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THE SINDH CONTROVERSY—NAPIER & OUTRAM.

DRS. MURRAY AND DUFF.

Correspondence relative to Sindh, 1838—1843. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1843.

Supplementary correspondence relative to Sindh. Presented to Parliament, 1844.

The Conquest of Sindh, by Major General W. F. P. Napier : Parts I. and II., 1845.

The Conquest of Sindh, a Commentary. Parts I. and II., by Lieutenant-Colonel J. Outram, C. B., 1846.

WE are now in a position to enter on a full and final examination of the British conquest of Sindh. A sufficient length of time has elapsed, and we are far enough removed from the scene of the transaction, to enable us calmly and dispassionately to review the history of that much controverted measure, while the materials for our inquiry are both copious and authentic. We are now before us two volumes of official correspondence relative to Sindh, presented to Parliament; we have an eloquent defence of the conquest from the practised pen of the conqueror's brother, and we have a most minute commentary upon that defence, by an officer who possessed equalled opportunities for acquiring a thorough knowledge of the country and its people, and whose name is an ample guarantee for the scrupulous accuracy of his statements. Reserving to the sequel the few observations we shall have to offer on the respective merits of these publications, we shall now proceed, with the aid of the historical materials which they supply, to lay before our readers a brief narrative of the events which immediately led to the subjugation of Sindh, together with an examination of the justice and policy of the measure.

The valley of the lower Indus, which forms the scene of the transactions we are about to record, has of late years been rendered familiar to all our Indian readers. Bordered, like the kindred valley of the Nile, by a range of mountains on one side and by a desert on the other, it is traversed throughout its entire length by the classic river from which it takes its name. The country on both banks of the river, from near the point where it receives the waters of the Punjab to its junction with the sea, formed the territory of the Amírs or rulers of Sindh, and was divided into two principal shares—the southern division forming the principality of Lower Sindh, and the Northern, that of Upper Sindh: leaving, towards the Dutch frontier, a third and inconsiderable division, that of

Mírpur, the affairs of which we will scarcely have occasion to notice.

At the period at which our narrative opens,—the early autumn of 1842—five Amírs held independent but associate rule at Hyderabad, the capital of Lower Sindh; namely, Mír Nússír Khan, his two cousins Mírs Mír Mahommed Khan and Sobdar Khan, and his two nephews Mír Shadad Khan and Hússen Ali. At Khyrpúr the seat of the Upper Sindh Government, the venerable Mír Rústum Khan was the acknowledged Rais, or supreme ruler; with whom were associated, as subordinate partners in the Government, his two younger brothers Mírs Ali Morad and Mahommed Khan, and his nephew Mír Nússír Khan. One Amír, Mír Sher Mahommed Khan, ruled the small principality of Mírpur.

Our political relations with the Amírs of Sindh at that time, were those established by Lord Auckland's treaties of 1839, which, as our readers are aware, were forcibly imposed upon these Princes at the commencement of the first Affghan campaign. In Lower Sindh, separate treaties, identical in their provisions, were concluded with each of the Hyderabad Amírs which contained, among other less important particulars, the following stipulations;—First, the maintenance of a British subsidiary force in Lower Sindh, either at Tatta or at some other station west of the Indus, towards the cost of which an annual tribute of three lakhs of Rupees was to be paid in equal proportions by three* of the Amírs—the fourth (Mír Sobdar Khan) being exempted on account of his early submission;—Secondly, the protection of their territories by the British Government against foreign aggression, and the arbitration of all complaints of aggression which the Amírs might make against each other;—Thirdly, non-interference by the British Government in the internal administration of the Amírs, or in any complaints made against them by their subjects;—Fourthly, the prohibition of all negotiation on the part of the Amírs with foreign states, unless with the sanction of the British Government;—Fifthly, the abolition of tolls on trading boats passing up or down the Indus;—Sixthly, the payment of the usual duties on merchandize landed from such boats for sale, with the exception of goods sold in a British camp or cantonment.

In Upper Sindh one treaty only was considered necessary,

* One of these shares was now divided between Mír Shadad Khan and Hússen Ali, the sons and heirs of the deceased Mír Nur Mahommed, one of the original parties to the treaties.

which was exchanged with Mír Rústum Khan as the acknowledged "Chief of Khyrpúr." Its engagements were analogous to those concluded with the Lower Sindh Amírs with the following differences ;—First, no stipulation was made for the payment of a subsidy ;—Secondly, there was no engagement for the permanent location of a British force : permission being only given "to occupy the fortress of Bukker as a depôt for treasure and munitions in time of war ;"—Thirdly, no stipulation was made for the abolition of river tolls : the Amírs merely promising "co-operation with the other powers" in any measures which might be thought necessary for extending and facilitating the commerce and navigation of the river Indus. Lastly, short "Agreements" were at the same time concluded with each of the other three Amírs of Upper Sindh, whereby the British Government engaged "never to covet one reah of the revenue of their shares of Sindh, nor to interfere in their internal management." The treaty entered into with the Amír of Mírpúr, in the following year, was similar in its provisions to that of Lower Sindh, and included an engagement for the payment of a subsidy of Rs. 50,000 per annum as the price of British protection.

It is unnecessary, for the purpose of our present inquiry, to examine either the justice or the policy which dictated these compulsory treaties. They formed a part (and, it may be, a necessary part) of that ill-advised and disastrous "Affghan policy," which forms the one disfiguring blot on Lord Auckland's otherwise beneficent administration : and it was only by the unconquerable firmness, and extraordinary personal influence, of the distinguished diplomatist* who conducted the negotiations, that the Lower Sindh Amírs were induced to yield a tardy and reluctant assent to their harsh provisions, and thereby preserved, though but for a season, the sovereignty of their kingdom.

Having been thus reduced from independent Sovereigns to tributary allies of the British Government, it was not to be expected but that some degree of alienation and a distrust of our future measures would take possession of the minds of the Amírs. Whatever may have been the real state of their feelings, their acts, even during the disasters of 1842, evinced no appearance of hostility : for it is a remarkable fact, that, under the able management of Major (now Lieutenant Colonel) Outram, Sindh continued in a state of profound tranquillity ; robberies were unknown ; British subjects of all classes, unattended by a single armed attendant, traversed the country without danger or molestation ; and carriage and supplies were

* Major General Sir Henry Pottinger, Bart. G. C. B.

liberally furnished for the support of our armies in Southern Afghanistan.

Such was the condition of Sindh, and such were our relations with its rulers, when Major General Sir Charles Napier, then Commanding the Puna Division of the Bombay Army, was invested by Lord Ellenborough with the military and political control of Sindh and Belúchistan. The veteran soldier hastened to Sindh (we are told) with all the alacrity of a young warrior; and on the 9th September landed at Kurrachi. Before we accompany him on his diplomatic and military career, it is desirable that we should first become acquainted with his character, and that of the political functionary whom he was about to supersede.

The name of Colonel Outram will ever be associated, in this country, with some of the finest and noblest qualities of the soldier. His character exhibits a remarkable union of calm, steady, resolute valour, with a passion for daring and chivalrous enterprise, and an energy and determination of purpose which no danger or difficulty can daunt. These qualities, added to an open, ardent, generous disposition, and a quiet, unassuming courtesy of demeanour, have deservedly rendered him the pride of the Bombay Army, and appear to have attracted, in a rare degree, the personal attachment and esteem of those who have served under his orders, or have been otherwise associated with him in public duty. But it were an unnecessary, though a pleasing task, to dwell upon these features of his character. The conqueror of Sindh himself has, with a just discernment, awarded to him the appropriate and expressive title of "*The Bayard of India*," and twelve hundred British officers of the Indian services have publicly recorded their admiration of his heroic achievements in India, Afghanistan, and Sindh.

Colonel Outram's experience of native character is extensive and varied. In common with the majority of officers who have known the natives long and well, who are conversant with their languages and customs, and who judge them by an Indian, and not by a British standard, he appears to have formed a generally favourable opinion of them. His intercourse with them seems to have been marked on all occasions by a considerate attention to their social usages and feelings: and his interest in their welfare is evinced by a desire to preserve and improve the more innocuous of their institutions, rather than precipitately to subvert them, in order to introduce the systems and usages of Europe in their place. Like all functionaries who have been guided by such principles

and feelings he has acquired in a high degree the confidence and good will of the people over whom he has been placed : and we need scarcely add, that the possession of such influence over the minds of the natives, particularly of those in high rank and stations, is one of the most important qualifications which a British diplomatist can possess ; and is calculated, more than any measures of abstract wisdom, to reconcile the Princes and people of India to our rule, and thereby to preserve the peace, and promote the best interests of the country.

Lest any of our readers should consider such political accomplishments as antiquated and worthless, we will supply a more practical test of Colonel Outram's diplomatic qualifications, and try them by the magnitude and importance of the services which he rendered to his country, during the eventful year that immediately preceded his removal. At that memorable crisis, when disasters unparalleled in our history clouded the past, and gloomy apprehensions overcast the future—when the storm of insurrection, which had burst with such fatal fury at Kabul, threatened to endanger the safety of our armies at Quetta and Kandahar—Lord Auckland, amid the general panic, turned to Colonel Outram with the assured confidence that he would hold his dangerous post with a firm and steady hand, and that by his prompt and zealous assistance, he would enable the Government also to weather the storm.* And the result shewed that the Governor-General's confidence was neither exaggerated nor misplaced. Within the three preceding years, we had imposed a subsidiary tribute and a subsidiary force upon the Amírs of Sindh ; we had stormed the capital and slaughtered the ruler of Belúchistan, and we had waged a sanguinary warfare upon the neighbouring mountain tribes. Yet—smarting though they were under these grievous injuries, and instigated by Affghan emissaries to raise the standard of insurrection in the common cause of Islam—such was Colonel Outram's wondrous activity, vigilance and zeal, that he not only with a small and detached military force, preserved tranquillity throughout these vast countries, which formed both the base and the line of our military communications with Kandahar ; but he also furnished and forwarded, from these very countries, the carriage and supplies which enabled General Nott to accomplish his triumphant march to Kabul, and General England to retire in safety on the Indus. These were, in truth, services which, to cite the words and the authority of the honorable

* Outram's Commentary, 21.

Mountstuart Elphinstone, "it would be difficult to parallel in the whole course of Indian diplomacy:" and they had just been brought to an honourable and successful termination, by the safe descent of General England's army beneath the passes, when their author was summarily, without warning and without reason assigned, removed by Lord Ellenborough from his high political appointment.*

And what were the peculiar qualifications of the officer selected to supersede a man who had, at so perilous a crisis, conferred such signal services on his country? On Sir Charles Napier's eminent military talents it were now superfluous to dwell. Long before his appearance in Sindh, his high reputation as a soldier had been inscribed on the page of history; the numerous scars with which he was furrowed attested his heroic valour on the sanguinary fields of Corunna and Busaco: and though untried as a General, he soon proved himself worthy of a place in the first rank of British Commanders. With a military experience of half a century, he had, moreover, deeply studied the art of war:—strict and stern in discipline, but ever watchful of the interests and attentive to the wants of his men, he was peculiarly the soldier's friend. Though bending somewhat under the weight of threescore years and one, yet did he retain all the vigour and energy of youth, with a capacity for the endurance of fatigue which the youthful soldier might well have envied.

But, though unquestionably a brave and accomplished soldier, he was singularly deficient in the particular qualities required for the safe and beneficial exercise of political authority in India. He was not only ignorant of the language, the character, the customs, and the institutions of the natives but he seemed to look upon such knowledge as unnecessary, if not prejudicial. He was, moreover, apparently imbued with strong prejudice against the princes of Sindh, and disposed to regard his mission, as that of a Military Dictator appointed to overawe and control a "barbarous durbar," rather than that of a political agent deputed to maintain the relations of amity and friendship subsisting between a protecting and a protected State. Disregarding, in short, the maxims of sound practical wisdom so strenuously recommended, and so successfully practised by

* It is any thing but creditable to the Government that no honors should have been conferred on Colonel Outram and Mr. George Clerk for the important political services they rendered at that critical juncture; while analogous services performed on the same scene four years before, by Sir Henry Pottinger and Sir Claude Wade, were respectively rewarded, (and justly rewarded) by the honors of a Baronetage and Knighthood.

Munro, Malcolm, and Elphinstone, and by other distinguished statesmen of the same eminent school—Sir Charles soon betrayed a determination to open up a new political path for himself. The progress and results of this novel diplomacy we now proceed to examine.

Sir Charles Napier, as has been stated, landed at Kurrachi on the 9th September 1842, and on the 17th of the same month he started for Sukker. On his passage up the Indus he paid a visit to the Amírs of Lower Sindh at their fortified capital of Hyderabad. The established courtesy uniformly observed by the Indian Government towards the Native States, of formally announcing any change in the British Representative at their courts, does not seem to have been observed towards the Amírs on the present occasion: nor does Sir Charles Napier appear to have been furnished by the Governor-General with any credentials of his appointment. Such an omission may be considered by the English reader to be of trifling import, but will be very differently viewed by those acquainted with the importance that Native Princes attach to all these matters of etiquette. Notwithstanding the neglect, however, on the part of the Governor-General, of the customary forms of courtesy, Sir Charles Napier was received by the Amírs of Hyderabad with every demonstration of respect due to his rank and station. Before leaving the capital, he addressed to them a letter regarding certain alleged infractions of the treaty, committed under their orders, or with their knowledge. These charges will pass under our review when we examine those preferred against the Amírs of Upper Sindh: but we must not omit to notice the style and tone used by the British Commander in this his first communication with Princes, wielding the absolute power of sovereignty within their own territories. It is characterised by the historian as an "austere, but timely and useful warning," given in the prosecution of "a fair and just, but stern and unyielding policy." We willingly pay Sir Charles the compliment of assuming that this extraordinary document, which will be found in the Parliamentary Papers (page 358) was merely the first rough draft of the letter, and that in the process of translation it received a form and phraseology better suited to the station of the Princes to whom it was addressed. But, even under this favourable interpretation, there will remain much in the tone and tenor of the letter that is deserving of the strongest censure, and in complete opposition to the letter and spirit of Lord Ellenborough's judicious circular instructions to his political agents, directing them "on all occasions to manifest the utmost personal consideration and respect to the

several Native Princes with whom they might communicate ; to attend to their personal wishes ; to consider themselves as much the representation of the *friendship*, as of the *power* of the British Government ; and to be mindful that even the necessary acts of authority may be clothed with the veil of courtesy and regard." We shall find, as we proceed, that the whole tenor of the General's political administration in Sindh, of which this was the commencement, was an exact antithesis of those admirable maxims.

Sir Charles Napier, having addressed this arrogant and offensive letter to the rulers of Hyderabad, continued his journey up the Indus, and on the 5th October arrived at Sukker, the head quarters of the British force then stationed in Upper Sindh. There, as the historian informs us, he "forthwith commenced a series of political and military operations, which reduced the Amírs to the choice of an honest policy or a terrible war."* These operations, with their fatal results, it is now our duty to record.

On his first nomination to the military and political control of Sindh, the General had been officially informed, that if "the Amírs, or any one of them, should act hostilely, or evince hostile designs against the British forces, it was the Governor-General's fixed resolution never to forgive the breach of faith, and to exact a penalty which should be a warning to every Chief in India." This communication, it will be observed, intimated the Governor-General's determination to punish *future* hostility : but the following instructions, which awaited Sir Charles on his arrival at Sukker, shewed that his Lordship had modified his intentions, and was now determined to inflict retributive punishment for *past* offences, should the General, on inquiry, discover satisfactory grounds for such a procedure. "Should any Amír or Chief, with whom we have a treaty of alliance and friendship, *have* evinced hostile designs against us during the late events which may have induced them to doubt the continuance of our power, it is the present intention of the Governor-General to inflict upon the treachery of such ally and friend so signal a punishment as shall effectually deter others from similar conduct : but the Governor-General would not proceed in this course without the most complete and convincing evidence of guilt in the person accused. The Governor-General relies entirely on your sense of justice, and is convinced that whatever reports you may make upon the subject, after full investigation, will be such as he may safely act upon."

* Napier's Conquest, 23.

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The first political duty, therefore, which devolved upon Charles, was to inquire into certain alleged breaches and hostile intrigues charged upon some of the Amírs, with the view of deducing from these past offences "a pretext" for remodeling the existing treaties, and inflicting a "signal punishment" upon their authors. And this brings us at once to the consideration of what proved to be the remote cause of the Sindh conquest. And as there has been much misapprehension and misstatement on this subject, it is necessary to trace the origin and history of the revised treaties, to the imposition of which, the General's investigation ultimately led.

In the early part of the year (1842) Major Outram appears to have come to the conclusion that our intended withdrawal from Affghanistan would render some change in our relations with the Amírs of Sindh very desirable, in order to remedy the errors of our Military position in that country; to define more clearly the commercial provisions of the existing treaties; and to ensure an adequate supply of fuel for the steamers composing the Indus flotilla. About the end of May of the same year he had received an intimation of Lord Ellenborough's wish to exchange the payment of tribute for "the continued occupation of Kurrachí and Sukker," including the fortress of Bukker: He therefore only awaited a favourable opportunity for opening a negotiation with the Sindh Government. In the meantime he received information from his assistants in Sindh, which gave him grounds for suspecting that certain of the Amírs, taking advantage of our Affghan disasters, and instigated by Affghan emissaries, had engaged in some petty intrigues inimical to the British Government. They were considered by Major Outram to be in themselves puerile: nevertheless, he conceived that they evinced an unfriendly feeling on the part of the Amírs, and furnished good grounds for proposing, and would materially assist the negotiation for the required changes in the treaties, which, under other circumstances, would most probably be resisted.

In accordance with these views, he submitted to Government on the 21st of June, a draft-treaty embodying the proposed changes. The following were its principal stipulations:*

- 1st. The cession to the British Government, in perpetuity, of the city and cantonment of Sukker (including the fortress of Bukker) and of the town and harbour of Kurrachí;
- 2nd. Free transit for commerce between Kurrachí and Tatta on the Indus;
- 3rd. Permission to cut wood within a hundred yards

of each bank of the Indus; 4th. The total abrogation river tolls, and 5th. In consideration of the above cessions the British Government engaged to release the Amírs from all pecuniary obligations whatever.*

Such were the provisions of Major Outram's proposed treaty—a treaty which stipulated for territorial and other privileges of the estimated annual value of Rs. 3,16,500,† to be ceded by the Amírs to the British Government, in exchange for a total release from the future payment of tribute which (exclusive of arrears) amounted to Rs. 3,50,000 per annum.‡

The objects proposed to be attained by this new arrangement were in themselves of great importance to British interests; and the pecuniary price to be tendered for their purchase was just and liberal: but, in the absence of any pressing necessity for the change, it became matter of regret that the subject should have been mooted at that particular juncture. The minds of the Amírs, who had on all occasions shewn themselves determinedly averse to any alteration in their relations with our Government, were at that time peculiarly distracted with apprehensions in regard to our future measures; in addition to which, Major Outram was himself at Quetta,—whither he had gone for the purpose of aiding General England's force in its retreat upon the Indus—and was consequently deprived of the opportunity, by personal negotiation, of exerting his great influence over the Amírs, by which alone could any hope be entertained of reconciling their minds to the contemplated changes. Nor were the grounds assigned as the basis of negotiation of clear and unquestionable validity. The hostile intrigues alleged against the Amírs, were considered by Major Outram at the time neither important nor dangerous; while the evidence in support of them, forwarded by

* A negociation had previously been entered into at the instance of Lord Auckland's Government, for the cession of the district of Shikarpúr: but Major Outram reported that this must be abandoned under Lord Ellenborough's contemplated occupation of Kurrachí, and the proposed river arrangements.

† Territorial Cessions.....	Rs. 1,06,500
Abolition of transit duties and river tolls	„ 10,000
Compensation for cutting wood.....	„ 2,00,000
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Total annual value.....	Rs. 3,16,500
‡ Annual tribute from the Amirs of Hyderabad.....	Rs. 3,00,000
Ditto ditto of Mirpúr.....	„ 50,000
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Total Rupees.....	3,50,000

This was exclusive of certain claims against Mir Nússir Khan of Khyrpur, the heir of the late Mir Múbaruk Khan, consisting of about three years' tribute of Rs. 1,00,000 per annum, in addition to Rs. 7,00,000 claimed in behalf of the late Shah Shúja.

his assistants, and which he had not the means of testing, was any thing but conclusive of the guilt of the Amírs, even if it had been as unimpeachable as it subsequently proved to be worthless and false.

But while we make these observations, we readily admit that the treaty, as originally proposed by Major Outram, was framed in a spirit of perfect fairness towards both Governments; and there is every reason to believe, that had the negotiation for its settlement been committed to that officer, it would have been brought to an amicable and successful termination. Little could it have been foreseen, that a proposal to negotiate the equitable purchase of certain privileges by an equivalent remission of tribute, would be made the groundwork—and even, in some quarters, the justification—of the oppressive and retributive penalties which were subsequently imposed upon these Princes.

Lord Ellenborough, who had only a few weeks before signified his intention of continuing to hold military command of the Indus, seems now to have hesitated regarding the line of policy which it was desirable to follow. In acknowledging the receipt of the draft treaties, he stated that he “did not see the necessity for pressing negotiation upon them (the Amírs) precipitately, and on the contrary would rather desire to leave their minds in tranquillity for the present;”^{*} and that it would be “a matter for future consideration whether any probable benefit to be ever derived from the treaties, could compensate for the annual expenditure which would be brought upon the Government of India by the maintenance of a large force at Sukker and Kurrachí.” Here, therefore, terminated the discussion regarding Major Outram’s Treaty, which was never presented to the Amírs.

On his return from Quetta to Sukker, three months afterwards, Major Outram was directed, before leaving Sindh, to lay before Sir Charles Napier, “the several acts, whereby the Amírs or Chiefs may have seemed to have departed from the terms or spirit of their engagements, and to have evinced hostility or unfriendliness towards the Government of India.” In obedience to these instructions, he submitted to the General two “Returns of Complaints” preferred respectively against two of the Amírs of Upper Sindh, and against four of the Hyderabad Amírs, together with the documentary evidence in support of these charges. Having done this, he resigned into Sir Charles Napier’s hands the political powers which he

* Sindh Parl : Pap. p. 381.

had wielded with so much credit to himself and with such signal benefit to the public service, and left Sindh on the 12th November, carrying with him the regrets of every officer in the country.

We now resume the narrative of the proceedings of his successor.

Sir Charles lost no time in commencing the investigation of these charges, the establishment of which was to form the ground-work for the imposition of a new treaty; nor was he long in bringing it to a conclusion. In the course of twelve days after his arrival at Sukker, and a week before he had received the charges against the Amírs of Lower Sindh, he completed his report—that report which was to be Lord Ellenborough's guide in his Sindh policy, and to decide the fate of the Sovereign Princes of that country. We have perused this remarkable document with much pain. Passing by the sneering allusion to "sticklers for abstract rights;" the undisguised admission that "we want only a pretext to coerce the Amírs;" the uncalled for remarks on the "barbarism of those Princes and their fitness to govern a country;" the (too true) prophecy that "the more powerful government will at no distant period swallow up the weaker;" and the opinion that it would be better to come to this result at once, "if it could be done with honesty:"—setting aside these, and many similar unseemly doctrines, as well as the palpable inaccuracy of the statement, that under existing treaties we were authorized to maintain our camps permanently in Upper Sindh, we proceed at once to examine the specific accusations, and the evidence by which they were verified.

The charges prepared against the Amírs are reducible to two heads:—First, certain acts of constructive hostility attributed to Mír Rústum Khan, the chief Amír of Khyrpúr, and Mír Nussír Khan, the Senior Amír of Hyderabad; and Second, certain infractions of the existing treaties alleged against these two Amírs, as well as against Mír Nussír Khan of Khyrpúr, and Mírs Mír Mahommed Khan, Shahdad Khan, and Hússen Ali of Hyderabad.

1. The first charge, under the first of these heads, alleged against Mír Rústum Khan, was a breach of treaty, of a hostile character, in having written a letter to the Maharajah Shír Singh of Lahore, the purport of which was to negotiate for the renewal of an alliance between that sovereign and certain of the Amírs of Upper and Lower Sindh. The letter, though intimating in vague and ambiguous language that the parties to the negotiation entertained unfriendly feelings towards the

British ("that tribe") did not indicate any hostile designs against our Government, and seemed to have principally in view an engagement to secure the succession of Mír Rústum's son to the chieftainship after *his own death*. It was intercepted by Agents of Mír Ali Morad (Rústum's brother), who was inimical to Rústum, and a rival candidate for the chieftaincy.

The authenticity of this intercepted letter rested exclusively on the supposed fact, that it bore Mír Rústum's seal, and was in the handwriting of His Highness' Minister. We need scarcely remind our readers that this species of judicial evidence is received with great distrust in this country. The forgery of letters and the fabrication of counterfeit seals are of very common occurrence, and had been recently and successfully exemplified in Sindh. Colonel Outram informs us* (and the Amírs in their final conference at Hyderabad reminded that officer of the fact) that in the preceding year he had occasion to complain to the Amírs of frequent forgeries of his own seal which, affixed to letters professed to be written by him, had so far imposed on their Highnesses as to procure grants of land for those who presented them; and in September of the same year several forged seals of the Amírs were found in the possession of a man apprehended in the Sukker bazar. These circumstances, combined with the fact that the parties through whose agency the letter was intercepted were hostile to Mír Rústum, and, as we shall afterwards find, were interested in embroiling him with the British Government, ought to have shewn the necessity of care and caution in pronouncing a final decision. Major Outram, having latterly entertained considerable doubts as to the authenticity of the letter, forwarded it to Mr. George Clerk, the Envoy at Lahore, in the hope that from his official relation to the sovereign to whom it was addressed, he might be able to determine the question. That most eminent public officer, however, after retaining it six months in his possession, reported to Lord Ellenborough, that its "authenticity was still a matter of doubt to him as it had been to Major Outram in sending it."† But the doubts which were entertained by Major Outram and Mr. Clerk were very summarily disposed of by the General's Political assistant. On the very day, the 23rd November, on which he received back the letter from Mr. Clerk, Sir Charles Napier wrote to Lord Ellenborough that Lieutenant Brown had assured him that there could not

* Out. Com. 74.

† Sindh Parl : Pap. p. 478.

be the slightest doubt of its authenticity.* And thus, on the simple assurance of an officer, who neither spoke nor wrote the language in which it was written, and without any opportunity being given to the accused party to rebut the charge, was the authenticity of the letter summarily decided. Nor was there the slightest attempt to prove that the seal, even if genuine, had been affixed with His Highness' sanction, while there were strong reasons for suspecting that it had been used without his knowledge. Mohun Lall informs us,† that, during the negotiation of the treaties of 1839, Mír Ali Morad surreptitiously obtained possession of Mír Rústum's seal, with the intention of using it for the furtherance of his own perfidious schemes, but was defeated in his object by the penetration of Sir Alexander Burnes. This fact, combined with our knowledge of Ali Morad's subsequent treachery, renders it by no means an improbable supposition that that "arch-intriguer" had now a second time possessed himself of his brother's seal, and that he was the real author of the secret letter which his own agents were instructed to intercept.

The second accusation preferred against Mír Rústum consisted in having, through his Minister Futteh Mahommed Ghori, compassed the escape of a British prisoner. This charge appears to have been established against the Minister: but there was no proof or even suspicion of the Amír's implication in the matter. The substantiation of such an offence would have justly warranted the British Government in requiring the punishment or banishment of the Minister by whom it was committed, but certainly never could be held to justify the forfeiture of Mír Rústum's territory.

The last charge under this head was preferred against Mír Nussír Khan of Lower Sindh,—and consisted in his having authorised the writing of a letter to Bíbuk Búgty, the chief of the Búgty hill tribes, containing some general expressions of hostility towards the English ("some people") and calling upon him and his brother Belúchís to hold themselves in readiness. The authenticity of this letter was unsupported by a tittle of evidence that could be considered as conclusive; and in this instance, as in the former, no opportunity was afforded the suspected Prince of disproving the charges.

The principal infractions of the treaty, constituting the *second*¹ division of charges, consisted in the levy of river tolls on boats belonging to subjects of Sindh. These accusations affected

* Sindh Parl : Pap p. 427.

† Life of Dost Mahommed Khan, p. 78.

Mír's Nussír Khan, Mír Mahommed Khan, and Hússen Ali of Hyderabad, and Mír Rústum Khan of Khyrpúr, all of whom admitted the facts, but denied that they were in contravention of treaty. It was argued by the Hyderabad Amírs that the treaties exempted British and foreign boats from duty, but were not considered by them to interdict the levy of duties on their own subjects, over whom, under the 3rd Art. of the treaty, they possessed "absolute" jurisdiction: and that, in point of fact, they had levied these tolls from them without hindrance up to 1840. Lord Auckland's Government, however, decided against their construction of the engagement, and the Amírs had recently issued perwannahs granting an entire exemption from tolls; upon which the Assistant Political Agent expressed a confident hope that the question would now be set at rest.

