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# HISTORY
## OF
# THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN.

By JOHN WILLIAM KAYE, F.R.S.

*THIRD EDITION.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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# THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN.

## BOOK VII.

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### [1841-1842.]

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At this time the Governor-General and his family were resident at Calcutta. The period of Lord Auckland's tenure of the vice-regal office was drawing to a close. He was awaiting the arrival of his successor. It had seemed to him, as the heavy periodical rains began slowly to give place to the cool weather of the early winter, that there was nothing to overshadow the closing scenes of his administration, and to vex his spirit with misgivings and regrets during the monotonous months of the homeward voyage. The three first weeks of October brought him only cheering intelligence from the countries beyond the Indus. The Envoy continued to report, with confidence, the increasing tranquillity of Afghanistan. The Douranee [2] insurrection seemed to have been suppressed, and there was nothing stirring in the neighbourhood of Caubul to create anxiety and alarm.

But November set in gloomy and threatening. The clouds were gathering in the distance. It now seemed to Lord Auckland that his administration was doomed to close in storm and convulsion. Intelligence of the Ghilzye outbreak arrived. It was plain that the passes were sealed, for there were no tidings from Caubul. There might be rebellion and disaster at the capital; our communications were in the hands of the enemy; and all that was known at Calcutta was that Sale's brigade had been fighting its way downwards, and had lost many men and some officers in skirmishes with the Ghilzye tribes, which had seemingly been productive of no important results. There was something in all this very perplexing and embarrassing. Painful doubts and apprehensions began to disturb the mind of the Governor-General. It seemed to be the beginning of the end.

Never was authentic intelligence from Caubul looked for with so much eager anxiety as throughout the month of November. When tidings came at last—only too faithful in their details of disaster—they came in a dubious, unauthoritative shape, and, for a time, were received with incredulity. At the end of the third week of November, letters from Meerut, Kurnaul, and other stations in the upper provinces of Hindostan, announced that reports had crossed the frontier to the effect that there had been a general rising at Caubul, that the city had been fired, and that Sir Alexander Burnes had been killed. Letters to this effect reached the offices of the public journals, but no intelligence had been received at Government House, and a hope was expressed in official quarters that the stories in circulation were exaggerated native rumours. But, a day or two afterwards, the same stories were repeated in letters from Mr. [3] George Clerk, the Governor-General's agent on the north-western frontier, and from Captain Mackeson at Peshawur; and the intelligence came coupled with urgent requisitions for the despatch of reinforcements to Afghanistan.

Though no authentic tidings had been received from Caubul, the

advices from our political functionaries, on the intermediate line of country, were of a character not to be questioned; and Lord Auckland, who a day or two before had received letters from Sir William Macnaghten, assuring him that the disturbances were at an end, awoke to the startling truth that all Caubul was in a blaze, and the supremacy of the Suddozye Princes and their foreign supporters threatened by a general outburst of national indignation. Afghanistan—serene and prosperous Afghanistan—with its popular government and its grateful people, was in arms against its deliverers. Suddenly the tranquillity of that doomed country, boasted of in Caubul and credited in Calcutta, was found to be a great delusion. Across the whole length and breadth of the land the history of that gigantic lie was written in characters of blood. It was now too deplorably manifest that, although a British army had crossed the Indus and cantoned itself at Caubul and Candahar, the Afghans were Afghans still; still a nation of fierce Mahomedans, of hardy warriors, of independent mountaineers; still a people not to be dragooned into peace, or awed into submission, by a scattering of foreign bayonets and the pageantry of a puppet king.

The blow fell heavily upon Lord Auckland. An amiable gentleman and a well-intentioned statesman, he had made for himself many friends; and, perhaps, there was not in all Calcutta at that time, even amongst the most strenuous opponents of the policy which had resulted in so much misery and disgrace, one who did not now grieve for the sufferings of him whose errors had been so severely [4] visited. Had it fallen at any other time, it would not have been so acutely felt. But it came upon him at the close of his reign, when he could do nothing to restore the brilliancy of his tarnished reputation. He had expected to embark for England, a happy man and a successful ruler. He had, as he thought, conquered and tranquillised Afghanistan. For the former exploit he had been created an earl; and the latter would have entitled him to the honour. It is true that he had drained the treasury of India; but he believed that he was about to hand over no embryo war to his successor, and that, therefore, the treasury would soon replenish itself. The prospect was sufficiently cheering, and he was eager to depart; but the old year wore to a close, and found Lord Auckland pacing, with a troubled countenance, the spacious apartments of Government House—found him the most luckless of rulers and the most miserable of men.

Never was statesman so cast down; never was statesman so perplexed and bewildered. The month of December was one of painful anxiety; of boding fear; of embarrassing uncertainty. There was no official information from Caubul. The private accounts received from Jellalabad and Peshawur, always brief, often vague and conflicting, excited the worst apprehensions without dispelling much of the public ignorance. In this conjuncture, government were helpless. The Caubul force, cut off from all support, could by no possibility be rescued. The utmost vigour and determination—the highest wisdom and sagacity—could avail nothing at such a time. The scales had fallen from the eyes of the Governor-General only to show him the utter hopelessness of the case. In this terrible emergency he seems to have perceived, for the first time, the madness of posting a detached force in a foreign country, hundreds of miles from our own frontier, cut off from all support by rugged [5] mountains and impenetrable defiles. Before a single brigade could be pushed on to the relief of the beleaguered force, the whole army might be annihilated. Clearly Lord Auckland now beheld the inherent viciousness of the original policy of the war, and, in sorrow and humiliation, began to bethink himself of the propriety of abandoning it.

What Lord Auckland now wrote publicly on this subject is on record; what he wrote privately is known to a few. That the Governor-General, in this terrible conjuncture, succumbed to the blow which had fallen upon him; that his energies did not rise with the occasion, but that the feebleness of paralysis was conspicuous in all that he did, has often been asserted and never confidently denied. But it may be doubted whether his feelings or his conduct at this time have ever been fairly judged or clearly understood. The truth is, that he had originally committed himself to a course of policy which never had his cordial approbation, and his after-efforts to uphold which he inwardly regarded as so many attempts to make the worse appear the better reason. It is plain that, very soon after the occupation of Caubul had for a time brought the Afghan

campaign to a close, the Governor-General began to entertain very painful doubts and misgivings; and that, although he by no means anticipated the sudden and disastrous fall of the whole edifice he had raised, he had, long before the close of 1841, repented of his own infirmity of purpose, in giving way to the counsels of others; and had begun to doubt whether we had succeeded in the great object of the war—the establishment of such a friendly power in Afghanistan as would secure us against western aggression. He must have seen, too—for he was, in the main, a just and an honest man—that the policy, which he had sanctioned, cradled in injustice as it was, was continually perpetuating injustice; and he must have [6] heard the wrongs of the Afghan chiefs and the Afghan nation eternally crying out to him for redress. Macnaghten complained that Lord Auckland and Mr. Colvin were too ready to believe all the stories of the unpopularity of the government and discontent of the chiefs and the people, which reached them through obscure channels of information; though those channels of information were the local newspapers, whose informants were generally officers of rank and character. But in spite of the Envoy's assurances and denials, Lord Auckland had begun to suspect that there was something rotten at the core of our Afghan policy; and something pre-eminently defective in the administrative conduct of those to whom its working out had been entrusted. He did not, in the autumn of 1841, believe that any sudden and overwhelming storm would cloud the last days of his Indian government; but he had begun to encourage the belief that he had made a fatal mistake, and that, sooner or later, the real character of his Afghan policy would be revealed to the world.

But there was something more than his own doubts and misgivings to be considered. Lord Auckland knew that the connexion he had established in Afghanistan was distasteful in the extreme to the East India Company. There was good reason for this. The necessity of sustaining Shah Soojah on the throne of Caubul had drained the financial resources of the Company to the dregs, and was entailing upon them liabilities which, if not speedily retrenched, they might have found it impossible to discharge. The injustice of the occupation of Afghanistan was not confined to the people of that country. A grievous injustice was being inflicted upon the people of India, the internal improvement of which was obstructed, to maintain the incapable Suddozye in the country from which he had been cast out by his offended people. No man knew this better, or [7] deplored it more deeply, than Lord Auckland himself. The opinions of the East India Company upon this subject had been well known from the very commencement of the war. But the Court of Directors had no constitutional authority to suspend the operations which they had not been called upon to sanction, and only so far as they were represented in the Secret Committee had they any influence in the Councils which shaped our measures in Afghanistan. But no one knew better than Lord Auckland that there was scarcely one of the twenty-four Directors' rooms in the Great Parliament of Leadenhall-street in which the continued occupation of the country beyond the Indus was not a subject of perpetual complaint.

And when he turned his thoughts from Leadenhall-street to Downing-street, it appeared to him that there were still weightier reasons for the abandonment of our ill-omened connexion with the countries beyond the Indus. The Whigs had sent him to India; the Conservatives were now in office. At the end of August the Melbourne ministry had resigned; and Peel was now at the head of the cabinet. It was known that the Conservative party either were, or made a show of being, radically opposed to the Afghan policy of the government which they had displaced. It was natural, therefore, that Lord Auckland, who was now awaiting the arrival of his successor, should have shrunk from committing him to any extensive measures for the recovery of our position in Afghanistan, which, in all probability, he would not be disposed to carry out. Whatever amount of energy the old ruler might now throw into the work before him, it was certain that he would only be able to commence what he must leave to his successor to complete. To have handed over to the new Governor-General the outline of a political scheme, just sufficiently worked out in its details to render its [8] abandonment impossible, would have been to embarrass and hamper him, at the outset of his career, in a manner that would have perplexed the new ruler in the extreme, and jeopardised the interests of the empire. He believed that the policy of the

Conservatives was nearly identical with that of the East India Company, and that they would eagerly take advantage of the present crisis to sever our connexion with the countries beyond the Indus, and to declare the failure of the original scheme propounded in the Simlah manifesto of 1838.

It is right that Lord Auckland should have ample credit for suffering these important considerations to exercise their due influence over his counsels. It is right, too, that it should be clearly recognised how great was the moral courage it demanded, either practically to declare by himself, or to leave to others to declare, the utter failure of a great political scheme for which he was responsible to his country, and with which, from generation to generation, his name will be indissolubly associated in history. But when all this has been said, there still remains to be recorded the humiliating fact that a great crisis suddenly arose, and Lord Auckland was not equal to it. He had begun to doubt the justice and expediency of the policy of 1838. And these doubts, added to his knowledge of the views of the Home governments, forced upon him the conviction that it had now become his duty to direct all his efforts to the one object of withdrawing our beleaguered garrisons in safety to Hindostan. But he seems, in the bewilderment and perplexity which followed the stunning blow that had descended so suddenly upon him, to have forgotten that there are in the lives of nations, as of men, great and imminent conjunctures, which not only sanction, but demand a departure from ordinary rules of conduct and principles of statesmanship. Such a conjuncture had now [9] arisen; and, important as were all the considerations recapitulated above, they should have given place in his mind to the one paramount desire of demonstrating to all the nations of the East the invincibility of British arms. Neither the wishes of the East India Company nor the opinions of the Conservative government had been declared in the face of a great disaster. The withdrawal of the British army from Afghanistan might, and I believe would, have been a measure of sound policy; but only if the time and manner of withdrawal had been well chosen. It could never have been sound policy to withdraw under the pressure of an overwhelming defeat. To retire from Afghanistan was one thing; to be driven out of it was another. A frank avowal of error, calmly and deliberately enunciated, under no pressure of immediate danger or insurmountable difficulty, would have denoted only conscious strength. It would have been the dignified self-negation of a powerful state daring to be just to others and true to itself. But to abandon the country, precipitately and confusedly, under the pressure of disaster and defeat, would have been a miserable confession of weakness that might have shaken to its very foundation the British Empire in the East.

And such a confession of weakness Lord Auckland was inclined to make. He seemed to reel and stagger under the blow—to be paralysed and enfeebled by the disasters that had overtaken him. His correspondence at this time betokened such painful prostration, that some to whom he wrote destroyed, in pity, all traces of these humiliating revelations. It was vaguely rumoured, too, how, in bitterness of spirit, he spent long hours pacing by day the spacious verandahs of Government House; or, by night, cooling his fevered brow on the grass-plots in front of it, accompanied by some member of his household endeared to him by ties of blood. The curse [10] brooded over him, as it was brooding over Elphinstone and Macnaghten, darkening his vision, clouding his judgment, prostrating his energies—turning everything to feebleness and folly. New tidings of disaster—misfortune treading on the heels of misfortune—came flooding in from beyond the Indus; and the chief ruler of the land, with a great army at his call, thought only of extrication and retreat; thought of bringing back, instead of pushing forward, our troops; of abandoning, instead of regaining, our position. Fascinated, as it were, by the great calamity, his eyes were rivetted on the little line of country between Caubul and Peshawur; and he did not see, in his eagerness to rescue small detachments from danger, and to escape the immediate recurrence of new disasters in Afghanistan, that the question now to be solved was one of far greater scope and significance—that it was not so much whether Afghanistan were to be occupied, as whether India were to be retained. But there were old and experienced politicians, well acquainted with the temper of the chiefs and the people of India and the countries beyond, who believed that any manifestation of

weakness, in this conjuncture, would have endangered the security of our position in India; and that, therefore, cost what it might, a blow must be struck for the recovery of our military supremacy in the countries beyond the Indus.

But from the very first Lord Auckland began to despond, and steadfastly set his face against any measures of military re-establishment. When, on the 25th of November, he received from Mr. Clerk and Captain Mackeson intelligence which confirmed the newspaper accounts received two days before, and read the pressing requisitions of those officers for the despatch of more troops to the frontier, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, who was then journeying through the Upper Provinces of India: "It is not [11] clear to me how the march of a brigade can by possibility have any influence upon the events which it is supposed may be passing at Caubul.... They may be at Jellalabad in February, and could not march onwards to Caubul before April.... It may be well, perhaps, that two or three regiments should be assembled at Peshawur.... I wish the requisition had been made with less trepidation." Again, on the 1st of December, he wrote to the same officer: "It seems to me that we are not to think of marching fresh armies for the re-conquest of that which we are likely to lose.... The difficulty will not be one of fighting and gaining victories, but of supplies, of movements, and of carriage.... The troops in Afghanistan are sufficiently numerous. They would but be encumbered by greater numbers, and reinforcements could not arrive before the crisis will have passed. If the end is to be disastrous, they would but increase the extent of the disaster." On the following day he again wrote to Sir Jasper Nicolls, setting forth the views of government, to the effect—"1st. That we should not fit out large armaments for re-conquest—such an enterprise would be beyond our means. 2nd. That even for succours the season is unfavourable and impracticable, and months must pass before it could be attempted. 3rdly. That if aid can be given, the officer in command should not be prohibited from seizing the opportunity of affording it. I fear," added the Governor-General in this letter, "that safety to the force at Caubul can only come from itself." On the 5th he wrote to the same correspondent, that "we should stand fast and gather strength at Peshawur"—on the Sutlej, and on the Indus. "Our power," he said, "of giving succour is extremely limited, and if it come at all, it can only come tardily.... We must look on an advance from Jellalabad for some months as utterly out of the question. An advance even to [12] Jellalabad could only be to give security to Sale, and with the aid of the Sikhs, one brigade, with artillery, should be sufficient. If all should be lost at Caubul we will not encounter new hazards for re-conquest."[1] On the 9th of December he wrote, still more emphatically: "The present state of affairs, whether its issue be fortunate or disastrous, is more likely to lead within a few months to the withdrawal of troops to our frontiers than to the employment of larger means beyond it." A week afterwards he wrote, still to the Commander-in-Chief: "We must know more before we can decide anything, or lay down any large scheme of measures.... There are already more regiments beyond the frontier than we can feed or easily pay.... You know I would not be too profuse in sending strength forward."[2] What Lord Auckland's intentions were at this time may be gathered from these letters. He thought only of saving all that could be saved; and of escaping out of Afghanistan with the least possible delay.

The Commander-in-Chief to whom these letters were addressed was, as has been said, at this time on his way through the Upper Provinces of India. Sir Jasper Nicolls had been consistently opposed to the entire scheme of Afghan invasion, and had with rare prescience and sagacity foretold the disastrous downfall of a policy based upon a foundation of such complicated error. He had spent his life in the camp; but his public minutes, as well as his private [13] letters and journals, written throughout the years 1840-41, indicate a larger amount of political sagacity than we find displayed in the expressed opinions of his official contemporaries, to whom statesmanship was the profession and practice of their lives. He had all along protested against the withdrawal of our troops from their legitimate uses in the British Provinces, and urged that it was necessary either so to increase the Indian army as to enable the government to keep up an adequate force in Afghanistan without weakening the defences of Hindostan, or to withdraw the British troops altogether from the countries beyond the Indus. It was now

his opinion—an opinion in which the Governor-General participated—that, inasmuch as the Indian army, largely indented upon as it was for service beyond the frontier, was greatly below the right athletic strength, it would be impossible to pour strong reinforcements into Afghanistan without weakening the British Provinces in such a manner as to provoke both external aggression and internal revolt.[3] But supineness, in such a conjuncture, was more likely to have provoked aggression than activity, although the latter might have [14] denuded India of some of its best troops. Macnaghten told Runjeet Singh, in the summer of 1838, that the military resources of the British-Indian Government were such that 200,000 soldiers might at any time be brought into the field to resist simultaneous aggression from all the four sides of India; and although this may have been only an approximation to the sober truth, it is certain that, if the dispatch of a couple of brigades to Jellalabad, and subsequently to Caubul, would have jeopardised the security of India, the military resources of the government must have been in a very depressed state. When Sir Jasper Nicolls, meeting the flood of intelligence from beyond the Indus, as he advanced through the Upper Provinces of India, recorded, in letters to the Governor-General, his belief that it would be unwise to prosecute another war in support of the Suddozye provinces,[4] he expressed only the sound opinion of a sagacious politician. But he seems to have forgotten that there [15] was something more than the restoration of the Suddozye dynasty to be accomplished—there was the restoration of the military supremacy of Great Britain in Central Asia to be achieved; and whatever may have been the scruples of the statesman, in such a crisis as this, the soldier ought not to have hesitated for a moment.

But whilst such were the opinions of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, there were other functionaries nearer to the scene of action at the time, whose feelings prompted, and whose judgment dictated, a more energetic course of procedure. Among these were Mr. Robertson, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, and Mr. George Clerk, the Governor-General's Agent on the North-Western Frontier. Both of these able and experienced officers recognised the paramount necessity of pushing on troops to Peshawur with the utmost possible despatch. On the latter devolved, in the first instance, the responsibility of moving forward the regiments which were in readiness to proceed for the periodical relief of the troops in Afghanistan,[5] as well as a regiment which was in orders for Sindh.[6] On the 16th of November, he addressed letters to Colonel Wild, the commanding officer at Ferozepore, and Colonel Rich, who commanded at Loodhianah, urging them to send on to Peshawur, as speedily as possible, the regiments named in the margin.[7] In compliance with these requisitions, the 64th Regiment crossed the Sutlej on the 18th [16] of November and the 60th on the 20th of November. The 53rd, which was accompanied by the 30th Regiment,[8] crossed the river on the 26th.

Having expedited the movement of these regiments, Mr. Clerk began to make preparations for the despatch of another brigade to Peshawur, and addressed General Boyd, who at that time commanded the Sirhind division, on the subject. At the same time, he addressed urgent letters to the Court of Lahore, apprising them of the intended march of the regiments through the Punjaub—calling on them to supply boats for the passage of the river—and suggesting to the Maharajah that he should "cause the immediate march of his son, Koonwur Pertab Singh, on Peshawur, with 5000 of their best troops from the neighbouring district of Chuck Huzara." Captain Mackeson had before applied to the Sikh authorities at Peshawur for 6000 men to march on Jellalabad; but had been told by General Avitabile that he had few troops at Peshawur, and that he required them all for the protection of the Sikh territory.

Lord Auckland, however, was strongly of opinion that the second brigade, which was to comprise her Majesty's 9th Foot, the 10th Light (Native) Cavalry, and a troop of Horse Artillery, ought not to be moved forward. "We do not now," wrote the Governor-General in Council, on the 3rd of December, "desire to send a second brigade in advance, for we do not conceive it to be called for, for the objects of support and assistance which we contemplate; and we think it [17] inexpedient to despatch any greater number of troops than be absolutely necessary from our own provinces." And two days afterwards he wrote privately to the Commander-in-Chief: "I

heartily hope that the second brigade may not have been sent." He could not, he added, "see of what service it could be at present. One brigade, with the artillery which you purpose sending, should be sufficient to force the Khybur pass; and ten brigades could not, at this season of the year, force the passes to Caubul."

But the "one brigade with artillery" never went to Peshawur. The Native Infantry crossed the Punjaub under the command of Brigadier Wild. Some artillerymen went with them;[9] but there was no Artillery, for there were no guns. It was expected, however, that the Sikhs would supply the ordnance which the British had left out of the account. "You have not at present any guns," wrote the Head-Quarters' Staff to Brigadier Wild, "but you have artillerymen, sappers and miners, and officers of both corps. His Excellency is not aware of any difficulty likely to prevent your being accommodated by the Sikh Governor-General, Avitabile, with four or six pieces; and you will solicit such aid, when necessary, through Captain Mackeson." But when Brigadier Wild reached Peshawur, a day or two before the close of the year, he found that difficulties had arisen to prevent the preparation of the expected Sikh guns for service. The artillerymen were disinclined to hand them over to the British; and though great doubts were entertained as to whether they were in reality worth anything, it was hard to compass a loan of the suspected pieces. And so Brigadier Wild, urged as he was from all quarters to push on to Jellalabad, with the provisions, treasure, and [18] ammunition he was to escort thither, sate down quietly at Peshawur, whilst Captains Mackeson and Lawrence were endeavouring to overcome the coyness of the Sikh artillerymen; and began to apprehend that his march would be delayed until some field-pieces were sent to him from India.

His suspense, however, was of not very long duration. On the 3rd of January, four rickety guns were handed over to the British officers; but not without a show of resistance on the part of the Sikh artillerymen. On the following day, one of the limbers went to pieces under trial; and then it had to be replaced. Other difficulties, too, met Wild at Peshawur. His camel-men were playing the old game of desertion. The Afreedi Maliks had not yet been bribed into submission by Mackeson; and the loyalty of our Sikh allies was so doubtful, that they were just as likely, on Wild's brigade entering the Khybur, to attack him in rear as to keep the pass open for him. All these elements of delay were greatly to be lamented. There was a forward feeling among the Sepoys which might have been checked. They were eager to advance when they reached Peshawur; and their enthusiasm was little likely to be increased by days of inactivity in a sickly camp, exposed to the contaminating influences of the Sikh soldiery, who, always dreading the deep passes of the Khybur, now purposely exaggerated its terrors, and endeavoured by other means to raise the fears, to excite the prejudices of the Sepoys, and to shake their fidelity to the government which they served.

In the mean while active preparations for the despatch of further reinforcements to Peshawur were going on in the North-Western Provinces of India. Lord Auckland could not readily bring himself to recognise the expediency of sending forward a second brigade: but Mr. Clerk had taken the initiative, and the Governor-General was [19] unwilling to disturb any arrangements which already were being brought into effect. The 9th Foot had been ordered to hold itself in readiness, and another regiment, the 26th Native Infantry, was to be sent with it, accompanied by some irregular horse, and a scanty supply of artillery.[10] The Commander-in-Chief was "not prepared" for this demand, and the Governor-General in Council thought it "undesirable" to send more troops in advance. But it was obvious to the authorities on the north-western frontier that the state of affairs in Afghanistan was becoming every day more critical; and that it was expedient to concentrate the utmost available strength on the frontier of Afghanistan. Towards the end of the year, the Governor-General having expressed a strong opinion regarding the necessity of attaching some regular horse to the brigade, the 10th Cavalry were ordered to proceed under Brigadier M'Caskill (of the 9th Foot), who, as senior officer, took command of the force; and on the 4th of January the brigade, consisting of 3034 fighting men, crossed the Sutlej on its way to Peshawur.

To command the body of troops now assembling for service beyond the frontier, it became necessary to select an officer of good

military repute and unquestionable energy and activity, combined with a cool judgment and a sound discretion. Sir Jasper Nicolls had, in the month of November, when the despatch of a Queen's regiment to Peshawur was first contemplated, pointed to Sir Edmund Williams, as a general officer well fitted for such command. But to the Governor-General it appeared expedient to place an experienced officer of the Company's service at the head of affairs, and Sir Edmund Williams was a general of the royal army, who had served but two years in India at the time of the Caubul outbreak, [20] and who knew as little of the Sepoy army as he did of the politics of Afghanistan. Lord Auckland had made his election. In Major-General Lumley, the adjutant-general of the army, he thought that he saw all the qualifications which it behoved the commander of such an army to possess. But there was one thing that Lumley wanted; he wanted physical health and strength. When the Governor-General sent up the nomination to head-quarters, the Commander-in-Chief at once replied that Lumley could not take the command; and again Nicolls recommended the appointment of Sir Edmund Williams. Indeed, he had determined on sending for that officer to his camp, and arming him at once with instructions; but subsequent letters from Calcutta made it only too plain that the appointment would be extremely distasteful to the Supreme Government; and so the intention was abandoned. General Lumley was at head-quarters. The Commander-in-Chief sent for him to his tent, placed in his hand a letter his Excellency had just received from the Governor-General relative to Lumley's employment beyond the frontier, and called upon him for his final decision. The General was willing to cross the Indus; but, doubtful of his physical ability to undertake so onerous a duty, placed the decision of the question in the hands of his medical advisers, who at once declared that he was totally unequal to meet "the required exertion and exposure" demanded by such a campaign.

The Commander-in-Chief at once determined to nominate another Company's officer to the command of the troops proceeding to Peshawur. His choice then fell upon General George Pollock, who commanded the garrison of Agra.—Receiving his military education at the Woolwich Academy, this officer had entered the Indian army [21] as a lieutenant of artillery in the year 1803, when Lake and Wellesley were in the field, and all India was watching, with eager expectancy, the movements of the grand armies which, by victory after victory, were breaking down the power of the Mahrattas. At the storm and capture of Dieg, in 1803, young Pollock was present; and in 1805, during the gallant but unsuccessful attempts of the British army to carry Bhurtpore by assault, he was busy in the trenches. At the close of the same year he was selected by Lord Lake to command the artillery with the detachment under Colonel Ball, sent in pursuit of Holkar. From this time he held different regimental staff appointments up to the year 1817, when, in command of the artillery with General Wood's force, he took part in the stirring scenes of the Nepaul war. In 1818 he was appointed Brigade-Major; and subsequently, on the creation of that appointment, held the Assistant-Adjutant-Generalship of Artillery up to the year 1824, when, having attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, he volunteered to join the army which was assembling for the prosecution of the Burmese war, and was nominated by Sir Edward Paget to command the Bengal Artillery attached to the force under Sir Archibald Campbell, proceeding to Rangoon. For his services during the war he received the decoration of the Companionship of the Bath. From this time, except during an interval of some three years spent in England for the recovery of his health, he held different regimental and brigade commands, until, at the close of 1841, being then Major-General, in command of the garrison of Agra, he was selected by Sir Jasper Nicolls to take command of the troops proceeding to Peshawur, and ordered at once to proceed to the frontier by dawk.

The appointment of General Pollock gave the greatest satisfaction to the Supreme Government, and not even a murmur of disapprobation arose from the general body of the army. The [22] nomination of this old and distinguished Company's officer was believed to be free from the corruption of aristocratic influence and the taint of personal favouritism. It was felt, that in this case at least, the selection had been made solely on the ground of individual merit. And the merit which was thus rewarded was of the most modest and unostentatious character. There was not, perhaps, in

the whole Indian army a man of more unassuming manners and a more retiring disposition: there was not one less likely to have sought notoriety for its own sake, or to have put himself forward in an effort to obtain it. Pollock's merits did not lie upon the surface. He was not what is called a "dashing officer;" he shrunk from anything like personal display, and never appealed to the vulgar weaknesses of an unreflecting community. But beneath a most unassuming exterior there lay a fund of good sense, of innate sagacity, of quiet firmness and collectedness. He was equable and temperate. He was thoroughly conscientious. If he was looked upon by the Indian Government as a *safe* man, it was not merely because he always exercised a calm and dispassionate judgment, but because he was actuated in all that he did by the purest motives, and sustained by the highest principles. He was essentially an honest man. There was a directness of purpose about him which won the confidence of all with whom he was associated. They saw that his one paramount desire was a desire to do his duty to his country by consulting, in every way, the welfare and the honour of the troops under his command; and they knew that they would never be sacrificed, either on the one hand by the rash ambition, or on the other by the feebleness and indecision, of their leader. The force now to be despatched to the frontier of Afghanistan required the superintendence and control of an officer equally cool and firm, temperate and decided; and, perhaps, in the whole range of the [23]
Indian army, the Government could not have found one in whom these qualities were more eminently combined than in the character of General Pollock.

Hastening to place himself at the head of his men, Pollock left Agra, and proceeded by dawk to the frontier. The second brigade was then making its way through the Punjaub, under General M'Caskill; and the authorities in the North-Western Provinces were exerting themselves to push on further reinforcements to Peshawur.

On the 22d of January, the Commander-in-Chief and Mr. George Clerk met at Thanesur, some two marches distant from Kurnaul. They had received the melancholy tidings of the destruction of the Caubul force; and they took counsel together regarding the measures to be pursued in consequence of this gigantic calamity. Very different were the views of these two functionaries. To Sir Jasper Nicolls it appeared that the destruction of the Caubul force afforded no reason for the advance of further reinforcements; but rather seemed to indicate the expediency of a retrograde movement on the part of all the remaining troops beyond the Indus. It was his opinion—an opinion to some extent shared by the Supreme Government—that the retention of Jellalabad being no longer necessary to support the Caubul army, or to assist its retreat, the withdrawal of the garrison to Peshawur had become primarily expedient; and that, as the re-conquest and re-occupation of Afghanistan were not under any circumstances to be recommended, it was desirable that, after the safety of Sale's brigade had been secured, the whole force should return to Hindostan. But Mr. Clerk was all for a forward movement. He argued that the safety and the honour of the British nation demanded that we should hold our own at Jellalabad, until the garrison, reinforced by fresh troops from the provinces of India, could march upon Caubul, in conjunction with [24]
the Candahar force moving from the westward, chastise the enemy on the theatre of their recent successes, and then withdraw altogether from Afghanistan "with dignity and undiminished honour."[11] It was gall and wormwood to George Clerk to think for a moment of leaving the Afghans, flushed with success, to revel in the humiliation of the British Government, and to boast of the destruction of a British army. Emphatically he dwelt on the disgrace of inactivity in such a crisis; and emphatically he dwelt upon the danger. Coolly and quietly, as one whose ordinary serenity was not to be disturbed by any accidental convulsions, Sir Jasper Nicolls set forth in reply that the return of so many regiments to the provinces, and the vast reduction of expenditure that would attend it, would place the government in such a position of strength as would enable it summarily to chastise any neighbouring state that might presume upon our recent misfortunes to show a hostile front against us. The demand for more troops he would have resisted altogether; but the urgency of George Clerk was not to be withstood, and two more regiments—the 6th and 55th Native Infantry—were ordered to hold themselves in readiness to proceed to Peshawur. But when Clerk asked for a detachment of British dragoons, Nicolls peremptorily

resisted the demand, and referred the question to the Supreme Government.[12] Before the reference reached Calcutta, the Supreme Government had received intelligence of the massacre of [25] Elphinstone's army; and wrote back to the Commander-in-Chief that it was essentially necessary that a commanding force should assemble at Peshawur—that it was particularly important that the force should be effective in cavalry and artillery, and that at all events two squadrons of European dragoons should be pushed on to Peshawur. The 1st Regiment of Native Cavalry and a troop of Horse-Artillery were subsequently added to the third brigade.

In the meanwhile increasing care and anxiety were brooding over Government House. Gloomily the new year dawned upon its inmates. And there was not in that great palaced city, or in any one of the smaller stations and cantonments of India, an Englishman whose heart did not beat, and whose hand did not tremble with anxiety, for the fate of the Caubul force, when he opened the letters or papers which brought him intelligence from beyond the frontier. No one who dwelt in any part of India during the early months of 1842, will ever forget the anxious faces and thick voices with which tidings were sought; questions and opinions interchanged; hopes and fears expressed; rumours sifted; probabilities weighed; and how, as the tragedy deepened in solemn interest, even the most timid and desponding felt that the ascertained reality far exceeded in misery and horror all that their excited imaginations had darkly foretold. There was a weight in the social atmosphere, as of dense superincumbent thunder-clouds. The festivities of the cold season were arrested; gaiety and hospitality were not. There were few families in the country which did not sicken with apprehension for the fate of some beloved relative or friend, whilst unconnected men, in whom the national overlaid the personal feeling, in this conjuncture, sighed over the tarnished reputation of their country, and burned to avenge the murder of their countrymen and the [26] insults that had been heaped upon the nation.

It would be pleasant to record that, in this great and melancholy crisis, the public looked up with confidence and assurance to the statesman upon whom was now thrown the responsibility of extricating from the quickset of danger and difficulty that environed them, the imperilled affairs of the British Indian Empire. But history can give currency to no such fiction. As time advanced it became more and more painfully evident that Lord Auckland was reeling and staggering beneath the blow that had descended upon him. He appeared to be unable to decide upon any consistent plan of action. At one time he seems to have contemplated the withdrawal of the Jellalabad garrison to Peshawur, leaving it to fight its own way through the pass; at another, he seems to have been fully impressed with the necessity of retaining the former post, if only for the protection of the Caubul force; then he talked, as I have shown, of concentrating a large army at Peshawur, and almost immediately afterwards began to think that it would be more expedient to have our advanced post at Ferozepore. There was only one point on which he seems clearly to have made up his mind. He was resolute not to recommend a forward movement for the re-occupation of Caubul. He believed that any such attempt would be attended with disaster and disgrace; and he considered that it became him, on the eve of departure, as he was, not to embarrass his successor by inextricably pledging the Government to measures which the new Viceroy might consider "rash, impolitic, and ruinous."

On the 30th of January, the worst fears of the Government were confirmed. An express arrived from Mr. Clerk, setting forth, on the authority of letters received from Macgregor at Jellalabad, that the Caubul force had been utterly destroyed. Some vague rumours of [27] this crowning disaster had obtained currency in Calcutta a day or two before; and now the terrible apprehensions of the public were found to have been only the presages of actual truth. The immediate effect of this astounding intelligence upon the conduct of Government was to rouse the Governor-General into something like a temporary demonstration of vigour. He issued a proclamation declaring that he considered the calamity that had overtaken the British arms only "as a new occasion for displaying the stability and vigour of the British power, and the admirable spirit and valour of the British-Indian army." But it was little more than a spasm of energy. The ink with which this notification was written was hardly dry, before the Governor-General in Council wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, that Jellalabad was not a place which he

desired to be kept at all hazards, and after succour should have been given to Sir R. Sale's brigade then, and relief should have been given to parties arriving from Caubul, the Governor-General in Council would wish General Pollock, rather than run extreme risks in that position, to arrange for the withdrawal of it, and the assembling of his force at or near Peshawur.[13]

As time advanced, the retrograde tendencies of Lord Auckland's determination became more and more apparent. On the 10th of February, the Governor-General in Council wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, instructing him to inform General Pollock that, "as the main inducement for the maintenance of a post at Jellalabad —namely, that of being a point of support to any of our troops escaping from Caubul—having now unhappily passed away, it is the [28] object of the Government that he should, unless any unforeseen contingency should give a decidedly favourable turn to affairs, confine himself to measures for withdrawing the Jellalabad garrison in safety to Peshawur, and there for the present, holding together all the troops under his orders in a secure position, removed from collision with the Sikh forces or subjects." And on the same day, Mr. Maddock, the chief secretary, under instructions from the Supreme Government, wrote to Mr. Clerk that "it would be highly desirable that when Jellalabad was no longer held by us, our detachments, which have been moved forward in support to meet a present emergency, should be brought gradually back to their cantonments, in order that any ulterior operations that may be determined upon for another advance beyond the Indus (and that towards the Khybur and Jellalabad is probably not the one to which preference would be given) may be undertaken after full preparation, with a complete equipment, and in fresh and well-organised strength."[14]

Lord Auckland had been startled by the astounding intelligence of the massacre of Elphinstone's army into an ebullition of energy by no means in accordance with the previous tenor of the measures which he had initiated, and not more in accordance with those which were about to emanate from him. After the first paroxysm of [29] horror and indignation was over, he began again to settle down quietly in the conviction that it was best to do as little as possible on the other side of the Indus, lest worse misfortunes should descend upon us, and the attempt to recover our lost reputation should result only in further disgrace.

By this time the doubts of those who had speculated on the subject of the succession to the Governor-Generalship had been set at rest by the arrival of the Overland Mail. The despatches received in December announced that the choice of the home ministry had fallen upon one of their own body; and that the East India Company had ratified the choice. Lord Ellenborough, who had before filled and was now filling the office of President of the Board of Control, had been appointed Viceroy of India. The question of the succession had been canvassed with more than common eagerness, and its solution looked forward to with unusual interest. When the intelligence at last arrived it took the majority by surprise. The probability of the appointment of Lord Ellenborough had not been entertained. Sir James Graham, Lord Heytesbury, Lord Lichfield—nay, even Lord Lyndhurst, had been named; but speculation had not busied itself with the name of Lord Ellenborough.

But the intelligence, though unexpected, was not unwelcome. It was, indeed, received with universal satisfaction. The Press, with one accord, spoke of the appointment with approbation; and the public confirmed the verdict of the Press. All parties were alike sanguine—all prepared to look for good in the new Governor-General. There is not a community on the face of the earth less influenced by the spirit of faction, than the community of British India. To support, or to oppose the measures of a Governor, simply because he is a Whig or a Tory, is an excess of active prejudice wholly unknown in India. There are no political parties, and there is [30] no party Press to play out such a game as this. Public men are judged, not by what they belong to, but by what belongs to them; and thus was Lord Ellenborough judged. Whig and Tory alike hailed the appointment: for the new Governor-General was held in some degree of estimation as one who had made India his study, and cherished a laudable interest in its welfare. He was believed to be possessed of more than average talent; to be assiduous in his attention to business; and rather an able man of detail than a statesman of very brilliant promise. They, who thought most about

the matter, anticipated that he would make a good, steady, peace-governor; that he would apply himself devotedly to the task of improving the internal administration of the country; and by a steady and consistent course of policy soon disengage the country from the pressure of financial embarrassment which had long sate so heavily upon it. They knew little and cared less about the personal eccentricities which in England had been imputed to him. Neither the Press nor the Public concerned itself about these manifestations of the outer man. They thought of the newly appointed Governor-General as an able and laborious man of business, with a more than common knowledge of the history of India and the details of its administration. They knew that not only had his occupancy, for many years, of the chief seat at the India Board, rendered him familiar with the workings of the Indian Government; but that, on every occasion, when Indian affairs had been discussed in the House of Lords, in power or out of power, he had taken a prominent part in the debates. In 1833, when the provisions of the existing charter were under the consideration of Parliament, he had distinguished himself as one of the ablest, but most moderate opponents of certain of its clauses, contending in favour of the diminution of the powers of the Indian Governors by [31] the imposition of the wholesome control of Council; and earnestly protesting against the perilous evil of leaving too much to the unbridled passions or the erratic caprice of a single man. In later days, he had denounced the war in Afghanistan, in fitting terms of severe censure; and all things combined to render the Indian public hopeful of a good, steady, peaceful administration. Conservative exchanged congratulations with Liberal on the cheering prospects, now opening out before them, of many years of peaceful government and financial prosperity. Lord Ellenborough was believed to be a moderate statesman—somewhat too liberal for the Tories of the ministerial camp, but not for the modified conservatism of India, where every man is more or less a Reformer; and as a moderate statesman all men were prepared to welcome him.

In October, 1841, he was elected to fill the office of Governor-General; and on the 4th of the following month, he attended the usual complimentary dinner, given, on such occasions, by the Court of Directors. The report of that dinner, which reached India simultaneously with the intelligence of Lord Ellenborough's appointment, had a natural tendency to increase the confidence, engendered by his Lordship's previous history, in the judgment and moderation of the new Governor-General. On returning thanks, after his health had been drunk, Lord Ellenborough, at that farewell dinner, on the 4th of November, 1841, made a most emphatic declaration of his intentions to govern India upon peace principles; he abjured all thoughts of a warlike, aggressive policy; and declared his settled determination, on assuming the reins of government, to direct all the energies of his mind towards the due cultivation of the arts of peace; to emulate the magnificent benevolence of the [32] Mahomedan conquerors; to elevate and improve the condition of the generous and mighty people of India. He spoke, it is true, in ignorance of the terrible disasters which soon afterwards cast a pall over the land; but there was in the speech so clear and explicit an exposition of what were supposed to be fixed principles, that the Public could not but rejoice over a declaration which promised so much eventual benefit to the people of the soil. They looked forward to the advent of the new Governor-General as to that of a man who, at the earliest possible moment consistent with the dignity of our position, would sever at a blow our ill-fated connexion with Afghanistan, and devote the remaining years of his administration to the practical development of those high principles which he had so enthusiastically professed.

It is probable that the nomination of Lord Ellenborough increased the embarrassments of Lord Auckland, and strengthened him in his resolution to suspend, as far as possible, all retributive measures until the arrival of his successor. There was no public man in England whose opinions, regarding the justice and policy of the war in Afghanistan, had been more emphatically expressed than those of the Governor-General elect. Lord Auckland knew that he was to be succeeded by a statesman who had pronounced the war to be a blunder and a crime; and there was a strong conviction within him that Lord Ellenborough would be eager to withdraw every British soldier from Afghanistan, and to sever at once a connexion

which had been attended with so much disaster and disgrace. As the responsible author of the war, this demanded from him no small amount of moral courage. It was, indeed, to court a reversal of the policy which he had originated, and to place the power of a sweeping practical condemnation in the hands of a political rival. If [33] the conduct of Lord Auckland, at this time, were wanting in energy and decision, it was by no means wanting in honesty. He saw that he had committed a blunder of enormous magnitude, and he left it to a statesman of a rival party, and an opposite faith, to pronounce sentence upon it.

But it was not permitted to Lord Auckland so to suspend the progress of events, as to enable him to hand over to his successor only the chart of a virgin campaign, to be accepted or rejected by the new ruler, as might seem fit to him, on taking up the reins of office. It was decreed that his administration should set amidst the clouds of continued disaster. There was nothing but failure to be written down in the concluding chapter of his unfortunate reign. Scarcely had he risen up from the prostration that followed the first stunning effects of the dire intelligence of the massacre in the Caubul passes, when there came from Peshawur tidings that the brigade under Colonel Wild had been disastrously beaten in the Khybur Pass. The first scene of the new, like the last of the old campaign, was a great calamity; and Lord Auckland, now more than ever dispirited and dejected, earnestly longed for the day when it would be vouchsafed to him to close his portfolio, and to turn his back for ever upon a country where sloughs of difficulty and thickets of danger seemed to cover the whole expanse.

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# CHAPTER II.

## [January-April: 1842.]

The Halt at Peshawur—Position of Brigadier Wild—His Difficulties—Conduct of the Sikhs—Attempt on Ali-Musjid—Failure of the Brigade—Arrival of General Pollock—State of the Force—Affairs at Jellalabad—Correspondence between Sale and Pollock.

THE position of Brigadier Wild at Peshawur was not one to infuse into a military commander any very overflowing feelings of hope and exultation. He was called upon to encounter formidable difficulties with slender means. Everything, indeed, was against him. He had four Native infantry regiments, containing a large number of young soldiers. They had been exposed for some time to the deteriorating contact of the mutinous Sikh soldiery, who had done their best to fill our Sepoys with that horror of the Khybur to which they had always abandoned themselves. The only cavalry with the brigade was a troop of irregular horse. The only guns were four pieces of Sikh artillery, which had a bad habit of knocking their carriages to pieces whenever they were fired. There was a scarcity of ammunition. Carriage was beginning to fail altogether. It was believed that the camels had been hired at Ferozepore to proceed as far as Jellalabad; but now the owners declared that they had entered into no such contract, and resolutely refused to proceed further than Peshawur. The most dispiriting intelligence was coming in from Afghanistan. Every day seemed to add some darker tints to the picture of our [35] discomfiture, and to bring out in more prominent colours the triumphant success of the Afghans. Sale and Macgregor were writing from Jellalabad to urge the immediate advance of the brigade; and General Avitabile was endeavouring, on the other hand, to persuade the Brigadier that it would be dangerous to enter the pass with the force which he then commanded.[15] The co-operation of the Sikh soldiery, in spite of Avitabile's exertions, seemed every day to become a fainter probability. They peremptorily refused at one time to proceed to Jumrood, from which point it was intended that the operations should commence, and declared that they would return to Lahore. Then threatening to kill Avitabile himself if he interfered with them, they intercepted one of the guns which were moving forward for our use, and carried it back to their lines. It was obvious, indeed, that they desired our discomfiture more than our success; and, in spite of the declared wishes of their Sovereign, whose sincerity at this time is not to be questioned,[16] and the efforts of the local governor, did everything [36] that they could do, to render the latter the more probable contingency of the two. The negotiations with the Afreedi chiefs were not going on prosperously, and there was every prospect of heavy opposition in the pass. Under such circumstances, Brigadier Wild could only write that he was prepared to move forward whenever it was expedient to do so, but that he could not answer for the consequences of a precipitate advance.

It was not, however, permitted him to remain long in doubt and inactivity. The fortress of Ali-Musjid lies some five miles within the entrance of the Khybur Pass, and about twenty-five from Peshawur. It consists of two small forts, connected by a wall of little strength, and stands upon the summit of an isolated oblong rock, commanded on the southern and western sides by two lofty hills. It has always been regarded as the key to the Khybur Pass; and now that it was [37] lying between the two positions of Sale and Wild, it was of immense importance that it should be held by British troops or their allies. It had recently been garrisoned by a small detachment of a local corps, composed of men of the Eusofzye tribe—some of whom, under Mr. Mackeson,[17] had been true to their employers, and gallantly commanded, had gallantly resisted the attacks of the Afreedi clan. But there was now every chance of its falling into the hands of the enemy. Nothing appeared to be of so much primary importance as the occupation of this post. It was resolved, therefore, that one-half of the brigade should be pushed forward, in the first instance to seize and garrison Ali-Musjid.

Accordingly, on the 15th of January, Colonel Moseley with the 53rd and 64th Sepoy regiments, prepared to commence the march to Ali-Musjid. They started under cover of the night, and reached their destination soon after daybreak. They met with little

opposition on the way; but soon after their arrival under the rock of Ali-Musjid, Captain Mackeson, who had accompanied the force, discovered to his dismay that, instead of 350 supply-bullocks, for the advance of which he had made suitable arrangements, only fifty or sixty now were straggling in with the rear-guard. The remainder, by some mismanagement or miscomprehension of orders, had been left behind. Thus had the two regiments which, had the cattle come on to Ali-Musjid, might have held that place in security for a month, shut themselves up in an isolated fortress without provisions; and [38] the plans which had been so anxiously debated by our political officers at Peshawur, utterly frustrated by an oversight of the most disastrous character, of which it is difficult to determine on whom we are to fix the blame.[18]

The only hope of extrication from this dilemma, without disaster and discredit, lay in the advance of the two other regiments, with the Sikh guns and the Sikh auxiliaries. But day after day passed, and Mackeson and Moseley gained no certain intelligence of the movements of their comrades. They were more than once under arms to support the coming reinforcements; but the reinforcements never appeared in sight. Wild, with the two regiments, had made an effort to throw supplies into Ali-Musjid, but had been disastrously beaten in the attempt.

Wild was to have moved forward with the Sikh auxiliaries on the morning of the 19th of January, but on the preceding evening, at eleven o'clock, the Sikh troops mutinied to a man, and refused to enter the pass. They were at this time with the British at Jumrood. But when Wild prepared to advance, they turned their faces in an opposite direction, and marched back upon Peshawur.[19] General Avitabile sent orders to his officers to close the city gates against [39] the mutinous regiments; and then shut himself up in the fort.

At seven o'clock, the 30th and 60th regiments with the Sikh guns commenced their march to Ali-Musjid. The enemy appeared at the entrance of the pass and met the advancing column with a fire from their jezails. The Sepoys at the head of the column wavered, stood still, crowded upon each other, fired anywhere, aimless and without effect. The officers moved forward, but the regiments did not follow them. In vain the Brigadier and his staff called upon them to advance; they only huddled together in confusion and dismay. The Sikh guns, when brought into action, broke down one after the other; and the Sepoys lost all heart. Lawrence exerted himself manfully to save the guns; but he could not induce the men to make an effort to carry them off; and one of the heavy pieces was finally abandoned.[20] There was nothing to be done after this but to fall back. The Brigadier himself was wounded in the face; several of our officers were injured; one killed. The loss among the Sepoys was severe. It was plain that they would not advance; so the column fell back on Jumrood, and Ali-Musjid was not relieved.

How this disaster happened it is not easy to explain. Exaggerated native reports of the immense hordes of Khyburees, who were assembling in the pass, had been in circulation; and the regiments [40] seem to have commenced their march, anticipating such formidable opposition as they were never doomed to encounter. The ominous intelligence from Caubul had alarmed them. The lies spread abroad by the Sikhs had probably alarmed them still more. The opposition was not strenuous.[21] Had the regiments been in good heart, they would not have been beaten back. But there was anything but a strong forward feeling among them when they commenced their march. The defection of the Sikhs had damped their ardour, and the breaking down of the guns now seemed to complete what the misconduct of our allies had commenced. The first attacks of the enemy threw the Sepoys at the head of the column into confusion; and all hope of success was at an end before a battle had been fought.

The two regiments that occupied Ali-Musjid might have held that post for any length of time against the Khyburees. But they had a lamentable scarcity of provisions. The water, too, seemed to poison them. The troops were put upon half-rations, but, in spite of this, in a few days the supplies were nearly exhausted. Without bedding and without tents, kept ever on the alert, under a severe climate, and under depressing influences, the health and spirits of the Sepoys were giving way. They were crowding into hospital. There seemed to be no prospect of relief; so, on the 23rd of January, Colonel Moseley determined to evacuate the fortress of Ali-Musjid, and to [41]

cut his way back to Jumrood.

To Mackeson, who saw clearly the political evils that must result from the surrender of so important a position, this was a heavy blow. Anything seemed better than the total abandonment of such a post. A small party of resolute men might hold it; for a small party might be fed. There were at least two men in the garrison eager for the proud distinction of holding, in an imminent conjuncture, a dangerous isolated post against a multitudinous enemy. Captain Burt, of the 64th Native Infantry, volunteered to remain with a party of regular troops; but the Sepoys would not volunteer. Captain Thomas, of the same corps—the staff officer of the detachment—a man of a bold and fearless nature, and of large acquirements—stepped forward and volunteered to hold the fortress with 150 men of the old Eusofzye garrison. The offer was accepted; arrangements were made for the defence; but the fidelity of the Eusofzyes, which had been long failing, now broke down altogether. They refused to occupy the dangerous post after the departure of the Sepoy regiments; and so, on the 24th, the entire force moved out of Ali-Musjid, and suffered it to fall into the hands of the Afreedis.

"The regiments are safe through—thank God!" was the emphatic announcement which Captain Lawrence, on the 24th of January, forwarded by express to Mr. George Clerk. It had been a time of intense and painful excitement. The communications between the two detachments were cut off, and anxious as they were to act in concert with each other, they had, up to the evening of the 22nd, failed to ascertain the intentions of each other, and to effect a combined movement.[22] On the 23rd, the two regiments which Wild had commanded, now, owing to the Brigadier's wound, under the charge of Colonel Tulloch, with the two serviceable Sikh guns, went forward to line the pass, and cover the march of Moseley's regiments; but no sound of an advancing column was heard, and about mid-day they returned to camp. On the following morning they moved out again. Moseley had quitted Ali-Musjid, and was making the best of his way to Jumrood. The Khyburees mustered strong; but the Sepoy corps in both detachments did their duty well and the regiments made good their passage. Captain Wilson, of the 64th, was killed at the head of his men; and Captain Lock, of the 60th, fell also with his sword in his hand. There was some loss of baggage on the retreat—some of the sick and wounded were abandoned; and the general conduct of the affair is not to be dwelt upon with pride or pleasure. But when the four regiments were once more assembled together at Jumrood, in spite of the disasters of the week, a general feeling of relief was experienced; and our officers congratulated one another, thankful that it was "no worse." [42]

Nothing was to be done now but to wait patiently for the arrival of General Pollock and the reinforcements which were marching up through the Punjaub. It was obvious that, without cavalry and without guns, every effort to relieve Jellalabad must be a disastrous failure. The want of guns was now severely commented upon. Everybody had something to say about the remissness of those in high places, who had suffered the advanced brigade sent for the relief of our beleaguered troops to appear at the mouth of the Khybur Pass without a single piece of British artillery. Brigadier Wild lamented the want of artillery: Colonel Moseley lamented the want of artillery: Captain Mackeson lamented the want of artillery. All were certain that the first effort at retrieval would not have been a new calamity and a new disgrace, if a proper complement of British guns had been sent on with the Sepoy regiments. The omission was a great one, but it appears to have been more the result of circumstances than of any culpable negligence on the part of the military authorities. The four Sepoy regiments, forming Wild's brigade, were sent forward by Mr. George Clerk, on a requisition from Captain Mackeson. Mackeson wrote for the immediate despatch of the troops which, before the outbreak at Caubul, had been warned for the ordinary relief. The regiments under orders for Afghanistan were therefore hurried forward, and another regiment, which was on the frontier, ordered to march with them. Expedition rather than efficiency was then sought; and to have got artillery ready for service would have delayed the despatch of the infantry corps. Captain Lawrence, himself an artillery officer, saw the expediency of despatching artillery to Peshawur, and did not omit to throw out suggestions regarding the preparation of this important arm; but Mr. George Clerk, who was Captain Lawrence's official chief, and subject only to whose confirmation that officer had any [43]

authority to call for the despatch of troops, did not follow up the intimation of his subordinate. “Your Excellency will have observed,” wrote Mr. Clerk to the Commander-in-Chief,[23] “that I have limited the requisitions, which I have presumed to make upon the commanding officers of Loodhianah and Ferozepore, to the three infantry regiments which were already preparing to march to Afghanistan. I consider that this is what Captain Mackeson means in [44] his urgent request for the despatch of the brigade warned for the Caubul relief. I therefore have not followed up the intimation made by Captain Lawrence to the commanding officer at Ferozepore regarding artillery and cavalry, by requesting that a detachment of either should move forward.”[24]

It appears, therefore, that Captain Mackeson, at Peshawur, limited his requisitions to the troops actually under orders to proceed, in ordinary routine, to Afghanistan—that Captain Lawrence, at Ferozepore, suggested the expediency of sending forward some guns, if they could be got ready; and that Mr. Clerk, at Loodhianah, declined to endorse the suggestion, and left it to the Commander-in-Chief to decide whether any artillery should be sent forward with the Sepoy regiments.

But the power of decision was not in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief. The odium of having sent forward four Native infantry regiments, without cavalry and without guns, has been cast upon Sir Jasper Nicolls. But the truth is, that the regiments had crossed the Sutlej before he knew that they had been ordered forward. He was moving upwards towards the frontier when intelligence of the outbreak in Afghanistan, and the consequent measures of Mr. Clerk, met him as he advanced. On the 18th and 20th of November the two first regiments crossed the Sutlej; and the Commander-in-Chief received the notification of the demand for [45] these regiments not before the 22nd. On the 26th of November the two other regiments crossed the Sutlej; and the Commander-in-Chief did not receive intelligence of their despatch before the third of December.

Thus far it is plain that no discredit attaches to the Commander-in-Chief, or to any other authority, for not having sent forward any guns *with* Wild’s brigade. But the question yet remains to be asked why guns were not sent *after* it. Though Mr. Clerk, in the first instance, anxious not to delay the advance of the infantry regiments, made no requisition for artillery, he directed General Boyd’s attention to the subject soon after the despatch of those corps, and suggested that one of Wild’s regiments should halt on the other side of the Sutlej, whilst the guns were proceeding to join it.[25] As there was no available artillery at Ferozepore, it was proposed that Captain Alexander’s troop of Horse Artillery should move at once from Loodhianah to the former station on its way across the frontier; but on hearing that the Commander-in-Chief had ordered some details of a foot artillery battery to be warned for service, Mr. Clerk withdrew his requisition for the movement of the troop beyond the frontier, but still suggested that it should be pushed on to Ferozepore. This was on the 2nd of December.[26] On the 4th, [46] having heard that some delay must attend the despatch of the details warned by orders of the Commander-in-Chief, Mr. Clerk wrote a letter to Captain Alexander, requesting him, as the means of more rapid movement were at his command, to push on across the Sutlej with all possible expedition.[27] But a few days afterwards he received a letter from Sir Jasper Nicolls, prohibiting the despatch of the Horse Artillery; and he accordingly apprised Captain Alexander that the request made to him on the 4th of December for the advance of the troop was withdrawn.[28] And so, instead of a troop of Horse Artillery being sent to overtake Wild’s brigade, which [47] reached Peshawur at the end of December, half of a foot artillery battery was warned to proceed with M’Caskill’s brigade, which did not arrive before the beginning of February. But in the interval, Wild had been disastrously beaten in the Khybur Pass, and Ali-Musjid had fallen into the hands of the Afreedis.

Whatever may have been the causes of this first failure, and to whomsoever its responsibility may attach, it is certain that its results were of a very dispiriting and deteriorating character.[29] The regiments remained inactive in the vicinity of Peshawur; and the usual consequences of inactivity under such circumstances were soon painfully apparent in the camp of Brigadier Wild. The Sepoys

fell sick; crowded into hospital; seemed to have lost all heart, and, without any of the audacity of open mutiny, broke out into language only a little way removed from it. Exposed to the alarming hints and the alluring temptations of the mutinous Sikh soldiery, some began to desert their colours, whilst others openly declared that nothing would induce them again to face the horrors of the Khybur Pass. As General Pollock advanced through the Punjaub, the worst reports continued to meet him from Peshawur. Not only was he informed that the Sepoys of Wild's brigade were enfeebled by disease and paralysed by terror; but that even the officers of the force were using, in an unguarded and unworthy manner, the language of disheartenment and alarm.[30]

[48] On the 5th of February, General Pollock reached Peshawur; and found that the stories, which had met him on the road, had by no means exaggerated the condition of the troops under Brigadier Wild. There were then 1000 men in hospital; and the number was alarmingly increasing. In a few days it had increased to 1800; so even with the new brigade, which marched in a day or two after the General's arrival, he had, exclusive of cavalry, scarcely more troops fit for service than Wild had commanded a month before.

An immediate advance on Jellalabad was not, under such circumstances, to be contemplated for a moment. General Pollock had much to do, before he could think of forcing the Khybur Pass and relieving Jellalabad. The duties of a General are not limited to operations in the field. When Pollock reached Peshawur he found that the least difficult part of the labour before him was the subjugation of the Afreedi tribes. "Any precipitancy," wrote the Commander-in-Chief some time afterwards, "on the part of a general officer panting for fame might have had the worst effect."[31] [49] To have advanced on Jellalabad in that month of February would have been to precipitate a strangling failure. Instead of flinging himself headlong into the pass, Pollock made his way to the hospitals. On the day after his arrival he visited the sick of the different regiments, inquired into their wants, conversed with their medical attendants, endeavoured to ascertain the causes of the prevalent sickness, and encouraged by every means at his command, by animating words and assuring promises, the dispirited and desponding invalids.

Nor was there less to do out of the hospitals. The *morale* of the troops was in the lowest possible state. It seemed, indeed, as though all their soldierly qualities were at the last gasp. The disaffection of the Sepoys broke out openly, and four out of the five regiments refused to advance. Nightly meetings of delegates from the different regiments of Wild's brigade were held in camp; and the 26th Regiment of Native Infantry, which had come up with M'Caskill's brigade, was soon invited to join the confederacy. In less than forty-eight hours after the arrival of that corps, active emissaries from the disaffected regiments were busy among the men, not only working upon their fears, but appealing to their religious feelings.[32] [50] The taint seems to have reached even to some of the officers of Wild's brigade, who did not hesitate openly to express at the mess-table the strongest opinions against a second attempt to force the Khybur, and to declare their belief that very few would ever return to Peshawur. One officer publicly asserted that it would be better to sacrifice Sale's brigade than to risk the loss of 12,000 men on the march to Jellalabad; and another said that, if an advance were ordered, he would do his best to dissuade every Sepoy of his corps from again entering the pass.[33]

To instil new courage and confidence into the waverers was no easy task; but coolly and sagaciously, as one who understood the cause of their disheartenment, and could make some allowances for their misconduct, Pollock addressed himself to the work of re-animating and re-assuring them. He made them feel that they had been placed under the care of one who was mindful of their welfare and jealous of their honour—one who overlooked nothing that contributed to the health and comfort of his men, and who would never call upon them to make sacrifices to which he would not cheerfully submit himself. There was, in all that he did, such an union of kindness and firmness; he was so mild, so considerate, and yet so decided, that the Sepoys came in time to regard him with that child-like faith which, under prosperous circumstances, is one of their most noticeable characteristics; and when the hour of trial came they were not found wanting.

All through the months of February and March, Pollock and his [51]
regiments remained inactive in the neighbourhood of Peshawur. Mortifying as it was to the General to be compelled to halt so long at the entrance of the Khybur Pass, no other course was open to him, at the time, that did not threaten renewed disaster. Pollock's position was, doubtless, painful, but it was not perplexing. His duty in this conjuncture was plain. The eyes of all India were turned upon him. The safety of the gallant garrison of Jellalabad was to be secured by his advance. Sale and Macgregor were writing urgent letters, calling upon him to push on without delay; but it was still his duty to halt. The Sepoys were gradually recovering both their health and their spirits. But reinforcements were coming across the Punjab, with British dragoons and horse artillery among them; and nothing did more to animate and re-assure those who had been discouraged by previous failure, than the knowledge that when they again advanced they would be supported by fresh troops, strong in every branch, and numbering among them a good proportion of stout European soldiers. Had the advance been ordered before the arrival of these reinforcements, it is at least a probable contingency that some of the native regiments would have stood fast, and, by open mutiny almost in the face of the enemy, have heaped up before us a mountain of difficulty, such as no prudence and no energy on the part of a commander could ever suffice to overcome.

Still it required much firmness to resist the pressing appeals made to Pollock by his comrades at the other end of the Khybur Pass. He had not been many days at Peshawur before he received a communication from General Sale, setting forth the exigencies of the Jellalabad garrison, and urging him to advance to their relief. The letter was written partly in English and partly in French, as was much of the correspondence of the time, with the view of rendering [52]
the work of translation more difficult. But Sale so often blurted out, in one sentence of plain English, what he had wrapped up in another of indifferent French, that his efforts at disguise could hardly have been successful.[34] He was too old a soldier to be very clever in such devices, and he had been too long fighting the battles of his country in India to write very unexceptionable French.

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# CHAPTER III.

## THE DEFENCE OF JELLALABAD.

## January-March: 1842.

Situation of the Garrison—Letters from Shah Soojah—Question of Capitulation—Councils of War—Final Resolution—Earthquake at Jellalabad—Renewal of the Works—Succours expected.

WITH heavy hearts did the officers of the Jellalabad garrison perform the melancholy duties, which devolved upon them, after the arrival of Dr. Brydon. Horsemen were sent out to explore the surrounding country, and to bring in, if any could be found, the bodies of the dead. Hopes, too, were entertained, that some survivors of the terrible retreat might still be concealed in the neighbourhood, or lying wounded by the wayside, unable to struggle on towards the sheltering walls of the fortress. Every effort therefore was made, and every precaution taken, to indicate to the sufferers that succour was at hand, and to aid them, in their extremity, to reach it. The stillness of the night was broken by the loud blasts of the bugle, proclaiming from the ramparts, to any stragglers that might be toiling through the darkness, the vicinity of the British camp.

But profitless were all these efforts. The few who had escaped the massacre in the passes were captives in the hands of the Afghans; and the Jellalabad officers now asked one another whether the fate of the prisoner were less to be deplored than the fate of the dead. It was hard to believe that they who had butchered thousands of their enemies like sheep, in the passes, would treat with kindness [54] and respect the few who had fallen into their hands. The only hope was, that Afghan avarice might be stronger than Afghan revenge, and that the prisoners might be preserved, like merchandise, and sold for British gold.

They sorrowed for their unhappy countrymen; but there was ever present with them the best remedy for sorrow. They had abundance of work to do. In the midst of their grief for the destruction of the Caubul army, it was necessary to consider in what manner that great catastrophe affected themselves. They reasoned that, perhaps, for some days, the Afghans would be gorging themselves with plunder; dividing the spoil; and burying the corpses of their countrymen; but that, this done, large bodies of troops would be released, and that Akbar Khan might soon be expected to come down upon Jellalabad, with an overwhelming force flushed with victory, and eager to consign them to the terrible fate which had overtaken the British army posted at the capital. It was soon said, that the Sirdar was organising an army, at Lughman, some thirty miles distant from Jellalabad. It was necessary, therefore, to prepare for his reception.

To such good purpose had Broadfoot worked, that the defences of Jellalabad were now fast becoming formidable realities; and the officers said among themselves and wrote to distant friends, that nothing but a failure of provisions, or ammunition, could give the Sirdar a chance of carrying the place. Our fighting men, however, were too few to man the works with good effect. Sale, therefore, embodied the camp-followers; and thus enabled himself to employ his effective troops beyond the walls. Day after day, foraging parties were sent out with good results. Our great requirements were wood and grass. It was expedient to obtain these as expeditiously as possible, for the place might soon be invested; and then the garrison would be thrown back entirely on its internal supplies. About the [55] same time, all the Afghans in Jellalabad, including 200 men of Ferris's Jezailchee regiment, were ordered to quit the walls, in the belief that in an extremity they would certainly turn against us.

Then news came of Wild's failure. To the younger and bolder spirits in Sale's brigade, this was scarcely a disappointment. They had expected little from Wild's advance. They believed, however, that the disaster would necessarily retard Pollock's forward movement; and in this there was something discouraging. But they said among themselves that they could hold out till May, that it was then only January, and that it was hard, indeed, if Pollock could not relieve them within the next three months.

But whilst everything appeared thus plain to the younger and the irresponsible officers of the Jellalabad force, difficulties were rising up before the eyes, and doubts were assailing the minds of the responsible chiefs. Already had they begun to question, whether the Government at Calcutta had any intention to make a genuine effort, on a sufficient scale, to relieve them. All that they had heard of the views and measures of Lord Auckland led them to the painful conclusion that they would be left to their fate; at all events, until the arrival of his successor. In the meanwhile, not only was Akbar Khan collecting an army in Lughman, but Shah Soojah himself, acting perhaps under compulsion—perhaps not—was preparing to despatch troops both to Ghuznee and Jellalabad for the expulsion of the Feringhee garrisons. From the Shah nothing was to be expected beyond, at best, a little friendly delay. On the 21st of January, Macgregor received a letter from him. It contained much about the past; it alleged that if the Shah's advice had not been disregarded, all would have gone well; that he alone could now hold the country, and that he wanted nothing from us but money.[35] This was a long, [56] private letter—somewhat incoherent—the work of the King himself. But another also came from the King, as from the head of the government, asking the English at Jellalabad what were their intentions. "Your people," it said, in effect, "have concluded a treaty with us, consenting to leave the country. You are still in Jellalabad. What are your intentions? Tell us quickly." What now was to be done?

The crisis was a perilous one; the responsibility was great. Sale and Macgregor were sorely perplexed. It was plain that by continuing to occupy Jellalabad, they could do nothing to support their comrades in Afghanistan; for the Caubul army had been destroyed, and the Candahar and Ghuznee garrisons would fall back, if at all, on Scinde. They were not bound to support Shah Soojah, for the Shah himself declared that he wanted nothing but our money, and was evidently compromised with his own countrymen by our continued occupation of Jellalabad. The safety of the prisoners appeared more likely to be secured by our departure from Afghanistan than by our continuing in a hostile attitude in one of the chief places of the kingdom. And it was at least doubtful whether the policy of the Government at Calcutta would not be aided rather than embarrassed by the withdrawal of the garrison to Peshawur.

All these considerations weighing heavily on his mind, Sale determined to summon a Council of War. On the 26th of January, the Council met at the General's quarters. It was composed of the commanding-officers of the different components of his varied force. [57] [36] The political officer, Macgregor, was also a member of the Council. On him devolved the duty of explaining the circumstances which had induced the general to call them together. All the letters and documents bearing upon the great question were read and laid upon the table. Macgregor, acting as spokesman, declared that it was his opinion, and that also of the General, that little was to be hoped from the efforts of Government to relieve them. It was obvious that they must trust to themselves. Shah Soojah appeared to desire their departure; he had virtually, indeed, directed it. Were the members of the Council, he asked, of like opinion with himself and Sale, that it was now their duty to treat with the Shah for the evacuation of the country?

Then Macgregor read to the Council the terms of the proposed letter to the King. It set forth that his Majesty's letter had been received; that the British held Jellalabad and the country only for the King, and that as it was his desire that they should return to India, of course they were willing to do so. But that after what had happened, it was necessary that the manner and the conditions of their withdrawal should be clearly understood. The terms upon which the garrison of Jellalabad would consent to evacuate the country were these: that they would give four hostages in proof of their sincerity; that the King should send a force to escort them in honour and safety to Jellalabad—that is, with their arms, colours, guns, &c.; that the escort should be commanded by one of the Prince's own sons; and that carriage and supplies should be furnished for our march; that Mahomed Akbar and his force were to [58] be withdrawn from Lughman before the British quitted Jellalabad; and that hostages should be given by the Afghans to accompany the British force as far as Peshawur, and there to be exchanged for our own hostages and prisoners; these hostages to be a son of the

Newab Zemaun Khan—a son of Ameen-oollah Khan—Sooltan Jan, said to be a favourite cousin of Mahomed Akbar—with some Shinwarree and Khyburee chiefs.

Great now was the excitement in the Council; earnest the discourse. Men lifted up their voices together, in vehement debate, eager to speak, little caring to listen. Arguments were enunciated with such warmth of language, that they lost all their argumentative force. It was apparent, however, that the feelings of the majority of the Council were in favour of withdrawal. There was a prevailing sense amongst them that they had been abandoned by the Government at Calcutta; that there was no intention to maintain the supremacy of our arms in Afghanistan; that Shah Soojah did not wish them to remain there; and that, if they could make their own way to Peshawur, they would best fulfil the desires of their masters, and that their first care should be to further the views of the Government which they served. And yet their indignation ran high against that Government, which had abandoned them in the hour of their need.

But against all this there was one officer who steadfastly set his face; who had viewed with horror and detestation the proposal to capitulate, and flung the paper of terms indignantly on the ground. This was George Broadfoot, of the Sappers. Eagerly he lifted up his voice against the proposal; eagerly he declared it to be impossible that the Government should leave them to their fate, and do nothing to restore our lost national reputation in Afghanistan; eagerly he set forth to his comrades that a new Governor-General was coming, [59] doubtless with new counsels, from England; that the Duke of Wellington was in power at home, and that so inglorious a policy could never ultimately prevail. But he lacked, in that conjuncture, the self-restraint, the moderation of language, and the calmness of utterance which might have secured for him respectful attention. They said that he was violent, and he was. Even his best friends said afterwards, that his warmth was unbecoming, and, doubtless, it weakened his cause. It was soon apparent to him that in the existing temper of the council, he could do nothing to change their resolves. He determined, therefore, to endeavour to delay the final resolution, and, with this object proposed an adjournment of the Council. The proposal was carried; the Council was dissolved, and the members went to their quarters or to their posts, to talk, or brood over what had happened, and to fortify themselves with new arguments in support of the opinions which they had determined to maintain.

The Council met again on the following day. There was much and earnest discussion; but it was painfully obvious that the majority were in favour of capitulation, and that at the head of the majority were the military and political chiefs. The proposed terms were again brought under review, and again George Broadfoot lifted up his voice against them. He was told by his opponents in the Council that the warmth of his feelings had obscured his judgment; but, resolute not to weaken his advocacy of so great a cause by any frailty of his own, he had submitted his views to writing, and had invited the sober criticism of his calmer friend Henry Havelock.[37] With this paper in his hand, holding his eager temperament in restraint, he now did resolute battle against the proposal for surrender. First, he took the votes of the Council on the general [60] question of the propriety of any negociation; and then, one by one, he combated the separate terms of the proposed treaty of surrender. But, two only excepted, his comrades were all against him. Backhouse, a man of fiery courage and of plain discourse, though recognising the force of much of Macgregor's reasoning, voted against withdrawal. Oldfield said little, but that little, with his vote, was against capitulation. Havelock, who attended only as the General's staff, was without a vote; but his heart was with those who voted for the manlier and the nobler course.

The chief spokesmen were, George Macgregor on the one side, and George Broadfoot on the other. The former, enunciating the views of his military chief, contended that the Jellalabad garrison had been abandoned by the Government; that after Wild's failure, no movement for their release was likely to be made; that there was no possibility that their little force could hold its own much longer, and that it could not retreat except under terms with the victorious enemy. He believed that the terms, of which he had spoken, would be strictly observed. Macnaghten and Pottinger had failed to take hostages from the Afghans, and therefore our army had been destroyed; but hostages being given, it was urged, the treaty would

never be violated, and on the arrival of the force at Peshawur, our prisoners would be surrendered. Moreover, as Macgregor had contended from the first, the British troops held Jellalabad, and every other post in the Afghan dominions, only on behalf of Shah Soojah; and if the Shah directed our withdrawal, we had no right, it was said, to remain, especially when our own Government apparently desired the speedy evacuation of the country.

But this Broadfoot denied. He denied that the British troops held Jellalabad only on behalf of Shah Soojah; he denied that the British [61]
Government—under whose orders alone, he contended, the force could with propriety be withdrawn from Jellalabad—had directed, or were likely to direct, the immediate evacuation of Afghanistan. He denied that the brigade could not hold out in Jellalabad; he denied that it could not make good its retreat to Peshawur. He declared that hostages had been given before, at Tezeen—that still our camp had been attacked;[38] and that, so long as the enemy held our hostages and prisoners in their hands, there was really little additional security in such a resource. Sale said that he would execute an Afghan hostage if the terms of the treaty were violated. "Would you do this," asked Broadfoot, "if the enemy threatened to kill, before our faces, two English ladies for every man that we put to death?" It was urged, by another officer, that if the British troops did not evacuate Jellalabad, our hostages at Caubul would be murdered. "Then," contended Broadfoot, "in such a warfare, the [62]
most barbarous must be most successful. Whoever is prepared to execute his hostages and prisoners must gain his object, and triumph by the mere force of his barbarity."

And thus, point after point, Broadfoot combated the arguments of those who supported the policy of capitulation; and at last took his stand boldly upon "first principles." When it was said that a body of troops, thus abandoned by Government, were entitled to look to their own safety, he replied, that they had a right to save the troops only when, by so doing, they would confer a greater benefit on the state than by risking their loss. And when mention was made of the views of the Governor-General, the chief officer of the state, he declared that there was a higher duty still which they were bound to discharge. If, as had been contended, the Government of India had abandoned them, the covenant between them was cancelled by the failure of the higher authority. But they had a duty to perform towards their country—a duty which they could never decline. And it was plainly their duty, in the conjuncture which had arisen, to uphold the honour of the nation. In these views Havelock openly concurred; though, for reasons already stated, he took little part in the debates.

The terms of the proposed capitulation were carried, with but one exception. It was determined that hostages should not be given. Macgregor volunteered himself to be one; and both he and Sale contended vehemently in support of the proposal; but the voice of the assembly was against it. Its rejection detracted little from the humiliation of the surrender; and Broadfoot stood forward in the hope of persuading his comrades to reconsider the remaining terms. He dwelt especially on the discredit of demanding the withdrawal of Akbar Khan from Lughman, as though they stood in fear of the Sirdar; he urged upon them the expediency of requiring the [63]
surrender of all the British prisoners in the hands of the Afghans, as a preliminary to the evacuation of Jellalabad; and he implored them to consider whether, if they were determined to abandon their position, they could not give some dignity to the movement, by imparting to it the character of a military operation, deceiving the enemy as to real intention, and fighting, if need be, their way down to Peshawur. All these proposals were overruled. At a later date, the last received some support from men who had before condemned it.

And so, slightly altered in its phraseology—which Broadfoot had denounced as too abject—the letter was carried through the Council and prepared for transmission to the Shah. After the votes had been given, Broadfoot sarcastically congratulated them on the figure that they would make if the relieving force arrived just as the brigade was marching out of Jellalabad, under the terms of a humiliating convention. In such a case, Dennie, who had not the clearest possible perception of the obligations of good faith in such matters, declared that he would not go. Upon which he was told that he would be "made to go;" and the Council broke up amidst greater hilarity than had inaugurated its assemblage.

The letter was despatched to Shah Soojah, and, amidst varied

and contending emotions, the members of the Council awaited a reply. In the meanwhile some of them recorded their reasons for the votes they had given; and all earnestly considered the course to be pursued when the expected answer should be received from Caubul. There could be little difference of opinion upon this score. It was determined that, if the answer received from the Shah should be a simple and unconditional acceptance of the proposed terms, the garrison must at once evacuate Jellalabad, and, if faith were broken by the enemy, fight its way to Peshawur; but that, if the answer [64] should be evasive or clogged with reservations and conditions, they would be at liberty to adopt any course that might seem most expedient to them.

The answer came. It called upon the chief officers at Jellalabad, if they were sincere in their proposals, to affix their seals to the letter. A Council of war was held. Sale and Macgregor urged the members to put their seals to a copy of the original paper of terms. Broadfoot, pleading that the nature of the Shah's letter, expressing a doubt, as it did, of their sincerity, liberated them from all foregone obligations, proposed that the whole question of capitulation should be reconsidered. He then offered to the acceptance of the Council the draft of a letter, stating that as the Shah and his chiefs had not answered their former communication—either by accepting or rejecting the proposed terms—that they should be referred to the Governor-General. There was much warm discussion. The proposed letter was pronounced violent, and eventually rejected. Another letter to the same effect, but more temperate in its tone, was proposed by Backhouse, and also rejected. Sale denounced, in strong language, the opposition of these men; some still more vehement discussion followed, and the council was adjourned.

An hour afterwards the members re-assembled, they who had felt and spoken hotly had cooled down; and the debate was resumed more gravely and decorously than it had broken off. Colonel Dennie and Captain Abbott had, by this time, determined to support the proposal for holding out, and Colonel Monteith, who had before recorded his opinions in favour of the course recommended by Major Macgregor, now prepared a letter, which, though couched in much less decided terms than those proposed by Broadfoot and Backhouse, was not a renewal of the negotiation. After some discussion this was accepted by the council, and a messenger was [65] despatched to Caubul with the important missive. It left them free to act as they should think fit;—most happily it left them free, for the next day brought tidings from Peshawur that large reinforcements were moving up through the Punjab, and that strenuous efforts were to be made for their relief. It was clear that the government had not abandoned them to their fate. It was now equally clear to all, that it was their duty to hold out to the last hour. There was no more talk of withdrawal.[39]

This was on the 13th of February. The garrison were in good heart, and the fortifications of Jellalabad were rising rapidly around them. In spite of all opposition at Caubul—in spite of the counsels of Alexander Burnes, who heartily despised the enemy—in spite of a sneering remark from the envoy, that the sappers would have nothing to do but to pick a few stones from under the gun-wheels, Broadfoot had insisted on taking with him a good supply of working tools, some of which he had ordered to be made for him, by forced labour, in the city; and had sent an urgent indent on the march for further supplies.[40] It seemed, he said afterwards, "as though [66] Providence had stiffened his neck on this occasion;" for now at Jellalabad, he found himself with implements of all kinds and with large supplies of blasting powder, able alike to make and to destroy. And gallantly the good work proceeded, in prospect, too, of an immediate attack, for Akbar Khan, with the white English tents which proclaimed our disgrace, was within a few miles of the walls which we were turning into formidable defences.

