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Treasure Seekers: Empires of India

By Timothy Dilworth

India a land of seductive riches,
land of the Kohinoor diamond
a priceless gem which legend says
was given by the god Krishna
to test mankind's greed.
Possessed of such wealth and beauty,
thought Krishna, would men
behave like beasts?
or would they think and
achieve wisdom?
This is the story of India
and its conquerors.
One stormed south
across the mountains,
one came from across the seas,
both were hungry for wealth
and dominion.
Each would become his own answer to
Krishna's question
wise man or beast?
For three hundred years the
Mughal empire dominated India.
It was a Mughal emperor who created
the radiant mountain of white marble
called the Taj Mahal,
one of the wonders of the world.
The wealth and sophistication of
the Mughal court were legendary.
Here, Mughal kings ruled
from the famous peacock throne
made of gold, rubies and sapphires.
All these treasures of
the Mughal empire
were the legacy of one remarkable
man, a poet, a killer,
a wild nomad who was not
from India at all.
His name was Babur.
Babur's life began in 1483
in Fergana,
a small kingdom in the highlands
of central Asia.
Fergana was one square of a
bloodstained checkerboard

of competing dynasties,
each struggling to expand
its little empire.
But a little empire wasn't
what Babur had in mind.
Babur's dynasty was part Turk
and part Mongol
"Mughals" as the Persians
called them.
Babur was a direct descendant
of the two greatest conquerors of
Central Asian history,
Genghis Khan
and Timur or Tamerlane.
He wanted something that would be
worthy of their memory.
From the very beginning,
Babur tried to take inspiration
from Genghis and Timur.
These were his two heroes.
And it was probably this reason
which had, at times, goaded him
to think of India as
his final destination.
Born to nobility,
at 11 Babur inherited Fergana.
Almost immediately other warlords tried
to take it away from him.
Not surprisingly for one so young,
the fortunes of war started to
turn against him.
Before long, he had lost much of
his kingdom and his men
deserted in droves to hitch their
fortunes to more promising leaders.
All seven or eight hundred of
my lords and warriors deserted me.
It was a terrible blow.
I remember, I couldn't help crying.
He was only fifteen.
It was a harsh education which made
young Babur's heart ache.
But his early failures toughened him.
If you desire to rule and conquer,

you don't just fold your hands
when things go wrong you act.
Action meant war.
And with whichever followers
he could muster,
he started to wage guerrilla warfare
against his more powerful neighbors.
He and his men seesawed
between victory and defeat.
Allies deserted him;
enemies became allies.
One day in 1501, he laughed
when he realized
a sword he had given to an ally as a
token of loyalty one year,
was the same one that almost split
his skull in battle the next.
My own soul is my most
faithful friend.
My own heart, my truest confidant.
Always, Babur's ambition was to found
a great dynasty like his ancestors.
He needed children who would be
his heirs.
He admitted he was so shy
as a young man,
his mother and sisters had to bully
him into sleeping with his first wife.
But before long he had more wives,
and a son, Humayun,
on whom the weight of Babur's dreams
would fall.
With his succession assured,
the question that now dogged him was:
what would he leave his sons?
He had lost his kingdom and was
being shut out of Central Asia.
So where was the land in which
his dynasty could flourish?
Slowly, Babur's reputation as
a warlord was growing
and with it the perception that
he might be a future ruler after all.
Lured by the promise of

conquest and booty,
warriors of other dynasties began to
join him.
In 1504, Babur's fortunes took a
decisive turn for the better.
He caught wind of tumult in the
Afghan kingdom of Kabul to the south.
Here, he thought, was a chance.
At the age of 21,
Babur rode out of the mountains
with his small band of men
and raced toward Kabul.
Warriors joined him as he approached
and they swept into the city.
The battle for Kabul was short
and Babur triumphed.
As he settled into his new home,
Babur immediately fell in love
with Afghanistan,
its cool climate, and the beautiful
rivers of its fresh upland plateaus.
Kabul signified a new beginning,
an end to the years of wandering
but not, of course,
an end to his dreams of empire.
Not far to the south lay the vast,
teeming land of Hindustan, India.
He had heard many stories
of its wealth.
He realized it was now within
his grasp.
From the time I took Kabul,
I set my heart on Hindustan.
In 1504, the Indian sub continent
was a disunited mass of
independent kingdoms and sultanates
Hindu in the south,
largely Moslem in the north.
One of the largest and most powerful
of these was Hindustan,
controlled by the sultanate
of Delhi.
Babur knew he stood no chance
of directly confronting

the armies of Hindustan.