On the part of the Khyrpúr Amírs it was urged with great truth, that the treaties concluded with them contained no stipulation whatever for the abolition of tolls—the Amírs simply promising "co-operation with *the other powers* in any measure which may be thought necessary for extending or facilitating the commerce and navigation of the Indus." Now "the other powers" holding territory on the Indus, were the Maharajah of Lahore, the Nawab of Bhawulpúr, and the Amírs of Hyderabad; the arrangements with the two former "powers," permitted them to levy a small stated duty; while the latter, on account of their hostile opposition to the British Government, were compelled, without receiving any pecuniary or other equivalent, to abolish all tolls. On the general principles of equity and justice, therefore, the *friendly* Amírs of Khyrpúr, whose adherence to our cause had elicited the enthusiastic admiration of the negotiator of the Treaty,* had a right to expect the terms which we concluded with the *friendly* "powers" of Lahore and Bhawulpúr, and not those which were imposed on the then *hostile* "powers" of Hyderabad, between whom and themselves a marked line of distinction had professedly been drawn throughout the whole of the negotiations. But apart from these grounds, there were special reasons for guiding the Government to the more favourable interpretation of the engagement: for Sir Alexander Burnes

* "With such adherence (says Sir Alexander Burnes) I feel quite at a loss to know how we can either ask money or any favour of this family. I have never doubted their disposition to cling to us: but in their weak state, I had not expected such promises in the day of trial." And in a marginal note to the Treaty the same officer observes: "I might have easily abolished the toll for ever: but this would be a hazardous step. The toll binds the Mír to protect property; the release from it would remove this duty from his shoulders."

had received specific instructions from Lord Auckland to put Khyrpúr on the same footing as Bhawulpúr, and with that view had been furnished with the Bhawulpúr treaty for his guidance.* Finally, it has been considered an established maxim with the most eminent of our Indian statesmen, that "when any article of an engagement is doubtful, it should be invariably explained with more leaning to the expectations originally raised in the weaker, than to the interests of the stronger power.† Notwithstanding all these considerations, Lord Ellenborough decided that the treaty must be construed as binding the Khyrpúr Amírs to acquiesce in the same arrangements as those subsequently imposed on "their kindred Amírs," of Hyderabad; and he intimated that he should expect them to be observed with the same strictness as if they had been expressly inserted in the treaty. This opinion, pronounced by the paramount power, finally decided the prospective operation of the contested article: but that it was not intended to authorise the infliction of a penalty for duties previously levied under a different, and, we think, a more equitable construction of the treaty, may be inferred from the fact, that a clause explanatory of the article in question was introduced into the revised treaty.

It is unnecessary to notice the other trifling charges of breach of treaty, the more particularly as it was distinctly admitted by the Governor-General,‡ that the right to make any demand, extending to the cession of territory, depended upon the truth of the three offences specified under the first head. The proposed treaty, writes Lord Ellenborough to Sir Charles Napier, "rests for its justification upon the assumption, that the letters said to be addressed by Mír Rústum to the Maharajah Shir Singh and by Mír Nussír Khan to Bábúk Búgty, were really written by the chiefs respectively, and that the confidential minister of Mír Rústum did, as is alleged, contrive the escape of Syed Mahommed Shurríp,*** I know (he added) that you will satisfy yourself of the truth of these charges before you exact the penalty of the offences they impute."§

The final decision on these three important questions having been then remitted to Sir Charles, "on whose word, as the historian truly states, the fate of Sindh now depended,"

* Sindh Parl : Pap. p. 61.

† Sir John Malcom's Institutions.

‡ Sindh Parl : Pap. p. No 387, p. 437.

§ Sindh Parl : Pap. No. 389, p. 440.

he lost no time in pronouncing a verdict of guilt against the two Amírs, on each of the accusations.* The Governor-General, in confirming the decision, stated that if Government were to wait in every case of suspected hostility until it obtained such proof as should be sufficient to convict the person suspected in a court of justice, it would in most cases expose itself at once to disgrace and disaster.† It may readily be conceded, that in the investigation and settlement of international questions arising between a paramount State and its tributary allies, we cannot expect either the technical procedure or the scrupulous nicety of evidence of a criminal court: but we have clearly a right to require that, in such an inquiry, the principles of substantial justice should not be violated. Every one who is practically conversant with the elements of judicial evidence will concur with us in opinion, that the *ex parte* evidence of an intercepted letter, written in a language unknown to those who decided upon its authenticity, and intercepted by interested and hostile parties, was altogether insufficient, in the absence of any corroborative testimony, to establish the accusation preferred against these two Princes.

Before we examine the exactions of the revised treaties which Lord Ellenborough determined to impose as the punishment of these alleged offences, it will be necessary to inquire into the proceedings and position of the parties affected by them.

The condition of the Amírs at this period was a very painful one. Their minds were agitated and alarmed by the current rumours of our intention to impose new treaties upon them, if not to subjugate their country; they had seen the Bengal portion of General England's force detained at Sukker, instead of proceeding to their own provinces; the political agency, heretofore their sole medium of communication with the British Government had been abolished; and an unknown Military Commander exercised arbitrary sway in the heart of their country. No official intimation of these changes had been vouchsafed to them; no reason had been assigned for the detention of the troops, although such detention was unauthorized by treaty: and instead of endeavouring to allay their fears by personal intercourse and friendly explanation—a duty which had been expressly enjoined by the Governor-General—it seemed as if the General's object was to confirm

* Sindh Parl. Pap. Nos. 409, 410 & 414.

† Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 414, p. 457.

and increase their apprehensions by an insulting arrogance of demeanour, and by an ostentatious display of military strength. Surely, under such suspicious and menacing demonstrations, it cannot be wondered at that the Amírs should have adopted some defensive measures for the protection of their interests.

If the British Government deemed it justifiable, after the abandonment of Affghanistan, to concentrate a large army in the immediate neighbourhood of the capital of Upper Sindh, at a time when, under the provisions of the treaty, we had no right to station a single soldier within the limits of that country, on what grounds of abstract justice, or under what clause of the existing treaties, can we dispute the right of the Upper Sindh Amírs to take the precautionary measure of assembling their armed dependants within the precincts of their capital? Ours were the offensive, their's strictly defensive measures. On the 6th November, Major Outram reported in regard to the Khyrpúr Amírs, that all their measures and preparations were defensive, and would lead to nothing offensive: and a week later his assistant at Hyderabad writes: "I cannot learn that the Amírs meditate collecting any troops in consequence of the large assemblage of British force at Sukker: but their Highnesses continue very uneasy on the subject, and impute any but friendly motives to it."

Lord Ellenborough's revised draft treaties bear date the 4th of November, and were received by Sir Charles Napier on the 12th of that month. On examining their provisions, we find that the following terms were common to the Hyderabad and the Khyrpúr treaties:—

1. The relinquishment of all tribute payable by the Amírs to the British Government.
2. The introduction of a British currency throughout Sindh, and the relinquishment, by the Amírs of the privilege of coining.
3. The right to cut wood within a hundred yards of both banks of the Indus.
4. The cession, in perpetuity, to the Khan of Bharríbúr of the rights and interests of the Amírs in the districts of Subzulkote, and all the territory intervening between the present frontier of Bhawulpúr and the town of Rorí.

The Khyrpúr treaty stipulated in addition, for the cession to the British Government of Sukker, Bukker and Rorí; while the Hyderabad treaty exacted, in like manner, the cession of Kurrachí and Tatta, with free transit between those places, and the cession to Mir Sobdar Khan of territory producing half a lakh of revenue, in consideration of his share of Kur-

rachí, "and as a reward for his good conduct." It was finally provided that a British Commissioner should apportion, by mutual exchanges, the cession of each Amír in Lower Sindh, according to the amount of tribute payable by each; and in the event of the cessions falling short of the amount of tribute, lands yielding an annual revenue equivalent to the balance were to be appropriated to the indemnification of such Amírs of Upper Sindh, other than Mírs Rústum and Nussír Khans, as were called upon to cede territory under these new arrangements.

The imposition of these treaties proved the remote cause of the Sindh Revolution. The oppressive severity and injustice of their exactions will be at once understood, when it is stated that the pecuniary value of the confiscated territory and the other forfeited privileges, amounted to the sum of Rupees 10,40,500* per annum; of which two-thirds (being about one-third of their entire revenues) fell upon the Amírs of Khyrpúr. We have seen that the object of Major Outram's proposed treaty was to commute, on equitable terms, the payment of tribute for the cession of territory, and to make the territorial possessions thus acquired, available for securing the military command of the Indus and the efficient protection of its navigation. Lord Ellenborough's treaties on the other hand, in addition to these and other stipulations, had in view the infliction of a signal punishment upon the Amírs, and the grant of "a great reward to our most faithful friend and ally," the Khan of Bhawalpúr.

Without stopping to discuss the expediency or otherwise of retaining military possession of both banks of the Indus (after the withdrawal of our troops from Affghanistan) the impolicy of which had been so strongly denounced by Lord Ellenborough in his celebrated Simla Manifesto only a month before, we will confine our present observations to the injustice and the folly of the proposed confiscation to Bharrib Khan. We have already expressed our conviction that the evidence adduced in support of the already hostile intrigues, upon the proof of

* Territorial cessions to the Nawab of Bhawalpúr.....	Rs.	6,40,000
Ditto Ditto to the British Government	„	1,90,500
Free transit from Kurrachee to the Indus at Tatta.....	„	10,000
Right of cutting wood on the banks of the Indus.....	„	2,00,000
Compensation to Mir Sobdar Khan.....	„	50,000

10,90,500

DEDUCT.

Amount of tribute remitted

Rs. 3,50,000

Balance Rupees.

„ 7,40,500

which the justification of the treaty was declaredly made to rest, was altogether insufficient to establish the accusation. But let us admit for the sake of argument, that the authenticity of the secret correspondence had been satisfactorily proved, and there will still remain the important question, whether the imputed offence justified the penalty inflicted. If it be admitted that nothing can warrant a Paramount State in sequestrating the territory of one of its allies, excepting such acts on the part of the latter as placed it in the position of a public enemy, and imparted to the former all the rights of war, no one, we think, will venture to assert that the intercepted letters justified such a measure. They indicated, it is true, an unfriendly feeling towards the British, and they pointed to measures of defence—in the one case by a foreign alliance, and in the other by the collection of troops—against our expected hostility: but there was not one hostile act either committed or apparently meditated. They were also in contravention of the existing treaties which prohibited negotiation with other States and therefore furnished grounds for remonstrance, or even for precautionary measures of self defence, had any real danger been actually apprehended: but in no point of view, could they be held to warrant either a public declaration of war, or a public confiscation of territory. Viewing their alleged offences in this light, we would next proceed to inquire, whether such petty and childish intrigues on the part of the Amírs, had placed them beyond the pale of mercy, or whether there were not some extenuating circumstances to plead, at least in mitigation of their punishment, if not for their entire forgiveness. On the part of the Amírs, it might have been urged that the British Government had itself contravened one of the most important provisions of the former treaties with these Princes, by transporting troops and military stores up the Indus—that we had forced the existing treaties upon them at the point of the bayonet, in pursuance of a policy the original grounds of which had just been publicly announced to be visionary and impolitic,* and which we had now been compelled to abandon—that we had given an illiberal, and, as appears to us, an unjust interpretation to an ambiguous clause of the treaty with Mír Rústum, and compelled him to abolish all river tolls without any recompense for the pecuniary loss it entailed—that notwithstanding our solemn pledge to Mír Rústum that we would not “covet a dam or drain of his territories nor the fortress on this bank or that bank of the Indus,” the Governor

* See Lord Ellenborough's Proclamation of the 1st October, 1842.

General had intimated his intention to retain possession of the fortress of Bukker and the town of Sukker nearly five months before the inquiry into the charges against that Prince commenced—that we were at this very moment directly infringing our engagements with the same Prince by retaining Bukker, which we had especially engaged to restore after the Affghan campaign, and by concentrating a large army at Sukker, when we had no authority, under the treaty, to station any troops whatever in Upper Sindh*—and finally, that the Governor-General's Military Commander in Sindh was then meditating other and more flagrant violations of national justice and of public faith. It might have been further urged in behalf of these Princes, that they had not derived from these treaties any of the advantages, political or commercial, which we had led them to expect—and that they had substantially befriended us at a time when even their passive friendship or neutrality would have been most injurious to our interests, and when their active hostility would have endangered the safety of our armies, and perilled the whole of our Indian possessions. Under such a combination of aggravating circumstances on the one side, and of extenuating considerations on the other, we cannot but think, that if ever there was an occasion when complete forgiveness would have been an act not merely of generosity but of justice, it assuredly was in the case we are now considering.

But if the declaration of an amnesty for all past offences, whether real or alleged, was deemed to be either impolitic or undeserved, surely no one will contend that either the demands of justice or consideration of sound policy required that the Amírs should be punished by such an arbitrary and indiscriminate spoliation of territory as the revised treaties contemplated. Was it not enough for the purposes of "just punishment," and for the efficient protection of British interests, that we should exact the perpetual cession of Sukker, Bukker, Rorí, and Kurrachí, and occupy these stations with our troops at pleasure? Was there occasion to humiliate and oppress them still further by gratuitously and recklessly confiscating one-third of the Upper Sindh territory, as if it had been a conquered province, for the purpose of conferring it on an obscure ally whom the Governor-General, for reasons only known to himself, delighted to honor and enrich, at the expense of other States?

* "It will be remembered (writes Lord Auckland in December 1839) that we are under special engagement to restore Bukker to the Khyrpúr Amírs, and that we have no absolute right under treaty to station our troops within the Khyrpúr limits."

If the punishment denounced against Mír Rústum Khan of Khyrpúr and Mír Nussír Khan of Hyderabad was thus arbitrary, oppressive, and unjust, how inexpressibly flagrant was the injustice inflicted on the other Amírs, who had not even been accused of any participation in these puerile intrigues—on Mírs Mír Mahommed Khan and Shadad Khan of Hyderabad, against whom there were only some trivial charges of evasions of treaty on the part of themselves or their officers—on Mír Nussír Khan of Khyrpúr, with whom we had not even the semblance of a written engagement—and on Mír Hússen Ali of Hyderabad, and Mírs Mahommed Khan and Ali Morad of Khyrpúr, against whom there was no sort of complaint.* And yet these Princes, equally with the two former, were despoiled of their territories and sovereign rights, in defiance of every principle of honesty, justice and good faith.

While we thus strongly reprobate this unrighteous act, it is just to Lord Ellenborough to record, that at the time he directed its execution, he was obviously not aware of the full extent of the injustice he was committing. In the letter of instructions to Sir Charles Napier which accompanied the draft treaties, he expressly avowed his ignorance of the precise value, position and ownership of the districts which he had ordered to be confiscated: and indeed, so vague and utterly erroneous was his information, that he made provision for the disposal of the *surplus tribute* to be surrendered by us *in excess* of the annual value of confiscated territory, when, in point of fact, the latter exceeded the former, as we have shewn, by upwards of seven lakhs of rupees. Seeing the grievous error which had been committed, Major Outram, on perusing the treaties when on the eve of leaving Sindh (on the 12th November), strongly urged Sir Charles Napier to make a reference to the Governor-General before tendering them to the Amírs; which, indeed, he was authorized to do by the discretionary instructions just referred to.† Notwithstanding the imperfect information avowedly possessed by Lord Ellenborough, and heedless of Major Outram's advice and of Mír Rústum's subsequent remonstrances, he delayed making the reference until the 30th of January—two months and a half after he received the treaties, and nearly two months after he had presented them to the Amírs. This fatal delay is the

* Mír Sobdar Khan (of Hyderabad) "our friend" was alone exempted from these exactions.

† Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 388.

more deeply to be regretted, because on the day of its receipt, his Lordship intimated, that, while he wished all the territory which had been conquered from Bhawul Khan to be restored, his object in confiscating the country between the Bhawalpur frontier and Rorí was "to establish a communication between our territories on the Sutlej and Rorí through a friendly State, rather than to inflict any further punishment on the Amírs of Khyrpúr," and therefore, that, if Sir Charles was of opinion that the cessions originally demanded, pressed too heavily upon the Amírs, he was directed to submit any suggestion he might have to offer for its modification. These instructions, however, arrived too late; they came not until the battle of Míaní had sealed the fate of Sindh and its rulers.

The conduct of Sir Charles Napier in this matter betrayed a most culpable neglect of duty, both towards his own Government and to the Princes of Sindh, and is deserving of the severest condemnation. But this constitutes only a part of his guilt in this painful transaction. Sir Charles had assured the Governor-General that *he himself* would present the treaty to the Amírs; and that he would "spare no pains to convince them that neither injury nor injustice were meditated, and that by accepting the treaties they would become more rich (!) and more secure of power than they now were." Instead of pursuing this course, which a sense of duty no less than his promise so clearly prescribed, he deputed his assistant, neither to explain, to advise, nor even to negotiate, but to present the treaties and to admit of no remonstrance. They were tendered to the Amírs of Upper Sindh on the 4th, and to those of Lower Sindh on the 6th of December, accompanied by letters from the Governor-General as well as from Sir Charles to these Princes, and were verbally accepted on the 7th by the deputies of both Provinces, who at the same time remonstrated against their injustice. The hostile attitude and menacing tone of the General had previously induced the Amírs of Upper Sindh to adopt the precautionary measure of collecting some of their troops at their capital; but the perusal of the draft treaties, harsh and humiliating though they were, and the (fictitious) report made to them by their Vakíls that the General had now abandoned his intention of marching on their capital, and was about to send away the Bengal force, seems to have, in some degree, reassured them; and, in the apparent hope of being able to procure by negotiation some remission of the terms, they began to disband their troops. The General's hostile measures, however, soon led to their recall.

Having crossed the Indus in hostile array, he, on the 8th,

publicly proclaimed the districts between Rorí and the Bhawulpúr frontier to be confiscated to the British Government from the first day of the ensuing year, and ordered that thenceforth "one cowree shall not be paid to the Kamdars of the Amírs. On the 18th he issued a second irritating proclamation, annexing these districts to the Nawab of Bhawulpúr, and prohibiting the Amírs, under threats of amercement, from collecting their revenues : and on the same day he sent the Bengal column to occupy the confiscated territory. The possessions, be it remarked, thus summarily and illegally seized, were the districts regarding which, he was at the moment withholding such official information, as in all probability would have induced the Governor-General to modify his orders for their sequestration and these districts were now seized on the plea of a treaty which was still unratified, and which remained so for nearly two months afterwards. Well might the chronicler of the conquest affirm ; that "the sword was now raised, and the negotiator became an armed parley."*

While he was thus forcibly appropriating the territory of Mír Rústum, which he had been authorized only to negotiate for, by treaty, he on the 12th thus abruptly addressed that Amír, "I must have your acceptance of the treaty immediately—yea or nay." And again in the same arrogant strain : "The Governor-General has occupied both sides of your Highness' river, because he has considered both sides of your Highness' argument. But I cannot go into the argument,—I am not Governor-General ; I am only one of his Commanders. The Governor-General has given to you his reasons, and to me his orders ; they shall be obeyed."† We will venture to state, that the annals of Indian diplomacy do not present a picture of more overbearing haughtiness than this. To have treated a conquered enemy in this manner, would have been deemed an act of barbarous inhumanity : but to address such language to a sovereign Prince, with whom we were at peace, argued a scandalous dereliction of public duty. Well might the venerable Rústum say : "You have issued a proclamation, that in accordance with the new treaty, my country, from Rorí to the boundary of Subzulkote shall be considered as belonging to the British Government from the 1st January. As yet I have not entered into a treaty to this effect : * * * moreover, be it known that I have distributed the districts above alluded to among my kindred and chiefs of Belúchistan." Such was the series of unjust and oppressive acts

* Napier's Conquest, p. 156.

† Suppl. Sindh : Pap. No. 8.

which proved the remote occasion of proximate cause is now to be noticed.

Mír Rústum Khan, the Rais or Prince of Sindh, the spoliation of whose territory has just been described, was now above eighty years of age. The succession to the sovereignty after his death was claimed, on the ground of prescriptive usage, by his younger brother Mír Ali Morad ; while Rústum, on the other hand, claimed the right of bequeathing the turban (or crown) to his eldest son Mahommed Hússen, and even of placing it on his head during his own life.

Of these two rival candidates, the ablest and the most unprincipled was Ali Morad, whose guilty intrigues were so soon to involve his kindred and country in ruin. His first object was to obtain from the British Government an acknowledgement of his title to the succession, and a promise of support, if necessary, in establishing his claim after Rústum's death : and this object being attained, he meditated the extortion of the turban, if practicable, during his brother's life. In furtherance of these objects, he persuaded Mír Rústum and the Khyr-púr Amirs to invest him with full powers as their representative to conduct all communications with Sir Charles Napier, and on the 23rd of November he succeeded in obtaining a personal interview with the General. At this memorable conference—memorable from the disastrous consequences to which it ultimately led,—Sir Charles having decided, on what ground is not stated, that Ali Morad had "the right" to the turban after the death of Mír Rústum, promised, on the part of the Governor-General, to protect him in that right, provided "he continued to act loyally towards the British Government." He further assured him that Mír Rústum would not be permitted by the Governor-General to invest his son with the dignity in question during his own life ; because he said, "it would be against the treaty for any one Amír to defraud another of his right."* Without presuming to decide, in the absence of any recorded data, whether the abstract right to the turban rested exclusively with Ali Morad as was authoritatively announced by Sir Charles, or whether the claims on that ground were equally balanced between the two candidates as had previously been decided by Major Outram,† we are clearly of opinion that, under the existing treaty, which acknowledged the supremacy of Rústum and his absolute control within his own territories, we should have had no grounds for interference had Rústum carried into effect his

* Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 413, p. 45.

† Outram's Commentary, p. 104.

intention of investing his son with the turban during his life ; although, in the event of a disputed succession after his death, its settlement might have rested with the British Government.

While Sir Charles thus guaranteed to Ali Morad the eventual succession to the sovereignty of Upper Sindh on Rústum's death, he indiscreetly, though perhaps unconsciously, intimated that the turban would be preserved to Rústum during his life "*unless he forfeited the protection*" of the *Governor-General*: an intimation which Ali Morad appears to have determined to turn to his personal advantage, even before he left the General's presence: for he at once indirectly accused Mir Rústum of hostility, by stating that he (Ali Morad) and Mir Sobdar Khan of Hyderabad, were "the only friends of the English," and by proposing that they two should make a secret treaty to stand by each other. It seems passing strange that such a proposition, coming from a Chief who had expressly solicited the interview as the accredited deputy of Rústum, should not have excited any suspicion of his perfidy in the mind of the General.

Having thus attained, and more than attained, the secret object of his visit, this bold and unscrupulous Prince hastened to compass the immediate deposition or compulsory abdication of his brother: and Sir Charles appears to have heartily seconded him in his guilty ambition. "The next step, (writes the General*) after giving Ali Morad a promise of the succession to the turban after Mir Rústum's death, was to *secure him the exercise of its power now, even during his brother's life.*"* How this was accomplished is now to be shewn.

At the very time when a British General was confiscating Mir Rústum's territory, and a perfidious brother was secretly meditating his deposition, domestic troubles had befallen "the good old man." On the 18th December—the day on which the General threatened to march on his capital and proclaimed his districts to be confiscated to the Khan of Bhawulpúr—he sent a secret message to the General, to the effect that he was in the hands of his family and could not act as his feelings of friendship for the English nation prompted him to do, and that if the General would receive him he would escape and come to his camp.† Surely, under such an appeal, it would have been an act of friendship and humanity peculiarly befitting, if not absolutely incumbent upon the British General, whose duty it was "to represent the friendship as well as the power" of his Government, to have promptly responded to so

* Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 445, p. 483.

† Supp. Sindh Pap. No. 15.

reasonable a request. But setting all such feelings aside, a just regard to political consideration should have dictated a ready compliance; for if it really was the wish of the General to secure an amicable settlement of the treaties, no better opportunity for effecting this object could have been desired than this spontaneous offer on the part of the Amír to place himself under British protection. And, be it remembered, that the request emanated from the Sovereign Prince of the Province, at whose court he was the delegated British representative, and within whose territories he had resided for two months and a half, but with whom he had not yet had an interview.* To have invited the aged Amír to his camp would most probably have effected the settlement of the treaties and secured the peace of the country, as it would have unmasked the character of Mír Ali Morad; and it was therefore a duty which Sir Charles owed both to that Chief and to his own Government. But we shall shew how different was the course of policy which he followed: "The idea struck me at once (he writes to the Governor-General two days afterwards,) that Rústum might go to Ali Morad, who might induce him, as a family arrangement, to resign the turban to him:" and accordingly in pursuance of this "idea," he sent a secret letter through Ali Morad to Rústum, recommending him to take refuge in his brother's fortress, trust himself to his care, and be guided by his advice. Bewildered and alarmed by the hostile proceedings of the General and by the dissensions within his own family, he fell into the snare, and on the 19th fled to Dejí-ka-kote. Having thus "thrown himself into his brother's power" by the General's advice, he was placed under restraint, deprived of his seals, and compelled on the following day to resign the turban to Ali Morad.† The great object of his policy having been successfully accomplished, Sir Charles thus laconically and exultingly reports its results:—"This (the transfer of the turban) I was so fortunate to succeed in, by persuading Mír Rústum to place himself in Ali Morad's hands. This burst upon his family and followers like a bombshell,"‡

Although the General was not acquainted at the time with the precise circumstances under which the turban had been fraudulently extorted from Mír Rústum, he, from the first, sur-

* Mír Rústum had solicited an interview with Sir Charles on a previous occasion, but postponed it on the plea of sickness, though, in reality, he was dissuaded from it by his intriguing brother. He repeated his request, but was refused.

† Sindh Parl. Pap., p. 503.

‡ Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 445, p. 483.

mised that Ali Morad had "bullied his brother into making it over to him:" and now his suspicions as to the honesty of the proceedings were increased by the fact, that a determination was obviously manifested in some quarter to prevent his having personal access to Rústum. This he resolved to counteract, and on the 27th, he intimated to Ali Morad his intention of visiting Rústum on the following day. But before the morning's sun had risen, the aged Prince had fled in dismay to the desert.

The intelligence of Rústum's flight, viewed in connection with the extraordinary transactions of which it was the consummation, could not fail to stagger the General, and to augment his former well-grounded suspicions. Accordingly, in reporting the matter to the Governor-General, he attributed it either to the aged Prince's dread of his (the General's) making him a prisoner—a dread, he adds, which had all along haunted him—or to his having been frightened into the foolish step by Ali Morad, who, in order "to make his possession of the turban more decisive," might have told him that he (the General) intended to seize him.* The accuracy of his conjectures was amply confirmed by the receipt of a communication, written on the following day from Mir Rústum himself, disavowing the validity of the cession of the turban, as having been extorted from him, and stating that he had been induced to flee into the desert, and to avoid a meeting with the General, in consequence of the representation of Ali Morad that he (the General) wished to make him a prisoner. Rústum further intimates in his letter, that he had sent ambassadors to the General to explain every thing, and concludes by expressing a hope that his case may be examined "by the scales of justice and kindness," and that he may receive his rights according to the treaty. The correctness of his statement was a week afterwards confirmed by the deputies just referred to, in presence of Ali Morad's own minister, as well as of Major Outram and Captain Brown.†

With such an array of circumstances and facts, all affording the strongest presumption that Ali Morad had fraudulently extorted his brother's birthright, and that, in the accomplishment of his wicked purpose, he had dared to stain the British name by imputing meditated treachery to the British representative,—it was the bounden duty of that officer to lose not an instant in instituting a full and searching inquiry into the whole circumstances of the transaction. An inquiry was due to the Sovereign Ally, whose rights we had guaranteed—it was due to the

* Sindh Parl. Pap. No 446.

† Outram's Commentary, p 126.

personal character of the General himself—and it was, above all, due to the vindication of the faith and honor of the Government whom he represented. We grieve to record that no investigation whatever was made, either then or at any subsequent period, though thus imperatively required for the credit of the British name, and repeatedly and urgently solicited by the Amírs both of Upper and Lower Sindh. On the contrary, on the very day (the 1st of January) on which he received from Rústum the confirmation of his own previous suspicions, the General, with incredible inconsistency and in violation of every consideration of political prudence and moral justice, issued an arrogant and offensive Proclamation, addressed to the Amírs and people of Sindh, in which he gives a short but inaccurate outline of what had occurred; asserts that Mír Rústum, by his flight, had insulted and defied the Governor-General; and declares his intention to “protect the chief Amír Ali Morad in his right, as the justly constituted Chief of the Talpúr family.”* On the following day he addressed a letter of similar purport to Rústum,—charging him with misrepresentation, subterfuge and double dealing; and concluding with these words: “I no longer consider you to be the Chief of the Talpúrs, nor will I treat with you as such, nor with those who consider you to be Rais.†

Ali Morad having been thus formally proclaimed as the justly constituted Rais of Upper Sindh, the General, without waiting for instructions from the Governor-General, did not hesitate to pledge the British Government to grant to the usurper all lands said to appertain to the turban, without knowing or inquiring what those lands were. Supported by the General, Ali Morad appropriated territory at his pleasure, and resumed, on the plea of the turban, lands which had passed into the possession of feudatory chiefs, thereby creating general disaffection and alarm.

