALITY

HAMPI is a tiny hamlet which grew up around the great Pampapati temple which stands on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra in the Hospet taluk of the Bellary district of the Madras Presidency. It is of no importance in itself, but it has given its name to the ruins which lie scattered about it of Vijayanagar, 'The City of Victory', the birth-place of the empire of that name and also of old the capital of its kings.

The remains cover some nine square miles, but the fortifications and outposts of the city included a far larger area. The entrance to it from the south-west, for instance, was at one time a fortified gateway on the huge embankment which stands at the foot of the hills two



miles the other side of Hospet—nine miles—the crow flies from the centre of the ruins. The town of Anegundi in the Nizam's Dominions formed the outpost for the city on its northern side, while Kampli served as an outpost on the eastern side.

The site of the old city is a strangely wild place to have been the birth-place and capital of an empire. The whole of it is dotted with little, barren, rocky hills and immediately north of it the wide and rapid Tungabhadra hurries along a boulder-strewn channel down rapids and through narrow gorges. The hills are of granite weathered to every shade of colour from grey to brown, and have hardly any vegetation on them. In places, cyclopean masses stand delicately poised one upon another at the most hazardous angles, in others they form impassable barriers, while those which have yet to fall often stand boldly out from the hills as single giant tors or range themselves in castellations and embattlements which but for their vastness would seem to be the work of man rather than of nature.

Up the sides of these hills and along the low ground between them—often in several lines one behind the other—run the fortified enclosing walls of the old city, and in the valleys among them stand its deserted streets and ruined temples and palaces. The lowest ground of all is covered with fields of tall cholam, sugarcane, or of green and golden rice watered by the channel which one of the kings of the days gone by led from the Tungabhadra to supply the people, and irrigate the orchards and rose-gardens of his capital. To know Vijayanagar at its best, the visitor should climb the slippery steps leading to the little shrine on the top of the hill called Matanga Parvatam and watch the evening light fade across the ruins, and if the fates are kind and grant him the added glory of a Deccan sunset, he will surely return content.

The best base from which to see what remains of the city to-day, 350 years since its destruction, is Kamalapuram (see the map), seven miles from Hospet Railway station (Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway), where a deserted temple was converted into a dwelling by Mr. J. H. Master, a former Collector of the district, is now used as a Travellers' Rest-house* and is available to the general public.

* The Rest-house is fully furnished and the servant in charge of it is capable of preparing meals for visitors, but the only food supplies that can be obtained locally are milk, eggs, fowls, mutton and rice. All other food supplies required should be obtained before leaving Hospet where there is one of Spencer's Refreshment Rooms at the Railway station.

Hospet Town

The town of Hospet was built by Krishna Deva Raya, the greatest of all the Vijayanagar kings, between 1509 and 1520 in honour of Nagala Devi, a courtesan whom he had known in the days of his youth and whom he married after he became king. He called it after her, Nagalapur, and it was his favourite residence. In his time it was the entrance gate, as it were, to the city of Vijayanagar for all travellers coming up from Goa and the West Coast.

The modern town of Hospet contains nothing of any antiquarian interest and there is hardly a trace of the old fortified walls that once enclosed the original town of Nagalapur.