But a great calamity was now about to befall the Jellalabad garrison. On the morning of the 19th of February the men were busied with their accustomed labour. With their arms piled within reach, they were plying axe and shovel, toiling with their wonted cheerfulness and activity at the defences, which they had begun to look upon with the satisfied air of men who had long seen their work growing under their hands, and now recognised the near approach of its completion. They had worked, indeed, to good purpose. Very different were the fortifications of Jellalabad from what they had

been when Sale entered the place in November.[41] They were now real, not nominal defences. The unremitting toil of nearly three [67] months had not been without its visible and appreciable results. It seemed, too, as though the work were about to be completed just at the time when the defences were most needed. Akbar Khan was in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad, and every day Sale expected to be called upon to meet the flower of the Barukzye horse on the plain. But on this 19th of February, when the garrison were flushed with joy at the thought of the near completion of their work, a fearful visitation of Providence, suddenly and astoundingly, turned all their labour to very nothingness. There was an awful and mysterious sound, as of thunder beneath their feet; then the earth shook; the houses of the town trembled and fell; the ramparts of the fort seemed to reel and totter, and presently came down with a crash.[42] On the first sound of the threatened convulsion the men had instinctively rushed to their arms, and the greater number had escaped the coming ruin; but it is still among those recollections of [68] the defence which are dwelt upon by the "illustrious garrison" in the liveliest spirit of jocularity, how the field-officer of the day—a gallant and good soldier—but one who had more regard for external proprieties than was generally appreciated in those days, was buried beneath a heap of rubbish, and how he was extricated from his perilous position by some men of the 13th, under circumstances which even now they enjoy in their retrospect with a relish which years have not impaired.[43]

But although the earthquake which threw down the walls of Jellalabad, wrought in a minute more irreparable mischief than a bombarding army could have done in a month, in nowise disheartened by this calamity, the garrison again took the spade and the pick-axe into their hands, and toiled to repair the mischief. "No time," says Captain Broadfoot, "was lost.advanced in two heavy columns The shocks had scarcely ceased when the whole garrison was told off into working parties, and before night the breaches were scarped, the rubbish below cleared away, and the ditches before them dug out, whilst the great one on the Peshawur side was surrounded by a good gabion parapet. A parapet was erected on the remains of the north-west bastion, with an embrasure allowing the guns to flank the approach of the ruined Caubul gate; the parapet of the new bastion was restored, so as to give a flanking fire to the north-west bastion, whilst the ruined gate was rendered inaccessible by a trench in front of it, and in every bastion round the place a temporary parapet was raised. From the following day all the troops off duty were continually at work, and such was their energy and perseverance, that by the end of the month the parapets were entirely restored, or the curtain filled in where restoration was impracticable, and every battery re-established. The breaches have [69] been built up, with the rampart doubled in thickness, and the whole of the gates retrenched."—Such, indeed, was the extraordinary vigour thrown into the work of restoration—such the rapidity with which the re-establishment of the defences was completed, that the enemy, seeing soon afterwards no traces of the great earthquake-shock of the 19th of February, declared that the phenomenon must have been the result of English witchcraft, for that Jellalabad was the only place that had escaped.

If Akbar Khan, who at this time was within a few miles of Sale's position, knew the extent to which the defences of Jellalabad had been weakened, he committed a strange oversight in not taking advantage of such a casualty. The garrison felt assured that the Barukzyes would not throw away such a chance; and they made up their minds resolutely for the encounter. Intelligence had just been received of the publication of the government manifesto of the 31st of January; and this spasmodic burst of energy and indignation, welcomed as an indication of the intention of the Supreme Government to wipe out at all hazards the stains that had been fixed upon the national honour, fortified and re-assured the heroes of Jellalabad, who had so long been grieving over the apparent feebleness and apathy of the official magnates at Calcutta.[44]

Sale published the proclamation in garrison orders; and the [70] result did not belie his expectation. Like the chiefs of the Jellalabad force, the junior officers and men had felt, with acute mortification, the neglect to which they had seemingly been subjected.[45] But now, that Lord Auckland had declared that he regarded the disasters that had befallen us merely as so many new opportunities

of demonstrating the military power of the British Empire in the East, the hearts of the brave men, who had been so long defying the enemy that had destroyed Elphinstone's army, again began to leap up with hope and exultation; and as they saw their defences rising again, almost as it were by supernatural agency, before their eyes, they began rather to regret the caution of the Barukzye chief, which seemed to restrain him from venturing under the walls of Jellalabad.

There seems, indeed, to have been in the Afghan camp a strange shrinking from anything like a hand-to-hand encounter with the intrepid soldiers of Sale's brigade. The reluctance of Akbar Khan to near the walls of Jellalabad is a painful commentary upon the arrogance and audacity of the Afghans, who a few weeks before had been bearding Elphinstone and Shelton under the shadow of the Caubul cantonments. Akbar Khan now seemed resolute to risk nothing by any dashing movement, that might decide, at once, the fate of the Jellalabad garrison. Instead of assaulting the place he blockaded it.

He seemed to trust to the efficacy of a close investment; and so [71]
moved in his troops nearer and nearer to our walls, hoping to effect that by starvation which he could not effect by hard fighting in the field. And so, for some time, he continued, drawing in more and more closely—harassing our foraging parties, and occasionally coming into contact with the horsemen who were sent out to protect the grass-cutters. Not, however, before the 11th of March was there any skirmishing worthy of record. Then it was reported that the enemy were about to mine the place. *Sungahs* had been thrown up on the night of the 10th, and the enemy were firing briskly from behind them. It was plain that some mischief was brewing; so on the morning of the 11th, Sale, keeping his artillery at the guns on the ramparts, sent out a strong party of infantry and cavalry, with two hundred of Broadfoot's sappers. Dennie commanded the sortie. As they streamed out of the Peshawur gate of the city, Akbar Khan seemed inclined to give them battle. But ever as the enemy advanced the hot fire from our guns drove them back. They could not advance upon our works, nor protect the *sungahs* which our skirmishers were rapidly destroying. It was soon ascertained that the story of the mine was a mere fable; ammunition was too scarce to be expended on any but necessary service; so there was nothing more to be done. Dennie sounded the recall. The British troops began to fall back upon their works; and then the enemy, emboldened by the retrograde movement, fell upon our retiring column. No sooner had our people halted and reformed, than the Afghans turned and fled, but still they wrought us some mischief, for they wounded Broadfoot; and those were days when an accident to the garrison engineer was, indeed, a grievous calamity. Not a man, however, of Sale's brigade was killed. The carnage was all among the enemy.

The remainder of the month passed quietly away—but the [72]
anxieties of the garrison were steadily increasing. Provisions had become scarce; ammunition was scarce; fodder for the horses was not to be obtained. It was obviously the design of the enemy to reduce the garrison by a strict blockade. It would be difficult to exaggerate the eagerness with which, under such circumstances, they looked for the arrival of succours from Peshawur. Excellent as were Pollock's reasons for not proceeding to the relief of Jellalabad until his force was strengthened by the arrival of the European regiments on their way to Peshawur, it is easy to understand, and impossible to condemn, the eagerness with which Sale and Macgregor continued to exhort him to advance for their succour.[46]

Pollock had expected that the dragoons would reach Peshawur by the 20th of March; but on the 27th they had not arrived; and the General wrote to Jellalabad, explaining the causes of delay, but still hoping that he would be able to commence his march on the last day of the month. "There appears," he wrote, "to be nothing but accidents to impede the advance of the dragoons. They were five days crossing the Ravee. I have sent out 300 camels to help them in; and I hope nothing will prevent my moving on the 31st. God knows I am most anxious to move on, for I know that delay will subject us to be exposed to very hot weather. But my situation has been most embarrassing. Any attempt at a forward movement in the early part of this month I do not think would have succeeded, for at one time the Hindoos did not hesitate to say that they would *not* go forward. I hope the horror they had has somewhat subsided; but without more white faces I question even now if they would go. Since the 1st we [73]

have been doing all to recover a proper tone; but you may suppose what my feelings have been, wishing to relieve you, and knowing that my men would not go. However desirable it is that I should be joined by the 31st Regiment, your late letters compel me to move, and I hope, therefore, to be with you by about the 7th. I cannot say the day exactly, because I want to take Ali-Musjid. When that is taken, your situation may, perhaps, become better."[47] The dragoons reached Pollock's camp on the 30th, and on the following day he began to move forward.

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# CHAPTER IV.

## [April, 1842.]

The Forcing of the Khybur Pass—State of the Sikh Troops—Mr. Clerk at the Court of Lahore—Views of the Lahore Durbar—Efforts of Shere Singh—Assemblage of the Army at Jumrood—Advance to Ali-Musjid—Affairs at Jellalabad—Defeat of Akbar Khan—Junction of Pollock and Sale.

WHATEVER embarrassments may have lain in the way of General Pollock during these months of February and March, and compelled him, eager as he was to advance to the relief of Jellalabad, to remain inactive at Peshawur, it is certain that they were greatly increased by the reluctance of our Sikh allies to face the passes of the Khybur. The conduct of the Nujeeb battalions, which had mutinied on the very eve of Wild's movement into the pass, left no room to hope for any effectual co-operation from that source. All the efforts of Captain Lawrence to obtain any assistance from the Sikh troops at Peshawur, through General Mehtab Singh,[48] had failed; and Lawrence was of opinion that the General's conduct, in admitting [75] the Afreedis into his camp, had established such a clear case of hostility, that he and his traitrous followers ought to be dismissed with disgrace. But now that Rajah Gholab Singh, accompanied by the Crown Prince of Lahore, was advancing with his regiments to Peshawur, as those regiments were composed of a different class of men, and the influence of the Rajah over these hill-levies was great, it was hoped, that on his junction with General Pollock's camp, a new order of things would be established. But it soon became painfully evident to the General that very little cordial co-operation was to be looked for from the Jummoo Rajah and his troops.

When, early in February, Pollock, on his way back to Peshawur, reached the Attock, he found the left bank of the river occupied by the Sikh troops under Gholab Singh, whilst the Nujeeb battalions, which had disgraced themselves a few weeks before, were posted on the opposite side.[49] Captain Lawrence, who had left Peshawur to expedite the Rajah's movements, was then in the Sikh camp; and M'Caskill's brigade was a few marches in the rear. There appeared every likelihood, therefore, of a collision that would impede the [76] progress of the British troops; but the exertions of Pollock and Lawrence were crowned with success; and the Sikh force moved off before M'Caskill's brigade arrived on the banks of the river. On the 14th, Gholab Singh and the Prince reached Peshawur. On the 20th, Pollock held a conference with the Rajah—Lawrence and Mackeson being present—and a day or two afterwards, forwarding an abstract of the conversation that had taken place between them, wrote to the Supreme Government: "I confess that I have no expectation of any assistance from the Sikh troops."

On the conduct of Gholab Singh at this time, some suspicion has been cast. It has been said that he not only instigated, through the agency of an influential messenger, the Nujeeb battalions to rebel, but carried on a friendly correspondence with our Afghan enemies at Caubul. That there was no hearty co-operation, is true; but hearty co-operation was not to be expected. Gholab Singh had other work on hand at that time; and, whilst he was playing and losing a great game in Thibet, it would have been strange, indeed, if he had thrown his heart into the work which he was called upon to perform for others at the mouth of the Khybur Pass. He had no confidence in his troops. He had no inducement to exert himself.[50] The latter obstacle, it was thought, might be removed; and Lawrence and [77] Mackeson were of opinion that it would be well to bribe him into activity by the offer of Jellalabad, to be held by him independently of the Sikh ruler; but Mr. Clerk was of opinion that such a measure would be neither politic nor honest.[51] It would, indeed, at that time, have been an injustice done by the British Government against both the other parties to the tripartite treaty. It would have injuriously affected both Shah Soojah and Shere Singh; and would have involved the Jummoo Rajah in difficulties and perplexities from which he would have found it difficult to extricate himself. Indeed, Captain Mackeson himself very soon came to the opinion that, if we desired to bribe Gholab Singh into co-operation by promises of territorial aggrandisement, it was necessary that we should lay our finger on some other part of the map than that which represented

Jellalabad; and he asked whether Shikarpoor, which Runjeet Singh had coveted, and which the tripartite treaty had snatched from him, "would not do better."[52]

In the mean while, it appeared to Mr. Clerk that his presence at the Court of the Sikh ruler, would have the effect of cementing the alliance between the two states, and enable him the better to obtain from the Lahore Government the military assistance that was so greatly needed. He had never doubted the good faith of the Maharajah himself. Whatever selfish motives he may have attributed [78] to him, it was not to be doubted that at this time his feelings and his conduct alike were those of a friend. Clerk declared that no native state had ever taken such great pains to accelerate the movements of our troops by preventing plunder, supplying boats at the ferries, and furnishing food for the use of our army. The Maharajah had given us the best aid and the best advice, and in the opinion of the British agent was willing to act up to the spirit of the Tripartite treaty. He was, indeed, the only man in the Punjab who really desired our success.

On the 2nd of March, Clerk arrived at Umritsur, resolute to "get what he could out of the Sikhs."[53] Early on the following morning he waited on Shere Singh. The first visit was a visit of condolence on the deaths of Kurruck Singh and his son. The attendance at the Durbar was small. No troops were in waiting beyond a single wing of a battalion drawn up to salute the arrival and departure of the British Mission. The Court were in mourning of white. Everything about the Durbar was quiet and subdued. It was a meeting of condolence on both sides. Clerk's expressions of regret were reciprocated by those which the Sikh ruler freely uttered with reference to the death of Sir William Macnaghten. Dhyan Singh and the Fakir Azizoodeen were both loud in their praises of the envoy; and expressed a lively hope that the treacherous Afghans would be duly punished for their offences. After other complimentary [79] interchanges, the Mission departed; and on the following morning proceeded to pay a visit of congratulation to the new ruler. The Court now wore a different aspect. Along the garden-walks stretched walls of crimson broadcloth, and lines of armed Goorcherrahs, in new appointments, glittered along the paths. Everything was bright and joyous. The courtiers shone in splendid apparel. The Maharajah himself was bright with jewels, of which the *Koh-i-noor* was the lustrous chief. The young Rajah Heera Singh, old Runjeet's minion, radiant with emeralds and pearls, sate beside Shere Singh, whilst his father, the minister, stood beside the regal chair. The officers of the British Mission sate on a row of chairs opposite; and the old Fakir Azizoodeen was seated on the floor beside the chair of the British chief. The conversation was of a general and complimentary character. The *Khelat* of accession was presented to the new ruler; the fidelity of the Sikh Government and the character of its administration were belauded; and then the Mission took its departure.

On the 5th, Clerk, having intimated his desire to wait on the Maharajah, to discuss matters of business, was invited to attend at his own time. He went in the afternoon; and at once solicited the honour of a private audience. Heera Singh was sitting beside him, and other courtiers were in attendance. A motion of the hand dismissed them all; and Clerk was invited to seat himself in Heera Singh's chair. But the British minister, not wishing that the conversation should be carried on without any witnesses, suggested the recall of Dhyan Singh and the Fakir, who, with Heera Singh and one or two others, were present at the interview. Clerk had a difficult game to play at this time. He had to obtain the most effectual co-operation of the Sikh Government that could be elicited [80] in this hour of trial; and yet he was unwilling to lay bare to the Sikh Durbar the real designs of his own government. He had been directed to disclose those designs to the Sikhs—to intimate that it was the intention of the British government, after rescuing the Jellalabad garrison, to withdraw the army to the British frontier; but inwardly indignant at the feebleness of the policy which was favoured at Calcutta, he shrunk from avowing these intentions of withdrawal, and endeavoured rather to elicit the views of the Lahore Cabinet than to expose the designs of his own. But Shere Singh was not inclined to be less cautious than the British envoy. When Clerk asked what he intended to do to rescue Sale's garrison from destruction, the Maharajah replied that the Sikhs were very desirous to aid the British Government, but that the matter called

for consideration. Bristling up at the coolness of this reply, Clerk said that the whole question of the alliance between the two states might call for future consideration; but that the present moment when the safety of a beleagured garrison was at stake, was no time for consideration. Qualifying then his former remark, the Sikh ruler said that he meant only that the mode of procedure called for consideration, and he began to talk about the advantage of erecting sungahs and crowning the heights of the Khybur Pass[54]—to all of which Clerk readily assented.

Then Dhyan Singh, who all this time had been sitting silent, with a dejected air and drooping head, looked up, and with a cheerful countenance began to take part in the conversation. He had before seemed to think that the purport of the discussion was to consign his brother, Gholab Singh, to inevitable destruction; but he now said that he was certain the troops under the command of that chief [81] would willingly co-operate with the British; but that "an iron lock required an iron key." He then abruptly asked why more British troops were not sent;[55] and the Fakir Azizoodeen whispered the same question. Clerk could have blurted out an answer to this; but it was one which would have opened the eyes of the Sikh Durbar, more than it was desirable to open them, to the true nature of British policy at this time, and the true character of our rulers. He, therefore, answered in general terms that the British government were collecting troops; but that, nevertheless, the co-operation of the Sikh Government was much desired; and, whilst he added that an intimation would be sent to General Pollock regarding the manner in which the Durbar recommended the war in the Khybur to be carried on, Shere Singh promised to send the desired instructions to Gholab Singh; and so the conference ended.

True to his word, the Maharajah at once despatched instructions to Gholab Singh to co-operate heartily and steadily with General Pollock and Captain Mackeson; and it is believed that at the same time Dhyan Singh wrote privately to his brother in a similar strain of exhortation and encouragement. But it was plain to Mr. Clerk that both the Sovereign and his minister regarded, with feelings of painful anxiety, the necessity of avoiding an open rupture with the British Government, by aiding in the perilous work that lay before the troops posted at Peshawur. Mr. Clerk remained at the Maharajah's Court, which had removed itself from Umritsur to Lahore, and exerted himself to keep up the fidelity of our ally to the right point of effective co-operation. But as time advanced, Shere Singh became more and more uneasy and apprehensive. It appeared [82] to him that a failure in the Khybur Pass would bring down such a weight of unpopularity upon him that his very throne would be jeopardised by the disaster. One day—it was the 4th of April—holding Durbar in the Huzooree-Bagh, the Maharajah appeared ill at ease. Having conversed a little while on general topics, but with an abstracted air, he ordered the intelligence forwarded to him by the Peshawur news-writers to be read to the British envoy; then took him by the hand and led him to another seat in the garden. Alone with the English gentleman the Sikh ruler opened out his heart to him. He was concerned, he said, to learn that the British authorities at Peshawur were making no progress in their negotiations for the purchase of a safe passage through the Khybur, and were disinclined to accept the offers of the old Barukzye Governor of Peshawur, Sultan Mahomed, who had declared his willingness to "divide, scatter, and make terms with" our enemies. He apprehended that there would be much fighting and much slaughter; and it was only too probable that the Sikh troops at Peshawur, seeing clearly the danger of the movement, and not by any means understanding the advantages that would accrue to them from it, would refuse to enter the pass. Or if they entered it, it was probable that they would suffer severely at the hands of the Afghans —and in either case, as he had been continually writing to Peshawur to impress upon the officers there the necessity of effective co-operation with the British, the odium would descend upon him, and perhaps cost him his throne. It was easier to listen to all this than to reply to it. Clerk saw as plainly as the Maharajah himself, that as the Sikh troops had always evinced an insuperable repugnance to enter the Khybur Pass, even when the glory of the Khalsa was to be advanced by the movement, and the dominions of the Lahore [83] Government to be extended, it was hardly reasonable to expect them to show greater alacrity in the advancement of the objects of another nation whom they cordially detested, and whose disasters

they regarded with secret delight.[56]

But whilst Shere Singh was thus expressing his misgivings at Lahore, and the British agent was inwardly acknowledging the reasonable character of the Maharajah's doubts, the Sikh troops at Peshawur were settling down into a state of quiet obedience, and making up their minds to penetrate the Khybur Pass. The letters despatched by Shere Singh and his minister to Avitabile and Gholab Singh had not been without their effect. A confidential friend and adviser of the Sikh ruler—Boodh Singh—had arrived at Peshawur, charged with messages from the King and the minister, which were supposed to have had an effect upon the Jummoo Rajah, sudden and great. Lawrence, too, had been busy in the Sikh camp, and little anticipating the circumstances under which it was decreed that they should one day meet in that lovely province of the old Douranee Empire over which the Jummoo Rajah since exercised undisputed dominion, had been holding long conferences with Gholab Singh.[57]
The good tact, good temper, and quiet firmness of General Pollock, [84]
had been exercised with the best results, and the arrival of further reinforcements of European troops had done much to give new confidence to the Khalsa. And so it happened, that when General Pollock prepared to enter the Khybur Pass, the Sikh troops had resolved not to suffer their faces to be blackened before all India; and really, when the hour for exertion came, did more for the honour of their own arms and the support of the British Government than the most sanguine of our officers had ventured to expect.

The dragoons and the horse artillery reached Peshawur on the 29th of March, and Pollock at once made his preparations to enter the Khybur Pass. On the 31st he pitched his camp at Jumrood, in the expectation of advancing on the following morning; but new elements of delay arose. The camel-drivers were deserting. Gholab Singh had not moved up his camp. And, above all, the rain was descending in floods. It would have dispirited the troops to have moved them forward at such a time and rendered more difficult the advance of the baggage. Pollock had done his best to diminish to the least possible amount the number of carriage-cattle that were to move with him into the Khybur Pass. But an Indian commander has no more difficult duty than this. Under no circumstances is the general addiction to much baggage very easily overcome. Men are not readily persuaded to leave their comforts behind them. A fine soldierly appeal was issued to the army;[58] and men of all ranks felt that it came from an officer who was not less ready to make sacrifices himself than to call upon others to make them.[59]
Circumstances, too, at this time, tended to reduce the amount of the [85]
baggage. The camel-drivers had deserted in such numbers, that there was not even sufficient carriage for the ammunition. The 33rd Regiment, which had just arrived at Peshawur, could not come up to the encamping-ground for want of cattle; and another day's halt was the result of the delay.[60] In the meanwhile, the Sepoys were deserting from Wild's Brigade; and no satisfactory progress was making in the negotiations which Mackeson had been carrying on for the purchase of a free passage through the Khybur from the Afreedi Maliks.[61] But there was one advantage in the delay. It gave [86]
time for the Sikh troops to prepare themselves, after their own fashion, to co-operate with our army, and General Pollock felt that whatever might be the amount of active assistance to be derived from the efforts of our allies, a combined movement would have a good moral effect.

The order of march was now laid down, and was well studied by commanding officers. Brigadier Wild was to command the advance guard, and General M'Caskill the rear. At the head of the column were to march the grenadier company of the 9th Queen's Regiment, one company of the 26th Native Infantry, three companies of the 30th Native Infantry, and two companies of the 33rd Native Infantry, under Major Barnewell, of the 9th. Then were to follow the Sappers and Miners, nine pieces of artillery,[62] and two squadrons of the 3rd Dragoons. After these, the camels, laden with all the treasure of the force and a large portion of ammunition, were to move on, followed by a squadron of the 1st Native Cavalry. Then the Commissariat stores, protected by two companies of the 53rd Native Infantry, were to advance, and a squadron of the 1st Cavalry were to follow. Then the baggage and camp-followers, covered by a Ressalah of Irregular Horse, and a squadron of the 1st Native Cavalry, were to move forward, with a further supply of

ammunition, and litters, and camel-panniers for the sick.

The rear-guard was to consist of three foot-artillery guns—the 10th Light Cavalry—two Ressalahs of Irregular Horse—two squadrons of the 3rd Dragoons—two horse-artillery guns—three companies of the 60th Native Infantry; one company of the 6th Native Infantry; and one company of her Majesty's 9th Foot. [87]

These details formed the centre column which was to make its way through the pass. Two other columns, composed entirely of infantry, were told off into parties, and instructed to crown the heights on either side of the pass. Two companies of her Majesty's 9th Foot, four companies of the 26th Native Infantry, with 400 jezailchees, were placed under the command of Colonel Taylor, of the 9th Foot; seven companies of the 30th Native Infantry, under Major Payne; three companies of the 60th Native Infantry, under Captain Riddle; four companies of the 64th Native Infantry, under Major Anderson, with some details of Broadfoot's sappers, and a company and a half of her Majesty's 9th Foot; the party being commanded by Major Davis, of the 9th, made up the right crowning column.

The left crowning column was to consist of two companies of her Majesty's 9th Foot, four companies of the 26th Native Infantry, and 200 jezailchees, under Major Huish, of the 26th Native Infantry; seven companies of the 53rd Native Infantry, under Major Hoggan, of that corps; three companies of the 60th Native Infantry, under Captain Napleton, of that regiment; and four and a half companies of the 64th Native Infantry, and one and a half companies of her Majesty's 9th Foot, under Colonel Moseley, of the 64th. With these last were to go some auxiliaries, supplied by Torabaz Khan, the loyal chief of Lalpoorah. The flanking parties were to advance in successive detachments of two companies, at intervals of 500 yards.

The order of march having been thus arranged and judicious rules laid down for the guidance of commanding officers,[63] Pollock marched his force to Jumrood. On the 4th of April, whilst the troops were encamped at that place, he issued further and more specific orders to regulate the movements of the following morning. In the evening, the General went round to all his commanding officers to ascertain that they thoroughly understood the orders that had been issued for their guidance; and to learn from them what was the temper of their men. There did not seem to be much cause for inquietude on this score. The *morale* of the Sepoys had greatly improved. [88]

At three o'clock on the morning of the 5th of April the army commenced its march. It moved off in the dim twilight, without beat of drum or sound of bugle. Quietly the crowning columns prepared to ascend. The heights on either side were covered with the enemy, but so little was the mode of attack, which the British General had determined upon, expected by the enemy, that it was not until our flankers had achieved a considerable ascent that the Khyburees were aware of their advance. Then, as the morning dawned, the positions of the two forces were clearly revealed to each other; and the struggle commenced.

Across the mouth of the pass the enemy had thrown up a formidable barrier. It was made of mud, and huge stones, and heavy branches of trees. The Khyburees had not wanted time to mature their defensive operations; and they had thrown up a barricade of considerable strength. It was not a work upon which our guns could play with any good effect; but it was a small matter effectually to destroy the barrier when once our light infantry had swept the hills. And that work was soon going on gallantly and successfully on both sides, whilst the centre column, drawn up in battle-array, was waiting the issue of the contest. Nothing could have proved better than the arrangements of the General; and no General could have wished his plan of attack to be carried out with better effect. On the left, the crowning column was soon in vigorous and successful action. On the right, the precipitous nature of the ground was such that it seemed to defy the eager activity of Taylor and his men. But he stole round the base of the mountain unseen, and found a more practicable ascent than that which he had first tried. Then on both sides the British infantry were soon hotly engaged with the mountaineers, clambering up the precipitous peaks, and pouring down a hot and destructive fire upon the surprised and disconcerted Khyburees. They had not expected that our disciplined troops, who had, as it were, been looking at the Khybur for some months, would [89]

be more than a match for them upon their native hills. But so it was. Our British infantry were beating them in every direction, and everywhere the white dresses of the Khyburees were seen flying across the hills. The Duke of Wellington had said, some time before, that he "had never heard that our troops were not equal, as well in their personal activity as by their arms, to contend with and overcome any natives of hills whatever."[64] And now our British infantry and our Bengal Sepoys were showing how well able they were to meet the Khyburees on their native hills. The mountain-rangers, whom Macnaghten wished to raise, because Sale's brigade had been harassed by the Ghilzyes, could not have clambered over the hills with greater activity than our British troops, and would not have been half as steady or half as faithful.

It was now time for Pollock to advance. The centre column did not attempt to move forward until the flankers had fought their way to the rear of the mouth of the pass. But when he had fairly turned the enemy's position, he began to destroy the barrier, and prepared [90] to advance into the pass. The enemy had assembled in large numbers at the mouth, but finding themselves outflanked—finding that they had to deal with different men and a different system from that which they had seen a few months before, they gradually withdrew, and, without opposition, Pollock now cleared his way through the barricade, and pushed into the pass with his long string of baggage. The difficulties of the remainder of the march were now mainly occasioned by the great extent of this convoy. Pollock was conveying both ammunition and provisions to Sale's garrison; and there were many more beasts of burden, therefore, than were used by his own force. But skilfully was the march conducted. Encumbered as he was, the General was compelled to move slowly forward. The march to Ali-Musjid occupied the greater part of the day. The heat was intense. The troops suffered greatly from thirst. But they all did their duty well. Whatever doubts may have lingered to the last in Pollock's mind, were now wholly dispersed; and when he reached Ali-Musjid in safety, and had time to think over the events of the day, nothing refreshed him more than the thought that the Sepoys had fairly won back the reputation they had lately lost. [65]

The enemy had evacuated Ali-Musjid in the morning, and now Ferris's jezailchees were sent in to garrison the place. A part of [91] Pollock's force, with the head-quarters, bivouacked near the fortress. The night was bitterly cold; but the command of the heights was maintained, and the men, both European and Natives, who had been under arms since three o'clock in the morning, did not utter a complaint. They appeared to feel that they had done a great work; but that the utmost vigilance was necessary to secure the advantage they had gained. The enemy were still hovering about, and all night long firing upon our people. It was necessary to be on the alert.

It was a great thing to have accomplished such a march with so little loss of life, and no loss of baggage. Avitabile said that Pollock and his force were going to certain destruction. Had he moved precipitately with his main column into the pass, he would probably have been driven back with great slaughter; but the precaution he took in crowning the heights and turning the enemy's position, secured him, though not without some fighting the whole way, a safe passage. The enemy are said to have lost about 300 men killed, and 600 or 800 wounded.

The Sikh troops moved up by another pass to Ali-Musjid. Pollock, still doubtful of their fidelity, and not desiring to have them too near his own troops, suggested that when he pushed forward by the Shadee-Bagiaree Pass, they should take the other, known as the Jubogee.[66] Pollock had entered into a covenant with Gholab Singh for the occupation of the pass by the Sikh troops until the 5th of June. It was necessary that he should keep open his communications with the rear; and the Sikhs undertook to do it. But when Pollock marched to Jellalabad, they began to bargain with certain Afreedi [92] chiefs, hostile to our interests, to keep open the pass for the stipulated time, for a certain sum of money, thus making known to the tribes the time for which they had covenanted to hold it.[67] Early in May the Sikhs suddenly quitted their position at Ali-Musjid and returned to Jumrood, seizing some of our baggage-cattle on the way, throwing their loads on the ground, and employing the animals to carry their baggage.[68]

In the mean while, Pollock had reached Jellalabad. "We found the [93]
fort strong," he wrote to a friend; "the garrison healthy; and, except for wine and beer, better off than we are. They were, of course, delighted to see us. We gave three cheers as we passed the colours; and the band of each regiment played as it came up. It was a sight worth seeing. All appeared happy."[69] It was, indeed, a happy meeting. Sale's little garrison had been shut up for five months in Jellalabad. They had long been surrounded with perils, lessened only by their own daring. They had looked in vain for succours, until they became so familiar with danger that they had begun to feel secure in the midst of it. But they were weary of their isolation, and were eager to see their countrymen again. Right welcome, therefore, was the arrival of Pollock's force; and happy the day on which it appeared with streaming colours and gay music. But the prospects of the garrison had brightened; and if Pollock had to speak of his victories, Sale, too, had his to narrate.

Pollock, before he entered the pass, had received intelligence of the gallant sortie made by the garrison on the 1st of April, when they swept away from the covering parties of the enemy a flock of 500 sheep and goats, which had secured them a further ten days' supply of meat.[70] Writing of this to General Pollock, Macgregor [94]
had said: "Our troops of all arms are in the highest pluck, and they seem never so happy as when fighting with the enemy. I verily believe we could capture Mahomed Akbar's camp, even with our present means, were it our game to incur the risk of an attempt of the kind."[71] This was lightly spoken; a mere outburst of the abundant animal spirits of the writer; but Pollock was scarcely on the other side of Ali-Musjid, when he received tidings which made it clear to him that now the light word had become a grave fact, and the capture of Mahomed Akbar's camp had been actually accomplished.

And now that they had reached Jellalabad, every one in Pollock's camp was eager for details of this great victory. It was, indeed, a dashing exploit. On the 5th of April, Macgregor's spies brought in tidings from Akbar Khan's camp that Pollock had been beaten back, with great slaughter, in the Khybur Pass. On the morning of the 6th, the Sirdar's guns broke out into a royal salute, in honour of the supposed victory. Other reports then came welling in to Jellalabad. It was said that there was another revolution at Caubul, and that the Sirdar was about to break up his camp and hasten to the capital. In either case, it seemed that the time had come to strike a blow at Akbar Khan's army; so a council of war was held, and the question gravely debated. It is said that councils of war "never fight." But the council which now assembled to determine whether the Sirdar's camp should be attacked on the following morning, decided the [95]
question in the affirmative. Unsurpassed in personal courage by any daring youth in his camp, and ever eager to fight under another man's command, Sale sometimes shrunk from energetic action when it brought down upon him a burden of responsibility. But Havelock was at his elbow—a man of rare coolness and consummate judgment, with military talents of a high order, ripened by experience, and an intrepidity in action not exceeded by that of his fighting commander. He it was who, supported by other zealous spirits, urged the expediency of an attack on the enemy's position, and laid down the plan of operations most likely to ensure success. Sale yielded with reluctance—but he did yield; and it was determined that at daybreak on the following morning they should go out and fight.

Sale issued directions for the formation of three columns of infantry, the centre consisting of her Majesty's 13th Light Infantry, mustering 500 bayonets, under Colonel Dennie; the left, under Lieutenant-Colonel Monteith, C.B.; and the right, composed of one company of the 13th Light Infantry and one of the 35th Native Infantry, and the detachment of Sappers, under Lieutenant Orr (the severity of Captain Broadfoot's wound still rendering him non-effective), the whole amounting to 360 men, commanded by Captain Havelock, of her Majesty's 13th Light Infantry. These were to be supported by the fire of the guns of No. 6, Light Field Battery, under Captain Abbott, to which Captain Backhouse, of Shah Soojah's Artillery, was attached, and by the whole of the small cavalry force under Captain Oldfield and Lieutenant Mayne.[72] Such were the components of the little force that was to attack the camp of the Sirdar.

At daybreak they moved out of the fort by the western gate. [96] Akbar Khan was ready to receive them. He had drawn out his troops before the camp, with his right resting on a fort, and his left on the Caubul river. He had not less than 6000 men. The plan of action proposed by Havelock was, that they should make a sudden and vigorous onslaught on the Sirdar's camp and drive him into the river, which at that time was a rapid and unfordable torrent. But, abandoning this simple device, Sale, on issuing from the gate, ordered Dennie forward to attack a small fort, several hundred yards to the right, from which the enemy had often molested us before, and in which they were now strongly posted. Gallantly, at the head of his men, went Dennie to the attack—a brave and chivalrous soldier ever in the advance—but an Afghan marksman covered him with his piece, and the ball passed through Dennie's body.[73] The movement was a false one; it cost us the life of this good soldier, and well nigh lost us the battle. The force being thus divided, the Afghan horsemen came down impetuously on Havelock's weak infantry column; and if he had not persuaded the General to recall the 13th from the fort, the action might have had a different result. The recall was not too late. Sale now gave his [97] orders for a general attack on the Sirdar's camp; and his orders were carried into effect with an impetuosity and success worthy of the defenders of Jellalabad. In the forcible language of the General's despatch, on which I cannot improve, "The artillery advanced at the gallop, and directed a heavy fire upon the Afghan centre, whilst two of the columns of infantry penetrated the line near the same point, and the third forced back its left from its support on the river, into the stream of which some of his horse and foot were driven. The Afghans made repeated attempts to check our advance by a smart fire of musketry, by throwing forward heavy bodies of horse, which twice threatened the detachments of foot under Captain Havelock, and by opening upon us three guns from a battery screened by a garden wall, and said to have been served under the personal superintendence of the Sirdar. But in a short time they were dislodged from every point of their position, their cannon taken, and their camp involved in a general conflagration. The battle was over —and the enemy in full retreat in the direction of Lughman by about 7 A. M. We have made ourselves masters of two cavalry standards, recaptured four guns lost by the Caubul and Gundamuck forces, the restoration of which, to our government, is matter of much honest exultation among our troops, seized and destroyed a great quantity of materiel and ordnance stores, and burnt the whole of the enemy's tents. In short, the defeat of Mahomed Akbar in open field, by the troops whom he had boasted of blockading, has been complete and signal." Although our cavalry were not stopped in pursuit, as some held they might have been with advantage, the enemy's loss was severe. "The field of battle was strewed with the bodies of men and horses, and the richness of the trappings of some of the latter seemed to attest that persons of distinction had been among the casualties." The loss on our side was small. Eight privates of the [98] 13th Native Infantry, and two of the 35th Native Infantry, were killed. Three officers and about fifty men were wounded.

Great was the joy which the intelligence of the victories of Pollock and Sale diffused throughout all India; and in no one breast did so much of gladness bubble up as in that of Lord Ellenborough. He wrote, that although it was his misfortune not to be a soldier by profession, he knew how to appreciate soldierly qualities and soldierly acts. It was then that, being at Benares at the time, he issued that well-known notification which conferred on Sale's brigade the honourable title by which it has since been so well known—the title of the "Illustrious Garrison."[74] That garrison had now done its work, and taken its place in history. Sale ceased to command at Jellalabad; and soon letters from Lord Ellenborough set aside the political functions of Macgregor. In Pollock and Nott, on either side of Afghanistan, had been vested supreme political authority; and Macgregor soon took his place beside the General, simply as his *aide-de-camp*. By Pollock's side, too, holding the office of his military secretary, was Shakespear, who had done such good service in liberating the Russian slaves at Khiva; who had won his spurs by this Central-Asian exploit, and returned to India Sir Richmond Shakespear. Pollock knew the worth of these men, and turned their experience to account. But the reign of the "Politicals" was at an end. Lord Ellenborough had determined to dethrone them.

The Governor-General knew his men. He did well in trusting Pollock and Nott. But after the melancholy illustration of the trustworthiness of military officers of high rank displayed in the conduct of affairs at Caubul, the time hardly seemed a happy one for opening out the question of political and military responsibilities, [99] and their relative effects upon the interests of the state. It is right, however, now that it has been stated how the whole system, which exercised so great an influence over events in Afghanistan, was abolished by the Governor-General, that something should be said upon the general character of the diplomatic functionaries employed on the great field of Central Asia.

There is no single controversial topic which has struck out so many sparks of bad feeling—so much personality, so much bitter invective, and I fear it must be added, so much reckless mendacity, as this question of political agency. At one time a "Political" was, by many writers, considered fair game. To hunt him down with all conceivable calumny and vituperation, was regarded as a laudable achievement. Every one had a stone to throw at him—every one howled at him with execration, or shouted at him in derision. Temperate men on this topic, became intemperate; charitable men, uncharitable; sagacity ceased to be sagacious; discrimination ceased to discriminate. All alike lifted up their voices to swell the chorus of popular indignation.

The Caubul outburst, with its attendant horrors, filled this cup of bitter feeling to the brim. It would be difficult to embody, in a page of mere description, the popular notion of an Afghan "Political." He was believed to be a very conceited, a very arrogant, a very ignorant, and a very unfeeling personage; a pretender, who, on the strength of a little smattering of Persian and some interest, perhaps petticoat interest, in high places, had obtained an appointment, the duties of which he was not capable of performing, and the trust involved in which he was well-nigh certain to abuse. He was looked upon as a creature whose blunders were as mischievous as his pretensions were ridiculous; one, whose ideas of diplomacy were [100] limited to the cultivation of a moustache and the faculty of sitting cross-legged on the ground; who talked largely about Durbar, rode out with a number of Sowars at his heels; and was always on the point of capturing some fugitive chief, and never achieving it after all. But this was only the more favourable aspect of the picture. There was another and a darker side. He was sometimes represented as a roaring lion, going about seeking whom he should devour; unveiling Afghan ladies and pulling Afghan gentlemen by the beard; inviting chiefs to a conference and then betraying them; blowing Sirdars from guns; conniving at wholesale massacre; bribing brothers to betray brothers, fathers their sons; keeping fierce dogs to hound them at innocent countrymen; desecrating mosques, insulting Moollahs, trampling on the Koran—in a word, committing every conceivable outrage that cruelty and lust could devise. There was no amount of baseness, indeed, of which these men were not supposed to be capable; no licentiousness to which they were not addicted; no crimes which they did not commit. This was the popular notion of an "Afghan Political." It was constantly illustrated in oral conversation and in the local literature of the day. Men talked and wrote upon the subject as though the question—if ever question there were—had long ago been settled by common consent; and it was not until the war had been brought to a close, that a doubt was raised respecting the validity of the charges so generally brought against the Ishmaels of diplomacy in the East.

Very much of this is now mere exploded slander. I cannot say that the political officers, who distinguished themselves throughout the Afghanistan campaign, have *lived down* the calumny of which they were the victims. Very few of the number survive. But a reaction, in public opinion, is discernible,—a growing disposition to do justice, at least to the memories of the dead. Men speak and [101] write more temperately on the subject. Exaggeration no longer overstrides all our utterances on this topic; and, in some cases, full justice has been done to the noble qualities of head and heart which have adorned, perhaps do adorn men amongst us, under the great "Political" reproach.

It would serve no good purpose to run from one extreme into the other. It is the evil of sudden reactions of popular feeling, that men escape from one error only to be precipitated into another of an opposite class. The system of political agency is not one of unmixed good; nor are political agents exempt from the common frailties of

humanity. Many mistakes were unquestionably committed; sometimes a stronger word might without exaggeration have been applied to the things that were done in Afghanistan by our diplomatic agents. Diplomacy is, at all times, a dangerous game. It has seldom, if ever, been played in any part of the world, without some loss of purity, some departure from integrity. In Europe, the diplomatist treads a tortuous path. Guile is met with guile. Fraud is often counteracted by fraud. Minister overreaches minister. One state jockeys another. And, in the affairs of nations, arts are resorted to, which, in the concerns of private life, would stamp the wily plotter with infamy not to be escaped. But, in the East, in the midst of the worst contagion, tempted on every side, stimulated by the fear of failure, irritated by the duplicity of others, far greater is the difficulty of preserving intact the diplomatic integrity which is exposed to so many corrupting influences. I am not asserting the propriety of fighting all men with their own weapons. I have no faith whatever in the worldly wisdom, apart from all considerations of right and wrong, of playing off wile against wile—meeting treachery with treachery—lie with lie. Such tactics may succeed for a season; but, in the long run, truth and honesty will be found the most [102] effective weapons. All I desire to plead in behalf of our Oriental diplomatists is the extraordinary temptations to which they have been exposed. Many of them were necessarily without experience in the difficult game; and, therefore, apprehensive of failure—little confident in themselves, when called upon to encounter, perhaps for the first time, the deep duplicity of Eastern intrigue. Fearful of being drawn into a snare, and deeply impressed with a sense of the responsibilities resting upon them, they have sometimes, in their eagerness to bring negotiations to a successful issue, departed from that strict line of integrity, which we could wish our countrymen ever to maintain. This much at least must be admitted—but who has ever gained a reputation as a skilful diplomatist without some deviation from the straight path of open and truthful manliness of conduct?

"If a man is too stupid or too lazy to drill his company," wrote General Nott, "he often turns sycophant, cringer to the heads of departments, and is made a 'Political,' and of course puts the government to an enormous expense, and disgraces the character of his country." Nothing was ever more unlike the truth. The Afghan "Politicals" were among the best soldiers in the country. Many of them, as Todd, Rawlinson, Nicolson, &c., were practised drill-instructors and had shown an especial fitness for this particular duty in disciplining foreign troops or raw levies. And no one, who takes account of the most honourable incidents of the Afghan War, will overlook the military services rendered by Pottinger, Macgregor, H. M. Lawrence, Mackeson, Broadfoot, Outram, and others, who are known to us as Political Agents. There have been no finer soldiers in the Indian Army than some of those who distinguished themselves during the war in Afghanistan, under the unpopular designation of "Politicals."

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[103]

# CHAPTER V.

## [January-April: 1842.]

The Last Days of Shah Soojah—State of Parties at Caubul—Condition of the Hostages—the Newab Zemaun Khan—Letters of Shah Soojah—His Death—Question of his Fidelity—His Character and Conduct considered.

It is time that I should pause in the narration of the retributory measures of the British-Indian Government, to dwell, for a little space, upon the events at Caubul which succeeded the departure of Elphinstone's army. It had been rumoured throughout India—and the rumour had created no little astonishment in the minds of those who had believed that the Caubul insurrection was a movement against the Feringhees and the King—that ever since the departure of the former Shah Soojah had continued to occupy the Balla Hissar, and had been recognised as the supreme authority by the very men who had recently been in arms against him. And the rumour was a perfect echo of the truth. Ever since the departure of the British army Shah Soojah had reigned at Caubul.

He had reigned at Caubul, but he had not ruled. His power was merely nominal. The chiefs wanted a puppet; and in the unhappy Shah they found the only one who was ever likely to stand between them and the vengeance of the British nation. Day after day they made their salaam to him in the Balla Hissar; but so imperfect even was their outward recognition of his regal dignity, that money was [104] still coined in the name of the Newab Zemaun Khan. The Newab, who had been raised to the sovereignty by the voice of the chiefs soon after the first outbreak of the insurrection, had cheerfully resigned the honour that had been thrust upon him, and accepted the office of Wuzeer. Ameen-oollah Khan was appointed Naib, or deputy. For a little time there was some outward show of harmony; but there was no real union between the King and the chiefs. The Barukzyes spoke scornfully of the King; and the King could not refrain from expressing his mistrust of the whole tribe of Barukzyes. Ameen-oollah Khan, openly swearing allegiance to both, seems to have held the balance between the two opposing factions, and was in reality the most influential man in the state. He had amassed, by fraud and violence, large sums of money, which the other chiefs, straitened as they were by an empty treasury, and unable to carry out any great national measure, would fain have made him disgorge. From the Shah himself they contrived to extort some three or four lakhs of rupees; but when Akbar Khan wrote pressing letters to Caubul for guns and ammunition, that he might lay siege to Jellalabad, no one would move without pay, and money was not forthcoming.

All parties were jealous of each other; and especially jealous of the rising power of Akbar Khan. The young Barukzye was in Lughman; and the elder chiefs at Caubul, even if they had possessed the money to enable them to answer these emergent indents upon their military resources, would have been little inclined to send him the reinforcements and munitions for which he was continually writing. They talked about raising an army of their own, and opposing the retributory march of the British through the Khybur Pass; but the want of money presented an insuperable obstacle to any military movement on a scale that would afford a prospect of [105] success. The Shah himself talked openly in Durbar about standing forward as defender of the faith, and declaring a religious war against the Kaffirs; but he privately assured Conolly that he was heart and soul with the British, and he wrote long letters to the Governor-General, Clerk, Macgregor, and others, declaring his inviolable fidelity, and eagerly clamouring for money.

In the mean while the English hostages remained under the protection of Mahomed Zemaun Khan. Nothing could exceed the kindness of the good old man. Faithful among the faithless, he was resolute to defend the Christian strangers at all risks; and never, when the popular clamour ran highest, and other men of note were thirsting for the blood of the captives, did he waver for an instant in his determination to shield the helpless Feringhees from the malice of his remorseless countrymen. He was a Barukzye chief—a near relative of Dost Mahomed Khan; and there was not among the Sirdars of all the tribes one in whom the spirit of nationality glowed more strongly and more purely. But whilst the independence of his

country was as dear to him as to any of his brethren, he did not burn with that fierce hatred against the English which broke out in other places, nor did he ever, in the advancement of the most cherished objects of his heart, stain his patriotism with those foul crimes from which elsewhere there was little shrinking. Regarding with abhorrence the conduct of those who had betrayed our unhappy people, he himself did all that, single-handed, he could do, to atone for the cruelty of his countrymen; and no father could have treated his children more kindly than the good Newab cherished and protected the English hostages who found a sanctuary in his house.

But it was necessary, whilst the excitement ran so high at Caubul, and there was a prospect of violent contention among the [106] chiefs, to do something more than this. Ameen-oollah Khan never slackened in his exertions to obtain possession of the persons of the hostages. Having tried every kind of stratagem, and failed to secure them by fraud, he would have resorted to open violence. It was necessary, therefore, to oppose force to force; so the Newab raised an army of his own. His pecuniary resources were limited; but he did not hesitate to spend his little store freely in entertaining followers. Mainly for the protection of the English gentlemen he raised a body of 1000 footmen, whom he armed with English bayonets; another body of 1000 horse, and some Jezailchees—in all, about 3000 men. The English guns, too, were in his possession, and he refused to yield them up to the Shah.[75]

The King regarded his proceedings with mistrust. There was no sort of cordiality between them. The old Suddozye and Barukzye strife seemed about to be renewed with all its pristine vigour. At last the Shah, about the middle of the month of March, corrupted the commandant of the Newab's army, who went over with all his followers to the Balla Hissar. This event, which threatened entirely to change the state of parties at the capital, threw all Caubul into a ferment. The shops were closed; the people began to arm themselves. The Newab demanded the restoration of his troops; but the King only yielded a conditional assent. He appears at this time to have been entirely in the hands of Ameen-oollah Khan; and he replied, that if the hostages were sent to the house of the Loghur chief, the recreant commandant should be sent there at the same time. The Newab, however, resolutely refused to give up the English gentlemen. The proposal seems to have strengthened Conolly's suspicions of the fidelity of Shah Soojah. It nearly cost the hostages their lives.

It now seemed that Caubul was about to become the theatre of [107] internecine strife. The gates of the Balla Hissar were half closed, and the Shah never ventured beyond them. The chiefs were all mustering retainers. The King was endeavouring to cast suspicion on the nationality of the Newab; and the Newab's party were doubting the fidelity of the King. The Populzye leaders of the insurrection clustered round the monarch, but he had neither popularity nor power. Money he had; but making an outward show of poverty, he resolutely refused to produce it; and the people began to abuse him for his parsimony. In this conjuncture he continued to write to the British authorities, declaring that he could do anything [108] for them if they would only send him money; but the British authorities were deaf to his entreaties, and only sent him advice.[76]

But the difficulties of the Shah were now drawing to a close; his days were numbered. Whilst he was awaiting the receipt of answers to his letters, the excitement in Caubul was increasing—the division among the chiefs was becoming more and more irreconcilable. Horribly perplexed and bewildered, anxious at once to appear in the eyes of his countrymen true to the national cause, and to retain the good-will of the English by some show of fidelity to them, he fell into every kind of inconsistency, was suspected by both parties, and either way was rushing on destruction. At last the chiefs called upon him to prove his sincerity by placing himself at the head of all the available troops, and marching down upon Jellalabad. The Shah yielded a reluctant consent; and, on the 29th of March sent round his criers to proclaim that he was about to march southward on the 31st; that the chiefs were to accompany him, and to send out their tents on the preceding day. The summons was scantily obeyed. The Kuzzilbash chief declared that as neither the King nor the minister had supplied him with money, he could not move. The King said that he had no confidence in the chiefs, and that, therefore, he would not go, but that Ameen-oollah might go for him. And so the expedition

was postponed. In the mean while, Akbar Khan was writing urgent letters to Caubul clamouring for reinforcements, and urging that it was wretched policy to be eternally at variance with one another—quarrelling for money and quarrelling for rank—instead of making common cause against the hated Feringhees.[77]

After a pause of a few days the King again consented to march. [109] His suspicion of the Barukzyes, however, was not easily to be allayed. Nor was it wholly without reason. Even impartial lookers-on prophesied that if he left Caubul he would either be murdered or blinded by the Barukzyes.[78] Aware of these suspicions, the Newab sent his wife to Shah Soojah with a sealed Koran, assuring the King with a solemn oath that the Barukzyes and other chiefs would be true to him. Fortified by this assurance, the Shah moved out of the Balla Hissar on the 4th of April, but before nightfall returned to the palace, determined on the following morning to review his troops and then to start for Jellalabad. Rising early on the morning of the 5th, he arrayed himself in royal apparel, and, accompanied by a small party of Hindostanees, proceeded under a salute, in a chair of state, towards his camp, which had been pitched at Seeah-Sungh. But Soojah-ool-dowlah, the son of the Newab, had gone out before [110] him, and placed in ambush a party of Jezailchees. As the Shah and his followers were making their way towards the regal tent, the marksmen fired upon them. The volley took murderous effect. Several of the bearers and of the escort were struck down; and the King himself killed on the spot. A ball had entered his brain. Soojah-ool-dowlah then rode up; and as he contemplated his bloody work, the body of the unhappy King, vain and pompous as he was to the very last, was stripped of all the jewels about it—the jewelled dagger, the jewelled girdle, the jewelled head-dress; and it was then cast into a ditch.

The news of the King's murder spread like wildfire. Great was the consternation. Futteh Jung, the second son of the Shah, on receiving the sad tidings of his father's death, made with all speed towards the Balla Hissar; but the gates were guarded; so he turned back and sought refuge in the fort of Mahomed Khan, Bayat. That night however, Mahomed Khan, in concert with Ameen-oollah, who held the Balla Hissar, restored the Prince to the palace; and they agreed to proclaim him King. The body of Shah Soojah was recovered, and for some days it lay in state. The royal family declared that until sentence had been passed upon the murderer it should not be buried. The Moollahs were assembled to expound the punishment due to so atrocious an offender; and they pronounced, on the authority of their religious books, that the murderer of the King should be stoned to death. But Ameen-oollah Khan interposed. He said that it was not a time to carry out such a sentence; all parties were bound to league themselves together to fight against the Feringhees; and intestine animosities ought therefore to be forgot.

To no one were the circumstances of the Shah's death a source of [111] deeper horror and regret than to the good old Newab, the father of the murderer. He is said to have sworn an oath never again to see his son beneath his roof, or to suffer him to be named in his presence.[79] Various circumstances have been assigned as the proximate causes of the murder of the unfortunate Shah. It was said that he had drawn down upon himself the increased animosity of the Barukzyes, by appointing to the command of the army a son of Ameen-oollah Khan. Akbar Khan, too, had recently been wounded by an accidental shot from a Pesh-Khidmut, or attendant, which was said to have been designed to take the life of the Sirdar; and it had been rumoured that Shah Soojah had bribed the man to make the murderous attempt. That the Newab Zemaun Khan was not implicated in the foul transaction, all men are willing to believe; but it was intended to strengthen the party of which he was then the acknowledged chief. It was the consummation of the great strife which for forty years had been raging between Shah Soojah and the Barukzye Sirdars. Indeed, it would have been little in accordance with the general tenor of Afghan history if this unfortunate Prince had not died a violent death. After so eventful a life, it would have been strange indeed if he had sunk to rest peaceably on his bed.

Among the obscurer points of Afghan history, there is not one more obscure than that which involves the question of the fidelity of Shah Soojah. That doubts were cast upon his sincerity has been already shown. Conscious of this, he entered upon a defence of his [112]

conduct in a series of letters to the British authorities which I have now given to the world. Written hastily, and under the influence of strong excitement, they carry very little conviction with them. The main object of these letters appears to have been the extraction of money from the British treasury. The Shah continued to assert, that having no money he had no power, but that if money were sent to him he would be able to do great things for his late allies. Death makes many revelations. The death of Shah Soojah revealed the mendacity and the avarice of the man. Some twenty lakhs of rupees, besides jewels of large value, were found to have been in his possession when he died.[80] This disagreeable circumstance, though by no means conclusive against the general fidelity of the Shah, certainly will not predispose the inquirer to take an unduly favourable view of his conduct.

It must, however, be always kept steadily in view, that the circumstances of Shah Soojah's position were such as to surround him with an atmosphere of doubt and suspicion. That the chiefs made use of the King's name at the outset of the insurrection, and produced an inflammatory document said to bear the royal seal, is one of the most notorious facts in the entire history of the war. The seal was genuine, but the document was a supposititious one. Nothing is more common, in times of popular excitement, than for the Afghans to endeavour to injure one another by giving currency [113] to forged instruments. It was to the last degree improbable that, at this time, Shah Soojah should have committed himself by putting the seal to any documents which might have fallen into the hands of his European allies, and laid bare the blackness of his treachery. But that he would have been glad to have cast off the Feringhee alliance, and to have ruled without the restraint of our superintendence and interference, is not to be questioned. He may, therefore, have regarded with inward satisfaction the progress of the insurrectionary movement, and rejoiced in its ultimate success; but he does not appear to have been more than a passive instrument in the hands of others. It was obviously his policy to appear all things to all people. He could not venture to take any decided course. He never in the prime of life had been conspicuous for manliness of character; and now, in his old age, he was more than ever a waverer and a waiter upon fortune. Perhaps, I should not err if I were to say that he was true neither to his own countrymen nor to his British allies. He was prepared to side with either the one or the other, according to the direction in which the tide of success might be seen to flow. He had no affection for the English; but he dearly loved English money. He knew the value of British aid; but he would fain have had it from a distance. From the very first he had disliked the obtrusive manner in which it had been forced upon him. He wanted the *prestige* of British support without the incumbrance of British control. To retain our friendship, and yet to rid himself of our presence, was unquestionably the desire of the Shah; but it is doubtful whether his desire would ever have shaped itself into any overt acts of hostility against the government which had restored him to the throne of his fathers. He was not deficent of gratitude, even if there had been anything to call it forth;[81] but he had [114] sufficient sagacity to know that his political existence was dependent upon the will of the British Government. And he was cautious not to do anything to provoke its vengeance. The chiefs believed, at the commencement of the November outbreak, that though the insurrection would soon be crushed, such a manifestation of popular feeling would in all probability cause the British authorities to tremble for the safety of their position, and induce them to evacuate the country in the ensuing spring. Encouraging a similar belief, Shah Soojah may have regarded with inward satisfaction the outbreak of the revolution. But he was surprised and alarmed by the rapidity of its progress; and was wholly unprepared for the sanguinary termination of his connection with his Christian allies. That he was in a state of painful depression and prostration throughout the entire period of the insurrection is not to be questioned; and it is scarcely less certain that he never wholly recovered from the terror which then bewildered him. The irruption culminated somewhat too violently for a man of Shah Soojah's temperament; and when he found what a convulsion had been raised around him, he shrunk back in dismay. On either side dangers and difficulties started up in his path. He strove to save himself by doing little, and being to all outward seeming the friend both of the Afghan insurgents and their European foes. Duplicity is

never long successful. Doubted by both parties, the king became an object of general contempt. He trimmed between the two contending hosts, and escaped the rocks on neither side of the vessel.

[115] On such a question as this, it is right that the opinions of the leading political officers, who were best acquainted with the character and the conduct of the Shah, and had the best opportunities of investigating the circumstances of the Caubul insurrection, should be summarily recorded. “To my mind,” wrote Captain Mackeson to Mr. Clerk, “there has ever appeared but little doubt that his Majesty Shah Soojah was, in the commencement, the instigator of the Caubul insurrection. Had the first blow struck by the rebels been effectual, his Majesty might, perhaps, have thrown off the mask earlier; but our troops in cantonments held their position though surrounded by foes without number, whilst those in the Balla Hissar held his Majesty in check. Nay, the chances were at one time so much in favour of our success, that his Majesty discarded his own instruments, refusing all their solicitations to place himself at their head. To such an extent did he carry his reluctant adherence to us, that at length the rebels, in their turn, were obliged to seek for a leader among the Barukzyes. His Majesty then husbanded his own resources, allowing the Barukzyes and our people to fight out the battle. Sir William Macnaghten would not have treated with Mahomed Akbar Khan had he not been convinced of the treachery towards us of Shah Soojah.”[82]

Captain Macgregor’s opinion coincides, but with some amount of qualification, with that of the last witness. “I agree with you” (Mackeson), he wrote, “in thinking that the Shah was more or less implicated in the insurrection; but when he saw that it took such a serious turn, I really believe that he repented—even so soon as he heard of Burnes’s assassination, and of the massacre of the other officers in the city. His Majesty pressed Sir William to remove all [116] the British troops into the Balla Hissar, which in itself looked like a friendly feeling towards us.”[83]

The opinion of Major Rawlinson sets in an opposite direction. It throws a side-light from Candahar on the conduct of the Shah at this time. “From everything I can learn, I should say that the Shah was certainly well inclined to us; and, if assured of our again placing confidence in him, would cordially support our advance. He has certainly done as little as he could, keeping up appearances with the Mussulman party, to complicate our position at this place, and I learn that for some time past the prevalent opinion in the Douranee camp has been that the Shah desired our success.”[84]

Captain Mackenzie’s opinion, as to the conduct and motives of the Shah, involves some considerations not noticed by others: “The king highly esteemed and loved Macnaghten personally, as indeed all the Afghans did who came into direct intercourse with that accomplished and courteous English gentleman. Macnaghten’s chivalrous consideration for the proud but dependant monarch, who felt his somewhat false position keenly, had been unvarying and unremitting: perhaps more so than the public interests warranted. But we can afford to admire the high tone and delicacy of the envoy’s motives, especially as few public functionaries are likely to be misled by similar knightly scruples. The king more than once [117] openly discussed with Macnaghten the likelihood of attempts to sow dissension between them, by the propagation of reports of his want of faith towards his British allies, and he always added: “You are yourself aware that you are as necessary to me as my nails are to my fingers.” Burnes was a man of totally different temperament from Macnaghten, and his demeanour towards the king was neither conciliatory nor deferential. It is not saying too much, that the king hated him; he was aware that his friend the Envoy was about to depart from Caubul, thus leaving him in Burnes’s hands; and after a careful consideration of the character of his proceedings from first to last, of the nature of the motives by which he was generally actuated (*i. e.* petty and personal), and also of the opinion of many of the most intelligent Afghans, the most probable conjecture is, that Shah Soojah was aware of the plot and combination against himself and the Feringhees before the outbreak; that he hoped it would be sufficient to detain Macnaghten in the country, but not enough to baffle our military power; and that, when he became thoroughly alarmed on the morning of the 2nd of November, he did his best to quell the insurrection, and openly expressed his

astonishment and disappointment at the apathy and inefficiency of the English leaders and their troops. He can scarcely, with due consideration for the peculiarities of the Asiatic mind, and the desperate circumstances of his position, be judged by the European standard of honour and morality, if he subsequently temporised with the dominant Barukzyes. He well knew what he had to expect at their hands, and he fully anticipated the fate which afterwards overtook him."[85]

But of all the officers connected with the British Mission, John Conolly was the one who enjoyed the best opportunities of arriving at a correct estimate of the conduct of the Shah. During the insurrection he was in attendance on the king at the Balla Hissar, [118] and he was at Caubul up to the time of his death. Conolly's opinions are on record. He seems at one time to have entertained the strongest possible conviction that the Shah was true to his British allies. "I believe," he wrote on the 17th of January, "that he is heart and soul in our interest; and it is contrary to all reason to suppose otherwise." But by the 15th of February his belief in the fidelity of the Shah seems to have been shaken; for he wrote to Macgregor: "It is generally believed and asserted throughout the town that his Majesty instigated the late rebellion. I have never been able to prove the accusation, though I cannot but think that he was, directly or indirectly, the cause of the revolution." A month afterwards, writing still more distinctly to General Pollock, he cast further doubts on the fidelity of the Shah. "I would suggest," he said, "that some direct understanding be come to with his Majesty. It is generally believed that he caused the late rebellion; and his conduct lately has been strange, to say the least of it. He tried to raise a popular tumult against us, hoping thereby to ruin the Newab. He did not interest himself in any way about our sick when their wretched, helpless condition was formally represented to him in a petition from me—added to the circumstance alluded to of his telling our host to send us to Ameen-oollah, who is our most bitter enemy. He is, moreover, surrounded by the Populzye leaders of the late insurrection, whose persons, I presume, our government will demand. I have not received a letter from him for a month; but the fear of being suspected of being in communication with us may be the cause of his disregard of us." And again, at the end of the month, writing to Major Rawlinson, he said: "The king is generally abused, and reported as the instigator of the late rebellion. He has proved himself, I think, unworthy of our friendship. If we are not [119] able to prove his villany, his cunning will, no doubt, prompt him to side with us on the near approach of our troops, for he is well aware that his subjects would seize him if he ventured out of the Balla Hissar. He is, as the Afghans say, like grain between two mill-stones."[86]

Many more passages might be cited from the correspondence of our political officers, to show the opinions entertained at this time by those most competent to determine the question of the Shah's fidelity. But, after all, the question remains an open one. The future historian may still lose himself in a sea of conjecture. From the facts before us, and from all that is known of the character of Shah Soojah, the inference is, as I have said, that the king was faithful neither to his own countrymen nor to his British allies. He was at best a poor creature. He had few good qualities. But it should in justice be remembered, that he was surrounded by circumstances against which an abler and a better man might have struggled in vain. He had long been greatly perplexed and embarrassed by the anomalies of his position. He was tired of playing the part of the puppet; and had begun to long for an opportunity either of becoming king indeed, or of throwing down the trappings and the cares of royalty, and ending his days in the calm security of his old asylum at Loodhianah. He used to say that Macnaghten did all the good that was done in Afghanistan—and all the evil too; for that he himself did nothing. Unpopular measures of which he was not the author were executed in his name; he was compelled outwardly to sanction much of which he inwardly disapproved; he saw dangers thickening around him without the power of averting them, and painfully felt that he had always been a cipher, and had now become [120] a hissing and a reproach.

Under the directorship which we had forced upon him, Shah Soojah was not happy. He was altogether a disappointed man. He did not find the sweets of restored dominion what he expected them to be. He was an isolated being. The sympathies neither of the

Afghans nor of the English were with him. All men suspected him. None loved him. When, therefore, he talked about leaving Caubul, he was probably not insincere; but he may have thought sometimes that if the English would leave Caubul, he might enjoy his sovereignty more. If to have desired to rid himself of an incubus, which sate so heavily upon him, was to be faithless to the British, Shah Soojah was unquestionably faithless; but this is a kind of infidelity so common to humanity of all ranks and in all places, that to record it against the Shah is only to say that he was a man.

But as regards the actions of the King, it is to be observed that Shah Soojah was not a man of action. His early life had been one rather of strenuous passiveness than of genuine activity. Since the British had taken him in hand, he had actually done nothing. When the insurrection burst over Caubul, he sate down and waited. After the departure of the British, he sate down and waited. He was afraid of both parties; and unwilling to declare himself openly until he could clearly see how the contest would end. He had not strength of mind sufficient to keep him faithful to any one. He was not even true to himself. The question is less a question of fact than of character. The solution of the difficulty is to be found in the idiosyncrasy of the man. He had led a very eventful life; but the vicissitudes of his career had not strengthened his character. Anything decided, active, or energetic, was not to be expected from him. The infirmity [121] of age was now superadded to the infirmity of purpose which had characterised his greener manhood; and if he had taken any decided part in the great contest which followed the outburst of the Caubul insurrection, it would have been an inconsistency at variance with the whole tenor of his past life. As it was, the conduct of the man in this crisis was in keeping with all that was known of his character and his antecedents. Shah Soojah was not a hero; and he did not play a heroic part. The British Government had picked him out of the dust of Loodhianah, simply as a matter of convenience to themselves; and they had no reason to complain that, in a great and imminent conjuncture, he thought less of their convenience than his own. He proved himself at the last to be very much what we had helped to make him. We could not expect him to be an active workman, when we had so long used him as a tool.

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# BOOK VIII.

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## CHAPTER I.

[November, 1841-April, 1842.]

Affairs at Candahar—Evil Tidings from Caubul—Maclaren's Brigade—Spread of the Insurrection—Arrival of Atta Mahmed—Flight of Sufdur Jung—Attack on the Douranee Camp—Continued Hostilities—Attack upon the City—Action in the Valley of the Urghundab—Fall of Ghuznee—Defence of Khelat-i-Ghilzye—Movements of England's Brigade.

THE attention of the reader ought now no longer to be withheld from that part of the country where General Nott and Major Rawlinson were gallantly and successfully holding out against the insurgent Douranees, and maintaining the character of the British nation before the tribes of Western Afghanistan. At the beginning of November, wrote Rawlinson, in a summary of events, drawn up with such masterly distinctness and comprehensiveness, that the historian has little to do, in this place, but to submit himself to its guidance;[87] "affairs wore a more tranquil and promising [123] appearance in the Candahar province than I had ever witnessed since my assumption of the charge of the agency. Akram Khan, the leader of the Derawat rebellion, captured by Lieutenant Conolly, had been executed at this place by his Majesty's orders. Eight of the most influential of his colleagues had been sent by me, according to the orders of the Envoy, under the charge of Lieutenant Crawford, to Caubul; that officer having my written instructions to destroy his prisoners in the event of an attempt at rescue. The Hazareh and the Belooch tribes had been effectually conciliated; the Douranees of the northern and western districts had been humbled and overawed."

The troops then at Candahar consisted of her Majesty's 40th Regiment; the 2nd, 16th, 38th, 40th, and 43rd Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry; Captain Blood's battery (Bombay Artillery); the Shah's Horse Artillery, under Captain Anderson; some regiments of the Shah's infantry, and some detachments of Irregular Horse (Shah's and Skinner's), the weakness of the force lying in this arm. The tranquillity of the country seemed to authorise the diminution of this force, and a brigade, comprising the 16th, 42nd, and 43rd Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry, was about to proceed, under Colonel Maclaren, to the provinces of Hindostan. On the 7th of November it commenced its march; but on the evening of that day some startling intelligence was brought into Candahar. A detachment of 130 men under Captain Woodburn—that officer who, in the month of July, had so distinguished himself on the banks of the Helmund, in action with the Douranee rebels under Akhtar Khan —was proceeding from Candahar to Caubul, when, on the 2nd of [124] November, after they had passed Ghuznee, they were attacked by swarms of Afghans, through whom, with consummate gallantry and skill, Woodburn fought his way to the little fort of Syedabad. The place was occupied by a man supposed to be friendly to us;[88] and the English officer, surrounded as he was by the enemy, gladly accepted his offer of protection. But there was no safety within the fort. For a day and a night he held his position against a besieging enemy, and nobly he defended himself. But his ammunition fell short; and then there came tidings of the success of the insurgents at Caubul. On this, the chief admitted parties of the enemy into the towers of his own Harem, which overlooked the court-yard, in which the Sepoys were quartered. Then the massacre commenced. Many of the Sepoys were killed on the spot. Others threw themselves over the walls, and were shot down outside the fort. Woodburn himself, with a few of his men, took post in a tower of their own court, and for some hours they gallantly defended themselves. But they fell at last. The enemy burnt them out; and massacred them almost to a man.

On receipt of this intelligence Rawlinson at once recommended the General to halt Maclaren's brigade. It was accordingly brought

back to Candahar. It was plain that some mischief was brewing in the country to the north. A week of doubt and anxiety passed; and then letters came from Macnaghten and Elphinstone, announcing that Caubul was in a state of insurrection, and ordering Maclaren's brigade to be despatched at once to the capital. These letters came on with indorsements from Colonel Palmer at Ghuznee, and Major Leech at Khelat-i-Ghilzye, which showed that in the intervening country there were signs of the coming storm.[89] On the 17th of November, accompanied by a troop of horse artillery, the three regiments commenced their march to the northward. [125]

Anticipating that some evil might arise from the presence of the Prince, Sufder Jung, in the province, after his supercession by his elder and better disposed brother, Rawlinson had invited him to come in from Zemindawer, and he now suggested the expediency of his proceeding to Caubul, with Captain Hart's Janbaz regiment, which was to follow in the rear of Maclaren's brigade. The Prince yielded to the suggestion, and went. The fidelity of the Afghan horse was doubtful, and Rawlinson was glad to rid himself of the presence both of a discontented Prince and a body of treacherous Afghan horsemen—soldiers raised, mounted, armed, equipped and disciplined by Shah Soojah and his British supporters, seemingly for the one sole purpose of drawing their swords against the very power to which they owed their military existence. [126]

All through the month of November Candahar remained tranquil. But it was obvious that the course of insurrection was setting towards the West. Tidings came in from the country about Ghuznee, which showed that the road to the capital was infested by the insurgents. Lieutenant Crawford, who was escorting the Douranee prisoners to Caubul had been attacked by overwhelming numbers near Ghuznee; and had suffered his prisoners to escape; or rather, had lost them, with all his baggage, and a considerable number of his horses and men.[90] Soon afterwards Guddoo Khan, an Afghan officer in the service of the Shah and his British supporters, who had accompanied Crawford's detachment—a man of unimpeachable integrity and unquestionable gallantry and good conduct—was on his return from Ghuznee to Candahar "overpowered by numbers and slain, with seventeen of his best men, losing at the same time forty-five horses, and all the arms and baggage of the Ressaleh." These incidents seemed to portend the near approach of the thunder-clouds that were breaking over Caubul. Candahar was as yet only beneath the skirts of the storm. [127] [128]

On the 8th of December Maclaren's brigade returned to Candahar. How it happened that these regiments had failed to make good their march to Caubul is not to be satisfactorily explained. It is still stated by officers who accompanied the detachment, that the difficulties of the march have been greatly exaggerated; and that, at all events, they might have been overcome. Nott sent the brigade with a reluctance which he took no care to conceal. It was his wish to retain the three regiments at Candahar; and he was not a man to shrink from the utterance of his feelings on such a subject as this. "Remember," he said to Maclaren and his staff, when they presented themselves at the General's quarters to take leave of their old commandant, "the despatch of this brigade to Caubul is not my doing. I am compelled to defer to superior authority; but in my own private opinion I am sending you all to destruction." The brigade marched; but, starting under such auspices, there was little likelihood of its reaching its destination. There were few officers in the force who did not know that, on the first colourable pretext, it would be turned back.

A pretext very soon presented itself. Two marches beyond Khelat-i-Ghilyze there was a light fall of snow. On the following day there was more snow, and some of the commissariat donkeys died upon the road. On the next, Maclaren halted the brigade, and ordered a committee to assemble and report upon the state of the commissariat cattle, with reference to their fitness for the continuance of their march to Caubul. The committee assembled; registered the number of deaths among the carriage-cattle during the two preceding days; and reported that as winter had now set in, and as the loss of cattle would increase every march that was made to the northward, it would be impracticable for the force to reach Caubul at all in an efficient state. On this, about the end of November, Maclaren ordered the brigade to retrace its steps. [129]

But the snow had now ceased. The little that had fallen soon

melted away, and for weeks not another flake fell throughout the entire country. The weather was remarkably fine and open; and there is not a doubt that the brigade might easily have made good its way to Caubul. But it does not appear ever to have been seriously intended that the force should reach its destination. Maclaren and his officers knew well that the return of the brigade to Candahar would be welcome to General Nott, and that there was not likely to be a very close inquiry into the circumstances attending the retrograde movement. There was in reality little more than a show of proceeding to the relief of Caubul. The regiments were wanted at Candahar; and to Candahar they returned. How far their arrival might have helped to save Elphinstone's force from destruction can only be conjectured. But it is said that both the English and the Afghan hosts looked with eager anxiety to the arrival or the repulse of Maclaren, as the event which was to determine the issue of the pending struggle. The relief of Ghuznee, would in itself have been great gain to us, for it would have opened the road between that place and Caubul, and have sent many of the rebellious tribes to their home; and that the appearance of reinforcements would have [130] determined many waverers, the venal and vacillating Kuzzelbashes included, to side with the British, may be recorded as a certainty. It is right, however, to admit the belief, that if Nott had known to what straits the Caubul army would soon be reduced, he would not have uttered a word to encourage the return of the relieving brigade to Candahar.

But whatever may have been the causes of the failure, soon after the retrograde movement of Maclaren's brigade became known, unmistakeable signs of inquietude were discernible in the neighbourhood of Candahar. Mahomed Atta Khan had been detached by the Caubul party to raise an insurrection in Western Afghanistan. No sooner had the chief reached the frontier than such unequivocal symptoms of popular excitement began to manifest themselves, that Major Rawlinson at once perceived the necessity of adopting active measures for the suppression of disorder and the maintenance of the tranquillity of the surrounding country. His efforts in the first instance were directed to the avoidance of any actual collision with the people, and the preservation of outward smoothness and regularity in the administration of affairs. With this primal object, he withdrew from the outlying districts all the detached troops, and concentrated them at Candahar. A single party of Janbaz, protected by the Hazarehs from the possibility of attack, were left in Tezeen, whilst all the other troops, Hindostanee and Afghan, were posted in and around the city of Candahar. But this was not enough. The safety of our military position might be provided for; but it was not sufficient to feel confident of our ability to overcome any enemy that might venture to attack us. It was obviously expedient to strike rather at the root than at the branches; to prevent the growth of rebellion rather than to beat it down full-grown. At all events, it was politic to secure such a division of [131] parties as would annihilate even the possibility of a powerful coalition against us. Relying upon the general unpopularity of the Barukzyes with the Douranee tribes, whom the Sirdars had so long and so severely oppressed, Major Rawlinson exerted himself to get up a Douranee movement in our favour. He bound the chiefs, by all the most solemn oaths that Mahomedanism affords, to stand firm in their allegiance to Shah Soojah and the Shah-zadah Timour. The priesthood ratified the bond; and the families of the Douranee chiefs were placed as hostages for their fidelity in the hands of the British officers. The chiefs themselves, with Prince Timour's eldest son at their head, and accompanied by Meerza Ahmed, the Revenue-manager of Candahar, a man of considerable talents and unsuspected fidelity, to whom Major Rawlinson had entrusted a lakh of rupees for the management of the movement, were despatched to the eastern frontier to raise the tribes against the Barukzyes and their Ghilzye allies. In the meanwhile the British at Candahar remained apparently unconcerned spectators of the contest, which, it was hoped, would resolve itself into a question of Suddozye or Barukzye supremacy in the Douranee Empire.

The objects contemplated by Major Rawlinson were, however, only partially attained. He succeeded in gaining time, and in removing the Douranee chiefs from the neighbourhood of our camp. "The Douranees quitted Candahar in the middle of December, delayed for a considerable time the advance of Mahomed Atta Khan, and prevented to the utmost of their power the spread of religious

fanaticism among their tribes." But the good faith so apparent at the outset was destined soon to be overclouded. As long as the Douranees believed that to carry out the wishes of the British was really to fight the battle of the Suddozyes, they were true to our [132] cause; but they soon began to give credit to the report that Shah Soojah himself was in the ranks of our enemies, and then they fell away from us. Even Meerza Ahmed, in whom so much confidence had been reposed, turned his fine talents against us, and became the mainspring of a hostile Douranee movement.

But they did not at once declare themselves. For a while the Douranees quietly watched the progress of affairs. Those events as they developed themselves seemed more and more favourable to the spread of insurrection in western Afghanistan. As the old year wore to a close, it seemed that our difficulties were thickening, and the new year came in with a crowd of fresh embarrassments. Sufder Jung had returned to Candahar. On the retrogression of Maclaren's brigade he had declared that he could not trust the Janbaz to escort him to Caubul, and again set his face towards the south. The presence of these traitorous horsemen at Candahar had always been a source of considerable anxiety to Major Rawlinson. The 1st Regiment of Afghan horse had been in Zemindawer; and when the political agent recalled the other troops from that part of the country, it was his intention that the Janbaz should remain at Ghirisk. Their enmity to the surrounding tribes was so well known, that there was less chance of their uniting with the rebels in that part of the country than in any other. Owing, however, to the miscarriage of a letter, Rawlinson's intentions were defeated. The Janbaz returned to Candahar with the other details of the Zemindawer detachment, on the 9th of December. But Rawlinson was determined to remove them. He suspected their treachery; but sooner than he anticipated, they threw off all disguise, and openly arrayed themselves against us.

Before daybreak on the 27th of December the men of the Janbaz [133] regiments were to have commenced their march to Ghirisk. There were 250 men of the 1st Regiment under Lieutenant Golding, and 150 of the 2nd under Lieutenant Wilson. Lieutenant Pattinson was to accompany them in political charge. The object of the movement was two-fold—to escort treasure and ammunition to Ghirisk, and to remove from Candahar a body of men whose fidelity was more than suspected. Two hours after midnight the party was to have moved and made a double march, for the purpose of clearing the villages on the Urghundab, which had been greatly excited during the few preceding days. Golding was ready at the appointed hour; but, through some misconception of orders, Wilson's men were not prepared to march. So the movement was countermanded. Golding and Pattinson, therefore, returned to the tent of the former, and laid themselves down again to sleep. The 1st Janbaz regiment had been drawn up ready for the march with their cattle loaded, and the postponement of the movement now took them by surprise. They had laid a plot to mutiny and desert upon the march, and they believed that the conspiracy had been detected. After waiting for half an hour, drawn up in the chill air of early morning, they determined at once to throw off the mask; so they streamed into Golding's tent with their drawn swords, and attacked the two officers in their beds. When they thought that their bloody work was complete, they rushed confusedly out of the tent, mounted their horses, and fled. The treasure was plundered, and some horses belonging to Golding and Pattinson were carried off; but nothing else was touched by the assassins. Pattinson was stunned by a blow on the head, but recovering his senses, he made his way out of the tent, wounded as he was in seven places, mounted a horse which his [134] Meerza had saddled on the spot, and effected his escape.[91] Golding was less fortunate. He rushed out of his tent, and fled on foot towards the cantonments; but the Janbaz followed and cut him down when within a short distance of our camp.[92]

A party of the Shah's horse under Captain Leeson, and a detachment of Lieutenant Wilson's Janbaz, who had remained true to us in the face of strong temptation, were sent out against the mutineers. The detachment came up with the rebels about twelve miles from Candahar. There was a brief but sturdy conflict. The mutineers charged in a body, but were gallantly met by Leeson's men; and after a hand-to-hand struggle, were broken and dispersed.[93] Thirty of their number were killed by our cavalry, who followed

up their advantage; many more were wounded, and the remainder fled in confusion to the camp of Atta Mahomed.