The aggregate annual value of the territory left to the Amírs of Upper Sindh, under the exactions of Lord Ellenborough's yet unratified treaties, was only Rs. 14,29,000: of this amount Ali Morad's share was Rs. 4,45,500, leaving to the other Amírs Rs. 9,83,500. Now Sir Charles had not only pledged to Ali Morad, in virtue of his usurpation of the

* Suppl Sindh Pap p. 6.

† Suppl. Sindh Pap. No. 17. We have deemed it to be quite unnecessary to enter into an examination of the discordant and contradictory statements to be found in the different versions given by Sir Charles Napier of this very discreditable transaction; but refer our readers to the fifth chapter of Colonel Outram's Commentary, where they will find the whole subject of the compulsory abdication of the turban analyzed and exposed with much minuteness and ability.

turban, one-fourth of the aggregate revenues of Upper Sindh, but had moreover stipulated that this fourth should be deducted, not from the aggregate revenues of the Province (Ali Morad's, own revenues included), but from the revenues of the other Amírs. Thus these unfortunate Princes were called upon to pay, not the fourth of their own possessions, *viz*, Rs. 2,40,000, but a fourth of the entire revenues of the Province, or Rupees 3,57,250, which, added to the sum of Rs. 1,50,000 to be paid to Ali Morad as an indemnity for his possessions confiscated to Bhawul Khan, swelled the total exactions made by the usurper to Rs. 5,07,250—leaving a balance of little more than six lakhs of Rupees for the support of no less than eighteen Amírs, with their families, dependants and feudatory chiefs, who had up to that period enjoyed an annual revenue of Rs. 17,44,000.

In the meantime, while these startling events were in progress, Major Outram, who was on the eve of embarking for England, was recalled to act as a British Commissioner, under Sir Charles Napier, for settling the details of the Ellenborough treaties. That officer, disregarding all personal considerations, promptly repaired to Sindh, to act as a subordinate in the countries where he had so recently held supreme political control. He accepted the situation in the hope that he might yet be enabled to save the ill-fated Princes of that devoted country: but their doom was fixed, and he was unable to avert it. What Sir Alexander Burnes was in Affghanistan under Sir William Macnaghten, Major Outram was in Sindh under Sir Charles Napier. Both were powerless for good: and both must have appeared, in the eyes of the Princes and people of the country, as countenancing and approving a system of policy which was utterly at variance with their known characters and with their former opinions. This is painfully exemplified in the final conferences, when the Amírs pour forth their remonstrances and complaints against the cruelties and injustice which they had suffered, and the Commissioner, in consequence of the instructions he had received, has not the power of holding out the slightest hope that their grievances would even be inquired into. We are, however, anticipating the regular course of our narrative.

Major Outram joined the General's camp at Deji-ka-kote, the fortified residence of Ali Morad, on the 4th of January (1843)—three days after the proclamation of that Prince as the supreme ruler of Upper Sindh. He used every effort to check the General in the course on which he had so unfortunately entered. He pointed out the palpable treachery and extortion by which Ali Morad had possessed himself of the turban; his unwarrantable and indiscriminate resumption of

lands alleged to appertain to the Rais-ship; the consequent injury and injustice it would entail on the other subordinate Princes and Chiefs, and the general disaffection, if not insurrection, it would create throughout Sindh. But the warning was disregarded: the General, deaf alike to the voice of reason, to the calls of justice, and to the solemn obligations of treaty, pursued his impetuous career. Having without any declaration of war, marched in hostile array upon the capital of Upper Sindh, with whose Chief we were at peace, and at whose hands we had received such signal benefits; having taken military possession of an extensive tract of country on the plea of a yet unratified treaty; having unauthorizdly lent the sanction of the British name to the usurpation of the turban by a crafty and unprincipled chief, under circumstances—to which he himself had been a party—that involved the strongest suspicions of treachery and violence; and having sanctioned his indiscriminate appropriation of lands on the pretext of their appertaining to that turban which he had usurped;—the General proceeded in the name of the usurper, to seize and make over to him all the fortresses in Upper Sindh. One of the first of the strongholds invaded was Emaunghur, the name of which must be familiar to all our readers.

Emaunghur, let it be observed, was the private property of Ali Morad's nephew, Mir Mahommed Khan, a chief against whom no charge of "hostility or unfriendliness" had even been preferred, and whose possessions were guaranteed to him, by a separate agreement, under the treaties of 1839. The sole object which the General seems to have first had in view, when he determined on capturing this "Sindhian Gibraltar" as he terms it, was the moral effect likely to be produced by so daring an achievement: and we find him writing to the Governor-General on the 27th December: "I have made up my mind, that though war has not been declared (nor is it necessary to declare it) I will at once march upon Emaunghur, and prove to the whole Talpúr family of both Khyrpúr and Hyderabad, that neither their deserts nor their negotiations can protect them from the British troops." But as this might be considered, and justly considered, an unwarrantable invasion of private rights, he some days after bethought himself of calling in question Mir Mahommed's title to the fort, and here, as on former occasions, we are again startled by the General's contradictory statements. In one place we find him describing it as "belonging to Mir Mahommed Khan, but becoming the property of Ali Morad by his election to be

chief."* But if the fort appertained as of right to the turban, why was it not in possession of Mír Rústum who wore the turban? In another place he states that "it *was* Ali Morad's, but he gave it to one of his relatives (Mír Mahommed Khan) three years ago." If it did really belong at some antecedent period to Ali Morad—which we merely assume for the sake of argument—we would ask, how came he, not only to be the proprietor of it, but to alienate it to another chief, while Rústum wore the turban, to which Sir Charles had just told us it of right belonged. Again, on a third occasion, he shifts his ground of defence, and rests the justification of its seizure on the allegation that the owner was "in rebellion" against Ali Morad. But it is painful to dwell on such contradictions. Nothing but an inward conviction of the injustice of the measure could have drawn forth such a defence.

Sir Charles marched on Emaunghur with a light detachment on the night of the 5th of January, saw no enemy on his route, and on his arrival at his destination found the fort deserted. Before setting out on this expedition he had intimated to the Governor-General his intention of sending word to the Amírs in Emaunghur that he would neither plunder nor slay them if they made no resistance. These chiefs, however, apparently distrusting the General's good faith, abandoned the fort; and the latter, in breach of his solemn promise, destroyed and plundered it, after having obtained with difficulty the consent (not of "the owner" but) of Ali Morad. Before quitting this subject, we must prominently notice, that while Sir Charles affects to have taken possession of this fortress in support of the authority of Ali Morad, we find that he had resolved on placing all the forts in the hands of his puppet, even before he had usurped the turban. "I will place their forts (he wrote before Rústum's abdication) in the hands of Ali Morad, nominally in those of Mír Rústum." †

Having accomplished this unprovoked inroad into the heart of the territory of an allied Prince, and having completed the spoliation and destruction of the fortress in direct violation of the treaty, and of his own plighted word, the General retraced his steps towards the Indus. He, at the same time, deputed his Commissioner Major Outram to Khyrpúr to meet the Amírs of Upper and Lower Sindh, with a view to the arrangement of the intricate details of Lord Ellenborough's treaties.

* Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 448.

† Sindh Parl. Pap. p. 47.

In a circular letter addressed to them by the General, the several Amírs were directed to attend at Khyrpúr, either personally or by Vakíls, adding that, if any one of them failed to furnish his deputy with full powers, he would not only exclude him from the meeting but would "enter the territories of such Amír with the troops under his orders, and take possession of them in the name of the British Government." Notwithstanding this threatening letter, none of the Khyrpúr Amírs made their appearance within the stipulated period. Having been distinctly informed that no alteration could be made in Sir Charles's arrangements with Ali Morad,—whose usurpation of the turban, with all its attendant territorial exactions, was to be considered a closed question,*—Mir Rústom proceeded in the direction of Hyderabad to join his fugitive relations.

Finding it impossible to avert the ruin which was befalling the Amírs of Upper Sindh, Major Outram asked the General for permission to proceed to Hyderabad without delay, in the hope of reaching that capital in time to prevent its Princes from giving aid or refuge to their fugitive kinsmen, and also of being enabled, by their means, to procure the submission of the latter. The General's reply, acceding to his application, was intercepted, it is believed, by Ali Morad's Minister, and never reached Major Outram. Two days after this, Vakíls, bearing the seals of the Amírs of Hyderabad, arrived at Sir Charles's head-quarters, with full authority to affix them to the treaties. Instead of procuring the signature of the Vakíls to their unconditional acceptance (leaving the details for future adjustment) he injudiciously desired the deputies to return to Hyderabad to meet Major Outram on the 6th of February. This was certainly an unfortunate decision: but, with a still more lamentable want of judgment and of consistency, he in a letter to the Hyderabad Amírs apprising them of what he had done, expressed a hope that the Khyrpúr Amírs would also proceed to Hyderabad to meet his commissioner, adding, "if they do not, I will treat them as enemies:"—thereby advising and directing the adoption of the very measure which Major Outram so much deprecated, and the prevention of which was the main object of his proposed visit to Hyderabad

* Notwithstanding the obviously imperfect information under which Lord Ellenborough drew up the draft treaties, and the discretionary power which he gave the General to refer all doubtful points the latter persisted to the last in carrying out these oppressive exactions to the uttermost. "Whether such arrangement," he writes to Major Outram, "leaves the former (the opposed Amírs) one rupee or one million, does not, in my view of the case, come within our competence to consider."

The interception of the General's letter and other unavoidable causes prevented Major Outram's departure from Sukker till the 4th of February, and on reaching Hyderabad on the 8th, he found that Mír Rústum, acting in obedience to the General's orders, had arrived there four days before him. Thus Sir Charles Napier had completely embroiled the Amírs of Hyderabad in the misfortunes of their cousins of Khyrpúr, and had succeeded, most effectually, in frustrating the very object for which his Commissioner had been deputed to Lower Sindh—a result which the Hyderabad Chiefs themselves had all along dreaded and had heretofore prevented, and to which they attributed all their subsequent misfortunes.

Having entered so much at length into the remote and proximate causes that led to the subjugation of Sindh, it will be unnecessary to dwell upon the memorable occurrences which marked its final accomplishment. In the conferences which Major Outram held at Hyderabad with the Amírs of both Provinces, they solemnly denied the truth of the charges on which the new treaties were imposed, and complained that they had never been allowed an opportunity of disproving them. The great subject of earnest and repeated remonstrance however, was the unjust extortion of the turban from Mír Rústum. That chief reiterated his previous allegations, that in conformity with the General's express directions, he had sought refuge with Ali Morad, who placed him under restraint, made use of his seals, and compelled him first to resign his birthright, and then fly from Dejl-ka-kote on the General's approach. Although they strongly protested against the harshness and injustice of the exactions of the revised treaties, the Amírs agreed to sign them, upon condition that Mír Rústum should be restored to his hereditary rights.

Finding that the Commissioner was unauthorized to give them any assurance, or even to hold out any hope of Rústum's restoration, they then endeavoured to exact a promise, that an *inquiry* should be instituted, and that in the event of their substantiating the truth of what they had alleged against Ali Morad, the turban should be restored to Rústum, and the lands which had been wrested from his kindred and feudatories on the plea of belonging to the turban, should be given back to them; or, should this request not be complied with, they entreated that they themselves might be allowed to settle their dispute with Ali Morad without British interference. They urged a promise of inquiry, not only as an act of justice to Rústum, but also as the only means of allaying the excitement of the Belúchís; who had been flocking into the capital

during that day and the preceding night, and who had refused to disperse until Rústum's wrongs should be redressed.* Major Outram's instructions, however, were peremptory and left him no discretionary power: he could only promise to forward to the General any representation they might have to make on the subject; and in the meanwhile urged upon them an immediate compliance with the terms of the treaties.

At length, on the evening of the 12th, the Amírs formally affixed their seals to the draft treaties in open durbar. On their way back to the Residency, Major Outram and his companions were followed by a dense crowd of Belúchis, who were only prevented from attacking them by "a strong escort of horse sent for their protection by the Amírs, under some of their most influential chiefs." On the following day the Amírs sent a deputation to Major Outram to intimate that, after his departure from the durbar on the preceding evening, all the Belúchi Sirdars had assembled, and learning that, notwithstanding the acceptance of the treaties, the commissioner had given no pledge whatever for the redress of Rústum's grievances, they took an oath on the Koran to oppose the British troops, and not to sheath the sword until that chief and his brethren had obtained their rights. The Amírs further stated, that they had lost all control over their feudatories, and that they could not be answerable for their acts, unless some assurance were received that the rights of Rústum would be restored. On that and the following day, they forwarded repeated verbal and written messages to Major Outram to the same purport,—entreating him, should he not be empowered to grant the required assurance, to leave the Residency, as they could not restrain their exasperated followers. Notwithstanding these warnings he determined to remain at his post at all risk, lest his departure should precipitate hostilities.

While these events were in progress, Sir Charles Napier was marching with his small army upon Hyderabad. He had intended and pledged himself, as late as the 12th, to halt and embark the troops for Kurrachi, as soon as he received the Amírs' acceptance of the treaties: but, ere it arrived, he was within two or three days' march of the capital, and had obtained information that the Belúchis were assembling in large numbers in the town and neighbourhood of Hyderabad. Under these circumstances, which had been brought about by his own acts, the safety of his army, and other military considerations

* The Belúchis were further exasperated at the moment by the intelligence of the seizure of Hyat Khan, a Muri and Sindhian Chief.

determined him, instead of halting as he had promised, to continue his march. The news of this determination was brought to the Amírs by the camel rider who had conveyed Major Outram's despatch announcing the acceptance of the treaties.

War was now inevitable, and both parties appear to have arrived at this conclusion at the same time. At 9 A. M. on the 15th, Sir Charles wrote to Major Outram, "I am in full march on Hyderabad, and will make no peace with the Amírs. I will attack them instantly, whenever I come up with their troops." At the very hour, when the British General thus formally *declared* war—for he had practically been carrying on warlike operations for two months—hostilities were commenced by the Amírs' troops in their attack on the British Residency, the heroic defence of which by Major Outram, with his small honorary escort under the command of Captain Conway, against eight thousand Belúchís, formed, perhaps, the most extraordinary achievement of that brief but memorable campaign. Then followed, in rapid succession, the brilliant victory of Míaní, won by the gallantry of our troops and by the military genius and intrepid valor of their General, against the united forces of Upper and Lower Sindh—the surrender of the Amírs, and the capitulation of Hyderabad—the hard-fought battle of Dubba, in which our troops defeated the army of Mír Sher Mahommed of Mírpur, who escaped after the battle—the public notification of the annexation of Sindh to the British dominions,—and finally, the captivity and exile of all the Amírs. It does not fall within our present purpose to give a detailed narrative of these transactions, but there are a few points connected with them which require special notice.

The first of these relates to the attack on the Residency. That measure was characterised by Lord Ellenborough in his notification of the 5th March, as "a treacherous attack upon a representative of the British Government," and as a "hostile aggression prepared by those who were in the act of signing a treaty:" the character thus affixed to this hostile measure being based upon Sir Charles Napier's official report, that the Amírs signed the treaty on the night of the 14th, and that they attacked the Residency on the following morning. On this we would remark, 1st. That the treaty was signed on the 12th, and not on the 14th, as erroneously reported by the General; 2nd. That during the two days and three nights which intervened between the execution of the treaty and the commencement of hostilities, the Amírs, as has been shewn, sent repeated messages, verbal and written, to Major Outram,

urging his departure on the ground that they could not restrain their feudatories, and that they themselves would be compelled to join with them, unless the General should halt, and promise an inquiry into Mír Rústum's grievances. To designate the attack on the Residency, after such repeated warnings, as a "treacherous" attack, was a direct perversion of language and of fact. It was in truth the first reciprocation, on the part of the Amírs, of hostilities which the British General had commenced two months before, and which before the commencement of the attack, he had resolved to prosecute with vigour.

The second point which requires notice is the suppression by Sir Charles Napier of the notes of the conferences between the Amírs of Sindh and Major Outram, in violation of his official duty and of his promise to forward them to Government. An examination of these documents by the Governor-General was absolutely necessary to his acquiring a just knowledge of the points at issue between the Amírs and his representative. The perusal of them would have acquainted his Lordship that the Amírs had unreservedly acquiesced in the terms of his treaties, harsh and oppressive as they were, but that they protested against the fraudulent exactions from Mír Rústum, which formed no part of their stipulations, and the unjust and unauthorized enforcement of which, by his General, proved the immediate cause of the war. The shifting and contradictory reasons subsequently assigned for withholding these important documents are melancholy exemplifications of the subterfuges to which it becomes necessary to resort in support of an indefensible act.

A third point to which we would advert, regards the terms on which the Amírs surrendered on the day after the battle of Míaní. Having previously received, through their Vakíls a promise of honorable treatment, those Amírs who were present in the battle, (*viz.*, Mír Rústum, Nussír, and Mahommed Khans of Khyrpúr, and Mír Nussír, Shahdad, and Hússen Ali Khans of Hyderabad) entered the British camp, and surrendered to the General, who returned their swords, and intimated that they would be treated with consideration, until the receipt of the Governor-General's instructions for their ultimate disposal. Under this guarded stipulation, Sir Charles could not be held responsible for the fate of any of these six Princes, with the exception of Mír Hússen Ali, Major Outram's ward. As no charge had ever been preferred against this young Prince, who was only sixteen years of age, except that of being present in the battle, Major Outram interceded

in his behalf, and obtained his release, and as was inferred, his pardon. Notwithstanding this, he was soon afterwards³ arrested without any assigned reason and imprisoned with the others. That there may have been a misconception of the General's precise meaning when he set him at liberty, is extremely probable ; but as the misapprehension was entertained not only by the Prince himself and the whole of his family, but also by the British officer at whose intercession he was released, his subsequent imprisonment, without any known cause, cannot be reconciled with the strict principles of justice and good faith.

But whatever difference of opinion may have existed regarding the treatment of Mr Hússen Ali, there can be but one opinion as to the injustice perpetrated on Mrs Sobdar Khan and Mír Mahommed Khan. The former of these had, up to the outbreak of hostilities, been recognized by all parties as the "old and ever faithful friend and ally" of the British Government, the latter had on all occasions been employed as a mediator between contending chiefs, and neither of them had been present at Míání. It was in consequence intimated to them by the General after the battle, that no harm should befall them, if they remained quietly in their houses. Under this assurance they peaceably surrendered the fort of Hyderabad, which Sir Charles admitted he could not have captured without reinforcements ; and three days afterwards they were arrested and condemned to share the fate of their kindred. The treatment of these two Princes has left an indelible stain upon the humanity, justice, and good faith of the British Government.

The next question which arises, and which has been the subject of much angry discussion, refers to the property seized in the fort of Hyderabad, and subsequently appropriated as prize. As the fortress was surrendered and not captured, it follows that whatever treasure or other property was found therein, that could justly be considered lawful prize, belonged of right to the British Crown, or the East India Company, and not to the army. But the complaint chiefly insisted on by the Amírs was, that they had been deprived by the prize agents acting under the General's orders, not only of the State property, but also of their personal and private property, including personal ornaments, clothing and articles of household furniture. Another complaint urged by them under this head, was that the privacy of the female apartments was violated ; that the Princesses were compelled to throw away their ornaments, rather than undergo the shameless scrutiny to⁴

which they knew they would be subjected; that jewels and other property were actually taken from the persons of their female attendants; and that the houses of some of their servants were plun' red. These alleged acts of spoliation were aggravated by the circumstance of their having been committed, not in the immediate excitement of a siege, but at an interval of two or three days after the peaceful surrender of the fort. There may possibly have been some exaggeration, and misstatement in these accusations, but their substantial truth has never been publicly disproved.

It is scarcely necessary to notice, except for the purpose of denouncing the apparently vindictive spirit in which Sir Charles Napier, with the aid of his brother, the historian, has traduced the public and private characters of the Amirs. There is something, to our thinking, at once unmanly and ungenerous in the seeming virulence with which the conqueror of Sindh has thus endeavoured to embitter the exile of the unfortunate victims of his power and his injustice. If he had even established the truth of the monstrous crimes and vices which he has laid to their charge, he would not in the slightest degree have thereby diminished the political and moral injustice which led to their dethronement; but when we find that these charges are either utterly devoid of truth, or to say the least, grossly exaggerated, we feel as if the original injustice of the conquest were almost obliterated by the atrocity of the subsequent libels upon the conquered Princes. In vindication of the character of the Amirs, however, Colonel Outram has adduced the written testimony of several British officers who, from their official relations to these Princes during the later period of their rule, and since their exile, have had peculiar opportunities for acquiring a correct opinion, and whose characters are a sufficient guarantee for the scrupulous accuracy of their evidence. From the concurring testimony of the officers, we are bound to exonerate their private character from some of the more revolting vices which have been laid to their charge, and to rank them as rulers rather above than below the ordinary level of the *Mahomedan Princes* of India.

We have already, in the course of our narrative, anticipated most of the observations that naturally arise from a review of the transactions which have been detailed. But before we conclude, it seems right that we should endeavour to appor-tion to Lord Ellenborough and to his General their respective shares in the responsibility of these proceedings.

The first great error which Lord Ellenborough committed in the management of our relations with the States on the

Indus, was the supercession of Major Outram, the British representative, by Sir Charles Napier, and the subsequent entire abolition of the political agency in that country. We are fully aware of the advantages which result from an union of political and military control in the person of one officer, both on account of the additional weight and influence with which it invests him, and also because it tends to prevent the delays, jealousies, and consequent injury to the public interests which may arise, in cases of emergency, from a divided and conflicting authority. But where the officer selected for the duty does not possess the requisite union of political and military qualifications, then there is no measure more hazardous to the public peace, or calculated to be more detrimental to the public interest. Lord Ellenborough selected for the discharge of these united functions in Sindh, an officer who was as admirably fitted for the one duty as he was utterly disqualified for the other. He superseded an incapable Commander by the ablest General in India ; but at the same time he displaced a political functionary of tried efficiency to make room for an inexperienced officer, whose utter incompetence for the duty has been made apparent in almost every page of the foregoing narrative. In this arrangement his Lordship evinced either a want of discernment of character, or a more culpable waywardness of disposition, to the indulgence of which the public interests were sacrificed.

The second objectionable measure, for which he must be held responsible, was the imposition of the Revised Treaties; which, as we have shewn, proved the remote cause of the revolution. It has been seen that, had the General not culpably withheld official information which it was his duty to have communicated, the details of the measure might have been modified and rendered less oppressive to the Amirs : but, after making the necessary deduction on this ground, there will remain much that is censurable both in the terms of the treaties and in the grounds upon which they were imposed. In the first place, he acted unwisely in entrusting to an inexperienced subordinate agent the power of passing a final decision upon a matter which was to involve in its consequences the forfeiture of the sovereign rights, and of a large proportion of the territorial possessions of an allied State. But even if the General's decision upon the questions referred to him had been supported by clear and undeniable evidence—a supposition very remote from our real conviction—we should still consider the treaties which Lord Ellenborough based upon them to be most impolitic. Independently of all other objectionable clauses,

the indiscriminate sequestration of the territory of the different associate rulers of Sindh, and its cession to the neighbouring chief of Bhawalpúr, not only immediately involved all these rulers in the punishment avowedly inflicted for the alleged offences of only a portion of them, but was calculated to perpetual future discord between the rulers and people of the two States, and to provoke a feeling of bitter and lasting animosity against the British Government.

Lastly, it is to Lord Ellenborough alone that we are to ascribe the dethronement, captivity, and exile of the Amirs, and the annexation of Sindh to the British dominions.

Along the more prominent errors and faults committed by Sir Charles Napier, during the few eventful months of his diplomatic career in Sindh, the first to be noticed is the general mode in which he performed the political duties of his office.

The functions of a British representative at the court of a protected native State, if we understand them aright, involve the two-fold duty of upholding the authority and interests of his own Government, and of conciliating the friendship and watching over the interests of the durbar to which he is accredited. He represents a Government which has engaged to protect as well as to control; and if he neglects the performance of either of these offices, he must be considered to have failed in the fulfilment of the responsible duties committed to his charge.

If we apply this test to the political services of Sir Charles Napier in Sindh, we shall find how grievously and how fatally he failed in their performance. Of the two branches of political duty just referred to, he altogether neglected the one, and he performed the other with unnecessary and unjustifiable harshness. The former political agents, as the historian admits,* had gained the friendship of these Princes, and there appears no reason to doubt but that Sir Charles would have been equally successful had he evinced a similar desire to obtain it. Instead of attempting to conciliate their confidence, he evinced in all his communications with them a degree of arrogance and harshness, that was altogether unprecedented in the official intercourse between allied States, and that was calculated to have a most injurious effect upon the interests of both Governments. Almost every page of the Sindh blue books confirms this fact. He, moreover, exercised an interference in their internal affairs that was not only unauthorized, but was expressly prohibited by the treaties.

The second point to which we have to advert is his inexcusa-

ble omission in not supplying the Governor-General with full and correct information on points where his Lordship's knowledge was declaredly defective or obviously inaccurate; and in not forwarding to him such representations and remonstrances as the Amirs repeatedly made against the measures which were in progress or were about to be enforced. This is perhaps to be ascribed, in part, to forgetfulness, but it seems also to have arisen in some degree from a mistaken conception of the duties of his office. He appears to have looked upon himself as the Governor-General's "commander," delighted to carry his orders into rigorous effect, rather than as his Lordship's political agent, whose duty it was to supply him with full and accurate information on every point connected with the duties of his office. The grievous results of Sir Charles Napier's ignorance or heedlessness or culpable neglect of this duty have been fully detailed.

His hostile invasion of the dominions of the Princes of Upper Sindh, with whom we were at peace, and were then negotiating a treaty, and his military occupation of extensive districts on the plea of that yet unratified engagement, constitute his third great offence. The injustice of this, however, must be shared by the Governor-General, who when issuing instructions to the General for an amicable negotiation, intimated at the same time, in no unintelligible terms, his wish that the Amirs should feel the force of our arms.

The fourth measure chargeable against Sir Charles Napier is one of which the conception and execution rested entirely with himself. We allude to the unjustifiable capture and demolition of Emaunghur—a fortress belonging to a chief who had never even been accused of any participation in the hostile intrigues alleged against some of the others.

The greatest, however, of his numerous offences was his having, in conjunction with Mir Ali Morad, compassed the forcible deposition of Mir Rustum Khan, the Prince paramount of Upper Sindh, at whose court he was at the time the British representative. In furtherance of this intrigue, as has been shewn, he counselled Mir Rustum to put himself into the power of Ali Morad; he publicly proclaimed the usurper's accession to the throne without the Governor-General's authority for so doing, and in utter disregard of Mir Rustum's solemn protest against the illegality of his abdication, as having been forcibly and fraudulently extorted from him, he publicly notified his determination to treat as rebels all who refused to acknowledge the authority of the usurper; he officially sanctioned the usurper's unwarrantable and indiscriminate

appropriation of territory in the possession of the other Amirs ; and lastly, he obstinately refused to institute or sanction any enquiry into the circumstances of the usurpation. This series of impolitic, unjust, and discreditable acts, proved the proximate cause of the Sindh Revolution, and has left an ineffaceable stain on Sir Charles Napier's reputation as well as on the good name of the British Government.*

Such is a very imperfect sketch of the leading particulars of the conquest of Sindh—a conquest which, whether it be viewed in reference to the political and moral injustice in which it originated, or to the unjustifiable proceedings which marked its progress and its close, has happily no counterpart in the history of British India during the present century. If we would find a precedent for the spoliation of the Amirs, we must go back to the times of Warren Hastings, and to the injuries inflicted on Cheyte Singh by that able but unscrupulous statesman. In the revolution of Benares, as in the revolution of Sindh, the paramount authority imposed unjust and exorbitant demands (pecuniary in the one case, territorial in the other) on its tributary allies—answered respectful remonstrances by insolent menaces and hostile inroads—treated defensive preparations as acts of aggressive hostility—rejected all overtures for amicable negotiation—goaded them to resistance in defence of their sovereign rights—defeated them in battle—confiscated their territories—and finally drove them into exile. While there was this general resemblance, however, between the atrocities committed on the banks of the Ganges in 1781, and those enacted in the valley of the Indus in 1843, the impelling motives, and the ultimate results of the policy pursued by the two Indian rulers, were widely different. In the one case, there was an exaction of money demanded, on the urgent plea of State necessity, to relieve the pressing financial embarrassments of the Government ; in the other, there was a spoliation of territory, originating in a whimsical solicitude to enrich a favourite ally, who had no claims whatever upon our bounty:—the one Governor-General, by his unjust policy, acquired a district yielding a considerable addition to the permanent revenues of the State—the other, by a similar course of injustice, bequeathed to his country a province burdened with what has hitherto proved a ruinous,

* The venerable ill-requited Chief who was the victim of such unparalleled injustice, has been released by death from the sorrows of his exile. He expired at Puna on the 27th of May last, and the grave closed, soon after, over another victim of British oppression—Mir Sobdar Khan, the "ever faithful friend and ally" of the British Government.

and may prove a permanently ruinous annual expenditure to the State.