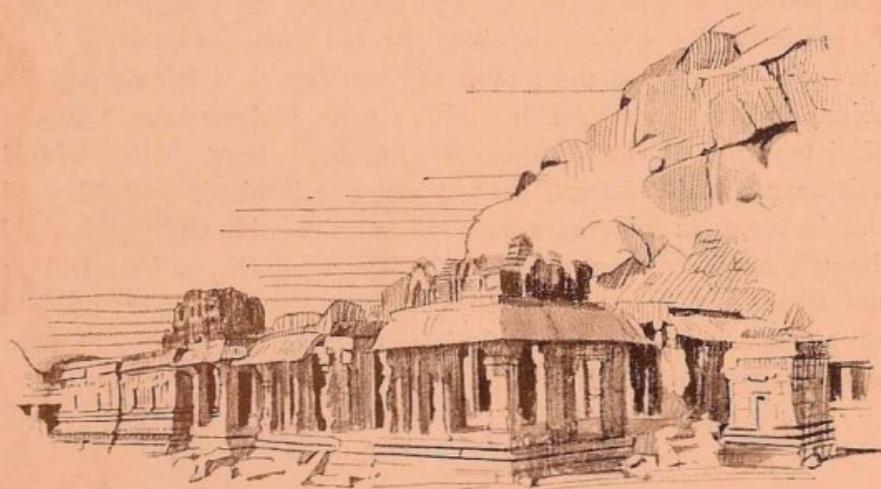
Soon after the visitor leaves Hospet on his way to Kamalapuram, he passes through the untidy village of Anantasayanagudi. On the south side of the village is the large and curiously shaped temple of Anantasayana. Ruined shrines and mandapas now begin to appear alongside of the roadway, marking the old route between the inner citadel at Hampi and the suburb of Nagalapur, while conspicuous objects to the north are the old square Muhammadan tombs at Kadirapuram. The Portuguese traveller Paes who visited Vijayanagar in the sixteenth century says that in his time all this road was "a street as wide as a place of tourney with both sides lined throughout with rows of houses and shops where they sell everything; and all along this road are many trees that the king commanded to be planted, so as to afford shade to those that pass along". Both houses and trees have long since disappeared.

THE HISTORY OF VIJAYANAGAR FROM THE INSCRIPTIONS.

If legendary history and local tradition be credited, there was a town on this site many centuries before the Vijayanagar kings selected it for their capital. Some of the most dramatic scenes in the great epic of the *Ramayana* occurred at a place called Kishkindha, and it is asserted by the local Brahmans and generally acknowledged by the learned in such matters that this Kishkindha was close to Hampi. It was ruled in those early days, says the *Ramayana*, by two brothers of

the monkey race called Vali and Sugriva. They quarrelled and Sugriva was driven out by his brother and fled with Hanuman, the famous monkey-chief of the poem, who had been one of his ministers, to the woods of the hill Rishyamuka, on the bank of the Pampa near the dwelling place of the holy rishi Matanga on the mountain called Matanga Parvatam. Here he was safe from Vali, for the rishi, furious at finding close to his hermitage the putrefying body of a rakshasa, or demon whom Vali had killed and flung there, had pronounced a dreadful curse upon him if ever he should again enter that region.

Rama, the hero of the poem, accompanied by his brother Lakshmana, is journeying south in search of his lovely wife Sita, who has been carried off by Ravana, the ten-headed demon king of Lanka or Ceylon, when he is informed that Sugriva can give him news of her. He goes to Rishyamuka and meets Sugriva and Hanuman. The



Achyutaranga Temple, Hampi

Vish.

former tells him how he saw Sita being carried through the air by Ravana and how she dropped one of her garments and her jewels; and how he had retained these latter in a cave. He brings them and shows them to Rama in proof of the truth of his story. Rama in his

gratitude for this clue slays Vali with his arrow, burns his huge body on a funeral pyre and replaces Sugriva on the throne. While Rama waits on Prasavana, a part of the Malyavanta hill close by, Hanuman searches for Sita, finds her in Lanka, brings back tokens from her to reassure Rama and finally organises the monkey army which builds the causeway from Rameswaram to Ceylon by which Rama crosses to the island to the rescue of his bride.

Such is the story in the *Ramayana*, and the names of several of the localities round Hampi are identical with those in the poem. Pampasaras or Pampatirtham is the name of a tank on the Nizam's side of the Tungabhadra near Anegundi and Pampa is also said to be the ancient and puranic name of the river; Rishyamuka is the hill on the Nizam's side of the narrowest of the gorges in the river already mentioned; Matanga Parvatam, or Matanga's hill, has been referred to above; Malyavanta hill (see the Map) lies to the east of it; the cave where Sugriva kept Sita's jewels and the mark made on the rocks by her garment as it fell to earth are pointed out to the pious pilgrim near the river bank; while a curious mound of cinders near the neighbouring hamlet of Nimbapuram is shown as the cremated remains of Vali. Enthusiasts go even further and declare that the black-faced grey langurs and the little red-faced monkeys which still scamper and chatter about the hills are the descendants, respectively, of Vali and Sugriva, and the tumbled masses of fallen boulders which encumber the site of Vijayanagar are the remains of the material collected by Hanuman's monkey hosts for the great causeway. Hanuman is at any rate the most popular deity in the whole district.

