

mad in order to comply with this demand cheerfully sold his ornaments and jewellery realising fifty-one lakhs with which he was able to raise and equip this force. In return for his services, the five *parganas* held formerly by the Vinchur chief, and the fort of Islāmnagar, then in Sindhia's hands, were restored to him. The results were of incalculable benefit to Bhopāl. Nazar Muhammad, who before the conclusion of this treaty was actually the possessor of only a few strongholds beyond the walls of which he scarcely dared to venture, now found himself the lord of a princely domain, while his revenues which at the death of his father amounted to little more than a lakh of rupees, collected with the greatest difficulty, rose at a bound to nearly fifteen lakhs with the prospect of their becoming nearly double this amount.

Just when a brilliant future seemed to await the State Nazar Muhammad was killed by the accidental discharge of a pistol. On the 22nd *Muharram* 1235 A. H. (11th November 1819) he went to Islāmnagar to hunt. While dandling his little daughter, Sikandar Begam, his young brother-in-law Faujdār Muhammad, aged eight, drew a pistol from his brother's belt and in playing with it, accidentally discharged it, the ball passing through Nazar Muhammad's head.

"There was," says Sir John Malcolm, "but one sentiment, that of the deepest regret, and no person sought to take advantage of the accident to promote his own interests. At a consultation of the principal chiefs it was resolved to continue to attend the widow and ministers of the deceased prince until the pleasure of the British Government was known as to his successor, and it is remarkable that not the slightest effort was made to influence the judgment of the British agent, a sufficient proof of the absence of all design or guilt on this unhappy occasion. Nazar Muhammad was only 28 years of age when he died after governing Bhopāl for three years and five months, but he left a name such as is attained by few in the longest life. . . . His appearance was noble and his manners those of a prince who knew the value of possessing the hearts of his subjects."¹

Though out of deference to Ghaus Muhammad, with whom he always remained on terms of the closest intimacy, he had never assumed the title of Nawāb, he was always so addressed by the British Government, which took no cognizance of a nominal chief who had long abandoned all interest in the affairs of his State.

Nazar Muhammad's death at such a time was an irreparable blow. He was a man of noble presence, superior mind and strong personality, gallant and honourable, devoted to

¹ *Central India*, i, 340.