While the present century nowhere furnishes a precedent or a parallel to our recent proceedings in Sindh, it is a subject of congratulation that the current year supplies us with a most remarkable and instructive contrast. The spotless justice of the recent war on the Sutlej, and the deep-stained guilt of the war on the lower Indus—the forbearance of Lord Hardinge, who scrupulously maintained peace until a wanton and unprovoked invasion compelled him to draw the sword, and the unjust aggressions by which Sir Charles Napier goaded the Princes and people of an allied State to resistance in defence of their sacred rights—the generous moderation which closed the triumphs of the former, and the oppressive and retributive severity with which the latter followed up his victories—all furnish points of contrast so striking and so extraordinary that posterity will hardly credit the fact, that the chief actors in these two campaigns lived in the same century, and were brought up in the same military school.

It only remains to say a few words regarding the two works whose titles are placed at the head of this article.

The "Conquest of Sindh" presents the same characteristic peculiarities which we alternately admire and regret in the previous writings of the historian of the Peninsular war. We find the same spirited and graphic narration of military operations; the same clearness of topographical delineation; the same vivid and thrilling descriptions of the battles. But these merits, great as they undoubtedly are, are disfigured by even more than the usual proportion of his characteristic faults. A turgid extravagance of diction pervades the general narrative; many of his statements and opinions are singularly distorted by personal and party prejudice, and the direct perversions of fact are so many and so serious, as irretrievably to mar its character for trustworthiness. These misrepresentations are rendered subservient on every occasion, either to the undue exaltation of Lord Ellenborough and Sir Charles Napier, the unjust depreciation of Lord Auckland and Colonel Outram, or the indulgence of a feeling of what we fear must be regarded a malignant hostility towards the Ex-Amirs of Sindh.

Many of the misstatements to which we have alluded are exposed with unsparing freedom, but in a tone of great moderation in Colonel Outram's Commentary, which presents, in many respects, a remarkable contrast to the work upon which it comments.

We regret that our limits do not admit of our furnishing

any adequate specimens of the earnest, truthful, straightforward and business-like style in which the author has treated every department of his intricate and voluminous subject. Our anxiety has been to disentangle, for the benefit of the general reader, the main thread of the narrative of leading facts, from the multitudinous details which are apt to weary or repel those who are neither personally nor officially concerned in the evolutions of the Sindhian tragedy. In this way we have endeavoured to contribute our mite to the diffusion of sound and accurate views respecting its real character and merits, since an undistorted retrospective view of what has actually occurred can alone effectually pave the way to healing prospective measures. And we are very sure, that to the noble-minded author of the Commentary, any service calculated to exhibit *the truth, the plain undisguised truth*, as respects the memorable series of events which led to the subversion of the Talpúr dynasty in Sindh, must prove far more gratifying, than any elaborate attempts to illustrate his own personal merits, or those of his recently published work.

Towards the conclusion however of the work, there is one passage so well fitted to display the moral grandeur of his sentiments, that we must find room for it:—

“Reverentially I say it, from my first entrance into public life, I have, thought that the British nation ruled India by the faith reposed in its honour and integrity. Our empire, originally founded by the sword, has been maintained by opinion. In other words, the nations of the East felt and believed that we invariably held treaties and engagements inviolate; nay, that an Englishman’s word was as sacred as the strictest bond engrossed on parchment. Exceptions, no doubt, have occurred; but scrupulous adherence to faith once pledged was the prevailing impression and belief, and this was one of the main constituents of our strength. Unhappily this charm has, within the last few years, almost entirely passed away. Physical has been substituted for moral force—the stern, unbending soldier for the calm and patiently-enduring political officer; functions incompatible—except in a few and rare cases—have been united; and who can say for how long a space—under such a radical change of system, such a departure from all to which the Princes and People of India have been accustomed and most highly value and cherish—the *few* will be able to govern the *millions*?

* * * * *

The moral effect of a single breach of faith is not readily effaced. “I would,”—wrote the Duke of Wellington, on the 15th of March 1804,—“I would sacrifice Gwalior, or every position in India, ten times over, to preserve our credit for scrupulous good faith, and the advantages and honour we gained by the late war and peace; and we must not fritter them away in arguments drawn from overstrained principles of the laws of nations, which are not understood in this country. *What brought me through so many difficulties in the war, and the negotiations for peace? The British good faith and nothing else?*”

It is another great misfortune, that acts like those I am deploring, pre-

vent those who are really imbued with pacific views and intentions, from acting upon and carrying them out. The present Governor-General, to his honour be it said, has endeavoured to carry out his wise and pacific intentions to the utmost verge of prudence and forbearance. Who shall however venture to say that his measures, which we know to have been purely defensive, have not, under the warning of Sindh, been regarded by the Sikhs as indicative of meditated aggression on the first favorable opportunity, or that the bold step they adopted of invading our borders, is not to be attributed to the distrust and suspicion excited in their minds by the subjugation of the Princes and People of Sindh?

If in the performance of the necessary duty of self-vindication, I have read a warning to those in power to retrace their policy before it is too late, may it not be neglected; for nations require occasionally to be reminded that "the love of Conquest is national ruin, and that there is a power which avenges the innocent blood." Our interests in the East require consolidation, and not extension of our dominion."

With this single but characteristic quotation, however, we must conclude. Of the Commentary, it may in brief be said, that without displaying the fitful eloquence or the practised literary skill of the military historian, it evinces a thorough mastery of the subject on which it treats, and it is written in clear, forcible and unaffected language, with an earnestness that bespeaks the author's honesty of purpose, and with a scrupulous accuracy to which his opponent can lay no claim. Colonel Outram has most fully and triumphantly vindicated his hitherto unsullied reputation from the aspersions which have been so ungenerously and so unjustly thrown upon it; he has cleared Lord Ellenborough's character from much of the guilt heretofore imputed to him in connection with the injuries inflicted on the Amírs; he has taken down the conqueror of Sindh from the political eminence on which the historian had so indiscreetly placed him, and fixed on him a brand of political dishonesty which, it is to be feared, he will find it difficult to efface; and he has exposed, in General Napier's history of the Conquest, a series of misstatements so numerous and so flagrant, as must for ever damage its claims to historical accuracy.

4
DOST MAHOMMED KHAN.

BY SIR JOHN KAYE, K.C.S.I.

Life of the Amír, Dost Mahommed Khan of Kabul; with his political proceedings towards the English, Russian and Persian Governments, including the victories and disasters of the British Army in Affghanistan. By Mohan Lal, Esquire, Knight of the Persian Order of the Lion and the Sun; lately attached to the Mission in Kabul. 2 vols. Longman and Co. 1846.

We had purposed to have given a few specimens of Mohan Lal's style, which he assures us is Persian, and which is certainly not English—but we think that we shall better carry out the objects of this journal by taking advantage of the present opportunity to compile, from the different authorities,—more or less trustworthy—at our command, a memoir of the eventful career of Dost Mohammed, which if not entirely free from error, will, we trust, be as close an approximation to the truth, as can be attained in the absence of all authentic records of the varied incidents of the Amír's life. Much is, necessarily, mere tradition, and must be received with liberal allowances for the exaggerations of oriental retailers of court-gossip, through whom the greater number of the anecdotes, which illustrate the biography of the Amír, have been received. We may sometimes be tempted, as we proceed, to throw into a note an original passage from Mohan Lal's volumes.

Dost Mohammed Khan is the son of Poyndah Khan, and the grandson of Hadji Jamal Khan, Barukzye. The latter was in his days a noble of high repute, and chief of the Barukzye tribe. On his death, Taimur Shah, who then ruled

in Affghanistan, bestowed, with due regard to primogeniture, the dignity of the chiefship upon Rahimdad Khan, the eldest of the four sons of the deceased Hadji. But this man had not the qualities necessary to control or conciliate his tribe. He was sordid and morose. He shut himself up in his house ; seldom associated with his equals without offending them, or with his inferiors without injuring them. He wanted courtesy—he wanted hospitality ; he had a bad temper and a bad heart. The Barukzyes rose up against him and appealed to the king. Taimur Shah responded to the appeal ; Rahimdad Khan was degraded, and the second brother, Poyndah Khan, became chief of the tribe.

Poyndah Khan was a man of a widely different character and temperament. He was liberal and chivalrous—hospitable to his equals, affable to his inferiors, faithful to his sovereign ; a brave soldier and a popular chief. He appears first to have distinguished himself by joining an expedition sent to coerce a recusant Governor of Kashmir, and exhibiting on this occasion, consummate gallantry in the field. The refractory Governor was beaten at all points ; and the leader of the expedition on his return to Kabul, brought the distinguished services of the Barukzye chief to the notice of his sovereign who conferred new honours upon him, appointed him to offices of emolument and trust, and bestowed upon him many signal marks of personal favor and friendship.

When Prince Abbas rebelled against his father, Taimur Shah selected Poyndah Khan to command the expedition against the insurgent hosts ; and the Barukzye chief, with characteristic energy, put himself at the head of his troops, and moved down upon Salpúrah, where the rebels had taken up a strong position. The river flowed between him and the enemy, but disregarding such an obstacle, he rode down to the water's edge and plunged into the stream, calling upon his men to follow him. The energy and devotion of the chief filled his soldiers with enthusiasm, and they followed him to a man. The whole party arrived in safety on the opposite

side of the river, and at once proceeded to the attack. The rebels were ignominiously defeated, and Poyndah Khan returned in triumph to his sovereign. New honors were lavished upon him, and the title of Sarfraz (or "the exalted") was bestowed upon him, in consideration of his glorious achievements.

His services were soon again in requisition. A disturbance on the Usbeg frontier so alarmed the Shah, that he had determined on quitting the capital and flying to Herat, when Poyndah (now Sarfraz) Khan implored his sovereign not to betray his apprehensions, but to retain his right place in the regal palace, and trust to that energy and skill which had before been so serviceable to him. Taimur Shah consented to remain in Kabul; and Sarfraz Khan set out for Balkh. Here the diplomacy of the Barukzye chief was as effectual as before his gallantry had been. He returned to Kabul without striking a blow; but opposition to the Dourani sovereign was at an end. His reputation, after this statesmanlike achievement, continued rapidly to increase.

Taimur Shah died in 1793. There was a disputed inheritance. Prince Abbas had his adherents; others supported the claims of Mahmud; but a stronger party, headed by Sarfraz Khan who, it is said, had been won over by the favorite queen of Taimur Shah, sided with Prince Zemaun. Zemaun was the successful candidate. In no small measure did he owe his elevation to the influence of Sarfraz Khan, and the Barukzye chief, for a time, was even a greater favorite with Shah Zemaun than with his predecessor.*

* Mohan Lal here takes occasion to observe, "As soon as Dost Mahommed Khan gained distinction and became chief of Kabul, he stamped the following verse on his coin, and this honoured and gave prominence to the name of his affectionate father :—

Sim o tila he shams o qamar medahad naved
Vaq te ravag sikhai Poyndah Khan vasid.

"Silver and gold give the happy tidings to sun and moon that the time has arrived for the currency of Poyndah Khan's coin." "It would certainly be wonderful if Sarfraz Khan could hear with his own ears that his enterprising

But the favorites of kings are ever surrounded by peril. Shah Zemaun, who made the great mistake of his life when he elevated Wuffadar Khan to the wuzirship, was induced by the minister to suspect the fidelity of the man to whom he owed his throne. The wuzir poured poison into the ears of the Shah. The overthrow of Sarfraz Khan was accomplished. The wiles of the false minister prevailed, and the favorite of two monarchs was disgraced. The strong-minded Barukzye chief was not one to remain quiet under the injustice that had been done him. He had been suspected without cause; he now gave cause for suspicion. He conspired, with other powerful chiefs, to destroy Wuffadar Khan and to depose Shah Zemaun. The conspiracy was discovered, and the leaders were seized. An officer was sent to the house of Sarfraz Khan, charged with the apprehension of the rebel chief, and was received by his son the celebrated Futteh Khan. The youth alleged that his father was absent and undertook to summon him. He then presented himself before Sarfraz Khan, warned him of his danger, and offered to assassinate the officer and seize the guard. The foul proposition was rejected. Sarfraz Khan went out, and surrendered himself to the representative of the king. On the following morning he was executed, and the other conspirators shared his fate.*

Sarfraz Khan died leaving twenty-one sons, of whom Futteh Khan was the eldest, and Dost Mahommed the twentieth.† The former, on the death of his father, fled to Ghireck, but was soon compelled to abandon his sanctuary and fly from the pursuing wrath of his enemies. "These," says Mohan Lal, "were the days in which the descendants and family of Poyndah Khan suffered most miserably. They were beg-

* son, Dost Mahommed, had become as celebrated as one of the kings, and that the ambassadors of the Russian, the Persian and the Turkistan Governments waited in his court. It happens seldom in this sad and changing world that parents are alive to derive pleasure from the prosperity of their promising sons; and if they ever happen to be alive, still, when the child has gained dignity, it is to be regretted that he seldom pleases them entirely, by performing his filial duties according to their expectation."

* Mohan Lal seems to assume the innocence of the alleged conspirators. He says, that they were all unjustly massacred. That the injuries they had received at the hands of the minister incited them to rebellion is true; but that they did actually conspire against their sovereign is not to be denied.

† Mohan Lal, determined that there should be no mistake about the matter, says—"If I did not mention that they had different mothers, it might puzzle the reader to consider that so many children were born from one mother." He adds, "I must safely say, that the mother of Dost Mahommed was the favorite wife of Sarfraz Khan. She accompanied him in the various campaigns, and would not allow him to rise early and march long after sunrise. For this she was blessed by the troops and camp followers who did not like to start earlier in cold."

“ging from morning to night for pieces of bread. Many were
“prisoners and others had taken shelter in the mausoleum of
“the late Ahmad Shah, with the view of gaining food, which
“was daily distributed for charity’s sake.” But their trials
were only for a season. The Barukzye brothers soon emerged
from the clouds which had environed them. There was no
power in the Douranî empire which could successfully cope
with these strong and determined spirits.

In Affghanistan, revenge is a virtue. The sons of Sarfraz
Khan had the murder of their father to avenge; blood cried
loud for blood, and the appeal was not made in vain. Futteh
Khan had fled into Persia and there leagued himself with Mah-
moud, the brother of Shah Zemaun. The ambition of
this prince, failure had not extinguished. His prospects
at this time were gloomy in the extreme, but the arrival of
Futteh Khan, whose extraordinary energy of character had
gained him the highest reputation among his countrymen,
inspired the exiled prince with new courage, and he resolved,
under the direction of the son of Sarfraz Khan, to strike
another blow for the throne of Kabul.

With a few horsemen they entered Affghanistan, and raising
the standard of revolt, were joined by thousands of their coun-
trymen. The result is well known. Shah Zemaun and his
detested Wuzir made but a feeble stand against the irresistible
energies of Futteh Khan. The Shah was seized, the eyes of
the unfortunate monarch were punctured with a sharp lancet,
and he was cast, a blind and hopeless prisoner, into the Balla
Hissar. Wuffadar Khan and his brother were executed, the
revenge of the Barukzyes was accomplished, and their triumph
complete.

At this period (the first year of the present century) Dost
Mahommed was a boy. According to Mohan Lol he was
then twelve years of age. This statement must be received
with caution. It is alleged, upon good authority, that Dost
Mohammed was born in the year 1793. If this assertion
be correct, on the ascension of Shah Mahmoud, he was only
seven years old. We should be sorry to stake our character
for accuracy on any statement relative to the precise year on
which the Amîr was born; but we may question whether
he has lived fifty-eight years in the world. We feel inclined
to accept neither statement, but rather to believe that Dost
Mahommed was born between the two dates indicated—1788
and 1793.

The early years of Dost Mahommed were years of absolute
servitude. His mother, though much beloved by Sarfraz Khan,

was not a woman of condition. She belonged to the Kuzzilbash tribe, and by the other wives of her lord—high-born Dourani ladies—was regarded with contempt. It is related by General Harlan that “by an honorary or devotional vow of his mother he was consecrated to the lowest menial service of the sacred cenotaph of Lamech... This cenotaph is known, in the colloquial dialect of the country, by the appellation of Meiter Lam. In conformity with the maternal vow, when the young aspirant become capable of wielding a brush, he was carried to Meiter Lam by his mother and instructed to exonerate her from the consequences of a sacred obligation, by sweeping, for the period of a whole day, the votive area included within the precincts of the holy place enclosing the alleged tomb of the antediluvian, the father as he is termed, of the prophet Noah.” At a later period, the boy attached himself to his enterprising brother Futteh Khan—becoming his personal attendant, first in the character of *Abdar* or water bearer, and afterward in the higher office of *hukah-bardar*, or bearer of the great man’s pipe. His ministrations appear to have been incessant. He was always in the Wuzirs presence, following his every movement and often watching him when wrapt in sleep.*

This is the history of the boyish life of Dost Mahommed in which we would fain repose our belief. A neglected younger brother, slighted by powerful relatives, because the child of a woman of inferior condition, but his high spirit not crushed by contumely—patiently biding his time, dreaming of the future, and only lacking opportunity to show the strength of his mind and the temper of his courage—such a picture we may look upon with pleasure. There is another and a darker one. Among the twenty brothers of Dost Mahommed, was one named Summund Khan. Profligate among the profligate, his life was one of debauchery most revolting. His vices were of that dark hue, which though not unknown at oriental Courts, in Christian countries is viewed with abhorrence even by the most licentious. The extreme beauty of the young Dost Mahommed is said to have attracted the attention of the profligate Nawab; and the boy soon found himself the most favored of the many youthful minions who polluted his brother’s house. The story is not wanting in probability. Uneducated, neglected, contaminated by the all-surrounding

* Mohan Lal says, “this promising young man was in attendance upon him at all times, and never went to sleep till Futteh was gone to his bed. He stood before him all the day with his hands closed, a token of respect among the Afghans. It was not an unusual occurrence, that when Futteh Khan was in his sleeping room, Dost Mahommed Khan stood watching his safety.”

debauchery—evil influences of every kind assailing him, the boy may have fallen a victim to the wickedness of men, and yet excite rather pity than loathing.

From this horrible pollution he was soon rescued. The Othos of the East are not always sunk in sloth and effeminacy. His was no woman's nature. Whilst yet a boy he had all the daring resolution, the impetuous courage, of manhood. His first achievement as a man was one unhappily but too characteristic of *Affghan* manhood—it was an act of deliberate murder. He had long sought an opportunity of recommending himself to the especial favor of his powerful brother—long sought an opportunity of showing the “sterner stuff” of which he was made. The Wuzir happened one day, in durbar at Peshawur, to express some apprehensions of the designs of a personal enemy, whom he named; and to indicate, by some indirect allusions, the satisfaction he should feel, if the man were removed from a proximity to the court, which seemed to threaten so much danger. The words sunk deep into the mind of young Dost Mahommed—then a stripling of fourteen—who was in attendance on his brother; and brooding over them, he left the durbar, mounted his horse, and had scarcely struck into the street, when he found himself face to face with the object of the Wuzir's hatred. Dost Mahommed was armed with a rifle; both parties were mounted—he had but to raise the weapon and rid his brother at once of a dangerous enemy. The resolution was formed in an instant. It was broad day; they were in the public streets: the townsmen were passing to and fro, and the man, whom he had marked as his victim, was attended by a band of followers. The lion-hearted stripling saw all this; but no personal fears could turn him aside from the task he had set himself; he raised his rifle and fired. The enemy of Futteh Khan fell a corpse at his horse's feet, and Dost Mahommed rode home to announce to his brother the death of his dangerous rival. The suddenness of the act must have paralysed the followers of the murdered man; for, the youthful assassin escaped in the midst of the confusion which the daring act created in the streets of Peshawur. From this time his rise was rapid. Various are the roads which led to fame and fortune. In the East, cruelty and lust are the darling vices of the great. Whatever ministers to these brutal passions, is sure to meet with favor in the sight of the magnates of the land. Dost Mahommed had now approved himself a hero.

That he did not pay the penalty of his murderous act—that the relatives of the man he had slain, did not in accordance

with national usage, and in fulfilment of the duties of Affghan consanguinity, demand blood for blood, we must attribute to the immense power of Futteh Khan, who during the reign of the indolent and licentious Mahmoud, was the virtual monarch of Affghanistan! He was protected, indeed, by something nearly akin to that

—sealed commission of a King,
Which kills and none dare name the murderer.

He was the brother, and now the favorite of Futteh Khan—the Warwick of the East—the King-maker of Affghanistan.

From the period of the accession of Shah Mahmoud to the date of Mr. Elphinstone's mission to Affghanistan in 1809, the country appears to have been almost incessantly rent by intestine convulsions. The strife between Shah Mahmoud and Shah Sújah was distinguished by the alternating successes of the two brothers; first one, then the other was uppermost; the war of succession deluged the country with blood, and ended in the dispersion of the royal family. *Dum singuli preliantur, universi vincuntur.* Seven years of warfare between the Suddozye brothers prepared the way for the rise of the Barukzyes. Mahmoud Shah was weak and unprincipled—but he was a puppet in the hands of Futteh Khan, and as such, his party was a strong one. The grand error of Shah Zemaun's life had been his treatment of Sarfraz Khan. His brother Shah Sújah appears to have been equally unfortunate in his failure to propitiate Futteh Khan, the powerful son of a powerful father. But the latter had an enemy nearer home, in the son of Shah Mahmoud—the Prince Kamran, subsequently well known as the ruler of Heart, who accomplished the destruction of the powerful Wuzír.

We need not follow in detail the intricate history of Affghan politics, throughout the early years of the present century. Much has been written on the subject; but for the most part, with such an utter contempt for the value of dates, that the student who would endeavour to derive from these varied narratives, a clear, comprehensive, chronological view of the annals of Suddozye warfare, is pretty sure to be fairly bewildered. It is enough for us, that Dost Mahommed Khan followed the fortunes of his warlike brother, and at an early age was renowned as one of the most distinguished of the chivalry of Affghanistan. That whilst yet in his teens, he was a warrior of no mean repute, is certain; but making every allowance for eastern precocity, we still find it difficult to believe, that he could have performed the various exploits ascribed to him

during the life time of Futteh Khan, if the date of his birth be correctly fixed at so recent a period as the year 1793. From his very boyhood he was accustomed to a life of adventure, and being trained to arms and familiar with scenes of battle, he early acquired the power of handling considerable bodies of troops, and was at once, after his kind, a skilful leader and a dashing soldier, when yet scarcely a man. He was bold, reckless, and it is to be feared, wanting in those qualities which most command respect. His scruples were few; his errors were many; and as he often acknowledged, in after life, his youthful career was stained by many acts not to be looked back upon, without shame and contrition.

It was one of these errors—to use no stronger word—which led, it is supposed, to the inhuman treatment to which Futteh Khan was subjected by the Suddozyes. The Dost accompanied his brother on an expedition against Herat; the place was taken, and the young warrior, to use the language of Mr. Vigne “signalised himself, not in action, but in the zenana “of Feroz-ud din, which he forcibly entered, and amongst “other pranks, gave chase to Tokya Begum, daughter of “Taimur Shah and sister to Shah Mahmoud, pursued her “into a bath where she had taken refuge, tore off by force “from her person the bund-i-pajama or waist-band of her “trowsers, which was studded with very valuable pearls, and “escaped with his prize to his brother in Kashmir. Futteh “Khan wrote to Mahommed Azim Khan, telling him to seize “Dost Mahommed, and a guard was placed over him; but “before any further steps were taken, news arrived that Futteh “Khan had been blinded by Kamran, son of Mahmoud. The “insulted Begum sent her dress, torn and bandless to her “cousin Kamran, at Herat, who forthwith followed Futteh “Khan, took him prisoner as he returned from Khorassan, “where he had been defeated by the Persian prince, Ak Mirza, “and on the principle which considers that what is done by “one man is done by his family, put out Futteh Khan’s eyes, “to avenge the insult offered by Dost Mahommed to his own “cousin.”* What followed is well known. Enraged by so gross an outrage on a member of the Suddozye family, alarmed at the growing power of the Barukzyes, and further irritated

* Mohan Lal says, that the lady was sister of the Shah-zadah Kamran: but it is obvious that if she was the daughter of Taimur Shah, and sister of Shah Mahmoud (Kamran’s father), she was neither the sister nor the cousin, but the aunt of the Prince. The Dost appears to have acted throughout recklessly and unscrupulously. He massacred the palace-guard; seized Feroz-ud-din; plundered the palace, and violated the harem. On hearing that his conduct at Herat had given offence to Futteh Khan, he fled to Kashmir, where his brother Azim Khan was employed; and there, Azim Khan, instructed by Futteh Khan, seized him.

by the resolute refusal of Futteh Khan to betray his brothers, who had effected their escape from Herat, Kamram and his father, Shah Mahmoud, agreed to put their noble prisoner to death. They were then on their way from Kandahar to Kabul. The ex-minister was brought into their presence, and again called upon to write to his brothers, ordering them to surrender themselves to the Shah. Again he refused, alleging that he was but a poor blind captive; that his career was run; that he had no longer any influence, and that if he had, he could not consent to betray his brethren. Exasperated by the resolute bearing of his prisoner, Mahmoud Shah ordered the unfortunate Wuzír—the king-maker to whom he owed his crown—to be put to death before him; and there, in the presence of the Shah and the Shah-zadah, Futteh Khan was, by the attendant courtiers, literally hacked to pieces. His nose, ears, and lips were cut off; his fingers severed from his hands; his hands from his arms; his arms from his body; limb followed limb, and long was the horrid butchery continued before the life of the victim was extinct. Futteh Khan raised no cry; offered no prayer for mercy. His fortitude was unshaken to the last. He died, as he had lived, the bravest and most resolute of men—like his noble father, a victim to the perfidy and ingratitude of princes. The murder of Sarfraz Khan shook the Suddozye dynasty to its base. The assassination of Futteh Khan soon made it a heap of ruins.

From this time, the rise of Dost Mahommed was rapid. He had the blood of kindred to avenge. The ingratitude, the cruelty of Mahmoud and his son, were now to be signally punished by the brother of the illustrious sufferer. Azím Khan, who ruled at Kashmir, counselled a course of forbearance; but Dost Mahommed indignantly rejected the proposition, and declaring that it would be an eternal disgrace to the Barukzyes not to chastise the murderers of the Wuzír, asserted his willingness to march upon Kabul, at the head of an army of retribution. Azím Khan, liking neither to enter personally upon so perilous an undertaking, nor to appear in such a juncture wholly supine, presented the Dost with three or four lakhs of rupees to defray the charges of the expedition—a sum, which was exhausted long before the sirdar neared Kabul. But in spite of every obstacle, Dost Mahommed Khan reached Kúrd-Kabul—two marches from the capital, and there encamped his army.

The Shah-zadah, Jehangír, the youthful son of Kamran, was then the nominal ruler of Kabul: but the management of affairs was entrusted to Atta Mahommed Khan—a man of

considerable ability, but no match for Dost Mahommed, and one who was now guilty of the grand error of underrating an adversary. This man had acted a conspicuous part in the recent intestine struggles between the Suddozye brothers. He had no love for the Royal family—none for the Barukzyes—but he had ambitious projects of his own, and to advance these, he was willing to betray his masters and league with their enemies. Whether the proposal came, in the first instance, from him or from Dost Mahommed, appears to be somewhat doubtful; but a compact was entered into between the two chiefs, and the cause of the Suddozye was sacrificed. Atta Mahommed marched out of the Balla Hissar, with the ostensible object of giving battle to the Dost. Nothing was wanted to complete the delusion. At the head of a well-equipped force, the Bamzai chief, proclaiming death to the rebels, moved upon Beh-meru. Drawing up his troops on commanding ground, he addressed them in language of well-simulated enthusiasm, invoking God to pour forth the vials of His eternal wrath upon the heads of all who should desert the cause of Mahmoud and Kamran. "With the same breath," says M. Masson, "in a style peculiarly Affghan, he turned round, and in whispers inquired for a Koran. The sacred book was produced; Atta Mahommed Khan, sealed, and with renewed oaths despatched it to Dost Mahommed Khan." Then followed a series of mock skirmishes, whilst the agents of the two parties were arranging preliminaries. A meeting between the principals was then arranged; it took place secretly and by night. The treaty by which it was agreed that the force under Dost Mohammed should be suffered to enter the Balla Hissar without opposition, was then sealed by Atta Mahommed and all the Barukzye brothers then present, with one exception. Pir Mahommed stood aloof. His brothers pleaded his extreme youth in justification of his unwillingness to enter into a business of such weighty import, and he was accordingly excused. A second meeting was then agreed upon. The chiefs met in the Búrj-i-wuzir—a garden-house of the murdered Futteh Khan—and there on a given signal, Pir Mahommed rushed upon the Bamzai chief, threw him to the ground, and blinded him. Atta Mahommed was fairly caught in the toils of his own treachery. It is alleged that he was, at the very moment of his overthrow, endeavouring to compass the destruction of the Barukzye brothers.* Be this as it may, the game was one of treachery

* Masson says, "The friends of the Barukzye chiefs pretend that the Mukhtahar intended to have blown them up; others wholly deny this statement, and regard the occurrence as naturally arising in a contest for power between desperate and

against treachery; and though we cannot palliate the offences of one party, it is difficult to compassionate the sufferings of the other.