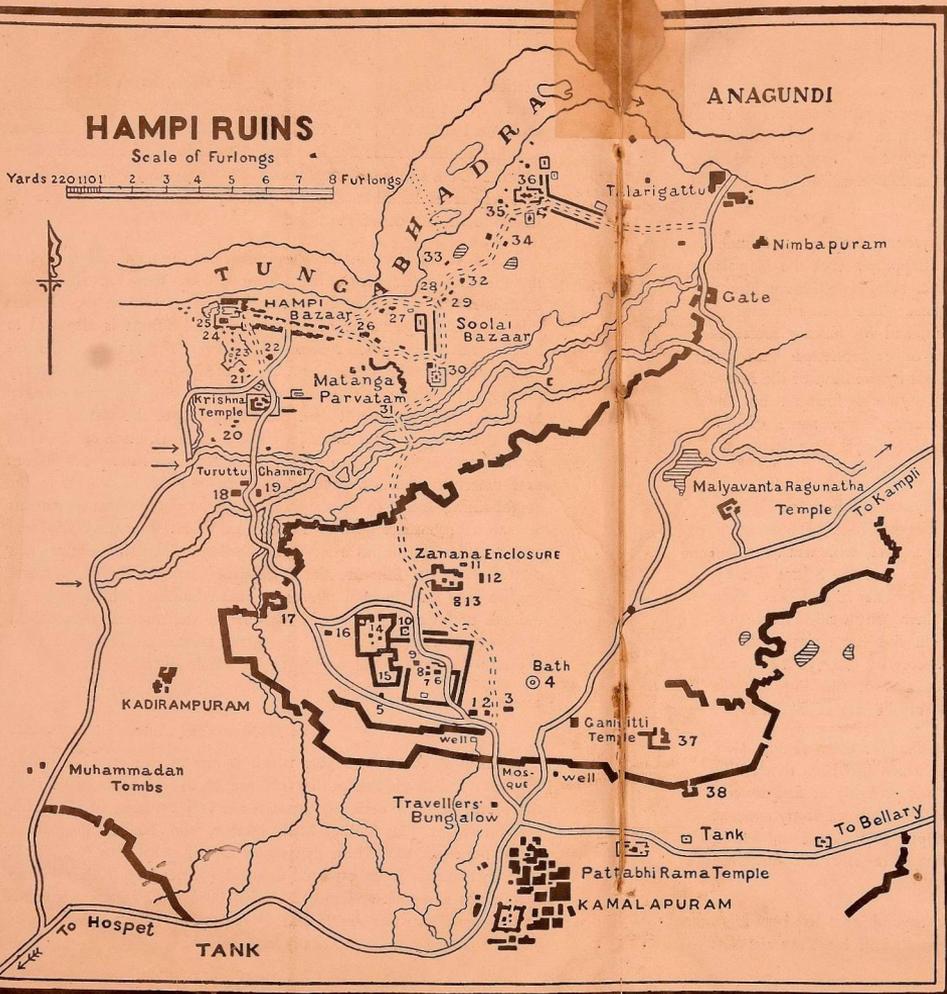
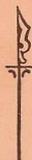
The Muhammadan advance, A. D. 1310

About A.D. 1310, a year which is one of the great landmarks in South Indian chronicles, the advance of the Muhammadans from the North began to seriously threaten the very existence of all Hindu Dominions in the south. Malik Kafur, the famous general of Alla-ud-din of the Khilji dynasty of Delhi, swept into the Deccan with an immense force, captured Orangal (Warangal) in the Nizam's Dominions and took and sacked Dvarasamudra. Two years later his armies again marched south and Devagiri fell. Both the Hoysalas and the Yadavas were practically extinguished.