But having taken Kabul, he lost no time in making an exploratory raid into the plains of northern India just to see.

With a small army he moved south in 1505.

He was amazed by what he found.

I had never experienced such heat or anything like Hindustan before different plants, different trees, different animals and birds, different tribes and people, different manners and customs.

It was astonishing, truly astonishing.

India exceeded his wildest expectations.

He discovered beautifully crafted textiles, refined sugar, perfumes and spices.

Here indeed was a rich land.

As he headed back to Kabul, his resolve to return was redoubled.

But he would have to bide his time.

For 20 years Babur

made Kabul his home.

to taste the pleasures of life.

Until now he had been a clean living and sober young Moslem.

In Kabul all that started to change.

At that time I had not committed the sin of drinking to drunkenness and did not know the delight and leisure of being drunk as it should be known.

Here all the implements of pleasure and revelry were ready and present.

If I didn't drink now, when would I?

He discovered a taste for fine wines, and the sweetmeats laced with hashish called Ma'jun.

In Kabul he drank often.

His memoirs filled with parties,
drunkenness and head splitting
hangovers.

We drank on the boat until
late that night.

We got on our horses,
reeling from side to side,
then let them gallop free reined.
The next morning they told me I had
galloped into camp holding a torch.
I swear I didn't remember a thing,
except that when I got back to
my tent I was extremely sick.

In Kabul, Babur learned how to let go,
but he never forgot that
if he was ever to take Hindustan
his troops had to stay disciplined.
He had no qualms about
extreme punishments.

I had one of the soldiers clubbed
at the gate for stealing a pot of oil.
He died.

The others were successfully
cowed by this punishment.

As he explored Afghanistan,
this ruthless nomad who was perfectly
capable of

putting entire cities to the sword,
became a keen student of flowers.

All sorts grow in these foothills;

I once counted them and found

We named one the rose scented tulip
because it smelt

rather like a rose;

it grows all by itself

on the Sheikh's plain.

Joy was to sit peacefully in one of
his beautiful highland gardens
and write poetry.

He built no fewer than
ten gardens in Kabul.

Before long, Babur's seven wives had
produced him eighteen children.

He was devoted to all of them

but it was his first born son,
Humayun, who he was determined would
inherit a great kingdom.
Babur bided his time, watching and
waiting for his opportunity in India.
Finally, in 1526, it arrived.
The Sultanate of Delhi was overtaken
by internal strife.
Babur realized his moment had come.
It would be now or never.
Babur marched into Northern India
with 12,000 men.
The sultan of Delhi marched to
meet him
with 100,000 men
and 1,000 armored elephants.
They met on the plain of Panipat
north of Delhi.
Babur's trump card was
the discipline of his troops
and his Turkish artillery.
The Indian elephants charged
but were met with explosions
of canons and mortar.
They panicked, spun, and stampeded.
The whole army fell into disarray.
Just a few hours after it began,
the battle became a rout.
The Indians, including their leader,
were massacred as they ran.
Babur had just pulled off
an astonishing military feat.
Finally, Hindustan was his.
With Hindustan in his grasp,
one of the first things Babur did was
to send Hindustani dancing girls
to entertain his wives
in their harem in Kabul.
It was a gracious gesture.
His wives, covered and restrained,
their faces painted stiffly white
in the central Asian style,
must have been astonished.
Out of meetings like this, of the

stark world of central Asian Islam
with the lush anarchy of India, would
arise the glories of the Mughal style.
As Babur took stock of
his new possession,
even he well versed in plunder
was stunned.
The astonishing treasuries
of Hindustan
contained the Kohinoor diamond.
Its name, he learned meant
"mountain of light."
He was told it was worth enough
to feed the entire world
for two and half days.
Offered it as a gift,
Babur refused and left it
with his son Humayun.
Suddenly he was less interested in
the riches
than in how to govern
this strange new land.
But as he surveyed Hindustan, his
enthusiasm for it started to melt away.
There is no beauty in its people,
no graceful social intercourse,
no poetic talent or understanding,
no etiquette, nobility or manliness.
The arts and crafts have no harmony
or symmetry.
There is no ice, cold water,
good food or bread in the markets.
The peasantry and common people
parade around stark naked.
Hindustan is a place of little charm.
But Babur was determined
he would build Hindustan into
something worthy of his dynasty.
He would introduce Mughal order
and symmetry
into what seemed to him
a chaotic and senseless land.
He made the princes of Hindustan,
the Rajputs,