Having thus removed a dangerous rival—whether friend or foe—the seizure of the Balla Hissar was speedily effected. The Shah-zadah was surrounded by treachery. The delight, as he was, of the women of Kabul, for he was very young and beautiful, he had few friends among the Affghans of the sterner sex, and was little capable of distinguishing the true from the false. He was easily persuaded to withdraw himself into the upper citadel, leaving the lower fortress at the mercy of Dost Mahommed. The sirdar made the most of the opportunity, ran a mine under the upper works, and blew up a portion of them. Death stared the Shah-zadah in the face. The women of Kabul offered up prayers for the safety of the beautiful prince. The night was dark; the rain descended in torrents. To remain in the citadel was to court destruction. Under cover of the pitchy darkness, it was possible that he might effect his escape. Attended by a few followers, he made the effort, and succeeded. He fled to Ghuzni and was saved.*

Dost Mahommed was now in possession of Kabul, but his occupancy was threatened from two very different quarters. Shah Mahmoud and Prince Kamran were marching down from Herat, and Azim Khan was coming from Kashmir to assert his claims, as the representative of the Barukzye family. But the spirit of legitimacy was not wholly extinct in Affghanistan. The Barukzyes did not profess to conquer for themselves. It was necessary to put forward some scion of the royal family, and to fight and conquer in his name. Dost Mahommed proclaimed Sultan Ali, king of Kabul; whilst Azim Khan invited Shah Sújah to assert his claims to the throne. The Shah consented, an expedition was planned; but the covenant was but of short duration, for the contracting parties fell out upon the road; and, instead of fighting a common enemy, got up a battle among themselves. The Shah, who never lived to grow wiser, gave himself such airs, and asserted such ridiculous pretensions, that a quarrel arose; and on being defeated in the conflict which ensued, he was driven back into ignominious privacy. Another puppet being called for, Prince Ayub, for want of a

reckless men. The deprivation of sight was in retaliation of the injury inflicted on the Wuzir, owing somewhat, it is said, to Atta Mohammed Khan's instigation. It is remembered that when Governor of Kashmir, the plucking out of eyes was one of his ordinary punishments."

* Masson.

better, was elevated to this dignity, and the new friends set out for Kabul.

In the meanwhile the Royal army, which had marched from Herat under Shah Mahmoud and Prince Kamran, approached the capital of Affghanistan. The Dost was in no measure prepared to receive so formidable an enemy. Weak in numbers, and ill supplied with money and materials, he could not, with any hope of success, have given battle to Mahmoud's forces. The danger was imminent. The royal troops were within six miles of the capital. Dost Mahommed and his followers prepared for flight. With the bridles of their horses in their hands, they stood waiting the approach of the enemy. But their fears were groundless. A flight ensued; but it was not Dost Mahommed's, but Mahmoud's army that fled. At the very threshold of victory, the latter turned back and flung himself into the arms of defeat. The causes of this extraordinary and most unexpected proceeding, have been variously explained. It is alleged by some writers, that Dost Mahommed, finding himself unable to cope with Mahmoud on the field of battle, resolved to accomplish that by artifice which he could not achieve by force of arms. Accordingly, he forged numerous letters, purporting to be written by and to bear the seals of Mahmoud's most influential supporters, and declaring their intentions of deserting the Shah and espousing the cause of Sultan Ali. These letters, it is alleged, were thrown, as though by accident, into the hands of Mahmoud and Kamran. The discovery of the supposed treachery of their principal supporters, so wrought upon their fears, that they determined not to risk an engagement before the walls of Kabul, but to fall back at once upon Herat. Another, and more probable story is that, finding when near the capital, that Fúr Díl Khan with four others of the Barukzye brothers were between them and Herat, and apprehending that these chiefs were about to lay siege to that place, they deemed it more prudent to fall back, for the security of a city already in their possession, than to advance for the purpose of attempting the seizure of a city in the possession of another. The Barukzyes were now dominant throughout Affghanistan. The sovereignty, indeed, of Azím Khan's puppet, Ayub, was proclaimed; but the country was in reality divided among the Barukzye brothers. By them the superior claims of Azím Khan were generally acknowledged; Kabul, therefore, fell to his share. Dost Mahommed took possession of Ghuzni Fúr Díl Khan, Kohan Díl Khan and their brothers occupied Kandahar. Jubbar Khan was put

in charge of the Ghiljí country. Yar Mahommed and his brothers succeeded to the Government of Peshawur. And the Shah-zadah Sultan Ali, Dost Mahommed's puppet, sunk quietly into the insignificance of private life.

But this did not last long. Shah Sújah had begun again to dream of sovereignty. He was organising an army at Shikarpúr. Against this force marched Azím Khan, accompanied by the new king Shah Ayub. No sooner were the Shah and his Wuzír fairly on the march, than Dost Mahommed stepped forward, again proclaimed Sultan Ali, and re-seated him in the Balla Hissar. Upon this Azím Khan returned to Kabul, and Sultan Ali vacated the royal apartments. What followed is eminently characteristic of Affghan history. Dost Mahommed advised Sultan Ali to murder Shah Ayub, and Azím Khan advised Shah Ayub to murder Sultan Ali. Sultan Ali indignantly rejected the proposal; Shah Ayub consented, on condition that Azím Khan would return the compliment by assassinating Dost Mahommed. This was agreed upon. Sultan Ali was strangled in his sleep. Shah Ayub then called upon Azím Khan to perform his part of the tragedy; but the Wuzír coolly asked, "how can I slay my brother?" and recommended a renewal of the expedition to Shikarpúr. The Barukzye forces again left Kabul, and proceeded southward, by the western route; but the army of Shah Sújah soon disappeared—melting away without a struggle; and Azím Khan, being in the neighbourhood of the Amírs, employed himself in the collection of the Sindh tribute. The immense quantity of treasure in camp, principally derived from the revenues of Kashmir, so excited the cupidity of Dost Mahommed, that he concerted with Sher Díl Khan to seize it,—a plot, which so alarmed Azím Khan, that he broke up his camp and incontinently returned to Kabul.

Azím Khan next planned an expedition against the Sikhs. He had no fear of Runjít Singh whom he had once beaten in battle. Dost Mahommed accompanied his brother, and they marched upon the frontier, by Jellalabad and the Karapa Pass. Runjít was on the look out for them. He well knew the character of the Barukzye brothers—knew them to be avaricious, ambitious, treacherous: the hand of each against his brethren. He thought bribery better than battle, and sent agents to tamper with Yar Mahommed and the other Peshawur chiefs. They listened to his overtures, hoping to be enabled in the end to throw off the supremacy of Azím Khan. Dost Mahommed received intelligence of the plot, and signified his willingness to join the confederacy. His offer was

accepted; and this important accession to the Sikh party communicated to Runjít Singh. Everything was soon in train. Azím Khan was at Minchini—with his treasure and his harem, neither of which, in so troubled a state of affairs, could he venture to abandon. Yar Mahommed wrote to him from the Sikh camp that there was a design upon both. The intelligence filled the Sirdar with consternation and grief. He saw plainly the treachery of his brothers; shed many bitter tears; looked with fear and trembling into the future; saw disgrace on one side, the sacrifice of his armies and treasure on the other; now resolved to march down upon the enemy, now to break up his encampment and retire: night closed in upon him whilst in this state of painful agitation. The disastrous intelligence soon spread through the camp, though its precise nature was scarcely known beyond his own tent. His followers lost confidence in their chief. They knew that some evil had befallen him; that he had lost heart; that his spirit was broken. The nameless fear seized upon the whole army, and morning dawned upon the wreck of a once formidable force. His troops had deserted him, and he prepared to follow, with his treasure and his harem, to Jellalabad. Runjít Singh entered Peshawur in triumph, but thought it more prudent to divide the territory between Dost Mahommed and the brothers of Yar Mahommed, than to occupy on his own account, and rule in his own name. The division was accordingly made. In the meanwhile Azím Khan, disappointed and broken spirited, was seized with a violent disorder, the effect of anxiety and sorrow, and never quitted the bed of sickness until he was carried to the tomb.*

On the death of Azím Khan, (in 1823), Ishmael, the son of Shah Ayub—the youth who had murdered Sultan Ali—persuaded his father to seize the wealth of the deceased Wuzír. The Shah called him a blockhead for his pains; but the Prince was not to be convinced by the contumelious rhetoric of his father. He still cherished the design of possessing himself of Azím Khan's treasure; but Sher Díl Khan, one of the Kandahar brothers, came to Kabul, entered the Balla Hissar, with a party of adherents, found Ayub and

* Azím Khan does not appear to have recognised the strength of Dost Mahommed's character; and to this great mistake of his life, his premature death must be attributed. Shortly before the expedition to the Sikh frontier, he had not only contemptuously declared that he did not require the services of the Dost, but had actually laid siege to Ghuzni. Azím Khan's batteries caused great slaughter, but Dost Mahommed could not be persuaded to open the gates of the fortress. A negotiation took place, and the brothers embraced; but they never forgave each other.

the Shah-zadah together, murdered the latter, and carried off the Shah.* By the assistance of Zimah Khan, the unfortunate monarch was enabled to make his way in safety to Lahore, where Runjít Singh allowed him a monthly stipend of a thousand rupees.

In the meanwhile Habib-úllah Khan, son of Azím Khan, had succeeded nominally to the power possessed by his deceased parent. But he had inherited none of the Wuzír's intellect and energy, and none of his personal influence. Beside the death-bed of his father, he had been entrusted to the guidance of Jubbar Khan, but he had not the good sense to perceive the advantages of such a connection. He plunged himself into a slough of dissipation, and when he needed advice, betook himself to the counsels of men not much better and wiser than himself. The ablest of his advisers was Amín-úllah Khan, the Loghur chief—known to the present generation as "the infamous Amín-úllah"—he who played so distinguished a part in the recent tragedies at Kabul. This man's support was worth retaining, but Habib-úllah having deprived the "good Nawab" of his government, attempted to destroy Amín-úllah Khan; and thus, with the most consummate address, paved the way to his own destruction. Dost Mahommed, ever on the alert, appeared on the stage at the fitting moment. Alone he had not sufficient resources to compete with the son of Azím Khan, but the Nawab speedily joined him; and soon afterwards, in the midst of an engagement in the near neighbourhood of Kabul, the troops of Amín-úllah Khan went over bodily to the Dost, and Habib-úllah sought safety within the walls of the Balla Hissar.

Dost Mahommed having occupied the city, invested the citadel, and would, in all probability, have carried everything before him, if the Kandahar brothers, alarmed by the successes of the Dost, and dreading the growth of a power which threatened their own extinction, had not moved out to the ostensible assistance of their nephew. Dost Mahommed retreated into the Kohistan; but the unfortunate Habib-úllah soon found that he had gained nothing by such an alliance.

* "One Haji Ali," says Mr. Masson, "who is reported to have shot the prince, despoiled the Shah of his raiments and clad him in his own; then by the sirdar's orders, placed him behind himself on a horse, and carried him off to the Burj Vazír. A singular spectacle was offered to the people of the city as Haji Ali bore the degraded monarch along the streets; but they had become familiar with extraordinary events and regarded them with apathy. The Sirdars when they had given the orders consequent on the feat they had performed, returned to their dwellings in the city with the same composure after the deposition of a monarch, as if they had been enjoying a morning's ride."

His uncles enticed him to a meeting outside the city, seized him, carried him off to the Loghur country; then took possession of the Balla Hissar and appropriated all his treasure. Dost Mahommed, however, was soon in arms again, and the Peshawur brothers were before Kabul. The affairs of the empire were then thrown into a state of terrible confusion. The Barukzye brothers were all fighting among themselves for the largest share of sovereignty; but, according to Mr Masson, "their followers have been engaged in deadly strife when the rival leaders were sitting together over a plate of cherries." To this fraternal cherry-eating, it would appear that Dost Mahommed was not admitted.* Sitting over their fruit, the brothers came to the determination of alluring the Dost to an interview, and then either blinding or murdering him. The plot was laid; everything was arranged for the destruction of the sirdar; but Hadjî Khan Khakur, who subsequently distinguished himself as a traitor of no slight accomplishments, having discovered in time that Dost Mahommed was backed by the strongest party in Kabul, gave him a significant hint at the proper moment, and the sirdar escaped with his life. After a few more brotherly schemes of mutual extermination which, although eminently characteristic we must pass by unnoticed, the brothers entered into a compact by which the government of Ghuzni and the Kohistan was secured to Dost Mahommed, whilst Sultan Mahommed of Peshawur succeeded to the sovereignty of Kabul. The truce was but of short duration.

Sher Dil Khan, the most influential of the Kandahar brothers, died. A dangerous rival was thus swept away from the path of Dost Mahommed. The Kuzzilbashes soon afterwards gave in their adherence to the sirdar, who now felt himself in a position to strike another blow for the recovery of Kabul. Sultan Mahommed had done nothing to strengthen himself at the capital; and, being summoned either to surrender or to defend himself, he deemed it more prudent to negotiate. Consenting to retire on Peshawur, he marched out of one gate of Kabul, whilst Dost Mahommed marched in at another, the followers of the latter shouting out a derisive adieu to the departing chief.

From this time (1826), to the day on which his followers deserted him at Urghandi, after the capture of Ghuzni by the British troops, Dost Mahommed was supreme at Kabul.

* Mr. Vigne says, that Dost Mahommed and Sher Dil Khan were the cherry-eaters. We do not pretend to determine the point.

His brothers saw that it was useless to contest the supremacy, and at last they acknowledged the unequalled power of one whom they had once slighted and despised. And now was it that Dost Mahommed began fully to understand the responsibilities of high command and the obligations of a ruler both to himself and his subjects. He had hitherto lived the life of a dissolute soldier. His education had been neglected, and in his very boyhood he had been thrown in the way of pollution of the foulest kind. From his youth he had been greatly addicted to wine, and was often to be seen in public, reeling along in a state of degrading intoxication, or scarcely able to sit his horse. All this was now to be reformed. He taught himself to read and to write, accomplishments which he had before possessed scantily, if at all; he studied the Koran; abandoned the use of strong liquors; became scrupulously abstemious, plain in his attire, assiduous in his attention to business; urbane and courteous to all. He made, and without exposing himself to a charge of hypocrisy, a public acknowledgement of his past errors and a profession of a reformation. "The days," says General Harlan, and the truth of the statement is not to be questioned, "that Dost Mahommed ascended the musnud, he performed the "Toba," which is a solemn and sacred formula of reformation, in reference to any accustomed moral crime or depravity of habit. He was followed in the Toba by all his chiefs, who found themselves obliged to keep pace with the march of mind—to prepare for the defensive system of policy, this assumption of purity, on the part of the prince suggested. The Toba was a sort of declaration of principles; and the chiefs viewing it in that light, beheld their hopes of supremacy in imminent hazard.... In later life the Amír became sensible of the advantages arising from learning. Although knowledge of literature among Mahomedan nations is confined to a contracted sphere, at least the reputation of theological science was essential to the chief, on whom had been conferred the title of Amír-ul-Mominín, or commander of the faithful. To escape the humility of dependence upon subordinate agents, more especially the secretaries necessarily employed in all revenue and judicial transactions, he tasked his mind with the acquisition of letters, and became worthy, by his industry and success in the pursuit, of the greatest respect of the great, as he commanded the admiration of the vulgar, who are ever accustomed to venerate the divinity of wisdom."

It is not to be questioned that there was, at this time, in

the conduct of Dost Mahommed, as a ruler, much that may be regarded with admiration and respect even by Christian men. Power does not seem to have elated him with pride. Simple in his habits, remarkably affable in his manner, he was accessible to the meanest of his subjects, ever ready to listen to their complaints and to redress their grievances. He seldom rode abroad without being accosted in the public streets or highways, by citizen or by peasant, waiting to lay before the Amír a history of his grievances or his sufferings, and to ask for assistance or redress. And he never passed the petitioner—never rode on; but would rein in his horse, listen to the complaints of the poorest of his subjects, and give directions to his attendants to take the necessary steps to render justice to the injured, or to alleviate the sufferings of the distressed. Such was his love of equity, indeed, that people asked, "Is Dost Mahommed dead that there is no justice?"

He is even said by those who knew him well, to have been kindly and humane—an assertion at which many who have read the history of his early career will smile. But no one who fairly estimates the character of Affghan history and Affghan morals, and the necessities, personal and political, of who take part in such stirring scenes as those which we have endeavoured faintly to describe, can fail to perceive that his vices were rather the growth of circumstances, than of any extraordinary badness of heart. He was not by nature cruel; once embarked in the strife of Affghan politics, a man must either fight it out or die. Every man's hand is against him, he must turn his hand against every man. There is no middle course open to him. If he would save himself, he must rise at nothing. Even when seated securely on the musnud, an Affghan ruler must, of necessity, commit acts abhorrent to our ideas of humanity. He must rule with vigor, or not at all. That Dost Mahommed, during the twelve years of supremacy which he enjoyed at Kabul, often resorted, for the due maintenance of his power, to measures of severity incompatible with the character of a humane ruler, is only to say, that for twelve years he retained his place at the head of affairs. Such rigor is inseparable from the government of such a people. We cannot rein wild horses with silken braids.

But although Dost Mahommed was now in the enjoyment of a season of comparative rest, the even tenor of his life, as undisputed ruler of Kabul, was ever and anon interrupted by martial episodes—slight disorders, such as are inseparable from the constitution of Affghan society. A rebellion in Taghon occupied much of his attention in 1831;

the Sirdar moved out against his contumacious subjects, besieged and razed their strongholds, and drove them like cattle to the mountains. Soon afterwards he marched upon Balla-Bugh, which was held by Osman Khan, reduced it after a siege of two days, and then moved down with a strong force and battering train upon Jellalabad. Here Mahommed Zemaun Khan determined to offer a stout resistance. Some time before, being aided by the Peshawur chiefs and by Jubbar Khan, who deserted the sirdar at a critical moment, he had held out with good success, and his opposition would probably have endangered the safety of Dost Mahommed, if the Nawab (Jubbar Khan) had not again stepped forward to play the old part of negociator and induced a cessation of hostilities. The Kabul and Peshawur forces were withdrawn. Dost Mahommed affected contrition, and "wrote a series of dreadful imprecations on himself, if ever he wrested Jellalabad from him, on a leaf of the chief's Koran." Having thus allayed the fears of Zemaun Khan, the sirdar returned to Kabul, and removed Jubbar Khan from the government of the Ghilji country—a punishment which does not appear to have been wholly undeserved. But now, utterly regardless of the oaths he had sworn on that former occasion, he again appeared before Jellalabad, ran a mine under one of the bastions of the fort, effected a breach, and carried the place. The town, with the exception of the residence of Zemaun Khan and a few other parties under the special protection of the Dost, was given up to plunder. "As for the Nawab Mahommed Zemaun Khan," says Mr. Masson, who was in neighbourhood of Jellalabad at the time, "as soon as the town was entered, he seated himself with the Koran in his hands, open at the part where Dost Mahommed Khan, two years before, had written the most horrible denunciations upon himself if ever he deprived him of Jellalabad." The Nawab's person was respected, but his power was gone. Jellalabad was placed under the Government of Amir Mahommed Khan.*

These, however, were but insignificant incidents in the eventful career of the Kabul chief. He was soon called upon to face a more pressing danger and to prepare himself for a

* As a set off to these services, Zemaun Khan made an effort to assassinate Dost Mahommed, but the creature employed to do the deed, having obtained entrance into the Sirdar's dormitory, relented just at the right time, and instead of murdering the sleeping chief, stole his pejammahs. These he presented to the Nawab and claimed his reward. The chronicles do not state whether he obtained it. It is not very clear, either, whether this little incident was the cause or the effect of the capture of Jellalabad.

more vigorous contest. The exiled Suddozye prince Shah Sújah, whose life had been one series of extraordinary vicissitudes, was about to make another effort to re-establish himself in the Dourani empire ; and with this object, was organising an army in Sindh. Had there been any sort of unanimity among the Barukzye brothers, this invasion might have been laughed to scorn, but Dost Mahommed felt that there was treachery within no less than hostility without, and that the open enemy was not more dangerous than the concealed one. Jubbar Khan, Zemaun Khan and others, were known to be intriguing with the Shah. The Nawab, indeed, had gone so far as to assure Dost Mahommed that it was useless to oppose the Suddozye invasion, as Sújah-úl-múlk was assisted by the British Government and would certainly be victorious. He therefore implored the Sirdar to pause before he brought down upon himself certain destruction, alleging that it would be better to make terms with the Shah to secure something, rather than to lose everything. Dost Mahommed, who, knowing his man, knew that Jubbar Khan had thrown himself into the arms of the Suddozye, laughed significantly, and said, " Lala, it will be time enough to talk about terms when I have been beaten." This was unanswerable. The Nawab retired, and preparations for war were carried on with renewed activity.

The Shah had penetrated as far as Kandahar before Dost Mahommed gave him battle. He had made Shikarpúr his place of rendezvous, but having entered the territory of the Amírs as a friend, he did not quit it before he had fought a hard battle with them and effectually beaten them. The pecuniary demands which he had made upon them, they had resisted ; and the Shah, having a considerable army at his command, thought fit to enforce obedience. Early in January 1834, an engagement took place near Rorí, and the pride of the Amírs having been humbled by defeat, they consented to the terms he demanded. Having arranged this matter to his entire satisfaction, Shah Sújah marched upon Kandahar, and in the early summer was before the walls of the city. He invested the place and endeavored ineffectually to carry it by assault. The Kandahar chiefs held out with much resolution ; but it was not until the arrival of Dost Mahommed from Kabul that a general action was risked. The Dost determined to lose no time in attacking the enemy—a determination strengthened by the Shah's fatuous abandonment of a strong entrenched position which he had taken up. Mahommed Akbar Khan commanded the cavalry ; Abdúl Sarmat Khan the infantry. The Sirdar made, according to his judgment,

the best possible dispositions, but no great amount of military skill appears to have been displayed on either side; Akbar Khan's sowars charged the enemy with much gallantry, but a battalion of the Shah's troops, under an Indo-Briton named Campbell, fought with such uncommon energy, that at one time the forces of the Barukzye chiefs were driven back, a victory appeared to be in their reach. But Dost Mahommed who had intently watched the conflict, and kept a handful of chosen troops in reserve, now let them slip, rallied the battalions which were falling back, called upon Akbar Khan to make one more struggle, and at length succeeded in rolling back the tide of victory. Shah Sújah, who on the first appearance of Dost Mahommed had lost all heart, and actually given orders to prepare for flight, called in his desperation upon Campbell to "chupao-chupao;" then ordered his elephant to be wheeled round, and turned his back upon the field of battle. His irresolution seems to have proved fatal to his cause. The game was up. The Barukzye troops pushed forward. Campbell, who had fallen like a brave man, covered with wounds, was taken prisoner with others of the Shah's principal officers and all the guns, stores, and camp-equipage of the Suddoz prince fell into the hands of the victors. The scenes of plunder and carnage which ensued are said to have been terrific. The Kandahar chief urged the pursuit of the fugitive Shah, but Dost Mahommed opposed the measure, and the unfortunate prince was suffered to escape.

But scarcely had Dost Mahommed returned to Kabul when he found himself compelled to prepare for a new and more formidable enterprise. Runjit Singh was in possession of Peshawur. The treachery of Sultan Mahommed Khan and his brothers had rebounded upon themselves, and they had left the province which had been the scene of so much intrigue, their anxiety to destroy Dost Mahommed, they opened a communication with the Sikhs, who advanced to Peshawur ostensibly as friends, and then took possession of the city. Sultan Mahommed Khan fled. His defeat was most ignominious. The Sikh force, under Hari Singh, consisted only of about a thousand men; and had the Affghans been commanded by a competent leader they might have driven back a much stronger force; but the utmost imbecility was manifested.*

*Mr. Masson, who was in Peshawur when the Sikhs entered, gives a graphic and amusing account of the affair, which is worth quoting—'after he had procured from the Sirdars beyond the ordinary complement of tribute, he sent a messenger to them, that he Shâhzâda Noh Nihâl Singh, the grandson of Runjit Singh, was with the army, desired to see the city, and it would be well that they should evacuate it, and retire to Bâgh Ali Mardan Khân, when the Shâhzâda would ride out

Peshawur chiefs were everlastingly disgraced, and Peshawur lost to the Affghans for ever.

But Dost Mahommed resolved at least to make a vigorous effort to recover the country which the fatuous conduct of his brothers had lost. To this end he determined on declaring a religious war against the Sikhs, and began with characteristic energy to organise a force sufficiently strong to wrest Peshawur from the hands of the usurpers. To strengthen his influence he assumed, at this time, the title of Amír al-Mominin (commander of the faithful)* and exerted himself to

it, and then the army would retire towards Aták. The morning came, when Súltán Máhommed Khán who had always his spy-glass in hand, descried the Sikh force in motion. All became panic-struck, and horses were saddled and mounted in a trice. The house was emptied as if by magic, and none remained in it but Abdúl Ghías Khán, his party, and myself. We ascended the roof, and beheld the Sikhs moving forward in a very respectable style. In the van was the young Sháh-záda on an elephant, with Harí Singh and a variety of Sikh chiefs, attended by a host of cavalry. Behind them followed the battalions of the court, advancing in columns at a brisk pace. On reaching the gardens attached to the house we were in, the first shots were fired, some Affgháns being concealed among the trees. They were soon cleared out, and the march of the force was not affected by the desultory opposition. Subsequently we heard some smart firing, and learned during the day that the Sikhs, pressing too close upon Hâjí Khán, who covered the retreat of Súltán Máhommed Khán, the Khán lost patience and turned upon them. He handled them very severely, and, as admitted by themselves, checked their advance until the battalions came up. Khán Máhommed Khán, the brother of Hâjí Khán, was badly wounded in this skirmish, but was borne off the field. Some very splendid instances of individual bravery were exhibited by the Affghans, and one gallant fellow cut down six of his opponents. The Sikhs, having completed the circuit of the city encamped under the Bálla Hissár to the east, the discomfited Sirdárs retired to Túkkál, and then to Shékhán, at the skirts of the hills. My Mírza in the course of the day went to the Sikh camp, where he saw Harí Singh, who asked where I had been during the tamásha or sport. He replied, that I had witnessed it from the roof. He then asked jokingly, where the Sirdárs had gone. The Mírza said to Túkkál, to prepare for battle. The Sirdar laughed and said, no, no : nasghir, nasghir ; they have run away, they have run away ; some to Kohát, some to Khaibar. I certainly was amused at the almost ridiculous manner in which the Sikhs had made themselves masters of an important and productive country, and Súltán Máhommed Khán was as much to be laughed at as to be pitied, for in place of adopting any means of defence, he had sent away the better part of his troops, and prohibited the citizens and people of the country from defending the city as they wished. Pír Máhommed Khán was accustomed to say that he had three lakhs of rupees, and did not care who knew it ; that he had reserved them for such a crisis as this : that he would assemble the Gházís, and do many wonderful things. Hâjí Khán would, when such valorous speeches were made, embrace the Sirdár, saying he must kiss the lips from which such words flowed. Pír Máhommed Khán, however, thought it better to keep his three lakhs of rupees and hastened to Kohát to collect what he could from the inhabitants, previously to his departure ultimately from the country. The force with Harí Singh did not exceed nine thousand men : and had a show of serious resistance been made, he would at least have been obliged to temporise ; also, had the city, although an open one, been put in a condition for defence, and the system of kúcher bundí adopted, he was scarcely competent to have forced it. As it was, with a small force he possessed himself of a country which some years before, Ranjít Singh in person, with twenty-five thousand men did not venture to retain.

† He had been recommended by some to assume the titles of royalty—as death under a royal banner is Mussulman martyrdom, and therefore ensures a translation to heaven—but he replied, that as he was too poor to support his dignity as a Sirdar, it would be preposterous to think of converting himself into a King.

inflare the breasts of his followers with that burning Mahomedan zeal, which has so often impelled the disciples of the Prophet to deeds of the most consummate daring and most perfect self-abandonment. Money was now to be obtained, and to obtain it much extortion was doubtless practised. An Affghan chief has a rude, and somewhat arbitrary manner, of levying rates and taxes. Dost Mahommed made no exception in his conduct to "the good old rule," which had so long, in critical conjunctures, been observed in that part of the world. He took all that he could get; raised a very respectable force; coined money in his own name, and then prepared for battle.