HAMPI RUINS

Scale of Furlongs

Yards 220 1101 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Furlongs



REFERENCE

- 1 Queen's Bath
- 2 Water Tower
- 3 Chandrasekhara Temple
- 4 Octagonal Bath
- 5 Octagonal Water Pavilion
- 6 Throne Platform
- 7 King's Palace
- 8 Underground Chamber
- 9 King's Audience Hall
- 10 Hazāra Rāma Temple
- 11 Guards' Quarters
- 12 Elephant Stables
- 13 Rāga Temple
- 14 Daṇḍāik's Enclosure
- 15 Mint
- 16 Underground Temple
- 17 Natural Archway
- 18 Sati Memorials
- 19 Virabhadra Temple
- 20 Narasimha Statue
- 21 Sāsivikallu Gaṇēsa Statue
- 22 Kaḍalaikallu Gaṇēsa Temple
- 23 Hēmakutam
- 24 Group of Jaina Temples
- 25 Pampāpati Temple
- 26 Monolithic Bull
- 27 Kōdarda Rāma Temple
- 28 Varāha Temple
- 29 Anantasayana Temple
- 30 Achyuta Rāya's Temple
- 31 Steps leading up Mataṅga Parvatam
- 32 Jaina Temple
- 33 Sugriva's Cave
- 34 King's Balance
- 35 Unfinished Gateway
- 36 Mthala Temple
- 37 Bhīma's Gate
- 38 Domed Gate

Foundation of Vijayanagar, A.D. 1336

Anarchy followed, Mussalman Governors, representatives of the old royal families and local chiefs struggling for supremacy, until out of the confusion arose the great Hindu empire of Vijayanagar, which from its capital near Hampi for two centuries remained a bulwark against Muhammadan invasion.

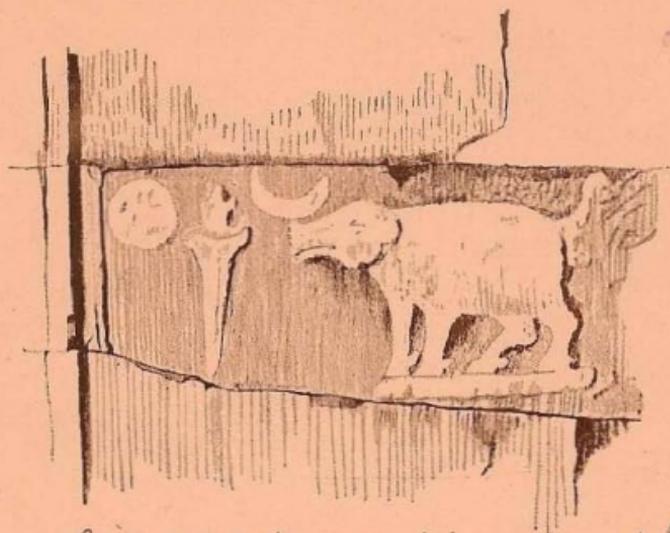
Most authorities agree that the Vijayanagar empire was founded about A.D. 1336, immediately on the disappearance of the Hoysalas from the stage of history, the founders being two Hindu princes named Hakka and Bukka, sons of Sangama. The former became the first king, taking the name of Harihara, and his brother succeeded him. They were probably subordinates of or connected with the Hoysalas, and were aided in their enterprise by the head of the *Matha* at Sringeri (in the Kadur District of Mysore), founded by the reformer Sankaracharya in the eighth century. The name of this *Guru* was Madhava and he is known as Vidyaranya. He became the first minister of the new state.

The first or Sangama dynasty of Vijayanagar, who were Yadavas, held the throne from 1336 to 1478, and consisted of nine kings. The throne was then usurped by a Saluva chief, who was succeeded by his son. There were thus only two kings of the Saluva dynasty, also Yadavas, and they occupied the throne from 1478 to 1496. Then followed the Narasinga dynasty from Tuluva, which ruled from 1496 to 1567, and had six kings. The fourth and last dynasty was the Rama-Raja or Karnata. It was in power from 1567 to 1644, and numbered 6 kings. It was from a member of this line that the English received in A.D. 1639 a grant of the site of Madras.

The Vijayanagar kings had Virupaksha for their family God, and their crest was the Varaha or Boar, which had been that of the Chalukyas before them. Their capital was probably at first situated at Anegundi on the northern bank of the Tungabhadra nearly opposite the present hamlet of Hampi. As the empire grew in size and power, the capital was moved to the southern bank of the river and Anegundi was retained as a fortified suburb or outpost.