Two days after the defection of the Janbaz, Prince Sufder Jung fled from Candahar, and joined the camp of Atta Mahomed. The Sirdar had fixed his head-quarters at Dehli, about forty miles from [135] Candahar, and there, early in January, Rawlinson was eager to attack him. The political agent saw clearly the expediency of crushing the insurrection in the bud. Every day was adding to the importance of the movement, and swelling the number of the insurgents. Some of the tribes were standing aloof, unwilling to declare themselves against us, yet in hourly expectation of being compelled to secure their own safety by ranging themselves under the banners of the Prince. But the General was unwilling to divide his force; and refused to send a brigade to Dehli. Whilst Rawlinson urged strong political considerations in favour of promptitude of action, Nott, with equal firmness, took his stand upon military grounds, and argued that it would be inexpedient, at such a season of the year, to send a portion of his force a distance of forty miles from Candahar to beat up the quarters of a fugitive Prince. "Sufder Jung," wrote Rawlinson, "has fixed his abode at Dehli, and has declared himself the leader of an insurrection, aiming at our expulsion from the country. Up to the present time no very considerable number of men have joined his standard, and the only chiefs in attendance of any note, are those who have accompanied Mahomed Atta Khan from Caubul, together with the Ghilzye leaders, Sumud Khan, Meer Alim Khan, and the Gooroo. It would thus be an easy matter by the detachment of a brigade to Dehli to break up the insurgent force, and whether the rebels fought or fled, the consequences would be almost of equal benefit with regard to the restoration of tranquillity. But I anticipate a very serious aggravation of affairs if we allow the Prince to remain unmolested for any length of time at Dehli, or to move from that place in the direction of Candahar with the avowed purpose of attacking us. Our inactivity would not fail to be ascribed by the great body of the Ooloos to an inability to act on the offensive, and an impression of [136] this sort having once gained ground, the natural consequences, in the present highly excited state of religious feeling, would be a general rise of the population against us."[94]

Reason and experience were both on the side of this argument, and Rawlinson stated the case clearly and well. But Nott took a soldier's view of the question. He argued, that to send out a brigade at such a season of the year, so far from its supports, would be to destroy his men in the field, and to expose the city to the attacks of the enemy. "I conceive," he wrote in reply to Rawlinson's letter, "that the whole country is in a state of rebellion, and that nothing but the speedy concentration of the troops at this place has saved the different detachments from being destroyed in detail, and the city of Candahar from being besieged.... Because this young Prince is said to have assembled 1000 or 1500 followers at a distance of forty miles from Candahar, it would, indeed, be truly absurd were I, in the very depth of winter, to send a detachment wandering about the country in search of the rebel fugitive, destroying my men amidst frost and snow, killing the few carriage-cattle we have left, and thus be totally disabled at the proper season from moving ten miles in any direction from the city, or even have the means of falling back, should that unfortunately ever become necessary."[95]

The movements of the rebel army soon settled the question [137] between them. No attempt having been made to dislodge the insurgent chiefs, they quietly moved down the valley of the Urghundab, and on the 12th of January took post on the river, about five miles to the west of the city of Candahar.

General Nott lost no time in moving out to attack them. Taking with him five and a half regiments of infantry, the Shah's 1st Cavalry, a party of Skinner's Horse, and sixteen guns,[96] a formidable body of troops, weak only in the mounted branch—he made a four hours' march over a few miles of country, and came upon the enemy,[97] posted near the fortified village of Killa-chuk, [138] on the right bank of the Urghundab. The British troops crossed the river, and at once advanced in column of battalions, flanked by the artillery and cavalry, to the attack. The action was of brief duration. At the end of twenty minutes, during which our guns and musketry, telling with deadly effect upon the heavy masses of the enemy, were answered by a wild and ineffective fire from their ranks, the rebel

army was in confusion and flight. The Ghilzyes fled in one direction; the Janbaz in another; the people from the villages[98] hastened to their own homes. Atta Mahomed attempted to make a stand; but our troops moved forward—carried the village by storm—and slaughtered every man, woman, and child, within its walls. The British line was then reformed, and Atta Mahomed prepared to meet a second attack. But the cavalry, with two horse-artillery guns, were now slipped upon the enemy, who broke and fled in dismay; and the humiliation of Atta Mahomed and his princely ally was complete.[99]

The Douranee chiefs now began to throw off the mask. They [139] moved down to the assistance of the rebel army, but the battle had been fought before they could arrive upon the field, and they only came up in time to see their countrymen in panic flight.[100] Sufder Jung, Atta Mahomed, and the other rebel chiefs found an honourable refuge in the Douranee camp; and from that time, they who had left Candahar as our friends, presented a front of open hostility to our authority.[101]

Meerza Ahmed was the head-piece of the Douranee party. Nott had pronounced him a traitor.[102] Rawlinson had now ceased to [140] believe in his fidelity; but he had never ceased to respect his talents. He knew him to be an Afghan of rare ability, and he believed that the sagacity of the Meerza would not suffer him to doubt the difference between the power of his countrymen and that of the British Government. But the Meerza had sounded the depth of the difficulties which surrounded us with no little accuracy, and had estimated aright the nature of the crisis. He saw in the distance our compulsory abandonment of Afghanistan, and doubted the wisdom of leaguing himself with a declining cause.

From the 20th of January to the last day of February the Douranees remained encamped in the neighbourhood of Candahar. Nothing but the genius of Meerza Ahmed could have kept together, throughout so long a season of comparative inactivity, all the discordant elements of that Douranee force. The winter had set in with its snowy accessories. Nott was unwilling to expose his troops to the severities of the winter season; and the enemy seemed equally disinclined for war whilst the snow was on the ground. But during this period of suspended hostilities very different were the occupations of the two contending forces—very different the feelings with which they contemplated the renewal of the struggle. The attitude of the British at this time denoted a consciousness of strength. There was no despondency—there was no excitement. Our officers and men, having nothing to do in the field, fell back again into the ordinary routine of cantonment life, as though the country had never been convulsed or disturbed. They rode steeple-chases; they played at rackets; they pelted one another with snow-balls. The dreadful snow which had destroyed the Caubul army was only a [141] plaything in the hands of their brethren at Candahar.[103]

The enemy, on the other hand, were kept continually in a state of restless and absorbing activity. Meerza Ahmed saw the danger of suffering the Douranee chiefs, disunited and jealous of each other as they were, to dwell too intently upon the embarrassments of their own position. He gave their thoughts an outward direction; and, by skilful management, kept them both from risking prematurely a general engagement with the British, and from breaking out into internal dissensions.[104] “Meerza Ahmed alone,” says Major Rawlinson, in the masterly despatch I have already quoted, “could have so long preserved union among the discordant elements of which this camp was composed; he alone could have managed, by the most careful revenue arrangements, to have supported the concourse which was assembled round the standard of Sufder Jung; he alone, perhaps, could have prevented the Douranees from risking an action in which they were sure to be defeated; his measures throughout have been most skilful and well sustained. The chiefs were, in the first place, sent to recruit in the different districts where their influence chiefly prevailed; revenue was raised in the usual form for the support of the troops in anticipation of the coming harvest, the ryots receiving an acquittance from Meerza [142] Ahmed in case the management should continue in his hands, and being assured that if our power prevailed we were too just to subject the cultivators to a double exaction; statements of the Shah’s connivance in the Caubul revolution were industriously circulated; incessant attempts were made to tamper with our

Hindostanee troops (not altogether without success), and letters were designedly thrown into our hands to render us suspicious of such chiefs as adhered to us, whilst the most stringent measures were adopted to deter the villagers around the city from bringing supplies into Candahar. Such was the line of policy pursued by Meerza Ahmed from the 20th of January to the 20th of February. In this interim General Nott had laid in five months' supplies for the troops; he had repaired the fortifications to a certain extent; and, intending on the 12th of February to march out and attack the enemy, he had concurred in the advisability of disarming the population preparatory to the movement of our troops.[105] Severe weather, however, rendered a march impracticable at the time he meditated; and before it became sufficiently mild to enable him to take the field, the tactics of the enemy had undergone a total alteration in consequence of advices from Caubul."

But there were many circumstances at this time to create uneasiness in the minds of those to whom was entrusted the direction of affairs at Candahar. The garrison was not threatened with a scarcity of provisions; but fodder for the cattle was very scarce. The horses were becoming unserviceable from lack of [143] nourishment; the sheep were so miserably lean as to be scarcely worth killing for food. It was intensely cold; and fuel was so scarce, that the luxury of a winter fire was denied even to the sick. The hospitals had their inmates; but there were no medicines. And above all, money was becoming so scarce, that the most serious apprehensions were entertained by Major Rawlinson, who knew that there was no weapon of war so serviceable as the money-bag in such a country as Afghanistan.[106] Under such circumstances it may readily be supposed how anxiously the arrival of a convoy from the southward was looked for, and how necessary it seemed that the communications with Sindh should be opened in such a manner as to secure the arrival of treasure and supplies.

But whilst the hopes of the garrison were directed towards the country to the southward, their thoughts, with fear and trembling, turned themselves towards the North. On the 21st of February a messenger arrived at Candahar, bringing a letter from General Elphinstone and Major Pottinger, ordering the evacuation of Candahar and Khelat-i-Ghilzye.[107] The original had been written [144] nearly two months before; and that which now reached Major Rawlinson was a copy forwarded by Leech from Khelat-i-Ghilzye. [108] There was no doubt in Rawlinson's mind about the genuine character of the document; but he could not bring himself to recognise for a moment the obligations which it was intended to impose upon him. He could not, however, help perceiving that the turn which political affairs had taken in Caubul placed him in a strange and anomalous position. Shah Soojah was now the recognised sovereign of Afghanistan, ruling by the consent and with the aid of the Barukzye chiefs; and it could no longer be said that [145] the presence of the British troops was necessary to the support of the Suddozye Kings. The Douranee chiefs saw this as plainly as Rawlinson; and they did not fail to take advantage of the circumstance. They now endeavoured to reason the British out of Candahar when they found it difficult to expel them; and Rawlinson and Nott found it less easy to rebut their arguments than to repel their assaults.

On the 23rd of February, Rawlinson received a packet of letters from the Douranee camp, the contents of which supplied much food for earnest reflection. Sufder Jung and the Douranee chiefs wrote to the British agent, setting forth that, as it had always been declared that the British merely occupied the country in support of Shah Soojah, and as the Shah was now recognised by the chiefs and the people, and had no longer any need of our support, it was incumbent upon us to withdraw from the country. If, it was added, the British would now consent to retire from Candahar, an unmolested passage to Quettah would be guaranteed to them; but that, if they insisted on maintaining their position, they must expect that the fate of the Caubul army would be theirs. Meerza Ahmed, in a private letter to Rawlinson, besought him to retire before the whole Douranee nation rose against the British. But perhaps the most important of the letters brought in that morning, was one from Shah Soojah to Prince Timour, to the following effect: "You must understand that the disturbances which you have, no doubt, heard of at Caubul, have been a contest between the followers of Islam

and the unbelievers. Now that the affair is decided, all the Afghans have tendered their allegiance to me, and recognised me as King. It is necessary that you should keep me duly informed of all proceedings in your government; and rest assured of my favour and [146] affection." When Rawlinson took this letter to the Shaz-zadah Timour, the Prince at once declared it to be a forgery; but the British officer knew how to decypher stranger characters than those of a Persian *Dust-Khut*, and to decide upon the authenticity of far more perplexing scriptures. Rawlinson's practised eye saw at once that the document was a genuine one.

The letter from the chiefs demanded an answer; and Rawlinson now took counsel with the General. The hour for decision had arrived. It became them to look their position boldly in the face, and to shape their course for the future. Nott was not a man to listen patiently to the language of insolent dictation from the Afghan chiefs. He had already made up his mind to maintain his position at all risks, pending the receipt of instructions from India issued subsequently to the receipt by government of intelligence of the Envoy's murder.[109] Rawlinson was of the same opinion. So he drew up a letter to the Douranee chiefs, setting forth that, as there was every reason to believe that Shah Soojah was acting under compulsion, and that he in reality, in spite of existing appearances, desired the support of the British, it would not become the latter to withdraw from Afghanistan before entering into a final explanation with the King. He drew the attention of the chiefs to the difference [147] of our positions at Caubul and Candahar—said that any attempt to expel us by force must inevitably fail—and recommended the Douranees to refrain from engaging in unprofitable hostility. But he added, that the British had no desire to conquer the country for themselves—that the Candahar army was only waiting for instructions from government—and he believed it was the desire of that government to restore to Shah Soojah the uncontrolled exercise of his authority, and to be guided by the provisions of a new treaty which would probably be negotiated between the two states.[110] On the following day,[111] the despatch of the letter having been delayed by the difficulty of finding a trustworthy messenger, Rawlinson added a postscript, setting forth that intelligence had since been received, which clearly demonstrated that the Shah was little more than a prisoner in the hands of the Barukzyes; and he added, that forces were on their way from India to avenge the murder of the Envoy.

The activity of Rawlinson, at this time, was unceasing. He exerted himself, and often with good success, to detach different tribes from the rebel cause; and was continually corresponding both with the chiefs in the Douranee camp and in the neighbouring villages. It was his policy to draw off the Barukzyes from the Douranee confederacy, and to stimulate the Douranees against the Barukzyes, by declaring that the Shah was a mere instrument in the hands of the latter. It was debated, indeed, whether the Douranees could not be induced to move off to Caubul for the rescue of the King.[112]

But, in spite of these and other favourable indications, it [148] appeared, both to the military and political chief at Candahar, that it was necessary now to strike some vigorous blow for the suppression of the insurrection and the maintenance of our own security. So Nott determined to attack the enemy; and Rawlinson, after many misgivings, to expel the Afghans from the city. This movement he had been painfully contemplating all through the month of February; and now, at the beginning of March, he believed that he could no longer postpone, with safety, the accomplishment of this harsh, but necessary, measure of defence.[113] All doubts regarding the wishes of the Indian Government had been, by this time, set at rest by the receipt of a copy of a letter, addressed by the Supreme Government to the Commander-in-Chief on the 28th of January, in [149] which letter the continued occupation of Candahar was spoken of as an event which the British-Indian Government believed would be conducive to the interests of the state; and it afforded no small pleasure to Nott and Rawlinson to find how completely they had anticipated the wishes of the Governor-General and his Council.

On the 3rd of March, Rawlinson began to clear the city of its Afghan inhabitants.[114] Inspecting the census he had made, and selecting a few who were to be permitted to remain—peaceful citizens, as merchants, followers of useful trades, and a few

members of the priesthood, he expelled the remainder of the Afghan inhabitants—in all, about 1000 families. No resistance was offered. The work was not completed before the close of the 6th. The municipal authorities performed their duties so remissly, that it was necessary to tell off an officer and a party of Sepoys to each district, to see that the clearance was more effectually performed. Some [150] 5000 or 6000 people were driven out of the city. Every exertion was made to render the measure as little oppressive as possible; but the expulsion of so many citizens from their homes could not be altogether free from cruelty and injustice.[115]

The city having thus been cleared of all its suspected inhabitants, Nott, on the 7th of March, took the field, with the main body of his troops. The 40th Queen's—the 16th, 38th, 42nd, and 43rd regiments of Native Infantry—a wing of one of the Shah's regiments—all the cavalry in the force, and sixteen guns, went out against the enemy. The 2nd regiment of Native Infantry, with two regiments and a wing of the Shah's foot, remained behind for the protection of the city. All the gates of the city, but the Herat and a part of the Shikarpoor gate, were blocked up, and Candahar was believed to be secure against the assaults of the whole Douranee force.

As Nott advanced, the enemy, who had been hovering about the neighbourhood of Candahar, retired before him. He crossed the Turnuk and advanced upon the Urghundab in pursuit of them; but they shrank from meeting our bayonets, and it was long before they even ventured to come within reach of our guns. The artillery then told with such good effect on the dense masses of the enemy, that they were more than ever disinclined to approach us. On the 9th, however, there seemed some prospect of a general action. The enemy's footmen were posted on a range of hills, and, as our column advanced, they saluted us with a volley from their matchlocks. The [151] light companies of the 40th Queen's and 16th Native Infantry, under Captain F. White, of the former regiment, were sent forward to storm the hills on the right; and the Grenadiers of the 40th, under Lieutenant Wakefield, performed the same good service on the ascents to the left. The hills were soon cleared; and the enemy's cavalry were then seen drawn up in front of our columns. Their line extended across the plain; their right resting upon a range of high ground, and their left on a ruined fort, built on a high scarped mound.[116] Hoping to draw them within his reach, the General now kept his guns quiet. But they were not inclined to meet us in the field. They were planning another game.

Whether it had been the original design of the Douranee chiefs to draw Nott's army out of Candahar, and to strip the city of its defences; or whether, awed by the magnitude of the force which the General had taken out with him, they shrunk from the conflict, was not at first very apparent.[117] But it subsequently became known to the British authorities that the stratagem was planned by the subtle understanding of Meerza Ahmed. The enemy, after the skirmish of the 9th instant, retired before our advancing battalions, and, industriously spreading a report that they purposed to attack Nott's camp during the night, recrossed the river and doubled back upon Candahar. Up to this time the city had remained perfectly quiet; and the minds of the British authorities had not been disturbed by any [152] thoughts of coming danger. But on the morning of the 10th it was seen that a number of Afghan footmen had come down during the preceding night and taken possession of old Candahar. Rawlinson at once despatched three messengers to Nott's camp, to inform him that the enemy had doubled back in his rear, and that it was apparently their intention to attack the city. His suspicions were soon confirmed. His scouts brought him intelligence to the effect that the Douranee army was to concentrate during the day, before Candahar, and to attack it in the course of the night. All day long the numbers of the enemy continued to increase, and at sunset Sufder Jung and Meerza Ahmed arrived and posted themselves in the cantonments. Night came on with pitchy darkness; and the garrison could not trace the movements of the enemy. They had no blue lights—no fire-balls—no means of casting a light beyond the defences of the city. The Ghazees were swarming close to the walls; and at eight o'clock they commenced the attack. They had heaped up some faggots at the Herat gate; and now they fired the pile. They had poured oil on the brushwood, and now it blazed up with sudden fury.[118] The gate itself ignited as readily as tinder, and the flames now lit up the mass of white turbans, the gleaming arms, and the

coloured standards, which had before been only seen, in scattered glimpses, by the momentary light of the kindled match of the Afghan jezails.[119] [153]

Desperate was the attack of the Ghazees, and steady the resistance of the garrison. A gun upon the bastion poured in its deadly shower of grape among the besiegers; and the guard kept up a heavy fire from the ramparts. But the Ghazees pressed on with desperate resolution. The success of their first movement had given them confidence and courage; and now they were tearing down the blazing planks with intrepid hands, fearless of the red-hot bars and hinges of the falling gate. Many of them, intoxicated with bang, were sending up the fearful yell of the Afghan fanatic, and rushing upon death with the eagerness of the martyr. Others were calling upon Prince Timour to come out and win Paradise by aiding the cause of the true believers. At one time it seemed that victory would declare itself on the side of the infuriated multitude that was surging round the city walls. But there were men within the city as resolute, and far more steady and collected in their resolution, than the excited crowds beyond it, who were hungering after our destruction. Major Lane commanded the garrison. Rawlinson was there to counsel and to aid him. They brought down the gun from the bastion, and planted it in the gateway. They brought another from the citadel to its support. They strengthened the point of attack with fresh bodies of infantry, and called out all the water-carriers to endeavour to extinguish the flames. But more serviceable even than these movements was one which opposed a solid obstacle to the entrance of the besieging multitude. They brought down from the Commissariat godowns a number of grain-bags, and piled them [154] up at the burning gate. About nine o'clock the gate fell outwards, and then a party of Ghazees climbed the lofty barricade of grain-bags, as men weary of their lives. Many fell dead or desperately wounded beneath the heavy fire of our musketry. Spirited was the attack—spirited the defence. The fate of Candahar seemed to tremble in the balance. For three more hours the Ghazees renewed, at intervals, the assault upon the gateway; but they could not make good their entrance to the city; and at midnight they drew off in despair.

Whilst this desperate struggle was going on at the Herat gate of the city, attempts had been made upon the Shikarpoor and Caubul gates. But the enemy could not fire the brushwood they had collected. The garrison were too prompt and alert. It appears that Meerza Ahmed, confident of the success of the attack upon the Herat gate, had arranged that a given signal should announce this success, and that then he should proceed to the assault of the Eedgah gate leading to the citadel. But when at midnight the attack was finally repulsed, a council of war was held. Baffled in their attempts on the city, the angry fanatics levelled the most violent reproaches against Meerza Ahmed, and were with difficulty restrained from laying violent hands on the man, who, they declared, had betrayed them into an attempt which had sacrificed the lives of hundreds of true believers, and ended only in failure and disgrace. It is said that the Ghazees lost six hundred men in the attempt. They were busy until daybreak in carrying off the dead.

It is not to be doubted that, during that night of the 10th of March, Candahar was in imminent danger. Had the city fallen into the hands of the enemy at this time, it is doubtful whether Nott's force, on its return, would have succeeded in recapturing it. The troops had gone out without tents, and were insufficiently supplied [155] with ammunition. Everything, indeed, was against them; and even if the courage and constancy of the force had prevailed at last, success could have been achieved only after an immense sacrifice of life. That the General was out-manœuvred, is plain. But it may be doubted whether he is fairly chargeable with the amount of indiscretion which has been imputed to him. It has been said that he left the city unprotected. But as he was to have engaged the enemy himself in the open country, and all sources of internal danger had been removed by the expulsion of the Afghans and the disarming of the other inhabitants, it was confidently believed that the troops left in the city were more than sufficient for its defence. It must, however, be acknowledged that Nott was lamentably ignorant of the movements of the enemy, who doubled back in his rear without raising a suspicion of their designs in the British camp. But this is no new thing in Indian warfare. To be ignorant of the intentions of the enemy is the rule, not the exception, of Indian generalship. Our

intelligence-department is always so miserably defective, that we lose the enemy often as suddenly as we find him, and are either running ourselves unexpectedly upon him, or suffering him to slip out of our hands.

General Nott re-entered Candahar on the 12th of March. The repulse which the insurgents had received at the city gate gave a heavy blow to their cause. It brought disunion into the Douranee camp, and made the Ghazees denounce the chiefs who had plunged them into disaster, and resolve to forswear the perilous trade of fanaticism which brought so much suffering upon them. The ryots, who had joined the standard of the true believers, now returned in numbers to their peaceful avocations; and Major Rawlinson exerted himself to the utmost to re-assure the public mind, and restore [156] peace and prosperity to the surrounding villages.[120] As the month advanced there were many encouraging signs of the approaching dissolution of the Douranee camp. Some of its components were already talking of moving off to Caubul; and it was said that Meerza Ahmed had sent his family to the capital preparatory to retreating in that direction himself.

But there is never anything sustained and consistent in Afghan politics. The appearances of to-day belie the appearances of yesterday, and are again succeeded by varied symptoms to-morrow. The Douranee chiefs at one time seemed to be on the point of a general disruption; and then, after the lapse of a few days, they met in council, and cooling down under a shower of mutual reproaches, swore solemn oaths to be true to each other, and to league themselves together for another attack upon the Feringhees. At the end of the third week of March they were again upon the move. Upon the 24th, they were within a short distance of Killa-chuk, where Nott had before attacked them. On this day the Parsewan Janbaz attempted to renew certain negotiations, which they had initiated a few days before, but which had been coldly received. They offered to quit the Douranee camp and to move off to Caubul, if a month's pay were given them to defray their expenses on the march. But Nott indignantly rejected the proposal. "I will never give them," he wrote to Rawlinson, "one rupee; and if I can ever get near them I will destroy them to a man. It is my wish that no communications shall be held with them. They have murdered our [157] people, and plundered the country."[121]

On the following day, our troops again encountered the enemy in the field. A brigade under Colonel Wymer had been sent out, partly to clear the country on the Candahar side of the Urghundab from the Douranee horse, who were threatening our position, and partly to relieve the garrison, which was straitened for forage, by sending out the camels to graze in the open country. Wymer took with him three regiments of infantry, a troop of horse artillery, and a party of some four hundred mounted men. In the neighbourhood of Baba-Wallee the Douranee horse crossed the river—3000 strong—to attack him. Having sent a messenger to Candahar to inform the General of his position, Wymer prepared to defend himself. He had to guard his cattle as well as to fight the enemy; and the former necessity greatly crippled his movements. Weak, as the Candahar detachments always were, in the mounted branch, he found himself at a disadvantage opposed to the large bodies of the enemy's horse, who now appeared in his front. Our Hindostanee cavalry were driven in by the Douranees under Saloo Khan, who gallantly charged our squares.[122] But the fire of our guns and the volleys of [158] our musketry soon checked the audacity of the Afghan horsemen; and the affair became one of distant skirmishes. But, in the mean while, the roar of our artillery had been distinctly heard at Candahar, and Nott had moved out to the support of Wymer's brigade. The Douranees were still surrounding our camp, when the General, with the reinforcing brigade, entered the valley. What the men who followed Nott then saw, is described as "a beautiful spectacle," which will not readily be forgotten.[123] The bright afternoon sun shed its slant rays upon the sabres of the enemy, and lit them up like a burning forest. Our infantry were drawn up in a hollow square covering a crowd of camels; the horse artillery guns, which had done such good service before, were playing gloriously, under Turner's direction, upon the dense bodies of the enemy's horse, whom their heavy fire kept at a cautious distance. "And just as General Nott," adds an eye-witness,[124] "with the reinforcements came in sight, Lieutenant Chamberlaine, of the Bengal service, an

officer in the Shah's cavalry, who at the head of a small party had charged the enemy, was driven back, and, emerging from a cloud of dust, formed in rear of the infantry, with the loss of a few men killed, himself and many of his party wounded—but not without having given very satisfactory proofs of his power as a swordsman, albeit his treacherous weapon had broken in his hand." As our reinforcing regiments approached, the enemy retired; and our cavalry were quite useless.[125] The Douranee camp had been left [159] standing, and Nott, though the day was far advanced, was eager to cross the river and attack it; but the guns could not be brought down to the bank without great labour, and the fords were well-nigh impracticable. So Nott determined to withdraw the brigade to Candahar for the night, leaving Wymer in position, and to return on the following morning to disperse the Douranee horse.

On the morning of the 26th, Nott went out again, with the brigade that had accompanied him on the preceding day, to the banks of the Urghundab; but the enemy had struck their camp during the night; and as soon as day broke, the Douranee horse had moved off and dispersed themselves in different bodies. So the General returned to Candahar; whilst Colonel Wymer re-halted in the valley to graze his cattle, unmolested and secure. Rawlinson remained in the valley throughout the day, "visiting the different villages, conversing with the Moollahs and head-men, and endeavouring to restore confidence. Imprecations against the Ghazees were general in every village, and the damage which had been caused by their depredations was evidently very great."[126]

The result of this affair was a growth of fresh disunion in the Douranee camp. The chiefs accused each other of cowardice, and all assailed Meerza Ahmed with measureless abuse. But tidings were now coming in, both from the north and the south, which went some way to comfort and re-assure them. It was currently reported in their camp that Ghuznee had capitulated. This intelligence had been [160] received some days before by the British officers at Candahar, and had not been disbelieved. On the 31st of March, a letter from Major Leech, at Khelat-i-Ghilzye, was received by Nott at Candahar, and though it announced the fall of Ghuznee only on native authority, it seemed to divest the fact entirely of all atmosphere of doubt. It appeared, from the statements that reached Candahar, that Ghuznee had been invested by an overwhelming force, and that, after holding out for some weeks, the garrison had been reduced more by a want of water than by the attacks of the enemy. It was reported, that before the arrival of orders from Caubul for the evacuation of the place, the town of Ghuznee had been taken by the surrounding tribes—"that the Hindoos of the Bazaar were all killed, fighting on our side—that Palmer, during the two months he was in the Balla Hissar, paid a daily sum for his provisions, water, and wood—that Shumshoodeen was the bearer of orders from the British at Caubul to give up the fortress—that the failure of water was the reason that made him agree to vacate the upper citadel on the 8th instant—that the mass of Ghazees did not respect the treaty formed, with a guarantee given to Palmer by Shumshoodeen, but attacked our garrison, and they only 400 strong, on their leaving the citadel, killing 100 and losing many themselves—that Palmer now wanted a guarantee for the safety of the officers, and that this being given, they surrendered themselves with two or three European females."[127] At the same time, Leech reported that he was in possession of a letter, bearing the seal of Shumshoodeen Khan, and addressed to the Shamalzye chiefs, exhorting them to assemble and march on Khelat-i-Ghilzye, and holding out to them hopes of honour [161] and wealth to be conferred upon them by the King and Ameen-oollah Khan, if they succeeded in capturing the place; and promising himself, upon the breaking up of the snow, to march down upon it "with fort-destroying guns and an army crowned with victory."

The tidings of the fall of Ghuznee were most calamitously true. The fortress, which the English had taken with so much difficulty, and the capture of which had been proclaimed with so much pomp, was now in the hands of the enemy. The slight outline of the melancholy events which had ended in the destruction of the garrison and the captivity of the surviving officers, which Leech had sent from Khelat-i-Ghilzye, was substantially correct. The enemy appeared before Ghuznee on the 20th of November. On the same day snow began to fall. Maclaren's brigade was then advancing from Candahar, and the enemy, expecting its appearance in their

neighbourhood, drew off their investing force; but they soon reappeared again. Maclaren's retirement gave them new heart; and on the 7th of December they collected again, in increased numbers, around the walls. The garrison were now completely enlaced. The city was in their possession, but they could not stir beyond it. Soon, however, they lost even that. The inhabitants undermined the walls, and admitted the enemy from without. On the 16th of December, through the subterranean aperture which the townspeople had made, the enemy streamed in by thousands. The city was now no longer tenable. The garrison shut themselves up in the citadel.

The winter now set in with appalling severity. The Sepoys, kept constantly on the alert, sunk beneath the paralysing cold. Bravely as they tried to bear up against it, the trial was beyond their physical capacity to endure. The deep snow was lying on the ground; it was often falling heavily when the Sepoys were on their cold night- [162]
watch. The mercury in the thermometer had fallen many degrees below zero. Men who had spent all their lives on the burning plains of Hindostan, and drunk their tepid water out of vessels scorched by the fierce rays of the Indian sun, were now compelled to break the ice in the wells before they could allay their thirst. Fuel was so scarce, that a single seer[128] of wood was all that each man received in the day to cook his dinner and keep off the assaults of the mysterious enemy that was destroying them. They were on half-rations; and the scanty provisions that were served out to them were of such a quality that only severe hunger could reconcile them to it. Numbers of them were carried into hospital miserably frost-bitten. The northern climate was doing its work.

The Afghans, in the mean while, in possession of the city, continued to harass the garrison in the citadel, by firing upon them whenever they showed their heads above the walls. This continued till the middle of the month of January, when, it appears, that some suspension of hostilities supervened. It was believed that the English at Caubul had entered into a treaty with the Afghan Sirdars; and that Shumshoodeen Khan would shortly arrive with orders from the existing government to assume possession of the place. Weeks, however, passed away, and the new governor did not make his appearance.[129] About the middle of February he arrived, and summoned Palmer to surrender. Unwilling to submit to the humiliating demand, and yet hopeless of the efficacy of resistance, the English officer contrived to amuse the Sirdar until the beginning of March. Then the patience of Shumshoodeen Khan and the other chiefs was exhausted; and they swore that they would recommence [163]
hostilities with unsparing ferocity if the citadel were not instantly surrendered. So, on the 6th of March, Palmer and his men marched out of the citadel. The enemy had solemnly sworn to conduct them in safety to Peshawur, with their colours, arms, and baggage, and fifty rounds of ammunition in the pouches of each of our fighting men.

But it soon became only too miserably apparent that the enemy had sworn falsely to protect Palmer and his men. The British troops had scarcely taken up their abode in the quarter of the town which had been assigned to them, when the Afghan chiefs threw off the mask. On the day after their departure from the citadel, when the Sepoys were cooking their dinner, the Ghazees rushed with sudden fury on their lines. Three days of terror followed. House after house, in which the English officers and their suffering Hindostanee followers endeavoured manfully to defend themselves, was attacked by the infuriated enemy. Fire, famine, and slaughter were all working together to destroy our unhappy men. At last, on the morning of the 20th, the survivors were huddled together in two houses which had been assigned to the head-quarters of the force—soldiers and camp-followers, men, women, and children, crammed to suffocation in every room, all hourly expecting death. The enemy were swarming around. The citadel guns, which had been useless in our hands, but were now most effective in those of the enemy, were sending their round-shot "crashing through and through the walls."[130] Hour after hour, and still the enemy seemed to pause, as though unwilling to shorten, by a last annihilating attack, the sufferings of their victims.[131] But Shumshoodeen Khan had begun [164]
to relent. He was in council with the other Sirdars; and it was determined that the wretched men, who were now so wholly at their mercy, should be admitted to terms. The Ghazees were still crying aloud for their blood. But the chiefs assured the officers of their

safety, if they would lay down their arms and place themselves in their hands. The Sepoys had by this time thrown off all authority, and determined to make their own way to Peshawur.[132] So the British officers, under a solemn oath from the chiefs that they should be honourably treated and conducted in safety to Caubul, laid down their arms, and trusted to the good faith of the Afghan Sirdars.[133] The Sepoys, in the mean while, were endeavouring to prosecute their insane scheme of escaping across the open country to Peshawur. Snow began to fall heavily. They wandered about the fields helpless and bewildered. Many of them were cut down or made prisoners by the enemy; and to all who survived, officers and men alike, a time of suffering now commenced, all the circumstances of which are burnt into their memories as with a brand of iron.

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The fall of Ghuznee was a great disaster and a great discredit. Among the officers of Nott's division it was regarded as more disgraceful than the loss of Caubul. Want of water was said to be the cause of Palmer's surrender; but it was believed that he might have retained possession of the great well by running a covered way down the mound; and it is still asserted that if he had taken the more decided step of expelling the treacherous inhabitants from the town, he might have held out until he was relieved from Candahar. This at least would have given him both firewood and water. And it is not improbable that Afghan cupidity would have prevailed over Afghan resentment, and that grain and other provisions would have been brought in to him in return for bills on the British Government. But Palmer wanted decision; and Ghuznee was lost.

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In the mean while, Khelat-i-Ghilzye was gallantly holding out against the enemy. Situated between Ghuznee and Candahar, about eighty miles from the latter city, this isolated fortress stands upon a barren eminence, exposed to the wintry winds and driving dust-storms—one of the dreariest and bleakest spots in all the country of Afghanistan. It had been originally garrisoned by the Shah's 3rd infantry regiment, a party of forty European artillerymen, and some sappers and miners; but Maclaren's brigade, on its return towards Candahar, had dropped some 250 Sepoys of the 43rd Regiment at Khelat-i-Ghilzye to strengthen the garrison; and now, commanded by Captain John Halkett Craigie, of the Shah's service, this little party prepared to resist the assaults of the investing enemy and the cruel cold. For months the cold was far more irresistible than the enemy. In that bleak, exposed situation, the icy winds were continually blowing from the north. "The lower the temperature sunk, the higher blew the north wind." The barracks were unfinished; there were neither doors nor windows to keep out the chilling blasts; and there was a scanty supply of firewood in store. How the Hindostanee soldiers bore up against it, it is difficult to say, for the European officers declare that they "never experienced a winter so continuously cold." There was an abundance of grain in store; but all the surrounding country was against them, and the wheat could not be ground. After more than two months of ineffectual labour they at last constructed serviceable hand-mills. The Europeans often lived for days together upon bread and water; but not a murmur arose. The winter passed wearily away. The enemy were inactive. But with spring came a renewal of active work on either side. The garrison were labouring to strengthen their defences, and the enemy, as the year advanced, began to draw more closely round the fortress, their numbers and their boldness increasing together. After a time, they began to dig trenches round the place, and, covered by the loopholed parapets, to keep up a hot fire upon the garrison, which it was impossible to return with good effect. But Craigie and his men had no thought of surrender. They held out, cheerfully and uncomplainingly, thankful if they could get a shot at the enemy when the parties in the trenches were being relieved.

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Such was the condition of the garrisons of Ghuznee and Khelat-i-Ghilzye when disastrous intelligence from the southward reached Nott and Rawlinson at Candahar. They had been, for some time, looking forward with the greatest anxiety to the arrival of a convoy from Sindh, which was to throw treasure, ammunition, hospital stores, and other necessaries into the garrison, and increase the number of their available troops. Brigadier England, who commanded the Sindh field force, was at Dadur towards the close of February, and there he received instructions to move on through the Bolan Pass, to assemble a strong body of troops at Quettah, and

thence to push his succours through the Kojuck with all expedient despatch. Major Outram was then in Sindh, earnest amongst the earnest to retrieve our lost position in Afghanistan, and active amongst the active to carry out the work of throwing troops into the country which had witnessed our abasement.[134] "All my endeavours in this quarter," he wrote on the 15th of March, "have [168] been to urge forward movements, and at last I have managed to send up every disposable man. Brigadier England marched from Dadur on the 7th (of March), and must be at Quettah by this time. The remainder of his troops intended for service above will march about the 23rd or 24th, so that he will have assembled at Quettah by the end of the month (including the garrison) one troop of European Horse Artillery, six guns; half a company of Bombay European Artillery; Major Sotheby's company of Bengal European Artillery; her Majesty's 41st Foot; three regiments of Native Infantry and a flank battalion of the same; two squadrons of Native Regular Cavalry, and 200 Poonah Horse. Of the above, two regiments of Native Infantry and half a company of artillery will be required to garrison Quettah. All the remainder will be available to reinforce [169] General Nott, and will march on Candahar with that view in the first week of April, I trust, with everything that is required by the Candahar garrison, namely, twenty lakhs of treasure, ammunition, and medicines. I hope, however, that Brigadier England will, in the mean while, push on a detachment with a portion of these supplies to meet a brigade at the Kojuck, which General Nott talks of sending out to receive what can be afforded."[135]

On the 16th of March, Brigadier England arrived at Quettah. On the following day, he wrote to Lieutenant Hammersley, the political agent at that place: "The 22nd is at length fixed as the day of my departure from hence, and in truth I do not see how it could advantageously be hastened, owing to the numerous demands made on my small means. I propose, unless other intervening events should change such purpose, to move as far as Hykulzye on the 24th, and there await intelligence from the northern extremity of the Kojuck Pass. This you must manage for me. I could move at once to Killa-Abdoollah; but it seems to me advisable to try the influence of our presence in the Pisheen valley, in the matter of supplies and camels. The amount of treasure I take to Candahar will not exceed four lakhs, and about one-third of a lakh of musket ammunition; we have not carriage or protection for more at a time." On the following day he wrote again to Lieutenant Hammersley, stating that he was determined to halt in the Pisheen valley, unless General Nott had actually sent two or three regiments to the Kojuck to meet the treasure; and Hammersley, when he forwarded a copy of this letter to Outram, wrote that there were officers in England's brigade who openly prophesied that the detachment would be sacrificed between [170] Quettah and the Kojuck Pass.[136]

On the 26th of March, the Brigadier moved forward on the Pisheen valley, taking with him five companies of her Majesty's 41st Regiment, six companies of Bombay Native Infantry, a troop of the 3rd Bombay Cavalry, fifty men of the Poonah Horse, and four Horse-Artillery guns. Early on the 28th he "arrived at the entrance of a defile which leads to the village of Hykulzye," at which place he "had intended to await the remainder of the brigade now in progress to this place through the Bolan Pass."[137] It was plain that General Nott had no intention to send any troops to the southward to co-operate with England's detachment;[138] and it soon became apparent that the latter would have done well to have retained his position at Quettah until reinforced by the troops moving up from the southward. England found himself near the village of Hykulzye, knowing nothing about the country, and nothing about the movements of the enemy. Colonel Stacy accompanied the force as its political director. He had, some days before, informed the General that he might expect to meet the enemy at Hykulzye; but as they approached that place no intelligence of their position was to be obtained, and not before England was close upon them had he any knowledge that they were in his front. Mahomed Sadig had come down determined to dispute our progress, and was now [171] posted, with his troops, behind some *sungahs* on the Hykulzye heights.

England halted the column, and rode forward with his staff to reconnoitre the enemy's position. After the lapse of about a quarter of an hour he returned, and the force was ordered to advance. The

Horse-Artillery guns were now opened on the hills to the left, whilst Major Apthorp, with the light battalion, was instructed to storm the hills to the right. Leslie's battery played with good effect, throwing its shrapnel among the enemy; but the infantry column was disastrously repulsed. The enemy rose up suddenly from behind their sungahs and poured in such a destructive fire upon our columns that the light companies fell back. Captain May, of the 41st, was shot dead. Major Apthorp,[139] who commanded the light companies, was carried, desperately wounded, to the rear. A sabre-cut had laid open his skull, and another had nearly severed his right arm. Of a party of less than 500 men nearly a hundred were killed or wounded. The enemy fought with uncommon gallantry, and many of [172] them were bayoneted or shot on the hill. Among them were five or six of their chiefs. Mahomed Sadig himself, who had been behind the defences, but had quitted them on the advance of our light battalion, and joined the horsemen on the hill, received a bayonet-wound on the shoulder.

Our men, after their repulse, soon rallied, and were eager again to be led to the attack. But England had determined to retreat. Colonel Stacy volunteered to lead a party of a hundred men up the hill and to carry the defences; but the gallant offer was declined. [140] Three times he pressed it upon the General, but with no effect. It was believed by the latter that the Hykulzye defences could be carried only by a strong brigade, and one, too, equipped with mortars. So he wrote to General Nott, urging him to send a force so equipped to meet him; and in the mean while fell back upon Quettah.[141] And there he began to entrench himself, as though he [173] were about to be besieged by an overwhelming force.

No satisfactory reasons have yet been assigned for this unhappy miscarriage. But excuses have been urged in abundance. It was alleged that the defences at Hykulzye were impracticable—that they had been two months in course of erection—that the General had received no plan of them from the political authorities—that he was not, in fact, aware of their existence—that he had been deceived by false accounts of the number of the enemy—that strong reinforcements had come down from Candahar—and that the Sepoys did not support the European soldiers at Hykulzye. But upon a careful examination of all these charges and assertions, it does not appear that one can be maintained.

The defences at Hykulzye were not formidable. General England had not seen them at this time. Lieutenant Evans, of the 41st, did see them; and he said that there were "no breastworks, but merely a four-foot ditch filled with brushwood." The elevations were nothing more than those heaps of earth and stone known as *sungahs*, which may be, and often are, thrown up in a few hours. The best information that Hammersley could obtain went to show that these defences were thrown up by Mahomed Sadig when General England's force had reached Koochlag; but not before. When the brigade advanced from Quettah a month afterwards, the Hykulzye defences were found to be so formidable that some of the officers rode over them, not knowing where they were.

The strength of the enemy at Hykulzye seems to have been exaggerated very much in the same manner as the strength of the defences. General England wrote to Hammersley on the 28th of March, after his unsuccessful engagement, that the enemy were "a hundred to one stronger than any one expected."[142] Hammersley [174] and Stacy had both told the General that he might expect Mahomed Sadig to make a stand at Hykulzye. The former officer had computed the strength of the enemy at 1000 foot and 300 horse; and his subsequent inquiries went to show that he had rather overstated than understated the number actually engaged. England's own officers estimated the strength of the enemy at from [175] 1000 to 1300 men; and native testimony went to show that they had overstated the number of horsemen in the field. The strong reinforcements which were said to have come down from Candahar before the 28th of March were purely fabulous. There had been some talk of such a movement, but not until after the affair with Colonel Wymer's brigade on the 25th of March. Then it was debated among the chiefs whether a party should not be sent down to the Kojuck to intercept the convoy advancing from the southward. An invitation from Mahomed Sadig had arrived in their camp, and it had come at an opportune season. Greatly depressed by the failure of their efforts in the neighbourhood of Candahar, the Douranee

chiefs were almost on the point of breaking up their camp, when intelligence of the fall of Ghuznee came to revive their spirits. They were then at Dehli. There the tidings of the advance of England's convoy reached them, and there they received an invitation from Mahomed Sadig to send troops to reinforce him. Expecting that their own camp would be strengthened by the arrival of Shumshoodeen Khan, they believed that they might safely detach a party to the southward. Accordingly, Saloo Khan and some other chiefs[143] set out towards the Kojuck. But they had hardly commenced their march when England was driven back at Hykulzye. The chiefs fell out on the road, and Saloo Khan alone made his way to the southern passes; but not a man of his party had [176] joined Mahomed Sadig on that disastrous 28th of March, when England sought to justify his failure by a reference to the reinforcements from Candahar.

Only one more point remains to be mentioned in connexion with a subject which the chronicler of these events is but too anxious to dismiss. General England insinuated that he had no reliance upon his Sepoy troops. He is said to have remarked, that although when his troops and those of General Nott were united they would have 15,000 men under their command, they could not oppose a whole nation with two weak regiments.[144] He thought that her Majesty's two regiments, the 40th and 41st, were the only two corps that could be relied upon. Nott told a different story. "My Sepoys are behaving nobly," was his constant report. I can find no mention of any backwardness on the part of the Sepoys, in any of the letters written by the officers of either service after the affair at Hykulzye; and I believe, that if Colonel Stacy had been suffered to storm the works after the first repulse, a large number of Sepoys would have volunteered to follow him.

When all the circumstances of the case come to be considered, it appears that a disaster of a very discouraging character was sustained by the adoption of a course which had no object of importance commensurate with the risk that was incurred. General England had no intention of advancing upon Candahar. He ought, therefore, to have remained at Quettah. The advance into the Pisheen valley was a grave error. It was plainly England's duty, at [177] this time, either to have cleared the pass with the treasure and stores which were so much needed by the Candahar garrison, or to have waited patiently for his reinforcements at Quettah. To advance from that place, and then to fall back upon it, was to do that which Nott said, in anticipation, would be more injurious to the position of the Candahar force than 20,000 of the enemy in the field.[145] Major Outram also strongly advised General England to await at Quettah the arrival of the reinforcements from below; but England would go on to be beaten.[146]

To Nott, this failure was mortifying in the extreme. He was in no mood to brook delays and excuses. The disaster at Hykulzye was sufficiently annoying to him; but the seeming unwillingness of General England to redeem his character by a vigorous movement [178] in advance, irritated him still more. He had been for some time complaining bitterly of the neglect to which he and his force had been subjected by the authorities below. "I know not the intentions of Government regarding this country," he wrote to General England; "but this I know and feel—that it is now from four to five months since the outbreak at Caubul, and in all that time no aid whatever has been given to me. I have continually called for cavalry, for ammunition, treasure, stores, and medicines for the sick. I have called loudly, but I have called in vain. Had the least aid been sent—even a regiment of cavalry—I could have tranquillised or subdued the country. I have been tied to this important city, when a few additional troops for its garrison would have set me free; and I now would have moved on Ghuznee and Caubul. All I have now to do is to uphold the honour of my country in the best manner I can without the assistance above alluded to, and in ignorance of the intentions of government."[147] In this frame of mind, his patience well-nigh exhausted, his temper never of the most genial cast now more than ever overclouded, he received intelligence, first of England's defeat, and then of his reluctance to move forward. England himself announced the latter, if not in so many plain words, in language equally unmistakeable. After setting forth all the dangers and difficulties of a forward movement, he concluded, on the 10th of April, a letter to Nott by saying: "Whenever it so happens that you

retire bodily in this direction, and that I am informed of it, I feel assured that I shall be able to make an advantageous diversion in your favour."[148]

This was too much for Nott. Determined at once to settle the [179]
question of England's advance, he sate down and wrote a letter to the General, declaring that he had well considered England's position, that he knew the country well, that he was determined to uphold the honour of his country, and that it was necessary that the brigade from Quettah should push on at once with money, medicine, and ammunition, for the relief of Candahar. "I am well aware," he added, with keen sarcasm, "that war cannot be made without loss; but yet, perhaps, the British troops can oppose Asiatic armies without defeat."[149]

It was impossible to resist the urgency of this appeal. The orders from Candahar were not to be misunderstood. They were clear as the notes of a trumpet, and ought to have been as spirit-stirring. England's brigade now began to prepare for a forward movement. So little, however, had it been anticipated that the force would ever leave Quettah, that the officers of the brigade had been buying houses and settling down for cantonment life.[150] But on the 26th of April, England broke ground; and on the 28th—precisely a month after the date of his disastrous failure—was again before Hykulzye. The enemy, emboldened by their previous success, were posted on the ground they had occupied before; but they soon found that they had not estimated aright the character of British troops, and that what they had regarded as a proof of their own superiority in the field, was an accident not likely to be repeated. The British troops were told off into three parties—one, under Major Simmons, to storm the hills to the left; another, under Captain Woodburn, to attack the hill on the right, where the disaster of the previous month had occurred; and a third, under Major Browne, was kept in [180]
reserve. When they had taken up their position, the guns of Leslie's battery opened with good effect on the enemy; and then the infantry advanced with a loud "hurrah" to the attack. They are said to have moved forward "as steady as on parade."[151] The coolness and courage of the infantry soon completed what the admirable practice of the guns had commenced. The enemy turned and fled. Delamaine's cavalry were then slipped in pursuit; and there was an end of the defence of Hykulzye.

On the morning of the 30th, England's brigade entered the defile leading to the Kojuck Pass. Here, for some unaccountable reason, the General halted the column, dismounted from his horse, called for a chair, and sate himself down. In vain Colonel Stacy implored him to move on. In vain he urged that the Candahar troops were entering the pass from the other side, and that all the glory of the enterprise would be theirs. In vain Major Waddington, the engineer, pressed the same advice on the General. The Bombay force was locked-up at the entrance to the pass, whilst Wymer, with the Bengal regiments, was gallantly crowning the Kojuck, and reporting everything clear for the advance of the Quettah brigade. The Sepoys of those three noble regiments—the 2nd, the 16th, and 38th, who would have followed Wymer wheresoever he pleased to lead them—were now climbing the precipitous ascents, disincumbered of whatever might clog their movements,[152] and every accessible height was bristling with the bayonets of the Candahar force. The [181]
Bombay troops were bitterly disappointed; but they cordially fraternised with their new comrades, and, if they felt any pangs of envy, they were too forbearing to express them.

Without any opposition the two united brigades now marched on to Candahar, and entered the city on the 10th of May. The enemy had broken up and dispersed. Saloo Khan, who had come down to the assistance of Mahomed Sadig, had fallen out with that chief. He had never thrown his heart into the cause, and was, indeed, at any time, to be purchased by British gold. Rawlinson thought that a little money would be well expended on the purchase of his allegiance, but Nott objected to the measure.[153] In the meanwhile, however, Stacy had been exerting himself with good success below the Kojuck to obtain the co-operation of this man in the important work of keeping open the communication between Quettah and Candahar; and when he reached the latter place, he was able to report that Saloo Khan had promised all that was required of him; and that [182]
Atta-oollah Khan, the brother of the chief, was now accompanying

him, for the purpose of concluding the necessary arrangements.[154]

In the meanwhile, the Douranee chiefs, though disunited, were not inactive. It was hard to determine with any distinctness what were their designs at this time—so contradictory were the accounts which reached our camp, and so inconsistent the movements of the enemy. But it seemed that our difficulties were very sensibly diminishing. As the spring advanced, the general aspect of affairs was brighter and more encouraging than it had been since the first outbreak of the revolution. The chiefs were scattered about in all directions—some wounded and dying—others eager to make terms with the British. Meerza Ahmed and Sufder Jung were contemplating a withdrawal across the frontier to Laush and Jowayan. The latter was corresponding with the British agent, and expressing his desire to return to our camp. The Caubul Janbaz had [183] deserted in disgust. The principal men of the surrounding villages were sending messages into our camp, offering to withdraw all their people from the rebel standard if we would guarantee them against the depredations of our troops. The trade of the *Ghazee* was plainly at a discount. And whilst the elements of decay were thus discernible within, there were external influences at work to weaken the rebel cause. Glad tidings arrived from the eastward. General Pollock had advanced upon Jellalabad; had relieved the garrison of that place; and had, it was said, determined to march upon the capital. A royal salute was fired at Candahar; and as the tidings of our successes spread through the country the spirits of the insurgents became more and more depressed.[155]

Still it was obvious that whilst Meerza Ahmed and Atta Mahomed continued to flit about the neighbourhood of Candahar, there was no prospect of permanent tranquillity. Lesser chiefs might tender their submission, but whilst these, the mainsprings of the great insurrectionary movement, were employing their talents and exercising their influence in hostility against us, there was little chance of any effective movement for the suppression of rebellion in Western Afghanistan. Armed with authority from the Shah himself, granted prior to the great outbreak, Meerza Ahmed was raising revenue in the name of the local government, and expending the money thus collected on the maintenance of the war. It appeared expedient, therefore, to Nott, to cause a proclamation to be issued, cautioning the inhabitants against paying revenue to the Meerza. This was a measure of unquestionable propriety; but Nott was disposed to go far beyond it. He was eager to offer a reward to any one who would bring in either Meerza Ahmed or Atta Mahomed to his camp; and on the 7th of April he wrote to Rawlinson on the [184] subject: "I wish a proclamation to be immediately issued, prohibiting any person paying revenue to Meerza Ahmed or to Sufder Jung, and making them to understand, that whatever sums they pay to these chiefs will be their own loss, as the regular revenue due to his Majesty the Shah will be exacted from them by the authorities of Candahar. I will thank you in the proclamation to offer a reward of 5000 rupees to any person who will bring in either Meerza Ahmed or Mahomed Atta. The sooner this is done the better. Let me see the draft of the proclamation before it is issued."[156]

Startled at this bold and questionable proposition, Rawlinson, having asked in the first place whether the proclamation was to be issued in the General's own name, or in that of Prince Timour, and having suggested that on a question of such importance as that of the raising of revenue the wishes of the Prince should be previously ascertained, went on to speak in his letter, of the proposed rewards. "Is the reward of 5000 rupees," he asked, "also offered to any one bringing in Mahomed Atta or Meerza Ahmed, to apply to these people dead or alive, or is it merely to be given in the event of any of the Afghans bringing them in as prisoners? I do not think the Prince would have any objection to issue the proclamation about revenue, and to signify to all his subjects that he has appointed Meerza Wulee Mahomed Khan to the management of this department, notwithstanding he is aware that papers of an exactly opposite tenor, issued by his father, are in Meerza Ahmed's hands; but I greatly doubt his aquiescing in the subject of the reward, as whatever may be the secret feelings of Mahomedans regarding betrayal or assassination, it is altogether repugnant to their habits [185] to avow such objects in a public proclamation."[157]

To this Nott replied that, as a matter of course, he intended the proclamation regarding the revenue to be issued in the name of the

Prince. “In regard,” he added, “to the reward for the apprehension of Meerza Ahmed, that is a different thing; and if the Prince will not consent to include it in the proclamation regarding the revenue, where it ought to appear, I will issue a separate proclamation. Meerza Ahmed has murdered my camp-followers and Sepoys in the most cruel and atrocious manner, and it is my duty, merely as commander of the force, to offer a reward to any person who will bring him in. Mahomed Atta has, like a monster, murdered our officers in their houses, and cut to pieces our unarmed and inoffensive camp-followers. I will show no mercy to these men. My note said nothing about ‘dead or alive,’ and I thought clearly indicated bringing them in prisoners. Why you make use of the word ‘assassination’ I know not—but I do know that it ought not to be used by Englishmen in any public document, and therefore it could never enter into my mind when speaking of a proclamation. Meerza Ahmed is collecting what he is pleased to call revenue, to enable him to raise men to attack the force under my command. Such plunder ought to be put a stop to.”[158]

Then Rawlinson answered, that he regretted that the unguarded use of the ugly word “assassination,” which he only intended to convey the meaning which the Prince might put upon a general offer of reward for the persons of the proscribed chiefs, should have given any offence to the General; but that he trusted Nott would excuse him if he made a few remarks upon the subject of the proposed proclamation. “We are accused, and perhaps suspected,” [186] he wrote, “of having lately suborned people to attempt the life of Mahomed Akbar Khan; and Captain Nicolson is known to have offered a high reward on one occasion for the head of the Gooroo; and it would be very difficult therefore, it appears to me, in our present proclamation, to get the Afghans to appreciate the difference between the offer of a reward for the betrayal of Meerza Ahmed and Mahomed Atta into our hands, to be executed by the Prince (as every one must know they would be) on their arrival at Candahar, and for anticipating this sentence by taking their lives on the spot, wherever a man might be found bold enough to attempt the deed. Now, if any misunderstanding on this subject existed, and we were believed by our proclamation to be aiming at the lives rather than at the liberty of Meerza Ahmed and Mahomed Atta, it would be only natural for them to retaliate, and, aided by religious enthusiasm, and with the voice of the country in their favour, they would be far more likely, I think, to succeed in bribing Ghazees to kill our officers, than we would be in tempting any of the Afghans to seize the persons of the proscribed individuals and hand them over to us for execution. I cannot help thinking also, that even supposing the proclamation to be expressly stated and understood to aim only at the liberty of the two heads of the Candahar rebellion, still it would operate rather to our detriment than our advantage, and would tend greatly to increase the inveteracy of our present contest with the Afghans. It would, probably, be met by the kidnapping of our own officers at this place, and I suspect it would be fraught with danger to our unfortunate countrymen in confinement at Lughman, at Caubul, and at Ghuznee. Should you still, however, desire to make the attempt to obtain possession of the persons of Meerza Ahmed and Mahomed Atta, I shall be happy to render literally into [187] Persian any draft of a proclamation which you will send me, and to give the proclamation all possible publicity.”

The arguments of Rawlinson prevailed. But soon another source of inquietude arose. The ex-chief of Candahar, Kohun-dil-Khan, appeared to be again turning his thoughts towards the government of his old principality.[159] He had, ever since his expulsion from Afghanistan, been quietly domiciliated at Shuhur-i-Babek, in the Persian territories, between Shiraz and Kirman; but now it appeared that he had sent an agent into Seistan to communicate with his Candahar adherents; and was otherwise intriguing for the recovery of the dominion he had lost. Not without some difficulty had Rawlinson throughout this season of convulsion contrived to maintain a recognised system of government, in the name of Shah Soojah. The internal administration of the country had never been suspended; but it was only through the agency of some of the old Barukzye functionaries that the British political chief had succeeded, in the midst of such disturbing influences, in carrying on the government of Western Afghanistan. But there was little hope of his continuing to exercise this influence if the old Barukzye Sirdars [188] again appeared on the stage. Already had Kohun-dil-Khan sent

letters to Meerza Ahmed appointing him his Wakeel in all matters of revenue. It was even reported at one time that the ex-Sirdars were only a few marches from Candahar.[160] These anxieties, however, were but short-lived. After-intelligence from Persia encouraged the belief that the Persian Government would restrain the ex-Sirdars from crossing the frontier.[161] But other sources of inquietude and annoyance soon came to take their place. The heaviest blow of all was now about to descend upon them. It came from the Supreme Government itself.

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# CHAPTER II.

## [April-June: 1842.]

The Halt at Jellalabad—Positions of Pollock and Nott—Lord Ellenborough—Opening Measures of his Administration—Departure for Allahabad—His Indecision—The Withdrawal Orders—Their Effects—The "Missing Letter"—Negotiations for the Release of the Prisoners.

POLLOCK and Nott were now eager to advance. On both sides of Afghanistan a junction had been effected which enabled the two generals to maintain a bold front in the face of the enemy, to overawe the surrounding country, and to inspire with new hopes and new courage the hearts of those whom the failures of Wild and England had filled with despondency and alarm. The English in India never doubted that the conduct of operations in Afghanistan was now in the hands of men equal to the duty which had been entrusted to them. They had full confidence in Pollock and Nott. There were now two fine forces of all arms, European and Native, in good health and good spirits, eager to advance on Caubul, and sure to carry victory before them. It seemed that the tide had now begun to turn in our favour. As the hot weather came on, the spirits of the Anglo-Indian community rose with the mercury in the thermometer; everybody said that we had seen the worst; and everybody looked for the speedy lustration of the national honour, which had been so hideously defiled.

But as the confidence of the public in the generals and their armies rose, the confidence of the public in the man upon whom had now devolved the great duty of shaping the counsels of the generals, and directing the movements of the armies, began rapidly to decline. On the 28th of February, Lord Ellenborough had landed at Calcutta and taken the oaths of office. The guns on the saluting battery of Fort William roared forth their welcome to the new Governor-General, and drowned the voices of those who were assembling in the Town-Hall to do honour to the departing ruler. The first intelligence of the disasters that had overtaken our arms in the countries beyond the Indus, had been telegraphed to him from Fort St. George, when, standing on the deck of the *Cambrian* in the Madras Roads, he looked out upon the white surf, the low beach, and the dazzling houses of the southern presidency. He arrived, therefore, at the seat of the Supreme Government with little to learn beyond the measures which his predecessor had sanctioned for the extrication of the emperiled affairs of the British-Indian Empire from the thicket of difficulty that surrounded them. [190]

What those measures were it is unnecessary to repeat. In the last letter written by Lord Auckland's administration to the Secret Committee—it bears date February 19, 1842—the Governor-General in Council said: "Since we have heard of the misfortunes in the Khybur Pass, and have been convinced that from the difficulties at present opposed to us, and in the actual state of our preparations, we could not expect, at least in this year, to maintain a position in the Jellalabad districts for any effective purpose, we have made our directions in regard to withdrawal from Jellalabad clear and positive, and we shall rejoice to learn that Major-General Pollock will have anticipated these more express orders by confining his efforts to the same objects." And on the 24th of the same month—in one of the last public documents of any importance written under the instruction of Lord Auckland—in a letter to General Pollock, that officer is distinctly informed that "the great present object of your proceedings at Peshawur is, beyond the safe withdrawal of the force at Jellalabad, that of watching events, of keeping up such communications as may be admissible with the several parties who may acquire power in the northern portion of Afghanistan, of committing yourself permanently with none of these parties, but also of declaring positively against none of them, while you are collecting the most accurate information of their relative strength and purposes for report to the government, and pursuing the measures which you may find in your power for procuring the safe return of our troops and people detained beyond the Khybur Pass."[162] These were the parting instructions of the old Governor-General. Lord Ellenborough found matters in this state when he assumed the reins of office; and every one was now eager to ascertain what measures the new ruler would adopt. [191]

The first public document of any importance to which he attached his name was a letter to the Commander-in-Chief. It was a letter from the Governor-General in Council, dated the 15th of March. It was a calm and able review of all the circumstances attending our position beyond the Indus, and was as free from feebleness and indecision on the one side, as it was from haste and intemperance on the other. Lord Ellenborough at once decided that the conduct of Shah Soojah was, at least, suspicious,[163] and that [192] the British Government was no longer compelled "to peril its armies, and with its armies the Indian Empire," in support of the tripartite treaty. Therefore, he said, "Whatever course we may hereafter take must rest solely upon military considerations, and hence, in the first instance, regard to the safety of the detached bodies of our troops at Jellalabad, at Ghuznee, at Khelat-i-Ghilzye and Candahar; to the security of our troops, now in the field, from all unnecessary risk; and finally, to the re-establishment of our military reputation by the infliction of some signal and decisive blow upon the Afghans, which may make it appear to them, and to our own subjects and to our allies, that we have the power of inflicting punishment upon those who commit atrocities and violate their faith, and that we withdraw ultimately from Afghanistan, not from any deficiency of means to maintain our position, but because we are satisfied that the King we have set up has not, as we were erroneously led to imagine, the support of the nation over which he has been placed." Here, in a few sentences, was mapped out the policy recommended by such men as Mr. Robertson and Mr. Clerk, the policy which Pollock and Nott were eager to reduce to action, and which, with few exceptions, the entire community of British India were clamorously expressing their desire to see brought into vigorous effect.

This letter to the Commander-in-Chief was written in Calcutta; and it bears the signatures of the different members of the Supreme Council of India—of Mr. Wilberforce Bird, of General Casement, and of Mr. H. T. Prinsep. Nothing like it was ever written afterwards. On the 6th of April Lord Ellenborough left Calcutta. It seemed desirable that he should be nearer to the frontier—nearer to the Commander- [193] in-Chief. The movement, at all events, indicated an intention to act with promptitude and energy. Already had the new Governor-General startled the sober, slow-going functionaries of Calcutta by his restless, and, as they thought, obtrusive activity. He seemed resolved to see everything for himself—to do everything for himself. Almost everything had been done wrongly by others; and now he was going to do it rightly himself. All this created a great convulsion in the government offices; but out of doors, and especially in military circles, men said that the new Governor-General was a statesman of the right stamp—bold, vigorous, decided, thoroughly in earnest, no fearer of responsibility—quick to conceive, prompt to execute—just the man to meet with bold comprehensive measures such a crisis as had now arisen. A few sober-minded men of the old school shook their heads, and faltered out expressions of alarm lest the vigour of the new Governor-General should swell into extravagance, and energy get the better of discretion. But no one ever doubted that the leading ideas in the Governor-General's mind were the chastisement of the offending Afghans and the lustration of our national honour.

After a day or two spent at Barrackpore, Lord Ellenborough put himself into a palanquin, and proceeded to Allahabad. Halting at Benares, he addressed the Secret Committee on the 21st of April. Much stirring intelligence had met him as he advanced. Good and evil were blended together in the tidings that reached him between Calcutta and Benares. Pollock had entered the Khybur Pass and forced his way to Ali-Musjid. Sale had defeated Akbar Khan in a general action on the plains of Jellalabad. But England had been beaten back at Hykulzye, and withdrawn his brigade to Quettah. All these things the Governor-General now reported to the Secret [194] Committee, in a despatch which can by no means be regarded as a model of historical truth. Writing again on the following day to the home authorities, he stated that he had "by no means altered his deliberate opinion that it is expedient to withdraw the troops under Major-General Pollock and those under Major-General Nott, at the earliest practicable period, into positions wherein they may have certain and easy communication with India." He had already written to General Nott, instructing him to take immediate measures to withdraw the garrison of Khelat-i-Ghilzye and evacuate Candahar.

"You will evacuate," wrote the Chief Secretary, "the city of Candahar.... You will proceed to take up a position at Quettah, until the season may enable you to retire upon Sukkur. The object of the above-directed measure is to withdraw all our forces to Sukkur at the earliest period at which the season and other circumstances may permit you to take up a new position there. The manner of effecting this now necessary object is, however, left to your discretion."[164] And so the Governor-General, who in Calcutta had determined to "re-establish our military reputation by the infliction of some signal and decisive blow upon the Afghans," could now hardly write a sentence suggestive of anything else but withdrawal and evacuation.

How it happened that, within the space of little more than a month, so great a change had come over the counsels of the Governor-General, it would be difficult to determine, if he himself had not furnished the necessary explanation. "The severe check," he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, "experienced by Brigadier England's small corps on the 28th ultimo—an event disastrous as it was unexpected—and of which we have not yet information to [195] enable us to calculate all the results—has a tendency so to cripple the before limited means of movement and of action which were possessed by General Nott, as to render it expedient to take immediate measures for the ultimate safety of that officer's corps, by withdrawing it, at the earliest practicable period, from its advanced position into nearer communication with India."

On this same 19th of April, the Governor-General addressed another letter to the Commander-in-Chief, relating to the position of General Pollock. "The only question," wrote the Chief Secretary, "will be, in which position will Major-General Pollock's force remain during the hot months, with most security to itself, and with the least pressure upon the health of the troops? its ultimate retirement within the Indus being a point determined upon, because the reasons for our first crossing the Indus have ceased to exist." The Commander-in-Chief was then directed to issue his own instructions to General Pollock; and another letter was immediately afterwards addressed to him (the third despatched to Sir Jasper Nicolls on this prolific 19th of April), in which, after speaking of the withdrawal orders addressed to Pollock and Nott, the Governor-General goes on to say: "It will, however, likewise be for consideration whether our troops, having been redeemed from the state of peril in which they have been placed in Afghanistan, and it may be still hoped not without the infliction of some severe blow upon the Afghan army, it would be justifiable again to push them forward for no other object than that of revenging our losses, and of re-establishing, in all its original brilliancy, our military character."

It was Lord Ellenborough's often-declared opinion that "India was won by the sword, and must be maintained by the sword." In his despatch of the 15th of March he had written: "In war, [196] reputation is strength." And yet we now find him questioning the expediency of undertaking operations beyond the Indus with "no other object than that of re-establishing our military character." If we hold India by the sword, and reputation is strength, a statesman need hardly look for any object beyond the establishment of that reputation, which is the strength by which alone our empire in India is maintained.

But England's miscarriage at Hykulzye had not only driven all the forward feeling out of Lord Ellenborough, but had blunted his logical acumen and deadened all his feelings of compassion. He seems to have forgotten that at this time there was a party of English prisoners in the hands of the Afghans—that the generals who had commanded our army at Caubul—the widow of the murdered Envoy—the brave-hearted wife of the commander of the illustrious garrison of Jellalabad—the man who had rescued Herat from the grasp of the Persian, and done the only thing that had yet been done to roll back from the gates of India the tide of Western invasion—with many more brave officers and tender women, were captives in the rude fortresses of the Afghan Sirdars. The Governor-General seems to have forgotten that there were prisoners to be rescued; and he doubted the expediency of undertaking operations merely for the re-establishment of our military reputation—although upon that reputation, in his own opinion, our tenure of India depended.

The request conveyed to Sir Jasper Nicolls in the government letter of the 19th of April met with prompt compliance; and on the

29th, the Commander-in-Chief, who was then at Simlah, instructed General Pollock to withdraw every British soldier from Jellalabad to Peshawur. “The only circumstances,” he added, “which can authorise delay in obeying this order, are: 1st. That you have [197] brought a negotiation for the release of the prisoners lately confined at Budeeabad to such a point that you might risk its happy accomplishment by withdrawing. 2ndly. That you may have attached a lightly equipped force to rescue them. 3rdly. That the enemy at Caubul may be moving a force to attack you. In this improbable case, should any respectable number of troops have descended into the plain below Jugdulluck with that intent, it would be most advisable to inflict such a blow upon them as to make them long remember your parting effort.” Of these instructions the Governor-General “entirely approved;” and on the 6th of May the Chief Secretary wrote to General Pollock, saying: “They are in accordance with the general principles laid down by his Lordship for your guidance, and you will execute them to the best of your ability, having regard always to the health of your troops and to the efficiency of your army.”

In the interval, however, between the 19th of April and the 6th of May, the Governor-General having somewhat shaken off the uneasy sensation which the disaster at Hykulzye seems to have engendered in his mind, and having arrived at the conclusion that the phantoms which had so intimidated him had not struck terror into the brave heart of General Pollock, had written to the General, anticipating the possibility of his having advanced upon Caubul.

“The aspect of affairs in Upper Afghanistan,” wrote the Chief Secretary, on the 28th of April, “appears to be such, according to the last advices received by the Governor-General, that his Lordship cannot but contemplate the possibility of your having been led, by the absence of serious opposition on the part of any army in the field, by the divisions amongst the Afghan chiefs, and by the natural desire you must, in common with every true soldier, have of [198] displaying again the British flag in triumph upon the scene of our late disasters, to advance upon and occupy the city of Caubul. If that event should have occurred, you will understand that it will in no respect vary the view which the Governor-General previously took of the policy now to be pursued. The Governor-General will adhere to the opinion that the only safe course is that of withdrawing the army under your command, at the earliest practicable period, into positions within the Khybur Pass, where it may possess easy and certain communications with India.” Why Lord Ellenborough should have entertained a belief even of the possibility of Pollock advancing upon Caubul, in the face of positive instructions to the contrary and a known deficiency of carriage, it is not easy to conjecture. Probably Lord Ellenborough himself could not have explained the source of this extraordinary buoyancy of expectation, for six days afterwards he declared that he had been led to expect “that you (Pollock) will have already decided upon withdrawing your troops within the Khybur Pass, into a position wherein you may have easy and certain communication with India, if considerations, having regard to the health of the army, should not have induced you to defer that movement.” The idea of the advance upon Caubul seems only to have been a temporary apprehension arising out of a not erroneous estimate of the military aspirations of General Pollock; and it very soon passed away. But it had one important result. It called forth from the General the following soldierly letter:

TO T. H. MADDOCK, ESQ., SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, ETC.

Jellalabad, May 13, 1842.

SIR.

I had the honour to forward with my letter No. 32, dated 12th instant, a copy of a letter from his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief. I have now the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your [199] letter, dated 28th ultimo, which adverts to the present aspect of affairs in Afghanistan, and the probability of my having advanced towards Caubul; stating also, that in such an event, the views of the Governor-General as to the withdrawal of the troops will not be altered; and further, that whatever measures I may adopt I must have especial regard to the health of the troops. I trust that I am not wrong in considering this letter as leaving to me discretionary powers, and, coming as it does from the supreme power in India, I venture to delay, for some days, acting up to the instructions communicated in his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief’s letter, dated 29th ult.

I regret much that a want of carriage-cattle has detained me here; if it had not been so, I should now be several marches in advance, and I am quite certain that such a move would have been highly beneficial. Affairs at Caubul are, at the present moment, in a very unsettled state; but a few days must decide in favour of one of the parties. Mahomed Akbar is at Caubul, exerting all his influence to overpower the Prince. He is without means; and if he cannot, within a very short period obtain the ascendancy, he must give up the contest, in which case I have no doubt I shall hear from him again. With regard to our withdrawal at the present moment, I fear that it would have the very worst effect—it would be construed into a defeat, and our character as a powerful nation would be entirely lost in this part of the world.

It is true that the garrison of Jellalabad has been saved, which it would not have been, had a force not been sent to its relief. But the relief of that garrison is only one object; there still remain others which we cannot disregard—I allude to the release of the prisoners. I expect about nineteen Europeans from Budeeabad in a few days. The letters which have passed about other prisoners have already been forwarded for the information of his Lordship. If, while these communications were in progress, I were to retire, it would be supposed that a panic had seized us. I therefore think that our remaining in this vicinity (or perhaps a few marches in advance) is essential to uphold the character of the British nation; and in like manner General Nott might hold his post; at all events till a more favourable season.

I have no reason, yet, to complain that the troops are more unhealthy than they were at Agra. If I am to march to Peshawur, the climate is certainly not preferable; and here I can in one or two marches find a better climate, and I should be able to dictate better terms than I could at Peshawur.

I cannot imagine any force being sent from Caubul which I could not successfully oppose. But the advance on Caubul would require that General Nott should act in concert and advance also. I therefore cannot help regretting that he should be directed to retire, which, without some demonstration of our power, he will find some difficulty in doing. I have less hesitation in thus expressing my opinion, because I could not under any circumstances, move in less than eighteen or twenty days; and your reply might reach me by express in about twenty-two days. The difference in point of time is not very material, but the importance of the subject is sufficient to justify the delay of a few days. In the mean time, I shall endeavour to procure carriage-cattle as fast as I can, to move either forward or backward, as I may be directed; or, if left to my discretion, as I may think judicious. Under any circumstances, I should not advocate the delay of the troops either at Candahar or on this side beyond the month of November; and in this arrangement advertence must be had to the safety of the Khybur, which I consider the Sikhs would gladly hold if they were allowed to take possession of Jellalabad. [200]

I have the honour to be, &c.,

George Pollock, Major-Gen.[165]

[201]

Unwilling to return to the provinces without striking a signal blow at the Afghans, and doing something great to re-establish the military reputation of Great Britain in the countries beyond the Indus, Pollock grasped eagerly at the faintest indication of willingness on the part of the Governor-General to place any discretionary power in his hands; and expressed his eagerness to traverse, with a victorious army, the scene of our recent humiliation. If he had had carriage he would have advanced at once; but the want of cattle paralysed the movements of the force, and kept Pollock inactive in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad. In one respect this want was a gain and an advantage. Mindful both of the honour of his country, and of the safety of his captive countrymen and countrywomen, Pollock adroitly turned the scarcity of carriage to good account, by declaring that he had not the means of retiring to Peshawur. Thus gaining time for something to be written down in the chapter of accidents, he continued to maintain his advanced position, and exerted himself to secure by negotiation the release of the prisoners from the hands of Akbar Khan.[166]

[202]

In the mean while, the announcement of the Governor-General's determination to withdraw the troops from their advanced positions had reached Candahar. Nott had always consistently declared that he would not yield an inch of ground without the instructions of the Supreme Government, but that, fortified by such instructions, he was prepared to move either in one direction or the other—to abandon all the posts in Western Afghanistan, or to march victoriously on the capital. He had his own opinions on the subject of withdrawal; but the obedience of the soldier was paramount over all his words and actions; and when he received the instructions of

which mention has been made, he wrote to the Chief Secretary on the 17th of May: “These measures shall be carried into effect, and the directions of his Lordship accomplished in the best manner circumstances will admit of.” And again he wrote on the 21st to the same functionary: “I shall not lose a moment in making all necessary arrangements for carrying into effect the orders I have received, without turning to the right or to the left, by the idle propositions and wild speculations daily and hourly heaped upon me from all parts of Afghanistan and Sindh, by persons who are, or fancy themselves to be, representatives of government West of the Indus. [203] I know that it is my duty and their duty implicitly and zealously to carry into effect every order received, without inquiring into the reasons for the measures adopted, whatever our own opinions or wishes may be, and without troubling government with unnecessary references.”[167] But it was plain that he read the orders of the Supreme Government not without acute mortification. He yielded in effect a prompt assent; but in spirit it was a grudging one. The orders for the evacuation of Candahar took Nott and Rawlinson by surprise, and filled them with as much pain as astonishment. What was really felt by the Candahar authorities is not to be learnt from the published papers; but in the following letter written by Rawlinson to Outram on the 18th of May, not only are the real feelings of the military and political chiefs clearly revealed, but the probable effects of the evacuation of Candahar sketched out, with a free hand by the latter:

> The peremptory order to retire has come upon us like a thunder-clap. No one at Candahar is aware of such an order having been received, except the General and myself, and we must preserve a profound secrecy as long as possible. The withdrawal of the garrison from Kelat-i-Ghilzye and the destruction of the fortifications at that place must, I fancy, however, expose our policy, and our situation will then be one of considerable embarrassment.
>
> General Nott intends, I believe, to order all the carriage at Quettah to be sent on to Candahar. A regiment is to escort the camels laden with grain to Killah Abdoolah, where the troops will remain in charge of the depôt, and from whence a regiment or two regiments detached from this will bring on the camels empty to Candahar. It must be our object to collect carriage, on the pretext of an advance on Caubul; but how long the secret can be kept, it is impossible to say. When our intended retirement is once known, we must expect to have the whole [204] country up in arms, and to obtain no cattle except such as we can violently lay hands on.
>
> If the worst comes to the worst, we must abandon all baggage and stores, and be content to march with sufficient food to convey us to Quettah, for which I believe the carriage now available will suffice.
>
> It will be quite impossible to destroy the works of Candahar, as directed in the government letter: the worst that can be done is to blow up the gateways. I have hardly yet had time to reflect fully upon the effects, immediate and prospective, of our abrupt departure. There is no man at present on whom I can cast my eyes in all Candahar as likely to succeed to power. Sufder Jung will be a mere puppet of course, and will be liable to deposition at any moment. Should the Barukzyes triumph at Caubul, and should we no longer oppose the return of Kohundil, he will be the most likely chief to succeed; but the natural consequence of his return, and of our determined non-interference with the affairs in this quarter, will be of course to render Persian influence paramount at Herat and Candahar; and, with the prospect of a Russian fleet at Astrabad and a Persian army at Merve, it is by no means impossible that the designs which threatened us in 1838 may at last be directly accomplished. Strong measures of intimidation, both against Russia and Persia, will be our best protection.[168]

But, however great may have been the mortification which Nott and Rawlinson were now condemned to experience, the orders of the Supreme Government were so explicit, that the General believed it to be his duty at once to begin to carry them into effect. A brigade had already been equipped for the relief of Khelat-i-Ghilzye and the rescue of the Ghuznee prisoners. It was now despatched, on the 19th of May, to bring off the garrison, and to destroy the works of [205] the former place. Colonel Wymer commanded the force. It consisted of those three noble Sepoy regiments with which he had before done such good service;[169] her Majesty’s 40th Regiment, Leslie’s troop of Horse Artillery, four guns of Blood’s battery, the Bombay cavalry details, and the Shah’s 1st Regiment of Horse. Some troopers of Haldane’s cavalry, some details of Bengal artillery, and of the Madras sappers, completed the components of the force.

Thus, in the later weeks of May, Pollock was holding his post at Jellalabad, eager to receive authority to march upon Caubul, and rejoicing in the pretext of a scarcity of carriage for delaying the withdrawal of his force; Nott, eager, too, for a forward movement, but unable to perceive in the instructions of government the least indication of an intention to place any discretionary power in his hands, was taking measures to secure, with all promptitude, the accomplishment of their wishes; and the Governor-General, from Allahabad, was writing strong letters to the Generals, impressing upon them the necessity of maintaining a discreet silence regarding the intentions of government and the future movements of the troops.

There was nothing, in truth, more desirable than this. The intentions of the Governor-General were of such a character as to render these revelations, in the existing state of things, dangerous, if not fatal, to the interests of Great Britain in the countries beyond the Indus. But official secrets are not easily kept in a country where so many copies of every public letter are forwarded to different authorities, in distant parts of the country; where so many clerks are employed to copy, and so many staff-officers allowed to read them. Before the end of May it was known, not only in General [206]
Pollock's camp, but in all the cantonments of India, that the armies were to be withdrawn. The secret had welled out from the bureau of the Commander-in-Chief; and bets were made at the mess-tables of Jellalabad regarding the probable date of the withdrawal of the troops. No man knew better than Pollock the danger of such revelations,[170] and he did his best to counteract the evil tendency of the reports which were now the common gossip of his camp, and were soon likely to be current in all the Afghan bazaars. "I have taken steps," he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, "to prevent any great mischief resulting, by ordering the deputy-quarter-master-general a few miles in advance, to mark out a new encamping ground; and I shall have such inquiries made among the natives about bringing supplies there, that will make them believe that I shall move forward."

And Pollock still hoped that something might arise to wring from the Governor-General an order to march upon the Afghan capital. But the letters he received from Lord Ellenborough and Sir Jasper Nicolls were calculated not only to discourage but to embarrass him. There was no possibility of misunderstanding the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief; but the Governor-General, whilst imperatively directing the speediest possible withdrawal of Pollock's army, was every now and then throwing out a hint that a forward movement for the chastisement of the Afghans would not be ungrateful to him. [207]
And whilst the Governor-General was obviously intending to place some discretionary power in the General's hands, the Commander-in-Chief was writing to assure him that the orders of the Supreme Government all tended towards an immediate and unconditional withdrawal.