At the head of an imposing array of fighting men, the Amír marched out of Kabul. He had judged wisely. The declaration of war against the infidel—war proclaimed in the name of the Prophet—had brought thousands to his banner; and ever as he marched, the great stream of humanity seemed to swell and swell, as new tributaries came pouring in from every part, and the thousands became tens of thousands. From the Kohistan, from the hills beyond, from the regions of the Kurdú-Kúsh, from still remoter fastnesses, multitudes of various tribes and denominations, moved by various impulses, but all noisily boasting their true Mahomedan zeal, came flocking in to the Amír's standard. Ghiljís and Kohistanís; sleek Kuzzilbashes, and fanatic Ghazís—horsemen and footmen—all who could lift a sword or a matchlock, obeyed the call in the name of the Prophet. "Savages from the remotest recesses of the mountainous districts," wrote one, who saw this strange congeries of Mussulman humanity,* "who were dignified with the profession of the Mahomedan faith, many of them giants in form and strength, promiscuously armed with sword and shield, bows and arrows, matchlocks, rifles, spears and blunderbusses, concentrated themselves around the standard of religion, and were prepared to slay, plunder, and destroy, for the sake of God and the Prophet, the unenlightened infidels of the Punjab."

The Mussulman force reached Peshawur. The brave heart of Runjít Singh quailed before this immense assemblage, and he at once determined not to meet it openly in the field. There was in his camp, a man named Harlan, an American adventurer, now a doctor, and now a general, to whom we have more than once alluded during the progress of this narrative. Clever and unscrupulous, he was a fit agent to do the Maharajah's bid-

* General Harlan.

ding. Runjít despatched him as an envoy to the Affghan camp. He went ostensibly to negotiate with Dost Mahommed; in reality to corrupt his supporters. "On the occasion," he says, with as little sense of shame as Mohan Lal manifests when recording his exploits in the same line, "of Dost Mahommed's visit to Peshawur, which occurred during the period of my service with Runjít Singh, I was despatched by the Prince as ambassador to the Amír. I divided his brothers against him, exciting their jealousy of his growing power, and exasperating the family feuds, with which, from my previous acquaintance, I was familiar, and stirred up the feudal lords of his durbar with the prospects of pecuniary advantages. I induced his brother Sultan Mahommed Khan, the lately deposed chief of Peshawur, with 10,000 retainers to withdraw suddenly from his camp about nightfall. The chief accompanied me towards the Sikh camp, whilst his followers fled to their mountain fastnesses. So large a body retiring from the Amír's control, in opposition to his will, and without previous intimation, threw the general camp into inextricable confusion, which terminated in the clandestine route of his forces without beat of drum, or sound of bugle, or the trumpet's blast, in the quiet stillness of midnight. At daybreak no vestige of the Affghan camp was seen, where six hours before 50,000 men and 10,000 horses, with all the busy host of attendants, were rife with the tumult of wild emotion*." Thus was this notable expedition brought prematurely to a disastrous close. Treachery broke up, in a single night, a vast army which Runjít Singh had contemplated with dismay. The Amír with the *debris* of his force, preserving his guns, but sacrificing much of his camp-equipage, fell back upon Kabul, reseated himself quietly in the Balla Hissar, and in bitterness of spirit, declaiming against the

* It would appear that Dost Mahommed instigated by Mirza Samí Khan, seized Mr. Harlan, as well as the Faqír Azizúdin, who was also sent as an ambassador into the Amír's camp. The Dost endeavoured to throw the odium of the act upon Sultan Mahommed, hoping thereby to ruin him utterly in the opinion of the Sikhs; but Sultan Mahommed, after having taken a number of oaths on the Koran, pledging himself to compliance with the Amír's wishes, sent back the prisoners (or *hostages* as Dost Mahommed called them) to the Maharajah's camp. Mr. Harlan in his published work says nothing about this; and the "forthcoming personal journal, promised some years ago, has not yet appeared. Mohan Lal says that "the appalling news (of the treachery of Sultan Mahommed) wounded the feelings of the Amír most bitterly. There were no bounds to the sweat of shame and folly which flowed over his face, and there was no limit to the laughter of the people at his being deceived and ridiculed. His minister, Mirza, Samí Khan was so much distressed by this sad exposure of his own trick, and still more by the failure of his plan in losing the Faqír, that he hung down his head with great remorse and shame, and then throwing away his State papers, he exclaimed that he would avoid all interference in the government affairs hereafter."

emptiness of military renown, plunged deep into the study the Koran.

From this pleasant abstraction from warlike pursuits, the Amír was after a time aroused by a well-grounded report to the effect that Súltan Mahommed had been again intriguing with the Sikhs, and that a plan had been arranged for the passage of a Punjabi force through the Khybur pass, with the ultimate intention of moving upon Kabul. An expedition was accordingly fitted out in the spring of 1837; but the Amír, having sufficient confidence in his son Afzal Khan and Mahommed Akbar, sent the sirdars in charge of the troops, with Abdúl Samí Khan, his minister, as their adviser. The Affghan forces laid siege to Jumrúd, and on the 30th of April, Harí Singh came from Peshawur to its relief. An action took place, in which both the young sirdars greatly distinguished themselves, and Shumshúdín Khan cut a no less distinguished figure. The Sikh chieftain Harí Singh was slain; and his disheartened troops fell back and entrenched themselves under the walls of Jumrúd. Akbar Khan proposed to follow up the victory by dashing on to Peshawur; but the Mirza who, according to Mr. Masson had, during the action, "secreted himself in some cave or sheltered recess, where in despair, he sobbed, beat his breast, tore his beard, and knocked his head upon the ground," now made his appearance, declaring that his prayers had been accepted, and "entreated the boasting young man to be satisfied with what he had done." The advice was sufficiently sound; for strong Sikh reinforcements soon appeared in sight, and the Affghan army was compelled to retire. Akbar Khan plumed himself greatly on this victory, but it was not a very glorious achievement. In one respect, however, it was a heavy blow to the Maharajah. Runjit Singh had lost one of his best officers and dearest friends. The death of Harí Singh was never forgotten or forgiven.

We now nearly approach the period at which the stirring career of Dost Mahommed assumes a new and peculiar interest as bearing upon the most eventful epoch of the recent history of British India. The Shah of Persia had long threatened Herat and in the summer of 1837, actually commenced his march upon that frontier city. On the 15th of November Ghorian capitulated; and a few days afterwards the Persian army was under the walls of Herat. In a recent article* in this journal, we considered at some length, the effect produced throughout India, and more especially in the Council-chamber

* Art. "Sir W. H. Macnaghten." No. 3.

of the Supreme Government, by the intelligence of the advance of the Persian army, and the assistance rendered to the Shah's force by officers in the Russian service. We shall not now enter anew upon this discussion, but proceed at once to notice the circumstances connected with the despatch of Capt. Burnes to the court of Dost Mahommed, and the subsequent proceedings of that officer at Kabul.

On the arrival of Lord Auckland at Calcutta as Governor-General of India, Dost Mahommed lost no time, after receipt of the intelligence, in addressing to his Lordship a complimentary letter expressive of his own friendly sentiments and his hopes of an entire reciprocity of kindly feeling. "The field of my hopes," he wrote in the spring of 1836, "which had before been chilled by the cold blast of wintry times, had, by the happy tidings of your Lordship's arrival become the envy of the garden of paradise." He then adverted to his relations with the Sikhs, saying "the late transactions in this quarter, the conduct of reckless and misguided Sikhs, and their breach of treaty are well known to your Lordship. Communicate to me whatever may suggest itself to your wisdom for the settlement of the affairs of this country, that it may serve, as a rule, for my guidance;" and concluded by adding, "I hope your Lordship will consider me and my country as your own;"—a hope, which in due course of time, was literally fulfilled. Lord Auckland took the Amír to his word.

The Governor-General returned a friendly reply to this friendly letter, expressing his "wish that the Affghans should be a flourishing and united nation;" enforcing upon Dost Mahommed the expediency of promoting the navigation of the Indus; hinting that it was his intention soon to "depute some gentlemen" to the Amír's court, to discuss with him certain commercial topics; and adding, with reference to the Dost's dissensions with Runjít Singh, "my friend, you are aware that it is not the practise of the British Government to interfere with the affairs of other independent States." If the Amír was ever aware of this, he soon learnt to his cost, that immutability is not an attribute of the practices of the British Government.

In accordance with Lord Auckland's intimation, "some gentlemen" were deputed on a commercial mission to the Amír's court. The gentlemen named were Captain Burnes, an officer of the Bombay infantry, who had recently published an interesting account of his travels through Central Asia, interspersed with chapters of Affghan history and politics—Lieutenant

Leech of the Bombay Engineers, who had acquired early in life an extraordinary proficiency in the oriental languages, Lieutenant Wood of the Indian navy, and Dr. Perceval Lord, a medical officer of rare accomplishments, whose early death on the field of battle, literature and science will long deplore. The mission was instructed, in the first place, to proceed to Hyderabad, with letters to the Amírs of Sindh, thence to ascend the Indus, and proceed to Peshawur, Kabul and Kandahar. The officers of the mission soon separated. Wood and Lord were despatched to Kúndúz, Leech was deputed to Kandahar, whilst Burnes, as the head of the embassy, was engaged at the court of Dost Mahommed, playing a more difficult game of diplomacy than he ever thought would fall to his lot. To his movements, as the chief actor on the one side in the events which followed, we purpose chiefly to direct our attention.

As the mission entered Affghanistan, it was met by friendly deputations from the Amír, bearing letters expressive of the warmest welcome and the kindest sympathy. Every honor was rendered to the British embassy; and as Burnes neared the capital, the favorite son of Dost Mahommed—that very son who, four or five years later, expelled the British so ignominiously from his country—came forward to meet the mission, and conduct it to his father's court, Mahommed Akbar was accompanied by a large retinue; and the procession which entered Kabul is said to have been highly imposing. The Amír indeed had spared no pains to render it so; his anxiety to give a fitting welcome to the delegates of a friendly power was so great, that not satisfied with such official pomp as his own immediate resources could impart to the entrance of the British mission, he requested the principal citizens of Kabul to aid him in welcoming the strangers. Nothing could have been more cordial than his reception of Burnes and his attendants. "He received us most cordially," writes Mohan Lal, "and near his own palace, a beautiful garden surrounded with the most comfortable apartments, was allotted to us, as our place of residence."

The mission entered Kabul on the 20th of September 1837. On the following day, the Amír formally received the representatives of the British Government, "with many expressions of his high sense of the great honour conferred on him, in his at last having had the means of communicating with an officer of the British Government."* Burnes submitted his creden-

* Letters of Capt. Burnes to W. H. Macnaghten, Esq.

tials The letters were opened by the Amír himself, and read by his minister Abdul Sami Khan. They introduced Burnes to his highness solely as a commercial messenger ; but this flimsy veil was soon dropped ; it was evident from the first that whatever might have been his instructions—whatever might have been the proximate, or rather the ostensible object of the mission, Burnes had ulterior designs, and that he in reality went to Kabul either as a spy or political diplomatist. He had not been three days at Kabul, before he wrote to Mr. Macnaghten to say that he should take an early opportunity of reporting what transpired at the Amír's court ; and ten days afterwards we find him announcing "the result of his inquiries on the subject of Persian influence in Kabul, and the exact power which the Kuzzilbash, or Persian party resident in this city, have over the politics of Affghanistan. Indeed, three months before, he had written to a private friend, "I came to look after commerce, to superintend surveys and examine passes of mountains, and likewise certainly to see into affairs and judge of what was to be done hereafter ; but the hereafter has already arrived." This, "seeing into affairs," this "reporting what transpired at the Amír's court," this writing at length the result of his inquiries into the subject of Persian influence, &c., &c., under cover of a purely commercial mission,—his credentials distinctly stating that he was sent "to confer with" Dost Mahommed "as to the best means of facilitating commercial intercourse between Affghanistan and India,"—is not altogether very unlike playing the part of a spy.*

On the 24th of September Burnes was invited to a private conference with Dost Mahommed. It took place in "the interior of the harem" of the Balla Hissar—Akbar Khan alone being present. Dinner was served, and "the interview lasted till midnight." The Dost listened attentively to all that Burnes advanced relative to the navigation of the Indus and the trade of Affghanistan, but replied that his resources were so crippled by his war with the Sikhs, that he was compelled to adopt measures injurious to commerce, for the mere purpose of raising revenue. He spoke with much warmth of the loss of Peshawur, which he alleged had been wrested from him whilst he was engaged in war with Shah Sújah. Burnes replied with a number of cut-and-dry sentences about the ability and resources of Runjít Singh—to all of which the

* On the 4th October Burnes wrote a long *political* letter to Macnaghten ; and on the following day, one in which he slightly touched on commercial topics, but soon rushed headlong into politics.

Amir cheerfully assented ; and acknowledged at the same time that he was not strong enough to cope with so powerful an adversary. "Instead of renewing the conflict," he said, "it would be a source of real gratification if the British Government would counsel me how to act : none of our other neighbours can avail me ; and in return I would pledge myself to forward its commercial and its political views." Burnes replied that he heard with pleasure this acknowledgement, and assured him that the British Government would exert itself to secure peace between the Punjab and Affghanistan, adding that although he could not hold out any promise of interference for the restoration of Peshawur, which had been won and preserved by the sword, he believed that the "Maharajah intended to make some change in its management, but that it sprung from himself, not from the British Government." The Amír showed great anxiety to be made acquainted with the precise character of these contemplated arrangements ; but all that Burnes could offer was a conjecture, that the Maharajah might be induced to restore the country, under certain restrictions, to Sultan Mahommed Khan and his brothers, to whom, and not to the Dost, it had formerly belonged.

On the evening of the 4th of October, Burnes was again invited to the Balla Hassar, the Amír having in the meantime waited upon him in his own quarters. At this second conference in the palace, the Nawab Jubbar Khan, the Dost's brother, was present. On this occasion, to the surprise of the British envoy, the Amír carried his moderation and humility to an excess which might almost have aroused suspicion. He declared that if the representative of Great Britain recommended him to do so, he would express to Runjít Singh his contrition for the past, and ask forgiveness ; and that if the Maharajah "would consent to give up Peshawur to him, he would hold it tributary to Lahore ; send the requisite presents of horses and rice ; and in all things consider himself, in that part of his dominions, as holding under Lahore." Upon this Burnes suggested that such an arrangement would be destructive to the hopes of Sultan Mahommed, who ought to be regarded with compassion ; and asked, whether it would not be equally advantageous to the reputation of the Dost that Peshawur should be restored to his brother. To this the Amír replied, that the country might as well be in the hands of the Sikhs as in those of Sultan Mahommed, who, indeed, was his enemy as it would never be believed that Runjít Singh had withdrawn from the countries westward of the Indus ;—little more passed at this meeting. Burnes retired to

scultate upon the conduct of the Dost and write letters to Mr. Macnaghten, at that time Political Secretary to the Government of India.

In the meanwhile the attention of the mission was directed to the state of affairs at Kandahar. The chief of that place, Aman dil Khan, had not only declared his willingness to embrace the Persian alliance, but had determined on sending his second son, with the Persian agent to Persia, as the bearer of presents to the Shah and the Russian embassy. Against this course of procedure Dost Mahommed had protested. "Oh! my brother," he wrote, "if you will do these things without my concurrence, what will the world say to me?" There can be no doubt of the Dost's sincerity. Indeed, it was the conviction that the Kabul chief was entering with his whole soul into the British alliance, to the exclusion, as was believed, of the Kandahar sirdars, that drove the latter to strengthen themselves with Persia. Burnes himself had no doubt that the Dost was at that time acting a straightforward part. On the 31st he wrote, that another conference had taken place on the 24th, and that what passed on that occasion "set Dost Mahommed's conduct in a light that must prove, as I believe, very gratifying to Government." He then stated, that on expressing the regret which he felt on being made acquainted with the misguided conduct of the Kandahar sirdars, the Dost had declared that if such conduct was distressing to the British minister, it was much more distressing to him; that he himself repented of having ever listened to the overtures of Persia; that he would take care publicly to manifest his desire to strengthen his relations with the British Government, and do every thing in his power to induce his Kandahar brothers to adopt a wiser course of policy. Burnes replied that he was delighted to hear the expression of such sentiments; but distinctly stated, "that neither he nor his brothers were to found hopes of receiving aid from the British Government"—that so long as they conducted themselves with propriety they might rely upon the sympathy of the British Government, but that they must, by no means, expect to derive anything more substantial from the alliance.* Burnes, who

* And on the 30th of December, Burnes, with reference to this promised sympathy, wrote in the following words to Mr. Macnaghten. The passage was not published in the official correspondence. It was thought better to suppress it—the present position of the British Government at this capital appears to me the most gratifying proof of the estimation in which it is held by an Afghan nation. Russia has come forward with offers, which are certainly substantial: Persia as been lavish in her promises, and Bokhara and other States have not been backward; yet in all that has passed, or is daily transpiring, the Chief of Kabul

had come to Kabul as a commercial agent, was without political instructions. He could promise nothing. The only thing that he could do was to write, and to await patiently receipt of letters from Hindústan.

And, in due course, letters were received at Kabul. There is in the published "correspondence relating to Afghanistan," a wretchedly garbled letter from Captain Burnes: Mr. Macnaghten, dated January 26th 1838, which, even as it stands in the authorised blue book, is an interesting and important document, but which in its true unmutilated form throws a flood of light on the true history of the transactions between Dost Mahommed and the British agent. Before this, Vickovich had appeared on the political stage. "We are in a mess," he wrote Burnes, in a private letter, on the 9th of Jan. "Herat is besieged and may fall, and the Emperor of Russia has sent an envoy to Kabul to offer Dost Mahommed Khán money to fight Runjit Singh!!!! I could not believe my eyes or ears, but Captain Vickovich, for that is the agent's name, arrived here with a blazing letter three feet long, and sent immediately to pay his respects to myself. I of course received him and asked him to dinner. This is not the best of it. The Amír came over to me sharp, and offered to do as I liked, to kick him out, or anything, but I stood too much in fear of Vattel to do any such thing; and since he was so friendly to us, said I, give me the letters the agent has brought, all of which he surrendered sharp, and I sent an express at once to my Lord A, with a confidential letter to the Governor-General himself, bidding him look what his predecessors had brought upon him, and telling him that after this, I knew not what might happen, and it was now a neck-and-neck race between Russia and us." The letters of which Vickovich was the bearer, like those brought by Burnes, were purely of a commercial tendency. They were written in the Russian and the Persian languages, the latter of which was translated by Mohan Lal, who gives in a few lines the substance of the more important one, the letter from the Emperor.* The

"declares that he prefers the sympathy and friendly offices of the British to all these offers, however alluring they may seem, from Persia or from the Emperor, which certainly places his good sense in a light more than prominent, and in my humble judgment proves that by an earlier attention to these countries we might have escaped the whole of these intrigues, and held long since a stable influence in Kabul."

* Mohan Lal says very shrewdly—it is one of the best passages in his book, "I have heard many people in their talking say, that if the letter of the Emperor touched upon no other points but those of trade, there was no necessity for taking such alarm at its appearance in Kabul, and that it was exaggerated in importance as it appeared to be felt by the Indian government. Though I do not boast of

authenticity of this letter has been questioned. Masson declares that it was a forgery—seal and all; alleging, in proof, that it bore no signature. To this Mohan Lal replies that the absence of the royal signature is a proof rather of the genuine than the counterfeit character of the document. "On the contrary," he says, according to Asiatic usage, these are the very reasons for confiding in the veracity of the letter. "In all countries of despotic government as Affghanistan, Turkistan and Persia, and their neighbour the Russians, letters are forwarded under the seal and not under the signature." If Mohan Lal wishes us to believe that Nicholas never attaches his signature to a letter, we must express our very positive incredulity; but we agree with him in thinking, that under the circumstances of the case, he would have been more inclined to omit than to attach the signature. The fact is that the letter was one to be acknowledged or repudiated as most convenient; it was intended to satisfy Dost Mahommed on one hand, and to be suspected by the European allies of Russia upon the other. That it came from the Cabinet of St. Petersburg we think there is little room to doubt.

The letter from Burnes, of the 26th of January, to which we have alluded above, and which we now have before us in an ungarbled state, contains a full account of an important conference between the Amír and the British agent, held after the receipt by the latter, of instructions from the Governor-General. At this meeting Burnes communicated to Dost Mahommed the sentiments of the Governor-General—a fact the record of which has been erased from the published letter—and recommended the Amír, in accordance with the opinions expressed by Lord Auckland, to wave his own claims to Peshawur, and be content with such arrangements as Runjít Singh might be inclined to enter into with Súlтан Mahommed. To this the Dost replied that he bore no enmity to his brother, though his brother was full of rancour against him, and would

"being well versed in the histories of India written by talented English authors, but from what I have learned from them I come to the conclusion that the disguised word or appellation for politics is commerce, and that commerce is the only thing which expands the views and policy of territorial aggrandisement." A smart back-handed blow this, struck at his own masters.

"An attempt, in the published blue-book, was made to conceal the fact of the receipt of these letters, and to make it appear that Burnes acted entirely upon his own responsibility. The genuine letter commenced with the following words—"I have now the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your (the Political Secretary's) letters of the 25th of November and 2nd of December last, which reached me about the same time and conveyed the views of the right honorable the Governor-General regarding the overtures made by Dost Mahommed, &c., &c." In the published version the letter commences with the word, "regarding."

gladly compass his destruction ; that with Sultán Mahommed at Peshawur he would not be safe for a day, and that he would rather see it directly in the hands of the Sikhs, than in the hands of an enemy ever ready to intrigue with the Sikhs for his overthrow. "Peshawur," said he, "has been conquered by the Sikhs ; it belongs to them ; they may give it to whomsoever they please ; if to Sultán Mahommed Khan, they place it in the hands of one, who is bent on injuring me, and I cannot therefore acknowledge any degree of gratitude for your interference, or take upon myself to render services in return,"—and then follow these mollifying sentences which it was a gross injustice to Dost Mahommed to omit from the published letter : "I admit" (said the Amír), "that it will be highly beneficial in many ways to see the Sikhs once more eastward of the Indus, but I still can dispense with none of my troops or relax in my precautionary measures, as equal if not greater anxieties will attach to me—I have unbosomed myself to you, and laid bare, without any suppression, my difficulties. I shall bear lively remembrance the intended good offices of the British Government, and I shall deplore that my interest did not permit me to accept that which was tendered in a spirit so friendly, but which to me and my advisers has only seemed hastening my ruin. To Runjit Singh your interference is beneficial, as he finds himself involved in serious difficulties by the possession of Peshawur, and he is too glad of your good offices to escape from a place which is a burthen to his finances, but by that escape a debt of gratitude is exactible from him and not from me ; and if your government will look into this matter, they will soon discover my opinions to be far from groundless, and my conclusions the only safe policy I can pursue." The Dost having ceased to speak, Jubbar Khan followed, proposing a compromise. He suggested that it might be found advisable to deliver over Peshawur conjointly to the Amír and Sultán Mahommed,—Runjit Singh receiving from the two chiefs the value which he might fix as the terms of surrender. The Dost observed that such an arrangement* would remove his fears, and that

*Burnes commenting on the Nawab's proposal observes. "The observations coming from the Nawab Jubbar Khan are the more remarkable since he is devoted to his brother, Sultán Mahommed Khan, and would rejoice to see him restored to Peshawur. They consequently carried with me a conviction that the Amír's fears are not groundless, and that they will deserve all due consideration before Government entered upon any measures for attaching this chief to its interests." This passage was, of course, suppressed.

if he appointed Jubbar Khan to represent him at Peshawur, he would be sure of an equitable adjustment of affairs. To this Burnes replied in general terms, that the withdrawal of the Sikhs to the eastward of the Indus would be a vast benefit to the Affghan nation, and asked Dost Mahommed whether he would rather see the Sikhs or Súltan Mahommed in Peshawur. The Amír replied that the question put in plain words was a startling one; but he asked in return, if that could be considered beneficial to the Affghan nation, which was especially injurious to him who possessed the largest share of sovereignty in Affghanistan? He then observed, in evidence of the truth of his assertions relative to the dangers to which he was exposed from the supremacy of Súltan Mahommed at Peshawur, "Súltan Mahommed Khan has just sent an agent to the ex-king at Lúdíanah (Sah Sújah) to offer his services to combine against me and to secure my brothers at Kandahar, in support of this coalition"—"what security," asked the Amír, "am I to receive against a recurrence of such practices?" He then continued, "as for the ex-king himself, I fear him not; he has been too often worsted to make head, unless he has aid from the British Government, which I am now pretty certain he will never receive. If my brother at Peshawur, however, under a promise of being made his minister, and assisted with Sikh agents and money, appears in the field, I may find that in expressing my satisfaction at his restoration to Peshawur, I have been placing a snake in my bosom—and I may then, when too late, lament that I did not let the Sikhs do their worst, instead of replacing them by another description of enemies." All this was carefully erased from the letter before it was allowed to form a part of the published blue-book; and the following just observations of Captain Burnes shared no better fate: "It has appeared to me that they" (the opinions and views of the ruler of Kabul) "call for much deliberation. It will be seen that the chief is not bent on possessing Peshawur, or on gratifying an enmity towards his brothers, but simply pursuing the worldly maxim of securing himself from injury; the arguments which he has adduced seem deserving of every consideration, and the more so, when an avowed partisan of Súltan Mahommed does not deny the justice of the Amír's objection;" and further on our agent observes (we omit many suppressed passages, which if we were writing a memoir of Alexander Burnes, we should be bound to insert), "since arriving here, I have seen an agent of Persia with alluring promises, after penetrating as far as

“Kandahar, compelled to quit the country, because no one has sent to invite him to Kabul. Following him, an agent of Russia with letters highly complimentary and promises more than substantial, has experienced no more civility than is due by the laws of hospitality and nations. It may be urged by some that the offers of one or both were fallacious, but such a *dictum* is certainly premature; the Amír of Kabul has sought no aid in his arguments from such offers, but declared that his interests are bound up in an alliance with the British Government, which he never will desert as long as there is a hope of securing one.” There is much more in a similar strain—much more cancelled from the published correspondence—which we are compelled, from such an article as this, reluctantly to omit. The system of garbling the official correspondence of public men—sending the letters of a statesman or diplomatist into the world mutilated, emasculated—the very pith and substance of them cut out by the unsparing hand of the State-anatomist—cannot be too severely reprehended. The dishonesty by which lie upon lie, a century of lies, is palmed upon the world, has not one redeeming feature. If public men are, without reprehension, to be permitted to lie in the face of nations—wilfully, elaborately, and maliciously to bear false witness against their neighbours, what hope is there for private veracity? In the case before us the *suppressio veri* is virtually the *assertio falsi*. The character of Dost Mahommed has been lied away; the character of Burnes has been lied away. Both, by the mutilation of the correspondence of the latter, have been fearfully misrepresented—both have been set forth as doing what they did not, and omitting to do what they did. We care not whose knife—whose hand did the work of mutilation. We deal with principles, not with persons—and have no party ends to serve. The cause of truth must be upheld. Official documents are the sheet-anchors of historians—the last courts of appeal to which the public resort. If these documents are tampered with—if they are made to declare historical figments, the grave of truth is dug, and there is seldom a resurrection. It is not always that an afflicted parent is ready to step forward in behalf of an injured child, and lay a memorial at the feet of his sovereign, exposing the cruelty by which an honorable man has been represented, in State documents, as doing that which was abhorrent to his nature. In most cases, the lie goes down unassailed, and often unsuspected, to posterity; and in place of sober History we have a florid Romance.