submit to him and laid foundations
for the future empire.
And it dawned on Babur that
it was no longer enough to be
a successful conqueror.
To fulfill his dreams for his heirs,
he had to become a wise ruler as well.
A sacrifice to god was necessary.
In an extravagant public ceremony,
Babur swore off drink.
He had his drinking vessels crushed
and distributed the gold and silver
to the poor.
At the age of 43, Babur had achieved
his dream of empire.
He settled into Hindustan and
continued work on his autobiography
the first ever written
in the Moslem world.
I have simply set down what happened.
I have reported every good and evil
of father and brother,
every fault and virtue of
relative and stranger.
May the reader excuse me.
And everywhere Babur built the square,
symmetrical gardens called 'charbagh'
which were the perfect expression
of Mughal beauty.
The radiance of nature bound by the
rigid geometrical order of Islam.
And it was in his gardens
that he reflected on his turbulent
life and his successes in battles,
both with enemies and himself.
The temptations of alcohol
had been almost overwhelming.
Two years ago my craving
for a wine party
was such to bring me to
the verge of tears.
This year, praise God, that desire
has completely left my mind.
The one thing that never left

his mind was his homeland, Fergana.
One day as he ate a melon he found
himself crying
as its flavor brought back memories
of the fresh uplands
of his childhood.
He confessed to his youngest daughter
that he wanted to retire
and turn the reins of power
over to Humayun.
But In 1530, four years after
the conquest of Hindustan,
Humayun fell sick.
His doctors gave him up for dead.
It was a catastrophe
the death not only of a beloved son
but the heir to Babur's dynasty
and empire.
Babur had learned the wisdom of
sacrifice.
But what on earth could he offer God
to persuade him to spare his son?
Priests and advisors came with

suggestions:

He could sacrifice the Kohinoor.
But Babur knew it was a worthless
bauble compared to the life of his son.
He decided only one sacrifice
could possibly compare.
For days, he prayed fervently
to Allah
to take his own life
in exchange for Humayun's.
Soon after, Humayun recovered and
sure enough, Babur fell sick.
He stayed true to his oath and
refused all offers of treatment.
He'd made a deal with Allah
a life for a life.
Who was he to renege?
He turned his face to the wall.
Three months later he died, aged 47.
Babur had ruled India

for only four years,
but the dynasty he founded
would rule it for almost 300.
Akbar, Babur's grandson,
would for the first time
unite the subcontinent.
Shah Jahan, Babur's great great
grandson, would build the Taj Mahal.
The Mughals laid the foundations of
the India we know today.
They were able to create
a large empire within India;
they were able to establish the
great institutions of empire
through their army, their especially
important domestic
and other alliance policies
with the Rajputs.
It was a very creative fusion.
Over the generations,
Mughal India would become
synonymous with opulence,
refinement, and wealth.
Before long it attracted the hungry
gaze of yet other treasure seekers.
This time they would come from
further west.
Just over three hundred years
after Babur died,
India was swallowed
by the British empire.
By the end of the 19th century,
Britain dominated most of the world
but India was its most
valued possession.
Queen Victoria called it
the jewel in her crown.
The man who gave all this to Britain
was an unlikely conqueror
a tormented soul
who came from nowhere,
driven only by an unwavering
ambition.
His name was Robert Clive.

in London.

Robert Clive is fighting
for his survival.

He has laid the foundations of
the British empire in India
and in the process made himself
a vast fortune.

Now he stands accused of
criminal greed and exploitation.

In the House of Commons
he rises to his defense.

Gentlemen, a great prince was
dependent on my pleasure,
an opulent city lay at my mercy;
its richest bankers bid against
each other for my smiles;
I walked through vaults which were
thrown open to me alone,
piled on either hand
with gold and jewels!

Mr. Chairman, at this moment I stand
astonished at my own moderation!

Robert Clive will not be bowed.

His life is ending as it began
in a furious and lonely struggle.

Born in 1725 in Shropshire
in the West of England,
he was given up by his mother as
a child and raised by relatives.