The letter of the 13th of May elicited no answer; but a letter written a week afterwards,[171] in which Pollock pointed out the evils and difficulties of an immediate withdrawal to Peshawur, found the Governor-General in one of his more forward and chivalrous moods. Pollock, in this letter of the 20th of May, had said: "I shall be glad if any letter from government may authorise my remaining till October or November;" and now, on the 1st of June, the Governor-General, through the Chief Secretary, replied: "It would be desirable, undoubtedly, that before finally quitting Afghanistan, you should have an opportunity of striking a blow at the enemy; and since circumstances seem to compel you to remain there till October, the Governor-General earnestly hopes that you may be enabled to draw the enemy into a position in which you may strike such a blow effectually." And again, in the same letter: "It will be for your consideration whether your large army, one half of which would beat, in open field, everything that could be brought against it in Afghanistan, should remain entirely inactive during the period which must now apparently elapse before it can finally retire. Although you may not have, or soon be able to procure the means of [208]
moving your whole army, you may possibly be able to move a part of it rapidly against some portion of the enemy's force incautiously exposed, and of giving it a severe blow." This was, at all events, something gained. And the gain was a sudden one. Only three days before, the Governor-General, in a letter to Pollock, had resented the presumption of Mr. Clerk in drawing from a former letter an

inference in favour of the continued occupation of Jellalabad, in the event of negotiations being on foot for the release of the prisoners, and had expressed a strong opinion that no negotiations had yet been entered upon of a nature to impede the backward movement of the force. The letter of the 1st of June was, therefore, doubly welcome. Pollock had now received a constructive permission to remain at Jellalabad until October;[172] and, as every effort was to be made in the interval to collect carriage-cattle in the provinces of Hindostan, ostensibly for the purpose of his withdrawal from Afghanistan, he determined to lose no opportunity of turning those means of withdrawal to the best possible account. If there were carriage to enable him to fall back upon Peshawur, there would be carriage to enable him to advance upon Caubul, for the mistake of hiring cattle, with local limitations affixed to the engagements, was not to be perpetuated. So General Pollock looked forward with confidence to the coming autumn, as to a time when a vigorous and decisive blow might be struck at the nation which had humbled the [209] pride and defiled the honour of the conquerors of Hindostan.

Patiently, therefore, biding his time, Pollock turned the halt at Jellalabad to the best possible account, by endeavouring to obtain by negotiation the ransom of the British prisoners. What those negotiations were, and what was their result, should be stated in this place. It was on the evening of the 25th of April that some excitement was created in Pollock's camp at Jellalabad, by rumours, presently confirmed, of the arrival of Captain Colin Mackenzie, one of the prisoners in the hands of Akbar Khan, with a letter from Major Pottinger, and overtures from the Sirdar. Pottinger's letter briefly shadowed forth the terms on which Akbar Khan and his Ghilzye confederates were prepared to release the prisoners—but the language employed was rather that of inquiry than dictation. "The Sirdar," wrote Pottinger, "wishes to know, in the first place, if we will consent to withdraw the greater part of our troops, and leave an agent with a small body of men to act with whomever the confederates may elect as chief, in which case they propose to be guided by the wishes of the two factions in Caubul, and wish us to release Dost Mahomed Khan. *Secondly*—They propose, that if the British Government have determined on subjecting the country and continuing the war, that the prisoners at present in Afghanistan shall be exchanged for Dost Mahomed Khan, his family and attendants, and that the issue be dependent on the sword. *Thirdly*—In the event of neither of these propositions being approved of, they wish to know what terms will be granted to themselves individually; whether we, in the event of their submission, will confine them, send them to India, take hostages from them, reduce their pay, or, in short, what they have to expect from our clemency."[173]

To this General Pollock replied, that "kindness and good [210] treatment of our prisoners would meet with due consideration at the hands of the British Government, and the release of them much more so; that if money were a consideration, he was prepared to pay into the hands of any one the Sirdar might depute to receive it the sum of two lakhs of rupees, whenever the prisoners might be delivered into his hands;" and that Mahomed Shah Khan and his brothers would be "suffered to enjoy the advantages arising from their hereditary dominions."[174]

With this letter Mackenzie left Jellalabad on the evening of the 28th of April. He had been instructed by the Sirdar to ascertain, if possible, from General Pollock whether there was any chance of the British Government admitting him to terms, on his own account, if he would detach himself from the national cause, and exert his influence to advance our interests in Afghanistan. But upon this [211] Pollock could express no definite opinion. "His position," wrote the General to the Supreme Government, "is evidently different from the others. That he was the murderer of the Envoy there cannot be a question, and he evidently feels his guilt to be an insuperable bar to any terms from us; but he also feels that he has possession of the persons of our countrymen, and that circumstance seems to hold out to him a hope that his proffers of submission will meet with a favourable reception."[175]

The reply of General Pollock to the overtures of Akbar Khan disappointed the Sirdar; and Captain Mackenzie was again despatched to Jellalabad. This time he was the bearer of a string of proposals far more extravagant than those which had been conveyed by him on his first mission. The requests of the Barukzye

chief, as set forth in Pottinger's letter to the General, were—

> 1stly. That a written promise of amnesty be given to himself, Mohamed Shah Khan, and the latter's family, for all past acts up to the date of delivery. 2ndly. That neither he nor any of the above-mentioned family shall be sent out of the Caubul and Jellalabad districts against their wishes. 3rdly. That they may not be obliged to pay their respects to you in our camp till they be assured against any danger. 4thly. If we merely intend to revenge ourselves on the enemy, and then leave the country, he trusts its government will be conferred on him. 5thly. He wants a jaghire to support his family, and he names two lakhs as adequate. 6thly. He wants eight lakhs of rupees as a present to start him with. (His great fear, as it is of all Afghans, is of [212] being removed from his country.) He also asks for his own women, who are in his father's *harem-serai*. They have asked for the money, if it is paid, to be given to Sir-Bolund Khan, who will remain as a hostage till the prisoners are delivered, or that you pay it to Hindoos, who can empower their agents in Caubul to pay it on delivery of the prisoners.[176]

To these proposals Pollock replied:

> With regard to the first, it follows as a matter of course that, whenever we agree to any terms, amnesty for the past will result.
>
> The second request, about residing at Caubul and Jellalabad, is out of place now; it must depend upon contingencies, and be discussed only after other and more important points have been agreed upon.
>
> With reference to the third request, the Sirdar Mahomed Akbar may be assured that I would guarantee his personal safety whenever he may visit my camp; but his doing so would require some preliminary arrangement, unless he voluntarily claims our protection, in which case I could immediately arrange for his safety, and appeal to the government on his behalf.
>
> The fourth request refers to matters entirely depending on future results, and which are known to God alone. It would therefore be vain to speculate on them at this stage of our negotiation.
>
> With regard to the fifth and sixth requests, I have already told you that I suppose the Sirdar rests his claim to any present on his delivering up the prisoners, which, as I have before stated, will be the best evidence of good faith, and a sincere wish for favourable terms with the British Government. I have accordingly already mentioned the sum of two lakhs of rupees. The Sirdar Mahomed Akbar must recollect that he is desirous of obtaining the females of his own family. The British Government will not require any money to be paid on their [213] account; and I hereby guarantee that, on all the prisoners being delivered over to me, I will write to India for the women of the Sirdar Mahomed Akbar, and I have no doubt that my request will be complied with.
>
> As to the payment of the money for the prisoners now with, or in the power of Mahomet Akbar, it shall be made to any person the Sirdar may appoint to receive it, or it shall be paid to Hindoos who can give bills on Caubul. The good faith and honour of the British nation is not doubted, and I therefore hereby pledge myself to pay the two lakhs of rupees on account of government whenever the prisoners are made over to me.[177]

Mackenzie took his departure with these replies. There was stirring work, at this time, for Akbar Khan at Caubul; and the [214] negotiations had no result. But the visits of the British officer to Jellalabad had not been without their uses. Mackenzie had been the bearer of much information of the deepest interest, and had placed many valuable documents in the hands of General Pollock. The General had laid before him a string of questions relative to the causes and progress of the insurrection at Caubul, the answers to which, in the existing state of information even in the best-informed quarters, threw a flood of light upon many dark points of recent history. And whilst in official places many important revelations were made, all through the general camp there transpired, in time, from the same source, much that was eagerly sought, eagerly discussed when found, and eagerly transmitted to every cantonment in India, where the fate of the captives in the hands of Akbar Khan was a matter of the liveliest concernment, and a source of the most painful alarm.[178]

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# CHAPTER III.

## [January-April: 1842.]

The Captivity—Surrender of the Married Families—Their Journey to Tezeen—Proceed to Tugree—Interviews between Pottinger and Akbar Khan—Removal to Budeeabad—Prison Life—Removal to Zanda—Death of General Elphinstone.

FEW were the letters which Mackenzie brought from his fellow-captives to their friends at Jellalabad. There may have been state reasons for the secrecy which enveloped his movements; but to all parties the disappointment was great. Every one at Jellalabad was eager for intelligence regarding the incidents which had befallen the little band of prisoners, and for particulars of all the daily environments of their captive state. All through the camp ran eager inquiries; and little by little the much-coveted information began to radiate from the General's tent, and to diffuse itself in more remote quarters. What was then told in mere outline may here be given more in detail.

It was on the 9th of January that the married families were made over to the protection of Mahomed Akbar Khan. The following day was spent by them in a small fort, where they found Pottinger, Lawrence, and Mackenzie, who had been surrendered as hostages at Boot-Khak. Rude as was the accommodation, and untempting as was the fare, that were here offered them, after the miseries and privations of the retreat through the snowy passes, the "small dark hovels" in which they were crowded together were a very palace, [216] and the "greasy palao" in which they dipped their fingers was regal fare. They slept that night on the bare ground—but there was a roof between them and the open sky; and they thought little of the smoke, which almost suffocated them, whilst in the enjoyment of the reviving warmth of a wood fire.[179]

On the morning of the 11th, through scenes of unexampled horror, the party of captives were conducted to the Tezeen fort. The road was strewn with the stark bodies of the mangled dead. Here and there little groups of wretched camp-followers, starving, frost-bitten, many of them in a state of gibbering idiocy, were to be seen cowering in the snow; or solitary men, perhaps wounded and naked, were creeping out of their hiding-places, in an extremity of mortal suffering and fear. The sickening smell of death rose from the bloody corpses through which our English ladies guided their horses, striving not to tread upon the bodies, or in their camel-panniers jolted and stumbled over the obstructing carrion. Happy were they all, when, about the hour of evening prayer, that dreadful journey was at an end, and the fort of Tezeen appeared in sight. There they were hospitably received—and there another captive was added to their number. Lieutenant Melville, of the 54th Native Infantry, who had been wounded on the retreat, and whose wounds had been bound up by the hand of Akbar Khan himself, was waiting their arrival in the fort.

On the following day they were carried to Seh-Baba; and the [217] same dreadful scenes of carnage sickened them as they went along. On the march another prisoner, and a welcome one, was added to the party—one whom the sick and wounded had much wanted—a medical officer, Dr. Macgrath. On the 13th, partly over remote mountain paths, so precipitous that the camels could scarcely keep their footing, and partly along the bloody track of our slaughtered army, the captive band were escorted to Jugdulluck. Here three ragged tents had been pitched for their reception. Here they found General Elphinstone, Brigadier Shelton, and Captain Johnson, who had been claimed as hostages by Akbar Khan; and here they learnt that all the soldiers and camp-followers who had left Caubul, with the exception of this little handful of prisoners, had, in all probability, been annihilated on the march.

Next morning they resumed their journey—the General, the Brigadier, and Captain Johnson, accompanied by Akbar Khan, bringing up the rear. A more rugged and difficult road had seldom been travelled over. The ascents and descents were seemingly impracticable; it made the travellers giddy to look at them. The road was "one continuation of rocks and stones, over which the camels with the greatest difficulty scrambled" with their burdens.[180] At night they bivouacked on the banks of the Punshuhur river. There [218]

were no tents, no shelter of any kind for the ladies. So they rolled themselves up in their warmest garments, laid their heads upon their saddles, and composed themselves, as best they could, to sleep.

Early in the morning of the 15th of January, they crossed the deep and rapid fords of the Punshuhur river. The passage was not accomplished without difficulty and danger; but the active kindness of the Afghan Sirdars availed to escort the party over in safety.[181] A bitterly cold wind was blowing as they passed; and a few followers [219] and cattle were lost. Proceeding then in a north-easterly direction, they made their way over a barren, inhospitable country, where neither grass nor water was to be seen, into the fertile valley of Lughman; and halted in the vicinity of the Tugree fort. The following day was the Sabbath. A day's halt had been determined upon; and it fell, by a happy accident, on the Christian's day of rest. A Bible and Prayer-book had been "picked up on the field at Boot-Khak;" and the service of the Church of England was read to the little band of prisoners. It is easy to imagine with what deep emotion they must have joined in the prayer beseeching the Almighty to have mercy "upon all prisoners and captives."

On the morning of the 17th, they were again upon the move.[182] Tugree is only thirty miles distant from Jellalabad; and up to this [220] time a faint hope had been encouraged by the captives that they were to be escorted to that place. But now an order came for them "to prepare for a march higher up the valley," and in a different direction. It was now found that their destination was the fort of Budeeabad. This was to be their resting-place. It had been recently erected; and was the property of Mahomed Shah Khan, the father-in-law of the Sirdar. Five rooms, composing two sides of an inner square, or citadel, were allotted to the British prisoners. The buildings were "intended for the chief and his favourite wife,"[183] and it may therefore be presumed that they afforded the best accommodation in the place. The party consisted of nine ladies, twenty gentlemen, and fourteen children. Seventeen European soldiers, two European women, and a child, were located in another part of the fort.

On that night of the 17th of January, Pottinger and Akbar Khan were in close and earnest conversation. The Sirdar entered on the subject of his father's release; and asked the English officer if he would guarantee an interchange of prisoners and the evacuation of Jellalabad. Pottinger could only answer that he was a prisoner and powerless; and could give no promises with any certainty of their being performed. But he undertook to write to Macgregor on the subject; and to urge him to lay the wishes of the Sirdar before the Supreme Government.[184] It appeared to Pottinger that no more [221] expedient course could be adopted than that involving a general interchange of prisoners and the restoration of the country to Dost Mahomed Khan.

Ostensibly for the purpose of proceeding southward for the reduction of Jellalabad, Akbar Khan took his departure on the following day; and the captives began to settle down into the monotony of prison-life. In this place they continued to reside for nearly three months. The incidents of captivity, during this period, were not many, or very memorable. Here for the first time, after the lapse of a fortnight, they were able to change their clothes.[185] Clean linen was very scarce; and the nice sensibilities of delicate English ladies were outraged by the appearance of nauseous vermin. The food that was served out to them was not of the most luxurious description. It consisted of rice, mutton, and thick cakes of unleavened dough, prepared by the Afghan cooks in a manner little relished by English palates.[186] Captain Lawrence acted as the steward of the captive party, and divided the supplies, whether they were the daily food of the prisoners, or parcels of clothes, money, [222] [187] and other equally acceptable presents sent them either by their Afghan captors or their friends at Jellalabad.

There was nothing very painful in the outward circumstances of their captivity, except the unmitigated dirt, which the cleanly habits of the English in India must have rendered peculiarly offensive. They were not suffered to wander far from their prison-house; but within its walls they found both occupation and amusement, and the time passed at Budeeabad is not now, in the retrospect, the saddest of their lives. They had among them a few books; some had been

brought for sale by natives of the country, who had picked them up on the road traversed by the army on its retreat; others had been forwarded by friends at Jellalabad. Now and then a stray newspaper came in from that place. It is hard to say how greedily its contents were devoured, and how eagerly they were discussed. Sometimes letters were received from below; there was a good deal of cypher correspondence between the prisoners and Sale's garrison,[188] and many long letters were written to friends in India or in England, to [223] be despatched when opportunity might offer. Then there were amongst them two or three packs of old playing cards—dirty and limp, but not the less serviceable for these conventional defects. Some rude backgammon and draft boards had been constructed for prison service; and there was quite enough elasticity of spirits left among the captives to render them not disinclined for more active and boisterous sports. They played at "hop-scotch;" they played at "blind-man's buff." A favourite game among them was the latter; and when some ten or fifteen healthy and cheerful little boys and girls joined in the sport, the mirth ran fast and furious. A Christmas party in old England seldom sees madder gambols than these—seldom has the heart's laughter risen more freely from a band of merrier children than those who romped with their elders in prison at Budeeabad. But from those elders were seldom absent the memory of the harrowing past, painful apprehensions regarding the future, and, above all, a depressing sense of the national humiliation.

The Sabbaths were always kept holy. Every Sunday saw the little party of Christian prisoners assembled for the worship of their God. Sometimes in the open air, sometimes in tents, in huts, or any other place available for the purpose, Sunday after Sunday, the Church Service was read to as devout a band of worshippers as ever assembled to render thanks to the Almighty, and to implore the continuance of His mercies. Nor were these observances lost upon their guards. Wild and savage as were their keepers, they seemed to respect the Christians' day of rest. There was more decorum in their demeanour, more courtesy in their manner, than on the working-days of the week. An atmosphere of peace and rest seemed to envelop them on that sacred day. Some, who had saved little else, had saved their Bibles, and every evening little knots of captives [224] might have been heard in their cells, lifting up the voice of prayer, and reading to one another God's blessed promises to the heavy-laden and the afflicted.

On the 23rd of January, Akbar Khan, accompanied by Sooltan Jan, returned to Budeeabad. The object of his visit was to induce Pottinger to write to Macgregor at Jellalabad, stating the terms on which the Sirdar was willing to treat with the British for the release of the prisoners. The letter was duly written;[189] but Pottinger repeated that he had no hope of the surrender of Jellalabad; and added that he advised the Sirdar not to attack it lest a war should be commenced of which it was difficult to see the end. Pottinger believed that the Sirdar was sincere in his expressions of a desire to establish friendly relations with the British. "But," he added, "he has been brought up in the midst of treachery, and does not know how to trust; and I regret that our own conduct in this country has put our government's faith on a par with themselves. Our defeat, though sufficiently galling to a soldier, really loses its sting when the taunts of our broken promises, which we know to be true, are thrown in our teeth by men who know the truth only by name."[190]

About the middle of the month of February the captive party was increased by the arrival of Major Griffiths and Captain Souter; and a few days afterwards, the same terrific earthquake which had shaken down the ramparts of Jellalabad made the walls of their prison-house reel and totter, and levelled a portion of the fort with the dust. For many days lesser shocks of earthquake kept the people in a continued state of alarm. The prisoners slept in the open court-yard, which was filled with their beds; and all kinds of rude awnings were thrown up to secure a little privacy. The cold was intense, and [225] the heavy dews saturated the bedding like rain. No lives were sacrificed within the fort by this great convulsion of nature; but narrow was the escape of Lady Sale, Brigadier Shelton, Captain Mackenzie, Mr. Eyre, and General Elphinstone. The first four were on the house-top when the shock commenced; and had scarcely time to secure a footing on a safer spot when the roof fell in with a crash. The poor old General was bed-ridden. His sufferings had been every

day increasing. He had been wounded on the retreat. His constitutional infirmities had been aggravated both by the external hardships to which he had been subjected, and the corroding anxieties which had preyed upon his mind. It was plain to all that his end was approaching. But he bore his accumulated sufferings with heroic fortitude; and the warmest sympathies of his fellow-captives were with him. Unable to bestir himself, when the walls of the fort were shaken by the earthquake, he was for a little time in imminent peril; but a soldier of the 44th, named Moore, who had acted as the General's personal attendant, rushed into the room and carried off the attenuated old man in his arms. "The poor General," says Eyre, who records this incident, "was greatly beloved by the soldiery, of whom there were few who would not have acted in a similar manner to save his life."

The month of March passed quietly over the heads of the captives. There was little to mark the monotony of prison-life. Good and bad tidings came in by turns. All sorts of rumours were in circulation, and all were volubly discussed. About the middle of the month, the Nazir, or steward, in charge of the prisoners, announced that Mahomed Shah Khan was willing to release them all for two lakhs of rupees. The proposition was made to Captain Johnson, who convened a meeting of the gentlemen. The offer was a tempting one, and it might have been accepted; but Pottinger protested against it. [226]
He was unwilling to aid the enemy with money without the express sanction of his Government. So the question was referred to Captain Macgregor; and in the mean while the perils which beset their position began to thicken around them. Akbar Khan about this time was wounded by the accidental discharge of a matchlock in the hands of one of his attendants; and it was generally believed throughout the country that Macgregor had bribed the man to assassinate the Sirdar. Had the wound proved mortal, there was at least a possibility of all the prisoners being massacred in revenge.

April came;[191] and at the end of the first week arrived the glorious tidings of Sale's victory over Akbar Khan on the plain of Jellalabad. Somewhat confusedly was the story told at first. It was said that the Sirdar had been killed in the action; and that Mahomed Shah Khan had also fallen. It was a day of intense excitement—of painful speculation and suspense. Some thought that Sale would push on to their rescue—others, that the Sirdar, if alive, would [227]
condemn them to death in revenge for his discomfiture; or that, if he had fallen, they would be massacred by their guards.[192] Another day—and another of doubt and anxiety followed. The captives watched, with deep and fearful interest, the deportment of their keepers, who were seen grouping together and conversing in low mysterious whispers. "A frightful stillness appeared to prevail."[193]
Then came terrible rumours to the effect that the captives were to [228]
be massacred at sunset. They had been disarmed; they had neither swords nor pistols—no means of resistance were within their reach. They could only submit to be slaughtered like sheep in the shambles. But at sunset their fears were dissipated. Mahomed Shah Khan arrived with a large party of followers. He went among the prisoners with frank cordiality—civilly shook hands with them all—and then sate down and entered into conversation with them. It was necessary, he said, that they should be removed from Budeeabad; and that they should commence their march on the following morning. Not a hint fell from him regarding their future destination, and none were inclined to question him. He slept that night in the [229]
fort; and the prisoners began to make preparations for the morrow's march. This was no difficult matter. "All my worldly goods," wrote Captain Johnson, "might be stowed away in a towel."

Morning dawned; and Mahomed Shah Khan busied himself in the work of plunder.[194] There was still some valuable property clinging to the unhappy captives. They who had nothing else had good horses. Lady Macnaghten had jewels and rich shawls. The Ghilzye chief helped himself freely. Then, utterly ignorant of the direction in which they were to proceed, the anxious captives started for their new prison-house. Four camels, with litters, were assigned to the ladies and such of the gentlemen as sickness prevented from mounting the ponies which had been parcelled out amongst them. A guard of fifty Afghans, horse and foot, escorted the little band of prisoners on their mysterious march. The European [230]
soldiers were left behind.

They had not proceeded many miles, when two or three

horsemen galloped up, and the party of captives were suddenly ordered to halt. Tidings had come, it was said, to the effect that Pollock had been beaten back in the Khybur Pass, with the loss of his guns, his treasure, and half his force. Confident of the truth of this atrocious story, the Afghans of the guard broke out into loud exultation, and the English officers, reluctant as they were to believe it, were overborne at last by the confidence of their escort and compelled to credit the distressing news. False as was the report, it was not ineffective. The prisoners were carried back to Budeeabad. With heavy hearts and sad countenances they returned to their old prison-house, thinking of the new disasters which had overtaken their unhappy country. But their hearts were soon re-animated, and their faces soon brightened up, by the news which greeted them at Budeeabad. Pollock had not been beaten back; but had forced the Khybur Pass, and was marching triumphantly upon Jellalabad. Again, therefore, the captive party were ordered to resume their interrupted march; and on the following morning again they started.

Proceeding for about ten miles, “through a bleak and barren country,” they came upon a patch of cultivated ground—which smiled up in the faces of the prisoners like an oasis in the desert. [195] Crossing the river, they overtook Akbar Khan, sitting in a palanquin, his arm in a sling, looking pale, haggard, and dejected, as one whose fortunes were not on the ascendant. They saluted the Sirdar, passed on, and halted at a short distance from him. The bivouac was a comfortless one. Strictly guarded and insufficiently sheltered, they passed the night in dreary discomfort. Rain fell, and [231] under the scanty tents there was not room for the bedding of the captives. The next day was one of equal misery—there was scarcely any food either for man or beast. On the morning of the 13th a distressing rumour was current among them. It was said that the married families were to be carried off in one direction, and the other captives in another. The scarcity was so great—it was so difficult to subsist them all on one spot—that it was necessary to divide the party. This was not to be submitted to without an effort to obtain the rescision of the obnoxious order. Lawrence went to the Sirdar, and implored him to suffer them all to remain together, and to share the same fate. The Sirdar relented; and they all resumed their march together.

Their route lay over barren hills and through narrow stoney valleys. Every now and then little patches of cultivation sparkled up in the arid waste. There was little or no food to be obtained. A few almonds and raisins, or other dried fruits, sufficed to appease the hunger of the captives, whilst their horses were reduced to skeletons. The heat was intense. The burning sun scorched the faces of the European travellers, and peeled off the white skin. The journey was a long and painful one, up a steep ascent almost along the whole line of march. The prisoners knew not whither they were going; and it seemed that Akbar Khan did not know where to take them. Some of the captives were suffering severely. The bad roads and the vicissitudes of the climate, for heavy rains followed the parching sun, tried them as in a furnace. General Elphinstone was dying. Lady Macnaghten and Lady Sale were sick. When Akbar Khan was made aware of the latter fact, he took compassion on the English ladies. He was still weak, and suffering from the effects of his wound; but he gave up the palanquin, or litter in which he had [232] been carried, for their use; and rode on horseback to the end of the march.

This was on the 19th of April. On the evening of that day the prisoners reached Tezeen, and were conducted to a fort belonging to a petty Ghilzye chief, in which were all the wives and women of Mahomed Shah Khan. There they remained, poorly accommodated and scantily fed, until the 22nd,[196] when, with the exception of General Elphinstone and two or three other invalids, they were all carried off in the direction of the hills, up a gradual ascent of many thousands of feet, to a place called Zanda. There they halted for some weeks, and in the mean while Captain Mackenzie was despatched in disguise to Pollock’s camp at Jellalabad; and General Elphinstone died.

By his fellow-captives his dissolution had long been anticipated, and was now hardly deplored. Death brought him a merciful release from an accumulation of mortal sufferings. Incessant pain of body and anguish of mind had long been his portion. He felt acutely the

humiliating position into which it had pleased Providence to cast him, and neither hoped nor wished to live to face his countrymen in the cantonments of Hindostan, or in the streets of that great western metropolis which he ought never to have quitted. They who watched beside the poor old man, during the painful close of his life, bear testimony, in touching language, to the Christian fortitude with which he bore his sufferings, and the Christian charity with which he spoke of others, under all the burdens which pressed upon him. The hardships to which he had been subjected on the march from [233] one prison-house to another had, perhaps, accelerated the crisis which was hanging over him; but he had long been passing away to his rest, and they, who loved him most, scarcely desired to arrest the progress of the maladies which were so surely destroying him. He left on record a statement of all the circumstances of our disasters—a statement which I have freely quoted in a preceding part of my narrative—but even with this statement in his hand, he could not have faced his countrymen without bringing down upon himself a verdict of condemnation. After all that has been written of his deficiencies at Caubul, it may seem a startling inconsistency to say that he was a brave and high-minded gentleman. He was so esteemed before, in an evil hour for his own and his country's reputation, he was ordered to carry his infirmities across the Indus; and in spite of all the humiliating circumstances of our discomfiture at Caubul, posterity may so esteem him. Not upon him, but upon those who are responsible for his appointment to high military command at such a time and in such a place—first, upon those who sent him to India; secondly, and chiefly, upon those who sent him to Afghanistan—must we fix the shame of this great miscarriage. When he consented to leave the quiet enjoyment of an honoured old age at home, to carry his good fame and his broken constitution to a distant Indian Presidency, he committed a fatal error, for which he made terrible atonement. But there are few who will not pity rather than condemn the man, who found himself suddenly, with all his weakness upon him, in a sea of difficulty which demanded almost superhuman strength to buffet through it. In these pages he has appeared only as the military leader—as one who, in the hour of danger, was tried and found wanting. His fine social qualities cannot be accepted as a set-off to his military deficiencies. It is not to be [234] pleaded in answer to the charge of having sacrificed an army at Caubul, that he was an agreeable gentleman in private life, that he was always ready with an anecdote and told it well, and that it was very hard not to love him. But now that it has been recorded how the soldier became the captive, and how the captive passed away to his rest, these things may be set down with a kindly hand upon the last page which bears his name; and it may be permitted to us, for a little space, to forget the deficiencies of the soldier whilst we sympathise with the sufferings of the man.[197]

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# CHAPTER IV.

## [December: 1841-June: 1842.]

Stoddart and Conolly—Intelligence of the Caubul Outbreak—Arrest of the English Officers—Their sufferings in Prison—Conolly's Letters and Journals—Death of the Prisoners.

THERE is a painful episode in this epic of the Afghan war, which perhaps can be introduced in no place more fitly than in this. Whilst the prisoners, who surrendered themselves on the march between Caubul and Jellalabad, were suffering such hardships only as were inseparable from their position in a rude and inhospitable country, and the hostages at Caubul were under the protection of a benevolent and high-minded Afghan nobleman, two enlightened and chivalrous British officers were enduring unparalleled sufferings in the dungeons of an Oosbeg tyrant, far beyond the snowy mountains of the Hindoo-Koosh. Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were being devoured by vermin in a cheerless prison in the city of Bokhara.

It has been shown that in the autumn of 1840, Arthur Conolly had started from Caubul, ostensibly on a mission to Khiva and Kokund. He had subsequently, on the invitation of the Ameer, and with the implied permission, if not under the direct instructions of the Caubul envoy, proceeded to Bokhara, where Colonel Stoddart was still detained, but outwardly in a more honourable and less painful [236] state of captivity than that which he had been condemned to endure during a part of the preceding years.[198] [237] It was in the summer of 1841[199] that this invitation was forwarded to Conolly, then at Kokund; but that state was then at war with Bokhara, and its rulers hesitated to allow the departure of her Christian guest. After some delay, however, Conolly received his passports, and, proceeding by a circuitous route, reached Bokhara in the month of November. The crisis was an unfortunate one. Conolly was from the first regarded with suspicion. The Ameer believed, or affected to believe, that he had instigated the states of Kokund and Khiva to war against him. But other circumstances of a still more inauspicious character were gathering around the ill-fated Englishmen.

It was in the middle of the month of December, 1841, that intelligence reached Bokhara to the effect that all Caubul and the surrounding country had risen against Shah Soojah and his Feringhee allies, that Sir Alexander Burnes had been killed, and the British troops beaten in battle. A few days before, an answer had been received to a letter addressed by the Ameer to the Queen of England. The answer was written by the Foreign Secretary, and it referred the King to the Government of India. This indignity—for so he regarded it—was still rankling in his mind, when tidings of the [238] Caubul outbreak reached Bokhara. The Ameer now sent for the English officers; asked them many questions; said that he would release Colonel Stoddart, but detain Captain Conolly; and finally, after pondering the matter for a few days, condemned them both to imprisonment in the house of the Topshee-Bashee, or chief artilleryman of Bokhara.[200]

Here their condition became every day more deplorable. They were not allowed a change of raiment, and the clothes rotted on their backs. Nauseous vermin preyed upon their bodies, and they tore the irritated flesh with their nails. They were not denied either a sufficiency of food or firing; but water leaked through the roof of the miserable room in which they were confined. Ague and fever racked them grievously; but they comforted one another with Christian consolation, and they prayed together to the Christians' God.

In this wretched prison-house, though strictly guarded, they were not so closely watched that Conolly could not contrive to spend many an hour chronicling, in small characters upon Russian paper, all the incidents of captive life, and drawing up, for the information of his Government, elaborate memoranda on the politics of Central [239] Asia. In spite of all difficulties of transmission, many of these notes and memoranda found their way from Bokhara to Caubul; and, surviving all the chances of destruction to which the convulsed state of Afghanistan necessarily exposed them, were conveyed in safety to the British camp, and are now lying before me.[201] In no way could

the sufferings which the Bokhara captives endured be set forth so truthfully as in extracts from such of Conolly's letters and journals as have fortunately been preserved.

The English officers must have been thrown into prison about the 17th of December. At the end of that month, or on the first day of the new year, Allahdad Khan, the Caubul envoy, was brought in to share their captivity.[202] "The Topshee-Bashee, on leaving Allahdad Khan with us," wrote Conolly in his journal, "made over to me a superfluous *posteen*[203] belonging to my friend, which enabled me to throw aside the stinking garment given by the Meer Shub (Master of the Police); this and his allowing Allahdad Khan to keep the rest of his clothes, looked as if the Ameer had somewhat relented, as the Topshee-Bashee would not have dared to show us so much kindness without leave." But these hopes were delusive. The Ameer had not relented. Day after day passed, and their sufferings increased.

All through the month of January little change took place in the [240] condition of the captives. On the last day of the month, wrote Conolly, "a Mehrum came to desire that we would minutely describe the city and castle of Caubul, and also give an account of Heraut. Allahdad Khan drew a plan of the first place; Stoddart was named as the one who best knew the second; but the Mehrum did not take his account of it. We next day learnt that he had been sent to the Akhondzadeh,[204] who had drawn a large plan of his native city." As February wore on, other encouraging signs of the Ameer's desire to treat the prisoners with greater kindness presented themselves. On the 9th of February another gleam of hope burst in upon them. The incident is thus touchingly described in Conolly's journal:

> *February 9 [1842].*—Moolla Nasir came to ask if we had seen the Peacock throne of India. As every lettered Asiatic should know that Nadir Shah carried that throne away to Persia, and Moolla Nasir's manner was pointedly kind, we judged that the question he had been sent to ask was a pretence, and that the Ameer desired an opening for a return to proper treatment of us. Stoddart, therefore, gave him this, by speaking of his position here as British agent, and expressing regret that he had not been able to relieve the Huzrut's mind from the doubts which he seemed to entertain of the English Government's friendship. We showed the sad state of our clothes (Stoddart had been obliged to put aside his shirt in consequence of the roof's having leaked over him the night before), and expressed hope that the Ameer would soon improve our condition; but we both spoke cheerfully, that the King might not think we entertained resentment for his treatment of us.[205]

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All the symptoms of a favourable change in the state of the Ameer's feelings proved delusive. Day after day passed, and the prisoners still remained in the same unhappy condition; at last, at the end of February, Conolly wrote:

> We hoped from Moolla Nasir's visit, and that of the page, who brought my thermometer, that the Ameer was relenting, but nothing has since occurred to favour this idea; on the contrary, the chief would appear to find pleasure in his servant's accounts of our discomfort, which may be imagined from the fact that we have now been seventy-one days and nights without means of changing or washing our linen, which is hanging in filthy tatters from our persons. The Topshee-Bashee, who looks in upon us every seven or eight days, replies to our entreaties for an improvement in this respect, that our state must be well known to the Huzrut, whose mind retains thought of the greatest and least matters, and that nothing can be said to his Majesty about us till he opens the subject. The Topshee-Bashee, has, I believe, been as kind to us as he has dared to be. We have had quite enough firing and food throughout the cold season we have passed in his house, and continue, thank God! in good health. We sometimes think, from the Ameer's keeping back Said's and the Akhondzadeh's packets, that he must have received the Governor-General's communication, and that he is acting big in irritation at not having been answered from the English throne; but it is impossible to form certain conclusions from his conduct, for it is very often influenced by [242] caprice, which is not very far from madness. We hope that all is well in Afghanistan, and that, soon as the Hindoo-Koosh roads become open, the Ameer will receive some communication which will induce him to properly treat or dismiss us. We beg that government will convey its sentiments to the Ameer in Persian, as he will not take our word for what is written in English any longer than it suits him, and also that no allusion may be made to the above details, for if the King knew that we were able to send intelligence he might treat us worse, and perhaps kill everybody about us. The Russians propose to go

about No-roz. We kept Colonel Boutenoff informed of our proceedings up to the date of our seizure, and if he should reach Europe ere our release, he may be able to enlarge this abstract, which is necessarily very imperfect.

In the second week of March, Conolly's sufferings broke out openly in the shape of cold and fever. Enfeebled and irritated by disease, he then began to despond. It seemed to him that he was in the toils of death; and in a high state of excitement, after many sleepless nights, he wrote to his brother, John Conolly, then also a prisoner in the hands of a Mussulman enemy, the following touching letter:

From our Prison in the Bokhara Citadel,
*11th March, 1842.*

My dear John,

This will probably be my last note hence, so I dedicate it to you, who now, alas! stand next to me. We both dedicate everything we feel warmest to William, whom may God bless in all belonging to him, for his long and untiring brotherly affection to us all! Send my best love to Henry and to all our dear sisters.

This is the eighty-third day that we have been denied the means of getting a change of linen from the rags and vermin that cover us; and yesterday, when we begged for an amendment in this respect, the Topshee-Bashee, who had before come occasionally as our host to speak encouragingly, set his face like a flint to our request, showing that he was merely a vane to the withering wind of his heartless master, and could not help us thus, so that we need not ask him to do so. This, at first, astonished and defeated us; we had viewed the Ameer's conduct as perhaps dictated by mad caprice; but now, looking back upon the whole, we saw instead that it had been just the [243] deliberate malice of a demon, questioning and raising our hopes, and ascertaining our condition, only to see how our hearts were going on in the process of breaking. I did not think to shed one warm tear among such cold-blooded men; but yesterday evening, as I looked upon Stoddart's half-naked and nail-lacerated body, conceiving that I was the special object of the king's hatred because of my having come to him after visiting Khiva and Kokund, and told him that the British Government was too great to stir up secret enmity against any of its enemies, I wept on entreating one of our keepers, the gunner's brother, to have conveyed to the chief my humble request that he would direct his anger upon me, and not further destroy by it my poor brother Stoddart, who had suffered so much and so meekly here for three years. My earnest words were answered by a "Don't cry and distress yourself;" he also could do nothing. So we turned and kissed each other, and prayed together, and then said, in the words of the Kokunders, "*My-bish!*"[206] Let him do as he likes! he is a demon, but God is stronger than the devil himself, and can certainly release us from the hands of this fiend, whose heart he has perhaps hardened to work out great ends by it; and we have risen again from bed with hearts comforted, as if an angel had spoken to them, resolved, please God, to wear our English honesty and dignity to the last, within all the filth and misery that this monster may try to degrade us with.

We hope that, though the Ameer should now dismiss us with gold clothing, the British and Afghan Governments will treat him as an enemy; and this out of no feeling of revenge. He treacherously caused Stoddart to invite me here on his own Imayut-Nameh; and after Stoddart had given him a translation of a letter from Lord Palmerston, containing nothing but friendly assurances, which he could have verified, with our entire consent, at the Russian embassy, he pent us both up here, because we would not pay him as a kidnapper for our release, to die by slow rot, if it should appear that he might venture at last to put us altogether out of the way. We hope and pray that God may forgive him his sins in the next world; but we also trust that some human power will soon put him down from his oppressive throne at this capital, whence emanates the law by which the Khivans harry and desolate the roads and homes of the Persians. He wishes every soul to crouch before him, and not breathe God's air freely without his leave, [244] nor dare to be happy or at ease. For instance (and we are at the fountain-head of police reports), a poor wretch, confined without food for three days and nights in the Bug House, an infernal hole used for severe imprisonment, said incautiously, on being taken out, that he was alive and well. "He is, is he!" said the Ameer, on the report; "then put him in for three days and nights more." Again, the other night, fifty-six grooms assembled at a house outside the city, to make merry on pilau and tea, with money liberally given by one of the Oosbeg men, Rahman Kool Tohsaba, to his head groom, who acted as master of the feast: they were convicted of having got together, so all that the police-master could seize received seventy-five blows each on the back with a heavy thorn-stick; and because one man uncomplainingly bore his punishment, which was inflicted on all before the King, he had him hoisted for seventy-five more, saying, "He must have been

struck softly." "But what was the crime in this innocent meeting of poor grooms?" we asked our gaolers. "Who knows?—he is a king, and gave the order." The master of the entertainment stood with his dagger against some thirty policemen, till he was felled by a stone thrown at his head, to let all who could escape; for this heavier offence he was condemned to be thrown from a part of the citadel wall, which gives a culprit a chance of escape with only the fracture of a limb, because it has a slope: he threatened to pull down with him any who should approach the brink to throw him off, and, leaping boldly down, came to the ground with whole bones, and lives, let us hope, for many a happy meeting yet with his friends in this now oppressed city. This is how the Ameer would treat such ambassadors as he dares insult, who do not bend reverently enough before him; but the days for such despotism are passing quick, and he must himself be made to go down before the strong spirit of Western civilisation. Stoddart has asked me to put on paper my notions as to the measures that should now be adopted for the settlement and independent happiness of the Central Asian states;—here they are, briefly and freely; those of a man born and bred, thank God! in Protestant England, who has seen Russia, Persia, and Afghanistan, and all the three Oosbeg States.

Turn out the horrible Wuzeer Yar Mahomed Khan, who has sold 12,000 men, women, and children, since he obliged the Persians to retire from Herat, and buy out Kamran's family from that principality. Kamran himself forfeited all his kingly right here by his letter to the Khan Huzrut of Khiva, which the latter chief gave me in return for my frank communication to him, and which I sent to Sir William [245]
Macnaghten. Thus will be gained the only point from which the Afghan nation can lend its weight to the preservation of peace and the advancement of civilisation in Toorkistan, protect its weakest subjects from being stolen or sold away, and properly guard its own and India's frontier. Next, let Pottinger come in attendance upon Shah Soojah's heir-apparent, Shah-zadah Timour, with a few thousand select Afghan horsemen of both the tribes, half Douranee and half Ghilzye, to blow down the gate of the citadel, which unjustly imprisoned us, against the rights of all nations, except those the Oosbegs profess. The Ameer scornfully says that the Afghans and English are one people; let him feel that they really are so in a good cause. I really do believe that if Shah-zadah Timour were to return, after such a proceeding, to assume the actual exercise of government at his father's capital, taking back with him all real Afghans now enslaved in Toorkistan, whose orthodoxy, according to the Soonees, is unquestionable, and who might easily be collected for a friendly offering, the Afghans would so thoroughly like him and understand us, that every English and Indian soldier might be withdrawn to Hindostan.

Let the Shah-i-Shah of Persia at the same time write these few words to the Court of the faithful at Bokhara, sending copies of his letter by friendly and high ambassadors to Khiva and Kokund: "I want all my enslaved subjects who are not willing to remain in Bokhara, and I am now coming, in reliance upon the only God of justice, to free them, and to destroy the law of THY Mooftehed, by which people who pray towards the same Kebla are sold as cattle." Let Mahomed Shah lithograph this, and send a copy to be stuck up at every mosque where his authority or influence can reach, in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tartary. This writing will tell the Ameer that his kingdom has been weighed and found wanting; it will do much to soften and liberalise Mahomedan feeling wherever it is read; and if the Persian nation are informed that it comes to them recommended by English sympathy, they will dismiss all irritation of mind that was caused by our checking their military career at Herat.

I feel confident that this great and most necessary measure of Persian emancipation may be effected at once without shedding one drop of blood. I never uttered a word of hostility against the Ameer, either at Khiva or Kokund; but now I am authorised to show how I thought the rulers of these states, who both hate him, may be made to end or lessen their own foolish enmity by his removing from between them. Let the Shah of Persia send a firman to Syud Mahomed Zahed, [246]
Kurruck Kojeh at Kokund, whom he knows, saying—"Tell the Khan Huzrut, of Kokund, who, I am happy to find, does not deal in my people, that I am about to liberate all those oppressed men and women who are unwillingly detained as slaves in Bokhara. I don't want that country; and if you will send Lushker Begglerbegge, or Mahomed Shereff Atalik, with the Kokund army about the same time to Samarcand, my prime minister shall make it over to him by treaty, as the capital of Mawarulneh. I shall give up Merve to the Khan Huzrut of Khiva to be made the capital of Kharasm, on condition of his doing all he can to restore and content my unfortunate people, whom his tribes have carried off during my wars in other directions."

The best Oosbeg troops are mere rubbish as opponents to Persian regulars and cannon, and they all know it. Allah Kouli Khan is the best and most sensible man in his country, and he will remain quiet while Mahomed Shah comes against Bokhara, if Shakespear can be

empowered to tell him that this is a reform which must be effected, and which Persia is determined now to effect, with the commerce of England and Russia. Shakespear can mediate between the Khan Huzrut and Mahomed Shah for the gentle emancipation of those who may wish to return home in the next four or five years, or to settle in the fine waste land of Merve; and perhaps Mahomed Shah may give to Allah Kouli Khan the very large colony of [ ],[207] now settled here, who really yet long for the home of their fathers: this, and securing to him the Kokund frontier up the Oxus to Balkh, perhaps leaving the khan of it his easy tributary, would make him agree to all that the Afghans need for the formation of their frontier from Persian Khorassan to the Oxus.

England and Russia may then agree about immutable frontiers for Persia, Afghanistan, Mawarulneh, and Kharasm, in the spirit which becomes two of the first European nations in the year 1842 of Jesus Christ, the God incarnate of all peace and wisdom. May this pure and peaceable religion be soon extended all over the world!

ARTHUR CONOLLY.

*March 12th.*

I beg that fifty tillas may be given to Jooma Bai, the servant who will convey this to Long Joseph. (Let the utmost caution be used always in mentioning their names while this Ameer lives and reigns.) As for Long Joseph, I don't know what reward to propose for him. He has risked his life for us in the most gallant manner, as few men would, except for a brother, and he is a noble fellow. I feel sure that Government will forgive me for not being able to make an account of my stewardship during my Toorkish mission, and that it will use every exertion to set free and to reward all who have suffered with me, but remained alive. [247]

Allahdad Khan had some 400 tillas in cash when he was brought back, besides his baggage and horses. Akhondzadeh Saleh Mahomed has served too well to make it necessary for me to recommend him. I trust that God has preserved his life. Stoddart and I will comfort each other in every way till we die, when, may our brotherhood be renewed in heaven through Jesus Christ our Saviour! Send this assurance to all our friends, and do you, my dear John, stand in this faith. It is the only thing that can enable a man to bear up against the trials of this life, and lead him to the noblest state of existence in the next. Farewell—farewell! I shall send this to be forwarded, if news reaches Stoddart's faithful man Ibraheem of our death, through Jooma Bai and Long Joseph.[208]

On the 22nd of March, Conolly again wrote, full of affectionate solicitude for the sufferings of his friends, but little mindful of his own:

After sending a page with my thermometer on the 15th ult. (February), to ask how much cold it indicated, as detailed in my last letter, the Ameer took no notice of us till the 13th of this month, when he sent the gold chronometer which I had given him, to show that its chain was broken, and to ask if we could repair it; a pretence, the Topshee-Bashee said, to ascertain what state we were in. We had both become ill a few days before, from a sudden cold change of weather and the discomfort of filthy clothing; and I, who had given in most to the sickness, owing to anxiety of mind regarding the many persons whom I had been the means of bringing into the Ameer's tyrannous hands, was lying weak in bed with fever when the last page came. The Topshee-Bashee, who for some time spoke encouragingly about changing our clothes, had by this time caused us plainly to understand that he neither dared himself to amend our position in this respect, nor even to represent it to the Ameer. He now tried to save us by telling the page that I had been confined to my bed eight days, and by remarking upon the wretched state of our apparel after eighty-five days' and nights' wear. I showed the Mehrum that Stoddart had been obliged to cast away all his under-clothing, and was suffering much from cold on the chest. I experienced hope that the Ameer would take some pity upon us, and especially upon such of my late travelling companions and people as might be suffering under his displeasure. The page said that he would make a representation if the Huzrut questioned him; and he afterwards told the Topshee-Bashee that, on the Ameer's doing so, he had stated that the King's last-come slave, Khan-Ali (Conolly), had been very ill for eight or nine days; to which the Huzrut had replied, "May he not die (or, I suppose, he won't die) for the three or four days that remain till his going." We thought from this that the Ameer proposed to send us away with the Russians, who were said to be preparing to depart after the *No-roz*. Nothing else has since transpired regarding ourselves; but through the indefatigable Long Joseph we have learnt the following items of intelligence about our friends.[209] [248]

On the 13th inst., Ibraheem wrote: "With regard to Caubul be quite

at ease; 30,000 people (rebels?) have been slaughtered there." Allahdad Khan, the Akhonzadeh, Eusoff Khan (Augustin), the Jemadar, Meer Akhor, with Bolund Khan, Kurreem Khan, and Gool Mahomed, had been released; for which we sincerely thanked God. Their sufferings, poor fellows, in that horrible dungeon, must have been great....

On the 23rd, we were made further happy by the verbal intelligence of Long Joseph that Allahdad Khan and the rest of our people had been released.

On the 24th, he again recorded that a ray of hope had broken into his dreary dungeon:

*24th.*—This forenoon, the Topshee-Bashee coming to see us, said, with a cheerful manner, "'Sewonchee'—Reward me for glad tidings. I represented your great want of clothes, and proposed to buy shirts and trousers for you from the bazaar: but the Huzrut said, 'They don't wear bazaar clothes; in three or four days I'll give them dresses of honour and dismiss them.' And the Huzrut asked Meerza Juneid which road would be the best one for you to travel by, saying, 'They cannot now go in that direction' (apparently meaning Caubul). Meerza Juneid replied, that the route by Persia would now be the best. After which the Ameer spoke graciously about you. He said that Khan-Ali was a well-informed person, that the Meerza represented that he had conversed very little with Khan-Ali, but that Stoddart of whom he had seen much, was a man instructed upon all matters." We doubted the Topshee-Bashee's having dared to make a representation of himself regarding us. And the old guardian mentioned afterwards that Meerza Juneid had come to his brother's office. Probably desiring to know whether I was better or worse in health since the 13th, the Ameer sent Meerza Juneid, in his capacity of physician, to make inquiries in this matter. [249]

A few days afterwards, remembering how he had written, under the excitement, almost the delirium of fever, a desponding letter to John Conolly, he wrote more cheerfully to his brother, begging him, if the letter reached its destination, not to be dispirited by it, for that both he and Stoddart were now in good health:

Bokhara Citadel, *28th March, 1842*.

MY DEAR JOHN,

We have been comforted by intelligence that the Ameer has released Allahdad Khan and all my people from the gaol in which he so unjustly and cruelly confined them.... The Ameer has lately been talking, we hear, of sending us away, and though we do not set much store by his words, we think it possible he may give us to the Russian Mission, who are about to depart.... I wrote you a longish letter on the 11th of this month, when I was in a high state of excitement, from fever and several nights of sleepless anxiety. The burden of it was an entreaty to the last effect regarding my poor people, and a hope that the British Government would seize the opportunity which the Ameer's faithlessness had given them to come forward with Persia to put him down, and give his country to Kharasm and Kokund, on condition of the entire suppression of the Persian and Afghan slave trade in Toorkistan. If that paper (which I shall endeavour to recover) should reach you, compress its words into this purport and destroy it, reserving my last good wishes for the friends to whom I addressed them, thinking that I might not live much longer. I am now, thank God, almost well in health again, and the news regarding our people has set my mind at rest. Stoddart, also, who was suffering awhile from severe cold, is, I rejoice to say, convalescent. We are both in a very uncomfortable state, as you may imagine, having been ninety-nine days and nights without a change of clothes; but we are together. Stoddart is such a friend as a man would desire to have in adversity, and our searchers having missed the little Prayer-book which George Macgregor gave us (tell him), we are able to read and pray, as well as to converse together. God bless you, my dear John. Send my love to everybody, and believe me, [250]

Yours, ever most affectionately,

ARTHUR CONOLLY.[210]

To J. B. Conolly, Esq., Caubul.

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The passages omitted from this letter relate almost entirely to the services and the pay of Conolly's attendants. There is nothing more remarkable in his letters and journals, written at this time, than his tender regard for others, and his forgetfulness of self. Not only did he grieve for the sufferings of his friend, and endeavour, by putting him forward as the real representative of the British Government, to obtain Stoddart's release, or at least a mitigation of the severity of his confinement, but he exhibited, also, the tenderest

solicitude for the welfare of all the servants who had accompanied him to Bokhara, and, in the midst of his own affliction, even on the bed of sickness and in the near prospect of death, thought of nothing more earnestly than the future welfare of his poor dependents.[211] On the 5th of April he wrote in his journal:

> *April 5.*—When I came here, Stoddart did his utmost to put me forward; but now, as long as the Ameer detains him, I shall refer to him as the accredited British agent, every communication on business that the Ameer may make to me, whether we should be together or separated. He well knows all the people here, and the dignity of our government is safe in his hands. [252]
>
> We have heard that the Russians are about to depart, and that they are to take their enslaved people with them; but we cannot get at the truth of the statement. Report also says that the Ameer will march with his army seven or eight days hence. There is no doubt that he is preparing for an early move; but though Takkind and Kokund are named as his points of attack, it is not certain that he will go eastward. This is the 107th day of our confinement, without change of clothes; but the weather having become warmer, we can do without the garments that most harboured the vermin that we found so distressing, and we are both now, thank God! quite well. We trust that our friends will be informed of our well-being. We have desired all our servants, except Ibraheem (who remains behind to keep up correspondence), to return to their homes as soon as their strength enables them to travel, begging them to make their way anyhow, and to rest assured that everything due will be made up to them on their reaching Caubul.... Allahdad Khan behaved very firmly in refusing to allow that he was the servant of a Feringhee servant, as the Ameer wished him to do, and did justice both to the dignity of his royal master and to the policy of the British Government in Afghanistan. I beg that his conduct may be mentioned to Shah Soojah, and I trust that all his losses will be made up to him; but if the preparation of the account is left to him, he will make it a very large one, and part of the settlement may perhaps be deferred till it is decided whether or not the Ameer is to be called upon for repayment.
>
> When our last packet was despatched we deemed it not impossible, from the Ameer's expressions, which had been reported to us, that his Majesty designed to send us away with the Russian Mission. Our keepers rather inclined to the idea that Huzrut would dismiss us about the same time by the route of Persia; and the Topshee-Bashee's old brother talked seriously about performing a pilgrimage to the holy city of Meshid in our company. [253]

These hopes were most delusive. As time advanced, the prospects of restoration to liberty became more and more remote. About the middle of the month of April, the Russian Mission took its departure; and the Ameer set out from Bokhara at the head of a grand military expedition against the state of Kokund. On the 13th of April, Conolly wrote in his journal:

> *April 13.*—We heard that the Russians had been dismissed with presents of honour, that the Kodiyar Beg Karawool Beggee, ranking as captain or commander of 100, had been attached to Colonel Boutenoff as the Ameer's envoy to St. Petersburg, and that the Huzrut had promised to promote him to the grade of Tok-Suba, commander of 1000, privileged to bear a cow-tail banner, on his return after the performance of good service. The Ameer's own arrangements were said to be completed, and the direction of it certainly to the eastward. An envoy from Kokund, who arrived two days ago, was not received, but was told to go about his own business wherever he listed. Our informant mentioned at the same time that the last envoy from Khiva had been dismissed a fortnight before with extraordinary honour, all his servants getting dresses. We now also learned that the heir of the Koondooz chief had sent an envoy to the Ameer, who had ordered one of his officers, a Khojeh, styled Salam Aghassi, to accompany that agent to Koondooz on his return. It was thought, we were told, that the Khojeh of Balkh would endeavour to take Koondooz on Meer Morad's death, and the heir may, in this apprehension, have been alert to put himself under the Ameer's protection. This morning the Ameer showed the Topshee-Bashee an especial mark of favour by sending him a loaf of refined sugar from the palace; towards evening his Majesty rode four miles to a place of pilgrimage, and on his return at night had the Topshee-Bashee up to give him some orders.

The narrative then proceeds:

> Early next morning (the 14th) the Ameer marched out to the sound of his palace kettle-drums and trumpets, leaving us in the filthy clothes which we had worn for 115 days and nights. We said to the Gunner's old brother, when he mentioned the Ameer's having departed, "Then the Meshid caravan apparently stands fast." "No," [254]

was his reply; “please God it will go soon. I asked the Topshee-Bashee last night if nothing had been settled about you, and he replied, ‘When the Russians get out a march or so, the Dustan Kanchee will make a petition about them, and they will be dismissed.’” The old man also remarked, probably from what he had heard his brother say, that the Ameer had expressed himself to the effect that he knew the Russian Elchee was led to get us in order to make a boast of having procured our release, which made it seem as though Colonel Boutenoff had been endeavouring to obtain our dismissal. Our old keeper persisted for some days in assuring us of his belief that our immediate dismissal was designed, and on the 18th said that he was going down into the city to seek out my Dewan Beggee, Eusoff Khan (Augustin), to set his mind at ease about us; he returned, saying that he had been referred from place to place without finding Eusoff Khan, or any of our people; but that one Meer Hyder and another shopkeeper of his acquaintance had assured him that they were all in the town, and that four or five of them were in the habit of coming occasionally at night to a certain quarter, to hear books read. We had thought the gunners might have received orders to collect some of our people in order to our respectable dismissal; but knowing that all our men, except Ibraheem, had left Bokhara, we concluded that the Topshee-Bashee had made use of his old brother to deceive us, in order to keep us hopeful and quiet for another period, as he said nothing about changing our clothes, and kept himself quite aloof from us, which he would hardly have done had he believed what he reported in the Ameer’s name.

Just before the Ameer’s departure, we heard that a British Elchee had arrived at Merve, on his way hither. We could get no further accounts of the said Elchee, but judged that it might be Shakespear on his way to Khiva.... [*MS.* defaced] ... From the 4th to the 7th of May the palace drums and trumpets were continually sounding for intelligence that Kokund had been taken after a faint endeavour at resistance under the famed Kokund general, Guda Bai; that the latter had been taken prisoner, and that the rebellious town had been given up to plunder, &c.

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Then follows much of Bokhara politics, the manuscript being greatly defaced—and after this, some passages of personal narrative, the chronicle of which extends up to the 24th of May—the latest date under which I have been able to discover anything in the hand-writing of Arthur Conolly:

We had expressed to our old guardian a wish to get some money from Meshid, with which to reward him for his kindness, (and to get) him privately to buy (us) a few necessaries in the event of our further detention, and, liking the idea, he, on the 19th instant (May), brought secretly to see us his son-in-law Budub, employed as a caravan-bashee between Bokhara and the Holy City, who agreed to act as agent in the business after another week. Inquiring the news from Budub, we heard that Kamran was said to be confined in Herat by Yar Mahomed Khan—that the English remained as before at Candahar and Caubul—and that four Elchees, English, Russian, Persian, and Turkish, had gone together to Khiva, each displaying his national flag, and told the Khan Huzrut that he had the choice of quietly giving up plundering and slave-dealing, or of meeting the Shah of Persia, who had assembled a large army for the redress of his people.

* * * * * *

Our old friend now informed us, on the authority of his Afghan acquaintance, Meer Hyder, that all our people had left Bokhara on hearing that they had been inquired about.... Possibly the Ameer really did mean to send us away at the time of his marching, but deferred to do so on hearing that we had no servants left here, or from one of his incalculable caprices. I had noted, in a detailed report of our proceedings after leaving Kokund, which when we were seized I was waiting the Ameer’s permission to despatch by a courier to Caubul, an expression which the Naib heard his Majesty had uttered in his camp after my arrival, to the effect that he would give the English a few rubs more, and then be friends with them again. Though we were not sure that the Amer had so spoken, the plan seems one likely to be entertained by an ignorant and weak man, anxious to give an imposing impression of his greatness and confidence; and to it I partly attributed the ungraciousness of my public reception in camp, though I was the Naib’s honoured guest; the failure of the Huzrut to recover the horses and the property of my servants which had been plundered at his outposts, when bringing letters to him, and the hauteur with which, at the first joint reception of Stoddart and myself here, he caused it to be signified to us that as in old times there had been friendship between the Mussulmans and infidels, there existed no objection to the establishment of friendly relations between the states of Bokhara and England; but that the Huzrut desired to know whether we (the English) had been travellers over all Toorkistan to spy the land with a view to take it, as we had taken Caubul, or for

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other purposes; and wished all our designs to be unveiled, in order that if they were friendly they might become apparent, and that if hostile, they might still be known. The Government of India, knowing what communications it has sent to Bokhara, will be able to judge the Ameer's conduct better than we are.

On the 19th (May) the Topshee-Bashee paid us a visit of a few moments, after keeping away for two months. He mentioned that a man with a name like Noor Mohumnud had come three or four days before from Persia, bringing a load of things for Stoddart, of which the Dustan Kanchee had forwarded a list to the Ameer—probably the articles which should have accompanied Lord Palmerston's letter. The Huzrut, the Topshee-Bashee said, would doubtless, on his return, be gracious to us, and give us fine robes of honour, and treat us even better than before.

About sunset on the 23rd, as Stoddart and myself were pacing up and down a small court of twenty feet long, which encloses our prison, one of the citadel doorkeepers came and desired us both to sit down in a corner; we complied, wondering what would follow, and presently saw heads peering at us from the adjoining roofs, when we understood that the Ameer's heir, a youth of seventeen, had taken this way of getting a sight of the Feringhee Elchees. We must have given him but a poor impression in the remains of our clothes, and with heads and beards uncombed for more than five months.

On the 23rd, Jooma Bai was accosted by a man named Makhzoom, known to Stoddart, who gave him a token, and a note written in such bad grammar as scarcely to be understood, in which he said one Juleb arrived lately from Khiva, mentioned that he saw Pottinger Sahib there, and another person named Moosa having come, bringing a letter from Pottinger Sahib, who, he says, is at Khiva, with the Elchee of Mahomed Shah.

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Authentic history here terminates. Beyond this all is doubt and conjecture. On the 28th of May, Stoddart despatched an official letter to the Indian Government,[212] which was forwarded with Conolly's journals; and at this point we lose altogether the track of the footprints which the Bokhara captives have left on the great desert of time. That they perished miserably is certain. "No change has taken place in our treatment," wrote Stoddart—it is the last sentence penned in the Bokhara prison which seems to have reached its destination—"though hopes, so long proved to be deceitful, are held out to us on the return of the chief." But the Ameer, glutted with conquest, returned from the Kokund expedition, and ordered them out to death. They died by the hands of the public executioner. But the precise period of their death is not with certainty to be ascertained.

There is but scanty evidence to enable us to determine the point. That which is most credible is the evidence of Saleh Mahomed, a youth whom Major Todd despatched from Herat, to join Captain Conolly's suit. His story is, that in the month of June, 1842, Stoddart and Conolly were executed by order of the Ameer; that he derived [258] his information from one of the executioners; and that he saw their graves. On the 17th of June, it is related, they were taken out of their prison, and, in the presence of an assembled multitude, led into a small square. Their hands were bound together before them. Their graves were dug before their eyes. Stoddart was first marked for death. He cried aloud against the tyranny of the Ameer; and his head was cut off with a knife. Conolly was then offered his life, on condition that he would adopt the Mussulman faith. But he indignantly rejected the proposal. "Stoddart," he said, "became a Mussulman, and yet you kill him: I am prepared to die." And then Arthur Conolly, full of faith in the merits of his Redeemer, stretched forth his neck, and died.[213]

There is nothing more painful than this in all the history of the [259] Central-Asian war. It would be unjust to encourage a belief in the reader's mind that efforts were not made to compass the liberation of Colonel Stoddart. From the time when Major Pottinger first received at Herat intimation of his friend's captivity, and wrote to the Ameer a protest against the outrage he had committed, to a date long subsequent to the deaths of Stoddart and Conolly, continual efforts were made, both from the side of India and of England, to accomplish this great object. Todd did all that he could do from Herat; Abbott and Shakespear did all that they could do from Khiva; Macnaghten did all that he could do from Caubul; Lord Auckland did all that he could do from Calcutta. From London, Lord Palmerston directed our ambassadors at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople to obtain the agency of the Courts at which they were resident; and both the Sultan and Count Nesselrode wrote urgent letters to

Bokhara in behalf of the British prisoners.[214] But when all this is related, it still appears that more regard might have been shown for Stoddart's position, and that if there had been greater promptitude in answering the references made by him to the home authorities, he might have taken advantage of a favorable change in the feelings of the Ameer, and of his own circumstances, to take his departure from Bokhara. Certain it is that Stoddart felt acutely the culpable indifference to his fate displayed by the British Government. As far back as the July of the preceding year he had written:

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> News from me you will not expect, nor have I the least word of interest to offer you, except that I am waiting the replies of government, before I am finally released and take my departure. Nothing can be more slack than the time and means taken to provide me with those replies, and my disgust perfectly negatives any attempt to write a commonly agreeable note. My last news from Caubul, dated June 6, says that poor Todd is there awaiting, if possible, a mitigation of his sentence. Conolly is not yet here from Kokan, nor have my messengers to him yet returned. They conveyed the orders from Caubul, and an invitation to the Ameer, to return by this route.[215]

On the 28th of February, 1842, he wrote again, as a kind of endorsement to one of Conolly's letters:

[261]

TO THE SECRETARY OF GOVERNMENT IN INDIA.

SIR,

The Governor-General in Council will be informed by the accompanying abstract how far my position here [*and that of Captain Conolly*] has been sacrificed.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient, humble servant,
CHARLES STODDART.

The words within brackets were erased—most probably by Conolly.[216]

But Stoddart, though he may have resented the injustice of sacrificing him to no purpose, was ready to become a sacrifice if, by so doing, he could promote the interests of his country. "I beg sincerely," he wrote on the 5th of April, "that no one will regret any sacrifice of me, for it is nothing at all. It may yet not be requisite—but if it be, I regard the probable result, from the action of government in doing justice to others, and bringing all these countries to reasonable conduct, as fully compensating a much greater sacrifice than that of so humble an individual as I am."[217] If anything could increase the sorrow with which we contemplate the fate of this brave man, it would be a perusal of such noble sentences as these.

It was under a high and chivalrous sense of duty to his government that Colonel Stoddart continued to face the dangers of his position at Bokhara, after he might have escaped from them; and it was under an equally strong sense of duty that Captain Conolly made his way to the inhospitable city. To describe them officially as "innocent travellers," was clearly a misapplication of language; and yet, when on the famous 1st of October, 1842, Lord Ellenborough addressed the following letter to the Ameer of Bokhara, he so described them both:

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Simlah, *October 1st, 1842.*

A. C.

The Queen of England, my royal mistress, has sanctioned my coming to India, to conduct its government, and direct its armies.

On my arrival, I found that great disasters had befallen those armies, and much injury had been inflicted on my countrymen and the people of India by the treacherous Afghans, under Mahomed Akbar Khan.

In forty days from the time when I directed to British armies, reinforced from India, to move forward, three great victories have been gained over the Afghans; the city and citadel of Ghuznee have been destroyed, and now the Balla Hissar of Caubul is in my power.

Thus, by God's aid, have I afflicted with merited punishment the murderers of their own king and of a British minister. In this I have avenged the cause of all sovereigns and of all nations.

The wife and family of Mahomed Akbar Khan are prisoners, and my soldiers are now conducting them to the sea.

Thus are the wicked punished, even in their wives and families.

I hear that you, too, have gained great successes, at which I

rejoice, if you had just ground of complaint against your enemy.

It is in the midst of successes that clemency most becomes the conqueror, and gives to him an extent of permanent fame which often does not attend on victory.

I was informed, when I reached India, that you detained in confinement two Englishmen, supposing them to have entertained designs against you. This must have been your reason, for no prince detains an innocent traveller.

I am informed that they are innocent travellers. As individuals they could not entertain designs against you; and I know they were not employed by their government in such designs, for their government is friendly to you.

Send them away towards Persia. It will redound to your honour. They shall never return to give you offence, but be sent back to their own country.

Do this as you wish to have my friendship.

ELLENBOROUGH.[218]

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So manifest a repudiation of the official character of these two officers was not right; and it has been said, by one whose zeal and enthusiasm overlaid his judgment and discretion, but who is still entitled to honourable mention for his generous exertions in a hopeless cause,[219] that this very letter, in all likelihood, caused the execution of the prisoners. To describe them as travellers was, it is said, to proclaim them as spies. But the letter, however dangerous in itself, was at least harmless in its results. Before it was even written, the "innocent travellers" had journeyed to a land where the tyranny of princes could not reach them—where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.[220]

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# CHAPTER V.

## [April-July: 1842.]

Affairs at Caubul—Elevation of Futteh Jung—Opposition of the Barukzyes—Arrival of Akbar Khan—His Policy—Attack on the Balla Hissar—Its Capture—Conduct of Akbar Khan—Barukzye Strife—Defeat of Zemaun Khan—Situation of the Hostages and Prisoners.

On the death of Shah Soojah there commenced in Caubul a civil war. The whole city was thrown into convulsion. Futteh Jung, the second son of the murdered Shah, was proclaimed King. He was a man of weak understanding and infamous character; but he was believed to be friendly to the British Government, and he both hated and feared the Barukzyes. In himself a mere cypher, he could have done nothing to resist the encroachments of that powerful tribe; but Ameen-oollah Khan threw all the weight of his influence into the scales in favour of the Prince, and for some time they seemed equally balanced. The Naib cared nothing for the Prince; but he scented the royal treasures, and where the money lay the thickest, there was sure to be Ameen-oollah Khan.

In such troublous times as he had now fallen upon, the Prince had little taste for royalty. He remembered the fate of his father; and shrunk from the perilous excitement in which he was now about to be plunged. Weak, too, as he was, he had sagacity enough to perceive that British power was again on the ascendant, and that [265] whatever might be the result of the internecine strife which was now convulsing the capital, the supremacy of the British would be speedily re-established. It was expedient, therefore, he thought, to exert himself to the utmost, to obtain the favourable consideration of his old Feringhee allies; so he despatched earnest letters to Captain Macgregor at Jellalabad, pleading both for himself and the memory of his murdered father, protesting his inviolate attachment and loyalty to the English Government, and imploring them to tell him what to do.

Futteh Jung had been proclaimed King by Ameen-oollah Khan and the Populzyes; but the Barukzyes refused to recognise him. Again they set up the Newab Zemaun Khan, and openly defied the Suddozye power. Soon the two contending parties broke out into open hostilities. Ameen-oollah Khan and his puppet were the first to draw the sword. On the 1st of May there was fighting from house to house—the whole city was in commotion. On the following day, success began to declare itself on the side of the Barukzyes. Ameen-oollah Khan made a false move, and disastrously over-reached himself. Believing that the act would dishearten the Barukzyes, he seized the person of Meer Hadjee, the chief Moollah. But very different was the real from the anticipated effect of this outrage. Nearly all the townspeople, before neutral, rose to avenge this insult offered to their High Priest. The Kohistanees joined them. The Hadjee was released. But popular indignation ran high against Ameen-oollah Khan. His house was burnt. His property was plundered. His servants were seized. Compelled to seek safety in flight, he flung himself into the Balla Hissar.

The Prince made a show of welcoming him, but secretly declared that he would willingly surrender him and his Populzye associates to the British, if Pollock would advance upon Caubul—that one of his [266] main objects, indeed, in opening the gates to them was to have the rebels more securely in his power.[221] The Naib knew that his position was a dangerous one, and declared that he would throw himself on the mercy of the British and take his chance of being hanged. There was a more unrelenting enemy beyond the walls of the Balla Hissar. The Barukzyes were eager to destroy him.

The contest now raged furiously. The guns of the Balla Hissar were opened upon the city. Multitudes of the townspeople fled in dismay. There were 5000 men in the citadel; there was no lack of provisions. The money was all in the hands of the Prince; and he disbursed it freely to his adherents. But the Barukzyes were miserably poor. They could only raise money by the sale of jewels and the exaction of fines; and the Kohistanees and others who flocked to their standard envied the fortunate followers of the more opulent Prince.[222]

It was not likely that Akbar Khan would regard with unconcern [267]

these proceedings at the capital. He was awaiting the return of Captain Mackenzie from Jellalabad, when intelligence of the disturbed state of affairs at Caubul was brought to him. Determining first, however, to learn the result of the mission to General Pollock's camp, he resolved to set out for the scene of strife, and to take one or two of the English officers with him. Mackenzie returned on the 3rd of May, and was immediately despatched by the Sirdar on a second mission to Jellalabad, whilst Akbar Khan, taking Pottinger and Troup with him, set out on the following day for the capital.

Arrived at Caubul, the Sirdar played his game with some address. Sedulously giving currency to the intelligence that he had been in treaty with General Pollock, who was said to have recognised his authority, he enhanced his own importance in the eyes of his countrymen, and sowed disaffection among the adherents of the royal party. Many who had before been neutral, now, believing that the British were on amicable terms with the Sirdar, openly espoused his cause. Khan Shereen Khan and the Kuzzilbashes had hitherto remained inactive; but feeling the importance of their coadjutancy, Akbar Khan made strenuous efforts to obtain it, and gained at last a promise of support.[223] From day to day there was continual strife [268] and much fighting. The advantage was for the most part on the side of the Barukzyes. The Prince had thrown up some outworks round the Balla Hissar; but partly owing to the weakness and partly to the treachery of the guards, they had been carried by the enemy.[224] Pottinger witnessed some of these engagements, and wrote of them as most contemptible affairs.

It soon became only too probable that the Balla Hissar itself would fall before the Barukzyes. The energy and vigour of Akbar Khan and his confederates greatly exceeded that of the wretched Prince and his few interested supporters. Fearful of this, Futteh Jung continued to write pressing letters to the British authorities at Jellalabad, urging them to push on to his relief, and Mohun Lal gave cogency to the request by setting forth the probability of the Balla Hissar falling into the hands of the Barukzyes, and the strength which that party would derive, not only from the occupation of such a commanding position, but from the possession of the royal treasures. Like his father, however, the Prince continued to declare that his money was failing, and to request the British to supply him with funds to carry on the war. But more than all he clamoured for the advance of the British army. On the 11th of May he wrote to [269] Captain Macgregor:

> The reason of the present contest is this. I wished to excite a dispute between the Barukzyes and the other wicked men, with a view that they should have no leisure even to touch their own heads, and thus the English army may reach here unmolested. To effect this cause, whatever gold and silver I had has been paid to the people, with the object of securing the interests of the British.[225] Now I have very little cash remaining in the treasury—enough only to support me for some ten or fifteen days more. After that period, without assistance from the British, I shall be reduced to the greatest difficulty. The men of the world are the disciples and worshippers of money. If you will not raise the victorious standard of the British troops quickly, or do not send me reinforcements within a few days, all the people will desert me on account of not having money, and the Barukzyes will then have the upper-hand over me.
>
> If the Barukzyes establish their power, serious evil is to be apprehended; and the household of the British ally (Shah Soojah) will be destroyed. After this there will be nothing in store for us but repentance and disgrace. It is as clear to all the people as the sun, that I am soliciting the assistance of the friends and nations of my late father. In delaying this object many dangers may arise, and much harm may befall the needy. In such a crisis as this, all objects may be easily gained; and the affairs which are now reduced to a state of disorder will, without much difficulty, be brought into order again.
>
> If you are delaying your march on account of supplies of grain, you need not care for this. If it pleases God that I should recover my authority, there will be thousands of "Khurwars" (measures of ten maunds) of grain, as well as plenty of fodder for the horses.
>
> I have heard that the Bombay forces have reached Candahar, and also marched thence to this quarter. It would be highly desirable, if the victorious army of Calcutta should possess this country before the arrival of the Bombay forces, that it should show the world that your arms alone have gained the victory. Although the army of both sides [270] belongs to the same government, I write thus because I wish you well.[226]

On the day after this letter was written, three holy men presented themselves before the Prince, with overtures of peace from the Sirdar. They set forth that whatever oaths Futteh Jung might desire the Barukzye chief to swear to him, would be solemnly sworn on the Koran. “Of what avail are oaths,” asked the Prince; and sending for several Korans from another apartment, showed the *Syuds* how they were covered with the seals of the Barukzye, the Douranee, the Caubulee, the Persian, and the Kohistanee chiefs. “This,” added the Prince, “is God’s holy book, in which all the faithful believe. Look at these seals and the oaths of fidelity written upon the margin, declaring that the enemies of the royal family are the enemies of Mahomed—and yet the Barukzyes have murdered the King, my father. If there be any other Koran sent from Heaven, let the Barukzyes swear solemnly upon it—this has been tried too often, and too often found wanting.” The Syuds were then dismissed. Nothing was done towards a satisfactory arrangement. So Mahomed Shah Khan was sent to conduct the negotiations with the Suddozye Prince.

What were the proposals made to the Prince, and in what light he regarded them, may be gathered from the letter which, on the following day, he addressed to Captain Macgregor:

> The circumstances of this quarter are as follows. Since the arrival of Mahomed Akbar Khan, the Barukzyes at the head of the Ghilzyes, Caubulees, and the Kohistanees, attacked the trenches I had built out at a distance. Some of them were taken by the enemy on account of the weakness of my guards, and others in consequence of the treachery of my people. All the trenches round the Balla Hissar have [271] fallen into the hands of the enemy, and we are now in a perfect siege. Yesterday, Mahomed Shah Khan, Ghilzye, came to treat with Ameen-oollah Khan into the Balla Hissar, and the result of their negotiation, after solemn oaths, was as follows:—That I should be acknowledged as King—Mahomed Akbar Khan as Minister of State—and that Ameen-oollah Khan should hold the situation of Deputy (“Naib”) under the minister. After this, Mahomed Shah Khan was brought to my presence, and I was obliged to give him a “Khelat;” but agreeably to the advice of my well-wishers, I deferred giving my acquiescence to the result of their negotiation for two or three days to come.
>
> They have made four proposals to me,—Firstly, that I should allow Mahomed Akbar Khan to be my minister, and Ameen-oollah Khan his deputy. They are then both to raise an army and to go and fight with the English forces coming up to Caubul. Secondly, they will stand neutral, if I like; but I must prepare to go and oppose the British troops. Thirdly, if I am powerful, I must get ready to wage war with the Barukzyes. Fourthly, that I should take the whole family of the late King, and go wherever I like to go with them.
>
> It appears that Ameen-oollah Khan, on account of our weakness, has consented to their proposals, and has therefore gone out of the Balla Hissar to have a conference with Mahomed Akbar Khan. These proposals have perplexed me greatly, and I am lost in speculation. If I were to appoint Mahomed Akbar Khan my minister, he would raise a force to oppose the English, and I should be forced to give up my artillery to him, which will be a dangerous business. In case of my refusal, the family of the late martyr (King) will be outraged.
>
> My anxiety for your departure from Jellalabad for Caubul appears thoroughly useless. It is now forty days since your victorious army has passed up through Khybur, and you have not yet left Jellalabad. I endeavoured to excite a dispute among the rebels, with the view that the English army should reach here without opposition. Although I have successively sent letters through Mohun Lai, asking you to advance immediately to this side, but no symptoms of the kind have yet appeared. In such delay dangerous evils are to be apprehended.
>
> It is a long time that I have deputed and entrusted Meerza Ameen-oollah with my verbal messages to you; but no answer has yet reached me about it. You should quickly reply to my letters, as well as the messages I have sent you by him, and also let me know the day of [272] your march, as I am now in much perplexity. If there be any hope of your immediate advance, I will undergo every hardship to defend the Balla Hissar, and engage the rebels in fight. In case of any more delay the object will be lost, and an easy end will be obtained with the utmost difficulty hereafter. What can I write you more than this?[227]

Feeling himself utterly powerless to resist the demands of the Barukzyes, for all his principal supporters were deserting him, the Prince now placed himself in the hands of Ameen-oollah Khan, who went out to a conference with Mahomed Shah Khan, which mutual distrust nearly strangled in the womb, and consented to the first of these propositions.[228] Futteh Jung was to be the nominal occupant of the throne. Akbar Khan was to be minister; and Ameen-oollah

Khan, his Naib, or deputy. It was the object of the Sirdar to arrest the internal dissensions which were so weakening the great national and religious cause, to obtain possession of all the available money and munitions, and then to carry on the war with new vigour against the infidels.

But Mahomed Zemaun Khan was the recognised chief of the Barukzye party; and he now asked on what authority the Sirdar ventured without his sanction to make peace with the Suddozyes. There appeared to be every chance of an open rupture between them; and scarcely had Akbar Khan concluded his negotiations with the Prince, then the Newab made a hostile demonstration, attacked the Balla Hissar, but was beaten back with much slaughter. It was, however, currently reported that a secret understanding existed between the two Barukzye chiefs, whose common object it was to obtain possession of the Balla Hissar. Two or three days afterwards they were, outwardly, again united. An attempt had been made to lure the Prince to an interview with Akbar Khan beyond the walls of [273] the Balla Hissar. The Arabs in the garrison, who remained true to the royal family, dissuaded the Prince from exposing himself to the treachery of the Sirdar; mutual distrust soon engendered a rupture between them; and it was plain, that if some arrangement could not be promptly made between the Prince and the Barukzyes, through the agency of the Kuzzilbash chief, the Balla Hissar, the treasure, and the guns, would speedily fall into the hands of Akbar Khan and his confederates.