But still in spite of the declarations of Burnes that Dost Mahommed had little to hope from the operations of the British Government in the East, the Russian mission made but little progress at Kabul. Alluding to the negotiations of our agent, Vickovich wrote some time afterwards, "all this has occasioned Dost Mahommed Khan to conduct himself very coldly towards me; and then, as he daily converses with Burnes, from my arrival here to the 20th of February I have hardly been two or three times in his presence." The fact is that the Russian mission was scurvily treated up to this time, as we are assured on the concurrent testimony of the British and the Russian agents. But on the 21st of February, letters were received from the Governor-General, stating in the most decisive language, that there was no intention to accede to the propositions of the Amír regarding Peshawur; and then, but not till then, the conduct of Dost Mahommed underwent a change, and the Russian mission began to rise in importance. On the 2nd of March, Jubbar Khan visited Burnes, and a long discussion ensued relative to the intentions of the British Government, which Burnes again explicitly stated! And on the following day, Abdúl Samí Khan waited upon him, and went over nearly the same ground. He alleged Dost Mahommed "had often written to the British Government about his affairs, and in return they replied to him about their own;" and recurred to the expectations which the Dost had formed of receiving aid from the British and rendering service to them in return. Burnes attended to a message that had been sent to him, stating that the Amír would not wait longer than the vernal equinox in the hope of receiving British assistance, after which time he would consider himself at liberty to listen to the overtures of any other power. For this Abdúl Samí Khan apologised; but repeated, in general terms, the demands of the Dost, and the expectations he had formed of coming to a friendly understanding with the British. On the 4th, the Nawab Jubbar Khan again waited on Burnes. The discussion which ensued was much the same as that of the preceding day, with the exception of something very much like a proposition from the Nawab to betray his brother; but on the 5th he again appeared with a string of specific demands dictated by the Amír. "These consisted of a promise to protect Kabul and Kandahar from Persia; of the surrender of Peshawur by Runjit Singh; of the interference of our Government to protect, at that city, those who might return to it from Kabul, supposing it to be restored to Súlтан Mahommed Khan; with several other proposals." Upon this

Burnes with an expression of astonishment declared, that of the part of the British Government he could accede to none of these propositions; and added, that as he saw no hope of a satisfactory adjustment, he should request his dismissal. "The Nawab," said Burnes, "left me in sorrow."

Upon his departure, the British agent sat down and drew up a formal letter to the Amír, requesting leave to depart for Hindustan. In spite of what had taken place, the letter somewhat startled the Amír, who summoned a meeting of his principal advisers, "which lasted till past midnight."* The conference was resumed on the following morning; and about midday Mirza Samí Khan waited on Burnes and invited him to attend the Amír in the Balla Hissar. The Dost was even more gracious and friendly than usual; he expressed his regret that the Governor-General had shewn so little inclination to meet his wishes; but added that he did not even then despair of forming an alliance advantageous both to England and Affghanistan. A long argument then ensued—but it led to nothing. The old ground was travelled over, again and again. Burnes asked for everything he could, but promised nothing, for he had no power to make any concessions; and the meeting, though it ended amicably, was productive of no good results. Burnes took his departure from the Balla Hissar. He might as well have departed from Kabul.

On the 21st of March, the Amír wrote a friendly letter to Lord Auckland, imploring him, in language almost of humi-

* It is probably of this meeting, or one shortly preceding it, of which General Harlan, who has not much more regard for dates than Mohan Lal, speaks in the following passage. We must premise that Harlan had by this time quitted Runjít Singh's service and "taken the shilling" from Dost Mahommed: "The document (Lord Auckland's ultimatum) was handed to me amongst others. I satisfied myself, by the Governor-General's signature, of its authenticity, surveying the contents with extreme surprise and disappointment. Dost Mahommed was mortified, but not terrified The Governor-General's ultimatum was handed round and an embarrassing silence ensued. A few minutes elapsed when Abdúl Samí Khan recalled the party from abstraction..... He proclaimed that the Governor-General's ultimatum left no other alternative than the dismissal of the English agent, for the spirit of the Kuzzilbash party was supercilious and unyielding, though full of duplicity..... Nieb Mahommed Amír Khan Akhund-Zadah openly opposed the Kuzzilbash party and urged many weighty arguments in favor of a pacific settlement of the Amír's relations with the British Government, which had now assumed a position so inauspicious; he concluded his oration with these words, addressing the Amír: "There is no other resource for you but to introduce Mr. Harlan in the negotiations with Mr. Burnes, and he, through his own facilities and wisdom, will arrange a treaty, according to their European usage, for the pacific and advantageous settlement of your affairs, and to this proposition the council unanimously assented." The proposition, it appears, was made to Burnes, but Burnes declined. Harlan says "that he then wrote to the British envoy offering to negotiate upon his own terms;" but Burnes sent "a reply personally friendly," but "evincing a deficiency of knowledge of first principles concerning the rights of independent powers, in political negotiations." Burnes says nothing about this in his official letters. It is not difficult to perceive why.

lity, to "remedy the grievances of the Affghans," to "give them a little encouragement and power." It was the last despairing effort of the Affghan chief to conciliate the good will of the British Government. It failed. The *fiat* had gone forth. The judgment against him was not to be reversed. Other meetings took place—but Burnes knew them to be mere formalities. He remained at Kabul with no hope of bringing matters to a favorable issue, but because it was convenient to remain. He was awaiting the return from Kándúz of Dr. Lord and Lieutenant Wood. The month of March passed away and the greater part of April; but these officers did not rejoin the mission, and Burnes determined to depart without them. Accordingly, on the 20th of April, he turned his back upon Kabul.*

The mission had failed. What wonder? It could by no possibility have succeeded. If utter failure had been the great end sought to be accomplished by the mission, the whole business could not have been more cunningly devised. Burnes asked every thing, and promised nothing. He was tied hand and foot; he had no power to treat with Dost Mahommed; all that he could do was to demand on one hand and refuse on the other. He talked about the friendship of the British Government. Dost Mahommed asked for some proof of it, and no proof was forthcoming. The wonder is not that the Amír at last listened to the overtures of others, but that he did not seek other assistance before: no better proof of his earnest desire to cement an alliance with the British Government need be sought for, than that involved in the fact of his extreme reluctance to abandon all hope of assistance from the British and to turn his eyes in another direction. It was not until he was driven to despair by resolute refusals from the quarter whence he looked for aid, that he accepted the offers so freely made to him by other States, and set the seal upon his own destruction. "Our Government," said Burnes, "would do nothing; but the Secretary of the Russian legation came with the most direct offers of assistance and money, and as I had no power to counteract him by a similar offer, and got wigged for talking of it at a time when it would have been merely a dead letter to say Affghanistan was under our protection, I was obliged, of course, to give in." What better

* Mr. Masson says, that before its departure, the mission had fallen into contempt, and that the assassination of Burnes was talked of; he explains too, what, according to his account, were the real causes of Burnes' departure without his companions—but it does not come within our province to investigate, in this article, Masson's charges against the envoy.

result Lord Auckland could have anticipated, it is hard to say. If the failure of the mission astonished him, he must have been the most sanguine of men.

But we are not about to consider the conduct of the Governor-General of India, but that of the ruler of Kabul. We have endeavored to state, with the utmost fairness, the principal circumstances attending the failure of the British mission under Captain Burnes; and we cannot, upon a deliberate review of all these circumstances, come to a conclusion that there was anything unreasonable—anything that can fairly be interpreted into an indication of hostile feeling—in the conduct of Dost Mahommed. That from the very first he was disappointed, there is no doubt. He had formed exaggerated ideas of the generosity and munificence of the British Government in the East, and doubtless expected great things from the contemplated alliance. The mission had scarcely been a day in Kabul, when the feelings of the Amir were shocked—the exuberance of his hopes somewhat straitened—and his dignity greatly offended, by the paltry character of the presents of which Burnes was the bearer. No one, ignorant of the childish eagerness with which oriental princes examine the ceremonial gifts presented to them by foreign potentates, and the importance which they attach to the value of these presents as indications of a greater or less degree of friendship and respect on the part of the donor, can appreciate the mortification of Dost Mahommed on discovering that the British Government, of whose immense resources and boundless liberality he had so exalted a notion, had sent him nothing but a few trumpery toys. Burnes had been directed to “procure from Bombay such articles as would be required to be given in presents to the different chiefs.” And it had been characteristically added,—“They ought not to be of a costly nature; but should be chosen particularly with a view to exhibit the superiority of British manufactures.” Accordingly the envoy had provided himself with a pistol and a telescope for Dost Mahommed, and a few trifles for the inmates of the Zenana, such as pins, needles, and play-things.*

* Harlan's account of the reception of these presents is at least amusing, and we see no reason to question its veracity:—“When the English Agent,” he writes, “who visited Kabul in 1837-38 produced his presents for the Amir's harem (a breach of etiquette most inexcusable in any one pretending to a knowledge of oriental customs) they were distributed by the Sultanah mo'her, and it may be readily conceived that a more onerous duty could not have been imposed upon her ladyship, although the value of these donations was inconsiderable and adapted only to the frivolous tastes of savages, or the wretched fancies of rude, infatuated Africans. They consisted of pins, needles, scissors, penknives, silk-handkerchiefs, toys

Presents, far costlier than these, had been forwarded to Shah Sújah, when the mission under Mountstuart Elphinstone had set out for Affghanistan. The Amír was disappointed. He thought that the niggardliness of the British Government, in this instance, portended no good : nor was he mistaken. He soon found that the intention to give little was manifest in all the proceedings of the mission.

It is said that the Amír asked more than could reasonably be granted—that he had no right to look for the restoration of Peshawur, as that tract of country, on the dismemberment of the Dourani empire, had fallen to the share of Súltan Mahommed. It is very true that the country had once belonged to Súltan Mahommed—but nevertheless, the Amír's arguments were perfectly unanswerable. No one who has read the early portion of this article will doubt for a moment that Dost Mahommed had nothing to expect from the *friendship* of his brother. Súltan Mahommed had shown, by a long course of treachery, that he was prepared at any moment to betray the Amír.* To have established him at Peshawur would have been to have paved the way for the march of Runjít Singh's army to Kabul. So thought Dost Mahommed. Better to submit quietly to the unassisted enmity of the Maharajah, than to have an insidious enemy on the frontier, by whose agency

watches, musical snuff-boxes, &c. all of which were received with inexpressible surprise, and the feeling followed by a sense of disgust, intermingled with mortification and disappointment. Anticipations, a long time entertained, founded on the fact that Dost Mahommed had *conditionally* solicited the advent of a British agent at Kabul and sustained by the Amír's cupidity, kept their expectations alive with the hope of a golden subsidy. His highness was honoured with a pair of pistols and a spy-glass, as though the Governor-General would have suggested to the Amír an allegory of the conservative and offensive symbols of good Government ! Dost Mahommed exclaimed with a "pish," as he threw them down before him and averted his face, "Behold ! I have feasted and honoured this Feringhee to the extent of "six thousand rupees, and have now a lot of pins and needles and sundry petty toys "to show for my folly ;" and again—"the distribution of the English trifles almost caused an insurrection among the inmates of the harem. Aga Taj thought her children entitled to choose before all the others, but in this fancy her highness was not gratified, and the disappointment gave rise to many expressions of asperity against the ruling power in her harem. Her little boy got hold of a musical toy called an accordion. As a matter of course, he soon managed to put it out of order, and her highness supposing in common with all Asiatics, that a Christian is capable of every science, sent to me with a request to repair it. I regretted the task exceeded my abilities in mechanics. I learnt from this source, the child of the princess royal, the ridicule and disgust which the English diplomacy and munificence excited in the minds of the ladies was general in the Amír's family, and did more to lessen the agent's ascendancy at the court of Kabul than can easily be imagined by those who are unacquainted with the potency of back-stair influence in an oriental court." There may be some exaggeration in all this—but we do not doubt that it is substantially true.

* Burne's spoke of Sultan Mahommed as "a very good man, but incapable of acting for himself ; and even alluded to his elevation to the chiefship of Kabul, as one course which might be pursued by the British Government on the rupture with Dost Mahommed "a very good man, indeed."

Runjít Singh might have accomplished that which he could not have achieved alone. It was mockery to talk to the Amír about Súlтан Mahommed. He had nothing to look for from that quarter but the blackest perfidy—the most unrelenting hostility. As to the *claims* of Súlтан Mahommed, the Súlтан had sacrificed them by his own misconduct. Had he been true to his brother, had he been true to himself, he might have retained possession of his principality. Treachery on the part of Súlтан Mahommed, treachery on the part of Runjít Singh, had lost Peshawur to the Affghans. It was the personal energy—the martial prowess of Dost Mahommed that had secured the supremacy of the Barukzyes in Affghanistan; and as Súlтан Mahommed Khan wanted the ability or the honesty to hold his own at Peshawur, it was but natural and fitting that the chief of the Barukzyes should endeavour to enter into arrangements better calculated to preserve the integrity of the Affghan frontier. He desired, in the first instance, the absolute possession of Peshawur on his own account. He subsequently consented to hold it in vassalage to Runjít Singh. Had the British Government undertaken to effect an amicable arrangement between the Amír and the Maharajah (and such an arrangement might have been effected to the entire satisfaction of both parties), there is no room to doubt that Dost Mahommed would have rejected all overtures from the Westward, and proved to us a firm and faithful ally. But instead of this we offered him nothing but our sympathy, and Dost Mahommed, with all respect for the British Government, looked for something a little more substantial. That his conduct throughout the long negotiations with Burnes, was characterised by an entire singleness of purpose and straightforwardness of action, we do not take upon ourselves to assert; but we may with truth aver, that it evinced somewhat less than the ordinary amount of Affghan duplicity—somewhat less, indeed, than the ordinary amount of diplomatic chicanery and deceit. Singleness and straightforwardness do not flourish in the near neighbourhood either of Eastern or Western diplomacy, and perhaps it is not wise, on our own account, to look too closely into these matters. We doubt whether any Eastern potentate ever negotiated with greater sincerity and good faith than did Dost Mahommed upon this occasion; and if we can detect a flaw here and there, we ought not on that account, to condemn the general conduct of the man, but considering the school in which he had been educated, highly extol his freedom from the besetting vices of the country, when we see that his errors were few when they might have

been legion. The wonder is that he acted so honorably—that he was so sincere, so straightforward, so patient, and so moderate. He might have possessed all these qualities in much scantier measure, and yet have been a very respectable Affghan.

Burnes went, and Vickovich who had risen greatly in favor, soon took his departure for Herat, promising every thing that Dost Mahommed wanted—engaging to furnish money to the Barukzye chiefs, and undertaking to propitiate Runjít Singh. The Russian quitted Kabul, accompanied by Sirdar Mehir Dil Khan (who some time previously had arrived at Kabul with the object of winning over the Amír to the Persian alliance), and one Abú Khan, Barukzye, a confidential friend of Dost Mahommed, and on the present occasion, his representative. It had been arranged that Azim Khan, the Dost's son, accompanied by the minister Samí Khan, should be despatched to the Shah ; but this arrangement being set aside in consequence of the scruples of the Mirza, Abú Khan was despatched in their place. There were now no half measures to be pursued. Dost Mahommed had flung himself into the arms of Persia.

Vickovich was received with all honour at Kandahar. A treaty between the Barukzye brothers and the Shah was drawn up and signed by the latter. The envoy sent it back to the Sirdars, saying, "Mahommed Shah has promised to give you the possession of Herat, I sincerely tell you that you will also get Ghorian, on my account, from the Shah... When Mahommed Omar Khan arrives here, I will ask the Shah to quit Herat, and I will remain here with 12,000 troops, and when you join, we will take Herat, which will afterwards be delivered to you,"—magnificent promises truly, and most refreshing to the souls of the Kandahar Sirdars. The letter was sent on to Dost Mahommed, but it did not fill the heart of the Amír with an equal measure of delight. The Russian alliance was unpopular at Kabul. It had "ruined him in the eyes of all Mahommedans." A crisis, too, was at hand. Intelligence had reached the capital to the effect that not only was the friendship of the British Government irrecoverably lost, but that an expedition was about to be equipped in the Company's dominions with the avowed object of entering Affghanistan, and placing Shah Sújah-úl-Múlk on the throne which he had before endeavoured to regain.

The intelligence alarmed the Amír. He was scarcely prepared for such a prompt manifestation of the displeasure of the British Government. He had not believed that it would at once assume so practical and so terrible a shape : clearly now before

him rose up, in all their dread proportions, the dangers which threatened his political existence. He saw at once that he had "played the fool and erred exceedingly," that a few thousand ducats from the Russians and the promise of a letter to Runjít Singh, were but trifles to weigh against an evil of such magnitude as a British army of invasion. But it was too late to repent—idle to revert with self-reproach to the past. It was left for him now to provide for the future. He began at once to strengthen the Balla Hissar and to repair the defences of Ghuzni. Money was required to provide means of resistance; to raise it, he increased the burthen of taxation, which already pressed severely upon the inhabitants of the Kohistan, and in so doing lost a further instalment of his now waning popularity.

Ample time was permitted to the Amír to organise his plans of resistance. He, at least, was not startled by a sudden incursion of hostile troops into his dominions. With such formidable natural defences and abundant time to strengthen to any extent his artificial ones, he might have bidden defiance to the Suddozye Prince, backed by the whole British army. But one thing was wanting. The nationality of the Affghans seemed to be almost extinct. There was no union among the Barukzye brothers. There was scarcely a chief in the country who was not prepared to sell his birth-right for a mess of pottage. Dost Mahommed had, indeed, long ceased to look for any effectual support from the other sons of Sarfraz Khan; he now trusted to his own. It had for some time been his policy to supersede, as far as was possible, the influence of his brothers by putting forward his sons. Afzul Khan and Akbar Khan had done good service at Jamrúd* They had early evinced the possession of no small share of the military prowess and personal energy of their father. To them and to Hyder Khan he now entrusted the command of his troops. It was a perilous game that he was involved in, but he did not despair.

From the dust of Lú dianah rose Shah Sújah—the pensioned exile—the hopeless fugitive—the man of many reverses, now suddenly to become a king; the signer of treaties, the favored ally of the British Government. In circumstances

* Mohan Lal says, that Afzul Khan really did the work, and Akbar Khan claimed the credit. "Since that period" (the battle of Jamrúd), he writes, "the eldest son of the Amír, Mahommed Afzul Khan, with other heroes of the family, is very much disheartened. No feeling of true regard has since existed between the father and these sons, and Akbar Khan continues gaining the strength and favor of the Amír.... He exalts Afzul Khan, in other passages, and lowers Mahommed Khan—but we can scarcely regard Mohan Lal as an unprejudiced witness.

how changed—in character how unchanged! Surrounded by an army of his own, which had sprung up as though by magic, supported by a brilliant force of well-disciplined European troops, and attended by a cluster of the most distinguished European diplomatists in India, the mendicant of yesterday re-entered his old dominions; and as the battle was to be fought *for* him and not *by* him, he was full of confidence and courage. It is no part of the task which we have set ourselves, to describe the operations of the army of the Indus, or to discuss the policy of the expedition. In the month of July 1839, the Suddozye prince and the British army were before Ghuzni. Hyder Khan commanded the garrison. Afzul Khan, with his detachment, was in the neighbourhood. Akbar Khan had been despatched to contest the passage of the Khybur with Timour Shah; and the Amír himself had determined, with his guns and his principal supporters, to take up his position on the road between Ghuzni and Kabul, and fling himself upon the advancing columns of the enemy, if they ever penetrated so far into his country.

The fall of Ghuzni—a fortress hitherto deemed impregnable—astounded Dost Mahommed and his sons, and struck dismay into their souls. Afzul Khan, who was prepared to fall upon our troops had they been repulsed before Ghuzni, found to his wonderment, that the British colors had been planted on the summit of the citadel; and whatever may be the amount of that “sound judgment and laudable quality of heroism,” of which Mohan Lal says he is so abundantly possessed, he cut no very distinguished figure upon the present occasion, but sought safety in flight. Abandoning his elephants and the whole of his camp equipage, which fell as booty into the hands of Shah Sujah, the Prince fled towards Kabul. His father greatly incensed, sent to order his immediate halt, and “peremptorily refused to receive him.”* Dost Mahommed appears never to have forgiven this failure at a critical time.

In little more than four-and-twenty hours after the fall of Ghuzni, intelligence of the event reached the camp of the Amír. He at once assembled his chiefs, spoke of the defection of some of his people, expressed his apprehension that others were about to desert him, and declared his conviction that, without the aid of treachery, Ghuzni could not have fallen before the Feringhis. He then called upon all present who wavered in their loyalty, at once to withdraw from his presence, that he might know the extent of his resources and not rely upon

* Outiam.

the specious friendship of men who would forsake him at a critical moment. All protested their fidelity. A council was held and the result was, that the Nawab Jubbar Khan was despatched to the British camp* to treat with Shah Sújah and his allies. The Nawab mounted his horse and rode with unaccustomed rapidity to Ghuzní. There he was well received both by the Shah and the British mission. But his exertions were utterly fruitless. He tendered on the part of the Amír submission to the Suddozye prince, but claimed, on part of the brother of Futteh Khan, the hereditary office of Wuzír, which had been held so long and so ably by the Barukzyes. The claim was at once rejected, and the mockery of an "honorable asylum" in the British dominions offered in its stead. Jubbar Khan spoke out plainly and bluntly like an honest man. His brother had no ambition to surrender his freedom and become a prisoner on the bounty of the British Government. Had his cause been far more hopeless than it was, Dost Mahommed would have rather flung himself upon the British bayonets than upon the protection of the Feringhís. Jubbar Khan then frankly stating his own determination to follow the fortunes of his brother, requested and received his dismissal.

The Nawab returned to the Amír's camp. All hope of negotiation was now at an end, and Dost Mahommed, with resolution worthy of a better fate, marched out to dispute the progress of the invaders. At the head of an army, in which the seeds of dissolution had already been sown, he moved down upon Urghundí. There he drew up his troops and parked his guns; but it was not on this ground that he had determined to give the Feringhí battle. The last stand was to have been made at Maidan, on the Kabul river—a spot, the natural advantages of which would have been greatly in his favor. But the battle was never fought. At Urghundí it became too manifest that there was treachery in his camp. The venal Kuzzilbashes were fast deserting his standard. There was scarcely a true man left in his ranks. Hadjí Khan Khakur, on whom he had placed great reliance, had gone over to the enemy, and others were fast following his example. This was the crisis of his fate. He looked around him and saw only perfidy on the right hand and on the left. He felt equal to the occasion, but thus deserted, what could he do? Never had the nobility of his nature shone forth more truly and more lus-

*Whether this step was taken by Dost Mahommed on his own account, or whether it was recommended or agreed to by his principal partisans, does not very clearly appear.

trously. In the hour of adversity, when all were false, he was true to his own manhood. Into the midst of his own perfidious troops he rode, with the Koran in his hand, and there called upon his followers, in the names of God and the Prophet, not to forget that they were true Mahommedans—not to disgrace their names and to dishonor their religion, by rushing into the arms of one who had filled the country with infidels and blasphemers. He besought them to make one stand, like brave men and true believers, to rally round the standard of the Commander of the Faithful; to beat back the invading Feringhís or die in the glorious attempt. He then reminded them of his own claims on their fidelity: "You have eaten my salt," he said, "these thirteen years. If, as is too plain, you are resolved to seek a new master, grant me but one favor in requital for that long period of maintenance and kindness—enable me to die with honour. Stand by the brother of Futteh Khan, whilst he executes one last charge against the cavalry of these Feringhí dogs; in that onset he will fall; then go and make your own terms with Shah Sújah."* The noble spirit-stirring appeal was vainly uttered: few responded to it. There was scarcely a true heart left. With despairing eyes he looked around upon his recreant followers. He saw that there was no hope of winning them back to their old allegiance; he felt that he was surrounded by traitors and cowards, who were willing to abandon him to his fate. It was idle to struggle against his destiny; the first bitter pang was over, he reassumed his serenity of demeanour, and addressing himself to the Kuzzilbashes, formally gave them their discharge. He then dismissed all who were inclined to purchase safety by tendering allegiance to the Shah, and with a small handful of followers, leaving his guns still in position, turned his horse's head towards the regions of the Hindú Kúsh.†

It was on the evening of the 2nd of August that he com-

* Havelock.

† The guns were found in position when the British troops reached Urghundí. "Onward," says Captain Havelock, "moved the force, and an hour had not elapsed since the day broke, when it came full upon the abandoned ordnance of the fallen Barukzye. Twenty two pieces of various calibre, but generally good guns, on field carriages, superior to those generally seen in the armies of Asiatic princes, were parked in a circle in the Amír's late position. Two more were placed in battery in the village of Urghundí, at the foot of the hills. The route by which we had advanced, was flanked by a deep impracticable ravine, on which the Affghan left would have rested; there their artillery had been parked, and would probably from this point have swept the open plain, and searched the narrow defile by which we would have debouched upon. Their front was open for the exertions of a bold and active cavalry, and here the Amír might at least have died with honour." But all this is mere speculation. It now appears that the Amír had no intention of making a stand at Urghundí.

menced his flight. A party from the British camp, commanded by Captain Outram and officered by a little band of dashi soldiers and bold riders, was soon in rapid pursuit. Had Khan Khakur, the apostate chief, rode with them. He had undertaken to betray his master. The rest is well known. The treachery which we had purchased for so many pieces of gold, was retributively turned against us. We reaped as we had sown; and Dost Mahommed escaped. Dost Mahommed crossed the Hindú Kúsh, and for a while fortune seemed to favor him. The Wullí of Kúlúm, who a little time before, had been at war with the Amír, now forgot all old animosities, and received the fugitive monarch with friendship and hospitality. To counteract this movement in the Usbeg country, a detachment of British troops was despatched to Bameean. The operations of this little force had the effect ere long of driving the Amír out of the friendly country in which he had taken up his abode, and reducing him to the condition of a fugitive, more hopeless and forlorn than before he had thrown himself upon the protection of the Wullí. In the valley of Syghan, there is a fort called Sarisung. It was held by one Mahommed Ali Beg, a chief who had given in his adhesion to Shah Sújah. It was essential to the safety of the Bameean detachment that this fort should be held by a friend. Assisted by the Wullí of Kúlúm, one Khilich Beg laid siege to the fort. It had been arranged then, in the event of the capture of the place which had been calculated upon with some confidence, that one of Dost Mahommed's followers who was in the camp of the beseigers, should be appointed Governor of the place in the name of the Amír. This could not be permitted. A detachment was sent out from the British camp to raise the siege; Golaum Beg (the Wullí's son) and Khilich Beg fled, and the Usbeg force was completely broken up. The effects of this movement were most advantageous to British interests. Not only did it open the communications of the British force with Túrkhistan, but had a perceptible and immediate effect upon the fortunes of Dost Mahommed. "Dost Mahommed's star," writes an intelligent officer of the Bameean detachment, "which had for a time shone forth was again dimmed by a cloud. His fortune waned, and the natural consequence was, that of those who followed the unfortunate monarch into exile, many now deserted him in his utmost need; his funds failed fast, and the ex-Amír was forced to grant a discharge to those of his followers who demanded it. During the month of November, many of these with their wives and families passed

through Bameean on their way to Kabul.... They were reduced to the most lamentable plight. The Amír had no money and could not support so many dependants; they were therefore obliged to resort to the sale of horses and other property to procure the means of subsistence for themselves and families. They remained with him for some time, hoping that fortune would wear a more favorable aspect; but Golaum Beg's unsuccessful expedition to Syghan dissipated any bright visions which might have been conjured up; and Dost Mahommed himself, now helpless and dispirited, gave to many a written discharge under his own seal, and bade them seek their livelihood elsewhere.*

What followed we shall do well to narrate in the words of the same able and accurate writer;—"I have said that the hopes of a brighter fortune which this unhappy prince at one time cherished, were rudely frustrated by the intelligence of Golaum Beg's disaster, and the beneficial workings of Dr. Lord's vigorous policy were fully developed. It is true that the evil was merely averted; but as he could not possibly have foreseen the events which afterwards rendered all the advantage previously gained nugatory, the praise due to him for having succeeded in driving the Amír from the Southern banks of the Oxus, should not be withheld. Despair was largely infused among the followers of the fugitive monarch, and he himself, too, on whom care had laid its heavy hand, no doubt shared in this feeling, and suffered some anxiety to steal upon him, when he heard of the sudden blow struck by the Feringhís, and knew not what more might follow. He no longer felt himself secure, and almost immediately prepared for flight towards Persia, where he felt sure of a favourable reception, his mother being a native of that country; but day by day he delayed his departure, perhaps with a lingering hope that something advantageous might yet occur to prevent the necessity of so long a journey,—perhaps through financial difficulties; but, at length he set out accompanied by his sons and his brother, the Nawab Jubbar Khan; his journey, poor man, did not end in the way which he had anticipated. I never heard the exact route by which he was proceeding, but he must have passed within a short distance of Balkh; for the Governor of that place, which is subject to the rule of Bokhara, sent him a message,

* From a series of papers entitled "the British on the Hindú-Kúsh," published originally in the *Bengal Hurkaru*, and now quoted from Stocqueler's "Memorials of Affghanistan."

“ requesting him to give him a meeting, as he had some proposals to make to him on the part of the Amír-úl-Múmu-
“ mín.

“ Dost Mahommed sent his brother the Nawab to him to
“ hear what these proposals might be ; but the Governor of
“ Balkh laid hold upon the envoy, and declared that he would
“ not free him until the Amír in person came. Accordingly
“ the ex-chief went to procure the liberation of his brother,
“ and when he arrived at that once famous, but now insignificant
“ city, he found himself little less than a prisoner : Jubbar
“ Khan was released, but the dethroned monarch was informed
“ that the king of Bokhara desired his presence. Perfectly
“ helpless, he could not but accede, and perhaps at the time
“ he entertained hopes of a friendly reception. The Nawab
“ returned to Kúlúm with his own and the Dost’s family,
“ while the other, accompanied by the young Khans, Akbar
“ and Afzul, repaired to Bokhara. There, instead of meeting
“ with the reception which first reports led us to believe awaited
“ him, the whole party were thrown into dungeons, and thus
“ did Dost Mahommed, in fleeing from the British, who would
“ have proved then, as now, kind hosts rather than enemies,
“ become dependent on the caprices of a tyrant.”