It happened at the insistence
of his father

an ineffectual lawyer from
the minor country gentry,
who barely earned enough to keep
the family afloat.

Rejected by his family
and naturally unruly,

young Robert was soon running wild
in the little town of Market Drayton.

He pioneered the business methods,
which would make him his later fortune
as the head of a juvenile gang.

It was a protection racket
if merchants agreed to pay a small fee,

the boys would agree
NOT to break their windows.
Robert was adventurous,
brave and bad.
He was an average student
and much more interested in
mischief than in school.
He climbed the church tower
of Market Drayton
and hung over the side
for the sheer thrill of it.
Robert grew up craving excitement,
but wanted acceptance
by his family even more.
When he was 17,
a job as a clerk in the East India
Company promised adventure,
money and a chance
to redeem his family.
Clive set his sights on India.
On the first of June 1744,
a cutter deposited Robert in a
rowboat just off the coast of Madras.
Splashing ashore,
he got his first sight of India.
The Madras, Robert discovered,
was an exotic melting pot
of Indian, Southeast Asian
and European influences.
Here British, French and Dutch
traders had established themselves
to take advantage of the
astonishingly lucrative trade
in cloth, spices and opium.
In those days the young men who
became clerks in the East India Company
were a little bit like the Eurobond
dealers of our day.
If you wanted to make a pile...
I mean there was a great risk
attached to this
because you could go out to India and
promptly die of some dreadful disease.
But there was a chance also,

that you might make a whole
sort of pile of money.

These early European colonialists
merged with the Indian population
much more completely than
later ones would.

Many traders went native, and began
to behave like local potentates.
So they lived as Indians,
wore Indian clothes quite often,
certainly adopted Indian manners
and customs.

Many of them had harems.

As far as the Indian princes
are concerned,
they looked upon the company as
another Indian presence,
not as a foreigner necessarily
invading.

This was global capitalism
in its infancy.

Clive and his friends were pioneers
of the system
that would soon dominate
the entire world.

But in 1745 Robert was
discovering that
the life of a clerk in India
was not easy.

His salary was five pounds a year.
He soon felt desperately lonely and
more cut adrift from home than ever.
His unhappiness came to a head when
several ships appeared in the harbor.

Every European in Madras received
a letter or package from home
except Clive.

He was devastated.

Clive had a mercurial temperament.
This apparent humiliation
at the hands of his family
plunged him into the depths
of depression.

Feeling utterly alone and cast off,

he put a gun to his head
and pulled the trigger.
Twice it failed to go off.
"Fate it seems must be reserving me
for some other purpose,"
he would later tell a friend.
In fact, fate had extraordinary
things in store for Clive
wild swings of fortune, dizzying
heights but also the darkest depths.
Throughout his life periods
of intense,
feverish activity would alternate
with bouts of deep despair.
He would probably be diagnosed today
as a manic depressive.
Clive soon discovered that
opium was the only cure
and he would use it as a medicine
for the rest of his life.
Clive got used to loneliness.
The British lived in
Fort St. George.
You had the fort and then you had
Blacktown outside.
They called it Blacktown,
and that's where all the Indians lived.
The British seldom ventured into
Blacktown
except when they wanted to go
and pick up hookers, basically.
And Clive, certainly it was known
he had this sort of
fondness for prostitutes.
Perhaps the one consolation for Clive
and his fellow
colonialists was that,
being so far from home, they could do
almost whatever they liked.
As a proverb of the time said:
"there are no sins south of
the equator."
As Europeans woke up to the phenomenal
profits to be made in India,

the competition for trade intensified.

Finally in 1746,

open war broke out between the
British and French in India
each side supported by
their local allies and clients.
It was just the push Clive needed.
He was galvanized by new energy
and enthusiasm.

For the next five years of
Anglo French conflict in India,
Clive fought in the militia of
the East India Company
where his raw aggression
and boundless energy won him
promotions and success
at the same furious pace.

In return for his victories against
the French,
culminating in the battle of Arcot,
he was rewarded with an appointment
as quartermaster of the company
factory at Madras.

He would find a way to make a profit
out of the soldiers' provisions.

Now, it doesn't sound very grand,
but the great thing
about quartermaster is

You were given a great wad of money
and told to go feed your troops.

And if you could feed your troops
on half the amount of money

you'd been given,
then you were allowed
to keep the rest.