The Barukzyes now laid siege, with redoubled vigour, to the Balla Hissar. The Prince was well-nigh deserted.[229] He called upon Oosman Khan, Shah Soojah's old minister, to aid him, but upon some frivolous pretext, the Wuzeer declined to league himself with so perilous a cause. It was assiduously given out that the Prince was holding the Balla Hissar only for the Feringhees; and, as the national feeling became stronger and stronger against him, if it had not been for the strength of the place itself, he would hardly have been able to hold it for a day against the Barukzyes. But the fortress held out, in spite of the weakness of the Prince and the garrison; and so at last the Barukzyes began to undermine the works. "Last [274] night," wrote Futteh Jung to General Pollock, at the beginning of June, "they made an assault; now they have made mines in every direction. My affairs are in a very critical state.... If you do not come quickly, the Balla Hissar and the throne will be lost, and you will be a sufferer. At this time I am at my last gasp. Moreover, there is nothing in the magazine.[230] Now is the crisis."[231]

On the 6th of June, after an ineffectual attempt at negotiation, Akbar Khan issued orders for the springing of the mine. But it was not carried sufficiently far to damage the works.[232] The explosion killed a large number of the besiegers; whilst the storming party was driven back by the garrison with considerable loss. The troops of the Shah-zadah are said to have "behaved very nobly, and like heroes, to have defeated the assault." Mohun Lal reported, but with some exaggeration, that not less than 1000 of the followers of Akbar Khan fell upon this day.

But the elation of the garrison was but short-lived. On the following day the Barukzyes brought up some heavy ordnance and [275] began to cannonade the Balla Hissar. The defenders then lost heart. The Hindostanee and Arab fighting men, who composed the bulk of the Prince's followers, began to tremble for the safety of their families, and to call upon Futteh Jung to enter into some accommodation with their assailants. Thus deserted by his garrison, who declared that they would open the gates to the enemy if the Prince did not submit, he had nothing to do but to abandon the defence, and to suffer the Barukzyes to enter the Balla Hissar.

With many professions of fidelity and demonstrations of respect, Akbar Khan presented himself before the Prince, declared that he had the prosperity of the royal family at heart, and that he himself was merely the servant of the Suddozyes. Futteh Jung offered him money; but he declined it—offered him a dress of honour, but he meekly refused to wear it. He wanted nothing, he said, but the prosperity of the Prince, and he could not wear the dress of honour until he had adjusted all his differences with Mahomed Zemaun Khan. But these differences were not very easily to be adjusted. The Newab was unwilling to recognise the sovereignty of Futteh Jung; and was jealous of the rising power of the Sirdar. Meeting after meeting was held, and many attempts were made to reconcile the

conflicting interests of the two Barukzye leaders. It was urged, on the one side, that if Futteh Jung were acknowledged as the nominal ruler of Afghanistan, all his wealth would be in the power of the chiefs, and that the war might then be waged against the infidels with every chance of success. But, on the other hand, it was asked by the friends of Zemaun Khan—and Meer Hadjee, the High Priest, adopted the same views—since during the lifetime of Shah Soojah the Newab had been chosen King by the chiefs and accepted by the nation, why should they now revert to the old Suddozye sovereignty, [276] which the country had so emphatically repudiated?[233]

As time advanced, the difficulties in the way of a reconciliation between the two parties seemed to thicken. The Newab declared that he was King—that Akbar Khan might hold the office of Commander-in-Chief of the Afghan army, but that Oosman Khan was to be the Wuzeer.[234] In the meanwhile, the Sirdar was gaining over the Kohistanee chiefs, and preparing himself for the inevitable [277] conflict. But the Kuzzilbashes now refused to league themselves with Akbar Khan, and talked of joining the British on their advance. There was no prospect of a reconciliation of the differences between the two Barukzye chiefs. The old Newab bitterly deplored the strife which seemed likely soon to plunge the city again into the miseries of war, and openly prayed that God might send General Pollock quickly, so that he and Akbar might fly from Caubul before they had caused bloodshed among the people by the violent arbitrement of their disputes.

Equally did Akbar Khan claim credit for his forbearance. On the 21st of June, after many fruitless attempts at an amicable adjustment of affairs, the two factions came into open collision. A battle was fought; and "after an insignificant fight of two or three hours' duration," the Newab was defeated. He and his sons were taken. His house was plundered. The leading chiefs of his party were seized and subjected to every conceivable insult. The victory, indeed, was complete; but it was mainly achieved by the money which had been pillaged from the treasury of the Prince. Some of the most influential men of the Newab's party were bribed over to desert him; and he found, when it was too late, that he was betrayed.

The Prince was throned on the 29th of June. But he exercised no regal power. The Sirdar, who conferred upon him the title of sovereign mainly to conciliate the Populzyes, began rapidly to strip him of his wealth, and to reduce him to a mere pageant and a name. [235] After possessing himself of all the tangible property upon [278] which he could lay his hands, he called in all the secretaries and managers of the royal household, and compelled them to give an account of their stewardship. He had taken up his residence in the Balla Hissar; was digging a ditch around the place; and laying in military stores. He then began to endeavour to compass the possession of all the hostages and captives, and to secure them against the chance of rescue by confining them in the Balla Hissar.

The situation of the English gentlemen at Caubul, who had resided so securely under the protection of the good Newab, now became more critical.[236] On the death of Shah Soojah the [279] Caubulees had called upon Zemaun Khan to deliver them up to Meer Hadjee, the High Priest. The Newab had long resisted the demand. But the clamour of the people had drowned his prayers. His tears and intercessions were fruitless. At last he surrendered them to the Hadjee, imploring him to treat them with kindness, and sending at the same time the ladies of his family to the priest's house that they might, in some sort, be a protection to the British captives. Under the guardianship of Meer Hadjee, Conolly and his associates remained until the beginning of July. By this time Akbar Khan was dominant in Caubul. He had determined to gain possession of the persons of the whole of the English hostages and prisoners in Afghanistan, and he now began to importune Meer Hadjee to send them to the Balla Hissar. Day after day he went, on this errand, to the High Priest's house; but for some time his importunities were fruitless. At last, he tried the effect of money. The avarice of Meer Hadjee was notorious. Akbar Khan had bought him over to his cause; and now he bethought himself of buying the prisoners. He did not bid high for them. It appears that Akbar Khan offered 4000 rupees for the persons of the hostages, and that the [280] offer was accepted.

The hostages were now conveyed to the Balla Hissar, where they

remained under the immediate custody of Akbar Khan. Mohun Lal, who had been rendering good service to the British Government, by keeping the authorities at Jellalabad continually supplied with information relative to the events which were passing at Caubul, was seized by the Sirdar and tortured. The Moonshee had been residing in the house of the Kuzzilbash chief, Khan Shereen Khan; but now, early in July, Akbar Khan, having first seized the person of the host, contrived to obtain possession of the guest; and immediately began to extort money from him by the cruel agency of physical torture. It was not until General Pollock wrote an urgent letter to Akbar Khan, that the unhappy Moonshee was relieved from this terrible persecution.[237]

[281] In the mean while, the British prisoners, who had been in custody at Budeeabad, were in a fort in the neighbourhood of Caubul. When last I spoke of them they were halting in the valley of Zandah, where they were detained for about the space of a month. On the 22nd of May they received orders to march on the following day for Caubul.[238] The road lay along the track of the slaughtered army, and the putrid corpses sickened the captives as they went. About three miles from Caubul, on the banks of the Loghur river, is the fort of Ali Mahomed, a chief of Kuzzilbash connexions. Here they were lodged in the apartments recently occupied by the ladies of the chief's family[239]—the best and most commodious quarters which the prisoners had yet enjoyed.

In Ali Mahomed's fort the prisoners led a life of comparative freedom. They had a spacious garden in which to exercise themselves at certain times. They had the use alike of the walks and of the fruits. They were suffered to bathe in the river. They were permitted to visit, and to receive visits from, their friends in the Balla Hissar. Many of them had the means of borrowing money from the Caubulees; and were able to purchase many necessaries which they had not enjoyed at Budeeabad. [282] Letters and papers from Jellalabad, from the provinces of India, and from old England, were brought to them without interruption. They had much to think about and much to discuss. Intelligence from Jellalabad and intelligence from Caubul came, in some shape, every day. Life was comparatively but little wearisome; there was abundant occupation for the mind, and abundant exercise for the body. True, indeed, it is that many of the party fell sick, and that some died; that their guards were sometimes insolent and extortionate; and that ever and anon there reached them rumours of the intentions of Akbar Khan to carry them off to Toorkistan; but they had much to be thankful for, on the other side, and on the whole, perhaps, they enjoyed greater comfort and happiness, than commonly fall to the lot of the prisoner and the captive in the hands of a barbarous foe.

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# BOOK IX.

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## CHAPTER I.

### [June-September: 1842.]

The Advance from Jellalabad—Instructions of Lord Ellenborough—The Question of Responsibility—Employment of the Troops at Jellalabad—Operations in the Shinwarree Valley—Negotiations for the Release of the Prisoners—The Advance—Mammoo Khail—Jugdulluck—Tezeen—Occupation of Caubul.

THE summer months passed away, and still left General Pollock at Jellalabad, and General Nott at Candahar. Whether it were the intention of the Governor-General that they should advance upon Caubul, or fall back at once upon Peshawur and Quettah, was a problem of very difficult solution. Such data as were afforded them by the letters of Lord Ellenborough and his secretaries sufficed only to plunge them into a state of still deeper bewilderment and mystification. Every fresh letter seemed to render the obscurity more obscure. The Governor-General's instructions to Pollock and Nott at this time resembled nothing so much as those given to children in the "game of contraries"—to hold fast when they are ordered to let go, and to let go when they are ordered to hold fast. Lord Ellenborough was, in effect, perpetually telling the generals that when he suggested to them to go forward it was their business to come back.

It is probable that Lord Ellenborough himself had no very clear perception, at this time, of the course which he purposed to pursue. [284] He had made up his mind, he said, to save India in spite of every man in it who ought to give him support;[240] but it seemed to be his idea to save India rather by withdrawing all our troops within the Sutlej, than by striking a decisive blow for the re-establishment of our military supremacy in Afghanistan. It was his opinion that the danger of our position at that time arose from the absence of so large a body of troops from the provinces of Hindostan; and that we might better afford to leave our external injuries unredressed, than weaken our means of defence in India itself for the purpose of redressing them. Viewing the matter in this light, Lord Ellenborough thought less of redeeming the military character of the British nation than of bringing back the troops to Hindostan; and he would have brought them back without an effort at such redemption, if the almost universal voice, not only of the chief civil and military officers, but of the Anglo-Indian community at large, had not been lifted up against so inglorious and degrading a concession. The opinions and desires of Pollock and Nott—of Robertson and Clerk—of Rawlinson, Outram, Macgregor, Mackeson, and others, who were eager for a forward movement, and little inclined to conceal their genuine sentiments under a cloak of official [285] reserve—how little soever Lord Ellenborough might have been disposed outwardly to acknowledge their influence—were not without their effect. Public opinion he professed to despise. The judgments of the Press he pretended to hold in such absolute contempt, that he lived in habitual ignorance of all that emanated from it; but it is believed that this disregard of public opinion was rather a profession than a fact, and that Lord Ellenborough was shaken in his determination to bring back the armies to the provinces, by the clamour that, from one end of India to the other, was raised against the obnoxious measure of withdrawal. He had by this time, too, received information from England that an inglorious retirement from the scene of our late humiliation, and the abandonment of all the brave men, tender women, and innocent children, in the hands of the Afghans, would be viewed with no satisfaction either by his old ministerial colleagues, or by the people of Great Britain. Many powerful external influences, therefore, roused him to a sense of the necessity of doing something in advance; but the "withdrawal policy" was emphatically his own, and he was resolute to preserve the shadow of it if he could not maintain

the substance.

In this conjuncture, he betook himself to an expedient unparalleled, perhaps, in the political history of the world. He instigated Pollock and Nott to advance, but insisted that they should regard the forward movement solely in the light of a retirement from Afghanistan. No change had come over the views of Lord Ellenborough, but a change had come over the meaning of certain words of the English language. The Governor-General had resolutely maintained that the true policy of the English Government was to bring back our armies to the provinces of India, and that nothing would justify him in pushing them forward merely for the re-establishment of our military reputation. But he found it necessary [286] to yield to the pressure from without, and to push the armies of Pollock and Nott further into the heart of the Afghan dominions. To preserve his own consistency, and at the same time to protect himself against the measureless indignation of the communities both of India and of England, was an effort of genius beyond the reach of ordinary statesmen. But it was not beyond the grasp of Lord Ellenborough. How long he may have been engaged on the solution of the difficulty before him, History cannot determine. But on the 4th of July it was finally accomplished. On that day Lord Ellenborough, who had entirely discarded the official mediation of the Commander-in-Chief, despatched two letters to General Pollock and two to General Nott. In these letters he set forth that his opinions had undergone no change since he had declared the withdrawal of the British armies to the provinces to be the primal object of Government; but he suggested that perhaps General Nott might feel disposed to retire from Candahar to the provinces of India by the route of Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad;[241] and that perhaps General Pollock might feel disposed to assist the retreat of the Candahar force by moving forward upon Caubul.

It has been seen, that on the 1st of June Lord Ellenborough had granted General Pollock a constructive permission to remain at Jellalabad until the month of October; and that General Pollock had determined to turn this permission to the best account. The mind of the statesman was running on retirement; the mind of the soldier on advance. The great obstacle either to retirement or to advance had [287] been the scarcity of carriage. But in the early summer months every exertion had been made by the authorities in Upper India to procure carriage for the use of the armies in Afghanistan. Lord Ellenborough had exerted himself to obtain cattle; Mr. Robertson, the able and energetic Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, had exerted himself to obtain cattle.[242] The Governor-General threw his heart into the work, because he was eager to bring back the armies to Hindostan; the Lieutenant-Governor threw his heart into the work, because he was eager to push them on to Caubul. So it happened, that before the end of June, there was a sufficiency of cattle at General Pollock's disposal to enable him to do something; and he reported to Government that his means of movement were such that he was able to make a demonstration in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad. Upon this, Lord Ellenborough, through his secretary, wrote to him on the 4th of July that he was rejoiced to hear, the General was able to do something; but that he (the General) must, on no account, think that any change had come over the opinions of Government, which still inclined resolutely towards the withdrawal of the army at the earliest moment consistent with the health and efficiency of the troops.[243]

On this same 4th of July the Governor-General wrote twice to [288] General Nott—once through his secretary and once with his own hand. He sent the General a copy of his instructions to Pollock, impressing upon him that all his views were in favour of a prompt withdrawal; and he addressed to him a long inconclusive letter, instructing him to withdraw from Afghanistan, but telling him, at the same time, that the line of withdrawal was to be left to his own choice. He might retire by going backward, by Quettah and Sukkur, or he might retire by going forward, by Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad. But whichsoever line he might take, he was never for a moment to lose sight of the fact that Lord Ellenborough had decreed that he should retire, and that retire he must.[244]

It was fortunate for Lord Ellenborough and for the country that he had to deal at this time with men who thought more of the honour of Great Britain than of their own safety; and who did not shrink from responsibility, if, by incurring it, they had a reasonable

chance of conferring great and lasting benefits upon the government which they served, and the nation which they represented. But Lord Ellenborough's instructions to the Generals were so worded—whether by accident or by design I do not presume to determine—as to cast upon them all the onus of failure, and to confer upon the Governor-General, or at least to divide with him, all the honour of success. One thing at least is certain—the letter of the 4th of July, addressed to General Nott and signed by the Chief Secretary, ought not to have been written. It is either from first to last a masterpiece of Jesuitical cunning, or it indicates a feebleness of will—an infirmity of purpose—discreditable to the character of a [289] statesman entrusted with the welfare and the honour of one of the greatest empires in the world.

But, whatever may have been the amount of responsibility cast upon the two Generals, neither Pollock nor Nott shrunk from it. They cheerfully took up the burden and placed it on their own shoulders.[245] They had obtained now all that they wanted. They had no doubt of the ability of their troops to carry everything before them. Cattle had been supplied, or were being supplied, sufficient for all their movements. It was only necessary that they should act in concert with each other—that they should so combine their operations as to reach the capital at the same time, and strike the last blow together. But it was no easy thing in those days to carry on a correspondence between Jellalabad and Candahar; and it was long before Pollock received an answer to his letters. Five messengers were despatched in succession to Nott's camp;[246] but it was not before the middle of August that Pollock could assure himself of his brother-general's intentions to advance upon Caubul at all.[247]

In the mean while, neither General had been wholly inactive. At [290] Jellalabad, Pollock had been making a demonstration against some hostile tribes, and carrying on negotiations for the release of the British prisoners. The Governor-General had several times, in rather obscure language, suggested to Pollock that it might be desirable to strike a blow at some one somewhere in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad; and now the General sent out Monteith into the Shinwarree valley to read a lesson to the tribes who had possessed themselves of the property plundered from our army, and who held in their hands one of our captured guns. These things were to be now demanded from the tribes, or to be wrested from them at the point of the bayonet. In the middle of June, Monteith descended into the valley, with a brigade of European and Native troops, and a sufficiency of guns for his purpose. The troops, so long held in restraint, were now all fire and impetuosity. The first sight, in the village of Ali-Boghan, of some property that had belonged to our slaughtered army, maddened them past control.[248] They began at once to fire the houses and to plunder the inhabitants. But Monteith [291] and Macgregor interfered for their protection. The plundered property was restored. Even the money that had been taken was made over again to the inhabitants.

The report of the violence that had been committed at Ali-Boghan spread like wildfire through the valley. The people believed that the British troops were about to fire all the villages; so they began at once to remove their property, and to fly in every direction from their homes. Macgregor exerted himself to restore confidence among them, by explaining the real designs of his government; and the people began to return to their dwellings. But, although indiscriminate plunder and destruction were not the objects of the expedition, the brigade had been sent out to do certain work, and it soon became evident that it could not be done without inflicting some injury upon the people. The captured gun and the plundered property were to be recovered. It was known that two of the principal chiefs of a place called Goolai were in possession of a portion of the treasure that had fallen into the hands of our enemies. It was known, too, that the captured gun was at Deh-Surruk. It was determined, therefore, that the brigade should move against these two places.

On the morning of the 20th of June, Monteith moved upon Goolai. "It presented all the appearance of a flourishing little settlement. Several of the forts were extensive and in good repair. They were shaded by clusters of mulberry and willow trees. Flowing water passed close to the forts, and served to irrigate the neighbouring fields of cotton, rice, and jewaree. The summer harvest had just been collected, and was stocked outside the fort in its unwinnowed

state. The inhabitants had evidently only time to escape with their portable property before the troops reached Goolai. In fact, our visit was most timely. Three or four days' delay would have enabled them to carry off their grain."[249] [292]

Monteith pitched his camp on some rising ground near the village, and demanded the restitution of the plundered treasure. On the following day evasive answers were received; there was no prospect of obtaining, by peaceful negotiation, the concession that was demanded from the chiefs. So the work of destruction commenced. Their forts and houses were destroyed. Their walls were blown up. Their beautiful trees were ringed and left to perish.[250] The retribution was complete.

The work of destruction went on for some days. In the mean while the captured gun had been given up, and the people of Deh-Surruk were willing to restore the treasure which they had taken; but they could not easily recover it from the real possessors. However, after some difficulty, upwards of 10,000 rupees, besides other property, were recovered from the Shinwarrees. A large quantity of grain, timber, boosa, and other requisites was appropriated at Goolai; and it was supposed that the declared objects of the expedition had now been fully accomplished. [293]

But the Shinwarrees had not been thoroughly coerced. They had always been a refractory people—unwilling to pay revenue either to Barukzye chief or Suddozye Prince. It was thought advisable, therefore, to read them a more severe lesson. So Monteith made a progress through the valley, applied the firebrand to their forts, and shot them down in their places of refuge. "At one time the interiors of five-and-thirty forts were in a blaze along the valley."[251] At a place named Mazeena the tribes made some show of resistance; but the steady gallantry of her Majesty's 31st Regiment and of their Sepoy comrades was not to be withstood; the shells from Abbott's howitzers were irresistible; and so Monteith effectually beat down the opposition of the Shinwarrees. This was on the 26th of July. On the 3rd of August the brigade returned to Jellalabad. From the 17th of June to this date, "both men and cattle had entirely subsisted on the resources of the country." "The cattle especially," added Captain Macgregor, concluding his report, "will be found to have greatly improved in condition while employed on this service. Indeed, in whatever way it may be viewed, it will be found that the expedition has been highly beneficial to British interests." [294]

Whilst Monteith was carrying on these operations in the Shinwarree valley, Pollock was carrying on negotiations for the release of the British prisoners. On the 10th of July, Mackenzie having been stricken down by fever and lying, as was supposed, at the point of death, Captain Troup, accompanied by a native gentleman, named Hadjee Buktear, had been despatched to General Pollock's camp; but had brought back no satisfactory intelligence to encourage and animate the Sirdar.[252] The fact is, that Pollock had by this time begun to see his way to Caubul. Lord Ellenborough and Mr. Robertson had exerted themselves most successfully to supply him with carriage. He was eager to plant the British standard on the Balla Hissar, and was unwilling to hamper himself with any negotiations which might impede or delay his advance. It was thought by some in Pollock's camp that the Sirdar was not sincere in his overtures, and that his real object was to gain time. But Pollock was equally anxious to gain time. The emissaries were not dismissed in a hurry; and when they returned at last to Caubul they carried back only a verbal message, and that message contained a demand for all the guns and trophies in the possession of the enemy.[253] It was expected that another reference would be made to Jellalabad; and that in the mean while Pollock would be supplied with the means of rescuing the prisoners more majestically than by such negotiations. He had received so many assurances from influential men at the capital that the Caubulees would not suffer Akbar Khan to carry off the prisoners to Toorkistan, that he believed the advance of his army would tend more surely to their release than any diplomatic measure which he could possibly adopt. [295]

But Akbar Khan held a different opinion. When Troup returned to Caubul, the Sirdar summoned him and Pottinger to an interview, declared that he was not satisfied with Pollock's verbal message, and candidly asked their advice. Pottinger replied that the best advice he could offer was, that Akbar Khan should immediately send down the whole of the prisoners to Pollock's camp at Jellalabad, as a

proof of his sincerity and good feeling. If there were any delay, he added, the negotiations would be broken off, and the army would advance. To this the Sirdar replied, that without a written promise from General Pollock to withdraw his troops from Afghanistan the prisoners would not be sent to his camp; and that they might at once banish the thought of a forcible release of the prisoners on the advance of the British army, for that as soon as intelligence should [296] reach him of our troops having arrived at Charbagh, he would send them all off to Toorkistan—scattering them about by twos and threes among the different chiefs—and come down himself with his fighting men to dispute the progress of the advancing army.

To Pollock, this appeared a mere idle threat. He still clung to the belief that there was a party in Caubul able and willing to prevent the departure of the prisoners; and when Troup, accompanied by Lawrence, came down again to Jellalabad, he found the General still less inclined than before to promise to withdraw his army. He had, indeed, already moved a brigade forward to Futtehabad—two marches in advance of his old position; and Sale, who commanded this brigade, had written that it was "a good place for a fight."[254] All that Pollock, therefore, could now promise was, that he would not advance beyond that point before the expiration of a certain number of days. The negotiations had, by this time, become the merest sham. It was obvious that Pollock could not proceed with them to a successful issue without encumbering himself with conditions which would have hung as a millstone round the neck of a military commander, eager to drive his battalions into the heart of the enemy's country. The Governor-General wrote to him that "all military operations must proceed, as if no negotiations were on foot;" but Akbar Khan had rendered this impossible, by demanding, as a condition of the delivery of the prisoners, that all the British troops should withdraw from Afghanistan.[255]

Weary of these protracted negotiations, Pollock was now eager to [297] advance upon Caubul. He was only waiting the arrival of specific information from Candahar relative to the movements of his brother-general. "As I have offered to meet him," he wrote to a friend in high place, "he will find some difficulty in resisting the *glorious* temptation; but if he does resist, he is not the man I take him for."[256] The glorious temptation was not resisted. The two Generals were worthy of each other. Nott had determined to retire to India by Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad; and in the middle of the month of August, a messenger, long expected and most welcome, brought the cheering intelligence into Pollock's camp.[257]

On the 20th of August, Pollock began to move from Jellalabad. On [298] that day the advanced guard under the General himself reached Sultanpore, on its way to Gundamuck. At the latter place he intended to assemble the whole of the troops which he had selected to accompany him to the capital[258]—in all, about 8000 men. On the 23rd, Pollock, with the advance, reached Gundamuck. About two miles from that place lies the village of Mammoo Khail. Two hostile chiefs, having sent away all their women and children, had mustered a strong body of the Ooloos, and were occupying this position. Pollock at once determined to dislodge them; and ordered up from Sale's camp in the rear Broadfoot's sappers and a squadron of dragoons. On the following morning the brigade advanced, and the enemy began to retire. Then, dividing his infantry into two columns, with a wing of her Majesty's 9th Foot at the head of each, Pollock entered the village. The enemy had abandoned their positions there, and at another village, called Koochlee Khail; but they rallied and returned to occupy a range of heights within musket-shot of the latter place, and from these commanding eminences, they kept up, for some time, a hot fire from their jezails. But Colonel Taylor attacked them on one side; Broadfoot, with his sappers, on the other.[259] The heights were carried. The forts and villages were taken, and the enemy dispersed. The chiefs fled to [299] Caubul with a few followers. Mammoo Khail and Koochlee Khail were destroyed by fire; and the fruit-trees were cut down.[260]

Having accomplished this, Pollock returned to Gundamuck. The attack on Mammoo Khail, which is not on the road to Caubul, was a diversion rendered necessary by the appearance of the enemy in that direction. But the General had yet to assemble his entire force, to assure himself of the sufficiency of his supplies, and to make all the necessary arrangements for his advance upon the capital. The

delight with which the announcement of the intended advance upon Caubul had been received throughout the general camp is not to be described. The question of advance or withdrawal had been for months eagerly discussed. Every symptom had been watched with the closest interest—every report had been canvassed with wondering curiosity. Acting under instructions from the Supreme Government, Pollock had kept all his intended movements a close secret. It was not, indeed, until the middle of August that even Sir Robert Sale knew that the force would advance upon Caubul; and then he was so wild with excitement that he could scarcely write a note to the General to express his unbounded delight.[261]

There were now no longer any doubts regarding the forward movement of the force. Officers and men were eager to push on to Caubul; and willing to advance lightly equipped, leaving behind [300] them all the baggage that was not absolutely necessary to their efficiency. The 13th Light Infantry, ever ready to set an example to their comrades, sent back a considerable portion of their baggage to Jellalabad, and prepared to march with only a single change of linen. The officers of the regiment were content to congregate, three or four together, in small hill tents; and Broadfoot, at all times a pattern of chivalrous zeal, offered to take on his sappers without any tents at all.[262]

Full of hope and courage the troops moved up, by brigades, to Gundamuck. Making all his arrangements for the march, and waiting intelligence from Nott,[263] Pollock remained at that place until the 7th of September. Supplies were pouring freely into camp. The rich orchards and fruit-gardens of the surrounding country yielded their luscious produce; and our officers were writing to their friends that they were "luxuriating quietly on the most delicious fruits and supplies of all kinds." The neighbouring chiefs were coming in and making submission to the English General. It was plain that already the tidings of our advance were striking terror into the hearts of the chiefs and people of Afghanistan.

It was on the 1st day of September, when Pollock was awaiting at Gundamuck the assembling of his brigades, that an Afghan, of forlorn aspect, in soiled and tattered clothes, rode upon a wretched pony, attended by three followers, into the British camp. Two [301] officers of the general staff, Burn and Mayne, met the stranger as he approached, and recognised him. They knew him to be Futteh Jung. They knew him to be the man who, a day or two before, had borne the title of King of Caubul. The fugitive was kindly received, and conducted to the General's tent. A salute was fired in his honour. Accommodation was provided for him in the British camp, and everything that could conduce to his comfort was freely granted to the unfortunate Prince.

For some time, Futteh Jung had been a wretched puppet at the Caubul Court. He had been but a King of straw. The merest shadow of royalty had been suffered to cling to him. Akbar Khan, for his own uses, held the imbecile Prince firmly in his hands; and every day tightened his grasp. He stripped him of all his power; he stripped him of all his wealth. He threatened—he overawed him. He compelled him to attach his seal, or his signature,[264] to papers resigning all authority into the hands of the Wuzeer, and signifying his assent to everything that might be originated or sanctioned by him.[265] Deeming that the unscrupulous tyranny of Akbar Khan [302] would soon manifest itself in the murder of the whole royal family, the Prince directed his thoughts towards the expediency of flight, and determined to claim the hospitality of the British General. But Akbar Khan suspected his intentions, and flung him into close confinement in the Balla Hissar. A Kuzzilbash gentleman, named Aga Mahomed, aided him to escape from his perilous captivity. A hole was cut through the roof of his prison, and he emerged into the outer air. But, overcome by terror and by opium, his limbs refused to perform their office, and on his perilous way to the Kuzzilbash quarters, he more than once implored his deliverer to carry him back to his place of captivity. The resolution, however, of Aga Mahomed prevailed, and, having lodged the wretched Prince for a while in the house of a Kuzzilbash lady—the Aga's aunt—he raised a few thousand rupees by pledging his own and his mother's property, and then started him on his perilous journey to the camping-ground of the British. With some difficulty, often fired upon as he went, [303] Futteh Jung made his way through the passes; and at last, on the 1st of September, struggled into Pollock's camp.[266]

On the morning of the 7th of September, General Pollock, with the first division of his army, accompanied by General Sir Robert Sale, moved from Gundamuck,[267] in progress to the capital. The second division, under General M'Caskill, marched on the following day. A party of the Sikh contingent, under Captain Lawrence, accompanied this division. These regiments had been sent up to Jellalabad in June, and had been encamped on the opposite side of the river. They were the old Mussulman corps who had behaved so infamously on the other side of the Khybur, but who now had been talked over by Gholab Singh into something like propriety of demeanour.[268] They behaved at least as well as the British General expected, and when Lawrence sought permission for a party of 500 men, horse and foot, to accompany, under his directions, Pollock's army to Caubul, the General was but little inclined to refuse the request. So a party of 300 horse and 200 foot marched, under Lawrence, with M'Caskill's division; and the remainder occupied [304] positions at Neemlah and Gundamuck.

On the 8th of September, as the first division of Pollock's army approached the hills which commanded the road through the Jugdulluck Pass, he found that their summits were occupied by the enemy. Large bodies of Ghilzyes, under different chieftains, each with a distinguishing standard, were clustering on the heights. "The hills they occupied formed an amphitheatre inclining towards the left of the road, on which the troops were halted whilst the guns opened, and the enemy were thus enabled on this point to fire into the column, a deep ravine preventing any contact with them."[269] The practice of the guns was excellent; but the Ghilzye warriors stood their ground. The shells from our howitzers burst among them; but still they held their posts. Still they poured in a hot fire from their jezails. So Pollock sent his infantry to the attack; and gallantly they ascended the heights. On one side, Broadfoot, ever in advance, led up his little band of sappers. On the other, Taylor, with the 9th Foot, ascended the hills, where the enemy, horse and foot, were posted behind a ruined fort. In the centre, Wilkinson, with the 13th, pushed up the ascent towards the key of the enemy's position. All went forward with impetuous gallantry; and as they clomb the hill-sides and seized the Ghilzye standards, up went an animated and enthusiastic cheer from the British stormers. It was plain that their heart was in the work, and that nothing could turn them back. The flower of the Ghilzye tribes were there, under many of their most renowned chieftains, and they looked down upon the scene of their recent sanguinary triumphs. But they had now to deal with other men, under other leaders. The loud clear cry of the British [305] infantry struck a panic into their souls. They turned and fled before our bayonets. Then galloped Lockwood with his dragoons after the enemy's horse; but the nature of the ground was against him, and they escaped the annihilation which otherwise would have been their fate.

But the battle was not yet over. A considerable body of the enemy had betaken themselves for safety to an apparently inaccessible height. On the summit of a mountain they planted their standards, and seemed to look down with defiance upon our troops. But Pollock was resolute not to leave, on that day, his work incomplete. He believed that where the enemy could post themselves his infantry could attack them. So, under cover of Abbott's and Backhouse's guns, Broadfoot and Wilkinson again led up their men, and stormed that precipitous height. "Seldom have soldiers had a more arduous task to perform, and never was an undertaking of the kind surpassed in execution."[270] The Ghilzyes looked down upon them with astonishment and dismay. They saw at once the temper of our men, and they shrunk from the encounter. Our stormers pushed on, and the Ghilzye standards were lowered. The enemy fled in confusion; and left the stronghold, from which they had looked down in the insolence of mistaken security, to be occupied by British troops.

The victory was complete. It was mainly achieved, under Pollock's able directions, by the brave men of the old Jellalabad garrison. Sale himself, who was never far off when there was likely to be hard fighting, led up the heights in front of his old regiment, and was wounded in the affray. The loss upon our side was trifling. [306] Nothing could have told more plainly than such a victory as this how little formidable in reality were the best Ghilzye fighting men in their most inaccessible strongholds, when opposed to British

infantry under the eye of a capable commander. The Ghilzye butchers were now seen flying like sheep before the comrades of the men whom a few months before they had slaughtered in these very shambles at Jugdulluck.

The first division alone of Pollock's army was engaged with the enemy at Jugdulluck.[271] The second division passed on, much molested by the enemy, and often compelled to fight its way against large bodies of Ghilzye footmen. On the 11th of September they joined the advance in the neighbourhood of Tezeen. The exertions of a forced march had fatigued M'Caskill's cattle; so Pollock determined to devote the 12th to a halt. Before the day had closed, it was evident that the enemy were close at hand, and that we were on the eve of a great struggle. Akbar Khan had been true to his word. He had despatched the bulk of the English prisoners to the Hindoo-Koosh, and was now preparing to meet our army. On the 6th of September he had moved his camp to Begramee—distant some six miles from the Balla Hissar—and there sent for Captain Troup.[272] The English officer repaired to the camp of the Sirdar, who summoned a meeting of the principal chiefs. The Newab Zemaun Khan, Jubbar Khan, Ameen-oollah Khan, Mahomed Shah Khan, and [307] other chief people of the empire attended the council. Troup was not permitted to be present at the conference; but he soon learnt its result. He was required immediately to proceed to Gundamuck on a mission to Pollock's camp. The chiefs had determined to endeavour to conciliate the British General. They were willing to agree to any terms he might please to dictate, if he would only consent to stay the advance of his army upon the capital.

Troup declared his willingness to proceed on the mission. But he had no hope, he said, of its success. The time for negotiation had passed. Nothing could now stay the progress of Pollock's army but the entire destruction of his force. But so urgently did the Sirdar press his request on the British officer, that Troup could not refuse his assent to the proposal. He made his preparations for the journey, and then returned to the Afghan camp. There, in the presence of Akbar Khan and Mahomed Shah Khan, he again set forth the uselessness of the mission, and prevailed with them to forego it.[273]

There was nothing now left for the Sirdar but to appeal to the God of battles, and bring all the force that he could muster to oppose the progress of Pollock's army through the passes. He now moved down to Boodkhak, and from that place summoned Troup and Bygrave to his camp. It appeared to him that the English officers might render him essential service in the negotiation of [308] terms, if the tide of victory turned against him. On the morning of the 11th they entered his camp at Boodkhak. That evening he summoned them to his presence, and was for some time in earnest consultation with them. He declared that he had no wish to oppose the progress of the British army, but that he had compromised himself too far to recede, and that the people would not hear of submission. The English officers assured him that his defeat was certain; and that opposition to our advance would only occasion an useless expenditure of life. "I know," said the Sirdar, "that I have everything to lose; but it is too late to recede." He declared that he was indifferent as to the result. The issue of the contest was in the hands of God, and it little mattered to him who was the victor.

On the following morning he sent for Troup, and announced that he and Bygrave must accompany him to Koord-Caubul. Arrived at that place, intelligence of the intended halt of Pollock's army at Tezeen reached the Sirdar. The Afghan chiefs had intended to make their last decisive stand at Koord-Caubul; but the halt of the advancing army seemed to indicate indecision, and it was rumoured that difficulties had arisen to obstruct the progress of the force. On this, the Sirdar at once determined to move on to Tezeen; and sent to Troup to announce his intentions.[274] The English officer sought and obtained permission to return to Ali Mahomed's fort; and Akbar Khan went forward to do battle with the British.[275]

On the 13th the two forces met. Great were the advantages of the ground to the Afghan levies. The valley of Tezeen is commanded on all sides by lofty hills; and the chiefs had posted their jezailchees on [309] every available height. Indeed, on that morning of the 13th of September, Pollock's camp was encircled by the enemy; and it was plain that every effort had been made to turn the natural defences of the country to the best possible account. There was a hard day's

work before Pollock's army; but never were a finer body of troops in finer condition, or more eager for the work before them. All arms had now a chance of distinguishing themselves—the cavalry on the plain, the infantry on the hills, and the artillery everywhere. Fortunately the enemy's horse entered the valley, attracted by the hope of plundering our baggage. The opportunity so eagerly desired by the dragoons was now at hand. A British squadron, gallantly led by Unett, was let loose upon the Afghan horsemen. The Native cavalry followed. There was a brilliant and successful charge. The enemy turned and fled; but the sabres of the dragoons fell heavily upon them; and many were cut up in the flight.

The infantry were not less successful. Gallantly they ascended the heights on either side of the pass, and gallantly the Afghans advanced to meet them. The stormers of the 13th Light Infantry clomb the hills on the right; the 9th and 31st on the left; and as they went, hotly and thick upon them poured the iron rain from the Afghan jezails. But never, beneath the terrible fire that greeted them, as they pushed up the hill-side, did these intrepid soldiers waver for a moment. They knew that their muskets were no match for the Afghan jezails. The enemy, indeed, seemed to deride them. So having reached the hill-top, our men fixed their bayonets, and charged with a loud hurrah. The cold steel took no denial. Down went the Afghan marksmen before the English bayonets; the foremost men stood to be pierced, and the rest, awed by the fall of [310] their comrades and the desperate resolution of the British troops, fled down the hill in confusion. The strength of the Afghan force was broken; but the work of our fighting men was not done. All through the day a desultory warfare was kept up along the ridges of these tremendous hills. The Afghans occupying the highest ground, fired down upon our infantry, hiding themselves when they could behind the rocks, and shrinking now from a closer contest. Never did British troops display a higher courage in action, or a more resolute perseverance. Nobly did the Native Sepoy vie with the European soldier; and nowhere was there a finer sight than where Broadfoot with his sappers clambered up the steepest ascents under the hottest fire, and drove before them the stalwart Afghans—giants beside the little Goorkhas who pressed so bravely upon them. Many gallant feats were done that day; and many an Afghan warrior died the hero's death on his native hills, cheered by the thought that he was winning Paradise by such martyrdom. Desperate was the effort to keep back the invaders from clearing the heights of the Huft-Kotul; but the British troops, on that day, would have borne down even stouter opposition. The Huft-Kotul was mounted; and three cheers burst from the victors as they reached the summit of that stupendous ascent.

A more decisive victory was never gained. The Afghan chiefs had brought out their best fighting men against us. They had done their best to turn the difficulties of the country to good account against the strangers. Their people were at home in these tremendous defiles; whilst few of our troops had ever seen them—few were accustomed to the kind of warfare which now alone could avail. There was everything to stir into intense action all the energies of the Barukzye chief and his followers. They were fighting in defence [311] of their hearths and altars; the very existence of the nation was at stake. It was the last hope of saving the capital from the grasp of an avenging army. But with everything to stimulate and everything to aid him, Akbar Khan could offer no effectual resistance to the advance of Pollock's retributory force. The Afghans were fairly beaten on their own ground, and in their own peculiar style of warfare. It has been often said that our troops were maddened by the sight of the skeletons of their fallen comrades, and that they were carried on by the irrepressible energy of revenge. It is true, that all along the line of country, from Gundamuck to Koord-Caubul, there rose up before the eyes of our advancing countrymen hideous evidences of the great January massacre—enough to kindle the fiercest passions in the hearts of the meekest men. But I believe that, if no such ghastly spectacles had lain in the path of the advancing army, the forward feeling would have glowed as strongly in the breasts of every soldier of Pollock's force.

The struggle was now at an end. Akbar Khan saw that the game was up, and that it was useless to attempt to bring together the scattered fragments of his routed army. Taking Captain Bygrave with him as the companion of his flight, he fled to the Ghorebund valley. The fighting men, who had opposed us at Tezeen, were now

in disordered masses, hurrying homewards along their mountain paths, and seeking safety in places remote from the track of the avenging army, whilst Pollock marched onwards with his regiments in orderly array,[276] and on the 15th of September encamped on the Caubul race-course. [312]

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# CHAPTER II.

## [May-September: 1842.]

The Advance from Candahar—The Relief of Khelat-i-Ghilzye—Reappearance of Aktur Khan—General Action with the Douranees—Surrender of Sufder Jung—The Evacuation of Candahar—Disaster near Mookoor—The Battle of Goaine—The Recapture of Ghuznee—Flight of Shumshoodeen Khan—Arrival at Caubul.

WHILST the force under General Pollock was fighting its way from Jellalabad to Caubul, and carrying everything before it, the Candahar division, under General Nott, was making a victorious march upon the same point along the countries to the westward.

But it is necessary that, before I trace its progress to the capital, the circumstances which preceded the evacuation of Candahar should be briefly narrated. It has been stated that, in obedience to the instructions contained in the government letters of the 19th of April, a brigade under Colonel Wymer had been despatched to Khelat-i-Ghilzye, to rescue the garrison there beleaguered, and to destroy the defences of the place. On the 19th of May, Wymer's force left Candahar. It seems that the Ghilzyes had obtained information of the intended movement, and determined to anticipate the attempted relief by making a desperate, and, as they believed, decisive assault upon the place. Accordingly, they prepared a number of scaling-ladders, practised escalading, and, in the dim twilight of early morning on the 21st of May, advanced in two heavy columns, each 2000 strong, to the attack. Ascending the mound [314] where the slope was easiest, they placed their scaling-ladders against the walls, and gallantly mounted to the assault. Three times they ascended to the crest of the works, and three times they were nobly repulsed by Craigie and his men. The heavy showers of grape and musket-shot which the garrison poured in upon them, did not deter those desperate assailants—they went on again and again to the attack, and were bayoneted on the parapets. For more than an hour this desperate struggle lasted; and then the assailants, whose impetuous courage had been overmatched by the steady gallantry of Craigie's garrison, gave way and abandoned the assault. The failure was dearly purchased. More than a hundred dead bodies were found at the foot of the works; and it was computed that the entire loss of the enemy did not fall short of five hundred men. Not a man of the British garrison was killed.

Before sunset the Ghilzyes had dispersed. Colonel Wymer, when he reached Khelat-i-Ghilzye, had nothing to do but quietly to withdraw the garrison, and to destroy the works of the place. It was believed that the measure, as indicating the intentions of the British Government to withdraw from Afghanistan, would create considerable sensation throughout the country, and greatly embolden the enemy. But the Afghans seemed rather to wonder why we had not extricated the garrison of Khelat-i-Ghilzye before, and did not associate it with any ideas of the general policy to be pursued by the British.

But before Wymer had returned from the northward, the Douranees had again made trial of their strength in the field, and had again been signally beaten. Aktur Khan, the Zemindawer chief, who throughout the preceding year had been keeping the western districts of Afghanistan in a state of continual turmoil, and who had [315] more than once given battle to our troops, was now again in the field against us. He had, since his return from Herat, whither he had betaken himself for safety, watched the progress of events without openly committing himself, and had hitherto shown little disposition to link himself with the Douranee cause. Indeed, at the beginning of May he had made overtures to the British authorities, and offered, if they would confirm him in the government of Zemindawer, to attack the Douranee camp. As the month advanced, his conduct became more and more mysterious. He was in constant communication with the Douranee chiefs, and yet at the same time he was professing the strongest friendship for the British Government, and offering to break up the Douranee camp. But before the expiration of the month he threw off the mask, joined his brother-chiefs with a considerable body of fighting men, and took the command of the van-guard of the Douranee force.

It was obvious now that we were on the eve of another conflict.

The Ghazees moved down on the Urghundab, and made arrangements to concentrate their troops in the neighbourhood of Baba-Wullee. It seemed probable that they would be able to raise the neighbouring tribes against us; and bring into the field a body of 4000 or 5000 men. Weakened by the absence of Wymer's brigade, and remembering the danger to which the city had been exposed when he last moved out to attack the Douranee camp, Nott determined to halt the detachment which he was about to despatch to the Kojuck to bring up the carnage which had been assembled for the withdrawal of his force. The enemy had chosen their time wisely and well. They believed that, in the absence of some of his best regiments, and nearly the whole of his cavalry force, Nott would be little able to hold Candahar and to do battle with the Douranee force in the open field. So they neared the city; and on the 29th of May [316] seemed to invite the contest.

Aktur Khan had drawn into his hands the chief control of the force. What were his designs, at this time, it is not easy to determine. On the 27th he had again made overtures to the British authorities, offering to seize Meerza Ahmed, and to do his best to dissolve the Douranee force. At all events, if he could not accomplish this, he would, he said, on the first attack of the British, draw off his own followers, and then, taking advantage of their discomfiture, fall on their rear and plunder their baggage. But these offers were thrown away upon Nott and Rawlinson. They had no faith in the man.

Early on the morning of the 29th of May the enemy began to appear in the neighbourhood of Candahar—hovering about the cantonments, and carrying off our baggage-cattle. As the day advanced, their numbers increased; but it was still believed by the General that they were only reconnoitring our position, and that they would not then give battle to our troops. Under this impression, Colonel Stacy, with two regiments of infantry and four guns, had been sent out to sweep away the intruders. It happened that his movements deceived the enemy. Believing at one time that he was retreating, the Ghazees pushed forward and occupied some rocky heights to the west of our cantonments, from which they opened a distant fire on our line. These movements were seen from the city. [277] It was obvious that the enemy were determined to bring on an [317] engagement. So Nott sent out the 41st Queen's and eight guns; and an hour after mid-day mounted his horse and rode out to take the command of his troops. Rawlinson went with him.

Covered by the fire of the guns, the light companies were now ordered to storm the heights. The work was done rapidly and well. Standing out in bold relief against the sky, the forms of our stormers were soon seen upon the ridge of the hills; and as the enemy were driven down, Chamberlaine's Horse swept round amongst them and cut them up with heavy slaughter. Rawlinson then took the Parsewan Horse to clear the hillocks, to the right, of the detached bodies of the enemy which still clung to them, and Tait, with his horse, was sent to support him. The Parsewan Horse charged gallantly; but the ground was difficult, and the enemy fled towards the mouth of the Baba-Wullee Pass. Rawlinson pushed on in hot pursuit; but turning off to follow a party of the enemy's horse, who seemed to have missed the outlet, well-nigh cut down or captured Mahomed Atta himself, who was afterwards known to have been at the head of them.

The rout of the enemy was complete.[278] But the movements of [318] our troops were too slow to turn it to good account. The Ghazees made for the Baba-Wullee Pass. They had barricaded this pass with stones, and they had thrown up a strong breast-work in another direction, intending them as defences to lie between the British position and their own. But now, instead of finding these works in their front, they found them in their rear. They had not intended that the battle should be fought so near to the walls of Candahar. It was their design to take up a position within these defences; but, emboldened by the stories of the scouts, who had reported that we were too weak to operate beyond the walls, they had determined to pitch their camp in the vicinity of the cantonment and to invest Candahar. Had our guns been pushed on with sufficient activity, the enemy would have found the barricade which they had erected for their defence a terrible obstruction on their retreat. But the greater number of them effected their escape; and Nott, contented with his victory, drew off his troops.[279]

[319] On the following day, Stacy went out with a brigade, and Rawlinson took the Parsewan Horse to the banks of the river. The enemy's horse had not wholly disappeared; and it was believed that they might again be drawn into another skirmish. But they were not inclined for more fighting. As our skirmishers advanced, they fell back and crossed the river. The chiefs held a council of war, and the day was spent in stormy debate. But when the shades of evening fell upon them, they had matured no plan of operations. They broke up without a decision. Again they met on the following day. One plan and then another was discussed. Some proposed that they should proceed to Caubul. Some that they should assemble in Zemindawer. Others recommended that they should hold their ground upon the Urghundab; but the greater number were of opinion that it would be more expedient to move off to the northern district, and there await the issue of events at the capital. Many of them sent into the British camp to ask for terms; and it was obvious that, although the suspicion of our approaching departure kept up considerable excitement throughout the country, the Douranees had now arrived at the inevitable conclusion that it was useless any longer to contend with us in the field.[280]

[320] In the meanwhile, Prince Sufder Jung was waiting a favorable opportunity to cast himself upon the mercy of his enemies. On the day after the action of the 29th of May, he had received a letter from his brother, Futteh Jung, at Caubul, urging him to throw himself upon the protection of the British; and the young Prince, weary of the peril-laden life he had been leading, and seeing clearly the hopelessness of the cause to which he had attached himself, determined to follow the advice of his brother. So, on the following day, he despatched a messenger with a note to Rawlinson, informing him that he was on the point of mounting his horse to ride into the British camp. But before the British officer's answer reached him, Meerza Ahmed and the chiefs discovered his intentions, and carried him off with them across the river. His resolution, however, was not to be shaken. The chiefs made him a close prisoner, and openly denounced him as a traitor. But he continued to make overtures to Rawlinson, and at last effected his escape. On the 18th of June a letter was brought into the British camp, announcing that he had forsaken the Douranees, and had made a night-journey to Baba-Wullee. Rawlinson reported the circumstance to Nott, and the General consented to receive the submission of the boy.[281] So, on the morning of the 19th, the British political chief rode out with a party of Parsewan Horse to the mouth of the Baba-Wullee Pass, and, through a crowd of excited gazers, who lined the thoroughfares from the cantonments to the city, bought the Prince into Candahar.

[321] No easy part was that which Rawlinson was now called upon to play. The conflicting claims and interests of the two Princes greatly distracted and perplexed him. Justice and policy appeared to be at variance with each other. Timour was a well-intentioned man; his fidelity had never been questioned. He was the eldest son of Shah Soojah, and his claims to the throne of Caubul were more valid, therefore, than those of either of his brothers. But he was utterly without influence. Convinced that he could never make his way with the chiefs or people of Afghanistan, the British authorities were unwilling to support his pretensions. Even for the governorship of Candahar they held him to be incompetent; and now that Sufder Jung had returned to his allegiance, they desired, on the earliest fitting opportunity, to place the administration in his hands. The Candahar force was under orders to return to Hindostan, and the best means of disposing of Prince Timour was by the quiet removal of his Highness to the British provinces. This was not yet to be openly announced to the Prince, for it was expedient that the measure of withdrawal should not be publicly declared; but Rawlinson hoped, that when the time came, he would be able to persuade Timour to accompany the army to India, and to leave Sufder Jung in possession of Candahar. In the meanwhile, both Princes were uneasy and dissatisfied. Jealous of his younger brother, Timour protested against his being permitted to mediate for the Douranee chiefs, or to interfere with the Candahar Government; whilst Sufder Jung was continually complaining of the incertitude of his position, and importuning Rawlinson to come to some definite explanation with him.[282]

[322] So Rawlinson determined to temporise. Putting off from day to

day the adjustment of these differences, he trusted to the chapter of accidents, and ere long found something written down in his favour. Before the end of June, it was announced at Candahar that Futteh Jung had been overcome by the Barukzyes at Caubul, and that he was in effect a mere prisoner in their hands. The intelligence, as regarded British interests in general, was supposed to be unfavourable; but it went far to diminish the difficulties which the presence of the two Princes at Candahar arrayed against the British authorities. “Whilst Futteh Jung’s star was on the ascendant,” wrote Rawlinson in his journal, “it was equally difficult to manage Timour and Sufder Jung; but now they both feel that they are entirely dependent upon us for support, and are disposed, in consequence, to lay aside their private jealousies.”

The three first weeks of July passed away; and Nott was preparing for his retirement from Afghanistan. Major Clarkson had, at the end of June, brought up the convoy of camels from Quettah. The supply of carriage and provisions for the movement of the army had now reached its necessary amount. Everything was in train for withdrawal, when the Governor-General’s letter of the 4th of July was put into Nott’s hands. He saw at once the weight of responsibility that it threw upon him; but he did not shrink from assuming the burden. Cheerfully taking it up, he wrote to the Governor-General on the 20th of July: “Having well considered the subject of your Lordship’s letter of the 4th instant; having looked at the difficulties in every point of view, and reflected on the advantages which would attend a successful accomplishment of such a move, and the moral influence it would have throughout Asia, I have come to a determination to retire a portion of the army under my command *viâ* Ghuznee and Caubul.”

The Candahar force was now to be divided. A portion of it was to [323]
be sent to Quettah and Sukkur under General England; and the remainder, under General Nott, was to “retire” to India by the route of Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad. The heavy guns and six pieces of the Shah’s artillery were to be sent down with England’s column, and with it were to be despatched the Bombay Infantry, two companies of Bengal Artillery, three regiments of the late Shah’s force, and some details of Irregular Horse. Nott would not part with one of those “beautiful Sepoy regiments” which had fought so well for him ever since he had commanded the Candahar division; nor could he think of suffering the 40th Queen’s to be disunited from their old comrades. But of the 41st Queen’s he wrote to Lord Ellenborough: “I certainly could have wished to have taken her Majesty’s 41st Regiment with me, knowing the great consequence of the adventurous march before me. But when I look to Sindh, and to the want of confidence in our brave troops shown by certain officers, I must give up that wish, however desirable, to ensure the safety of the division which I am not to accompany.” But he subsequently changed his mind, and took the 41st with him. Two or three days passed; some slight preparations betokening departure were made; the old and unserviceable guns were destroyed; the repairs, which were going on, on the works, were arrested; and then it was publicly announced that the force was to hold itself in readiness to return to India. But by what route it was to retire was still a secret. Speculation was busy throughout the garrison. There were all sorts of rumours and conjectures, and then it was declared that Nott’s column was to make its way across the country by the route of Dehra Ismael Khan. It soon, however, was obvious that this was nothing more than a report, which might have its uses, and the
heart of every soldier in Nott’s division soon beat with chivalrous [324]
emotion at the thought, that the General, under whom they had so long and so gloriously served, was about to lead them on to the re-conquest of Afghanistan.[283]

And now again came up for adjustment, rather than for consideration, the question of the disposal of the Princes. Timour was eager to proceed with the British force to Caubul, and hoped to be placed upon the throne by his old supporters. His fidelity at least deserved our support—but something else was required to induce the British authorities to identify themselves with the interests of the Prince. It was fortunate for Rawlinson that at this time the decision was not left in his hands. On the 29th of July, letters were received from the Governor-General, emphatically expressing his opinion of the inexpediency of permitting the Prince to accompany the army in the direction of Caubul, or even of permitting him to remain at Candahar. His presence at Caubul, it was said, might

greatly embarrass our proceedings there; and though it would be advantageous for us that he should establish his independent authority at Candahar, there seemed so little likelihood of his being able to maintain his position after the departure of the British troops, that, on the whole, it was the most expedient course that he should accompany that portion of the force which was to proceed by the way of Sindh to the provinces of India. The communication of [325] these resolutions to the Shaz-zadah was a painful duty; and when Rawlinson announced them, they produced an explosion very foreign to the passive nature of the apathetic Prince.

On the 7th of August, the British force evacuated Candahar. There were no demonstrations of ill-will on the part of the inhabitants. No acts of licentiousness were committed by the soldiery. The movement was effected in the most orderly and peaceable manner. The soldiers and the citizens were seen embracing each other. Before night closed upon the scene, Prince Timour moved out of the citadel, and Sufder Jung remained in possession of Candahar.

On the following day, completing their Commissariat arrangements, Nott and England remained in camp under the city walls. Many of the most influential people of the new government waited upon Rawlinson, seeking his advice. On the 9th, Nott commenced his march to the northward, and England prepared to move in the opposite direction. The latter was dissatisfied with the components of his force. He applied to Nott for an European regiment to accompany him, and received in reply an indignant rebuke.

From Candahar to Mookoor the progress of Nott's division was easy and uneventful. But few traces of the recent excitement were discernible along the line of march. The villages seemed wonderfully tranquil. The villagers brought in their supplies more freely than our officers had ever ventured to expect. Every precaution was taken by the General to prevent the commission by his troops of acts of lawless depredation. He declared, that if any soldier were caught in the act of plundering, or returning with plunder in his possession, he would hang the offender, and remove the officer to whose regiment he might belong from the command of his corps.

On the 27th of August, the force arrived at Mookoor. Up to this [326] point—a distance of 160 miles—not a shot had been fired. But there were symptoms now of more active work for our troops. Some days before their arrival at Mookoor, Shumshoodeen Khan had moved out of Ghuznee with a party of 500 horse and two guns, to collect revenue in the adjacent country. He was ignorant, at the time, of our advance; but when the tidings reached him, he prepared at once to contest the progress of the British force; threw all his energies into the work of raising the country between Ghuznee and Mookoor; and made arrangements "for all the chiefs to rendezvous at the latter place, and fight us at the source of the Turnuck."[284]

But the British force approached Mookoor; and Shumshoodeen Khan was not ready to receive them. The chiefs had not come to the rendezvous. His preparations were not completed. He had fallen back to the vicinity of Oba, and there the chiefs were flocking to his standard. But, as Nott advanced that sultry morning through a thick haze upon Mookoor, it was plain to him that he was in an enemy's country. The villages were deserted. Supplies were not brought into his camp. He was compelled to send his cavalry out to forage. It was plain, too, that the enemy had wisely chosen the ground on which they had determined to give us battle. There was no more defensible position on the whole line of country from Candahar to Caubul than that at the source of the Turnuck, which Shumshoodeen Khan had selected as his point of defence.[285]

The next day was an eventful one. On the morning of the 28th of [327] August the force advanced from Mookoor. The rear-guard had scarcely moved from their encamping-ground when the enemy came down upon them. Nott ordered out his irregular cavalry, under Captain Christie, who cut up some fifty of the enemy's footmen; and, but for an interposing ravine, would have destroyed the whole. Without further molestation the force reached its halting-ground and encamped. It was known that Shumshoodeen was somewhere in the neighbourhood; but through the thick haze which enveloped the camp, it was impossible to determine his position. The camels went out to graze. The grass-cutters went out to obtain forage for their horses. Everything was going on in camp after the wonted fashion,

when, an hour before noon, a report came in that Delamain's grass-cutters were being cut to pieces by the enemy. Delamain waited for no orders—never paused to inquire into the truth of the story that was brought to him—but at once ordered his troopers into their saddles, and rode out, with all the disposable cavalry, in search of an imaginary foe.

He soon found that it was a false alarm. His grass-cutters were not in the hands of the enemy. But he went on to reconnoitre, and about three miles from camp came up with a party of the enemy's footmen on the plain. Some twenty of them were cut down by our troopers, and the remainder put to confusion and flight. Delamain went after them in hot pursuit, and coming to the foot of a range of hills, turned the shoulder of one of them, and found that the heights were crowned, in considerable strength, by the enemy's jezailchees, who opened upon him a galling fire. He was falling back, in orderly [328] retreat, when a body of the enemy's Horse, about 150 strong, showed themselves on the ridge of a hill, flaunting a white standard. Delamain at once determined to attack them. A squadron of the 3rd Bombay Cavalry charged up the hill; but a hot fire from a party of jezailchees, who suddenly appeared on their flanks, saluted them as they advanced; and then the enemy's Horse poured down upon them with tremendous effect. Captain Reeves was shot near the foot of the hill. Captain Bury and Lieutenant Mackenzie gained the ridge; but fell beneath the sabres of the Afghan horsemen. The troopers now seeing their officers fall, borne down by the weight of the Afghan Horse, and suffering severely from the fire of the jezailchees, turned and fled down the hill. Their companions at the foot of the hill caught the contagion from them. The panic spread, and the whole body of British Horse were soon in disastrous flight. Riding each other down in wild confusion, they were not easily reduced to order. The loss among them had been severe. Two officers were killed, and three wounded; and fifty-six of our men had been killed or disabled in the fight.

In the mean while, exaggerated stories of the disaster had spread throughout Nott's camp. Messenger after messenger had come to the General, and reported that the enemy were in immense force, and that Delamain and his cavalry had been annihilated.[286] Twice he sent out instructions for the troops to return to camp. At last it [329] was reported to him that the enemy were 7000 strong, and that Delamain, if not already destroyed, was in imminent peril. So Nott took out his army and moved against the enemy—expecting to find them flushed with success and eager for a general action. But when they came upon the ground, it was found that the enemy had moved off. Their videttes alone were to be seen on the peaks of the hills.

But there was still work to be done. From some fortified villages in the neighbourhood of the field of action it was said that shots had been fired. The General marched upon them. In an attitude of abject submission the villagers came out and prayed for quarter. Nott granted the boon. But a company of the 40th Queen's was sent in to search the houses, where it was believed some plunder would be found. From the matchlocks of some Ghazees shots were fired as our soldiers entered the place. The result of the misdeed was terrible. The place was given up to carnage. The women and children were spared; but the men were indiscriminately butchered.[287] Not less than a hundred of the villagers were massacred for the offences of a few men.

Whilst the General was thus employed, the cavalry, which had [330] sustained so mortifying a defeat, were endeavouring, with the aid of the horse artillery and some infantry details, to rescue the bodies of their dead. The corpses were brought off; and then the entire force returned to camp. That evening the two European officers[288] received Christian burial. The wounded officers recovered.

"This was a bad beginning," wrote Rawlinson to Outram, "but we have amply redeemed it since." On the 30th of August the Candahar division was again engaged with the enemy; and with better success. On the preceding day, Shumshoodeen Khan had sent round the heads of the officers who had fallen in the action of the 28th,[289] and, greatly exaggerating the victory he had gained, endeavoured to raise the people against the infidels whom he had beaten so gloriously in the field. On that day considerable reinforcements joined him. He was seen on the hills to the right of [331] Nott's camp, with four or five thousand men, and it was believed that he would attack our troops in the course of the morrow's

march. The morrow came. Nott marched to Ghoaine. Shumshoodeen Khan moved parallel to him, and took up his position again on the hills to the right of the British camp. As every hour was increasing his numbers, he desired to postpone the inevitable collision. On the afternoon of the 30th he is said to have mustered not less than 10,000 men.[290]

Not far from the ground on which Nott halted on that morning, was a fort held by the enemy which he determined to attack. But the day was sultry. The troops were exhausted by their march. So the General pitched his camp at once, and giving his troops a few hours to recruit and refresh themselves, postponed the attack to the afternoon. At three o'clock the General went out with the 40th Queen's, the 16th and 38th Native Infantry Regiments, all his cavalry details, Anderson's troop of Horse Artillery, two guns of Blood's battery, and two eighteen-pounders. The ground between our camp and the fort was difficult. Some time elapsed before the guns could be brought up to breaching distance. And, when at last they opened upon the fort, they made so little impression, that Shumshoodeen was persuaded by his chiefs not to shrink any longer from a general action with a force whose cavalry had been already beaten in the field, and whose artillery now seemed so little formidable. So, scattering his horsemen on both sides so as to outflank us, Shumshoodeen moved down with the main body of his infantry and his guns; and, planting the latter on the nearest height, opened a rapid and well-directed fire on the British columns.[291] [332]
Then Nott drew off his troops from the attack of the fort, and advanced in column to the right, flanked by Anderson's guns and Christie's Horse, upon the main body of Shumshoodeen's fighting men. On this the enemy crowded upon the other flank, keeping up a smart fire both from their guns and jezails; so Nott "changed front to the left, deployed, threw out skirmishers, and advanced in line, supported by the guns."[292] For some time, the enemy seemed inclined to engage us, and kept up a sharp fire from their guns and jezails; but when our troops came to the charge, and pushed on with a loud and cheerful hurrah, the Afghans turned and fled before us. One of their guns broke down and was immediately captured. Christie, with his Horse, went off in pursuit of the other, sabred the drivers, and carried off the piece. Shumshoodeen's tents, magazines, and stores were found scattered about the plain. The chief himself fled to Ghuznee; and the tribes who had joined his standard now dispersed to their homes.

Nott halted upon his ground during the following day, and on the 1st of September resumed his march. On the 5th, he was before Ghuznee. The day was spent in desultory fighting. Shumshoodeen, who had been reinforced from Caubul by Sultan Jan, occupied with a strong body of horse and foot some heights to the north-east of the fortress. The gay attire and fine chargers of the chiefs made them conspicuous even at a distance.[293] The gardens, the ravines, and water-courses were filled with jezailchees; and the city seemed to be swarming with men. Before encamping his force, Nott determined to clear the heights; and gallantly the work was done. Our troops [333]
ascended in noble style, and drove the enemy before them until every point was gained.[294] In the mean time the camp had been pitched. Two infantry regiments and two guns were left out to occupy the heights, and the remainder of the troops were then withdrawn.

Scarcely, however, had the troops entered their camp, when the great Ghuznee gun, the "Zubbur Jung," began to open upon it. It was plain that Nott had taken up a position too near to the enemy's works. Fourteen shots were thrown into our camp without doing any mischief; but the warning was not thrown away. The tents were struck, and the camp was moved to another position, in the vicinity of the village of Roza.[295] The movement was not without danger; [296] but the enemy wanted spirit to turn it to good account—and in their new position our troops were secure.[297]

Before sunset the firing had ceased. Sanders, the engineer, a [334]
man of rare talent, now began to make his arrangements for the siege of Ghuznee. It was not believed that the defence would be conducted with much vigour. The fort was very poorly manned. It was obvious that Shumshoodeen had trusted more to external operations. The tribes who had been summoned for the defence of the city had already begun to lose heart. When they saw our

engineers at work busily constructing their batteries, they called upon Shumshoodeen to come within the walls, and take his share of the dangers of the siege. Vainly he represented that his cavalry were of greater service beyond the walls—vainly he set forth that as there was no barley in the city his horses could not be fed. They had made up their minds to evacuate the place; and when night closed in upon them, they moved out quietly by the water-gate of the city, and betook themselves to the hills. Seeing now that all was over, Shumshoodeen mounted his horse, and with a small party of followers fled to Caubul.

The engineers worked busily throughout the night; but as the batteries took shape under their hands, the stillness within the walls of Ghuznee aroused their suspicions. So at early dawn, with a party of some twenty men, North, the engineer, went down to reconnoitre; and finding the water-gate open, and the city apparently abandoned, sent intelligence to the party on the hill, and the 16th Regiment, which had remained out to protect the working parties, was marched down to occupy the place. They found it almost deserted. A few Hindoos and some Sepoys of the unfortunate 27th Regiment were the only occupants of Ghuznee.[A] And when, [335] at early dawn, the officers of Nott's camp looked through their telescopes towards the citadel, they plainly saw our Sepoys on the ramparts. Soon the British flag was waving from the highest tower, and Shumshoodeen's artillery, worked by his enemies, was roaring out a royal salute in honour of their triumph. The General and his staff rode out from camp to inspect the place, and to make arrangements for its destruction. They found the city a mass of ruins; and in the houses which had been occupied by the officers of Palmer's garrison, many sorrowful mementoes of the sufferings they had endured, written or scratched on the walls. The citadel was in good repair, and every one who inspected it marvelled how it happened that Palmer had yielded it up, and trusted himself and his men to the honour of his treacherous opponents.[298]

And now began the work of destruction. The artillery officers burst the enemy's guns, and the engineers ran mines and exploded them, under different parts of the works. After this the town and citadel were fired. The wood-work soon ignited, and all through the night the flames of the burning fortress lit up the over-hanging sky.[299]

But there was something else now to be done. At the village of Roza, in the vicinity of Ghuznee, is the tomb of Sultan Mahmoud. A peculiar odour of sanctity is exhaled from that shrine. The priests, in whose guardianship it is held, have their traditions concerning it, in [336] which the spurious greatly prevails. Its boasted antiquity is not supported by any credible evidence; and when Major Rawlinson carried to the examination of the inscriptions on the tomb all that profound knowledge and acute penetration which have since attained for him, in the Eastern and in the Western world, so wide a celebrity as the first of Oriental antiquaries, he had at once detected unmistakeable proofs of their belonging to a more recent period than the Moollahs had claimed for them.[300] Still the shrine was a [337] venerable one, and by the priesthood of Afghanistan held in no common esteem. The famous sandal-wood gates of Somnauth, which Mahmoud had carried off from their home in Guzerat, were deposited at the conqueror's tomb. Such at least had long been the popular faith; and among the priesthood and the people of Afghanistan, no one doubted that the trophies were genuine. It was reserved for European scepticism to cast discredit upon the reality of the sacred relics.

But, whether genuine or spurious, upon these gates Lord Ellenborough had fixed his desires. What he knew about them, where he had read of them, or by whom his attention was drawn to them, History cannot determine. It is sufficient that on the 4th of July, when the Governor-General wrote to General Nott, authorising him to "retire" to the provinces of India, by the route of Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad, he inserted in this memorable letter a paragraph instructing the General to despoil the tomb of Sultan Mahmoud. "You will bring away," he wrote, "from the tomb of Mahmoud of Ghuznee, his club, which hangs over it, and you will bring away the gates of his tomb, which are the gates of the Temple of Somnauth." So, on the 8th of September, under Sanders's superintendence, the gates of Mahmoud's tomb were carried off, as tenderly as they could perform the duty, by a party of English

soldiers. The Moollahs wept bitterly. But the shrine was not otherwise profaned; and the excitement which the spoliation created scarcely extended beyond the holy circle of the priesthood. [301]

[338] Onward went Nott with his trophies. On the 12th he was before Sydeabad, where Woodburn and his men had been decoyed and massacred. This fort was at once destroyed; and another was fired [339] by the camp-followers.[302] On the following day the enemy crowned the hills on both flanks; but not until the 14th did they appear in sufficient numbers, or assume such an attitude, as to bring on a collision with our advancing troops. On that day, near Mydan, Nott attacked them on the heights. It seemed that Shumshoodeen and Sultan Jan had determined to make a last stand for the defence of the capital; but having hitherto gained so little advantage by meeting us in the open country, had resolved to try the effect of opposing us at the gorge of the hills stretching towards Mydan. Here they had thrown up breastworks. Nott, however, precipitated the engagement, and carried the contest to the heights.[303] All arms were now engaged. The day was a busy one. It was one of doubtful victory on either side. The heights were carried; but they were not held. And when night fell upon the contending hosts, and the moon again lit up the scene, it seemed that the work was not yet done. A busy night was looked for as the sequel of a busy day. But suddenly the exertions of the enemy slackened. News of the defeat of Akbar Khan at Tezeen had reached the camp of the chiefs. They seemed to have changed their tactics, and to have moved off to Urghundeh—a place a few miles nearer to the capital.

[340] The position which Shumshoodeen had intended to take up, at the gorge of the Mydan Pass, was found, when Nott advanced on the following day, to have been abandoned. But the day was a busy one. The tribes were up along the line of march and harassed us severely with their jezails. The breaking down of one of our guns crippled our movements and gave some temporary advantage to the enemy. All arms of our force distinguished themselves. The practice of the guns was excellent. The infantry clomb the heights with their wonted gallantry; and the cavalry did good service. The result was all that could be wished, and to the Afghans the day was a disastrous one. The Mydanees, who had been actively engaged in the Caubul insurrection, and some of whom had now accompanied Sultan Jan in his march to the southward, and had been engaged, under his standard, with the British troops at Ghuznee, now sent a deputation to the General claiming his protection. Nott dismissed them with an indignant rebuke. Little protection was there in store for them. The Sepoys and camp-followers began to fire their forts, and at sunset six-and-twenty of them might have been counted lighting up the evening sky.

The march was now nearly at an end. Passing Urghundeh on the 16th of September—the place where, in the autumn of 1839, Dost Mahomed had planted his guns, and determined to make a last stand against Sir John Keane’s advancing army—Nott’s division neared Caubul. On the 17th, it had encamped at a distance of some four or five miles from the city. But the Jellalabad army had anticipated its arrival. Caubul was already in possession of the British. Pollock had planted the British ensign upon the heights of the Balla Hissar.

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[341]

# CHAPTER III.

## [September-October: 1842.]

The Re-occupation of Caubul—Installation of Futteh Jung—The Recovery of the Prisoners—Their Arrival in Camp—The Expedition into the Kohistan—Destruction of the Great Bazaar—Depredations in the City—Accession of Shahpoor—Departure of the British Army.

On the 15th of September, Pollock's force had encamped on the Caubul race-course. It had encountered no opposition along the line of road from Bootkhak, and it was plain now that there was no enemy to be encountered at the capital. Akbar Khan had fled to Ghorebund, ready, if need be, to take flight across the Hindoo-Koosh. The other hostile chiefs were supposed to be in the Kohistan. Everything at Caubul betokened the panic engendered by the approach of our retributory arms.

On the day after his arrival, Pollock prepared formally to take possession of the Balla Hissar. A detachment of horse and foot, with a troop of horse artillery, was told off, to give effect to the ceremony. The British flag was to be hoisted on the highest point of the citadel, and the British guns were to roar forth a royal salute in honour of the re-occupation of the capital of Afghanistan.

All this was done—but, on that September morning, there occurred coincidentally with it another event much controverted and much misunderstood. The wretched Prince Futteh Jung, who, two weeks before, had carried his tattered clothes and his [342] bewildered brain to General Pollock's camp at Gundamuck, had now returned under the General's protection, to start again as a candidate for the throne from which he had been driven by the Barukzye Sirdar. It was not the policy of the British Government openly to interfere for the establishment of any government in Afghanistan, or to identify itself with any particular party or Prince. But both Pollock and Macgregor were of opinion, that so long as the British were to remain at Caubul, it would be desirable that a government of some kind should be established, if only to enable our armies more surely to obtain their supplies. Some sort of indirect assistance and protection was therefore extended to the Prince. The friendly chiefs were encouraged to give in their allegiance to him; and he was suffered to turn to his own uses the ceremony of the re-occupation of the Balla Hissar. He asked and obtained permission to accompany the British detachment; because, he said, treachery was to be apprehended, if he proceeded to the palace without the support of his father's allies.

And so it happened, that when the British detachment moved from its ground towards the Balla Hissar, the Prince, attended by some of his principal adherents, fell in at the head of the procession. A portion of the town was traversed by the detachment on its way to the citadel. But, although the hideous sights of the last few days were still fresh in the memory of the troops, they resisted all temptation to violence and outrage. Not a man was hurt, or a house injured. In orderly procession they streamed into the citadel. The road to the point at which the colours were to be hoisted ran by the palace gates. As a road for the passage of artillery, indeed, it terminated there. It was necessary that the General should halt the guns and troops in the vicinity of the palace. There was no point [343] beyond, to which they could proceed. The Prince and his attendants entered the royal abode; and the British General, with some of his principal officers, were invited to appear at his installation. Pollock sate on a chair on the right of the throne, and M'Caskill on the left. Then was gone through the ceremony of appointing officers of state; and the British allies of the new King took their departure, and went about their own work. The General and his Staff moved forward with the British colours, and planted them on the highest conspicuous point of the Balla Hissar. As the colours were raised the troops presented arms, the guns broke out into a royal salute, the band struck up the National Anthem, and three hearty cheers went up to announce that the vindication of our national honour was complete.

So far was the restoration of Futteh Jung to the throne of his fathers encouraged and aided by the British General. The Prince had been suffered to hang on to the skirts of Circumstance, and to make the most of a favourable coincidence. But so careful was

Pollock not to encourage in the breast of the Shah-zadah and his adherents any hope of more direct assistance from the British Government, that Macgregor was deputed to wait on Futteh Jung after the Durbar, and to enter into a definite explanation of our views. He was emphatically told that he was to look for no assistance, in men, money, or arms, from the British Government; and that therefore it behoved him to turn his own resources to the best account.[304] He was instructed, too, that the British authorities [344] were unwilling to interfere in any way in the administration, and that it was necessary that he should immediately proceed unbiassed to the election of a minister. The choice lay between the Nizam-ood-dowlah and Gholam Mahomed Khan, Populzye. On the evening of the 18th a council was held, and the decision of the Prince and the chiefs was eventually in favour of the latter.

In the mean while, Pollock's mind was heavy with thoughts of the [345] probable fate of the British prisoners. They had been carried off towards the regions of the Hindoo-Koosh, and were, perhaps, even now on the way to hopeless slavery in Toorkistan. Immediately on his arrival at Caubul, the General had despatched his military secretary, Sir Richmond Shakespear, with a party of 600 Kuzzilbash Horse,[305] to overtake the prisoners and their escort. But there was a possibility of this party being intercepted by the enemy. It was said that Sultan Jan was hovering about with some such mischievous intent. At all events, it was expedient to send a strong detachment of British troops to the support of Shakespear and his Kuzzilbashes. The service was one which any officer might have been proud to undertake. Pollock offered the honour of the undertaking to Nott and the Candahar division. But the offer was not accepted.

The two divisions of the British army were on opposite sides of Caubul. The first communication that had taken place between them was accomplished through the agency of Major Rawlinson. He had ridden in Afghan costume from Nott's camp at Urghundeh, and had joined Pollock's division on the morning of the 16th of September, shortly after the British colours had been planted on the Balla Hissar. On the following day Rawlinson returned to Nott's camp. Mayne, who had done such good service at Jellalabad, and who was now attached to Pollock's staff, rode with him, attended by a party of Irregular Horse. They bore a note from Pollock, suggesting that a brigade from the Candahar division should be detached towards Bameean, to assist the recovery of the prisoners. The Candahar force were pitching their camp at Char-Deh, when Rawlinson and Mayne reached them. Nott received the letter of his brother-general in no very genial mood. He had already made up his mind on the [346] subject. Twice before had the officers of his own force suggested to General Nott that the recovery of the prisoners would be facilitated by the despatch of a detachment from his division.[306] But he had always answered, that he believed the recovery of the prisoners to be a matter of indifference to Government, and that he did not consider it expedient to divide his force.

When, therefore, the proposal came to him in a more official shape from his brother-general—upon whom, as the senior officer, had now devolved the command of all the troops in Afghanistan—he received it as one on which he had no consideration to bestow, and determined at once, within the bounds of due subordination, to decline it. It would be well if there were nothing else to record. Unhappily, the temper of the Candahar General was such, that the officer—one of the bravest and, for his years, the most distinguished in Afghanistan—who presented himself in Nott's camp, to bring back the General's answer, met with a welcome which may little have surprised, however much it may have pained, the officers of [347] Nott's Staff, but which, upon one accustomed, in Sale's and Pollock's camps, to the courtesies due to a soldier and a gentleman, burst like a loaded shell. Chafing under the thought of being recommended by his superior to do what his own better judgment suggested to him that he ought to have done unprompted, the Candahar General poured upon Mayne and his escort all the vials of his wrath. What he said was heard by many, and is upon record. Mayne, stung by the insult put upon him by the veteran commander, refused to continue in his camp, and said he would await at the outlying picket the answer which he was commissioned to carry back to Pollock's tent.[307]

But when Nott entered his tent, and sat down to write a reply to his brother-general, he did not wholly forget the duties of a soldier

to his superior in rank. He stated, in emphatic language, his reasons for protesting against the adoption of the course suggested to him; but at the same time declared his willingness to obey the orders of his superior officer. What these reasons were must be set forth in his own words:

Camp, September 17th, 1842.

My Dear General,

I have been favoured with your note of this date, in which you express a wish that I should detach a brigade towards Bameean; before you decide on sending it, I would beg to state as follows:—

1st. The troops under my command have just made a long and very difficult march of upwards of 300 miles, and they have been continually marching about for the last six months, and most certainly require rest for a day or two—the same with my camels and other cattle. I lost twenty-nine camels yesterday, and expect to-day's report will be double that number. [348]

2nd. I am getting short of supplies for Europeans and natives, and I can see but little probability of getting a quantity equal to my daily consumption at this place. I have little or no money.

3rd. I have so many sick and wounded that I fear I shall have the greatest inconvenience and difficulty in carrying them; and should any unnecessary operations add to their number, they must be left to perish. If I remain here many days I shall expect to lose half my cattle, which will render retirement very difficult.

4th. I sincerely think that sending a small detachment will and must be followed by deep disaster. No doubt Mahomed Akbar, Shumshoodeen, and the other chiefs, are uniting their forces, and I hourly expect to hear that Sir R. Shakespear is added to the number of British prisoners. In my last affair with Shumshoodeen and Sultan Jan, they had 12,000 men; and my information is that two days ago they set out for Bameean.

5th. After much experience in this country, my opinion is that, if the system of sending out detachments should be adopted, disaster and ruin will follow.

6th. After bringing to your notice, showing that my men require rest for a day or two, that my camels are dying fast, and that my supplies are nearly expended, should you order my force to be divided, I have nothing to do but implicitly to obey your orders; but, my dear General, I feel assured you will excuse me when I most respectfully venture to protest against it under the circumstances above noted. I could have wished to have stated this in person to you, but I have been so very unwell for the last two months that I am sure you will kindly excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

Wm. Nott.[308]

On the following day, Nott having excused himself on the plea of ill health from visiting Pollock in his camp, Pollock, waiving the distinction of his superior rank, called upon his brother-general. The conversation which ensued related mainly to the question of the despatch of the brigade in aid of the recovery of the British prisoners. Nott had made up his mind on the subject. He was not to be moved from his first position. There were few besides himself who considered the arguments which he advanced to be of the overwhelming and conclusive character which Nott himself believed them to be; and it was, at all events, sufficiently clear, that as it was of primal importance on such a service to lose the least possible amount of time, it was desirable to detach a brigade from Nott's camp, in preference to one from Pollock's, if only because the former was some ten miles nearer to Bameean than the latter. Nott was inflexible. Government, he said, "had thrown the prisoners overboard"—why then should he rescue them? He would obey the orders of his superior officer, but only under protest. So Pollock returned to camp, and delegated to another officer the honourable service which Nott had emphatically declined. Sir Robert Sale was not likely to decline it. Though his own heroic wife had not been one of the captives, every feeling of the soldier and the man would have responded to the appeal. [349]

So Sale took out with him a brigade from the Jellalabad army, and pushed on in pursuit of Shakespear and the Kuzzilbashes. But already had the release of the prisoners been effected. They had accomplished their own liberation. Sale met them with Shakespear and the Kuzzilbash escort on their way to Pollock's camp.