For a while the Amír and his sons were condemned to taste in all its bitterness, the misery of close confinement in the city of Bokhara. We know how the Amír of this place is wont to treat his Christian prisoners. His Mahommedan captives, whom he at first pretended to receive as guests, were dealt with somewhat more leniently—but the natural ferocity of the man was not to be kept down ; and Dost Mahommed nearly became the victim of a treacherous murder. Baffled in this attempt on the life of his prisoners, and not daring openly to slay them, he kept them for a time under strict surveillance, forbidding them even to repair to *mosque*. This inhospitable treatment seems to have called forth a remonstrance from the Shah of Persia, in consequence of which greater liberty was allowed to the unfortunate princes—a relaxation of which they availed themselves to make their escape. Many romantic incidents are reported in connexion with this flight from Bokhara. The horse on which the Dost fled, being incapable of proceeding further, its rider transferred himself to a caravan which he chanced to overtake, and escaped detection only by dyeing his beard with ink. The Wallí of Kúlúm was delighted to welcome him again.

It was not long before the Amír again found himself at the head of a considerable force. His family, with the exception of the two sons who had shared his captivity in Bokhara, were

the hands of the British. He knew the danger of his determined course; and when reminded that his wives and children were in our power, sorrowfully replied, "I have no family; I have buried by wives and children." As the Usbek fighting men flocked to the standards of Dost Mahommed and the Wallí of Kúlúm, the hopes of the former seemed to rise, and his determination to strike a vigorous blow for the recovery of his lost empire, gathered strength and consistency. To have cut upon the Bameean detachment, and emerging from the Hindú Kúsh, to have appeared on the plains below flushed with victory, raising the old war-cry in the name of the Prophet, and profiting by the notorious unpopularity of Shah Sújah in that part of the country, would have been a mighty achievement—one which would have rendered easy his triumphant progress to the very walls of the capital. He determined to make the effort, and in the month of September advanced upon Bameean, with a force of six or eight thousand men. To strengthen the British position, a reinforcement consisting of some details of irregular horse and a native infantry regiment, under Colonel Dennie, an officer of approved gallantry and skill, who had led the storming party at Ghuzní, was by this time on its way from Kabul. On the 30th August, a party of Usbeks, headed by Afzul Khan the eldest son of the Amír, advanced upon Bafgah, one of the British outposts, but was repulsed by the gallant little Gúrkah regiment and a party of Affghan horse. It was necessary, however, to withdraw the British detachment from this isolated post, and to fall back upon Syghan. On their way, one of the Shah's infantry regiments deserted its colors, and went over in a body to the enemy. This disaster filled the Amír with renewed confidence and he pushed on to attack the British position at Bameean, expecting to carry everything before him. On the 18th of September he came up with a portion of our force under Brigadier Dennie, which was advancing to Syghan to meet him. The Brigadier had only two guns, and not more than a third of his force; but with such terrible effect did these two guns* play upon the advancing columns of the enemy, and such was the steady gallantry of all arms, that the Affghan force lost heart and fled before the handful of Hindustani soldiers. The Dost, the Wullí and Afzul Khan escaped, leaving their camp equipage, their kettle-drums, their ammunition and their only gun upon the field. They "owed their safety to the fleetness of their horses."

* A howitzer and six pounder, from the 4th troop, 3rd Brigade, under Lieut. Murray Mackenzie.

"I am like a wooden spoon" said Dost Mahommed, "you may throw me hither and thither, but I shall not be hurt" — Having been defeated on the Hindú Kúsh, he now re-appeared in the Kohistan. Disaffection was rife throughout that part of the country. The authority of Shah Sújah had been but imperfectly established. More than one fortress was in the hands of a recusant chief, and it was apprehended that the presence of Dost Mahommed would set the whole country in a blaze. Accordingly, at the latter end of September, a force under Sir Robert Sale was sent into the Kohistan. Sir Alexander Burnes accompanied it. It moved in the first instance on Tántandurrah. The fire of our guns soon caused its evacuation and the place was speedily taken. Sale then advanced upon Súlghah; the attempt to carry the fort by assault was not successful; but the enemy, dreading a renewal of the attempt, effected their escape, and the bastions of the fort were destroyed. During almost the entire month of October, Dost Mahommed was flitting about from one place to another, to the extreme annoyance of our political officers and the discomfort of our troops. Various were the reports which reached the British camp, of the nature of his movements and the number of his adherents. Many of these were of a most exaggerated character; and, such at one time was the alarm which they seem to have created, and the gloomy forebodings which filled the minds of our political chiefs, that they predicted the necessity of concentrating all our troops in the Balla Hissar, and actually began to think of preparations for a siege. Guns were mounted on the Balla Hissar, so as to overawe the town which it was expected would soon be in a state of rebellion; the guards were everywhere increased, and Sir William Macnaghten talked about having "to submit to the disgrace of being shut up in Kabul for a time."* On the 11th of October it was known that the Dost was in the valley of Ghoreburi. A detachment was sent to intercept his progress; but he moved off towards Nijrow, where he assembled his troops, in number it is said about four thousand, and on the 27th broke ground and moved down towards the capital. On the 29th, intelligence of the ex-Amír's movements having reached the British camp, the force under General Sale was sent out to meet the enemy. It was a critical moment. Such was the exasperation produced by the apparent success of the ex-Amír, even upon the kind nature of the envoy, that he talked about showing no mercy

* See the correspondence of Sir W. Macnaghten, as quoted in the *Calcutta Review*, No III.

the man, who was the "author of all the evils now distracting the country." Shah Sújah was eager to "hang the dog;" and even Macnaghten could only say that he would defer the execution till he could hear from Lord Auckland on the subject. This was only the "furor brevis"—the temporary insanity of one, who would never so have applied the branding iron to the reputation of the country which it was his first duty to uphold. The generous sympathy, which even at this time was felt throughout the British camp towards the unfortunate Amír, is a national characteristic which it is pleasing to dwell upon—the spectacle of a brave man fighting for his liberty, fighting for the country from which he had been expelled by an invading army, was one which no true English soldier can have contemplated without feelings of admiration and pity.

On the 2nd of November—a day which has obtained a melancholy celebrity in the annals of the English in Affghanistan—the British force came in sight of the enemy. The army of the ex-Amír was posted at Purwun-darrah, and the Nijrow hills were bristling with the armed population of a hostile country. Dost Mahommed had no intention on that day of giving battle to the Feringhís. He was unprepared for the conflict, and would fain have avoided it—but an unforeseen occurrence precipitated the collision. On the first appearance of the British troops, the Dost evacuated the village of Purwun-darrah and the neighbouring forts, and was moving off to a position on some high ground, commanded to the rearward by a lofty mountain, when, at the suggestion of Dr. Lord, the British cavalry were sent forward to outflank the Affghans. The scene which followed is perhaps one of the most exciting, as it is the most melancholy in the whole Affghan drama. It was a clear bright morning. The yellow foliage of autumn glittered like gold in the broad sunlight. The opposite hills were alive with the enemy; the crisp, fresh air, so bracing and invigorating to the human frame, seemed to breath confidence and courage. Dost Mahommed who since his defeat at Bameean, had often been heard of, never seen, by the British troops, and who had seemed to elude the grasp of the army of occupation like an *ignis fatuus*, was now actually within their reach. It ought to have been an hour of triumph. The Affghans were on the hills skirting one side of the pass; the British troops were on the opposite declivity. Dost Mahommed saw our cavalry advancing, and from that moment all thought of retreat seems to have been cast away far from him. At the head of a small band of horsemen—strong, sturdy

Affghans, but badly mounted, he prepared to meet his assailants. Beside him rode the bearer of the blue standard, who marked his place in the battle. He pointed to it; reined his horse; then snatching the white Lúngí from his hand, stood up in his stirrups uncovered before his followers, and called upon them, in the name of God and the Prophet, to drive the cursed Kaffirs out of the country. "Follow me," cried aloud, "or I am a lost man." The Affghan horsemen advanced—the rest is painful to relate. The English officer who led our cavalry to the attack, covered themselves with glory. The native troopers fled like sheep. Emboldened by the craven conduct of the British cavalry, the Affghan horsemen rode forward, driving their enemy before them and charging right up to the position of the British, until almost within reach of our guns. The Affghan sabres told with cruel effect upon our mounted men; Lieutenants Broadfoot and Crispin were cut to pieces; Dr. Lord was killed by a shot from a neighbouring fort, which tore out his bowels; Captain Fraser and Poñsonby, whose gallantry has never been surpassed even in the annals of old Roman heroism, still live to show their honorable scars, and to tell the story of that melancholy day.

In front of our columns, the Affghans, flaunting the national standard, stood for some time masters of the field, and then quietly withdrew from the scene of battle. Sir Alexander Burnes, awed by this disaster, wrote to Sir William Macnaghten to say that there was nothing left for the force but to fall back upon Kabul, and implored the envoy there to concentrate our troops. Sir William received the letter on the 3rd of November, as he was taking his evening ride in the outskirts of the city. His worst forebodings were confirmed; he little knew what thoughts were stirring in the breast of the ex-Amír. Dost Mahommed, in the very hour of victory, felt that it was hopeless to contend against the power of the British Government. He had too much sagacity not to know that his success at Purwun-darrah must eventually tend, by moving the British to redouble their exertions, rather to hasten than retard the inevitable day of his final destruction. He quitted the field in no mood of exultation; with no bright visions of the future before him. True, he had won the last throw, but the issue had ceased to be a matter of speculation. The hour in which, with dignity and grace, he might throw himself upon the protection of his enemies, now seemed to have arrived. He had met the British troops in the field, and at the head of a little band of horsemen, had driven back the cava-

of the Feringhís—his last charge had been a noble one, he might now retire from the contest without a blot upon his name.

So thought the ex-Amír, as was his wont, taking counsel on his saddle. None knew in the British camp the direction he had taken—none guessed the character of his thoughts. On the day after the victory of Purwun-darrah he was under the walls of Kabul. He had been four-and-twenty hours in the saddle, but betrayed little symptoms of fatigue. A single horseman* attended him. As they approached the residence of the British envoy, they saw an English gentleman returning from his evening ride. The attendant galloped forward to satisfy himself of the identity of the rider, and being assured that the envoy was before him, said that the Amír was at hand. "What Amír?" asked Macnaghten. "Dost Mahommed Khan," was the answer; and presently the Amír himself stood before him. Throwing himself from his horse, Dost Mahommed saluted the envoy, and said he was come to claim his protection. He surrendered his sword to the British chief, but Macnaghten returning it to him, desired the Amír to remount. They then rode together into the mission compound—Dost Mahommed asking many eager questions about his family as they went. A tent having been pitched for his accommodation, he wrote letters to his sons, exhorting them to follow his example and seek the protection of the British Government.

The rest is soon told—a prisoner, but an honored one in the British camp, Dost Mahommed remained some ten days at Kabul, during which time all the leading officers of the garrison paid him the most marked attention. Men, who kept aloof from Shah-Sújah, as one to be religiously avoided, were eager to present themselves before the unfortunate Amír, and to show that they respected him in his fallen fortunes. He received his visitors with courtesy, and conversed with them with freedom. Seated on the ground he desired them to be seated; and seemed to take pleasure in the society of the brave men who did him honor. Captain Nicolson—an officer of distinguished gallantry and great intelligence, whose early death on the banks of the Sutlej his country has to deplore—who had been selected by Sir W. Macnaghten to fill the difficult and delicate office of custodian to the ex-Amír, acted on these occasions as interpreter. It may be doubted, whether a single officer quitted his presence without drawing

* Said to have been Súlтан Mahommed Khan.

a comparison between the Amír and the Shah, very much to the disadvantage of the latter.

On the 12th of November 1840, Dost Mahommed, under a strong escort, commenced his progress towards the provinces of India. He appears to have recovered his spirits during the journey, and to have won golden opinions from all the officers who accompanied him.* The progress was a long and tedious one. His final destination was uncertain; but he was permitted, in the first instance, to proceed to Calcutta, where the Governor-General was then residing. A house was taken for him in the suburbs, and his annual pension fixed at two lakhs of rupees. At the Presidency he remained for some time. Lord Auckland treated him with marked kindness and attention; invited him to Government House; escorted him to such of the public institutions as were calculated to interest the Amír; showed him all the "lions" of Calcutta and the suburbs, and took him to his country house at Barrackpore. The ex-chief seemed to have no desire to shun the public gaze. He was constantly to be met in an English barouche on the course, or public drive; and might sometimes at sunset be seen to descend from his carriage and perform, *coram populo*, his evening devotions. The climate of Calcutta did not suit his constitution. He resided amongst us during the most unfavorable season of a not very favorable year; his health suffered, and for a while he was stretched on the bed of sickness—a trial which severely taxed his philosophy. "He condemned," says one who had several opportunities of conversing with him at this time,† "without measure the City of Palaces—but hardly knew how to say enough of the kind politeness and good will which had been evinced towards him by the *sahibs*; not alone the *sahibs*, but their *mehems*—in all of whose manners and expressions he observed kindness and friendship."

In the autumn of 1841, Dost Mahommed, attended by Captain Nicolson, turned his back upon Calcutta. A residence had been provided for him at Lúdíanah, where the exiled

* During the halt at Jellalabad, the Dost having expressed a wish to see the Feringhis in their social hours, was invited to the Mess of the European Regiment. After dinner, he was conducted by Capt. Nicolson into the Mess Room, all the officers rising as he entered. He appeared to enjoy the music of the band, and the convivial songs which enlivened the evening—smoked a cheroot, and conversed freely with all who addressed him.

† Mr. Charles Grant, an intelligent young artist, of whose works we have already spoken in this journal. Mr. Grant has published, among other clever sketches of "Oriental Heads," a *Illustration* containing portraits of the ex-Amír, Harder Khan, Ukran Khan, &c., accompanied by some interesting and amusing letter press. The portrait, in the Calcutta edition is not, in respect of fidelity and spirit, behind any of the numerous likenesses of the Amírs, which have appeared in the volumes of Vigne, Burmes, Mohan Lal, &c. &c.

Shah Sūjah pompous in his poverty, had dwelt before him. But, as he was proceeding towards the frontier, intelligence of the disastrous outbreak at Kabul—to Dost Mahommed it must have seemed the day of retribution—reached the Upper Provinces of India, and soon made its way to the Presidency. This tidings suggested at once the propriety of a change of route, and Dost Mahommed was escorted to Missúrie. The surveillance exercised over him, now as a matter of precaution, became more strict—stricter than the real circumstances, though not than the seeming exigencies of the case demanded. We believe him to have been guiltless not only of all participation in, or connivance at, the great popular movement for the expulsion of the British from Affghanistan, but wholly ignorant of the storm that was rising. Still, it was necessary that, at such a time, the ex-chief should be closely watched. His escape would have so strengthened the cause of our enemies, that to us it would have been a great national disaster. Of the vigilance that was exercised there was little to complain. But the threats—if ever they were more than threats—to send Dost Mahommed and his family to England as an act of imbecile retaliation, were cruel and unmanly.

The army of retribution, under General Pollock, marched upon Kabul, broke up the forces of Akbar Khan, planted the British colors upon the Balla Hissar, and returned to the provinces of India. Then the Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, issued that notable proclamation of the 1st of October, in which he spoke of Dost Mahommed, as a chief “believed to be hostile,” and soon afterwards published the following act of grace, restoring the exiled Amír to his country:—

Secret Department, Simla, 25th October.—“The advance of the British armies to Ghuzni and Kabul, having led to the restoration to freedom of the British prisoners in the hands of the Affghans, Dost Mahommed Khan, his wives and family, and the wife and family of Mahommed Akbar Khan, and many Affghan chiefs, remain in the absolute power of the British Government, without having any means of procuring their liberation.

To this condition of disgrace and danger has Mahommed Akabar Khan reduced his father, and his wife, and his family, and the chiefs his countrymen, by making war upon women, and preferring the continuance of their captivity and suffering for objects connected only with his own safety, to the general exchange of prisoners which was offered by the British Government, and the consequent restoration to liberty of those whose honor and whose happiness should have been most dear to him.

But the British Government is desirous of terminating, at the earliest period, all the evils which have arisen out of the Affghan war: and the Governor-General, enabled by the recovery of the British prisoners who were in the hands of the enemy, to follow the course most in accordance with clemency and humanity, declares that when the British army returning from Affghanistan shall have passed the Indus, all the Affghans now in the

power of the British Government, shall be permitted to return to their country.

The Affghan chiefs who are thus released, will, before they pass the Sutlej, present themselves at the durbar* of the Governor-General in his camp at Ferozpoore.

The wives of Dost Mahommed Khan and Mahommed Akbar Khan, and all the ladies of the family and household, shall be conducted with all respect to the frontiers of Affghanistan."

Becoming as was this resolution of the British Government to liberate the captive Amír, there was one passage in the above edict which raised a cry of indignation throughout India. To have dragged Dost Mahommed and his sons to the footstool of the Governor-General—to have paraded them at Ferozpoore to grace the triumph of the British over his own countrymen, would have been an unmanly and a cruel act—a crowning injury, which would have disgraced the British name, and filled with hatred and contempt the breasts of the Affghan princes. It matters not what induced the Governor-General to abandon so unworthy a design. It was abandoned. Dost Mahommed was permitted to depart in peace. An escort was allowed him: he set forth and turned his back upon the British frontier. At the Court of Shere Singh, in his passage through the Punjab, he was received with kindness and respect. He entered his old dominions. The ravages of the destroying army, which had just quitted Affghanistan, were everywhere too visible as he advanced: but, melancholy as were the sights that greeted him, he at least breathed the air of freedom, and in this there was abundant solace. Of his reception we have no authentic accounts. It appears probable that at the period of his return, the minds of his countrymen were so engrossed with matters peculiarly affecting themselves, either as tribes or individuals—the natural consequences of the devastation which had been committed along the route of the avenging army,—that there was little room in their breasts for any feelings of nationality. He made his way quietly to Kabul, and, if in the midst of no great popular enthusiasm, certainly without anything approaching opposition, took up his abode once more in the Balla Hissar, and received the homage of the people. Since that time his mind has been occupied with the ceaseless intrigues inseparable from an Affghan court—intrigues which it would be unprofitable to narrate in detail, even if authentic materials could be collected. He appears to be weary of the bustle of war, and would, if his turbulent son Mahommed Akbar Khan could be induced to forego the wild delights of

* This was subsequently dispensed with.

ever-recurring excitements, fain repose quietly under the laurels which he earned for himself in early life.

It is said that he is especially desirous to cement an alliance with the "Sirkar Company," and that he is constantly exerting himself to counteract the Anti-British tendencies of his son Akbar Khan.

We have now brought the history of Dost Mahommed's life down to the present time. It has been our object to confine ourselves as closely as possible to pure narrative—condensing within a narrow space the record of the many events of a most eventful career. It is scarcely necessary that we should conclude this notice with a written character of the Amír, as his conduct best reveals what he is. Indeed, it has been said of Dost Mahommed that he has no character at all; and inasmuch as it is made up of inconsistencies, there is some truth in the assertion. The fact is that there is observable throughout his career traces of two separate characters—the natural character of the man, and the character shaped by circumstances. There is scarcely anything which may be said of Dost Mahommed, not to be substantiated by a reference to some incident in his career. He was just and unjust; merciful and cruel; cautious and rash; frank and treacherous. His virtues were his own. There was nothing in the accidents of his position to foster their growth whilst every outward circumstance tended to favor the expansion of opposition qualities. He is to be pitied rather than condemned. As a man he could not have escaped the temptations which beset his path. Often compelled to sin in self-defence—often compelled to heap crime upon crime, or perish in his inactivity—his life was one of almost perpetual warfare—of constant excitation of the passions. It is just that we should bring to the estimate of his character, a clear perception of all these pernicious accidents of position, for he appears never to have sinned in wantonness, but to have loved evil less than good; and, judging by what he was when removed from the destructive influences of unholy strife, it is probable that under a serener sky, and on a less barren soil, his virtues might have elevated him to a high rank among rulers and among men. Compared with his cotemporaries, he towers above them all, in the former if not in the latter capacity; no Affghan prince in the present century has shown himself so fit to govern. In many respects his conduct, at the most favorable epoch of his career, was a model for rulers in all parts of the world; and at the most unfavorable epoch, when the clouds of adversity gathered most thickly over his head, his heroism was of so romantic a character, that history in these

prosaic times can scarcely supply a parallel to it. History, indeed, has never more closely simulated romance, than when recording the remarkable career of this remarkable man.

* * There is much *vraisemblance* in the following passages from General Harlan's book, descriptive of the personal habits of Dost Mahommed, that we are induced to publish them in the form of an appendix to this article :—

"The Amfr was not attended by a guard of regular troops, but his personal servants, many of whom were confidential household slaves, came armed into his presence. Every day, except Thursday morning, he sat in public to transact business. Thursday morning was devoted to the bath until ten o'clock; after this hour, those only visited him who were called. He usually employed the time before noon in auditing his domestic affairs in company with his Mirzas or writers. * * * *

Friday was appropriated to the promiscuous access of the populace. On this day, the gateway of his durbar was thrown wide open, and the doorkeepers withdrawn. Every one who had a cause to urge, or curiosity to gratify, might come into the presence without impediment. The Amfr heard all complaints in person, attended by the Langi. Civil causes were referred to this functionary for judgment, and the sentence was enforced by the Amfr. Criminal causes, which were not likely to yield a fine, were also referred to the Langi, to shift from his own shoulders the odium of an onerous act. * * * *

The remainder of the week was employed in the transaction of miscellaneous business. The hours of business were confined to the forenoon. His highness, in common with all the Mahommedans, was an early riser, which custom is necessary to admit of the performance of the prescribed morning prayers. Of the five periods of prayer commanded by the traditionary law, the first must be finished before sunrise, otherwise the act becomes "quzah," or "lapsed;" in this event the prayer is unacceptable to the deity, or of no avail; and the consequences attending neglect of religious duty should be deprecated by charitable donation, at least to the provision of a meal for the necessitous. Conscientious persons will perform this penitential hospitality, though the mass of the community are indifferent to the pious injunction. After the conclusion of this first religious duty, which commences the diurnal service and routine of life, he read a few pages in the Koran attended by his Iman. This functionary translated into Persian, or rather expounded in that colloquial dialect, the Arabic of the sacred volume, which the Mussalman holds to be the Word of God. In this employment he would be engaged an hour, more or less, as the task was longer or shorter. At the conclusion of this matin exercise, to which all the faithful who have singular pretensions to piety, are addicted, the chiefs who composed the durbar made their entree promiscuously, and with the simple ceremony of a bow, and the ordinary salutation "Usulam Allai-kum," touching the forehead as they leaned forward with the inner surface of the four fingers of the right hand, took their seats on the right or left of his highness. They were seated generally according to the rank of each guest. * * * *

The salutation of every one was returned by an audible response, it being amongst the religious injunctions of the faithful, to reply to proffered civility a reciprocal acknowledgment. They are probably just in the esti-

mation of politeness when they ascribe humility and condescension to the courteous. These are qualities which all profess to admire and endeavour to practise, notwithstanding the exclusive bigotry of pure Mahommedanism. My place in durbar was alongside of the Amír, on the left if the right should be pre-occupied, otherwise on the right. If his brother, the Nawab was there when I entered, he always gave place to me. The Nawabs Jubbar Khan and Mahommed Khan Populzye, whose daughter was married to the heir apparent, and myself, were the only officers who enjoyed the prescriptive right of seating ourselves on the same named or felt, which his highness occupied.

When recent spring fruit came into season the Amír frequently breakfasted at nine o'clock, on mulberries or apricots, in which instance he usually abstained from the more solid repast at meridian.

At twelve o'clock, the Prince and the elite retired and slept until two P.M. ; at this hour they arose to perform the second prayer. After his ablutions and toilet, the Amír egressed from his harem, and mounting his horse, which was in waiting at the gateway, he sallied out upon his evening ride. He had a fondness for fine horses, and generally visited his stud in the afternoon ; but this occupation was more appropriate to the spring, when the brood mares and colts attracted his regard, and participated in his care. In the summer and fall, he luxuriated in the picturesque scenery about the city, from a favourite prospect point ; seated himself, with a few select friends on the bank of a running stream, of which there were several about the vicinity, and enjoyed a cup of tea, or visited some one of the magnificent, oramantal and useful gardens near the suburbs of Kabul, accompanied by a train of musicians. In the spring he viewed his stud daily about three or four P. M. He sat on a terrace made for the purpose, two or three feet high, covered with felts. Here many of his chiefs joined him, who did not usually attend in morning durbar. These were stipendiary lords, and múllahs or priests and familiar friends who enjoyed his confidence ; they passed their time in smoking the cullioon,* desultory conversation, complimentary commendations of the Prince's unique fancy for horses, and admiration of the promising brood of young colts, which were the delight of his highness and favourites of his taste. These companions passed the evening with his highness until he retired. He returned to his Derri Khaneh (place of durbar) at nightfall. Having previously performed the third prayer, he mounted his horse and moved into quarters. The evenings, when the weather permitted, were passed in a beautiful flower garden : we sat on a low terrace illuminated by a large lamp.

During the season of full bloom, the position was surrounded by an invisible and delightful fragrance of the ever wakeful floral nature ; the intoxicating perfume of the rose, the spicy pink breathing of sweetness, and the flood of grateful odour that bathed the senses from the enchanting "Shuhboo."† The genial air of midsummer, tempered by the everlasting Alps of permanent snow near the valley, gratefully clothed our nocturnal hours in a voluptuous mantle of serene repose. The music was there too, fitful, frantic, or pathetic as the feast of reason and the flow of soul invoked its mysterious influence which,

"Softly sweet in Persian measure,
Gently soothed the soul to pleasure."

* Persian water pipe.

† "Or nocturnal odour," the July or Jilly flower, that sheds its scent after nightfall, is so called by the Persians.

Kabul, the city of a thousand gardens in these days, was a paradise removed from the agitating scenes of life, away from the world. * *

His highness kept very late hours, particularly during the long nights winter. I have repeatedly sat up with him until three A. M. Dinner was brought after "ussur," or the fourth prayer, which shortly followed sunse. This meal, similar to the breakfast, was served sooner or later, generally before eight o'clock, as his appetite suggested, although sometimes deferred until ten o'clock. When this was the case, fresh fruit would be introduced about eight, and the intermediate time was passed by his highness playing several games of chess with Kazi Budder-ú-Dín, or in conversation. When his highness was engaged at chess, the conversation ceased, and the interlocutors gathered nearest the performers to observe the game and applaud the sagacity he displayed. I never knew him lose a game. The Kazi was always beaten. At the conclusion of each game the science of certain moves was discussed, and a sufficient amount of flattery bestowed on the unrivalled play of his highness.

Notwithstanding, the wily Afghans would aside pass winks and gestures from one to another, and occasionally some one more privileged than the rest, has been heard to taunt the Amír by hinting that the Kazi played had intentionally, and lost to flatter him. He took his rallying always in good part, and it is certain that the Kazi was much too complaisant ever to gain a game even by chance. These nocturnal parties were conducted with perfect regard to etiquette and good manners. He was fond of listening to the relation of travels, and allusions to history; made frequent inquiries of merchants who were known to visit distant countries, concerning the manners and customs of the people they had seen, the character of the prince, the government, religion, and particularly, geography and topography, for which sciences he seemed to have a strong inclination. He was well acquainted with the Russian military system, and the best account, detailed with accuracy and illustrative minuteness, I have heard of the destruction of the Janissaries by the last Súlтан of Turkey, was recited to me by the Amír. He was much addicted to telling stories of his personal adventures; he delighted to talk of himself, was pleased with his own declamation, and vain of his eloquence. If merit is to elicit the reward of praise, he was justly entitled to admiration for the ready command of language and agreeable mode of displaying his talents in colloquial intercourse. Buffoonery never formed a part of his princely amusements, but refinement of moral or purity of design did not always characterise the tenor of his *improvisatore*. His anecdotes were not unfrequently gross and sensual. Unsophisticated by the arts of intellectuality, he thought that "nature unadorned was adorned the most." No event lost by relating any importance in reality, or was obscured by the nomenclature of modesty. He dealt a good deal in sarcasm, and was ever ready to trump his adversary's trick. Ridicule was a weapon that he flourished with considerable effect, and he good-humouredly made himself or his position the subject of ludicrous wit. The demands of his courtiers, or rather the feudal lords who represented the communities and constituted the most powerful element of the Government, kept the Amír always greatly straitened for the resources of present means, and I have heard him make his poverty, which really arose from extreme circumspection in providing for the necessities of personal defence out of his civil list, the source of ridicule."