By the time Clive was 27,
he had made himself a small fortune
Clive was also being credited with
turning the tide
against the French.

News of his success astonished
the family back in England.

His father is said to have remarked:

"Perhaps Robert is not such a booby

after all".

Finally Clive was getting
the recognition he craved.

Now he hungered for it
on a wider stage.

One event would set the seal
not only on Clive's fortunes in India
but that of the British as well.

In 1756, the Mughal Nawab,
or 'prince of Bengal' Siraj,
seized the British East India
Company's fort in Calcutta.

The British in India were furious.

Their outrage soared
when stories circulated
about the Mughals' treatment
of European prisoners.

When he seized the fort,
Siraj had ordered the imprisonment
of all company employees.

The Indians locked their
British captives in a cell
designed by the British
for Indian captives.

It was tiny 18 by 14 feet
with only a couple of minuscule,
barred windows.

The night of June 20th,
When the door opened the next morning,
at least 40 British were dead.

"The Black Hole of Calcutta"
they called it,
and the incident sparked uproar.

It was just what Clive had been
waiting for.

Here was a chance to really
take control of India
and make a name for himself.

He received command of
a small British army.

Clive and his troops hit Bengal
like a monsoon.

In 1757, he swept into Calcutta and
forced the Nawab's troops to withdraw.

With promises of lucrative deals,
Clive then strong armed
an Indian prince
into joining him in a
military alliance against Siraj.
With typical guile,
Clive secured the allegiance of his
Indian allies with fraudulent treaties.
Finally, he marched into Bengal
with 800 European troops and
over 2,000 Indian sepoys.
It was an impressive force
but nothing compared to what Siraj
mustered against him.
by the French
and 50 pieces of state of the art
heavy artillery.
The two armies met near a town
called Plassey.
The Nawab's superiority
may have seemed overwhelming
but Clive knew that discipline,
not numbers, was the key.
The Europeans had already
gone through something
like a bureaucratic
military revolution
in the organization of their armies.
Everyone is trained to act in unison
and it is not heroic battle action
which matters but the discipline
of formation
and quick succession to anybody who
falls in the field of battle,
exactly as one faceless bureaucrat
is replaced by another.
Clive was outnumbered enormously,
but he could use his resources
much more effectively.
Faced by the disciplined phalanxes
of the British trained troops,
the Mughal army fell apart.
Clive's triumph at Plassey
effectively gave India to the British.

Although the British empire in India would not be formally declared for another 100 years, India now belonged to the British East India Company. Clive became known as the Master of Bengal and lost no time in turning his position into an astonishingly lucrative business. He had learned the technique years ago as a quartermaster in Madras. Indian merchants were prepared to do anything to ensure their continued good relations with the East India Company. On the same principle, the Prince of Bengal now paid Clive huge sums to ensure his favor. On top of this Clive was collecting trade and land revenues. Within the space of two years he had amassed a huge fortune. But with the action over, it was not long before Clive slumped into another cycle of depression, accompanied now by agonizing pains in his stomach, gout and prostration. In 1760 he returned to England as Clive of India a very rich, very famous and very sick man. When Clive returned to London, one of the only things that could drag him from his gloom was the prospect of a spending spree. He now had wealth, recognition, fame in India the only thing he didn't have was social position in England. He decided he would buy his way into the English upper classes. He hungrily set out to amass property and social status in equal measure. He remodeled the family home

at S0tyche, and bought four more
a luxurious town house in
London's Berkeley Square,
two more estates in England
and one in Ireland too.
He engineered himself a seat in
Parliament and one for his father also.
The power and reach of
Clive's money was huge
but not limitless.
The one thing Robert Clive wanted
more than anything else was
to be accepted by the establishment
and the aristocracy
and for people to consider him
a gentleman.
He did flash his money around.
And sadly, people considered him
to be rather vulgar.
They didn't like this chap coming
back from India out of nowhere
and buying all these estates
and big houses and,
you know, sort of buying his own
furniture if you like.
Clive soon found himself mired
in the intricacies of the
English class system.
Try as he might, spend as he might,
the inner circles of the aristocracy
would not let him in.
His rough manners only made things
worse for him.
They called him a 'nabob',
English slang based on the Hindi
word 'Nawab' or ruler.
The nabob is a pejorative
expression for an Englishman
who has given up to bad stomach,
bad digestion,
bad temper as a result of
overindulgence in India.
And usually plundered India
and made a lot of money.