Of Harihara I, not much is known beyond what has been cited above. But Bukka Raya, whom he appointed as his Yuvaraja, was

famous. With the assistance of Vidyatirthamuni he became very great, and "having freed from enemies a hundred royal cities, counting from Dorasamudra, ruled over an empire perfect in its seven parts." Though the establishment of the capital is attributed to Harihara,



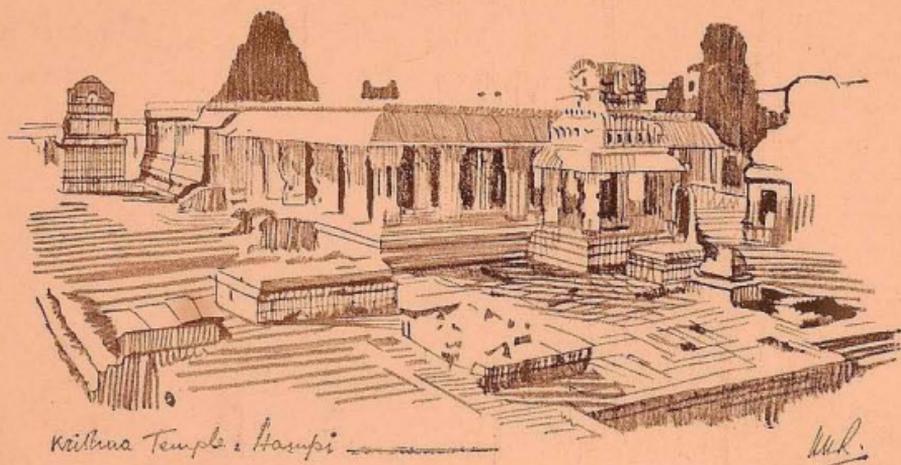
Bear Crest of the Vijayanagar Kings — Buk.

and his naming it Vidyanagari after Vidyaranyasripada, the building of the city and the transformation of its name to Vijayanagari or City of Victory, are said to have been the work of Bukka Raya.

Harihara II, Bukka Raya's son by Gaurambika, succeeded him on the throne and severe struggles were going on with the Sultans of the Bahmani Kingdom of Gulbarga, which was founded in 1347, or only 11 years after Vijayanagar. Thus, in 1380, when the Turushkas (Muhammadans) were swarming over the Adavani (Adoni) hill-fort and kingdom, Mallappa Odeyar's son defeated them, took possession of the fort and kingdom, and handed them to Harihara. In 1384 the Turushkas are said to have come and attacked Kottakonda when the army had gone to the Orangal country. In 1397, we are informed of the exploits of the General Gunda, "into the flames of whose valour the Yavanas, Turushkas, and Andhras fell like moths."

The struggles with the Muhammadans to the north continued unabated, and the pages of *Ferishta* are filled with details relating to them. According to him, Deva Raya, Harihara's son, whom he calls Dewul Roy, was forced to give his daughter in marriage to the

Bahmani Sultan Firoz Shah. At the end of his reign Deva Raya inflicted a severe defeat upon the Sultan. A great slaughter of the Muhammadans followed, and the Bijapur country was laid waste with all the treasured resentment of many years. These reverses killed



Firoz Shah. But his successor, Ahmed Shah, drove back the Hindus, and desolated the possessions of Vijayanagar, massacring women and children without mercy. Whenever the number came to 20,000, he halted for three days and made a feast. The Hindus in desperation, formed a plot against him, from which he escaped by a hair's breadth. Terms were then agreed to, and he retired to his own country, the capital of which he shortly removed from Gulbarga to Bidar, a hundred miles to the north. Of these affairs there is little indication in the inscriptions, which generally represent Deva Raya as ruling a peaceful kingdom.

The story of the struggles between Hindu and Muhammadan power continues with varying fortune until Krishna Raya came to the throne, who was the most powerful and distinguished of the Vijayanagar monarchs. About 1520 he inflicted a severe defeat upon the Muhammadans, in consequence of which a good understanding prevailed between the courts of Vijayanagar and Bijapur for a considerable time. He extended the limits of the empire until they reached to Cuttack on the east and to Salsette on the west. Krishna Raya was a great patron of Sanskrit and Telugu literature, and had at his court eight celebrated poets. On his death, Achyuta Raya, his half brother, succeeded to the throne.

