

It was said Nana forged a will ; and, after the death of the Peishwa, inherited his vast fortune. The pension, however, was discontinued. Revenge rankled in the heart of the Nana ; but, like the Raneef of Jhansi, he concealed his rancor and bided his time. The Nana, in luxurious idleness and sensuality, lived in the fort of Bithoor, hard by Cawnpore. The walls of his rooms were frescoed in a style that disregarded expense and decency. The writer was once invited to witness the ceremonies attending the marriage of a rajah's son to the daughter of another potentate. In a large hall, where the boy bridegroom received in state his visitors, the walls were decorated with life-size frescoes of nude boys and girls, men and women, in every conceivable and (to all except Indian artists) every inconceivable posture. The rajah's major-domo informed the writer that the walls had been expressly decorated with these frescoes to provide object-lessons for the youthful betrothed ! Rooms so adorned suited the tastes of the Nana. Whether Nana Sahib foresaw the mutiny, or had simply private designs of his own, it is impossible to say ; but one fact was apparent—he cultivated the friendship of British officers. Never would he visit them, but they were always made welcome at Bithoor and treated sumptuously. For an agent or steward he had an adventurer, Azimoolah, who, from being a waiter and passing through many vicissitudes, eventually became the Nana's right-hand man. Azimoolah was sent to London to intercede with the H. E. I. C. directors on behalf of the Nana, and to induce them to continue to him the late Peishwa's pension. Azimoolah failed in this ; but he had a good time in London, where the female fools of fashion lionized the ex-waiter. He was the instigator of the Cawnpore massacres.

After May 20th the roads to Delhi and Agra were in the possession of the mutineers ; and after that date the Cawnpore Sepoys began to show signs of insubordination. Meetings were held nightly ; and Sir Hugh, alarmed, applied to the Nana for a force to guard the treasure-chest. The lambs asked wolves to watch over them. The Nana sent a body of troops into Cawnpore. Sir Hugh wished to move the treasure-chest into the improvised fort ; the Sepoys prevented this. On May 21st all the Europeans except the magistrate, Sir George Parker, took refuge in the fort. The move was so hastily made that no special accommodation was yet ready for the women and children, who were obliged to rough it that night. But worse times were in store for them. An officer, writing to friends, after describing the situation, the miserable plight they were in that night, and hinting at the rumors afloat, adds, " I still put all trust in the Sepoys." This extraordinary infatuation had possessed the minds of nearly all the officers in native regiments.

On May 22nd Captain Moore, in command of a company of the 32nd Foot, arrived. Sir Henry Lawrence had sent these men (whom he could ill spare) from Lucknow. A week later more reinforcements arrived : 160 men contributed by

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