They're something like robber barons
in fact.

And their idea was to
make a fortune here and then
establish themselves in England
as respectable notables.

And try to make a political
career there.

Now in England they were looked upon
as adventurers who were slightly seedy,
and Clive was a classic example
of that.

The English aristocracy closed
its doors in Clive's face.

But Clive was not to be put off.

Still intent on his social climb,
Clive decided to try a different tack.

To enhance his reputation, he agreed
to return to India in a different role.

No longer just the businessman,
but now statesman as well.

In 1765,
only five years after leaving,
the 40 year old Clive returned
to India

as governor of the
British East India Company.

He now cast himself as a high minded
champion of British interests.

Clive's mission was to clean up the
practices of the British in India.

They certainly needed it.

In the eight years since
Clive's victory at Plassey,
profiteering had run wild in Bengal.
The British had achieved an effective
trade monopoly.

British merchants and soldiers
strong armed

and extorted money from

Bengali traders

just as Clive himself had once done.

Resentment was seething.

Clive countered the growing unrest

with a tone of patrician contempt
for all the practices
that had made him rich.
The confusion we behold,
what does it arise from?
Rapacity and luxury;
the unreasonable desire of many
to acquire in an instant,
what only a few can
or ought to possess.
With almost biblical fervor,
Clive launched reforms outlawing
the abuses he had instituted.
In a whirlwind 20 months
Clive totally revamped the
British East India Company.
By the end of it he was drained.
And it was now that disaster struck.
In 1769 the monsoon rains
failed in Bengal.
And in 1770 famine set in.
Hundreds of thousands died
as much as one third of the population.
Share prices for the East India
Company's stock plummeted.
By 1772 the Company's credit
had failed.
Meanwhile stories were
circulating that
English merchants were hoarding rice
as Indians starved.
There was a public outcry
against the company.
People looked for a scapegoat.
Fingers pointed at Clive.
It was a bitter irony.
Only as Clive was at last making
a noble hearted effort
to clear up the morass of greed
in India,
was he finally accused of being
its cause.
A parliamentary committee was formed
to investigate the company

and Clive's role in it.
The accusation?
Extortion and profiteering in India.
As usual, energized by the prospect
of a fight,
Clive rose magnificently to his own
defense in the house of commons.
And it was now he made his
famous speech saying that
given the opportunities for
self enrichment in India
he was astonished at his moderation.
Clive was cleared but there was
no joy in it for him.
He had been stung by the accusations.
He had effectively given India
to Britain.
Now he was furiously bitter at what
he felt was his country's ingratitude.
He was once again being rejected.
Predictably, he plunged back
into depression.
His agonizing stomach pains returned,
this time complicated by gallstones.
Even opium did little
to relieve the pain.
I have a disease
which makes life insupportable, but
which the doctors tell me
won't shorten it an hour.
He drifted from one mansion
to another,
barely unpacking before
setting off for the next.
Little did he know, many in the
British government had in fact
been deeply impressed with his
reforms of the East India Company.
They were on the verge of giving him
control of yet another colony
that was in chaos and on the verge of
revolt North America.
Unaware of the honor
that was pending,

Clive was consumed by
humiliation and despair.
On the 22nd of November, 1774,
as his family prepared to leave the
London house
at Berkeley square for Bath
they heard a crash in Clive's room.
When they rushed in,
they found him dead.
Robert Clive, still only 49 years old,
had cut his own throat.
Clive's death created a huge scandal,
there was a sort of big hush up
and a lot of sort of muted whispering
going on in the corridors of power
as to whether he had killed himself.
It sounds like he slit his throat
with a penknife.
Suicide was a sin.
In grief and shame, Clive's family
removed his body by night
and buried him without a headstone
in the little church of Moreton say,
outside Market Drayton, the town
where he had run wild as a child.
After Clive's death,
the British grip on America loosened
and tightened on India.
The profits to be earned there
resumed their flow.
A hundred years later, the Kohinoor,
the fabulous diamond Babur had dismissed
as worthless
compared to the life of his son,
was in the British crown jewels.
Krishna's gift had been a test of
mankind's greed.
What would they do with
all that wealth?
Would they behave like beasts
or think and achieve Wisdom?