Achyuta Raya's son, perhaps an infant, was crowned as king, but died in a short time. Sadasiva Raya, the son of Ranga, a deceased brother of Achyuta by the same mother, was then raised to the throne by the great minister Rama Raja (who was his brother-in-law) and the councillors. He is said to have subdued all his enemies in Suragiri (Penukonda), and brought the whole land into subjection to his commands, while the Kamboja, Bhoja, Kalinga, Karahata and other kings acted as servants for his female apartments. But Rama Raja himself wielded the chief power in the State, and is called the ruler of the great Karnata Kingdom. Though possessed of commanding abilities, so great was his arrogance that the Mussalman States of Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmadnagar and Bidar were provoked to combine in an attack on Vijayanagar as their common enemy.

The Muhammadans combine against Vijayanagar

On Christmas day, 1564, they began their united advance southward and halted near the town and fortress of Talikota, 25 miles north of the Kistna river. Rama Raja despatched his brother Tirumala with 20,000 horse, 100,000 foot and 500 elephants to block the passage of the river, then sent off his other brother Venkatadri with another large force, and finally marched in person to the point of attack with the whole remaining power of the Vijayanagar empire. His total force is said to have numbered 600,000 foot and 100,000 horse. The Hindus had fortified their side of the ford opposite the enemy's camp, but the latter drew them off by pretending to attempt another passage, and then returning suddenly to the original ford crossed it unopposed. They then marched south towards Rama Raja's camp.

The battle of Talikota, A. D. 1565

On the 23rd January 1565 the great battle of Talikota (as it was called), one of the most decisive battles in all South Indian history, was fought. All the available forces on either side took part in it. Rama Raja, though over ninety years of age, commanded the Vijayanagar centre and his brothers Tirumala and Venkatadri led, respectively, the left and right divisions. The Muhammadans awaited the attack with their artillery in the centre, opposite Rama Raja's division. This consisted of six hundred pieces of ordnance disposed in three lines, the heavy artillery in front, then the smaller pieces, and in the rear light swivel guns. Masking all these were two thousand archers.

These latter kept up a heavy fire as the enemy advanced and then falling rapidly back allowed the massed batteries to open fire. Their effect was murderous and decisive and the Hindus retreated in disorder. On the flanks they had, however, been more successful and had driven



Monolithic Statue of Narasimha

W. H. R.

back the Mussalmans, and the centre rallied for a charge upon the guns. At first their onslaught seemed to prevail, but the Mussalmans' heavy guns, loaded with bags of copper coin, were fired into them at close quarters, 5,000 of them fell, and the Mussalman cavalry charged through the intervals of the guns and cut their way straight through the disorganised masses of the enemy right up to where Rama Raja was posted.

Rama Raja had at first superintended operations from a litter. Later, thinking to encourage his men, he seated himself on a "rich throne set with jewels, under a canopy of crimson velvet embroidered with gold and adorned with fringes of pearls," from whence he

distributed money, gold and jewels to those of his followers who acquitted themselves well. Later again, he returned to his litter and it was at this moment that the Mussalman cavalry charged up to his position. One of the enemy's elephants stampeded towards him, his bearers dropped him and fled, and before he could mount a horse he was taken prisoner. He was taken before the king of Ahmadnagar, who immediately had his head cut off and raised on a long spear so that the Hindu troops might see it.

This disaster caused an instant panic among the Vijayanagar forces and they broke and fled. "They were pursued", says *Ferishta*, "by the allies with such successful slaughter that the river which ran near the field was dyed red with their blood. It is computed on the best authorities that above 100,000 infidels were slain in fight and during pursuit."

Their panic was so great that they made no attempt to rally on a fresh position or even to defend the hills and approaches round about their capital. Venkatadri had been slain and of the three brothers Tirumala alone remained. He hastily returned to Vijayanagar and fled thence with the puppet king Sadasiva to the hill fort of Penukonda in the Anantapur district, taking with him a few followers and a convoy of 550 elephants laden with treasure in gold, diamonds and precious stones valued at more than 100 millions sterling and also the state insignia and the celebrated jewelled throne.

Deserted by their king and the commandant of their troops, the people of the capital made no effort to defend themselves and the very next day the city was looted by hordes of wandering gipsies—Lambadis and the like. On the third day the victorious Muhammadans arrived and for five months "with fire and sword, with crowbars and axes", to quote Mr. Sewell* "they carried on day after day their work of destruction. Never perhaps in the history of the world has such a havoc been wrought, and wrought so suddenly, on so splendid a city; teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plenitude of prosperity one day, and on the next seized, pillaged, and reduced to ruins, amid scenes of savage massacre and horrors beggaring description."