The story which they had to tell was this. On the afternoon of the 25th of August the prisoners,[309] who had already received a general intimation that they were to be carried off to Bameean, but

who had still ventured to hope that some efforts might be made by the chiefs in our interests to release them, were warned by Captain Troup, who had just returned from an interview with the Sirdar, to [350] prepare for the journey towards the Hindoo-Koosh. Soon after sunset a guard of three hundred men arrived to escort them. Their ponies, camels, and litters were brought, and an hour or two before midnight they started upon their dreary journey.

They were not suffered to sleep that night, nor the next; but were painfully hurried on towards the inhospitable regions of the Indian Caucasus. All the forts and villages by which they passed poured forth their inhabitants to stare, with wondering curiosity, at the Feringhee captives.[310] But none insulted them in their misfortunes. Often, indeed, by the rude inhabitants of the country [351] through which they passed, were many looks, and words, and deeds of kindness freely bestowed upon them. Onwards still, in upward direction, they went, thousands of feet above the level of the sea. The days were painfully sultry, and the nights were bitterly cold. The alternations of climate told fearfully upon the constitutions of the European prisoners; and their sick increased in numbers. The soldiers and camp-followers, for whom no carriage was provided, dragged their infirm limbs wearily over the barren wastes and up the steep ascents of the Hindoo-Koosh, the officers giving up their horses to the ladies, for whom the camel panniers were no longer secure, toiled wearily after them up the rugged slopes.

On the 3rd of September they reached Bameean. Conducted to one wretched fort and then to another, they remonstrated against the noisome quarters to which it was proposed to consign them; and twice their importunities prevailed. But at last, on the 9th of September, the commandant of their escort ordered them to take up their abode in another fort, scarcely less wretched than the others, and portioned out among them some small and comfortless apartments, so dark that they could scarcely see in them, and so filthy that they could write their names in the soot that covered the roof. But their residence in this place was but brief. They soon effected their escape.

The commander of the escort was one Saleh Mahomed. A soldier of fortune, who had visited many countries and served under many masters, he had been at one time a soubahdar in Captain Hopkins's regiment of infantry, and had deserted with his men to Dost Mahomed on the eve of the contest at Bameean. A good-humoured, loquacious, boasting man, he was never happier than when narrating his adventures to the English officers under his charge. Among them there was not one who better understood the Afghan character, or who had made more friends in the country, than [352] Captain Johnson; and now, in a short time, between him and Saleh Mahomed an intimacy was established, which the former began to turn to the best account.[311] He rode with the commandant, listened to his stories; and soon began to throw out hints that a lakh of rupees and a pension in Hindostan might be found for him, if, instead of carrying off his prisoners to Bameean, he would conduct them in safety to the British camp. To Pottinger, who had hitherto been the chief negotiator on the part of the captives, Johnson would now have confided the delicate duty of inducing the deserter again to desert; but the task was declined, on the plea that the attempt was more likely to succeed in the hands of the latter, who seemed to have inspired a feeling of friendship in the breast of the commandant. Pottinger disliked the man; and the man seemed to dislike him. So Johnson began, with admirable tact and address, to work upon the cupidity of his friend.

On the 29th of August, the suggestion was put forth, in a light [353] and jesting manner; and not until he had convinced himself that there would be no danger in a more direct proposition, did Johnson suffer Saleh Mahomed to feel that he was thoroughly in earnest. The Afghan was in no hurry to commit himself. Days passed. The party reached Bameean; and no allusion was made to the subject; till one day—the 11th of September—Saleh Mahomed sent for Johnson, Pottinger, and Lawrence, and in a private room of the fort, which had been appropriated to Lady Sale, produced a letter which he had just received from Akbar Khan. The Sirdar had instructed him to convey the prisoners to Kooloom, and to make them all over to the Wullee of that place. It seemed then that they were about to end their days in hopeless captivity among the Oosbegs. But the despair which fell upon them was but short-lived. Saleh Mahomed soon

dispersed their fears by saying that one Syud Moorteza Shah, a Cashmeree, who, during the Caubul insurrection, had helped Johnson to collect grain from the villages, had arrived from Caubul, and brought a message from Mohun Lai to the effect, that if he would release the prisoners, General Pollock would ensure him a life-pension of 1000 rupees a month, and make him a present of 20,000 rupees. “I know nothing of General Pollock,” then said Saleh Mahomed, “but if you three gentlemen will swear by your Saviour to make good to me what Syud Moorteza Shah states that he is authorised to offer, I will deliver you over to your own people.” The offer was at once accepted. With little delay an agreement was written out in Persian by Syud Moorteeza Shah, and signed by Johnson, Pottinger, Lawrence, and Mackenzie.[312] It was a perilous [354] game—for Saleh Mahomed had twice played the traitor before, and might assume the same character again. But the prize was too great and too tempting for them to hesitate even to risk their lives; so they flung themselves without hesitation into the hazardous plot.

Cheerfully did the prisoners now bind themselves to provide from their own resources, all according to their means, the money that was required to carry out the grand object of their liberation. The signatures of all the officers and ladies were obtained to the bond. [313] Saleh Mahomed proved to be staunch and true. The conspiracy [355] was wholly successful; and the conspirators soon grew bold in their success. The rebellion of Saleh Mahomed and his European allies was openly proclaimed to all the chiefs and people of Bameean and the surrounding country. A flag was hoisted on the fort which they occupied. They deposed the governor of the place, and appointed a more friendly chief in his stead. They levied contributions upon a party of Lohanee merchants, who were passing that way; and so supplied themselves with funds. And, to crown all, Major Pottinger began to issue proclamations, calling upon all the neighbouring chiefs to come in and make their salaam; he granted remissions of revenue; and all the decent clothes in the possession of the party were collected to bestow as *Khelats*.

But, in spite of the boldness of their outward bearing at this time, they were not without some apprehensions that their dominion might soon be broken down, and the lords of to-day reduced again to captives and slaves to-morrow. Some of the confederate chiefs might ere long appear at Bameean and overwhelm the rebellion of Saleh Mahomed. So the new rulers began to strengthen their position, and make preparations to stand a siege. They had promised their guards—in all some 250 men—four months’ pay, as a gratuity, on reaching Caubul; and there was every reason to rely on their fidelity.[314] Commanded by European officers, it was believed that they would make a good show of resistance. So Pottinger and his companions began to clear out the loopholes of the forts—to dig wells—to lay in provisions—and otherwise to provide against the [356] probability of a siege. They were busily employed in this manner on the 15th of September, when a horseman was observed approaching from the Caubul side of the valley. Eager for intelligence from the capital, they left their work and gathered round him. He brought glad tidings. Akbar Khan had been defeated by General Pollock at Tezeen, and had fled no one knew whither. The aspect of affairs was now changed, indeed. The common voice of the prisoners—prisoners no longer—declared in favour of an immediate return to Caubul. It was decided that, on the following morning, they should set out for Pollock’s camp.

At eight o’clock on the morning of the 16th they started on their journey. Sleeping that night, in the clear moonlight, on hard stony beds, they were awakened by the arrival of a friendly chief who brought a letter from Sir Richmond Shakespear, stating that he was on his way to Bameean, with a party of 600 Kuzzilbash horse. This was cheering intelligence. At daybreak they were again astir, pushing on with increased rapidity, in a whirl of excitement, unconscious of hunger or fatigue. Their trials were now nearly at an end. They had heart enough to do and to suffer anything.

About three hours after noon on the 17th of September, a cloud of dust was observed to rise from the summit of a mountain-pass in their front. Presently a few straggling horsemen made their appearance, and, in a little time, the English officers could plainly see a body of cavalry winding down the pass. Great now was the excitement in our little party. The horsemen who were now approaching might be Shakespear and the Kuzzilbashes, or they

might be a body of the enemy. It was well at least to prepare for their reception. Saleh Mahomed's drums were beaten; all stragglers were called in; every man stood to his arms; a line was formed;[315] [357] the muskets were loaded; and Saleh Mahomed seemed all eagerness to give the enemy a warm reception. But there was no enemy to be defeated. An English officer soon appeared galloping a-head of the horsemen. Shakespear had arrived with his Kuzzilbashes. He was soon in the midst of the prisoners, offering them his congratulations, receiving their thanks, and endeavouring to answer their thick-coming questions.

At daybreak on the following morning they pushed on again. Some better horses had been obtained from the Kuzzilbashes; and now they moved forward with increasing rapidity. On the 20th, as two or three of the officers riding on a-head of the party were nearing Urghundeh, which was to be their halting-place, another cloud of dust was observed rising over the hills; and soon the welcome tidings reached them that a large body of British cavalry and infantry was approaching. This was the column which Pollock had sent out in support of the Kuzzilbash Horse—the column that Sale commanded. In a little time the happy veteran had embraced his wife and daughter; and the men of the 13th had offered their delighted congratulations to the loved ones of their old commander. A royal salute was fired. The prisoners were safe in Sale's camp. Their anxieties were at an end. The good Providence that had so long watched over the prisoner and the captive now crowned its mercies by delivering them into the hands of their friends. Dressed as they were in Afghan costume, their faces bronzed by much exposure, and rugged with beards and moustachios of many months' growth, it was not easy to recognise the liberated officers who now pushed forward to receive the congratulations of their friends. On [358] that day they skirted the ground on which the Candahar force was posted, and out went officers, and soldiers, and camp-followers, eager and curious, to gaze at the released captives, and half-inclined to fall upon their guards.[316] On the 21st of September they passed through the city, on their way to Pollock's camp. They found the shops closed; the streets deserted; and they paused, as they went along, before some melancholy memorials of the great outbreak which, a year before, had overwhelmed us with misery and disgrace.[317]

Great was the joy which the recovery of the prisoners diffused throughout the camps of Pollock and Nott; and great was the joy which it diffused throughout the provinces of India. Rightly judged Pollock that, if he returned to Hindostan without the brave men and tender women who had endured for so many months the pains and perils of captivity in a barbarous country, his countrymen would regard the victory as incomplete. Let him fight what battles, destroy what forts, and carry off what trophies he might, he would, without the liberation of the prisoners, be only half-a-conqueror after all. Pollock knew that his countrymen had not "thrown the prisoners [359] overboard." He had rescued them now from the hands of the enemy; that object of the war was obtained. There was little else, indeed, now to be done, except to fix upon Caubul some lasting mark of the just retribution of an outraged nation. It had been the declared wish of the Supreme Government that the army should leave behind it some decisive proof of its power, without impeaching its humanity; and now Pollock prepared to carry, as best he could interpret them, those wishes into effect.

The interpretation, however, was not easy. Very different opinions obtained among the leading officers in the British camp respecting the amount of punishment which it now became the British General to inflict upon the Afghan capital. It was a moot question, involving many considerations, and not to be hastily solved; but there could have been no question whether, at that time, justice and expediency did not alike require that the inhabitants of Caubul and the neighbourhood should be protected against unauthorised acts of depredation and violence. Against the plunderings of soldiers and camp-followers Pollock had steadfastly set his face; but in the neighbourhood of Nott's camp much was done to destroy the confidence which Pollock was anxious to re-establish, and to alarm and irritate the chiefs whom he desired to conciliate.[318] After a few days the new minister and Khan Shereen [360] Khan, the chief of the Kuzzilbashes, determined to represent to Pollock, in a joint letter, the grievances of which they thought they

were entitled to complain.[319]

The minister had been anxious to pay his respects to the gallant commander of the Candahar division, and had waited upon him with a letter from Macgregor; but Nott had peremptorily refused to give him an audience. He believed it to be the desire of Lord Ellenborough that no Afghan Government should be recognised by the British authorities, and he was unwilling to favour any such recognition by receiving visits of ceremony from the functionaries appointed by the government which had been established at Caubul. As Pollock had not been equally nice upon this point, the refusal of [361] his brother-general to extend his courtesies to the minister could only have embarrassed our supreme authorities at Caubul, and attached suspicion to the sincerity of our proceedings. But Nott, at this time, was in no mood of mind to extend his courtesies either to Afghan or to British authorities. It was his belief that even then the British army ought to have been on its way to Jellalabad. He had with him a sufficiency of supplies to carry him to the latter place; and was irritated at the thought that Pollock had come up to Caubul without provisions to carry him back.[320] If he had been in supreme authority at Caubul, he would have destroyed the Balla Hissar and the city, and would have marched on with the least possible delay to Jellalabad. He placed his sentiments on record regarding the impolicy of the halt at Caubul—declared that he would be compelled to make military requisitions to rescue his troops from starvation; and denounced Futteh Jung and the new ministers as the enemies of the British. Nothing, indeed, could dissuade Nott that every Afghan in the country was not our bitter foe.

Pollock, however, was inclined to discriminate—to protect our friends and to punish our enemies. Whilst supplies were coming in but slowly to his camp, it seemed good to him that another blow should be struck at the hostile chiefs. It was reported to him that Ameen-oollah Khan was in the field at Istaliff, in the Kohistan, endeavouring to bring together the scattered fragments of the broken Barukzye force. It was believed to be the design of the chief [362] to attack the British on their retirement from Caubul; and it was expedient, therefore, at once to break up his force, and to leave some mark of our just resentment on a part of the country which had poured forth so many of the insurgents who had risen against us in the preceding winter. A force taken from the two divisions of the British army was therefore despatched, under General M’Caskill, to Istaliff, to scatter the enemy there collected, and to destroy the place. It was thought, moreover, that Ameen-oollah Khan, dreading the advance of the retributory army, would endeavour to conciliate the British General, by delivering up to him the person of Mahomed Akbar Khan, if he could adroitly accomplish his seizure. The Sirdar had sent his family and his property into Turkistan; and was himself waiting the progress of events in the Ghorebund Pass, ready, it was said, to follow his establishment across the hills, if the British troops pushed forward to overtake him.

The hostile chiefs were all now at the last gasp—all eager to conciliate the power that a few months before they had derided and defied. Already had Ameen-oollah Khan begun to make overtures to the British authorities—to declare that he had always at heart been their friend; but that he had been compelled to secure his own safety by siding with the Barukzyes. And now Akbar Khan with the same object, sent into Pollock’s camp a peace-offering, in the shape of the last remaining prisoner in his hands. Captain Bygrave was now restored to his friends. It might have been a feeling of generosity—for generous impulses sometimes welled up in the breast of the Sirdar; it might have been a mere stroke of policy, having reference solely to his own interests; or it might, and it probably was, a mixture of the two influences that prevailed upon him; but he would not any longer make war upon a single man, and [363] upon one, too, whom he personally respected and esteemed with the respect and esteem due to a man of such fine qualities as Bygrave. So he sent the last remaining prisoner safely into Pollock’s camp; and with him he sent a letter of conciliation, and an agent commissioned to treat for him. He was eager to enter into negotiations with the British. It was little likely that so weak a Prince as Futteh Jung would be able to maintain his regal authority in Afghanistan a day after the departure of the British; and it appeared to him not wholly improbable that, wishing to leave behind them a friendly power in Afghanistan, the British authorities

might be induced to enter into a convention with him before their final departure from the country.

Even now was Futteh Jung himself beginning to acknowledge his utter inability to maintain himself in the Balla Hissar after the striking of Pollock's camp. Pollock had refused to supply him with troops, money, or arms; and the Prince himself had closed the door of reconciliation with his old Barukzye enemies by destroying their houses and property. Among the houses thus destroyed, it is deplorable to state, was the house of Mahomed Zemaun Khan—the very house in which the good old man, with real parental kindness, had so long and so faithfully protected the British hostages. The houses of Oosman Khan, Jubbar Khan, and others fell also. It was the policy of the Prince thus to compromise his supporters, and to prevent an alliance between them and the Barukzye party; but having done this, he felt that it was only by destroying the hostile chiefs that he could, in any way, maintain his position. He watched, therefore, with anxiety the issue of the expedition into the Kohistan, and deferred his ultimate decision until the return of M'Caskill's force.

Aided by and relying on the wise counsels of Havelock, M'Caskill [364] made a rapid march upon Istaliff, and took the enemy by surprise. The town is built, terrace above terrace, upon two ridges of the spur of the Hindoo-Koosh, which forms the western boundary of the beautiful valley of Kohistan. It was held in high repute as a maiden fortress by the Afghans, who had now collected, in its fortified streets and squares, their treasure and their women. Looking to it as to a place of refuge, secure from the assaults of the invading Feringhees, they had scarcely made any military dispositions. M'Caskill's first intention had been to attack the left face of the city; but the intelligence brought in by a reconnoitering party, on the evening of his arrival, caused him to change his plan of operations, and to conduct the assault on the right. Soon after daybreak, therefore, on the following morning (the 29th of September), the camp was in motion towards the right of the city. The enemy soon marked the movement; and, believing that our columns were in retreat, poured in a sharp fire upon them. Growing more and more audacious in this belief, the foremost Afghans pressed closely upon our covering party, which, composed of Broadfoot's sappers under their intrepid chief, soon found themselves in fierce collision with a large body of the enemy posted in a walled garden. There was a sturdy hand-to-hand conflict. The little band of sappers pushed on, and the Afghans retreated before them up the slopes in the direction of the city, where they would have been overwhelmed. But the time had now come for operations on a larger scale. Havelock and Mayne, who had observed the dangerous position of the sappers, galloped to the General, and urged the necessity of supporting Broadfoot. M'Caskill, who had made his arrangements for the assault, now ordered the columns to advance upon the city. Her Majesty's 9th Foot and the 26th Native Infantry, who had done [365] such good service before, delighted to receive the word to advance to the support of the sappers, tore across the intervening space, in generous emulation, and rushed cheerily to the encounter; whilst on the other side of the enemy's position, the light companies of Her Majesty's 41st, and the 42nd and 43rd Sepoy regiments of Bengal, stormed, with steady gallantry, the village and vineyard to the left. The Afghan marksmen gave way before our attacking columns; and as our men pursued them up the slopes, a great panic seized the people. They thought no longer of defence. Their first care was to save their property and their women. Ameen-oollah Khan himself fled at the first onset. As our troops entered the town, the face of the mountain beyond was covered with laden baggage-cattle, whilst long lines of white-veiled women, striving to reach a place of safety, streamed along the hill-side. The forbearance of our people was equal to their gallantry. M'Caskill, respecting the honour of the women, would not suffer a pursuit; but many fell into the hands of our soldiers in the town, and were safely delivered over to the keeping of the Kuzzilbashes.[321] Two guns and much booty were taken; the town was partially fired; and then M'Caskill went on towards the hills, meeting no opposition on the way, destroyed [366] Charekur, where the Goorkha regiment had been annihilated, and some other fortified places which had been among the strongholds of the enemy; and then returned triumphantly to Caubul.

On the 7th of October, M'Caskill's force rejoined the British camp. It was now necessary that immediate measures should be

adopted for the withdrawal of the British troops from the capital of Afghanistan. Already had Pollock exceeded, but with a wise discretion, the time which the Supreme Government would have accorded to him. But there was yet work to be done. No lasting mark of our retributory visit to Caubul had yet been left upon the accursed city. Pollock had been unable to shape his measures before, for the nature of the retribution to be inflicted was dependent upon the constitution of the new Afghan Government; and it was long uncertain what government the British General would leave behind him. Futteh Jung had been for some time trembling at the thought of the prospect before him. If M'Caskill had brought back Akbar Khan a prisoner, or had sent his head to the British camp, the new King might have summoned resolution to maintain his seat on the throne. But he could never forget the treatment he had received from the Sirdar, or nerve himself again to meet the unscrupulous Barukzye.[322] So now he peremptorily declined to wear the crown which we would fain have kept a little longer on his head; and implored the British General to afford him the protection of his camp, and convey him to the provinces of India.

Willing to spare the city and the Balla Hissar for the sake of a friendly government, Pollock had despatched Shakespear to the Kuzzilbash camp, which was then in the Kohistan, to take counsel with Khan Shereen Khan, and the other chiefs of the Persian party. [367] It seems that they had been sceptical of the intentions of the British General to evacuate the country; but Shakespear now announced that the departure of the army was at hand, and that it was necessary finally to determine upon the nature of the new government. In this conjuncture, the Kuzzilbashes, trembling for the safety of the city, and feeling that there was little hope of their being reconciled to the Barukzye party, laid their hands upon another puppet. There was a younger scion of the Suddozye House then at Caubul—the Prince Shahpoor. His mother was a high-born Populzye lady, and it was believed that his recognition would tend to conciliate the Douranees. Postponing, however, the final enunciation of their views until their return to Caubul, they now proposed that the young Prince should be set up in the place of his brother. At Caubul, a general meeting of the chiefs was held. The voice of the assembly declared in favour of the elevation of Shahpoor. The Prince himself, a high-spirited boy, willingly accepted the crown that was offered to him, and a declaration to that effect, from the Wuzeer and the Kuzzilbash chief, was then sent in to Pollock's camp.

Determined to make a last effort to obtain substantial assistance from the British authorities, the chiefs now waited upon Pollock, and entreated him to leave some British troops behind him for the support of the new monarch. Pollock resolutely refused the request. They then asked him for money. This he also refused. Then came before them the painful subject of the "mark" that was to be left on Caubul. The chiefs pleaded for the city and for the Balla Hissar. Urgently they now set forth the necessity of a Suddozye Prince maintaining the appearance of royalty in the palace of his fathers—urgently they now set forth that the Arabs and Hindostanees, who in [368] the hour of extremest peril had been so faithful to Futteh Jung, were all located in the Balla Hissar; and that the blow would fall with the greatest severity on those who were least deserving of punishment. [323] So Pollock consented to spare the Balla Hissar.

But it was still necessary that some mark of the retributory visit of the British should be left upon the offending city. Pollock, therefore, determined to destroy the great Bazaar. There the mutilated remains of the murdered Envoy had been exhibited to the insolent gaze of the Afghans; and there it was deemed fit that the retributory blow should fall. So, on the 9th of October, Abbott, the chief engineer, received instructions from the General to destroy the Bazaar; but so anxious was Pollock not to extend the work of destruction, that he strictly enjoined the engineer to abstain from applying fire to the building, and even from the employment of gunpowder, that other parts of the city might not be damaged by his operations. At the same time, a strong detachment of British troops, under Colonel Richmond—one of the best and ablest officers of the force—was sent with the engineers, to protect the town from injury and the inhabitants from plunder and outrage.

But it was no easy task to destroy that great Bazaar simply by the work of men's hands. Abbott did his best to obey the instructions he

had received from the General; but he was baffled by the massiveness of the buildings on which he had been sent to operate. It was necessary to employ a more powerful agent. On his own responsibility, therefore, he betook himself to the use of gunpowder. But the explosions damaged no other buildings than those which had authoritatively been marked for destruction. The operations against the great Bazaar lasted throughout the 9th and 10th of October. Every effort was made to save the city from further [369] destruction; but all Richmond's protective measures were insufficient to control the impetuosity of the soldiers and camp-followers who poured themselves into the town.

That many excesses were then committed is not to be denied. The principal gates of the city were guarded; but there were many other points of ingress, and our people streamed into the streets of Caubul, applied the firebrand to the houses, and pillaged the shops. Guilty and innocent alike fell under the heavy hand of the lawless retribution which was now to descend upon the inhabitants of Caubul. Many unoffending Hindoos, who, lulled into a sense of delusive security by the outward re-establishment of a government, had returned to the city and re-opened their shops, were now disastrously ruined.[324] In the mad excitement of the hour, friend and foe were stricken down by the same unsparing hand. Even the [370] *Chundarwal*—where dwelt the friendly Kuzzilbashes—narrowly escaped destruction. Such excesses as were committed during the three last days of our occupation of Caubul must ever be deplored, as all human weakness and wickedness are to be deplored. But when we consider the amount of temptation and provocation—when we remember that the comrades of our soldiers and the brethren of our camp-followers had been foully butchered by thousands in the passes of Afghanistan; that everywhere tokens of our humiliation, and of the treachery and cruelty of the enemy, rose up before our people, stinging them past all endurance, and exasperating them beyond all control, we wonder less, that when the guilty city lay at their feet, they should not wholly have reined in their passions, than that, in such an hour, they should have given them so little head.

It was now time that the British army should depart. Nothing remained to be done. Any longer continuance at Caubul would only have aggravated the sufferings of the people and increased our own difficulties. So, on the 11th of October, orders were issued for the commencement of the march on the following day. The unhappy Prince, Futteh Jung, had claimed and sought permission to accompany Pollock's camp to India, and to seek an asylum in the Company's dominions. The old blind King, Zemaun Shah, after all the vicissitudes of his eventful life, was now about again to become an exile, and to end his days in the same hospitable country. For the family of Shah Soojah protection also had been sought, and not refused; and now all these fragments of the great wreck of royalty—these miserable records of a most disastrous enterprise—were committed to the charge of one who had largely participated in its sufferings, but had happily escaped the ruin which had overwhelmed his comrades and his chief.[325] On the evening of the [371] 11th of October they came out of the town, and found safety in Pollock's hospitable camp.[326] The British colours, which had floated over the Balla Hissar, were now lowered; the regiment which had been posted there was withdrawn; and every preparation was made for the departure of the British army.

On the following morning the two divisions commenced their march. Fearful that the Candahar division, if left in occupation of its old ground, whilst the head-quarters of the army were proceeding in advance, would commit many unauthorised excesses, Pollock had determined that the whole force should move on the same day. There was some inconvenience in this, for Nott's division came up before Pollock's had crossed the Loghur river; but to the cause of humanity it was, doubtless, great gain. The unfortunate Hindoos, who had been rendered destitute by the destruction of Ghuznee and the spoliation of Caubul, had crowded into the British camps, hoping to obtain, in their utter misery, safe conduct to the provinces of India.[327] Pollock took with him what trophies he could, but he had [372] not carriage for all the guns,[328] and even on the first day's march he was compelled to begin their destruction; whilst Nott, rejoicing in a letter from the Governor-General, who was in ecstasies about the gates of Somnauth, and in the notification of his appointment to the Residency of Lucknow, went off with those venerable relics, and

turned his face towards the country, from which they had been traditionally ravished.

And on that day, as Pollock was leaving Caubul, and Nott was striking his camp, the guns of the Balla Hissar roared forth a royal salute in honour of the accession of Prince Shahpoor—the *Fatiha* was read in his name, and the chiefs tendered their allegiance. It was, perhaps, a mere mockery; but it had saved the Balla Hissar. [329] So the new King was paraded about the streets of Caubul—only to be dethroned again before the British army had reached the provinces of India; and that army turned its back upon Afghanistan, not as of old, in the agony of humiliation and defeat, but in the flush of victory and triumph.

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# CHAPTER IV.

## [October-December: 1842.]

Effect of the victories—Lord Ellenborough at Simlah—The Manifesto of 1842—The Proclamation of the Gates—The Restoration of Dost Mahomed—The Gathering at Ferozepore—Reception of the Troops—The Courts-Martial.

NEVER was intelligence received in India with stronger and more universal feelings of delight than the intelligence of the victories of Pollock and Nott; and the happy recovery of the prisoners. There was one general shout of triumphant congratulation, caught up from station to station along the whole line of country from Sirhind to Tinnevelly. Suspense and anxiety now died away in the European breast; and, in the words of one of the ablest Indian statesmen, "it was a comfort again to be able to look a native in the face."[330]

To Lord Ellenborough the brilliant achievements of the two Generals were a source of unbounded gratification. Everything that he could have desired had been accomplished. Pollock and Nott, [375] under his orders, had "retired" so adroitly from Afghanistan, that everybody believed they had advanced upon the capital of the country. The movement had produced, or was producing, a grand moral effect all over Hindostan. Again was there likely to be a season of universal repose. The excitement which had stirred the hearts of the native community was now passing away. All those vague hopes and longings which had sprung up, at the contemplation of our disasters, in Native States of doubtful friendliness and fidelity, were now stifled by the knowledge of our success. The Governor-General had threatened to save India in spite of every man in it who ought to give him support;[331] but it now seemed as though, in reality, Pollock and Nott had achieved the work of salvation in spite of the Governor-General himself.

But Lord Ellenborough was not less delighted than if the work had been emphatically his own. He was at Simlah when the glad tidings of the re-occupation of Caubul reached him. He was at Simlah, and in the very house which had been the cradle of the great manifesto of 1838, out of which had come all our disasters. He was at Simlah; and the 1st of October was temptingly at hand. On the 1st of October, four years before, that manifesto had been issued. From Simlah, therefore, now, on the first of October, another manifesto was to be made to issue. The utter failure of Lord Auckland's policy in Afghanistan was to be proclaimed from the very room in which it had taken shape and consistency.[332] From this [376] very room was to go forth to all the chiefs and people of India a proclamation, laying bare to the very core the gigantic errors which had been baptised in the blood of thousands, and shrouded in contumely and disgrace.

And thus ran the proclamation:

*Secret Department, Simlah, the 1st of October, 1842.*

The Government of India directed its army to pass the Indus in order to expel from Afghanistan a chief believed to be hostile to British interests, and to replace upon his throne a sovereign represented to be friendly to those interests, and popular with his former subjects.

The chief believed to be hostile became a prisoner, and the sovereign represented to be popular was replaced upon his throne; but, after events, which brought into question his fidelity to the government by which he was restored, he lost by the hands of an assassin the throne he had only held amidst insurrections, and his death was preceded and followed by still existing anarchy.

Disasters unparalleled in their extent, unless by the errors in which they originated, and by the treachery by which they were completed, have, in one short campaign, been avenged upon every scene of past misfortune; and repeated victories in the field, and the capture of the cities and citadels of Ghuznee and Caubul, have again attached the opinion of invincibility to the British arms.

The British arms in possession of Afghanistan will now be withdrawn to the Sutlej.

The Governor-General will leave it to the Afghans themselves to create a government amidst the anarchy which is the consequence of their crimes.

To force a sovereign upon a reluctant people, would be as inconsistent with the policy as it is with the principles of the British

Government, tending to place the arms and resources of that people at the disposal of the first invader, and to impose the burden of supporting a sovereign, without the prospect of benefit from his alliance. [377]

The Governor-General will willingly recognise any government approved by the Afghans themselves, which shall appear desirous and capable of maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring states.

Content with the limits nature appears to have assigned to its empire the Government of India will devote all its efforts to the establishment and maintenance of general peace, to the protection of the sovereigns and chiefs its allies, and to the prosperity and happiness of its own faithful subjects.

The rivers of the Punjaub and Indus, and the mountainous passes and the barbarous tribes of Afghanistan, will be placed between the British army and an enemy approaching from the West, if indeed such an enemy there can be, and no longer between the army and its supplies.

The enormous expenditure required for the support of a large force, in a false military position, at a distance from its own frontier and its resources, will no longer arrest every measure for the improvement of the country and of the people.

The combined army of England and of India, superior in equipment, in discipline, in valour, and in the officers by whom it is commanded, to any force which can be opposed to it in Asia, will stand in unassailable strength upon its own soil, and for ever, under the blessing of Providence, preserve the glorious empire it has won, in security and in honour.

The Governor-General cannot fear the misconstruction of his motives in thus frankly announcing to surrounding states the pacific and conservative policy of his government.

Afghanistan and China have seen at once the forces at his disposal, and the effect with which they can be applied.

Sincerely attached to peace for the sake of the benefits it confers upon the people, the Governor-General is resolved that peace shall be observed, and will put forth the whole power of the British Government to coerce the state by which it shall be infringed.

By order of the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India.

T. H. Maddock,
Secretary to the Government of India, with
the Governor-General.

It would have been well if Lord Ellenborough had resisted the puerile temptation to date this proclamation on the 1st of October. [378] That it was written then is not to be doubted. But, though written, it was not issued.[333] The Governor-General was not prepared to issue it. There was no immediate necessity, indeed, for the preparation of such a notification as this. It might have been delayed for a few weeks without injury to the state; whilst, on the other hand, it could not have been delayed for a few days without great advantage to Lord Ellenborough. On the 1st of October, the Governor-General knew that the British ensign was floating over the Balla Hissar of Caubul; but he did not know that the British prisoners had been released from captivity. Had he suppressed the [379] inclination to write "*October 1*" at the head of his proclamation, he might have announced in it the attainment of all those objects which his countrymen had at heart, and fully declared that the war was at an end. But there were not wanting those who now commented bitterly on the fact that this proclamation was drawn up by the Governor-General of India whilst yet in ignorance of the fate of the prisoners. The delay of a few days would have placed him in possession of the intelligence, for which all India was looking with the deepest interest and anxiety; but the temptation of the "1st of October" was not to be resisted; and Lord Ellenborough sacrificed his character for humanity for the sake of a little dramatic effect.

Having drawn up this proclamation, and handed it over to the translators to be arrayed in Oriental costume, Lord Ellenborough began to take counsel with Sir Jasper Nicolls on the subject of the honorary distinctions to be conferred on the officers and men who had gained these great victories in Afghanistan; and to draft another proclamation to be issued to the Chiefs and Princes of India. This was the famous proclamation of the Gates. On the 5th of October, he sent a rough draft of it to Sir Jasper Nicolls, inviting the comments of the Chief. Freely asked, they were freely given. What they were is not on record. The Governor-General took the comments of the Commander-in-Chief "in good part," and was not wholly impervious to the criticism of the veteran commander.[334] Subjected to a long and laborious incubation, this address to "all the

Princes, chiefs, and people of India," was translated into the Persian and Hindee languages, circulated among those to whom it especially appealed, and finally published in its English dress on the 16th of November.[335] It was by no means, therefore, an ebullition of impulse and enthusiasm on the part of the Governor-General, but the result of many weeks of thought and study, and, perhaps, much consultation with others. The Duke of Wellington called it a "Song of triumph." Thus rose the pæan, in its English dress: [380]

FROM THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL TO ALL THE PRINCES AND CHIEFS, AND PEOPLE OF INDIA.

My Brothers and my Friends,

Our victorious army bears the gates of the temple of Somnauth in triumph from Afghanistan, and the despoiled tomb of Sultan Mahomed looks upon the ruins of Ghuznee.

The insult of eight hundred years is at last avenged. The gates of the temple of Somnauth, so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory the proof of your superiority in arms over the nations beyond the Indus.

To you, Princes and Chiefs of Sirhind, of Rajwarra, of Malwa, and of Guzerat, I shall commit this glorious trophy of successful war.

You will yourselves, with all honour, transmit the gates of sandal-wood through your respective territories to the restored temple of Somnauth.

The chiefs of Sirhind shall be informed at what time our victorious army will first deliver the gates of the temple into their guardianship, at the foot of the bridge of the Sutlej.

My Brothers and my Friends,

I have ever relied with confidence upon your attachment to the British Government. You see how worthy it proves itself of your love, when, regarding your honour as its own, it exerts the power of its arms to restore to you the gates of the temple of Somnauth, so long the memorial of your subjection to the Afghans. [381]

For myself, identified with you in interest and in feeling, I regard with all your own enthusiasm the high achievements of that heroic army; reflecting alike immortal honour upon my native and upon my adopted country.

To preserve and to improve the happy union of our two countries, necessary as it is to the welfare of both, is the constant object of my thoughts. Upon that union depends the security of every ally, as well as of every subject of the British Government, from the miseries whereby, in former times, India was afflicted: through that alone has our army now waved its triumphant standards over the ruins of Ghuznee, and planted them upon the Balla Hissar of Caubul.

May that good Providence, which has hitherto so manifestly protected me, still extend to me its favour, that I may so use the power now entrusted to my hands, as to advance your prosperity and secure your happiness, by placing the union of our two countries upon foundations which may render it eternal.

Ellenborough.

No document that ever emanated from the bureau of a statesman has been overwhelmed with so much ridicule as this. It is still fresh in the recollection of men who dwelt in India at this time, how the authenticity of the proclamation was gravely doubted—how many, at first, declared their conviction that it was a newspaper satire upon the Napoleonic style of address which Lord Ellenborough had recently adopted; and how at last, when it came to be known—thoroughly known and understood—that it was a genuine emanation from the "Political Department," with the right official stamp upon it, such a flood of ridicule and censure was let loose upon it as had never before descended upon an Indian state-paper. The folly of the thing was past all denial. It was a folly, too, of the most senseless kind, for it was calculated to please none and to offend many. It was addressed to "all the Princes and Chiefs, and People of India." The "Brothers and Friends" thus grandiloquently apostrophised, were a mixed family of Mahomedans and Hindoos. Upon the Mahomedans it was an open and most intelligible outrage. To the Hindoos, the pompous offer of the polluted gates of Somnauth was little better than a covert insult. The temple to which it was to have been restored was in ruins, and the sacred ground trodden by Mahomedans. Looking at the effusion from the Oriental side, it was altogether a failure and an abortion.[336] Among Europeans, worldly men scouted the proclamation as a folly, and religious men denounced it as a crime. It was said to be both dangerous and [382]

profane. The question suggested by the latter epithet I do not propose to discuss; but of the dangers of such a proclamation it may be said that they existed only in the imaginations of those who discerned them. It was altogether an event of no political importance. In Afghanistan, the rape of the Gates created little or no sensation. In India, the proclamation produced no excitement among the “brothers and friends” to whom it was addressed. The effect of the measure was personal to Lord Ellenborough himself. It damaged his reputation, and left the rest of the world as it was before.

But there was another proclamation published about this time—launched into the world, indeed, before the proclamation of the Gates, but of a somewhat later conception. The Afghan drama was now well-nigh played out. The Afghan policy of Lord Auckland had been publicly declared a failure, and the grounds on which it had been originated wholly a mistake. Everything, indeed, was to be reversed. The Tripartite treaty was at an end. Shah Soojah was dead. The people of Afghanistan had felt an obvious distaste for [383] foreign interference, and had evinced it in a very unmistakeable manner. The Suddozye Princes had demonstrated the feebleness of the tenure by which they could hope to maintain possession of the throne. It was impossible wholly to revert to the state of things that had existed in 1838, for thousands of lives and millions of money had been buried in the passes of Afghanistan—and there was no earthly resurrection or restoration for them. But there was one victim of the war in Afghanistan for whom restoration was yet possible. The first victim of our national injustice was yet a prisoner in the hands of the British. The Governor-General had publicly announced, in his proclamation of the 1st of October, that Dost Mahomed was only “believed to be hostile to British interests,” and that Shah Soojah was only “represented” to be friendly to those interests, and popular with his own people. It was announced, too, in this proclamation, that the British Government had determined to leave the Afghans to form a government for themselves, and to recognise that government when formed. After such announcements as these, the retention of Dost Mahomed in captivity would have been confessedly inconsistent and unjust.

Ever since the intelligence of the outbreak at Caubul had reached the provinces of Hindostan, Dost Mahomed had been watched with greater suspicion, and guarded with greater care. It was believed that he would place himself in communication with the leaders of the revolutionary party, and would make an effort to escape from the captivity which embittered his lot. It does not appear, however, that he manifested any feelings of exultation at the thought of the calamities which had befallen his captors, or, in any way, desired to increase the difficulties which surrounded them. On the other hand, he seemed willing, if not anxious, to impart to the British [384] Government, through Captain Nicolson, such local information as he thought would be serviceable to them in the conjuncture which had arisen; and even offered suggestions tending to facilitate their re-invasion of his country. The vigilance with which he was guarded, and the consequent inconveniences to which he was subjected, seemed to cause him much vexation and annoyance. He always protested that he knew nothing of the secret history of the Caubul outbreak—that it was his belief the Suddozyes had instigated it, as no other family in Afghanistan, since the overthrow of the Barukzyes, had sufficient influence to initiate a great national movement. Any expression or intimation of a doubt of his honesty seemed to pain him. “Recollect,” he said, on one occasion to Captain Nicolson, “that I have, from the first day I came in, been on your side, heart and soul. I swear by the most holy God, that since my submission I have not communicated with Caubul and its people, except through you. But it is possible that news may have reached my sister at Loodianah through her other brothers. I am your guest or your prisoner, whichever you please. I came to you in the hope of being in time employed by you; and I should say what is not true, if I denied still entertaining that hope; and I am ready to lay down my life in your service.”[337] It may be doubted whether he entertained any hope, or any desire to regain the dominion he had lost. He had resigned himself submissively to his fate. If it seemed to be the will of God that he should return to Caubul, he was willing to retrace his steps to the Balla Hissar. But he was little inclined to take into his own hands the shaping of his future destinies, and to win his way [385] back to empire by violence or fraud.[338]

It has been seen that the Government of India, ever since the disastrous downfall of our efforts to prop up the Suddozye dynasty, had contemplated the possibility of restoring Dost Mahomed to the country from which we had expelled him. Lord Auckland had hinted at the restoration of the ex-Ameer as a measure to which, under certain circumstances, he would offer no opposition. He would gladly, indeed, have availed himself of the opportunity afforded, by a proposed interchange of prisoners, to render tardy justice to the man whom he had so palpably wronged. The subsequent progress of events had tended to render more and more obvious the propriety of this resolution. It was now plainer than ever that the retention of Dost Mahomed as a prisoner of state could no longer be justified, on the score of either political rectitude or expediency. So Lord Ellenborough did, as it became him to do. He issued a proclamation, setting forth that when the "British army returning from Afghanistan shall have passed the Indus, all the Afghans now in the power of the British Government shall be permitted to return to their country." This was equally reasonable and just. But the proclamation was not without characteristic disfigurements, for the Governor-General, who had set his heart upon a grand pageant at Ferozepore, added a codicil, to the effect that the released Afghan Princes were to present themselves, before returning to their [386] desolated country, at the Durbar of the Governor-General in his camp at Ferozepore.

The popular feeling against this contemplated outrage was strong and universal. There was not a generous mind in the country which did not feel deeply the wrong that was to be done to these unfortunate Princes. But the Governor-General, in a better hour, conscious of error, consented to forego the pitiful delight of gracing his triumph with the presence of a dethroned monarch, whose national feelings were not so wholly extinguished by exile as to render his appearance at the Ferozepore festivities anything but a painful and humiliating trial. The order issued in thoughtlessness was revoked in good feeling; and Dost Mahomed, without suffering this last crowning injury at the hands of the British Government, returned to Afghanistan, with hopes and expectations falling far short of the long years of restored dominion, which actually lay before him.

Quitting Simlah, the Governor-General moved down to the plains of Ferozepore. There an army, under the personal command of Sir Jasper Nicolls, was now assembled. It had been originally projected by Lord Auckland, at a time when it was believed that the presence of such an army on our north-western frontier would have a great moral effect upon the neighbouring states. It has been said, that when it did assemble, at the commencement of the cold season of 1842-1843, it was intended to answer no other purpose than that of a vast pageant; that the Governor-General had determined on celebrating the return of the victorious armies with all possible pomp; and that he looked forward, with childish delight and anxiety, to the magnificent *fête champêtre* of which he had appointed himself director-in-chief. It must be admitted that Lord Ellenborough took a somewhat undignified interest in the details of [387] these puerilities; but the justice of the assertion, that the army was kept together for no other purpose than that of presenting arms to the "Illustrious Garrison" of Jellalabad, and turning out for a grand field-day, may be reasonably disputed. The fidelity of the Sikhs had long been suspected. It was now considered by no means an impossible event, that the march of our army, worn, sick, and incumbered, through the Punjab, would offer a temptation too strong to be resisted by the mutinous Sikh soldiery, whose real feeling had betrayed itself early in the year at Peshawur. Had the Governor-General felt secure in the reality of the formal alliance with the Punjab, he might have dispersed the Army of Reserve when the Afghanistan force crossed the Attock. Such expositions of the military resources of a great nation are never wholly without profit in such troubled times; and as doubts, and not unreasonable doubts, of Sikh fidelity had arisen, it was sound policy to keep a force on the frontier until the returning troops had actually crossed the Sutlej.

On the 9th of December the Governor-General arrived at Ferozepore. The Army of Reserve was drawn out to receive him. A noble sight, it must have stirred the heart of one who loved to express his regret that circumstances had not made him a soldier. There was much work to be done; and he flung himself into it with characteristic energy, resolute to give the returning warriors an

honourable reception, and to dazzle the eyes of all the native potentates who could be lured to the scene of triumph. Four years before there had been a grand gathering at the same place, when Runjeet Sing and Lord Auckland had exchanged courtesies, and the army of the Indus had commenced its march for the invasion of the Douranee Empire. The war in Afghanistan had opened with a grand spectacle at Ferozepore; and now, with due dramatic propriety, it [388] was to close with a similar effect. The Maharajah of the Punjab, with his ministers of state and his principal military chiefs, were invited to grace the festival.[339] The Princes of Sirhind, and other "brothers and friends," were asked to take part in the rejoicings. And everywhere from the neighbouring stations, under lordly encouragement, flocked our English ladies to Ferozepore—the wives and daughters of the returning warriors and of the officers there assembled—and everywhere was a flutter of excitement, such as had not been known in those regions for years.

Day after day, as Lord Ellenborough busied himself with his preparations for the reception of the victorious Generals, tidings reached him from their camps. There was nothing in this intelligence to dim the pleasure which was animating his Lordship's breast. Pollock had brought back his army with little loss through the formidable passes of Afghanistan, and was now making an uninterrupted march through the Punjab. The withdrawal of the force had been looked forward to with some anxiety by many, who believed that the tribes would harass the rear of the retiring army, and work them grievous annoyance. But so completely had the strength of the Afghans been broken by continual defeat, that they made no energetic or combined effort to annoy the British columns on their line of march. Pollock wrote that he had not seen an enemy; but M'Caskill and Nott, who followed with the centre and the rear divisions, were not quite so fortunate. From Caubul to Jellalabad, however, there was little to contend against, except some desultory [389] night attacks on our baggage.[340] There was, indeed, no organised resistance.

The entire force assembled at Jellalabad; and halted there for a few days. Pollock had determined to destroy the defences of the place. When the British army was halting at Peshawur in the spring, the question of the transfer of Jellalabad to the Sikhs, as a *douceur* to ensure cordiality of co-operation with us, had been earnestly discussed, but at that time the project had fallen to the ground. It was felt, that so long as Shah Soojah survived, and the Tripartite treaty had not been annulled, any design to dissever the Douranee Empire, and to invite the Sikhs to share in the partition, would be premature, both as regarded the justice and the expediency of the measure. But the death of Shah Soojah gave a new aspect to the state of affairs; and the British Government lost little time, after authentic intelligence of that event had been received, in communicating to Mr. Clerk its willingness that certain territories on the right bank of the Indus should pass into the possession of the Sikh Government or of the Jummoo Rajahs, with the permission of the Lahore Durbar; and it was intimated that the British Government would facilitate the accomplishment of this object by placing Jellalabad in the hands of the Sikhs. The offer was formally made; but, in the then uncertain position of affairs, prudently [390] declined. It was not unreasonably urged by the Durbar, that until they were in possession of the ultimate intentions of the British with respect to Afghanistan, it would be hardly politic in the Sikhs to place themselves in a prominent position, or in any way to identify themselves with measures the future out-turn of which they could as yet but dimly foresee. But it was believed, that as soon as ever our withdrawal from Afghanistan was fully determined upon, and about to be put in execution, the Sikhs, without further explanation, would be willing to take possession of Jellalabad. And they were so; but not having fully made up their minds upon the subject (probably from some mistrust of our intentions) until the British force had actually marched from Caubul, their acceptance of the offer came too late to save the place from destruction. General Pollock had, in accordance with instructions, destroyed the fortifications of Jellalabad before he received a communication from the Government, intended, if possible, to arrest such proceeding, and ordering him to make over the place uninjured to our allies. It may be doubted whether either party very much regretted the accident.

Having destroyed the defences of Jellalabad, Pollock pushed on to Peshawur. The Khybur Pass had now to be traversed again. The

Afreedi Maliks offered to sell us a free passage; but Mackeson answered that Pollock would take one. The first division, under the General himself, who effectively crowned the heights as he advanced, passed through with only the loss of two or three privates. M'Caskill was not equally successful. He had not taken the same precautions, and the Khyburees came down upon the rear-guard, under their old enemy, Brigadier Wild. Favoured by the darkness of night, they rushed among our people, and threw them into confusion. Two of our officers were killed,[341] and two of our [391]
guns were abandoned. But the chief object of the Khyburees seems to have been plunder. They made no effort to carry off the guns.[342]

Altogether, the return march of the British troops was singularly peaceful and uneventful. If the same precautions to crown the heights along the line of march, as were systematically taken by Pollock, had been taken by M'Caskill and Nott, it may be doubted whether we should even have heard of the appearance of an enemy. The Afghans are famous plunderers, and they are habitually armed. When they saw their opportunity, they came down upon our baggage-laden columns, and molested us as best they could. But [392]
there was nothing like organised resistance.[343]

The fortress of Ali-Musjid was destroyed, and the army then pushed on to Peshawur. Having partaken of Avitabile's magnificent hospitality, the victorious Generals commenced their march through the Punjab. It was an uneventful, but a melancholy one. Sickness broke out in the returning army. There had always been a scarcity of carriage-cattle, and now the number of sick made it more severely felt. But all the inconveniences of the march were from within. The Sikhs wrought us no annoyance.

Whilst such were the tidings from the returning army which reached the Governor-General in the midst of his preparations, there came from Afghanistan intelligence of a more dubious and, at the same time, a less interesting character. Lord Ellenborough had left the Afghans to suffer the punishment due to their crimes; and it little mattered to him whether one party or another were dominant at Caubul. But the news which now reached him from the Afghan capital all went to show that the Suddozye Princes were utterly destitute of power and influence; and that the new government had not the means of supporting the youthful puppet upon the throne. The Wuzeer had sought to re-establish the supremacy of the Douranees, had hedged in the new King with Douranee influences, and by his exclusiveness given general offence. The downfall of the Suddozye Prince followed rapidly upon this.[344] Akbar Khan had [393]
been biding his time about the regions of the Hindoo-Koosh. He was in no hurry to return to Caubul. It was more prudent to leave the dissensions which were certain to arise at the capital to work out their own debilitating effects upon those in power, and pave the way for his triumphant return to the capital.

And so, after a time, there came into Ferozepore tidings, [394]
forwarded from Pollock's camp, to the effect that the Suddozye prince, Shahpoor, had been expelled from the Balla Hissar, and had fled for safety to Peshawur. The poor boy had narrowly escaped with his life. Akbar Khan had made a descent upon Caubul, and carried everything before him. The Newab Zemaun Khan, it was said, had been made Governor of Jellalabad, Shumshoodeen of Ghuznee, Sultan Jan of Candahar; and in the meanwhile Dost Mahomed was making his way through the Punjab to his old principality. "Everything," it was added, with bitter significance, "is reverting to the old state of things—as it was before we entered the country."

And now the heart of the Governor-General began to beat with expectation of the immediate arrival of the victorious armies. Everything was ready for their reception. The army of reserve was spread out over the great plain of Ferozepore. Triumphal arches had been erected. A temporary bridge had been thrown across the Sutlej. The elephants, no insignificant portion of the coming spectacle, had been gorgeously painted and decorated, and tricked out in their gayest trappings and caparisons; and as much of tinsel, and bamboo-work, and coloured cloth, as could give effect to the triumph, had been expended to grace the occasion. On the 17th of December, Sir Robert Sale crossed the Sutlej at the head of that gallant body of troops which had composed the garrison of Jellalabad. The Governor-General went forth to meet them. A street of two hundred and fifty elephants, more or less caparisoned, had

been formed, and through this marched the heroes of Jellalabad—the 13th Light Infantry, Sale's own regiment, at the head of the column; but although the docile animals had been instructed to make a simultaneous salaam at a given signal, and to snort out a [395] note of welcome from their huge trunks, they resolutely refused to make an obeisance, and were obstinately silent as the Illustrious Garrison filed between the huge walls of caparisoned flesh. The morning was dull and lowering—not a gleam of sunshine lighted up the festive scene; but there were sunny hearts and bright faces; and as the horse-artillery guns boomed forth their welcome, and the band of the Lancers struck up the ever-animating "Conquering Hero" tune, and each regiment in succession, as the column passed on, saluted their long-absent comrades, the heart must have been a dull one that did not acknowledge that there is something of a bright side even to the picture of war.

On the 19th, General Pollock crossed the Sutlej; and on the 23rd, General Nott arrived, bringing with him the gates of Somnauth.[345] Then there was feasting and festivity in the gigantic tents, hung with silken flags, on which, in polyglot emblazonments, were the names of the actions that had been fought; many complimentary effusions, in the shape of after-dinner harangues;[346] and in the mornings, grand field-days, more or less, according to the "skyey [396] influences." The year—a most eventful one—was closed with a grand military display. The plain was covered with British and Sikh troops, and in the presence of Pertaub Singh, the heir apparent of Lahore; Dhyan Singh, the minister; the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, and others of less note, some forty thousand men, with a hundred guns, were manœuvred on the great plain. On this grand tableau the curtain fell; and the year opportunely closed in gaiety and glitter—in prosperity and parade.

The Sepoy regiments having been feasted with their "favourite *mehtoys*" (sweetmeats), and the important event announced in a Government notification, the army of reserve was broken up;[347] but not before the Governor-General, moved by that characteristic admiration of gallantry, which earned for him in India the title of the "Friend of the Army," had done all that lay in his power to reward the troops who had achieved such brilliant successes. The honours which he could not bestow he solicited from the Crown, on behalf of the brave men who had so fairly earned them; and the distribution of honorary distinctions which ensued gave almost universal satisfaction, It erred rather on the side of liberality; and, perhaps, there are some old soldiers, in the scantily-decorated Queen's army, who think that during the last few years, honours have been bestowed so profusely as to lower their real value, by showing how easily they are to be earned. But it is better to err on the side of liberality than of chariness—better even that the unworthy should be decorated, than that the worthy should pine in vain for distinction.[348]

But there was still something more to be done. The prisoners, [397] towards whom the flood of sympathy had been setting in so strongly for many months, and whom the English in India now welcomed back with cordiality and delight, were not to be suffered all at once to sink into privacy and obscurity. Some of them were to be tried by courts-martial, or to be summoned before courts of inquiry, for abandoning their posts, going over to the enemy, or otherwise disgracing themselves. The courts sate, but they could not pronounce the officers arraigned before them guilty of any offence. Brigadier Shelton was acquitted. Colonel Palmer,[349] Captains Anderson, Boyd, Troup, and Waller, and Lieutenant Eyre, were honourably acquitted; and the court of inquiry, over which Mr. Clerk presided, must have risen from its investigation into the conduct of Major Pottinger with increased respect for the high soldierly qualities of the young officer who had beaten back the Persians at Herat, and protested against the capitulation of Caubul in the teeth of all the veterans of the force.

On the 20th of January, 1843, Dost Mahomed arrived at Lahore, on his way to the frontier of Afghanistan, and was honourably received by the Sikh Durbar. The Suddozye Princes and their families, to whose reception in the British provinces Lord Ellenborough had evinced an insuperable repugnance, found an asylum in the Sikh dominions;[350] and British connection with [398] Afghanistan was now fairly at an end.

Little more remains to be said. The proclamations which were issued by the Supreme Government of India in the autumn of 1842, are in themselves the best commentaries on the war in Afghanistan. The Governor-General of 1842 passed sentence of condemnation upon the measures of the Governor-General of 1838. No failure so total and overwhelming as this is recorded in the page of history. No lesson so grand and impressive is to be found in all the annals of the world. Of the secondary causes which contributed to the utter prostration of an unholy policy, much, at different times, has been written in the course of this narrative; much more might now be written, in conclusion, of the mighty political and military errors which were baptised in the blood and tears of our unhappy countrymen. These errors are so patent—are so intelligible—they have been so often laid bare by the hand of the anatomist—and they have been so copiously illustrated in these volumes, that I do not now purpose to enlarge upon them before I lay down my pen. But if none of these causes had been in operation to defeat and frustrate our policy, it must still have broken down under the ruinous expenditure of public money which the armed occupation of Afghanistan entailed upon the Government of India. It is upon record, that this calamitous war cost the natives of India, whose stewards we are, some fifteen millions of money. All this enormous burden fell upon the revenues of India, and the country for long years afterwards groaned under the weight. The bitter injustice of this need hardly be insisted upon. The Afghan war was neither [399] initiated by the East India Company, nor at any stage approved of by that great body. The ministers of the crown were responsible for the invasion of Afghanistan, but the revenues of the East India Company, in spite of a feeble effort to shift a part of the burden on to the British Exchequer, were condemned to bear the expense. It was adroitly designed, indeed, from the beginning, that the Company should bear the charges of the expedition.

And what was gained by the war? What are the advantages to be summed up on the other side of the account? The expedition across the Indus was undertaken with the object of erecting in Afghanistan a barrier against encroachment from the West. The advance of the British army was designed to check the aggressions of Persia on the Afghan frontier, and to baffle Russian intrigues, by the substitution of a friendly for an unfriendly power in the countries beyond the Indus. After an enormous waste of blood and treasure, we left every town and village of Afghanistan bristling with our enemies. Before the British army crossed the Indus, the English name had been honoured in Afghanistan. Some dim traditions of the splendour of Mr. Elphinstone’s mission had been all that the Afghans associated with their thoughts of the English nation; but, in their place, we left galling memories of the progress of a desolating army. The Afghans are an unforgiving race; and everywhere, from Candahar to Caubul, and from Caubul to Peshawur, were traces of the injuries we had inflicted upon the tribes. There was scarcely a family in the country which had not the blood of kindred to revenge upon the accursed Feringhees. The door of reconciliation seemed to be closed against us; and if the hostility of the Afghans be an element of weakness, it seemed certain that we must have contrived to secure it.

It has been said that the tendency of all these great movements [400] in Central Asia has been to diminish the mutual jealousies and apprehensions of the British and the Muscovite powers, by revealing, in all their true proportions, the tremendous quicksands which lie waiting to engulph our armies in the inhospitable countries between the borders of the Russian and the Indian Empires. But although both states have learnt—the one from her Afghan, the other from her Khivan expedition—terrible lessons not to be forgotten, it may still be questioned whether the Cossack and the Sepoy are further apart than they were. The “Macadamisation” of Sindh and the Punjab has given England a forward position, which, advantageous as it is in itself, may have stimulated Russia to increased activity, whilst our awful disasters in Afghanistan have encouraged anew the aggressions of the Persian, and the intrigues of his Muscovite ally, by revealing the sources of our disinclination to entangle our armies again in its perilous defiles.

It needed but the announcement of the arrival of a Persian army at Herat, and the establishment of Persian dominion in the province, to consummate the completeness of the failure. After a lapse of twenty years from the date of the first siege of Herat, we found that the very event which had stimulated our English statesmen to

decree the invasion of Afghanistan, had actually come to pass. The Shah of Persia had conquered Herat, and his viceroy held the key of the "Gate of India" in his hand. It was still believed to be essential to the security of our Indian empire either to maintain the integrity of Herat, as an independent principality, or to attach it to the territories of the *de facto* ruler of Afghanistan. Dost Mahomed was still that ruler. For some time after his restoration, he had been the enemy of the British Government; but, as years passed, and the memory of his humiliation grew fainter and fainter, he had come to [401] recognise the wisdom of an alliance with his opponents; and, in 1852, a treaty of general alliance between the two states was concluded at Herat, by Hyder Khan and John Lawrence. When, therefore, in 1856, the usurpations of the Shah of Persia again roused England to a sense of the necessity of "doing something" to wrest Herat from his grasp, she found in the Caubul Ameer a willing, because an interested, ally. The very policy which ought to have been pursued in 1837—the policy which was recommended by Sir John M'Neill—is that which then presented itself, but under what altered circumstances, for our adoption. If, instead of expelling Dost Mahomed from his principality, we had advanced him a little money to raise, and lent him a few officers to drill, an army, the Persians would not, twenty years afterwards, have been lining the walls of Herat. When the old difficulty, therefore, presented itself with a new face in 1856, England adopted, in a modified form this once-rejected policy. She supplied money and arms to Dost Mahomed, to enable him to resist the tide of Kujjur invasion. Because Persia was aggressive on one side of the Afghan frontier, she meditated no aggressions on the other. She did not make war upon the ruler of Afghanistan, in revenge for hostile intrigues at the Persian capital, and hostile movements in the Persian camp. But when Persia offended her she struck promptly at Persia. The demonstration was successful. Under a treaty, signed at Paris by the English and Persian ambassadors, Herat was evacuated, and all claims to sovereignty yielded by the Shah; and, whatever may be its results,—whatever may be the verdict of history upon the policy of the Persian War of 1856-1857, it will at least be recorded, that it had not, like the war which I have endeavoured to chronicle, the foul stain of injustice upon it.

Whether, as many now contend, a later and more terrible [402] disaster owes primarily its origin to our humiliating expulsion from Afghanistan, it is not my duty to inquire. The calamity of 1842 was retribution sufficient, without any conjectural additions, to stamp in indelible characters upon the page of history, the great truth that the policy which was pursued in Afghanistan was unjust, and that, therefore, it was signally disastrous. It was, in principle and in act, an unrighteous usurpation, and the curse of God was on it from the first. Our successes at the outset were a part of the curse. They lapped us in false security, and deluded us to our overthrow. This is the great lesson to be learnt from the contemplation of all the circumstances of the Afghan War—"The Lord God of recompenses shall surely requite."

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# APPENDIX.

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## NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

### THE COMMAND OF THE CAUBUL ARMY.—WILLIAMS, LUMLEY, AND POLLOCK.

[*Book VII., chapter 1, pages 19, 20.*]

On the 20th of November the Commander-in-Chief wrote to Lord Auckland: "I purpose that H.M.'s 9th should proceed with the second army. This corps is 900 and upwards strong, including serjeants and drummers. The Buffs are somewhat nearer, but they have been nineteen and a-half years out of England, and should be moved towards Calcutta for early embarkation, especially as the 49th and 55th are so far out of reach. The Buffs have now nearly 200 men in hospital. The right to join, which the Court's order gives to Major-General Sir Edmund Williams, may be especially dispensed with by your Lordship, should you not choose to give him the command. Sir Edmund is in very good health, a hale, strong man—moreover, was Lieutenant-Colonel of a Light Infantry battalion of Portuguese in the Peninsular war."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

On the 15th of December, Sir Jasper Nicolls wrote to Lord Auckland: "I very much regret that the state of Major-General Lumley's health entirely forbids the hope of his being able to undertake the command of the troops advancing to Peshawur. If, therefore, the force is raised to six regiments, I shall order the Major-General Sir Edmund Williams to join my camp by dawk, and push him forward, as soon as I shall have furnished him with instructions, and armed him with all the information and advice which the known state of affairs at his departure may seem to require."—[*Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.*] [404]

"In your Lordship's letter of the 8th, you have, I think, given a preference to General Nott, wherefore Sir E. Williams need not be disturbed. To send him to Cawnpore merely to force his way to Jellalabad and Caubul, and then return, giving over the command to a junior officer, would, I think, be unfair. As to his holding the chief command, it is a matter of no moment to me. The officer to command, if your Lordship could find such a man, should be also the Envoy—a Malcolm, Close, or Ochterlony."—[*Sir Jasper Nicolls to Lord Auckland: December 19, 1841. MS. Correspondence.*] "Twice I laid before the Governor-General the name of Major-General Sir Edmund Williams, and as a Light Infantry officer he was deemed most qualified to meet an enemy in a mountainous country; he was active, zealous, and in perfect health. In the command of a division he had shown a clear judgment, and given me satisfaction.... The Governor-General gave such an unwilling and discouraging reply to my second communication, that I clearly saw the whole onus of the appointment and its consequences would be mine."—[*Sir J. Nicolls to Lord Fitzroy Somerset: September 2, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

"In obedience to your Lordship's wishes, that Major-General Lumley should be placed in command of the force assembling at Peshawur, I requested his attendance at my tent, and placed the despatch now acknowledged (*Governor-General in Council to Sir J. Nicolls: December 15, 1841*) in his hands. The general is still very weak, though improved in health; he is willing to proceed, but requested that his medical adviser should be consulted as to his ability to undertake such a service. Assistant-Surgeon Turner decidedly assured me that his state of health would by no means admit of the required exertion and exposure."—[*Sir J. Nicolls to Government: December 24, 1841. Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.*]

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### LORD AUCKLAND AND THE RETRIEVAL QUESTION.

[*Book VII., chapter 1, page 27.*]

Lord Auckland's private letters to the Commander-in-Chief exhibit better than anything else the alternations in the Governor-General's opinions. On the 3rd of January he wrote: "It is melancholy to think how mighty interests may be compromised by such errors as seem to have been committed. Our officers are very wild in their requisitions. We have given all that we can prudently give—perhaps even more; and the chance of operations must be measured by those means."—On the 5th of January, after describing the tidings from Caubul as "inexplicable as they are appalling," and declaring that he "was prepared for everything but for such misdirection and misconduct as seem to have taken place," he proceeded to say, "I can make no further suggestions to you until I know more; but you may shortly have to consider what instructions should be given to General Sale, and as to whether it may not be better that he should fight down, than that Brigadier Wild or General Pollock should fight up, the pass. This must greatly depend on the manner in which matters may end at Caubul."—On the 21st of the same month he wrote, that he "still adhered to his opinion, that it would be madness with such force and means of carriage, as we could easily collect, to attempt a fresh advance upon Caubul; and that such a movement would only have been justified, if we had been led to it by objects of rescue. It would be my wish, if it could be done with safety, that Jellalabad should be retained for some weeks, and until the fate of the British troops in other parts of Afghanistan should be ascertained."—On the 26th he wrote: "I agree with you that, at least so long at the fate of the force at Caubul is uncertain, the post as Jellalabad must be maintained. I think it will be absolutely necessary, under any circumstances, to maintain for a time a strong force at Peshawur—also at Quettah and Sukkur. If our retirement carry with it a general appearance of defeat and of flight, it will bring on Peshawur and the Punjab—on Beloochistan and Sindh—a tide of aggression and disaster which it may be difficult to [406] stem, and against the chance of which we must endeavour to guard."—On the 28th, growing still more convinced of the expediency of doing something for the recovery of our lost honour, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, speaking first with reference to the refusal of Sale and Macgregor to evacuate Jellalabad: "We approve of the determination taken at Jellalabad not to withdraw the troops as directed. Far from withdrawal, under such circumstances, I am anxious to learn that Brigadier Wild has found it safe to advance to Jellalabad.... Whatever happens beyond the passes, we should be strong for a time in Peshawur.... For the present, at least, Jellalabad should be firmly held;—General Elphinstone was not in a condition to make stipulations, except for his own troops at Caubul."—On the 3rd of February he expressed his opinion that Jellalabad should be held so long as there was a chance of assisting the escape of fugitives: "I apprehend," he added, "that its evacuation will, in a very short time, become absolutely necessary; if so, the movement should not be long delayed." He expressed a doubt, too, whether, with the "force that we can employ, the pass (Khybur) can be so occupied as to secure through it a safe passage of detachments and convoys. A descent through the Jugdulluck passes to Caubul is beyond our present power. It would require vast exertions and months of preparation, and in the end would be an enterprise of no light danger. I almost conceive that it would be an impossible enterprise with any means that we could bring to bear upon it, unless some party should separate from the present combination, and then with what confidence should we render it? I have therefore, in dissent from many for whom I have the highest respect, earnestly wished that the force at Jellalabad could be safely and creditably withdrawn to Peshawur.... I would not have it hastily retire beyond Peshawur, or any healthy spot near it.... The post should be as forward as it safely can be; and my successor could then pursue the line of policy which he may think best. I would not have the government inextricably pledged to measures which my successor may regard as rash, impolitic, and ruinous." But he soon [407] came to modify these opinions in favour of a forward position; and later on the same day wrote that the disaffection of the Sikhs might cause him to alter his views with regard to Peshawur: "I am coming fast to the opinion," he said, "that our furthest point of support in advance must be Ferozepore, and that we must bear the disgrace and disadvantage of retiring to this frontier with as little of loss as may now be ensured."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

## THE JANUARY PROCLAMATION.

[*Book VII., chapter 1, page 27.*]

"Fort William, Jan. 31, 1842.

"Intelligence having been received which leaves no room to doubt that, after the British force at Caubul had maintained its position against overpowering numbers of insurgents for more than six weeks, the officer commanding had judged it necessary, in consequence of a failure of provisions, to agree to a convention of the enemy, and to retire, in reliance on the faith of that convention, towards Jellalabad, when the troops, exposed to the worst rigours of cold and privation, in the mountain defiles, and harassed by treacherous attacks, suffered extreme disasters—the Governor-General in Council deems it proper to notify that the most active measures have been adopted, and will be steadfastly prosecuted, for expediting powerful reinforcements to the Afghan frontier, and for assisting such operations as may be required in that quarter, for the maintenance of the honour and interests of the British Government.

"The ample military means at the disposal of the British Government will be strenuously applied to these objects, so as at once to support external operations, and to cause efficient protection for its subjects and allies.

"A faithless enemy, stained by the foul crime of assassination, has, through a failure of supplies, followed by consummate treachery, been able to overcome a body of British troops, in a country removed, by distance and difficulties of season, from the possibility of succour. But the Governor-General in Council, while he most deeply laments the loss of the brave officers and men, regards this partial reverse only as a new occasion for displaying the stability and vigour of the British power, and the admirable spirit and valour of the British-Indian army. [408]

"By order of the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council,

"T. H. Maddock."

## THE APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL POLLOCK.

[*Book VII., chapter 2, page 45.*]

### SIR JASPER NICOLLS TO LORD HILL.

My Lord,

I have the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's letter of the 13th of June, calling upon me for an explanation of the appeal made to the General Commanding in Chief, by Major-General Sir Joseph Thackwell, in consequence of his not being permitted to accompany the regiment of which he is senior Colonel, on service beyond the Indus—I beg you will apprise his Lordship, that, in addition to the rule quoted by Sir J. Thackwell, the special appointment of Major-General Pollock prohibited his employment in Afghanistan.

I shall explain the circumstances of that appointment.

In December, 1841, the Governor-General of India in Council instructed me to place Major-General Lumley, of the Company's army, in command of the reinforcements which passed through the Punjab in January last; and, in addition to the command of the whole force in Afghanistan, it was his Lordship's intention to place in his hands the political control also.

Major-General Lumley's health was such as to preclude all hope, or even desire, that he should undertake so great a charge, and it became necessary that I should propose another officer for this important duty. Twice I laid before the Governor-General the name of Major-General Sir Edmund Williams; and as a Light Infantry officer he seemed most qualified to meet an enemy in a mountainous country: he was active, zealous, and in perfect health. In the command of a division he had shown a clear judgment, and given me satisfaction.

I need not inform Lord Hill that the management of the native army, or of small portions of it, is a matter, at times, of delicacy and difficulty. It will not do to distrust or disparage it, as Colonel Monson did. The Governor-General gave such an unwilling and [409]

discouraging reply to my second communication, that I clearly saw the whole onus of the appointment and of its consequences would be mine. This I would not undertake, and Major-General Pollock being near at hand, and honoured by Lord Auckland's confidence (as I know), I ordered him by dawk to join the 9th Foot and other corps. This done, Government was pleased to confer upon him the political powers intended for Major-General Lumley; without which Sir Edmund Williams would have had to act, not from himself, but according to requisitions made by the local political authorities—viz., Brevet-Captains Mackeson and M'Gregor. Upon the more abstract question of the Lieutenant-Colonelcy, it must be remarked that Sir Edmund Williams held that rank in the 9th Foot, which gave *him* no claim to go to Afghanistan, though some officious friend has since asserted it.

I had soon occasion to rejoice that Sir Edmund was not appointed to the command on my sole responsibility, for the four sepoy corps first sent, under Brigadier Wild, having been most sadly mismanaged (*at the instance of the political authorities, against my instructions and earnest caution*), when Major-General Pollock arrived at Peshawur he found 1800 men of the four regiments in hospital; the sepoys declaring that they would not advance again through the Khybur Pass; the Sikh troops spreading alarm, and in all ways encouraging and screening their desertion, which was considerable. It was well that a cautious, cool officer of the Company's army should have to deal with them in such a temper, 363 miles from our frontier. General Pollock managed them exceedingly well, but he did not venture to enter the pass till April (two months and a-half after Brigadier Wild's failure), when reinforced by the 3rd Dragoons, a regiment of cavalry, a troop of horse artillery, and other details. Lord Hill will at once perceive that the *morale* must have been low when *horse artillery and cavalry* were required to induce the General to advance, with confidence, through this formidable pass. Any precipitancy on the part of a general officer panting for fame might have had the worst effect. I must now return to Sir J. Thackwell's appeal. The General Order, quoted very ingenuously by the Major-General, contains a full and complete reply to his complaint. He was senior to Major-General Pollock, and his proceeding with the 3rd Dragoons would have interfered with a divisional command. He certainly did offer to serve under that officer, but I could not recommend the government to suffer him to do so, all such arrangements being in my opinion most faulty in principle, and, depending chiefly on good temper, [410] dangerous. I have since called up Sir Joseph Thackwell to my head-quarters, in order to command the cavalry, had it been necessary (as seemed possible) last winter to collect an army. The Major-General is in error when he states that I intended him to command an army of observation on the Sutlej: that post I retained for myself, aided by Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Arbuthnot. In November next it is proposed to collect an army of reserve in this vicinity, and Sir J. Thackwell will have the command of the cavalry. I cannot have the smallest objection to the Major-General's bringing himself to Lord Hill's notice as he has done, except the infraction of a rule in doing so direct. But if he had remembered that he commanded the cavalry of Lord Keane's army; had been twice named by me for similar duty; has long been a Brigadier commanding a division or station; he would have found little cause to complain of ill-fortune or neglect. I have known many of Her Majesty's officers, Colonels and old Lieutenant-Colonels, to reside ten to fifteen years in India without having had any such opportunities of service and distinction, and, further, to command divisions without receiving the smallest remuneration.

I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) J. Nicolls.

P.S.—I am happy to say that the Governor-General has displaced all the minor political agents in Afghanistan but one, and entrusted the power to the Generals Pollock and Nott.

J. N.

Simlah, *2nd Sept., 1842*.

[*MS. Records.*]

## SALE'S FRENCH AND ENGLISH LETTERS.

[*Book VII., chapter 2, pages 51, 52.*]

Jellalabad, Feb. 14th, 1842.

My dear General,

Captain Macgregor's cossids yesterday brought me the information of your arrival at Peshawur, and of full military and political powers in Afghanistan being vested in you. I lose no time in sending such a view of the state of this garrison as may enable you to form your own opinion on the necessity of moving to its relief. Nous avons des provisionnemens pour les soldats Britanniques pour [411]
soixante-dix jours, pour les Sipahis et les autres natifs demi-provisionnemens pour le même temps, et pour les chevaux de la cavalerie et l'artillerie de large pour vingt-cinq jours. Autant que nous pouvons renvoyer nos parties pour la fourrage, nous ne manquerons cela pour la cavalerie, mais nous serons entièrement privé de cette ressource après le premier jour d'investissement. A présent nous n'avons de fourrage que pour trente jours pour tous les animaux. Les chevaux d'artillerie et les yaboos des sapeurs sont de ce pays et mangent seulement boozeut kurlise. Nous manquons beaucoup aussi des munitions de guerre, plomb, &c.

When our animals can no longer be sustained by corn or forage only, we must of course destroy them. The hospitals are ill supplied with medicines, and much sickness may be apprehended when the weather grows hot. At present the health of the garrison is excellent. We have no prospect of adding to our resources above detailed even if we had money, which we have not. The country possesses abundance of supplies, of which the presence of a force would give us command.

Mahomed Akbar is at Cherbyl, in the Lughman district, and threatens an attack; and we may, in about fifteen days, though I think not sooner, be invested by a large force from Caubul, with a considerable artillery.

Believe me to be, my dear General,
Yours very truly,
Rt. Sale, M.-G.

P.S.—I shall view la perte of my cavalry, should such occur, with much sorrow, as from their successes against the enemy they have acquired a confidence in themselves, and contempt for their enemies, which feeling is equally participated in by the rest of the troops. As I cannot now get an opportunity to send you a return, I give a memorandum:—Cavalry, effective, deux cents quarante-un; malade, vingt-un. Artillerie, effective, un cent soixante-onze; malade, quarante-onze. Sapeurs, effective, trois cents quatre; malade, quarante-cinq. Infanterie Britannique, effective, sept cents dix-neuf; malade, trente. Sipahis, effective, huit cents trente-huit; malade, quarante-huit.

*February 16.*—Hier Mahomed Akbar a passe la rivière, et a pris position sur ce côté près de dix milles de cette ville. On dit qu'il a des soldats de tous armes et quatre pièces de canon. On peut voir son camp d'ici.

R. Sale.

*February 16.*—I have received this morning yours of the 9th [412]
instant. S'ils n'envoyent pas des canons de siège de Caubul, *peut-être* je puis maintenir ma position dans cette ville pour le temps que vous avez écrit; mais si une force avec les pièces (que nous avons perdu) arriveront ici, ce sera impossible, et avant cette époque nos chevaux moureront de faim. Il sera bien difficile et incertain de vous donner avis de mon intention de retirer, parce qu'à ce moment Mahomed Akbar est près avec une force de deux milles hommes (qui s'augmente jour par jour), et à présent ses patrouilles et videttes parcourent tout le pays.

Rt. Sale, M.-G.

## THE EARTHQUAKE AT JELLALABAD.

[*Book VII., chapter 3, page 67.*]

Sale and Macgregor were both writing to Pollock when this event occurred. I subjoin their letters:—

Jellalabad, February 19th, 1842.

My dear General,

* * * A l'égard à mon pouvoir de maintenir ma position ici, j'ai déjà vous donné avis de tous mes moyens et ressource. Je n'ai pas rien de craindre de la force à présent avec Akbar Khan, même si il est joint par tous les colors de Ningraher; mais je veux bien que vous vous comprenez que nos parapets ne sont pas assez forts pour résister les bouts de canon, et il est sujet de doubte si nous pouvons résister une siège pour peu de temps si l'ennemi envoyent des pièces de siège de Caubul; et en aucune cas les chevaux de la cavalerie et de l'artillerie comme les yaboos et les chameaux après vingt-cinq jours periront. Cette époque le rendre impossible pour nous à vous ajouter dans aucun plan de retraite que vous voudrais; et de plus il sera impossible communiquer avec vous au moment que je me trouverais au point d'être écrassé (overwhelmed) par une force irrésistible. En perdant las yaboos et les chameaux, qui sont absolument nécessaire pour les travaux de la fortification, je perd aussi tous mes moyens de transporter mes malades et les munitions de guerre, sans laquelle il ne faut pas contempler une retraite. J'ai extrême.... Soixante-huite chameaux et *cinq trente neuf* yaboos. Ces circonstances me semble de demander que votre avance à notre secours sera prompt—the only means of securing the avowed object of government, *i.e.*, the relief of the troops who have so long defended Jellalabad. After writing the [413]
above, the dreadful earthquake of this day a fait tomber deux bastions, et plusieurs autres sont culles—une brèche de côté de Peshawur dans les murs et beaucoup des maisons (casèmees) aussi. Sans doute l'ennemi prend avantage de cet calamité. Nous travaillons sans cesse de réparer le dedommage.

Believe me to be, my dear General, yours, very truly,

R. Sale, M.-Genrl.

[*MS. Records.*—I give the postscript to this letter in a note, though of no historical importance,[351] as I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting a tribute to the worth of one whom I am proud to recognise as a fellow-labourer in the field of Afghan history: "P.S. —Understanding from the 3rd para. of the letter from the Adjutant-Gen. that the authority of Major-Gen. Elphinstone has ceased, I venture to mention to you that Captain Havelock, 13th L.I., was appointed in general orders Persian Interpreter to the M.-General, so long as he continued to command in Afghanistan. He was by his permission, however, attached to me from the period of my force leaving Caubul, and I have received from him very valuable assistance in every way throughout our operations, as I have already intimated in public despatches. I trust you will pardon my undertaking to say, that if you would be pleased to re-appoint him to the same situation under yourself, I feel persuaded that his local experience would render him most useful to you. In the meantime, I have nominated him Per. Intr. to myself, subject to confirmation, as I cannot, under present circumstances, dispense with his services. Be good enough to make this known also to H. E. the C. in C."]

Jellalabad, February 19th, 1842.

My dear General,

* * * Since I commenced writing to you, we have been visited by a very severe earthquake, which has in a great measure demolished two or three of our bastions, and nearly the whole of the parapet of the ramparts, to raise which cost the troops more than a couple of months of hard labour. A number of houses in [414]
the town have been thrown down by the shock, and the small court-yard attached to the house in which the General and myself reside, is filled with the rubbish of a number of out-offices which fell crashing at our feet, we having sought the centre of the yard as a place of safety. It was with difficulty we could preserve our footing, so great was the undulating motion of the ground we stood upon. Our dwelling-house seemed to heave to and fro, as if it would topple on us. I have not heard of more than two or three persons who have been killed by the falling houses or walls. Colonel Monteith was buried up to the neck; but he has not, I believe, sustained any serious injury. If this town had been seriously bombarded for a month, I don't think it could have suffered more than at present. God grant that we may not have to witness anything so fearful again. I feel still giddy, although the earthquake took place a couple of hours ago. It is to be expected that on the enemy discovering the damage which our defences have sustained, they will be encouraged to attack us.

Gold mohurs and bootkees would be of use to us, but I fear that Mackeson would find it impracticable to send them to us in safety.

Captain Bygrave is alive, and with Mahomed Akbar Khan. Captain Souter, 44th Regiment, is also there. He saved the Queen's colour of his regiment by rolling it round his waist, and he writes that a shot struck him there, and the colour saved his life.

