

CHAPTER XV.

THE FIRST SIKH WAR.

THE SIKH GENERALS—DEPARTURE OF VENTURA AND AVITABILE—
 THE APEX OF THE ARMY—COLONEL HURBON—GULAB SINGH'S
 DIPLOMACY—RANI JINDAN AND THE DEPUTATION—OCCUPATION
 OF LAHORE—TERMS OF PEACE.

AFTER the murder of Wazir Jawahir Singh his sister, the Rani Jindan, was declared regent. Her principal advisers were Diwan Dina Nath, Bhai Ram Singh, and Misr Lal Singh, the first named of whom was a man of remarkable talent, known as "the Talleyrand of the Panjab." When war was declared against the British, and the Sikhs crossed the Sutlej, I was acting as Raja Gulab's agent and factotum at Lahore, and in consequence had great power and influence.

Two more contemptible poltroons than the two generals of the Khalsa army—Lal Singh and Tej Singh, both Brahmans—never breathed. Lal Singh ran away and hid himself for twenty days