* "A Forgotten Empire", p. 208.

Two years later, Caesaro Federici, an Italian traveller, visited the place and wrote of it that "the houses stand still but empty, and there is dwelling in them nothing, as is reported, but Tygres and other

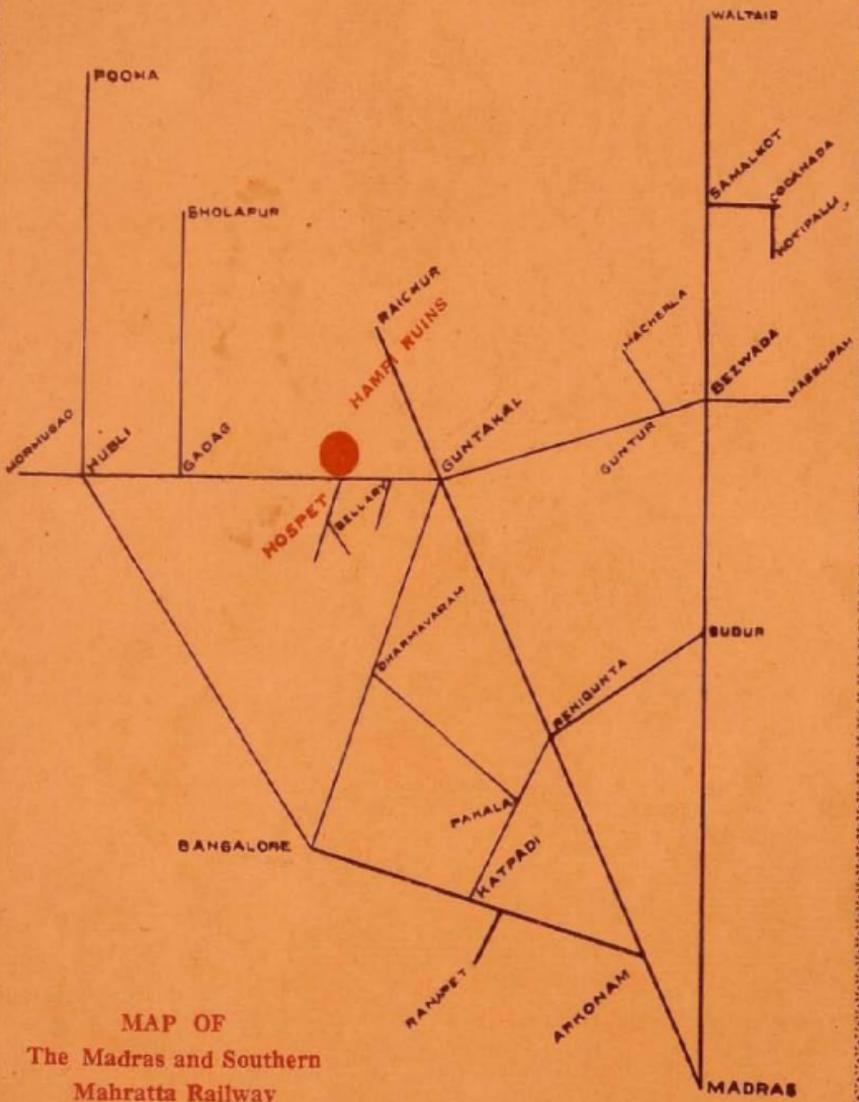


Watch tower. Hampi W.H.

wild beasts". Thus Vijayanagar as a city was blotted out, and has never since been inhabited by any but the few cultivators who still till the fields which wind about among its deserted streets and temples.

On the fall of the capital, anarchy followed throughout the dominions of the empire. Sadasiva and Tirumala kept up a certain state at Penukonda, but the nobles for the most part threw off their allegiance to them and proclaimed themselves independent.

In 1568 Tirumala murdered Sadasiva and seized the throne for himself. A few years later he was forced to fly to Chandragiri in the Chittoor District, and it was there that one of his descendants in 1639 granted to Francis Day the land on which Fort Saint George in Madras now stands.



MAP OF
The Madras and Southern
Mahratta Railway
SYSTEM
Showing position of
HAMPI RUINS



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