Believe me, very truly yours,

G. H. Macgregor.

## THE ADVANCE FROM PESHAWUR.

[*Book VII., chapter 3, page 72.*]

[The following is the correspondence to which reference is made in the text.]

Jellalabad, March 8th, 1842, 9 P.M.

My dear General,

I had the pleasure of receiving a few hours ago yours of the 26th ultimo. I must confess that its contents have deeply disappointed me, since I gather from it that it is not your intention to advance to my succour until you shall have been reinforced by the brigade which you expect to reach Peshawur on the 22nd instant. Now, independently of other considerations, Macgregor will [415] inform you that he yesterday got a Dust-i-Khat from the Shah's Durbar at Caubul, demanding categorically our evacuation of this place. He referred the King and his councillors to you, and their next measure will probably be to march an overwhelming force against us, aided by our captured iron nine-pounders. I have reiterated in several letters the fact that mes mains ne sont pas assez forts pour résister tel artillerie, and therefore desire to make you once more fully aware of the risk, if not certainty, of our being overpowered if your advance to our support is not sufficiently prompt to anticipate this movement of our enemies. The responsibility, therefore, of such a result, will now rest entirely upon you, and not on me. Money is not now of the slightest use to me, Mahomed Akbar having established a most rigid blockade, which effectually prevents all supplies from reaching us. Our foraging parties are also daily attacked.

Believe me to be, my dear General, yours sincerely,

Robert Sale, M.-G.

P.S.—As I remark that your letter does not contain any distinct avowal of an intention of advancing even when your reinforcements reach you, I shall be obliged, for the sake of this garrison, if you will specifically inform me when it is probable I may calculate on its being relieved.[352]

At the same time Macgregor despatched another letter of a similar tendency, and to this letter Pollock replied:

March 12th, 1842.

My dear Macgregor,

I will write you a very short note in reference to yours and Sale's of the 8th. It must no doubt appear to you and Sale most extraordinary that, with the force I have here, I do not at once move on. God knows it has been my anxious wish to do so, but I have been helpless. I came on ahead to Peshawur to arrange for an advance, but was saluted with a report of 1900 sick, and a bad feeling among the Sepoys. I visited the hospital, and endeavoured to encourage by talking to them, but they *had no heart*. I hoped that when the time came they would go. This, however, I could not write to you or Sale in *ink*, either in English or French. On the 1st instant the feeling on [416] the part of the Sepoys broke out; and I had the mortification of knowing that the Hindoos, of four out of five native corps, refused to advance. I immediately took measures to sift the evil, and gradually a reaction has taken place, in the belief that I will wait for reinforcements. This has caused me the utmost anxiety on your account. Your situation is never out of my thoughts; but having told you what I have, you and Sale will at once see that necessity alone has kept me here.

I have sent five expresses to hurry on the first division of the next

brigade. It consists of the 3rd Dragoons, a troop of Horse Artillery, 1st Light Cavalry, the 33rd N.I., and two companies of the 6th N.I., all fresh and without a taint. I really believe that if I were to attempt to move on now without the reinforcement, the four regiments implicated would, as far as the Hindoos are concerned, stand fast. Pray, therefore, tell me, without the least reserve, the latest day you can hold out. If I could, I would tell you the day when I expect reinforcements, but I cannot. I may, however, I believe with safety say, that they will arrive by the end of this month.

The case, therefore, now stands thus:—Whether I am to attempt with my present materials to advance, and to risk the appearance of disaffection or cowardice, which in such a case could not again be got over, or wait the arrival of a reinforcement, which will make all sure. This is the real state of the case. If I attempted now, it might risk you altogether; but if you can hold out, the reinforcements would make your relief as certain as any earthly thing can be.

Our only object in going to Jellalabad is to relieve you and bring you back with us to this; but it is necessary that this should be kept a profound secret.

I am, &c. &c.
GEORGE POLLOCK.

To this Sale replied:

Jellalabad, 23rd March, 1842.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

Yesterday arrived yours of the 12th instant addressed jointly to Captain Macgregor and myself. I have only, in reply thereto, to say that in my last I informed you definitively that I would, by God's blessing, hold this place to the 31st instant, by which time you acquainted me that you could arrive at Jellalabad with the dragoons. You now state to me your expectation that they will only reach your present encampment by that date. Our European soldiers are now [417] on two-thirds of their rations of salt meat, and this the commissariat supply; on the 4th proximo that part of the force will then be without meat, notwithstanding every arrangement to lessen the consumption. I have this day directed all the camels to be destroyed, with the view of preserving the *boosa* for the horses of the cavalry and artillery; and these valuable animals cannot receive any rations of grain whatever after the 1st proximo, but must be subsisted entirely on *boosa* and grass, if the latter can be procured.

Believe me to be, yours sincerely,
R. SALE.[353]

## GHOLAB SINGH AND THE SIKH ARMY.

[*Book VII., chapter 3, page 77.*]

On the 10th of February Mr. Clerk wrote to the Government Secretary: "There seems to have been no good reason for the delay of Rajah Gholab Singh in crossing the Attock, unless he really feared a collision with the Nujeeb battalions, encamped on the other side. But for the Rajah's apparent reluctance immediately to undertake to co-operate in the Khybur Pass, there may be better grounds. These may be either an apprehension of his inability to oppose the enemy there; or, as supposed by Captain Lawrence, a want of incentive to exertion—or both these causes may retard his movements. In regard to the former, the presence of the large body of British troops assembling at Peshawur will encourage him. With respect to the latter, I should be glad to be provided with the instructions of government."—[*MS. Records.*]

Writing again, on the 13th of February, he says: "In regard to the means of inducing zealous co-operation on the part of the Sikh troops, I do not think that the expectations of Captains Mackeson and Lawrence are quite reasonable, or the almost indefinite extent of proposed reward judicious, or the direct negotiation with the Jummoo Rajahs for their immediate aggrandisement honourable.... It would not be compatible with the friendship long subsisting between the British Government and the Lahore Government, now [418] to assign suddenly and directly to the Jummoo Rajahs any territories as a compensation for services demanded of the Sikh Durbar. This would be precipitating the decline of a power which it may be soon

expedient to prop, both against Afghans and Jummooees."—[*MS. Records.*] But though Mr. Clerk thought, at this time, that it would not be honourable openly to treat with the Jummoo Rajahs for the transfer of Jellalabad, he was not unwilling to place it permanently in their hands by a stroke of *finesse*. I confess that I cannot see very distinctly how the course suggested by Mr. Clerk is so much more "honourable," and "compatible with friendship," than that suggested by Captains Mackeson and Lawrence.

## POLLOCK'S APPEAL TO HIS ARMY.

[*Book VII., chapter 4, page 84.*]

After alluding to the defence of Jellalabad, and the probability that the Peshawur force would immediately advance to its relief, General Pollock said: "Success in relieving these troops will raise for this force the admiration and gratitude of all India, and the Major-General commanding feels assured that officers and men will cheerfully make any sacrifices to attain so noble an object. He therefore now calls upon the Brigadiers to assemble the commanding officers under their orders, and determine on the least quantity of baggage and the smallest number of camp-followers with which their regiments can advance. The success of this enterprise will greatly depend upon the quantity of baggage taken, as from the nature of the country between Peshawur and Jellalabad, the line most consistent with safety must be as little incumbered as possible. The Major-General commanding trusts that the confidence he feels in the troops will be repaid by their confidence in him. The soldiers may rest assured that his thoughts are constantly engaged in ensuring their provisions and securing their comforts, and they may be convinced they will never be called upon by him to make useless sacrifices, or to undergo unnecessary hardships. Arrangements will be made for placing such baggage as may be left behind in perfect [419] security at Peshawur."

## FORCING THE KHYBUR.—POLLOCK'S GENERAL ORDERS.

[*Book VII., chapter 4, pages 87, 88.*]

[The following are the rules laid down for the guidance of commanding officers, to which allusion is made in the text.]

1. A bugler or trumpeter to be attached to each commanding-officer of a party or detachment of the several columns.

2. Whenever an obstacle presents itself, or accident occurs, of a nature to impede the march of any part of either of the columns, and occasions a break in its continuity, the officer in command nearest to the spot will order the halt to be sounded, which will be immediately repeated by the other buglers, and the whole will halt till the removal of the difficulty enables the columns to proceed in their established order, when the signal to advance will be given.

3. The baggage-master will superintend the placing of the baggage, &c., in the order prescribed, and the Major-General commanding requests that commanding-officers will use their best exertions to facilitate this important object. The quarter-master of each corps will see that the baggage of his regiment is placed in its proper position in the column, and an officer from each is to be appointed to the duty.

4. No private guards are to be allowed. The parties of cavalry and infantry, allotted at intervals in the line of march, are to be the only troops attending it.

5. The officers entrusted with the command of the parties which are to flank the rear-guard on the heights, must give their most vigilant attention to the important duty of preventing their men from hurrying in advance of it; its rear must never be left exposed to fire from the heights.

6. The troops to be told off on their regimental parades, as above detailed, and marched at the appointed hour to their respective posts.

7. The force will march to Jumrood to-morrow morning, in the [420] order above prescribed. The general to beat at four, and the

assembly at five o'clock.

8. The baggage and camp-followers of each corps are to be kept with their respective regiments till notice is given by the baggage-master that they are required to take their places in the column.[354]

Camp Jumrood, 4th April, 1842.

The force to be under arms to-morrow morning at half-past three o'clock, ready to move forward, at which time all the treasure, ammunition, baggage, &c., will be moved to the low ground to the right front of the hills now occupied by picquets. No fires are to be lighted on any account; no drums to beat, or bugles to be sounded. The six companies of the 60th Regiment, and six companies of the 33rd Regiment, will remain with the baggage, in the vicinity of the treasure and ammunition. The parties for crowning the heights, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor and Major Anderson, will move forward to the hill on the right of the pass. The parties for the same duty, under the command of Major Huish and Lieutenant-Colonel Moseley, will in like manner move forward to the hill on the left. Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor's party will be accompanied by the Irregulars who lately garrisoned Ali-Musjid.

Captain Ferris's jezailchees will accompany the left advancing party.

When the heights have been crowned on both hills, four companies of the 9th Foot, the eight companies of the 26th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor and Major Huish, also the jezailchees, under Captain Ferris, will descend the hills to be in readiness to enter the pass.

Six horse-artillery guns, four from the foot-artillery, with the two mountain guns, will be drawn up in battery opposite the pass.

The advance guard, seven companies of the 30th, and seven companies of the 53rd, will accompany the guns.

The whole of the cavalry will be so placed by Brigadier White, that any attempt at an attack from the low hills on the right may be frustrated. When the baggage, &c., is directed to advance, the same order of march will be preserved as was formerly prescribed, with the following alteration: Six companies of the 60th N.I. will be together on the right, and six companies of the 33rd, now arrived, [421]
will follow the 53rd N.I. When the rear of the column is entering the pass, the two rear companies of Lieutenant-Colonel Moseley's and Major Anderson's parties should descend the hills.

G. Ponsonby, Capt., A. A. General.[355]

## LORD ELLENBOROUGH'S JELLALABAD PROCLAMATION.

[*Book VII., chapter 4, page 98.*]

Secret Department, Benares, 21st April.

The Governor-General feels assured that every subject of the British Government will peruse with the deepest interest and satisfaction the report he now communicates of the entire defeat of the Afghan troops, under Mahomed Akbar Khan, by the garrison of Jellalabad.

That illustrious garrison, which, by its constancy in enduring privation, and by its valour in action, has already obtained for itself the sympathy and respect of every true soldier, has now, sallying forth from its walls, under the command of its gallant leader, Major-General Sir Robert Sale, thoroughly beaten in open field an enemy of more than three times its numbers, taken the standards of their boasted cavalry, destroyed their camp, and recaptured four guns, which, under circumstances which can never again occur, had during the last winter fallen into their hands.

The Governor-General cordially congratulates the army upon the return of victory to its ranks. He is convinced that there, as in all former times, it will be found, while, as at Jellalabad, the European and Native troops mutually supporting each other, and evincing equal discipline and valour, are led into action by officers in whom they justly confide.

The Governor-General directs that the substance of this notification, and of Major-General Sir Robert Sale's report, be carefully made known to all troops, and that a salute of twenty-one guns be fired at every principal station of the army.

# STATE OF CAUBUL AFTER ITS EVACUATION BY THE BRITISH.

[*Book VII., chapter 5, page 104, et seq.*]

The letters of John Conolly written at this time afford a [422]
sufficiently clear insight into the state of parties at Caubul. On the 17th of January he wrote to Macgregor: “The accounts of our most ill-fated force become more distressing every day. Hundreds of Sepoys, wounded, frost-bitten, starving, and naked, come into the city. The Oosbegs buy many, and some find their way to us, and are relieved in the hospital, which is now crowded to excess; and the poor wretches are dying off fast. That villain, Ameen-oollah, is evidently anxious that the sick should die, for he will not assist them in any way, nor attend in the least to our repeated requests for assistance. The Newab is so completely in the hands of the Naib that he cannot afford us any relief. The Afghans are very sanguine in the expectation of assistance and co-operation of the Sikhs, and talk in court of Sultan Mahomed having received instructions from the Durbar to do our force as much injury as possible, and that Shere Singh has an understanding with them to prevent our force re-entering the country. You must be aware whether there is any foundation for these reports.... This morning the Newab, attended by Ameen-oollah and all the chiefs, went to pay their respects to the King in the Balla Hissar. The King has paid two lakhs of rupees already, and has promised one more in ten days. The Newab is Minister—Ameen-oollah, Naib; and oaths and protestations have been taken on the Koran that they are to be friends to each other, and supporters of the true faith. The Newab abuses the King most loudly and openly. The King does the same with the whole family of the Barukzyes. Ameen-oollah Khan has sworn eternal faith to the cause of his Majesty—bares his head and swears most solemn oaths in the Musjids to uphold the Newab’s dignity against the King and all the royal family. His Majesty has sent me several messages, saying that he submits to the extortion of the three lakhs because he is not strong enough to oppose the demand; but that, *Inshallah!* when he has received the salaam of the chiefs, he will gain power daily, and be able, should our troops come on, to play his own game with advantage to himself and ourselves. I believe that he is heart and soul in our interest; and it appears contrary to all reason to suppose otherwise. The measures which obliged the Newab to [423]
resign his throne are, I believe—1st. The dread of our vengeance, which the people think the King can in some way avert, if a force is sent strong enough to shut out all hope of opposition. 2nd. The dread of Akbar’s rising power. 3rd. The suspicions of the fidelity of their own party, who had shown symptoms of disaffection, and some of whom had openly espoused the cause of his Majesty. Such a condition cannot, I should think, last long between such Yorks and Lancasters. There is one thing very certain, that unless a very large force is sent up, which will preclude all hope of opposition, every man in the country will rise against us; and the people in the vicinity of Caubul have so compromised themselves, and dread our vengeance so much, that they will strain every nerve to oppose us, and may be his Majesty will feel that his safest plan is to join his countrymen against us. He said at the Durbar this morning that he was glad that affairs had taken such a turn, and that he was now able to call himself defender of the faith. This much could not have been avoided under the circumstances.... We are amused all day long by abuse and scurrilous verses about the Kaffirs. Books are being sold by the weight. I have not yet been able to get hold of the children—most exorbitant prices are demanded. The Newab promises, but has not the power to fulfil. Salutes are being fired, and there is a general rejoicing in honour of the coalition between the two Kings. Artillerymen are being sent to Akbar.”—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

On the 24th of January, John Conolly wrote: “The King holds Durbar regularly, at which all the chiefs attend. He pretends to have shaken off all connection with our government, but secretly sends me messages, professing all sincerity and attachment. There is much talk of a large force being sent to oppose the army which is said to be advancing from Hindostan; but money is wanting; the religious feeling against us continues very strong, and the chiefs have compromised themselves so much, that they will rise to a man, unless an overpowering force is sent. The Newab’s kindness is

beyond description, and he professes, and I believe sincerely feels, great anxiety to secure the friendship of our government. He is most deeply distressed at the treacherous conduct of the chiefs. We are [424] quite ignorant of the intentions of government. Mohamed Akbar is continually writing for guns and ammunition; but not a man can be induced to march without pay, and every one is jealous of Akbar Khan's rising power. The Barukzye faction of his party view each other with great suspicion. Ameen-oollah is the go-between. Akbar Khan is procuring all the money he can by extortion from Sourkars and others."—[*MS. Correspondence.*] This was interlined invisibly on the advice of a bill drawn by Major Pottinger on the Ferozepore treasury, and was produced on the application of iodyne to the paper. On the same day Lieutenant Conolly wrote to Mr. Clerk: "The King is obliged to talk of sending troops to oppose us at the Khybur; but he declares secretly to me his sincerity for the British Government. The chiefs talk of collecting an army, but the sinews of war are wanting.... Thanks to the Newab, we are safe; but it has more than once been proposed that we should be killed.... Since our troops left this, the King has been recognised by the Newab and the rebel chiefs on the payment of three lakhs of rupees to the Newab and Ameen-oollah Khan. The former is Vizier; the latter deputy. The Newab is most anxious to serve our government. He has not been in any way concerned in the treacherous conduct to our troops. His kindness and attention to us is great, and he is sincerely anxious to establish a friendship with the British Government—being afraid of the King and Mohamed Akbar, and disgusted with the conduct of the chiefs, who deceived him with oaths and protestations. Great excitement prevails in the town; the feeling against us continues very strong, and every man will oppose our re-entering the country, unless a force is sent which will preclude all hope of successful opposition."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

On the 15th of February Conolly wrote to Macgregor: "Since my former notes, the latest of which was dated the 10th, affairs have assumed a very different aspect. Naib Ameen-oollah, having given up the guns entrusted to his charge, has shaken the confidence of the Barukzye party in his (the Naib's) sincerity, and exposed the King's ultimate designs of making himself strong and independent [425] of, if not inimical to, the Newab's clique. Yesterday the Naib called on the Newab, on the part of his Majesty, to send his guns to the Balla Hissar. His demand was directly refused; and the Newab declared his determination of not again attending the Durbar until his Majesty gave proofs of confidence and honesty. This morning Fuzil-i-Almud, son of Kasee Hussun, brought an order from his Majesty that I should wait upon him; but I declined the honour in this instance, as I had done before, feeling that no good could come from an interview, ignorant as I am of the intentions of government and of your wishes, and having been, moreover, frequently warned against moving out of our present residence. I gathered from the Kasee's son, that his Majesty was forming a party in opposition to the Barukzye faction, the principal characters being Ameen-oollah, the Populzye, many of the Kuzzilbash, and some of the Caubul chiefs. You will perceive among his partisans the chief conspirators in the late rebellion, Ameen-oollah, Abdool Salam, and Sekundur,—men who have nothing to hope for at our hands. I presume the first demand made by our government will be the persons of these chiefs, who planned and were most conspicuous in the late revolution; and if the information I have alluded to be correct, his Majesty may object to give up the chiefs. But these are matters for future consideration; and should his Majesty be disinclined to use his utmost endeavours for the furtherance of the wishes of government, such unwillingness must, of course, be regarded as hostility. It is generally believed and asserted throughout the town, that his Majesty instigated the late rebellion. I have never been able to prove the accusation, though I cannot but think that his Majesty was, directly or indirectly, the cause of the revolution. When you know the intentions of government, you will be able to see your way more clearly. I would, however, suggest that his Majesty be made to understand, either from yourself or through me, that he must either meet our wishes or go his own road. Things are so very unsettled here just now, that the most learned cannot foretell the events of the morrow. All eyes are turned upon you. The evacuation of Jellalabad will have the worst possible effect. Every one here has [426] turned soldier and the people are in a high state of excitement, and hungering after pay, which is not forthcoming. Our host has

assembled a regiment of 1000 bayonets, 1000 horsemen, some Jezailchees, and a park of twelve guns, the ammunition for which, by the Meerza's return yesterday, amounted to about thirty shot, and no cartridges. There must be some serious disturbance ere long. We are very anxious about the sick, which we fear will be sacrificed in any popular tumult. For ourselves, we must trust to Providence; should things come to the worst, we shall try and escape to your stronghold.—P.S. We have just heard that a change of ministry has been proposed by his Majesty, and likely to be effected, Oosman Khan to be acting premier, and the Newab to be a sleeping partner.

"15th, P.M., 10 o'clock.—To-day there has been a noisy debate between the Newab and Ameen-oollah, the former abusing the latter in rather round terms. The Naib left the room in a huff, and things are as unsettled as can be. The Newab says he won't give up his guns, or go to the Durbar: and insists upon ... his Majesty pursuing the non-interference system to which he is bound by the terms of his treaty. There is nothing but Nifag: everybody suspects his neighbour; everything is in capital trim for us if our army advances; I only wait your authority to spend a little money, and above all a guarantee to our host of a handsome provision if he sides with us, or stands neutral—for he is a most worthy and honest old gentleman, and had no hand in the late melancholy occurrences. Ghoolam Mahomed Khan has also kept aloof from the late rebellion. There is a report that Palmer has broken up the treaty, and is again besieged in the Balla Hissar. He writes for orders, which kindly send with all expedition. For God's sake beware of Mahomed Akbar."

In a letter of March 5th, the same writer says: "Futteh Jung (Shah Soojah's son) has gone out yesterday to join Akbar. Things are very unsettled here still, and the Kohistanees are fighting amongst themselves. The Newab is still treating us with the greatest kindness. He has enlisted about 3000 men, principally for our protection, and is determined to fight rather than give us up. The Naib here has been trying to get us, and has a strong party of [427] Sepoys enlisted also. The Newab asked me yesterday if, when his money is out, we shall be able to assist him, as he only has sufficient ready cash to pay his men for one month and a half more. Can you authorise me to make him an advance when his money fails? For, as I said before, his entertaining troops is almost entirely on our account. He would be safe enough were we not his guests. In the meantime he has bought ammunition, and got his guns ready in case of an attack."

And in another letter of the same date: "The bearer will be able to tell you all the news. I have written to you several times, but have received no acknowledgment of my letters. Always try solution of iodyne on my notes.... We are very kindly treated by the Newab, but close prisoners. Ameen-oollah has tried stratagem and threats to get us out of the Newab's hands, with a view of screwing us; but, thanks to the Newab, we are as yet safe, though our situation is an unpleasant one. The King is sitting in the Balla Hissar; but his authority is only nominal, all power being in the hands of Ameen-oollah. Prince Futteh Jung has started with a few horsemen towards Jellalabad, and will probably halt for some days at Bootkak. The King sends me occasionally messages professing sincerity for the British Government; but he does not, in his present circumstances, do anything which would lead his subjects to suspect his attachment to us, or the whole population would rise up against him."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

## THE LETTERS OF SHAH SOOJAH.

[*Book VII., chapter 5, page 108.*]

[Containing the King's version of the causes and circumstances of our disasters at Caubul, and throwing some light upon his own character and conduct, the unpublished letters of Shah Soojah are sufficiently curious and interesting to induce me to insert a few of them in this place. It is important also to consider their bearing upon some of the events recorded in the chapter on the Defence of Jellalabad.]

[428]

## FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

(*Received January 21st, 1842.*)

Let it be known to Captain Macgregor: you are aware of all that has occurred here. Notwithstanding all I said regarding the treachery of these men, they (the British) did not understand, but were guided by the advice of my enemies—that is, the Barukzyes—until arrived at this pitch. The clans of the Barukzyes had this object, that suspicion and ill-will should exist between the British and me. To the British they said, that I had instigated the rebellion; and to the Mahomedans they said, that I and the Feringhees were one, until they made me generally unpopular. Well; such was fated! It has caused me much grief and regret. God grant this wish of my heart, that the fate of Sir William Macnaghten and Mr. Trevor and the other gentlemen may befall my enemies! I frequently desired them, on the first outbreak of the rebellion, to bring everything into the Balla Hissar, which is a place of strength. They did not listen to my advice. I then begged them to endeavour to gain time—that when I could arrange matters with these men (Afghans) all would be well. During the time that I was besieged, I expended all that I had collected with so much labour, until I brought every one of influence over to my side by payment. Please God they may remain faithful to me!

No one but myself could manage these people (Afghans) and carry on the government. My sincerity and friendship to the East India Company was formerly well known: at present it is as evident to all the world as the light of day. If I had only some treasure, that during the two or three remaining months of winter I might strengthen myself, please God there is no one in this country who could displace me, and, by the blessing of God, everything would be arranged according to my desire. The men here are not to be won without money. God grant this wish of my heart! Before this I spent four lakhs of rupees in this affair, and I also gave two lakhs more; I have nothing else left. If some money could be received that I might win over these men, please God everything could be arranged according to my desire. It is to be hoped, as you will see, that in a few months I could collect horse and foot so that no one could stir. God grant this wish of my heart!

The bearer of this will verbally inform you of all other circumstances. It is advisable that you should send this paper to Peshawur, or even to the Governor-General. And send me an answer [429] to this speedily. Whenever you hear of the arrival of this paper at Peshawur, be good enough to let me know, that I may feel sure of its having passed out of this country; because the evil-disposed are spreading reports that I am united to the Feringhees. Until I have gained my proper footing, it is necessary that, for some time, money should be sent to enable me to manage matters. When I have succeeded in establishing my power, I shall not require assistance from any one. Everything will be easy. Don’t let the men of this country know these things. Afterwards, whatever may be desirable for my good and for yours, God will grant. And God grant this wish of my heart! The bearer will tell you how matters stand. Whenever money has been received and I have reinstated myself, I shall have these people so much under my control, that if I order it they will carry the shoes of the Sahibs on their own heads.—[*MS. Records*].

## FREE TRANSLATION OF A LETTER FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

(*Without date, brought on the 2nd of February, by a messenger fifteen days from Caubul.*)

Be it known to my friend that I am King, and know the people well. It is right to treat people according to their deserts; some by kindness, others by severity.

Some evil-disposed persons, from fear of me, took refuge with Sir W. Macnaghten and Sir A. Burnes, and I could say nothing to them; they stirred up strife.

During the last two or three years I considered the Sahibs, and especially the Envoy, whom I valued more than my life, as my equals; without their pleasure I did nothing.

It was God’s will I should see what I would have wished not to have seen. May no other have such experiences.

Could it have been my wish to see my enemies and their families in the place of my friends?

Once or twice I wrote to you to send a person to inquire and inform you of the state of things in this country; but it was not done.

For two or three years I consoled the people, who told me if I was not King, they should understand it was the Feringhee; and they (the former) told me that when I came they expelled Dost Mahomed, but that I had disappointed them; that now their women left them, [430] their country was lost; and, although at first they received pay, even that was stopped. I could not console the people, but I spoke of them to the Envoy, and told him that, sooner or later, there would be a disturbance; but he listened not to me. I told him they were deceiving him; but he believed me not, and desired me to be at ease, for that he would settle the country with two Pultuns (regiments).

He further told me to confine and expel some evil-disposed persons. I did so; but they got access to Nizam-oo-dowlah, and through him to the Envoy, who asked me to release them. I did so. Now I am distressed by those very people.

When the Envoy was going away I asked him to take me with him; for that I was in an extremity; I told him of what was going on, and was not listened to. I told him that complaints were daily made to me of Afghan women being taken to Burnes's Moonshee, and of their drinking wine at his house, and of women being taken to the Chaonee (cantonments) on horseback, and of my having myself witnessed it. When people complained to me of such things, I asked who did so, that I might inquire; and told them not to defame the Sahibs. I first comforted and then reproved them; and said, if any person uses violence to your women, tell me, and inquiry shall be made.

The people have often before acted as they have now; they confined my brother Mahmood in the Balla Hissar; the conspirators then were Mooktear-oo-dowlah and Ahmed Khan, Noorzye, &c. They pretended it was a quarrel between the Sheeahs and Soonees; but it proved a great matter, and they saw that without me they could not settle matters. I was then among the Kakurs. The Khans sent for me, and all obeyed me.

In the present instance people said, "There are crores of rupees in the Chaonee; let us strengthen Islam." Such are the people. Three or four dogs are gone (dead); as many remain.

Nizam-oo-dowlah was a dog and ruined all. I begged the Envoy not to ruin the people. Nizam-oo-dowlah said to the Douranees, the King and Envoy will destroy you. I will help you, but Captain Trevor will not let me. The people were thus stirred up. I was annoyed, but could not help myself; now, please God and by the help of friends, much may be done.

All were against me on account of you. They sent to me to separate myself from you, and for the sake of the faith to be King myself (some Sahibs were then in the Balla Hissar). I did not give a reply at the time, but sent word to the Envoy, who told me to turn [431] them away. I did so, saying I owed everything to the Sahibs. They told me I would repent.

For some days there was fighting near the Chaonee and Balla Hissar and Balla Boorj; at which time I sent word to the Envoy to come with all his baggage to the Balla Hissar, where the troops could hold out for a year or two, telling him that three or four thousand of the inhabitants might be turned out, and guns and stores brought. After much debate, no answer was given. I said, "Very good! Please yourselves."

Some days after I sent to the Chaonee, and warned them not to abandon it; that I knew the designs of the enemy, who intended to attack them; and by expending five or six lakhs of rupees I endeavoured to bring the people from the common enemy towards myself; but they told me to separate myself from you. On this account three or four Barukzyes separated themselves from me; but though I could not trust people, I managed matters by first paying three or four lakhs, and afterwards two or three, which they asked of me, thinking I would refuse, and they would have an excuse for separating from me; but I gave all I had, and now am moneyless. If, however, I had money, I could openly do much; but nothing is to be done without money (they are dogs). If I had money I could raise troops, and many of my old (Hindostanee) ones who returned naked are anxious to serve me; but I have no money. In heart I am yours, though all the world are separated from me.

Nizam-oo-dowlah knew a night before it occurred what was to happen, but did not tell me or the Envoy that we might prevent it.

The conspirators told the people that I was with them; and when the Prince went out with the troops, they (the traitors) said, “They are with us.”

I sent Mahomed Sherreef to settle matters, but he was not attended to; and he, as well as many of my troops, was killed, which event opened the eyes of the people of Caubul; so the conspirators, to implicate the people, attacked Sir A. Burnes.

If my counsel is taken much may yet be done; or, if not, I will go to Mecca. Here the people are confirmed traitors, or I could easily settle the whole country, and Persia and Khorassan.

What was fated has happened. I have not seen it in my sleep, but have actually witnessed it. May God remove the sorrow, that my enemies and their families should be in the place of my friends. Is there any in the world who gave their enemies the means to kill [432] them? The dog Akbar came as a beggar from Toorkistan. His enmity to the Sahib-Log and myself was apparent; but lakhs of rupees were given him to escort the troops in their retreat; and what was the consequence? In the midst of the discussions I sent several times to the Envoy, and asked him why he nourished his enemy; but I was not attended to.

All Mussulmans turned from me on account of you; and for three months, for your sake, I experienced trouble and distress, and then the Envoy agreed to give the country to Mahomed Akbar, and to allow me a lakh of rupees a year, or four lakhs in Hindostan; but I knew and said, that as soon as they left the Chaonee they would be destroyed; and so it has proved.

Between us there were no differences, and there will not be.

When I saw how things were going, I expended money to draw the people from Mahomed Akbar; but now I can do nothing. I sent news to Macgregor, and to Ghuznee, and to Candahar.

The road is unsafe, so I cannot write aright.—[*MS. Records*].

## FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR (WRITTEN IN SECRET BY HIS MAJESTY’S OWN HAND).

(*Received February 6th.*)

Let it be known to Captain Macgregor what misfortunes have befallen me! Everything occurs contrary to expectation. I wrote, that after labouring from earliest morning to nightfall, I had by a thousand schemes satisfied these men and made them swear fidelity. One came and another went; but all saying, “Be not united to the Feringhees.” This is what the Barukzyes are spreading among the people. I said in reply to them, “You yourselves have said that they (the Feringhees) have done nothing for the Sirkar, and have not fulfilled their promises; then how should the Sirkar be well disposed towards them? During the time that I was with them I felt that my name suffered, and I felt this disgrace—that it was known to all the world. I continued with them until the time when Sir William Macnaghten purposely told me to cast them (the Feringhees) off. [356] I then dismissed them, and you yourselves informed me that they (the Feringhees) had come to an understanding with Mahomed Akbar. How then could I still preserve any understanding with them? Rest perfectly satisfied. At present I have no understanding with the Feringhees.” At length, by every means in my power, I [433] pacified them. These men at present, whether Barukzyes or other Afghans or Parsewans, are all obedient to me. Without my orders they do nothing. However, I place no trust in them. God grant that I may obtain the wish of my heart! I have no other desire. I cannot think that you are possessed of a proper sense of honour, since Dost Mahomed and his family remain there with honour. Should Akbar fall into my power, if I am a Mussulman or a man, what treatment he shall receive! Dost Mahomed and his wives and children, in revenge for the Sahibs who have fallen in this country, should be seen wandering in destitution through the bazaars and streets, that it should be known to all the world. What has been your treatment of that dog (Dost Mahomed)? So much wealth! And what return have you received from this faithless wretch (Mahomed Akbar)? May God accomplish this desire of my heart! It is now some days since they (the Afghans) have requested me to send Shumshoodeen

Khan to Ghuznee. Until to-day I have delayed. I have also made delays in the direction of the Khybur. At length I am helpless, and if I do not consent I shall be suspected. And from Khybur intelligence has come that 200 men have been killed, and two loads of treasure and two guns abandoned to the enemy, and that Mackeson Sahib is shut up in Ali-Musjid requiring succour. If this is true, what management! How often have I said that if I possessed money I might collect some thousands of troops of my own! I should not require assistance from any one. I could do anything I liked. But I have nothing whatever. At this moment there is only remaining two or three thousand ducats. These men, who are my own servants, have remained with me; but, poor wretches, how many months are they in arrears! The other Afghans I have ordered to be mustered daily in my presence. Such as I may select I shall continue in service. I never have had and never can have any interest separate from yours. Alas! that you should not have known my worth! I will delay the despatch of the men some days longer. I shall be suspected. If I could know the truth I would arrange accordingly. If you think that this affair will succeed, and that an army will come, let me know the truth, and if it is unlikely, write to me that I may make such arrangements as shall fully satisfy you that not a cat belonging to you shall be injured. The retreat of the Caubul Pass was quite a different affair. All were then our mortal enemies. If I had money I should not require assistance from any one. Since I have no money, if the Lord (Auckland) does not think it advisable to [434] send it, I must go somewhere else. There is not another person but myself who could manage this affair. I know these men well; and I have not seen a man who could do anything without my permission. Write these circumstances to the Governor-General, and tear up this paper. What misfortunes have befallen! Write explicitly, that arrangements may be made accordingly. They (the Afghans) have made many petitions regarding Candahar, that an order may be sent to the prince. It has been written and sent, carefully worded, to the best of my ability.

About this affair of Mackeson, I cannot understand what management this is. If it is true, you are destroying yourselves. I don’t know whether there is an understanding between you and Shere Singh that your troops should have a free passage (through the Punjab). I wrote to Shere Singh that it was a religious war, that he might understand. Tear up this paper; and remove from about your person the men of this country.—[*MS. Records.*]

## FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

(*Received February 8th.*)

Let it be known to Captain Macgregor, I have no certain intelligence about affairs. I don’t know what perverseness is this, that up to the present time you will not appreciate my worth, nor understand your own position or interests. You do not correctly explain things to me; and if there is a prospect of your being supported from the rear, and you have, or are likely to have, a good understanding with Shere Singh, so that an army may come, then I would act here as such a state of circumstances would render expedient; but if there be no prospect of this, and you determine on any other course, I will then take such measures as may be desirable. May God grant the wish of my heart! I have prayed God to grant this prayer. God is omnipotent. Write to the Governor-General. I am not happy in this country; but if my friends desire it, I cannot oppose myself to their wishes. The settlement of that country can be satisfactorily managed; but the country could never have been settled in the manner in which you were making arrangements.—[*MS. Records.*]

## FROM H. M. SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

Let it be known to Mr. Macgregor, to the General, and to the other gentlemen, that which I did not wish to see, and which never entered into my imagination, it has been my lot to see. What I have [435] already suffered, and am suffering, is known only to God.

Although I frequently remonstrated, they paid no attention to my words. These men have made fraud and deceit their trade. * * *

During the time they were committing these excesses, and would not come in for some days, they continued plundering the shops and exciting disturbances in the city; and in this business all the Sirdars were concerned, and on this account the lower orders became like hungry dogs: but God shamed them, for they got nothing. What has happened was fated, and was owing to our own neglect. However much I said, “Come up above; the fort is strong; for one year no one can be brought within it; with my servants, and from 500 to 1000 others, the fort would be strong; and 2000 or 3000 others, with guns, sallying out might collect grain”—[it was in vain.] However, it has passed—such was our fate. I sent messages to cantonments, begging them not to defer their coming from to-day to to-morrow, from to-morrow to next day—that, please God, all would be right.

I had collected five or six lakhs of rupees in gold mohurs, knowing that these people, except for money, would not act honestly, even with God. I spent three or four lakhs of rupees amongst them. Every tribe made oath, wrote on the Koran, and sealed; but they still said, “The King and the Feringhees are one.” However, I have managed to bring them thus far, and given two lakhs more. It is a pity that I have no more money. If I had any more, and could raise 2000 or 3000 sowars, and 2000 foot-soldiers of my own, I would defy any one to stir. The foot-soldiers, too, who returned from the army, I collected—300 or 400—that they might be with my regiment. Oh! that God had never let me see this day! Although, if money reaches me, God will prosper everything. To give money to an enemy to collect troops, and to come and kill you, did ever any one so trust an enemy? Even now have nothing to say to that dog.[357] This, too, I have said to you, even as I warned you before. I am night and day absorbed in this one thought; it has occurred to my mind that it would be better if the few ladies and gentlemen should be brought here, in order that they might be released from the hands of that dog. This entered my mind, and I consulted with the Sirdars, and brought them to agree; before this, I had sent a paper to this effect to that dog. It struck me that that dog would not release and send them here. I then decided that it would [436] be judicious that Jubbar Khan should be sent. I hope that he will bring them to this place in safety. By the blessing of God, my mind will be at ease. No one will have power to say anything to them; they will remain in safety. If this is approved of by you, I will take this course; but inform me if you do not approve of it, and can suggest anything else, that it may be arranged. Now, men of all ranks are flocking to me. * * * I have asked of God—if some money could be obtained all would go well, by God’s assistance. * * * At present, my subjects make petition to me to send money, and one of the princes with guns and an army to Candahar. * * * I had sent for Mr. Conolly, and other gentlemen, to consult with them, as they had themselves asked the Sirdar to send for them; but some one said to them, “If you go to the King he will kill you.” It was their (the Sirdars’) intention that the King should kill them. They had sent me word secretly beforehand. I replied, that if the world was upset, and every one my enemy, I would not do so. They then said, that it was really true what Jubbar Khan and Oosman Khan had said—that the King was not separate from the Feringhees. If he is, they said, give these (English gentlemen) to the king, that he may kill them. I heard this, and gave them answer. They understood their position, and repented of the step they had taken. Since this occurrence they come and go; and I have re-assured them. They now swear and protest that they will do nothing whatever without my wishes. If you think it can be done, God will shame my enemies.—[*MS. Records.*]

## FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

(*Written in secret by the Shah himself. Received at Jellalabad on the 7th of March.*)

This is the state of affairs—that night and day I am disturbed about you. God help us! I did not wish to see such a day as this. All day I am thinking of this. The evil-disposed Mahomed Akbar, from the day he went to Lughman, has managed matters by the means of the money which was given to him. From that quarter letters arrived here (Caubul), and money was given to men who went to join him; at length it was put a stop to, some men were even stripped (on their way to join) in Bootkhak. At last, people went

under the plea of Gazza (religious war); by these means only a few now go. It is nearly one month that I have delayed (sending troops to Jellalabad): no accounts have been received (from you). I have [437] made myself unpopular with all Mahomedans on your account, and you have not comprehended it. This is an affair affecting life. Up to this time nothing is known (of your intentions). I know not upon what misfortunes I have fallen; and these men are displeased with me (saying) “It is not the Shah’s wish that we should go to Jellalabad; he wishes to destroy the true faith.” God help us! There is no saying when those men (British troops) will arrive. If things are thus managed, what may be expected in Hindoostan?

I am altogether devoted to you—may God protect me! If they (British troops) arrive within the next ten or fifteen days, it is well; but if not, what ought to be done? Whatever you think advisable, write to me plainly, that it may be well understood and arrangements made. I am always thinking how I can obtain possession of those gentlemen and ladies, that they may be in safety, and that this villain (Mahomed Akbar) may not injure them.

I sent a message to Mahomed Shah (Ghilzye) that, if any injury happened to them (the English prisoners), I would revenge it on him and his family, and root out his race, and that I would seize him. God will prosper this matter, though it is very difficult and complicated.

These rascals (Afghans) make numerous oaths, and in their hearts there is villany. May God put them to shame!

The true state of the case is this; if you think it will succeed, and that they (British troops) will arrive, the sooner the better. This is not a matter to be trifled with.

Shumshoodeen Khan, who went to Ghuznee, I ordered not to press the garrison hard until I had completed an engagement with you.

I have forgotten my own sorrows, and am grieving for yours. Neither day nor night can I rest, nor think of anything else.

If I came myself (to Jellalabad), I could arrange the affair as I wished. It has two advantages and one objection. I am puzzled. God deliver me! All that has happened has been caused by want of forethought. Now may God give me assistance!

I always said to Sir William Macnaghten that this affair would end badly.

The day that he made arrangements for leaving (Caubul for Bombay) I was ready to precede him, saying that I did not like the appearance of things here. He did not listen to me. The bearer will inform you of other particulars. What can I do? These men are the greatest curse in the world. If I had any money I could collect my [438] army—then “could it be in the power of any one to injure even a dog that belonged to you?”—[*MS. Records.*]

The letters which Macgregor wrote in reply to the Shah were very brief, and intended to convey as little meaning as possible. One or two specimens will suffice:

## CAPTAIN MACGREGOR TO HIS MAJESTY SHAH SOOJAH.

Your Majesty’s letter was received by me on the 21st of January, and I feel much honoured. The fact is, that what has occurred was fated. It is true that they (the British) made a mistake in not following your Majesty’s advice.

Please God, you may rest at ease regarding affairs here. In this quarter there is no enemy except Mahomed Akbar, who is at Lughman, and is the foe both of your Majesty and the British Government. The rabble of Ghilzyes who were with him have carried away to their homes what they were able to steal. With the exception of 200 or 300 Barukzyes there is no one else with him. And please God, if he comes, he will meet with a warm reception.

A copy of your Majesty’s letter was immediately forwarded to Peshawur, requesting that it might be sent with all possible haste to the Governor-General, and that an answer might be received, which may be soon expected. Rest at ease, that while I breathe I will not fail to assist your Majesty to the utmost of my ability. The army with the artillery may be considered to have arrived near this; indeed, they will be here as soon as the distance can be crossed.

## FROM CAPTAIN MACGREGOR TO HIS MAJESTY SHAH SOOJAH.

March 9th.

Your Majesty's letter, which was sent by the hands of a trustworthy person, has been received. Please God, if you can only cause delay for one month, whatever may be your wish can be arranged. Rest at ease, since the army under General Pollock, together with the Sikh force, has arrived at Peshawur, and may be considered as having arrived near this. Whatever the bearer of this may say is worthy of belief.—[*MS. Records.*]

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## NOTT'S LETTERS TO ENGLAND AND POLLOCK.

[*Book VIII., chapter 1, page 179, et seq.*]

Candahar, April 18th, 1842.

SIR,

I have been favoured with your letters of the 1st and 10th instant. I have also heard of the affair you had with the enemy on the 28th ultimo, and deeply regret the result. I have attentively perused the government despatch of the 15th ultimo forwarded through you. I have looked at our position in Afghanistan in every point of view that my judgment, aided by three years' experience of its people, will admit of. I now deliberately note what I consider to be necessary to carry out the intention of the Supreme Government, and to assert and uphold the honour of our country, even should the government ultimately determine on withdrawing the British troops from the right of the Indus, it would be impossible to retire the troops below the passes before October. The troops at Candahar are four months in arrears, and we have not one rupee in the treasury. In the event of much field service we should run short of musket ammunition, and we are without medicine for the sick and wounded. I think it absolutely necessary that a strong brigade of 2500 men should be immediately pushed from Quettah to Candahar with the supplies noted in the foregoing paragraph. I therefore have to acquaint you that I will direct a brigade of three regiments of infantry, a troop of horse artillery, with a body of cavalry, to march from Candahar on the morning of *the 25th instant*. This force will certainly be at Chummun, at the northern foot of the Kojuck, on the morning of the 1st of May, and possibly on the 30th of this month. I shall, therefore, fully rely on your marching a brigade from Quettah, so that it may reach the southern side of the pass on the above-mentioned date. I believe there can be no difficulty whatever in accomplishing this, nor of crossing the Kojuck without loss, provided the heights are properly crowned on either side. I have crossed it three times in command of troops, and I know that what I now state is correct. There can be no danger in passing through Pisheen provided a careful and well-ordered march is preserved, and patroles and flanking parties of horse are thrown well out. The people of this country cannot withstand our troops in the open field. I am well aware that war cannot be made without loss, but yet, perhaps, the British troops can oppose Asiatic armies without defeat; and I feel and know that British officers should never despair of punishing the atrocious and treacherous conduct of a brutal enemy. You say you are not aware if I know the localities of Quettah. I know them well and I hope I shall be excused when I express my surprise that the authorities at Quettah should for a moment have thought of throwing up breastworks and entrenching that straggling and wretched cantonment, when the town and its citadel is so well calculated for every purpose which can render a post at all desirable in Shawl, and I am quite certain may be well defended by 500 men. Did I command at Quettah, I would relinquish the cantonment—it is useless. Quettah is not a place for a large body of troops. I feel obliged to you for pointing out the many difficulties attending our position, but you are aware that it is our first and only duty to overcome difficulties when the national honour and military reputation is so deeply concerned—nothing can be accomplished without effort and perseverance. On the last para. of your letter of the 10th instant, I have only to observe that I have not yet contemplated falling back. Without money I can neither pay the long arrears due to the troops, nor procure carriage for field

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operations. I deeply regret this state of things, which ought to have been attended to months ago. Had this been done, I should now have been on my march to Ghuznee. I shall fully rely on your brigade being at the Kojuck on the 1st of May or before. This letter I request may be forwarded to Major Outram.

W. Nott, Major-General.

To Major-General England, commanding
S. F. Force.

P.S.—You will of course perceive that I intend your brigade should join and accompany the detachment sent from this to Candahar. I have no cattle for treasure or stores.

[It was with no common anxiety that Nott awaited the return of his regiments from Candahar. He had sent them reluctantly to the Kojuck, and was eager to commence operations in another direction —to march upon Ghuznee, and then onward to meet Pollock at the capital. In the letters which he addressed at this time to his brother General at Jellalabad, his feelings found vent. They are eminently characteristic:]

[441]

Candahar, April 29th, 1842.

My dear General,

My last news from your side was of the 5th instant. I regret I am not on my way to Ghuznee—I am tied to this place. My troops have had no pay since December, 1841. I am in want of almost everything. I have not carriage even for three regiments, and I have not a rupee to buy or to hire cattle. For five months I have been calling for aid from Sindh—none whatever has been sent. At last Major-General England moved with money and stores, but received a check in Pisheen, and then retired to Shawl! I have now been obliged to send the best part of my force to the Kojuck Pass, in hopes of getting the treasure and stores I have so long been expecting, and without which my small force is paralysed. It is dreadful to think of all this. I ought to have been on my way to extend my hand to you from Ghuznee instead of which I am obliged to make a movement on the Kojuck. I have felt the want of cavalry. I have the Shah's 1st Regiment, but I have never been able to *get them to charge*. My Sepoys have behaved nobly, and have licked the Afghans in every affair, even when five times their number. The moment my brigade returns from the Kojuck I move on Kelat-i-Ghilzye and Ghuznee, in hopes of saving some of our officers and men at the latter place. Instead of sending me cavalry, money, &c., the authority in Sindh coolly says, "When you retire bodily I hope to render you some assistance." I believe I shall go mad! I have much to say, but am confined to a slip of paper.

Yours sincerely,

W. Nott.[358]

Candahar, May 6th, 1842.

My dear General,

I have this day received your letter of the 14th ultimo. I had before heard of your progress up to the 6th of April: this is the only note I have received from you. I enclose a copy of my note of the 29th of last month, which was sent *viâ* Kelat-i-Ghilzye, and by which you will perceive how much I have been disappointed, and the state of the force under my command. It drove me almost mad to be forced to send the best part of my force to the Kojuck Pass instead of marching towards Caubul; but I had not a rupee to pay the long arrears of the troops, or to purchase cattle. The people of this country unfortunately have an idea that we are to retire whether we are successful or not, and therefore they will part with nothing; and, as far as cattle are concerned, we are nearly helpless. God knows why such delay has occurred in sending me money and stores. This is dreadful. I shall move towards Caubul the moment I can get carriage. General England's retrograde movement has been a sad disappointment to me.

[442]

Yours sincerely,

W. Nott.[359]

P.S.—England has now, with the aid of my brigade, crossed the pass. He brings with him two twelve-pounder howitzers; but for

these I should not have a single howitzer at command. Mortars I have none. I expect the troops here on the 10th. The Ghazehs still keep head within a few miles of us, not in great strength: the nucleus, however, exists. I have directed all camels within reach to be procured on any terms: want of money alone prevented me doing this earlier. The force I shall take from this must depend upon the available cattle. I trust it may amount to 5000 men. Rely on my making every effort to communicate with you; but from past experience I must regard this as extremely doubtful, and that we must not depend on mutual intelligence enabling us to make combined movements. No opportunity shall be lost; but if all attempts at correspondence fail, I will still hope that, as we have one object at heart, the similarity of our operations may in some measure supply the want of a concerted plan.

## GENERAL NOTT AND THE SHAH'S FIRST CAVALRY.

[With reference to the passage in one of the above letters, to the effect that the Shah's cavalry would not charge, I have received the following letter:]

Jhelum, April 28, 1852.

My dear Sir,

In the second volume of your "War in Afghanistan," page 447. General Sir William Nott, in a letter to General Sir George Pollock, dated Candahar, April 29, 1842, states:

"I have felt the want of cavalry. I have the Shah's 1st Regiment, but I have never been able *to get them to charge*."

Captain Leeson, who commanded the regiment during my [443] absence on sick leave, has since died. I therefore desire, without delay, to contradict this most extraordinary assertion. Fortunately, the regiment has built too solid a foundation by its own gallantry to be shaken by so malicious a representation, albeit made by a General Officer in whose word and opinion the public and Government placed such implicit faith; but General Nott was prejudiced against everything and everybody in any way connected with Shah Soojah and his country.

Facts are stubborn things, and I shall therefore make a few extracts from your valuable history of the War, which of themselves give denial to General Nott's *mis-statement*.

Page 441, vol. i., states:

"A gallant charge of the Shah's Horse, led by Peter Nicolson" (who took no undistinguished part in the after events of the war), "checked the onslaught of those desperate fanatics."

In the engagement alluded to (page 591, vol. i.) at Assea Ilmee, no mention is made of the Shah's 1st Cavalry; but it is well known that, under the command of Captain Leeson, aided by Lieutenant Moorcroft of the Madras Army, who was proceeding to join his regiment at Kelat-i-Gilzhee, and, who was a volunteer for the occasion, the Shah's 1st Cavalry did make a very gallant charge by moonlight.

Page 603, vol. i., states:

"And then the Cavalry, headed by the young Prince Sufdur Jung, who had something more than the common energy of the Piczal race, charged with terrific effect, and utterly broke the discomfited mass of Dooranies."

It is true that the Prince did *accompany* the charge, but a squadron of the Shah's 1st Cavalry, under Lieutenant Crawford of the Bombay Army, who was wounded, did nearly all the execution, and followed in pursuit long after the Dooranie Horse under his Royal Highness had given up the chase.

Page 400, vol ii., states:

"A party of the Shah's Horse, under Captain Leeson, and a detachment of Captain Wilson's Jan Baz, who had remained true to us in the face of strong temptation, were sent out against the mutineers. The detachment came up with the rebels about twelve miles from Candahar. There was a brief but sturdy conflict. The mutineers charged in a body, but were gallantly met by Leeson's men, and, after a hard struggle, were broken and dispersed."

I send you a copy of Captain Leeson's report of the affair. [444] General Nott expressed to Captain Leeson his admiration of the gallantry of the regiment, and his determination to recommend it to

the marked notice of Government.

Whatever his expressed intentions were, I have very good reason for believing that he never fulfilled them!

No. 235.

Candahar, 28th December, 1841.

Sir,

I have the honour to report for the information of the Major-General that, agreeably to his orders, I proceeded in search of the mutineers of the 1st Jan Baz Regiment with the details as per margin,[360] and, having received information on the road of a body of horse being in the direction of Chupreal, I ordered the Afghan Horse, who were in front, to proceed at a trot. After proceeding three or four miles they halted, and appeared in confusion, and on my riding to the front to learn the reason, I found they would not obey their officers' orders to form, in consequence of the mutineers of whom we were in pursuit being drawn up to receive them, amounting from 250 to 300 men, joined by about 80 footmen, who, however, took no active part in the fight.

I immediately took the lead with my regiment, formed into line, and advanced at a trot. After proceeding a little distance, my progress was arrested by a wide ditch, through which I had to pass my regiment by files, and which was performed most steadily. The mutineers, seeing us advance so slowly, fancied us to be wavering and advanced to the charge. I waited for the last files to cross the ditch, when I charged them. The collision was severe, and the conflict, for the time it lasted, bloody, as will be seen by the accompanying return of killed and wounded. The struggle lasted for about five minutes, when the mutineers broke and fled in two bodies. I pursued that which appeared to me the largest one, upwards of fourteen miles, cutting down the only three stragglers we came up with, and having seen the body enter the enclosed country on the Urghandab below Hinz-i-Muddud Khan, and having only sixteen men with me, I gave up the chase.

It is impossible that men could have behaved better than those of the 1st Cavalry. Their formations were as steadily performed as ever I saw them done on parade, and they advanced on the foe in as beautiful a line as possible.

The whole of our work was done by the sabre, not a shot being fired on our side from either matchlock or pistol, thus proving the confidence these men have acquired in their proper weapon. [445]

I regret to say that the conduct of the 2nd Jan Baz was shameful and cowardly. In the first instance, they refused to form when ordered by their officer, until sheltered by my line, and afterwards, when ordered by him to cross the water-course and join in the attack, they refused, notwithstanding the gallant example set them by Lieutenant Wilson, who charged, followed by his standard-bearer, alone. He was immediately joined by several of my men, who, seeing the precarious situation of their old adjutant, rallied round him, and I must not omit to mention that the lives of myself and Lieutenants Chamberlain and Wilson, who were with me, were saved by the devotion of these gallant men, who, whenever we were in danger, rushed to the rescue.

It seemed to be the main object of the mutineers to destroy the officers, which must inevitably have been the case, had it not been for the devotion of the men of the 1st Cavalry.

I have not mentioned the number of the enemy slain. I should say they must have amounted to between fifty and sixty, for I saw from twenty to twenty-five fall near me, and Lieutenant Wilson reports having seen thirty to forty bodies in the direction he took. The pursuit being immediate, there was no time to look about us, and on my return to the field of action, there were only three bodies remaining, which I believe to have been those of Sheeahs.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

(Signed)

Joseph Leeson,

Captain Commanding Shah's 1st Cavalry.

To Captain Ripley,

Fort Adjutant, Candahar.

Killed: 1 sowar, 26 horses.—Wounded: 1 resaldar, 1 naib, 1 jemadar, 1 duffadar, 26 sowars, 16 horses.

Four months after this event, which I believe *was the only instance throughout the whole war* where *both parties met at full gallop in good earnest*, General Nott was pleased to say "I have never been able *to get them to charge*."

But I will adduce further proof of General Nott's untruth.

Page 404, vol. ii., states:

"But the Cavalry, with two Horse Artillery guns, were now slipped upon the enemy, who broke and fled in dismay."

This was sixteen days after Chuplanee, and the men were mad to [446]
be at the enemy—indeed, they would not be restrained, and no sooner was the charge sounded than, with a terrific yell, they flew over the plain in pursuit of an intimidated foe, who knew from experience that they would give no quarter, and ask none.

We now come to the cause of General Nott's aspersion of the Regiment.

Page 416, vol. ii., most truly states:

"But they shrank from meeting our bayonets, and it was long before they even ventured to come within reach of our guns. The artillery then told with such good effect on the dense masses of the enemy, that they were more than ever disinclined to approach us."

It was on the 8th of March 1842, the day after General Nott took the field ostensibly to war, but truly to feed his half-starved cattle, that the enemy, who had threatened our camp on the previous evening, were now collected in dense masses and *entirely cavalry*. They owed the Shah's 1st Regiment a grudge for the lesson read to the mutinous Jan Baz, and they were determined to pay them off. General Nott's cavalry, consisting of 400 sabres Shah's 1st Cavalry, and 150 of Skinner's Horse, certainly the aggregate was not 600, were pushed to the front with Anderson's twelve guns, commanded by Captains Cooper and Turner. The country was intersected by large, deep, wide water-courses, over which there was great difficulty in transporting the guns. General Nott and his Infantry were fully *one mile* in the rear, with two or three of the nullahs alluded to between. The cavalry and guns were halted after some cannonading at the enemy, who hovered in front and on both flanks. Captain Saunders, of the Engineers, brought up an order from General Nott, desiring Captain Leeson to charge the enemy, but which body, or to which flank, was not named. Captain Leeson's reply was, "If I do, the enemy will possess himself of the guns, as they will be totally unsupported." From a mound close at hand the enemy were seen in swarms, computed from 5000 men and upwards, and *all cavalry*. A second, and a third, and a fourth message were brought by Lieutenant North, Bombay Engineers, and Captains Polwhele and Waterfield, and one of them brought word to say that General Nott had desired him to say that if Captain Leeson would not lead the charge, he would do so himself. Whilst this delay occurred, a party of the enemy having seen Skinner's Horse, under Lieutenant Travers, on the other side of a village, determined to destroy them, and came down to the attack. Travers flew for refuge to the guns, which had hardly wheeled about for action. Nor had the Shah's 1st Cavalry much time to form close column in rear of the [447]
guns, which were drawn up in a curve, when a body of the Dooranie Horse charged down with yells, brandishing their swords and waving their flags along the ground. They were received with grape, and it was not until several saddles had been emptied that they withdrew. This attempt to charge the guns, *supported by* ALL *General Nott's cavalry*, showed in what estimation, in their then *overpowering numbers*, the Dooranies held the Hindostanee Horse!! Opinions were divided as to the propriety of Captain Leeson's refusal to charge: by many he was censured, and by many he was praised *highly*, for having had the *moral* courage (when from General Nott's distance from the scene, and the amount of responsibility which devolved upon him) to determine not uselessly to lead a regiment to utter destruction, *and not to sacrifice twelve out of General Nott's only eighteen guns*! He did all that he could do. He immediately tendered the resignation of his command, which was not accepted. He begged for a court of inquiry, and demanded a court martial. He attended upon General Nott, and personally tendered resignation a second time, and a second time it was refused, General Nott assuring him that he was well satisfied with him, &c., but that in having disobeyed his orders to charge, *he had committed an error in judgment*. I doubt not but that it was founded upon this event, that General Nott wrote as he did. But surely it was

no fault of the regiment. The men had never been ordered to charge. Had they, they would have done so most willingly!

Again page 423, vol. ii., states:

"The bright afternoon sun shed its slant rays upon the sabres of the enemy, and lit them up like a burning forest. Our Infantry were drawn up in a hollow square, covering a crowd of camels. The Horse Artillery guns, which had done such good service before, were playing gloriously, under Turner's direction, upon the dense bodies of the enemy's Horse, whom their heavy fire kept at a cautious distance; and just as General Nott, with the reinforcements, came in sight, Lieutenant Chamberlain, of the Bengal Service, an officer of the Shah's Cavalry, who, at the head of a small party, had charged the enemy, was driven back, and emerging from a cloud of dust, formed in rear of the Infantry with the loss of a few men killed, himself and many of his party wounded, but not without having given very satisfactory proof of his power as a swordsman, albeit his treacherous weapon had broken in his hand."

This occurred at Baba Wullee 25th March, and everyone in the force except General Nott was aware that the combined charge of a [448] party of the Shah's 1st Cavalry, and a similar party of Skinner's Horse, although most unnecessarily ordered by Colonel Wymer commanding, was most gallantly executed.

Page 587, vol. ii., in a foot note, in a letter from General Nott to Lieutenant Hamersley, dated June 2nd, alluding to an action fought under the walls of Candahar, he says "a detail of the 1st Cavalry, under Chamberlain, behaved very well indeed:" but he never said so in his public despatch, nor did he ever allude to the recovery by the Shah's 1st Cavalry of the guns which Shumshoodeen carried off after the action of Ghoine, but to which allusion is made in page 602, vol. ii.

General Nott was determined that the Shah's Cavalry never should have any credit. He said after the action at Ghoine that he would mention their gallantry, but that he did not do so, everyone knows.

I think I have said quite sufficient to disprove General Nott's assertion. I do not consider it just, quietly to submit to the charge of cowardice imputed to the regiment on the page of history.

The Shah's 1st Cavalry has for some years past been transferred into the 9th Regiment Irregular Cavalry, and the mottoes on the standards, gallantly displayed by them, are refutations of Sir William Nott's assertion.

In proportion as your work has had an extensive circulation, so am I desirous that this explanation should be made known; and when your work goes through the second edition, I trust you will make such remarks as may be an antidote to the letter which has caused this long statement.

Believe me, my dear Sir, faithfully yours,

J. Christie, Lieutenant-Colonel,
Commanding 9th Irregular Cavalry,
Late Commanding Shah Soojah's 1st Cavalry.

To J. W. Kaye, Esq., Bletchingley, Surrey.

## [*Book VIII., chapter 3, page 226.*]

[The following is the letter from Pottinger to Macgregor, alluded to in the text. It is important, as showing what, in the course of my researches after truth has been emphatically denied, that at this early period Akbar Khan had begun to open negociations for the restoration of Dost Mahomed.]

[449]

"Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan has been with us to-day; and from what I can learn, it seems that Shah Soojah has entirely thrown us overboard, and is about to proceed to open war with us; and the following appears to be the grounds on which he wishes to treat. The agreement he wishes us to enter into is, that if Shah Soojah, or any of Shah Soojah's sons in enmity to the English may send an army to attack Jellalabad, it will thus become evident that the King is the enemy of the English; and the English will treat him as such—and then Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan will be considered the friend of the English, who will act according to his wishes with respect to this country, and will release the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan with all his family, and send them to this country with all honour and

respect, and will restore him to his government, in the same manner as they took it from him to give it to Shah Soojah; but will leave to the Ameer and Sirdar Mahomed Khan the full control of the people and government; and if any enemy attack the government thus established, the British Government will aid it with either money or an army, and the friends of the one government will be the friends of the other. The agreement which the Sirdar will enter into is this, that he will hereafter be the friend of the English; but that at present, to prevent himself being abused by his people, he must proceed to close the Khybur Pass against the approach of the English army; but he will not attempt to attack Jellalabad before the arrival of Shah Soojah's son and army; and after their arrival he will use every endeavour to secretly aid the garrison until the arrival of his father and family." [*Major Pottinger to Major Macgregor: Budeeabad, January 23, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*] From Major Pottinger's letters written about this time, his real opinion of the conduct of Akbar Khan can only be extracted by ascertaining the circumstances under which the different documents were prepared —some of them having been written at the request of the Sirdar himself. There are two letters of January 23, one of an official tendency, quoted above—the other of a more private and more genuine character, in which the writer says: "He" (Akbar Khan) "sent out the day before yesterday a Persian letter for me to send to you in English; I wrote a letter telling you the meaning, which he [450] sent back to-day, and requesting me to give him an exact copy of his own. I have done so it is true; but I fancy his humanity was only a sham, and every sinew was strained to destroy our poor fellows. He has, however, treated us personally well, and very much so."—[*MS. Correspondence.*] The despatch of these private letters was discovered by the Sirdar, who is said to have disarmed all the prisoners in consequence of this discovery.—[*Eyre.*]

## THE EARTHQUAKE AT BUDEEABAD.

[*Book VIII., chapter 3, page 226.*]

"*February 19.*—At about eleven we were visited by the most fearful earthquake within the memory of any man in this country. The day was beautifully clear, and nothing indicated the approach of such a visitation. Most of us were inside our rooms, when we heard a heavy rumbling noise, as of thousands of heavy carriages. This was immediately succeeded by a heaving of the earth, which caused a rocking of the walls, and made us all rush out into the court-yard, which we had no sooner entered than the shock, which had ceased for an instant, again came on with a hundred-fold violence. The high massive walls by which we were surrounded, heaved to and fro most fearfully, whilst we, for security, huddled together as closely as we possibly could in the centre of the square, where there was a deep wood-cellar. All of a sudden, there was a frightful crash around us; and the earth heaved up and down to such a degree that we could scarcely stand. The crash was succeeded by a dense cloud of dust, which, for five or six seconds, prevented our seeing the amount of injury done. The walls of the wood-cellar fell in. The earth around us was giving way; and we were afraid to move to the right or left, as it would bring us within range of the walls which were falling on both sides of us. The shock had now expended itself. The dust cleared away. And we then saw that our out-houses and the roof of one of our sleeping-rooms had tumbled in. The upper parts of the walls were down, and those portions which still remained were either [451] thrown out of their perpendicular or had large rents in them. God grant we may never again experience such a visitation. On the shock ceasing, we went outside the fort, and frightful was the devastation. The whole valley was one cloud of dust. Almost every part had been either wholly or partially destroyed, and great was the loss of life. Even mountains did not escape; and fearful were the crashes of huge rocks, as they were precipitated with awful violence to the plains below. We had shocks at least a dozen times during the day—but none of so alarming a nature as the first."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

## LETTER OF FUTTEH JUNG TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

[*Book VIII., chapter 5, page 265.*]

HIGH IN PLACE,

The astounding event of the Shah's murder will be known to you. These treacherous tyrants, how tyrannical has been their act! If the Shah had not been united to the interests of the English, and had not attended and acted according to their advice, why should he have met with such an end, and why was he with them until the last, save that he hoped for their co-operation? They placed that ungrateful man, the Nizam-oo-dowlah (Oosman Khan), in power, and, by their acting according to his advice, matters came to such a pass. The Shah was aware of the treachery and disaffection of these persons, and how much soever he warned the English of this, it was of no use. It was because the Shah looked upon himself and the English as one, and attended to their pleasure, that the revolution took place; but this is known to you. The people, high and low, have sealed the Koran, sent their deputies with it to the Shah, stating that, if the Shah would forsake the English and ally himself to Islam, they would acknowledge him as their King. The Shah replied: "They and I are one; I am not separated from them." These bastards united and proclaimed the Shah an infidel. The Shah told the English to leave the cantonments and enter the Balla Hissar. The English did not consent to this. The Shah then endeavoured to conciliate the rebels, and night and day took oaths with them, with the view of carrying out the plans of the English. After the English left the [452] cantonments, the people tendered to the Shah their submission, and endeavoured to persuade the King to attack Jellalabad. The Shah, by a thousand devices, managed for two and a half months to put them off, in order that the British reinforcements might reach you. All the money that the Shah possessed he gave to the people. The people gave out that as the Shah would not go to Jellalabad, it was evident that he was friendly to the (British) infidels; he and they were one. The Shah felt embarrassed. He said to his confidential servants: "If I go to Jellalabad, lakhs of people would collect, and I should be unable to control them, and if by this time the British reinforcements had not arrived, it would be bad for the cause." The King, not knowing that the reinforcements had arrived, agreed to leave the city, but determined not to reach Jellalabad for twenty days—500,000 registered troops—and if he saw that it was to their advantage, he would join the British. On the 22nd Suffur (5th of April), the Shah's murder took place; on the 23rd Suffur, the Populzye nobles, and Ameen-oollah Khan, Loghuree, placed me on the throne. Even as the Shah was the friend and well-wisher of the English, so am I the friend and well-wisher of the English. On account of this friendship the King sacrificed his life and property. Had he accepted the friendship of the Mussulmans, the Shah would neither have been proclaimed an infidel, nor have thus met with his death from the hands of the Barukzyes. I am not pleased at having been placed on the throne by these people. If God places me on the throne, and if this country is again in the possession of the British, and they support me on the throne and in getting my revenge from these tyrants who killed the Shah, then I shall be pleased. The Shah sacrificed his life and property on account of the English, and now it is for them to uphold the reputation of his family. If in a few days your army does not arrive at Caubul, they will carry off the Shah's family. Write speedily, and tell me what I am to do, and what the family of the Shah is to do. It is necessary that the British should arrive soon. The death of the Shah has caused disunion among the chiefs. It is necessary that your army, with a large army of the Sikhs (God willing), should advance. When I was first placed on the throne, the people were considering the death of the Barukzyes, but on hearing that your army had arrived at Jellalabad, and that Mahomed Akbar had been defeated, the people agreed to suspend hostilities among us, and endeavoured to induce me to attack Jellalabad. Up to the present time this is what they are striving to effect, but I tell them, that if they will in the first place avenge the [453] Shah's death, then I'll go to Jellalabad. But I am powerless, and shall anxiously expect a letter from you. Tell me how to act. To defeat this people is at present very easy, for great is their disunion. Start soon for Caubul.—[*MS. Records.*]

## DEFEAT OF THE NEWAB ZEMAUN KHAN.

[*Book VIII., chapter 5, page 277.*]

“The reason of the overthrow of the Newab is the disaffection of some of the most influential men of his party—the chief one being Oosman Khan, who was bought over with 1000 gold mohurs. The Pultuns also went over, and our host (Meer Hadjee) was bribed with 4000 gold mohurs, and during the fight his brother, Mahomed Dost, took an active part against the Newab. Poor old Zemaun Khan was a dupe throughout to Hotspur’s (Akbar Khan’s) perfidy, and a victim to misplaced confidence.”—[*Lieutenant John Conolly to Captain Macgregor: Caubul, June 23, 1842. MS. Records.*]

Akbar Khan’s own account of the affair, and of his subsequent treatment of Zemaun Khan, is on record in the following letter to the Shinwarree chiefs: “Up to the day of writing this, the 17th of Jamadi-ul-aroal (26th July), all is well here with me. As it was an object of paramount importance that in the contest with the race of misguided infidels the whole of the numbers of the true faith should be united together, and the attainment and perfecting of this object appeared indispensable, therefore did the whole of the devoted followers of the true faith consent to choose me as their head, and to place themselves under my command. All the tribes and leaders of the Douranees, Ghilzyes, and Kuzzilbashes and Kakulees and Kohistanees, have submitted to me, and I have placed on the throne the King, high in power, majestic as Alexander, ambitious as Kai-Khusro, Shah-zadah Futteh Jung, son of the late King, and caused the Khutba to be read and coin to be struck in his name, redoubted as that of Faridoon. Newab Mahomed Zemaun Khan, having in some respects opposed himself to my views and interfered with me, at length came to an open rupture, and commenced hostilities against [454] me. After several of my people had been killed and wounded, then, and not till then, I, of necessity, gave the order to them to retaliate. In two hours the engagement was at an end; and all order being destroyed among the troops of the Newab, they were dispersed. His guns and magazines, stores and horses, and regiments and jezailchees, and other appendages of power which he had newly prepared, all fell into my possession. As the Newab was a part and parcel of myself—not wishing to reduce him to a state of poverty and want—I, on the same day, restored to him all his horses: the rest of his property I kept possession of. Since then, all the leaders of the different tribes have acknowledged my authority, and I firmly trust that all my future undertakings will in like manner be crowned with success, and that the object nearest the hearts of me and you, and all the race of Islam—viz., the extermination, root and branch, of the detested race of infidels, may be without difficulty accomplished. Set your mind perfectly at rest on this subject, and do not entertain any misgivings, and gird up your loins for action, and be ready with the fear-inspiring and punishment-inflicting Ghazees, and use your utmost exertions and efforts to close the Khybur road and intercept their dawk communications, that their messengers may not pass to and fro, and that no grain may reach them from any quarter; for this is the real way to defeat this misguided and detested race,—this is the real battle of martyrdom which you must fight: therefore consider this injunction as of the very first importance. In a short time, by the favour of God the Almighty, and the assistance of the founders of our religion, this humble servant of God, with a terror-inspiring army from this country, and an artillery thundering and flashing fire, and with jezailchees threatening like Mars, and with artillerymen like Saturn, and Ghazees, who march hand-in-hand with victory, will set out for your direction: and if it be the will of God, will soon clear the surface of that country, sweeping from it the rubbish from the bodies of the enemies of our religion. Meanwhile it behoves you, in anticipation of the arrival of the exalted standards, the emblems of victory, to spare no exertions to [455] stir up the strife of religion, and send me constantly news of your welfare, and of the movements of the vile infidels, that according to your information I may take measures to counteract them. Futteh Mahomed, the son of Saadat Khan, is here, and will shortly leave me to join you with the Ghazees.”—[*MS. Records.*]

## LORD ELLENBOROUGH AND SIR JASPER NICOLLS.

[*Book IX., chapter 1, page 286.*]

It was not until the 27th of August that the Commander-in-Chief was informed, by a letter from General Pollock, of the instructions

sent to General Nott on the 4th of July. How entirely the Governor-General had set aside the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, and what Sir Jasper Nicolls thought both of Lord Ellenborough's conduct and of the advance on Caubul, may be gathered from the following extracts from his journal:

"*June 6.*—To my astonishment, Lord E., in consequence of General Pollock's complaints of want of carriage, has consented to his remaining beyond the Khybur till October, though he quotes the Duke of Wellington's dictum, that an army, which cannot be moved as you will, is no army at all. He will thus have an unhealthy, difficult pass behind him for four or five months, and possibly involve us in another dreadful campaign. These changes are dreadful. I wish that I had nothing to do with them."

"*June 30.*—The Secret Committee review the proceedings of Government, from December to February last, not with asperity, but with decided disapprobation of the uncertain policy of that time, and the contradictory resolutions and orders which were then passed. This is very well deserved, for it was then, in November or December, that Government ought to have decided to leave the country or to resume our full control over it."

"*August 8.*—The wants of General Pollock's army are put down at 6½ lakhs *per mensem*, and we are just going to send 20 to clear him off—the last, I believe and hope, which we shall send to be buried in [456] the Punjab and Afghanistan. Twenty-one lakhs he had before."

"*August 15.*—General Nott has fixed on the 2nd of this month for leaving Candahar, and in two divisions—the Bombay troops by Quettah and Sukkur—the Bengal column by Dehra Ismael Khan. This is quite new to me, and may be either ordered by the General or suggested by Lord E."

"*August 20.*—This order as to retirement by Dehra Ismael Khan appears the effect of impulse. Its neglect of me I forgive, though a manifest slight; but I do not find that he has ordered the necessary supplies to be collected for the retreat through the Sikh territory, which is, in parts near that place, almost a desert."

"*August 24.*—The 3rd Dragoons, and another troop of horse artillery, are about to join Sir R. Sale at Futtehabad. Can the General be now organising an advance on Caubul? Is he commanded to do so? Can he effect it? Is he to encamp at Gundamuck till Nott's attack on Ghuznee (if that take place)? It is curious that I should have to ask myself these questions; but so it is. I am wholly ignorant of the intended movements of either. Lord Ellenborough means to surprise friend and foe equally."

"*August 27.—To-day* I find, by a despatch from General Pollock, that General Nott has decided on returning to the provinces, *viâ* Ghuznee and Caubul. Lord E., by letter dated 4th of July, gave him a choice as to the line by which to withdraw, and he has chosen this—certainly the noblest and the worthiest; but whether it will release our prisoners and add to our fame, I cannot venture to predict. Lord E.'s want of decent attention to my position is inexcusable."—[*Sir Jasper Nicolls' MS. Journal.*]

## THE GHUZNEE PRISONERS.

[*Book IX., chapter 3, page 349.*]

I have stated in a note that the Caubul prisoners, before their removal to Bameean, had been joined by their fellow-captives from [457] Ghuznee. Some idea of the sufferings of the latter may be derived from the following passages of Lieutenant Crawford's Narrative: "Every little thing we had managed to secure, such as watches, penknives, money, &c., was taken from us, and we were strictly confined to a small room, eighteen feet by thirteen. In it there were ten of us. * * * When we lay down at night we exactly occupied the whole floor; and when we wanted to take a little exercise we were obliged to walk up and down (six paces) by turns. Few of us had a change of linen, and the consequence was we were soon swarming with vermin, the catching of which afforded us an hour's employment every morning. I wore my solitary shirt for five weeks, till it became literally black and rotten. * * * On the 7th of April we heard of Shah Soojah's death, and from that date the severities of our confinement were redoubled. They shut and darkened the solitary window from which we had hitherto derived light and air,

and they also kept the door of our room constantly closed, so that the air we breathed became perfectly pestiferous. On the 21st of the month they tortured Colonel Palmer with a tent-peg and rope in such a manner that it is wonderful he ever recovered the use of his foot. I cannot in a letter explain the process of the torture, but we all witnessed it, and it was something on the principle of the Scotch boot described in ‘Old Mortality.’ * * * In the end of April our guards suddenly became particularly civil to us for a few days, and we found that they had a report of the advance of our troops. * * * On the 12th of May we were permitted to quit our prison-room, and walk on the terrace of the citadel for one hour. * * * Just at this period (June 15) one of our number, Lieutenant Davis, 27th N. I., had sickened with typhus fever. We had no medicines, no comforts for him, and he lay on the ground delirious, raving about home and his family, and every hour proving worse, till, on the 19th, death put an end to his sufferings. We read the burial service, and then made his body over to the guard to bury; but I am afraid they merely flung the poor fellow into a ditch outside the gate. On the following day we were removed to another building, where we had three or four [458] rooms to ourselves, and a court-yard to walk about in. This was a delightful change. From this date the conduct of Shumshoodeen towards us improved greatly. * * * It was on the 19th of August, we had, as usual, wrapped ourselves up in our cloaks, and taken lodgings on the cold ground for the night, when the chief suddenly entered the yard, and told us we were to march immediately for Caubul; and sure enough in half an hour we found ourselves moving towards the capital. * * * We went direct to Mahomed Akbar’s quarters in the Balla Hissar, and from him we met with the kindest reception. He bade us be of good cheer, as our future comfort would be his care, and we should find ourselves treated like officers and gentlemen. * * * We found our countrymen living in what appeared to us a small paradise. They had comfortable quarters, servants, money, and no little baggage, and a beautiful garden to walk in.”

## THE ALLEGED EXCESSES AT CAUBUL.

[*Book IX., chapter 3, page 360.*]

| ABSTRACT TRANSLATION OF A LETTER FROM GHOLAM MAHOMED KHAN, THE WUZEER, AND KHAN SHEREEN KHAN THE KUZZIL-BASH CHIEF, TO THE ADDRESS OF GENERAL POLLOCK, C.B. | REMARKS BY GENERAL NOTT. |
|---|---|
| A.C. | |
| On the 14th of Shah Bau (20th September) the inhabitants of Aushar and Chardeh were plundered by the Candahar force, and sustained loss of life and property(1): their women were not respected. In the village of Deh Dānā Causim, and in Zeibah Shewan Khan, and at Chardeh, two persons were killed(2). The Ausharries are employed in your service, in the rescue of your prisoners: if their houses are plundered and their people(3) killed, all confidence among the people will at once be destroyed. If it is your intention that protection should be afforded to the people, and to avail yourself of our resources(4), redress should be granted under our promises of protection to the people returning to their homes. | 1. This is unfounded, with the exception of a few worthless articles, stolen by surwans and grass-cutters, for which they were most severely punished. |
| | 2. I never heard of two Afghans having been killed; but four Europeans unarmed, walking at a little distance from camp, were killed by these monsters. |
| | 3. What people? The population of [459] this valley had left it before my force had arrived, and have not been here since, with the exception of a few individuals. |
| | 4. Why are not these resources brought in when an extravagant price is offered for them? |
| We are satisfied that it is not your pleasure that the troops should behave in this manner(5). | 5. This is a false assertion, for which the writer ought to be instantly punished: the troops have not behaved ill. |
| To-day, the 15th of Shau Bau (21st September), the army which was appointed to destroy Meer Hajee’s fort also destroyed the property belonging to people of the neighbourhood: these people should also have redress granted them(6). | 6. What this man means by this I know not; no army, no detachment was appointed by me to destroy a fort. I did hear that General Sale ordered one to be burnt, but whether he did so or no I do not know; but if he did, I dare say he had good reasons. |
| If the English do not grant them redress, the ryots(7) will fly from their homes, and they will have no longer confidence in us. | 7. I repeat that there are no ryots in the villages. All men capable of bearing arms are with different chiefs, and there is no knowing the hour we may be attacked by them. |
| Just now news has reached us that the Candahar force has encamped at Allaábád(8), which | 8. Yes, I have encamped, and I can but admire the extreme insolence of this man in presuming to object to it. |
| | 9. This is false; there are no |

belongs to us, and where our families are lodged(9); the force has already plundered our grain and fruit(10).

If your friends suffer in this way, what may your enemies expect?(11) Those people who returned to the town are leaving it again.

Redress should be speedily granted, and Lamars should be stationed at each village for its protection(12).

families near the place.

10. This is false; with the exception of fruit in the immediate vicinity of camp.

11. We have not a friend in Afghanistan; and I know what our enemies ought to expect for their cruelty, treachery, and bloody murders. [460]

12. What insolence in this man, whose hands are still red with the blood of our countrymen, to dictate how and where we are to place our troops!

I cannot conclude my remarks on this document without offering my opinion that the writer should be instantly seized and punished for sending such a grossly false and insolent statement.

W. Nott, M.-Gen.

Camp near Caubul, 22nd September, 1842.

Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, and to acquaint you that I conceive that General Pollock, C.B., must have received some erroneous information. No army ever moved with fewer instances of plunder than that under my command, and not an instance of irregularity has occurred without punishment being inflicted. The persons who had made this complaint ought to be made to prove the truth of what they say. I believe the enemy (I mean Futteh Jung's party and the rest of the people) are organising a system to bring our men to the same state of starvation to which General Elphinstone's army was reduced, in hopes of the same results.

While I think it my duty to state this, I must declare that I will not, to please a few Afghans, who have scarcely washed their hands from the blood of our countrymen, allow my army to be destroyed, and my country to be dishonoured. There is grain in the country, and I think it ought to be brought in immediately, the same being paid for.

General Pollock's order shall be proclaimed through my camp immediately, but I have not heard of a single act of plunder during the last twenty-four hours.

I have, &c.
W. Nott, Major-General,
Commanding Field Forces.

To Captain Ponsonby,
Assistant Adjutant-General, Camp.

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## SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE OF CAUBUL. FUTTEH JUNG AND SHAHPOOR.

[*Book IX., chapter 3, pages 366-367.*]

[The following extract of a letter from General Pollock, shows what was really done by that officer with respect to the Suddozye succession. The declaration of the chiefs alluded to at page 367 is subjoined.]

"Shortly after my arrival at Caubul I despatched a force, under Major-General M'Caskill, to disperse the followers of Ameen-oollah Khan and Mahomed Akbar, and to endeavour to secure the person of the latter. Futteh Jung continued for several days in power, and appeared disposed to endeavour to retain it. The hope which then existed, that Mahomed Akbar Khan would fall into our hands, no doubt had great influence with him; but when this hope vanished, the representations of his female relations, and the remembrance of the gross treachery he had experienced from the chiefs on former occasions, appear to have alarmed him; and at length he announced to me his determination to accompany the British troops to Hindostan. At the same time I received a letter, a translation of which I have now the honour to forward, from Gholam Mahomed Khan (the minister) and Khan Shereen Khan, the chief of the Kuzzilbashes, on the part of several other chiefs, avowing their determination to support the brother of Futteh Jung (Shahpoor) on the throne of Caubul. It was long before I could convince the chiefs

comprising this party that they could not hope for any assistance from the British Government, either in money or troops; but as they still persisted in urging me to allow the Prince Shahpoor to remain, and as he repeatedly assured me he was anxious to do so, I did not conceive myself authorised by my instructions to remove him forcibly from Caubul, and only stipulated that the British Government should not be supposed to have raised him to the throne. On the morning of the 12th of October, after the British troops had marched from Caubul, Prince Shahpoor was put on the throne, and the chiefs took the oaths of fidelity to him."—[*General Pollock to Lord Ellenborough: MS. Correspondence.*]

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## FROM WUZEER GHOLAM MAHOMED KHAN, POPULZYE; AND KHAN SHEREEN KHAN, CHIEF OF THE KUZZILBASHES, ON THE PARTS OF ALL THE CHIEFS AT CAUBUL.

A.C.

Be it known to you, that since we, the Populzyes and the other Douranee tribes and the Kuzzilbash cannot exist under the Barukzyes; and as such a state of things is altogether out of the range of possibility; and moreover, since his Royal Highness Futteh Jung has decided on quitting the country; we agree and accept of the Prince Shahpoor as our King, and will obey him as our ruler. But we hope that you will, from this time, put a stop to the destruction of forts and other property, that the people may regain confidence, and return to their own houses; and we also beg that Meer Soofaee Byanee, who is a prisoner in Charekur, be sent for and made over to us, that people may be induced to come in to us. And if you will make over to us any guns and ammunition, it will be a great assistance. For the rest, as long as we live we shall hope for the friendship of the British Government.[361]

## DESTRUCTION OF THE BAZAAR AT CAUBUL AND THE IMPUTED EXCESSES OF THE TROOPS.

[*Book IX., chapter 3, page 369.*]

### SIR GEORGE POLLOCK TO LORD ELLENBOROUGH.

*April 2nd, 1843*, Allahabad.

My Lord,

I have had the honour to receive your Lordship's letter, dated 23 ultimo, intimating that disapprobation had been expressed at the destruction of the bazaar and mosque at Caubul, and of trees; also, that excesses have been imputed to the troops.

It is difficult to grapple with vague and anonymous accusations against the conduct of the troops. Many detailed statements in the newspapers were entirely unfounded, and were got up with the sole object of creating a sensation; but I confess that if individual and isolated instances of excess had occurred, I should not have been much surprised, composed, as all India armies are, of such a heterogeneous mass, comprising all classes and castes; more than two-thirds of whom are either public or private servants and adventurers, who, though nominally following some occupation useful to an army, proceed with it for the sole purpose of plundering when a favourable opportunity offers. Some excesses may, unknown to me, have been committed; but I will venture to assert that no troops ever conducted themselves with more forbearance under such unprecedented aggravations: perhaps no army was ever placed in a more trying situation.

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During the whole course of their progress towards the capital they had ocular proofs of the treachery and brutality of a merciless enemy; but still I am unable to call to mind any wanton, deliberate act of inhumanity on the part of the troops; and cannot but regret that the culpable instances alluded to have not been specified, as I may possibly be suspected of suppressing facts. This, however, I beg to assure your Lordship I have no wish to do.

The feeling of the Hindoos against the Afghans was very naturally strong, in consequence of the latter having deprived the Hindoos of their caste whenever they came into their power; but no troops could feel otherwise than excited at the sight of the skeletons of their late brethren in arms, which still lie covering the road from

Gundamuck to Caubul; and as if the more to rouse a spirit of revenge, the barricade at Jugdulluck was literally covered with skeletons.

What I have stated above will not be considered as justifying excesses on the part of a British army; but it may be admitted in extenuation of individual cases.

A few days previous to the march of the brigade under Brigadier Monteith, an European was murdered by the Afghans at Jellalabad. The destruction of Alli Boghan by some men under Brigadier Monteith's command, was caused by one of those sudden bursts of feeling which, being wholly unexpected, no precautions were deemed necessary; but it was a solitary instance, and occurred nearly as follows:—Some camp followers entered the village, and having found parts of the dress of some of our soldiers who had been massacred on the march from Caubul, a number of men proceeded to the village, which was eventually burnt, whether accidentally or intentionally is doubtful; so very soon was the mischief perpetrated, that the Brigadier was hardly aware of it till the place was in flames. He immediately took measures to prevent a recurrence of such scenes, and I wrote in strong terms on the subject. Subsequent to that event, during the whole time the Brigadier was detached, I heard of no more excesses. In the instance of Alli Boghan, after a most minute inquiry, I have reason to believe that not a man, woman, or child was injured, and I know the greater part of the property was returned to the head man of the village.

In subsequent engagements with the enemy at Mamookail, [464]
Jugdulluck, and Tezeen, I neither saw or heard of any excesses. A report was circulated that an European was burnt alive at Jugdulluck, and that two Afghans were burnt in like manner by our troops in revenge, the whole of which was an infamous fabrication.

I know of no instances of cruelty or excess at Istaliff; and the feeling of the army could not have been very prone thereto when about four or five hundred women and children were protected from insult and injury, and made over to their families after the engagement. If any excess has been committed which I have not noticed, I can only affirm that I recollect none; and I beg to add, that the praise bestowed on the troops on a late occasion by your Lordship for their "forbearance in victory," is, as far as I am able to judge, well merited; and I trust your Lordship will never have cause to alter your good opinion of their conduct.

On the subject of trees being destroyed, I am unable to call to recollection what occurred in Brigadier Monteith's detachment; and the only instance of their destruction, which came under my personal observation, was at Mamookail, where the ground was such that I was obliged to encamp the different regiments in the gardens surrounding the fort. Without this precaution I should have been subjecting the troops to constant annoyance, as the enemy would certainly have occupied them. The destruction of the vines and other small plants was almost a necessary consequence of our occupying Mamookail.

With regard to the destruction of the Caubul bazaar and mosque, it may possibly be supposed that with them was destroyed other property; but this was not the case.

The insult offered to the remains of the late Envoy was notorious to the whole of the chiefs and inhabitants of the city. They admitted that the mutilated body was dragged through the bazaar and treated by the populace with every indignity, and eventually hung there, that every Afghan in the city might witness the treatment of the remains of the representative of the British Government. The intended measure was communicated to the chiefs, who not only admitted the propriety of destroying a place were such scenes had transpired, but offered to, and did, accompany the party sent for its destruction. Those who resided at and near the bazaar had two days' previous notice to remove their property (which they did), and I am not aware of any instances of violence having occurred. It was
not possible entirely to prevent plundering; but during the time the [465]
engineer was employed in the destruction of the bazaar and mosque attached, both cavalry and infantry were on duty in the city to prevent any outrage.

I have the honour, &c.

GEO. POLLOCK.

## FROM GENERAL POLLOCK TO LORD ELLENBOROUGH.

Ghazeepore, *10th April, 1843*.

My Lord,

Since I had the honour to address your Lordship on the 2nd instant, in reply to your Lordship's letter dated the 23rd ultimo, it has occured to me that I could not produce better proof of the forbearance of the troops under my command than by a reference to their conduct on the morning of the 16th of September last. I have already officially detailed the number of troops which accompanied me on the occasion of planting the colours on the Balla Hissar. It was deemed advisable on that occasion to go through a part of the city, and although the troops had arrived only the day before from a march which was abundantly calculated to irritate and exasperate them, they so fully and literally obeyed the orders I had previously given, that not a house or an individual was injured, either in going or returning from the Balla-Hissar. The destruction of the residence of Koda Bux, the chief of Teezeen, may perhaps have been considered an excess; I will therefore explain, that during the time the army remained in advance of Teezeen, the chief of that place was the cause of our communication being cut off. He was repeatedly warned what the consequences would be when an opportunity offered, if he persisted in such a course; but I beg to add that the injury sustained by the chief in the destruction of his residence entailed no loss on others that I am aware of, as the injury done was confined almost entirely to the fortified dwelling. Forage was found there and brought to camp, but not an individual was injured.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c.

Geo. Pollock.

[466]

## FROM GENERAL POLLOCK TO THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL.

Dinapore, *18th April, 1843*.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 29th ult., which awaited my arrival here. I regret that I was not sooner in possession of your letter, as I fear this will be too late for the purpose required. Nearly all the information it is in my power to give is contained in the accompanying copies of letters which I have addressed to the Right Honourable the Governor-General in reply to a reference his Lordship was pleased to make to me. With respect to the extent of injury done by the brigade under Brigadier Monteith, I am unable to give any detailed account. The provisions, grain, etc., and materials for building, were taken from those of the inhabitants who were openly opposed to our troops; but in both cases the cost of things taken was carried to the account of government. I have already, in my letters to his Lordship, stated that I am not aware of any Afghans having been killed when unresisting, or from any feeling of revenge on the part of the troops. Torabauz Khan, the chief of Lallpoora, and the governor of Jellalabad, accompanied the brigade to point out what property should be respected. With regard to the violation of woman, I heard of no instance of the kind; and I am quite sure that Brigadier Monteith would have done his utmost to prevent such excuses. I have stated to his Lordship what occurred at Mamoo Kail, and I know most positively that no Afghan was killed on that occasion except in fair fighting. The families had, I believe, gone the day before the place was taken. I cannot say when or by whom the fort or adjoining houses were set fire to. I passed through with the right column in pursuit of the enemy, and did not return till the afternoon, when I had determined to encamp there. On my return I found Brigadier Pollock with his column (the left) occupying the gardens. The fort and adjacent houses were still burning. On the return of the whole of the troops, it was necessary for their security to take advantage of the gardens surrounded by walls, and the men were accordingly encamped there. The destruction of the vines was a necessary consequence, as every one must know who has seen how grapes are cultivated in Afghanistan. There were very few trees cut down, but the bark of a number of them was taken from about two or three inches. With reference to the third paragraph of your letter,

I beg to state, that from the date of my arrival at Caubul on the 15th of September, the inhabitants commenced returning to their houses. [467] They had assurances from me of protection, and, with the exception of the covered bazaar, I did my utmost to protect both the inhabitants and their dwellings from injury. I have already stated to his Lordship why I considered that particular spot (the bazaar) should suffer, and on the 9th of October the engineer commenced his operations. I believe I am quite justified in stating that no lives were lost; the private property had been removed, and I had both cavalry and infantry on duty in the city to prevent plundering. Some injury was no doubt sustained by the city, but the damage done even when we left it was partial and comparatively trivial. I consider it mere justice to the troops who proceeded under my command to Caubul, and who passed over scenes which were particularly calculated to cause great excitement among them, to state, that their conduct on proceeding to the Balla Hissar (passing through a part of the city) was quite unexceptionable, and the good effect resulting therefrom was immediately felt: confidence was restored; in proof of which I may state that supplies both of grain and forage were brought in abundantly, everything being paid for. I have no memorandum from which to quote the exact quantities of grain which came into camp, but my recollection of the quantities in round numbers is as follows:—The first day 500 maunds, second day 1000 maunds, third day 1600 maunds, fourth day 2000 maunds, fifth day 1000 maunds. The falling off of the supplies on the fifth day was the consequence, I was told, of some of the men of General Nott's force having plundered those who were bringing in supplies. I wrote to General Nott on the subject; but from that period the supplies never came in so freely as before, and I am sorry to add that many complaints were made. I have hitherto been silent on this subject, and should have continued so, for reasons which it is perhaps unnecessary to explain; but as the third paragraph of your letter calls for a more particular report than I have hitherto made, I reluctantly forward the accompanying documents, upon which it is unnecessary for me to make any comments.

I beg, however, to state distinctly, that until plundering commenced supplies of every description were abundant, and the people were fast returning to the city. In reply to that part of the third paragraph in which I am directed to state what injury I understood had been committed by the Candahar force after my march, I have merely to observe, that from all I had heard I thought it advisable that the whole force should move from Caubul the same [468] day; and this precaution, I have reason to believe, prevented some excesses.

In reply to the fourth paragraph, I believe I may with great truth state that no Afghans were destroyed in cold blood, either before or after reaching Caubul. No women were either dishonoured or murdered, that I am aware of. With regard to the destruction of that particular part of the Caubul bazaar where the envoy's remains were treated with indignity, and brutally dragged through to be there dishonoured and spit upon by every Mussulman, I admit that I considered it the most suitable place in which to have decided proofs of the power of the British army, without impeaching its humanity.

I have, as directed by you, forwarded a copy of this letter and the original documents to Colonel Stewart, for the information of the Governor-General.

I have the honour to be, Sir, &c. &c. &c.

GEO. POLLOCK.

## POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

### THE COURT OF DIRECTORS TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL.

London, *2nd April, 1843*.

The Secret Committee has communicated to us the letters noted below,[362] relating to inquiries addressed by order of the Governor-General to the General Officers lately commanding in Afghanistan, on the subject of certain rumours of outrages alleged to have been perpetrated by the British troops, and conveying replies to those inquiries from Major-Generals Sir George Pollock, Sir William Nott,

[363] and Sir John M'Caskill.

When these rumours were first brought to our knowledge, we deemed them to be great exaggerations, if not altogether unfounded; and we did not doubt that we should receive, in due course, full and exculpatory explanations as to what had actually taken place. [469]

Whilst we regard the statements made by the three General Officers as generally satisfactory, we cannot avoid the expression of our regret that Sir William Nott should have been hurried, by the warmth of his feelings, into throwing on the government which he served the reflection contained in the last paragraph of that letter, and which was quite unnecessary to the vindication of his own character, and that of the troops under his command.

Neither can we do otherwise than notice with regret the publication of Sir William Nott's letter in an English newspaper. We have not the means of ascertaining how this irregularity occurred, but we must observe, that unauthorised disclosure of official correspondence on any subject is highly improper, and may lead to the greatest inconvenience.

We are, &c.

(Signed)

| | |
|---|---|
| John Cotton. | E. Macnaghten. |
| John Shepherd. | W. H. C. Plowden. |
| W. Astell. | John Masterman. |
| C. Mills. | W. B. Bayley. |
| J. Lushington. | Hy. Alexander. |
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| R. Jenkins. | |

[*MS. Records.*]

THE END.

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# FOOTNOTES:

[1] About the same time Lord Auckland wrote to Sir W. Macnaghten: “I would have you share in the feeling which is growing strongly upon me that the maintenance of the position, which we have attempted to establish in Afghanistan, is no longer to be looked to. It will be for you and for this government to consider in what manner all that belongs to India may be most immediately and most honourably withdrawn from the country.”—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[2] *MS. Correspondence.*

[3] Mr. George Clerk at that time entertained very similar opinions regarding the danger of sending more regiments away from the North-Western Provinces. “Whatever may take place,” he wrote to Lord Auckland on the 25th of November, “in regard to Caubul, and in whatever degree our troops there may be reinforced, we should not weaken this frontier. Any reduction of our military strength causes some presumption or audacity in our native allies generally.” And on the 29th he wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces (Mr. Robertson): “I really do not see how our muster-roll is to stand this draining of more troops—and probably many more, west—whilst reinforcements are also proceeding eastward. Undoubtedly the remainder will be inadequate to the due maintenance of our high supremacy in India.”—[*MS. Correspondence.*] There was, unquestionably, a choice of evils at this time. But Sir Jasper Nicolls and Mr. George Clerk differed in opinion as to which was the greater of the two.

[4] On the 27th of November he wrote to Lord Auckland from Mynpoorie: “If it be decided that we are to support Shah Soojah under all circumstances and difficulties, I must entreat your Lordship’s early attention to the means of effecting this object, which may be a more arduous undertaking than the occupation of the country in 1839.” And again, in the same letter: “There is a dark, perhaps a random hint, in one of these letters that the rebellion is instigated by the royal family at Caubul. If so, I would advise the early abandonment of them, their country, and their cause.” On the 28th he again wrote: “I really would not advise our forcing either him or ourselves upon a nation so distant, and in all respects so dissimilar both to our Sepoys and ourselves, at an expense so decidedly ruinous.” And on the 30th, in still more emphatic language, he said: “My opinion regarding a renewal of our efforts to support Shah Soojah on his throne, and to establish a permanent influence in Afghanistan, is without change or modification. That we have no base of operations has been always clear; but now, were we to march a reinforcement on the best horses, we could not be sure of carrying the Khybur Pass, and if snow has fallen, the road to Caubul would still be closed.”—[*MS. Correspondence of Sir J. Nicolls.*]

[5] The 53rd and 64th Native Infantry.

[6] The 60th Native Infantry.

[7] Two days before, Captain (afterwards Sir Henry) Lawrence, Assistant to Mr. Clerk, whose later career justified the high expectations which were formed of him during his connexion with the North-Western Agency, on his way out after a dacoity party, met the intelligence of the Caubul outbreak, and immediately after forwarding it on to Mr. Clerk went to Colonel Wild, to urge him to push on the 60th and 64th Regiments, and to warn the Light Infantry Battalion and some details of the 10th Cavalry, for service beyond the frontier.—[*Capt. Lawrence to Mr. George Clerk: Nov. 14, 1841. MS. Records.*]

[8] Mr. Clerk sent forward the 30th, which was Wild’s regiment, in order that the colonel might take command of the brigade, General Boyd having thrown out a hint that he was a more efficient officer than the colonels of the other regiments.

[9] These artillerymen were on their way to Afghanistan to relieve the company then in the country, serving with Abbott’s battery.

[10] Two nine-pounders and a howitzer.

[11] *Sir Jasper Nicolls to Government: January 24th, 1842.*

[12] *Sir Jasper Nicolls to Government: January 23rd.* See also private journal, “*Thanesur*, January 23rd.—Mr. C. joined us on the ground. He is anxiously in favour of our sending forward more

troops, in view, I believe, to our undertaking the re-conquest of Caubul. To this I decidedly object. We have neither funds nor men available, without in the latter instance leaving India so bare as to risk its safety."—[*MS. Records.*]

[13] *Supreme Government to Sir Jasper Nicolls: January 31, 1842.*—[*Published Papers*.]

[14] *Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.* Lord Auckland's private letters were still more decided on these points. "I should be glad," he wrote to Sir Jasper Nicolls on the 10th of February, "to hear that Sir R. Sale has been able to withdraw his brigade from a position so perilous as to make me regard its possible fate with extreme anxiety." Two days afterwards he wrote to the same correspondent: "I have from the beginning believed a second conquest of Caubul with our present means to be absolutely impossible."—[*MS. Correspondence*.]

[15] It was, moreover, of great importance to accelerate the movement, because it was believed that any day might witness the appearance of the Barukzye horsemen on the road between Peshawur and Jellalabad. "Time is most precious to us," wrote Mackeson to Clerk; "a few days more may see a party of the Barukzye troops in the plains of Ningrahar, and then thousands will be required where hundreds now would do the work."

[16] Shere Singh despatched urgent purwannahs both to General Avitabile and to Raee Kishen Chund, calling upon them to aid the British by every means in their power. "You are a general of the Khalsa Government," he wrote to the former, "and noted for the confidence placed in you. This is the time to serve the two allied powers; and you will, therefore, unreservedly devote your attention to discharge your trust, so as to please the two friendly governments, and to earn such a name that the services performed shall be known in London." To the latter he wrote, "Orders have been issued to Koonwur Pertab Chund to march to Peshawur, and the zeal of the Durbar will at once make itself manifest to Mr. Clerk (as the sun suddenly shining forth from beneath a cloud) when he is informed of all by the letters of Captain Mackeson."—[*MS. Records.*] When Mackeson received from George Clerk a copy of the purwannah to Avitabile he was in conference at that officer's quarters with the Sikh general, Mehtab Singh, and the commandants of all the Sikh battalions. "I read out this purwannah," says Mackeson, "but was somewhat confounded to find at its conclusion that the Durbar limited the operations of General Avitabile and the Sikh troops to Futtehgurh—their own frontier post. It was fortunate that, before the arrival of this *purwannah*, the commandants of the auxiliary Mussulman troops had left the room, having previously engaged to march as far as Ali-Musjid in support of our troops, and to move on again with General Pollock's brigade."—[*Mackeson to Clerk: January, 1842. MS. Records.*] The passages referred to in the *purwannah* might bear this construction, but it is doubtful whether this was their intent. George Clerk, in a marginal note to Mackeson's letter, says: "The *purwannah* did not limit it; but directed them to move on to Futtehgurh and act in concert and by Captain Mackeson's advice."—[*MS. Records.*]

[17] A cousin of Captain Mackeson. Holding no recognised place in the army either of the Crown or the Company, his services were neither fairly estimated nor adequately rewarded. But there were few more gallant episodes in the war than his defence of Ali-Musjid. Mr. Mackeson had been long disabled by extreme sickness, but was carried about in a litter to superintend the defence.

[18] See *Mackeson to Government: January 27, 1842*. *Published papers.*

[19] "The *Nujeebs* struck their tents when we did, and moved back to Peshawar, and the Sikhs made no demonstration, though twice we wrote to General Avitabile during the night; and just before daylight I told him they were not moving, and again at sunrise."—[*Captain H. M. Lawrence to Mr. Clerk: 19th January, 1842.*] Lawrence adds: "I impute no blame to General Avitabile for the man not telling us what we might expect from his miscreant troops. His own intentions are kind and friendly to our government and ourselves." The misconduct of the Sikh troops was rendered more atrocious, and our own mortification more bitter, by the circumstance that Mackeson had advanced a lakh and a half of rupees to the Sikh authorities, for the payment of the men whose services we hoped to retain.

[20] "We have been disgracefully beaten back," wrote Captain

Lawrence to Mr. Clerk. “Both our large guns broke down; one was on an elephant, but was taken down to put together when the other failed, but its carriage breaking too, the Sepoys lost all heart, and I grieve to say that I could not get men to bring one off, though I tried for an hour, and at last, finding we were only expending ammunition, we left it in their hands, but it was broken completely down and spiked.”—[*MS. Records.*]

[21] “I confess,” wrote Captain Lawrence to Mr. Clerk, “that I never heard any very heavy fire, or saw the enemy in any numbers. I was not with the advance, and therefore may be mistaken; but was afterwards within a hundred yards of the advanced gun for an hour or more, and could see into the pass, but observed no breast-work, and but very few of the enemy; certainly not above a thousand, and not half that number of fire-arms.”—[*MS. Records.*]

[22] The two detachments met at the mouth of the pass.

[23] *Mr. G. Clerk to Sir Jasper Nicolls: November 17, 1841.* I have taken this passage from a MS. copy. It is quoted, however, in the Blue Book, but with the usual fatality attending such compilations, there are two errors in these few lines. Mr. Clerk is made to say that he had called upon “the commanding officer of *Lahore* and Ferozepore” to send forward the regiments.

[24] It is not very clear, however, that Captain Lawrence actually made any written requisition to the commanding officer at Ferozepore (Colonel Wild) for the despatch of artillery details. He wrote a private letter to Mr. Clerk, saying: “If four guns can be made effective, they also shall be got ready.” In this letter he says that he was about to call upon Colonel Wild; and he may orally have broached the subject of the guns; but in his official letter, written on the same day (November 14), there is no mention of artillery, although he suggests the expediency of sending forward the 10th Cavalry without delay.

[25] “Though I have not yet heard that any artillery is ordered up to the frontier, I would beg leave to recommend, in anticipation of the speedy arrival of reinforcements so necessary on the Sutlej, that artillery should move forward from hence. I shall transmit a copy of this letter to Lieutenant-Colonel Wild, in case he may think proper to halt one of the regiments under his command, until the arrival of such artillery as you consider can best be spared from Loodhianah or Ferozepore; but the latter is, I believe, for want of horses, incapable of moving; and this leaves an insufficiency for the due protection of this border, during an unsettled state of parties at Lahore.”—[*Mr. George Clerk to Major-General Boyd: November 27th, 1841. MS. Records.*]

[26] “Having had the honour to receive from the acting Adjutant-General a statement of the reinforcements which his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has ordered to be put in motion for the purpose of forcing the Khybur, I beg leave to state to you that I would not now wish that the 3rd troop, 2nd Brigade of Horse Artillery, should move from the British frontier on my requisition, though I do not propose, in consequence of this information, to request Lieutenant-Colonel Rich to recall the order for the intended march hence of that troop to-morrow in progress to Ferozepore.”—[*Mr. George Clerk to Major-General Boyd: Loodhianah, December 2nd, 1841. MS. Records.*]

[27] “Having heard that it is possible the guns which his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has directed to move across the frontier may not be ready to move so immediately as the passage across the Sutlej of your troop may be effected, I deem it to be advisable, adverting to the emergency of the occasion, to recommend that you nevertheless proceed on, in anticipation of the sanction of his Excellency to your doing so, by orders of the Major-General commanding the division issued at my request, provided that you can do so without crippling the means of marching requisite for the artillery, which his Excellency has directed to be put in motion for the frontier, and which should follow as expeditiously as possible.”—[*Mr. George Clerk to Captain Alexander, commanding 3rd troop, 2nd Brigade of Horse Artillery: December 4th, 1841. MS. Records.*]

[28] “I do myself the honour to inform your Excellency that, in consequence of my receipt of your Excellency’s letter of the 2nd instant, prohibiting the advance of horse artillery as a reinforcement to proceed to Afghanistan, I have apprised Captain Alexander, commanding the 3rd troop, 2nd brigade, now on its way to Ferozepore, and Major Huish, commanding that station, that they are to consider the request made by me, for the advance of that troop to be withdrawn.”—[*Mr. George Clerk to*

*Sir Jasper Nicolls: December 7th, 1841.*]

[29] See Appendix.

[30] On the 29th of January, Sir Jasper Nicolls wrote to General Pollock: "My dear General,—In some late letters Captain Lawrence has expressed himself in a very decided manner touching the disheartened and unguarded language held by officers belonging to the corps which were beaten back in the Khybur Pass on the 19th instant. God forbid that they should feel any panic, or even alarm; but if you observe it, I rely on your addressing yourself to them in a very forcible manner, and shaming them out of such very unbecoming, unmilitary, and dangerous conduct. Their duty is obedience—prompt and energetic obedience—such as executes without expression of doubt. If more has been said than the case seemed to require, take no notice of this further than to warn Captain L., if you think proper to do so.—Always yours faithfully, J. NICOLLS."
[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[31] *Sir Jasper Nicolls to Lord Hill: Simlah, September 2nd, 1842.*—[*MS. Correspondence.*] In this letter, which will be found entire in the Appendix, the Commander-in-Chief says: "When Major-General Pollock arrived at Peshawur he found 1800 men of the four regiments in hospital; the Sepoys declaring that they would not again advance through the Khybur Pass; the Sikh troops spreading alarm, and in all ways encouraging and screening their desertion, which was considerable. It was well that a cautious, cool officer of the Company's army should have to deal with them in such a temper, 363 miles from our frontier. General Pollock managed them extremely well."

[32] An intelligent and trustworthy officer of the 26th Native Infantry, whose letter is now before me, writes: "In less than forty-eight hours after our (the 9th Foot and 26th Native Infantry) arrival, active emissaries, particularly from the 53rd and 60th Regiments, were in our camp, using every effort to induce our men to desert, and to refuse to enter the Khybur; and had actually gone the length of sending Brahmins with the Gunga Jul to swear them in not to advance; and did not desist until orders were given to seize the first man caught in the lines under suspicious circumstances. This information was several times communicated to me by old Sepoys and non-commissioned officers, and the fact of the attempts made to seduce the men from their allegiance is too well known to the officers of the 26th to admit of a moment's doubt."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[33] *MS. Correspondence.* I need not say that these statements would not be made except upon the testimony of officers who heard the speeches to which I have referred.

[34] See Appendix.

[35] This and other letters of Shah Soojah will be found in the Appendix. Macgregor's answer to the private letter received on the 21st was to the effect, that they had no fear of Mahomed Akbar, to whom, please God, they would give a warm reception, if he ventured to attack them.

[36] Colonel Dennie, commanding the 13th L.I.; Colonel Monteith, commanding the 35th; Colonel Oldfield, commanding the Cavalry; Captain Abbott, the Company's Artillery; Captain Backhouse, the Shah's Artillery; and Captain George Broadfoot, the Sappers and Miners.

[37] The late Major-General Sir Henry Havelock, K.C.B.

[38] *Memorandum by Major George Broadfoot.*—"Captain Macgregor vehemently denied that we had ever received hostages at Tezeen. I mentioned several things to show that we had; but, as he persisted in his denial, I said that I had been under some extraordinary delusion, and that, of course, any argument founded on it must fall to the ground, but I still held hostages utterly worthless while the enemy had our hostages and prisoners in their hands." Again, Broadfoot says: "Hostages were announced in General Sale's orders, and reported to General Elphinstone. I was blamed for opposing one of them in a fight at the time; and afterwards met him in charge of Captain Mackenzie on his mission to General Pollock, when he reminded me of having nearly killed him when he was a hostage. There are many grounds for still thinking that I was right." *Both* were, to a certain extent, right. The men to whom Broadfoot referred were not actually hostages. They were Afghan agents, sent into the British camp to re-establish our thannahs, &c. So Macgregor describes them in his despatch. Macnaghten, referring to them,

in a letter dated October 27, says: “I explained to his Majesty that these people were not sent as hostages, but merely to assist our troops and be the medium of friendly communication.”

[39] It need scarcely be said that this account of the councils at Jellalabad, which appears for the first time in the present edition, is based upon what I conceive to be undeniable evidence, which has come into my possession since the book was first published. No one who peruses it should, for a moment, lose sight of the fact that the responsibility was with Sale and Macgregor, who had to regard the position in which they were placed with respect to Shah Soojah’s and to their own government, both of which were, at that time, believed to be anxious for the evacuation of Jellalabad. In circumstances similar to those which surrounded Broadfoot and Backhouse, I do not doubt that Sale and Macgregor would have counselled the same course of resistance. We err greatly when we judge by the same standard men in supreme and men in subordinate command. Apart even from the consideration of the paralysing effects of a sense of responsibility, it is obvious that what is a man’s duty in one case, is not his duty in another. There were no braver spirits in the garrison than those of Sale and Macgregor.

[40] The requisition crossed a letter from Brigadier Anquetel, censuring Broadfoot for taking with him an unnecessary supply of tools. The requisition was complied with, and the censure withdrawn.

[41] The work of the Jellalabad garrison was not confined to the strengthening of their own defences. The destruction of all the adjoining cover for the enemy was no small part of their labour. With reference to these works, General Sale says, in his official report: “Generally I may state that they consisted in the destruction of an immense quantity of cover for the enemy, extending to the demolition of forts and old walls, filling up ravines and destroying gardens, and cutting down groves, raising the parapets to six or seven feet high, repairing and widening the ramparts, extending the bastions, retrenching three of the gates, covering the fourth with an outwork, and excavating a ditch ten feet in depth and twelve feet in width round the whole of the walls. The place was thus secure against the attacks of any Asiatic army not provided with siege artillery.” This admirable report was written by Havelock, as were all Sale’s Jellalabad despatches.

[42] “But it pleased Providence, on the 19th of February, to remove in an instant this ground of confidence. A tremendous earthquake shook down all our parapets, built up with so much labour, injured several of our bastions, cast to the ground all our guard-houses, demolished a third of the town, made a considerable breach in the rampart of a curtain in the Peshawur face, and reduced the Caubul gate to a shapeless mass of ruins. It savours of romance, but is a sober fact, that the city was thrown into alarm, within the space of little more than one month, by the repetition of full one hundred shocks of this terrific phenomenon of nature.”—[*Report of General Sale: Jellalabad, April 16, 1842.*] “On the 19th of February, an earthquake, which nearly destroyed the town, threw down the greater part of the parapets, the Caubul gate with two adjoining bastions, and a part of the new bastion which flanked it. Three other bastions were also nearly destroyed, whilst several large breaches were made in the curtain, and the Peshawur side, eighty feet long, was quite practicable, the ditch being filled, and the descent easy. Thus in one moment the labours of three months were in a great measure destroyed.”—[*Report of Captain Broadfoot, Garrison Engineer.*]

[43] See Appendix.

[44] “The officers of the garrison,” wrote Macgregor to Pollock on the 21st of February, “came upon rations to-day. They are willing to brave all difficulties and dangers, now that they feel certain that government will resent the insult offered to our national honour by these rascally Afghans.” And again, on the same day, writing to the same correspondent, he said: “I am glad to find that government intend to uphold the national honour by resenting the insults which have been offered to it by the rascally Afghans; and I feel assured that this garrison will continue to perform the part which has devolved upon them at this crisis with credit to themselves and advantage to the state. General Sale intends to publish in to-day’s garrison orders the proclamation of the Indian Government, a copy of which you kindly sent to me by Torabaz’s Sowars.”—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[45] The rescue of the Jellalabad garrison had in reality been the primary—indeed, the sole acknowledged reason of the movement in advance; but the Supreme Government, whilst by no means unmindful of the claims of the Jellalabad garrison, long omitted to communicate with Sale or Macgregor—to convey to them directly any instructions for their guidance, or any expressions of approbation of their conduct.

[46] The correspondence which passed between Jellalabad and Peshawur at this time unfolds the real nature of the respective positions of the two generals. It will be found in the Appendix.

[47] *General Pollock to General Sale: March 27th, 1842. MS. Correspondence.* Pollock did not exaggerate the backwardness of the native regiments, or the importance of associating with them a larger body of Europeans. Even the new corps which were moving up from the provinces, and which the General believed to be "without a taint," were openly expressing their disinclination to advance. Shere Singh mentioned this to Mr. Clerk. "Yesterday, early," wrote the latter, "the Maharajah, Rajah Dhyan Singh, and myself, being together for a short time, quite unattended, they told me that Commandant Cheyt Singh, who had come into Lahore for a day from Colonel Bolton's camp, to escort which from Ferozepore to Peshawur the Durbar had appointed him, had mentioned that our Sepoys in that brigade did not like going to the westward, and were sometimes grouped eight or ten together, expressing their dissatisfaction; but that on the other hand the Europeans (her Majesty's 31st and artillery) were much delighted at the prospect of fighting with the Afghans. The Maharajah added, 'If you could send two or three more European corps, they would penetrate the Khybur or anywhere else so successfully against the Afghans, that the Hindoos, who are now alarmed, would, after one action, all take heart again.'"—[*Mr. Clerk to Government: Lahore, March 19th, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[48] Shere Singh was at this time a confirmed drunkard, and he thought more of potations than of politics. When the first intelligence of our Caubul disasters reached him, Mr. Clerk wrote: "The effect which these events in Caubul will have on Lahore, will, I imagine, be as follows. The Rajahs will inwardly rejoice thereat; the Khalsa will be vexed at any Mahomedan exultation; and Shere Singh will congratulate himself on the prospect this may open to him of drawing closer his relations with us as a means of procuring good champagne."—[*Mr. Clerk to Mr. Robertson: Nov. 29th, 1841. MS. Records.*]

[49] Their design was to arrest the progress of Gholab Singh's force; and some of our officers thought that the Rajah ought to have attacked them. But Mr. Clerk was of opinion that his forbearance was a proof of his friendship towards us. "In the same manner," he wrote, "that the reluctance of Rajah Gholab Sing to have recourse to measures of open hostility towards the Mussulman battalions, when arrayed against him across the Attock, was, I believe, in a great measure caused by his apprehension of embarrassing the British brigade coming up and near at hand, should he be found making of the high road an unseemly and uncertain field of battle for the coercion of mutinous battalions, so I conceive that he may very naturally feel disinclined hastily to pledge himself to take as far as Jellalabad, or into any arduous service, troops which for fourteen months past have generally assumed a tone of defiance of the control of their appointed officers."—[*Mr. George Clerk to Government: February 13th, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[50] Gholab Singh was employed in the Hazareh country in operations against Poyndah Khan and a rebel force when he was summoned to proceed to Peshawur. At this time, too, the Jummoo Rajah had an army in Ladakh and Thibet engaged in active warfare with the Chinese, and it was sustaining serious reverses at the time that Gholab Singh was called upon to aid the British Government. "What with this reverse on the eastern frontier of his possessions," wrote Mr. Clerk to government, "and the apprehension that in his absence his lately victorious troops will lose ground in the Hazareh country, Rajah Gholab Singh evinces little ardour to co-operate with the Sikh troops at Peshawur. It is also probable that the Jummoo Rajah would rather contemplate the difficulties of the British Government in that quarter, than be instrumental in removing them."—[*Mr. Clerk to Government: January 20, 1842.*]

[51] See Appendix.

[52] "Lawrence is making out a digest of our conversation with the

Rajah yesterday. I should say that not even with Sultan Mahomed Khan would the Sikhs hold Jellalabad with any advantage to themselves. If we would bribe them with offers of territory, it must be in some other direction. Would Shikarpoor do better!"—[*Mackeson to Clerk: Feb. 21, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[53] "My course, I think, is clear—to get what I can out of the Sikhs, and, if to my mind that is anything like substantial co-operation in advancing or even securing support in the rear, to accept it for General Pollock if he will use it, and officially to recommend to him that, if it proves serviceable, he should, contrary to the orders of government, continue to maintain Jellalabad, whilst awaiting further orders from government on the subject."—[*Mr. Clerk to Mr. Robertson: Umritsur, March 4, 1842.*]

[54] This was merely an echo of what Gholab Singh had been recommending by letter to the Maharajah.

[55] There were more than enough, the minister said, to beat all Afghanistan on the plains, but it was a different thing to convey supplies through the defiles of the Khybur.

[56] "The aversion which the Sikhs have to penetrate the Khybur is not more inconvenient to the British Government than it is alarming to the Maharajah; for their resentment against the government, which has imposed upon them the arduous duty, will be enhanced, should they suffer from the swords of the Afghans. Nor can any thinking person in this Durbar fail to apprehend that by proceeding to invade Afghanistan in support of its ally, whilst deprived by the circumstances of the alliance of all latitude of securing parties among the Afghans, such as it would create and turn to advantage in aid of its encroachments, if acting on its own account, it may be raising a hornet's nest which may involve the Khalsa in long wars for the preservation of its territories on the Indus."—[*Mr. George Clerk to Government: Lahore, April 5th, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[57] The same year (1857) witnessed the death of Gholab Singh, and, alas! of Henry Lawrence, one of the best of men.

[58] See Appendix.

[59] Pollock had reduced his own baggage-cattle to one camel and two mules.

[60] "My detention here has been most annoying. We have had heavy rain, and the Sikhs begged that I would wait till to-morrow. I have consented to this, because the troops of both powers advancing simultaneously for the same purpose ought to produce a good effect. I should have been better pleased had Mahomed Akbar not sent the last reinforcement—save the guns, which I hope we shall be able to give a good account of. The pluck of the Sepoys is doubtful; but I hope when we carry the mouth of the pass, they will feel confidence. The 9th are most anxious to be let loose, and—please God! by to-morrow, we shall be well into the pass... I still much regret that I have not the 31st; but after Sir Robert Sale's letter received some time back, I consider that he has put it out of my power to wait longer, although I am quite sure that the addition of 900 Europeans would have operated very favorably for the prisoners. I, however, hope that you will be able, through the Ghilzyes, to pave the way for their release when we reach you."—[*General Pollock to Captain Macgregor: Jumrood, April 3rd, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[61] The negotiations, indeed, failed altogether. The chiefs had given hostages, and were to have received 50,000 rupees, for the safe conduct of the force from Jumrood to Dhaka—one moiety to be paid in advance, and the other on the army reaching the latter place. "They were to clear the pass for us to Dhaka, and make arrangements for guarding it afterwards. They engaged to remove all hostile Afreedis from the pass, as far as Ali-Musjid, and then we were to repel any troops of Mahomed Akbar Khan sent to oppose us."—[*Captain Mackeson to General Pollock: April 2, 1842. MS. Records.*] Mackeson adds: "Yesterday the Afreedis in our pay proposed to seize on the mouth of the pass; but as the Sikhs were not ready to move on, and they promised to be ready on the following day, the movement was postponed. To-day the Afreedis of our party have pleaded that Mahomed Akbar's troops have come down to the mouth of the pass, and that they can no longer perform their agreement. They offer to return the money that has been given to them."—[*MS. Records.*]

[62] Four horse-artillery guns, two guns of the mountain-train, and three foot-artillery guns.

[63] See Appendix.

[64] See Appendix, vol. ii.

[65] "The Sepoys behaved nobly," wrote General Pollock, on the day after the action. "They merely required a trial in which they should find that they were not sacrificed. There were, however, many desertions before we advanced. Now they are in the highest spirits, and have a thorough contempt for the enemy. This is a great point gained. You are aware that Mahomed Akbar sent a party, about 800, with one or two guns, to oppose us; but they thought better of it, and abandoned the fort of Ali-Musjid this morning. I have accordingly taken possession. The Sikhs are encamped near us, and are much more respectful and civil since our operations of yesterday."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[66] Pollock saw nothing of the Sikhs till the afternoon of the 6th. They doubted his success, and held discreetly back until they found that he had made good his way to Ali-Musjid.

[67] "I have been given to understand that, on the advance of our army to Jellalabad, the Sikh authorities at Peshawur, without intimating their intentions to Captain Lawrence, and without reference to any engagements between the Afreedis and ourselves, entered into arrangements with the Afreedis to purchase, for the sum of 6000 rupees or 4000 rupees, the security of that portion of the pass they have engaged to protect for a period of two months. The parties they agreed to pay were Abdul Rahman Khan, Kooki Kheil, Mahomed Jalim Sipa, and Alia Dad Malik, Din Kheil, son of Khan Bahadur, all of whom were at that time hostile to us, although Abdul Rahman Khan has since come over. There could have been no objection to the Sikhs entering into an arrangement with the Afreedis; but it should have been done in communication with us, and without imparting to the Afreedis the term for which the Sikhs were bound to hold the pass."—[*Mackeson to Pollock: May 6, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[68] "I regret to have to report that the Sikh regiments posted at Ali-Musjid, yesterday left their post, and returned to Jumrood; on their way throwing the loads off some of our mules and bullocks that they met, and employing the animals to carry their own baggage. My letter to Koonwur Pertab Singh, and his answer, are herewith enclosed. You will observe that the whole Sikh regiment was actually recalled by order, without notice being given to me, or without their being relieved, although four regiments were within a mile of them."—[*Captain Lawrence to Mr. Clerk: May 9, 1849. MS. Records.*]

"I waited on Koonwur Pertab Singh yesterday. I spoke strongly on the outrage of the morning, and on the necessity of a severe example being made of the offenders.... I repeatedly returned to the subject, declaring the necessity of punishing the offenders, whom, I said, there could be no difficulty in recognising, as they were for hours in the heart of the town, and had been seen by General Avitabile himself, as well as by Captains Lane and Johnstone, and by many of the Commissariat agents. It was not denied that the men could be recognised; but I much fear that no punishment will be inflicted on them."—[*Lawrence to Pollock: May 8, 1849. MS. Records.*]

[69] Mr. Gleig says that the band of the 13th went out to play them in; and that the relieving force marched the two or three last miles to the tune, "Oh, but ye've been lang o' coming."

[70] Mr. Gleig says: "On the 2nd, Sir Robert Sale proceeded to distribute the captured sheep among the corps and departments composing his garrison. The 25th declined to accept the boon. They sent a deputation to the General, which respectfully acquainted him that animal food was less necessary for them than for Europeans, and besought him to give their portion of the booty to their gallant comrades of the 13th. No wonder that between these two corps there should have sprung up a romantic friendship, which, though the accidents of service have parted them, probably for ever, neither is likely to forget, at all events as a tradition, while they keep their places respectively in the armies of the Queen and of the East India Company."

[71] *MS. Correspondence.*

[72] *General Sale's Public Despatch.*

[73] Mr. Gleig gives the following account of Dennie's end: "With undaunted resolution the 13th rushed at the fort, Colonel Dennie nobly leading; and finding the aperture sufficiently large to admit of it, they rushed through the outer wall—only to find

themselves exposed to a murderous fire from the untouched defences of the inner keep. Here Dennie received, just as he approached the breach, his mortal wound. A ball entered the side, passing through the sword-belt; and he bent forward upon his horse. Lieutenant and Adjutant (now Captain) Wood instantly rode up to him, and expressed a hope that the hurt was not serious. But it was more than serious; it was fatal. A couple of orderlies, by Captain Wood's direction, turned his horse's head homewards, and leading it by the bridle, endeavoured to guide him to the town. But he never reached it alive. He died with the sound of battle in his ears, hoping, but not living to be assured, that it would end triumphantly."

[74] See Appendix.

[75] A letter to General Pollock, written on the 18th of March, says: "Affairs here are as unsettled as they can possibly be. The day before yesterday the commandant of the Newab's regiment was bribed by his Majesty to desert to the Balla Hissar with all his soldiers. The Newab demanded their restoration, but was refused. Yesterday, after much dispute, his Majesty sent a message to our host, saying that the commandant should be sent to Ameen-oollah's house if we were delivered over to the same authority. Fortunately for us the Newab refused to give us up. This proposition was made through jealousy of the Newab, and with the view to conciliate Ameen-oollah, by whom it had been represented to his Majesty that we were supplying our host with money, &c. Ameen-oollah had been for many days trying to get possession of our persons with a view to try and extort money from us. His Majesty's proposition nearly cost us our lives.... Since the desertion of the commandant the whole city has been in an uproar. The shops are all closed, and every man has armed himself. The feeling against us is reawakened. The gates of the Balla Hissar are half shut; and each chief has collected his followers. Three or four thousand men have flocked round our host. The Barukzye's and Suddozye's party-spirit bids fair to be renewed with all its rancour.... The King has, however, now but few friends, and his parsimony is as a proverb; and his suspected connexion with us adds to his unpopularity.... The Naib has written for the Kohistanees to accompany him on a crusade, and unless some accommodation is made with his Majesty, the Balla Hissar will in all probability be the first point of attack. It will be a popular cause, as there are hopes of plunder."

[76] See Appendix for translations of Shah Soojah's letters.

[77] On the 2nd of April Mohun Lal wrote from Caubul: "A letter has been received by Mahomed Akbar Khan, which was carried by Ameen-oollah Khan and read by the Shah. It also passed under my sight through the kindness of the Persian chiefs. It contained that Mahomed Akbar has been always writing to send the troops to assist him against Jellalabad, but nobody has heard him. Now he has been informed by his trusty men at Peshawur that five battalions of the English have reached Hussna Abdal, and when they join the forces at Peshawur they, in company with the battalions of the Najeebs of the Sikhs, will force their march through Khaibur, though he has sent Sultan Jan with a few hundred men to reinforce the people of Khaibur; but if the English enter and pass the Khaibur once, no one shall be able to oppose them. Therefore the chiefs, as well as the Shah, at Caubul, should not quarrel for the distribution of the money and ranks, but exert themselves to come down immediately to Jellalabad and reduce it before the English should pass Khaibur; otherwise he (Akbar) is risking and ending his life for the faith of Mahomed, and will continue to exert himself as long as he lives."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[78] "The Shah, I am told, has made up his mind again to proceed in person to Jellalabad; but I scarcely believe that he will ever march, and if he does he will either be murdered or made blind by the Barukzyes."—[*Letter of Mohun Lal: MS. Correspondence.*]

[79] The murderer was a godson of the Shah, who had shown great personal kindness to the youth. It is said that his evil passions had been greatly excited, not only by the disappointment spoken of in the text, but by the fact also that when he went to remonstrate, the King caused the purdah or curtain of his Durbar tent to be let down, and so denied ingress to the remonstrant.

[80] Mohun Lal, in a letter to Captain Mackeson, Caubul, April 10, 1842, says: "Prince Futteh Jung was taken prisoner in the fort of Mahomed Khan, Bayat, and at even released by force of Ameen-oollah and the Populzyes. As soon as he reached the palace he

opened the treasury hoarded up with great pains by his father, the King. He spends a good deal of it, to employ the people and make his party strong.... It is estimated to be twenty lakhs in cash and a considerable quantity of jewels."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[81] I utterly repudiate the cant which fixes the stigma of ingratitude on the character of Shah Soojah. No one knew better than the Shah that we had carried him back to Caubul, and kept him there not for his purposes but for our own.

[82] *MS. Correspondence.*

[83] Macgregor was of opinion that after the departure of the British from Caubul, the conduct of the Shah indicated a friendly feeling towards us. "The Shah is, I believe, acting in a friendly manner towards us," he wrote to General Pollock; "and will, if he has the power, prevent the march of an army from Caubul. He knows that whilst Dost Mahomed is in our possession we can make use of him as a powerful weapon against his Majesty, and this is the great hold we have upon his friendship."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[84] *MS. Correspondence.*

[85] *MS. Memorandum.*

[86] *MS. Correspondence.*

[87] *Major Rawlinson to Government: March 6, 1842.* This important despatch was published by Lord Ellenborough in the Government Gazette, and subsequently appeared in the Blue Book. To an unpublished letter, written by Major Rawlinson to Mr. Colvin, on the 13th of December, I am indebted for the information contained in the earlier portion of this chapter.

[88] He was connected with our postal establishment.

[89] The letter to General Nott was worded as follows:

"Assistant Quarter-Master-General's Office, Head Quarters,
Caubul, November 3, 1841.

"Sir,—I have the honour, by direction of Major-General Elphinstone, commanding in Afghanistan, to request that you will immediately direct the whole of the troops under orders to return to Hindostan from Candahar to march upon Caubul instead of Shikarpore, excepting any that shall have got beyond the Khojuck Pass, and that you will instruct the officers who may command to use the utmost practicable expedition. You are requested to attach a troop of his Majesty the Shah's Horse Artillery to the above force, and likewise half the first regiment of cavalry.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,
"J. Paton, Capt. A. Q. M. G.

"To Major-General Nott, Commanding at Candahar."

This letter was sent, under a flying seal, through Colonel Palmer, at Ghuznee, and Major Leech, at Khelat-i-Ghilzye—Palmer sent it on with this indorsement: "The country getting more disturbed every day. Burnett came in yesterday after being attacked on the road. He was pursued, when he fortunately fell in with some horsemen I had sent after the fifty-two camels from Candahar, which have been taken off. No tidings of Crawford." Leech wrote:—

"Khelat, Nov. 12, 1841.

"The whole of the Ghilzye prisoners escaped from Caubul, and the family of Husan Khan from this neighbourhood. Khaker Khan and Munsoor Khan in custody, and all the other families expected by this evening to be safe at this place.——What are we to say to the appearance *en route* to Candahar at this crisis of Saifadeen, nephew of Atta Mahomed Khan. He was here on the evening of the 8th."

Macnaghten's letter was addressed to Rawlinson, and it ran in the following words:—

"Caubul, Nov. 3, 1842.

"My dear Rawlinson,—We have a very serious insurrection in the city just now, and from the elements of which it is composed, I apprehend much disturbance in the surrounding country for some time to come. It would be only prudent, therefore, that the 16th, 42nd, and 43rd, with a troop of horse artillery and some cavalry, should come here immediately. General Nott will be written to officially in this respect. We have been shelling the city all day, but apparently with little effect. I hope there will be

no difficulty about supplies. Your writing to Leech will obviate this. On second thoughts I shall forward this letter under a flying seal through Palmer and Leech. Unless you send up this reinforcement there will be a probability of our supplies being cut off.

"W. H. MACNAGHTEN."

A line from Captain Lawrence to Colonel Palmer requested him to send on the letter express through Leech. Leech forwarded it with a few words to Rawlinson, saying, "What think you of a Prince and some treasure with the brigade? Please reinforce this post (Khelat-i-Ghilzye) by 160, or if possible, 200 men—infantry." Another indorsement stated, "There are nearly 100 maunds of atta here, belonging to the Bengal commissariat, disposable for the brigade proceeding towards Caubul. We have six months supply for the garrison.

"H. MILNE."

—[*MS. Records.*]

[90] It does not appear that the conduct of Lieutenant Crawford was, in any way, open to censure. He was the bearer, as has been shown, of written instructions, authorising him to destroy the prisoners if they attempted to escape, but there seems to have been no connivance between them and the party who attacked the escort. Crawford himself says, in a narrative which he drew up, and which was subsequently published in a Bombay paper: "One prisoner was cut down by a horseman of the enemy (plainly showing there was no collusion between them), two others rolled over in a ditch, where, with their horse a top of them, and their legs chained under his belly, I left them; indeed, I now found it was impossible I could ever get my charge into Ghuznee alive, and I had only to decide on putting them to death or setting them at liberty. My instructions would have justified my pursuing the former course, but the poor wretches had clearly made no attempt to escape; they were in no way answerable for the attack made on my party, as was evident from one of their number falling by the sword of our adversaries; and I conceived then, and do now conceive, that in letting these men go with their lives, I was not only acting according to the strict letter of my instructions, but that justice and humanity required I should not slay them in cold blood. Had I put them to death, then Shumshoodeen or Mahomed Akbar would have been equally justified in taking our lives (the lives of all their prisoners) on the advance of Pollock and Nott on Caubul. I may add that the Court of Inquiry, which I called for, after investigating all the circumstances, decided that I had acted perfectly right." These escaped prisoners, however, subsequently became the most active of our enemies.

[91] He died, after much suffering, in March.

[92] *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*

[93] "The mutineers moved down to the Barukzye villages in apparent expectation of being joined by the Ooloos, but wherever they went they received neither support nor encouragement, notwithstanding that they gave out our troops were on the march to destroy the Douranee villages. The Janbaz at last took up a position at Chuplanee, a village about twelve miles off, where our cavalry came up with them; Captain Leeson had to file his men across a difficult canal, and had only just formed line when the enemy charged in a body. Our men charged at the same time in line, and the flanks swept round the Janbaz horse, who were probably not above 150 strong—numbers having left the rebel standard before reaching Chuplanee. For about five minutes a splendid fight took place, hand-to-hand, when the Janbaz broke and fled, pursued by our cavalry. Of the enemy, about thirty were killed and fifty wounded in the flight and pursuit. Our loss was trifling."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[94] *Major Rawlinson to Major-General Nott: January 7th, 1842. MS. Correspondence.* as end ref

[95] *General Nott to Major Rawlinson: January 8th, 1842. MS. Correspondence.* There is a characteristic passage in this letter which is worthy of quotation. "I have no right to interfere with the affairs of the government of this country, and I never do—but in reference to that part of your note where you speak of political influence, I will candidly tell you that these are not times for mere ceremony, and that under present circumstances, and at a distance of 2000 miles from the seat of the Supreme Government, I throw responsibility to the winds, and tell you that, in my opinion, you have not had for some time past, nor have you at present, one particle of political influence in this

country."

[96] Her Majesty's 40th Regiment; the 2nd, 16th, 38th, and a wing of the 42nd Native Infantry; the Shah's 5th Infantry; Anderson's two troops of Horse Artillery (Shah's); Blood's Battery (Bombay Artillery); Leeson's and Haldane's Horse.

[97] The number of the enemy has been variously stated at all sorts of amounts, from 5000 to 20,000. General Nott, in his official despatch addressed to the Military Secretary, says: "After a march of four hours over a very difficult country, I came in sight of the rebel army, from fifteen to twenty thousand men, drawn up in a strong position on the right bank of the Urghundab." Major Rawlinson says: "From what I myself saw, as well as from information I have received from parties in the enemy's camp, I should estimate their entire force at 5000-3000 of which accompanied the chiefs from Sir-a-bund, whilst the other 2000 joined from the Alekozye villages."—[*MS. Journal.*] There is nothing of which the historian ought to speak with less confidence than the "number of the enemy." There is nothing more difficult to determine than the fact; and nothing more likely to draw upon him a large amount of acrimonious criticism, than his manner of stating it. As a general proposition, I think it may be laid down that military commanders seldom under-state the number of the enemy they have beaten.

[98] "Two canals in advance of the village were lined by matchlock men—the horse crowded the slope of the tuppa upon which Killa-chuk is built, and occupied the entire space intervening between that village and Kohuck, the hillocks adjoining which latter place were covered by large masses of footmen collected from the neighbouring villages to witness rather than to participate in the combat."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[99] Major Rawlinson, in his despatch of the 6th of March, describes this affair as a "brief skirmish." General Nott has described the action in a few pregnant sentences. A graphic account of it is to be found in Captain Neill's *Recollections of Four Years' Service in the East*. Captain Neill was present as Adjutant of her Majesty's 40th Regiment. He speaks of the affair as the "Battle of Urghundab."—"the first success after our recent disasters at Caubul," as it was. He adds: "The victory having been obtained over a force so immensely superior to that which was opposed to it by the British, most effectually damped the spirit of our enemies in that part of the country." As Nott's force had sixteen guns, it can hardly be said that the enemy's force was immensely superior.

[100] The Prince seems to have been inclined to desert to the British in the course of the action. He and Tej Mahomed (the Sirdar of the recreant Janbaz, who had been forced to accompany the mutineers after their attack on their British officers) had been in consultation in the morning about going over to the British camp. The chiefs had some suspicion of this, and "when they saw Tej Mahomed detach himself, they immediately accused the Prince of treachery. They talked, indeed, of seizing him; upon which the boy, with his immediate followers, galloped off the field."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*] Tej Mahomed would have come in; but an inopportune shower of grape from Blood's battery kept him at a discreet distance.

[101] The Douranee chiefs were irritated against Atta Mahomed for precipitating the conflict with the British. They had been anxious to stand aloof until the issue of the Caubul contest could be more clearly seen by them.

[102] On the 8th of January, the General wrote to Rawlinson: "I am sorry that I have not the same confidence in Meerza Ahmed which you appear to have. The force under this man has been in the immediate vicinity of Candahar for the last month. Why this has been permitted I know not. He has a very considerable body of men with him, both horse and foot; and my information tells me that they are increasing daily and hourly.... You ought to be the best judge of this man's fidelity; but I believe him to be a traitor; and I should not be surprised to hear of his being joined by his expected confederates, and before twenty-four hours marching off and forcing the young Prince Sekunder to accompany him. Yet he is on the watch, and will play his game according to circumstances."—[*General Nott to Major Rawlinson: January 8th, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*] The position of Meerza Ahmed, and the near prospect of his defection, were among the reasons urged by the General in support of his refusal to quit the near neighbourhood of Candahar.

[103] *Neill's Recollections.* There was, however, comparatively little snow at Candahar. It seldom lies there long upon the ground.

[104] He was not, however, completely successful. It would have been a miracle if he had been. "*February 4.*—There have been several squabbles in the Douranee camp already: 1stly. A quarrel took place between the Janbaz and Populzyes regarding *bhoosa*; 2ndly. Sufder Jung fell out with Meerza Ahmed, and abused him for not spending his money freely on the Ghazees; and 3rdly. The Janbaz have regularly cleaned out an Ishakzye Khail in another dispute about supplies."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[105] Major Rawlinson, preparatory to the commencement of the work of disarming, took a census of the inhabitants of the city, which greatly alarmed the people, as it was believed to be our intention to expel them. When it was found that they were only to be disarmed, they recovered their serenity, and submitted very patiently to the ordeal.

[106] "*February 11.*—I am becoming seriously alarmed about money. A lakh is the utmost that I shall be able to raise from the Candahar merchants, and with the most rigid economy this will hardly last us to the end of March—the godowns at the same time being opened to supply the troops. It seems, therefore, absolutely indispensable that the road should be opened from the south, either by Outram or ourselves."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[107] "*February 21.*—Two Cossids reached me to-day from Leech, one with letters of the 13th and 15th, the other with letters of the 17th. Enclosed was a copy of a letter addressed to me by Major-General Elphinstone and Major Pottinger, requesting me to intimate to Major-General Nott their wish that he would evacuate Candahar and Khelat-i-Ghilzye, in pursuance of the agreement entered into at Caubul for the return of our troops to India. This letter appears to be genuine, but I cannot consider it in any way binding on us; and for the reasons stated in my letter to General Nott of the 1st instant, I still conceive that we are best consulting the interests of government in maintaining our position pending the receipt of further instructions from Calcutta.... The question regarding Shah Soojah is very perplexing. He is certainly nominally at the head of the government, and we can no longer be supposed to be here in support of his authority. Still, however, a month sooner or later in retiring can make little difference, and it seems to me indispensable that some definite arrangements, approved of by government, should be entered into for the future administration of the province before we withdraw our troops."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[108] It ran thus: "*Caubul, 25th December, 1841.*—Sir,—It having been found necessary to conclude an arrangement, founded on that of the late Sir W. H. Macnaghten, for the evacuation of Afghanistan by our troops, we have the honour to request that you will intimate to the officer commanding at Candahar our wish that the troops now at that place and at Khelat-i-Ghilzye, together with the British authorities and troops within your jurisdiction, should return to India at the earliest convenient season. Newab Jubbar Khan, who is the bearer of this letter, will render you all the assistance in his power. He has been appointed Governor of Candahar on the part of the existing government.

"E. Pottinger.
"W. K. Elphinstone, M.-G.

"P.S.—If you require two or three days to make your preparations, you must not remain in the city, but proceed to your cantonment. Whatever you are obliged to leave behind, you will make over to the Newab Jubbar Khan."

[109] "I have only to repeat," wrote General Nott, on the 23rd of February, in reply to Major Rawlinson's official letter on the subject of the evacuation orders received from Caubul, "that I will not treat with any person whatever for the retirement of the British troops from Afghanistan, until I shall have received instructions from the Supreme Government. The letter signed 'Eldred Pottinger' and 'W. K. Elphinstone' may, or may not, be a forgery. I conceive that these officers were not free agents at Caubul; and therefore their letter or order can have no weight with me."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[110] *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*

[111] February 28.

[112] "I have been for some days past in communication with the Barukzye tribe, and have, I believe, succeeded in detaching them

from the Douranee confederacy. They had deserted their villages and gone off to the desert; but, on a promise of protection, have now returned, and bound themselves to admit none of the enemy's horse within their borders. The Alekozyes of the Urghundab also propose to enter into the same engagements; and if we can fairly detach these two powerful tribes, the Douranee cause must, I should think, expire of an atrophy.... Timour suggests that he should endeavour to get the Douranee chiefs to march on Caubul, in order to release the Shah from the Barukzyes, feigning that he has received his father's instructions to this effect; and I see no objection to such an attempt being made. I also hear that the Caubul Janbaz insist on proceeding to the north, and that Meerza Ahmed has the greatest difficulty in restraining them."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[113] "*March 1.*—The General now has made up his mind to take the field; and, after considering the case fully, I have determined that the Afghans must be turned out of the city. It is not as if the present affair were a mere transient disturbance. We are engaged in a regular national war, and Outram does not anticipate that we shall be able to take the field in sufficient force to put down all opposition before next winter. We must, therefore, look forward to a protracted struggle at Candahar all through the summer; and the security of the city appears to me, under such circumstances, indispensable."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[114] A week before, a strong conviction of the necessity of the measure had forced itself upon his mind. But he was only too willing to postpone the execution of it. On the 22nd of February he wrote: "The Moollahs are now again stirring themselves, and I have very good grounds for supposing a large quantity of arms to be concealed. I almost fear that affairs are approaching that state when, for our immediate safety, we shall be obliged to incur the odium of expelling the Moollahs and Afghans from the city. It is not that these people can do us any serious injury within the city; but the probability of an insurrection inside the walls simultaneously with the disturbances outside, gives confidence to Meerza Ahmed's party and dispirits our Parsewan adherents. It is to be considered, however, that if we expel the Afghans and retain the Parsewans, we shall embitter the national feeling against us with the rumour of sectarian animosity, and shall, moreover, sacrifice the Sheeah party in the event of our retirement. The most obvious necessity of self-preservation could alone, I think, warrant such a course, and I cannot doubt but that it is my duty to temporise as long as prudence will admit."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[115] "No doubt much property has been sacrificed in carrying the measure into effect; but we have done all in our power to alleviate the evil. Valuable property, which the people were unable to take away with them, has been transferred to the safe keeping of the Hindoos and merchants who have remained, and the grain is to be all taken charge of by the commissariat, receipts in money being granted by us to the owners."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[116] *Captain Neill's Recollections of Service in the East.*

[117] "The plan of enticing the General to Telookham, delaying him there by keeping a body of horse in his vicinity, and then doubling back on the town, was all preconcerted by Meerza Ahmed; and on the night of the attack every chief in the country was present except the Noorzyes."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[118] The gate had been closed for the night. Lieutenant Cooke was on guard, and was endeavouring to trace the movements of the enemy in the distance, when a villager drove his donkey, loaded with brushwood, over the bridge and demanded admission. He was told the gate would be opened for no one; upon which he growled out a malediction, and tossing the brushwood on the ground, said he would leave it there for the night, and take it into the town in the morning. The villager, having recrossed the bridge with his donkey, dived among the ruined huts opposite the Herat gate, and was out of shot in a moment. At the same instant flames burst forth from the brushwood, and the gate was fired.

[119] See the letter-press to Lieut. Rattray's admirable drawings of the Scenery and Costumes of Afghanistan.

[120] The Ghazees had so damaged the canal banks, that the irrigation was destroyed, and there was every prospect of a failure of the crops; but through Rawlinson's agency the people of the

Urghundab were induced to labour at their repair, and in a short time the waters began again to flow in their accustomed course.

[121] *General Nott to Major Rawlinson: March 25, 1842.* [*MS. Correspondence.*]

[122] "In the charge of the horse under Saloo Khan, when after driving back our cavalry they were stopped by the fire of the guns and the light company of the 38th, which had been thrown out in advance, Yar Mahomed of Dehrawat, who was Saloo's nephew, fell, and in another part of the field, Hubeeboollah, Akhondzadeh, and Mahomed Raheen, Noorzye, were wounded. The total loss of the enemy in killed and wounded I estimate, from all I could learn on the field and from the villagers, at about 150. We had a few men killed and some forty wounded. Amongst the latter are two cavalry officers, Chamberlaine, and Travers of the 2nd. The Douranee horse came on more boldly on this occasion than they had ever been seen to do before. Some of the 38th Sepoys, indeed, received sabre-cuts from our horsemen; but they cannot stand our artillery or musketry fire. They had been so taunted with cowardice, that they resolved to have one conflict with us before they quitted the vicinity of Candahar, and had not reinforcements gone out, they would have sustained, I doubt not, a much heavier loss, by making repeated charges on different parts of the camp during the afternoon."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[123] *Captain Neill's Recollections of Service.*

[124] Captain Neill.

[125] "A few squadrons of dragoons," wrote Rawlinson in his journal, "would have swept the Douranee horse from the field; as it was, they were permitted to re-cross the river almost unmolested."

[126] *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.* Rawlinson adds: "Our own camp-followers, I also found, had committed extensive ravages, and when I endeavoured to persuade the people that our troops were there for their protection, they uniformly answered that they knew not whether they had most to fear from their friends or their enemies."

[127] *Major Leech to General Nott: Khelat-i-Ghilzye, March 9, 1842. MS.*

[128] Two pounds.

[129] Shah Soojah claimed credit for having delayed his march.

[130] If there had been any one in Ghuznee acquainted with the use and practice of artillery, the garrison might have held out till April.

[131] "On the morning of the 10th, Poett and Davis were obliged to retire from their posts, and the survivors here now assembled in the two houses held by Colonel Palmer and the head-quarters of the corps. You cannot picture to yourself the scene these two houses presented; every room was crammed not only with Sepoys, but camp-followers, men, women, and children, and it is astonishing the slaughter among them was not greater, seeing that the guns of the citadel sent round-shot crashing through and through the walls. I saw high-caste men groping in the mud, endeavouring to discover pieces of unmelted ice, that by sucking them they might relieve the thirst that tormented them. Certainly, when that morning dawned, I thought it was the last I should see on this earth, and so did we all, and proceeded to make a few little arrangements ere the final attack on us took place. The regimental colours were burned, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy; I destroyed my watch, and flung it, and what money I had, over the wall of the ditch; I also burnt my poor wife's miniature, first cramming the gold frame of it into a musket, being determined that one of the Ghazees should have his bellyful of gold ere I died. Hour after hour passed on, and still we sate expecting every minute to hear the shout of the final attack; but it came not. From our loopholes we saw the enemy swarming all around us—in every lane and house, and on the hill of the citadel—the place was black with their masses; and as they themselves afterwards told us, there were not less than ten thousand men thirsting for our blood."—[*Lieutenant Crawford's Narrative.*]

[132] Lieutenant Crawford says: "During the three preceding days' fighting, Shumshoodeen had repeatedly offered us terms; but they were such as we could not accede to, inasmuch as they commenced by desiring we would surrender ourselves to him

and abandon the Sepoys to the fury of the Ghazees. The Sepoys, it appears, had held a consultation among themselves, and believing they had no chance of their lives, determined on forcing their way out of the town and endeavour to get to Peshawur. When we first heard of this mad design and spoke to the men about it, they denied it; but, on the 10th, two Native officers came forward and told us they had made up their minds to go off that night—that if we chose to accompany them they would be exceedingly glad, but, if otherwise, they would go alone."

[133] It is pleasant to record any act of individual heroism. The late Brigadier Nicholson, who fell at Delhi, in 1857, "then quite a stripling, when the enemy entered Ghuznee, drove them thrice back beyond the walls at the point of the bayonet before he would listen to the order given him to make his company lay down their arms. He at length obeyed, gave up his sword with bitter tears, and accompanied his comrades to an almost hopeless imprisonment."—[*Rattray.*]

[134] How strongly Outram felt on the subject of the withdrawal policy may be gathered from the following passage in a letter to Sir Richmond Shakespear: "As this is not a time to mince matters, no sooner did I see the orders of government to General Pollock to withdraw the Jellalabad garrison, and to retire to India under any circumstances (except the Sikhs rising against us, which, by-the-by, that measure would have brought about most probably), than I wrote, in the most earnest manner I was capable of, pointing out that our bitterest foe could not have devised a more injurious measure, whether viewed politically or in a military light; but expressing my trust that Mr. Clerk would act on the responsibility vested in him to prevent so ruinous a step. My mind is now set at rest by General Pollock's determination, now gleaned from your letters. I honour the General, therefore; and should he be allowed to carry out his views, we shall have mainly to thank him, not only for retrieving our honour in Afghanistan, but for saving India to us, the loss of which would ultimately result from disgracefully succumbing to the Afghans now.... Nothing is easier than to retrieve our honour in Afghanistan previously to finally withdrawing, should the government so determine; and I pray God, Lord Ellenborough may at once see the damnable consequences of shirking the undertaking, and order accordingly; otherwise the disaster of Caubul will be but the commencement of our misfortunes."—[*Major Outram to Sir Richmond Shakespear: March 15, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[135] *Major Outram to Sir Richmond Shakespear: March 15, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*

[136] "There are some officers in camp who think that Brigadier England's detachment will be sacrificed between this and the Kojuck; but with such fine examples as those set by Woodburn on the Helmund, Anderson at Tazee, and Wymer at Assyai, surely there ought to be no doubt of success between this and the Kojuck, when no natural obstacles to signify intervene."—[*Lieutenant Hammersley to Major Outram: March 18, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[137] *Major-General England to Government: April 2, 1842. Published Papers.*

[138] Nott had resolutely refused to send any troops to meet England's detachment, though earnestly pressed by Rawlinson to do so. The General urged that he could not afford to send troops to the Kojuck, whilst he was liable at any time to be called upon to proceed to the relief of Khelat-i-Ghilzye. Rawlinson pointed out the immense evils attending a total deprivation of treasure, and said that even the compulsory abandonment of Candahar might follow the failure of General England to effect the passage of the Kojuck. Nott, however, was obdurate. The detachment was not sent. Wymer's brigade, however, was then out to the southward of Candahar, and it was believed that the object of the movement was to support the party advancing through the Kojuck. Nott withdrew the brigade to Candahar, and an impression gained ground among the enemy that we had endeavoured to open our communications with the troops below, but had drawn back in despair.

[139] Of the 20th Bombay Native Infantry. He was greatly esteemed as a gallant and good soldier. "They have a fine fellow at the head of the light battalion," wrote Hammersley to Outram, a few days before the brigade left Quettah, "and it is to be hoped that he will inspire the crest-fallen with a little ardour."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[140] "General England and his staff were dismounted, and standing in conversation not far from where the light companies had rallied. I joined them. It was useless to stand and lament over what could not be recalled. A retreat was determined upon. I observed to the General that the day might be retrieved, and offered to lead into the entrenched position with a hundred men properly supported; and I am confident that I should have succeeded. The men were in courage, and anxious to recover the bodies of their comrades. The General replied, he had not men. I proposed that the left hill should be attacked first, as it commanded the smaller one. The enemy were certainly in strength, and very bold, but our men burned with rage at seeing their comrades cut up before their eyes. I think I pressed my offer three times, the last time volunteering to lead with eighty men; but the General felt he had too few, and that the stake was too great."—[*Colonel Stacy's Narrative of Services in Beloochistan and Afghanistan in the Years 1840, 1841, 1842.*]

[141] It appears to have been England's intention, after the disaster on the 28th, to have commenced his retreat on the same evening; but Colonel Stacy persuaded him not to move until the following morning. On the 29th he struck his camp and marched to Hykerzye, halted at Koochlag on the 30th, and on the 31st reached Quettah.

[142] Hammersley complained that the General's letter was so very unsatisfactory, that if it had not been for some private letters, he would have been left in ignorance of the real nature of the events that had occurred. The original letter, now before me, is worth quoting. England seems to have been so unwilling to state distinctly that he had been defeated, that even when writing officially to General Nott on the 1st instant, he shrunk from a plain statement of the circumstances of the case; so that Nott, writing to him on the 18th, could only say: "I have been favoured with your letter of the 1st instant, &c.... I have *also heard of the affair you had with the enemy on the 28th ult.*" The letter to Nott is, however, less obscure than the letter to Hammersley, which runs thus:

"Camp, three miles south of Hykulzye, 2 P.M.

"My dear Hammersley,—I wish you would acquaint Colonel Marshall, that as the insurgent force has been much reinforced from Candahar, and have so strongly protected themselves with breastworks, &c., on the ground commanding our line of route this side of Hykulzye, I shall fall back to Hykerzye to-morrow, my presence here being now of no use, and inviting their insults; and it is probable that as the position at Hykerzye is not a good one, having much broken ground in its rear, that I shall further fall back on Cutchlak. I have had so many men killed and wounded by the enemy, that my baggage is increased whilst my means of defending it is lessened. If Colonel Marshall, through your information, thinks the Cutchlak Pass occupied, he may make such efforts as his numbers will enable him to keep it open and communicate with us; and as the enemy is a hundred to one stronger than any one imagined, I must wait for the reinforcements till I try them again. Meanwhile, the fortification of Quettah must be proceeded with vigorously. Show this to Colonel Marshall and Major Waddington.

"Sincerely yours (in haste),

"R. England."

[143] "*April 1.*—The Douranees having received positive accounts from Mahomed Sadig of the advance of Brigadier England with treasure, have resolved to make an effort to intercept it. Saloo Khan accordingly, with Mahomed Azim (Noorzye), Fyz Tullub, Hubeeboollah, Sooltan Mahomed (Barukzye), &c., have gone off by the desert to the Kojuck Pass. The body of horse with the chiefs is about 1000; but they expect to raise some 4000 or 5000 of the Noorzye, Atchekzye, Barukzye, and Populzye Ooloos to assist in holding the pass."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[144] "You will understand the insinuation," wrote one of the most chivalrous of the many chivalrous officers who served beyond the Indus (James Outram). "If he is ever heard to libel our Sepoys in that manner, surely it will be noticed by our officers."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[145] After adverting to the reported intention of England to leave Quettah with a small supply of money and ammunition, but not to push through the Kojuck, Nott goes on to say: "This I deeply regret; firstly, because I cannot send a force to the southern side of the pass; secondly, I require a large supply of ammunition, which I have for two years been endeavouring to get, but without success; thirdly, four lakhs of rupees will be of little use here—

the troops and establishments are going on for four months in arrears; fourthly, your moving into Pisheen with a convoy, known by the whole country to be intended for Candahar, and then halting or retiring to Quettah, will have the very worst effects throughout Afghanistan, and will be more injurious to my present position than 20,000 of the enemy in the field. I sincerely hope that you have not moved, or that you have determined to push across the Kojuck with all the force you can muster."—[*General Nott to General England: April 2, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[146] "I strongly advised Brigadier England, through Lieutenant Hammersley, in letters I addressed to them both so long ago as the 10th ultimo (March), to await at Quettah the junction of the remainder of his brigade, unless very urgent circumstances should require his more immediate advance to meet an advance from Candahar. The latter, so far from being the case, General Nott requested might not be attempted."—[*Major Outram to Captain Durand: April 3, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[147] *General Nott to General England: April 2, 1842. MS. Records.*

[148] *General England to General Nott: April 10, 1842. MS. Records.*

[149] There is so fine a soldierly flavour about this letter, that I give it entire in the Appendix.

[150] *Colonel Stacy's Narrative.*

[151] *Colonel Stacy's Narrative.*

[152] "These fine fellows had been led forward by Colonel Wymer, at daybreak, to occupy the heights commanding the pass from Chummemo to the western side, to secure General England's party a safe passage. I have never seen our Sepoys to such advantage. It was impossible to climb the precipitous hills in pantaloons; this part of their dress had, therefore, been discarded, and the men were in their doties. As they showed on every accessible point, they were the admiration of all. I can easily imagine how painful it must have been to the Bombay regiments to find the Candahar troops in full possession of the pass before they were allowed to enter it."—[*Colonel Stacy's Narrative.*]

[153] "I have only," wrote Nott, "to repeat my sentiments—namely, that I will not sanction a rupee being given from the British treasury to these people. I have for three years viewed with deep regret the ruinous system of giving away large sums to the chiefs and Sirdars of Afghanistan, which I sincerely believe has brought upon us all our present difficulties in this country. I have offered to guarantee the personal safety of Saloo Khan if he returns to his allegiance by a certain day. If there are any other chiefs who can make it appear that they are worthy of the indulgence of my guarantee for their personal safety, I will take their wishes into consideration; but I will make them no other promises. This does not apply to Mahomed Atta or to Meerza Ahmed, as I will not receive these two men on any terms, without the order of higher authority."—[*General Nott to Major Rawlinson: April 9, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[154] See *Colonel Stacy's Narrative*, and his correspondence with Major Rawlinson. Rawlinson, however, doubted whether the negotiations with Saloo Khan would have a favourable result: "Had a long conference," he wrote on the 10th of May, "with Atta-oollah Khan, who has come in to treat for his brother, Saloo; and the latter, if his agent is to be believed, certainly desires to espouse our cause. Knowing, however, as I do, Saloo's ambition and avarice, I question very much whether we shall come to any satisfactory arrangement with him. We merely require Saloo Khan's co-operation, in order to facilitate the re-establishment of our dawk communication; but the Khan talks of rank, power, and pay, as the return he has a right to expect for joining us, and is not likely to be satisfied with any moderate measure of conciliation."—(*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*) Saloo Khan, however, in the sequel rendered good service and proved his fidelity in the face of strenuous opposition from some of the other chiefs: "His falling off from the cause of Islam," wrote Rawlinson in his Journal, "has plunged him into personal difficulties. He has been twice attacked by Mahomed Sadig and Meer Afzul, and has been wounded, together with his brother and his nephew."

[155] *MS. Correspondence.*

[156] *MS. Correspondence.*

[157] *MS. Correspondence.*

[158] *MS. Correspondence.*

[159] "Letters are said to have been received from the ex-Sirdars announcing their intended journey to this place, according to Meerza Ahmed's invitation which was sent to them in January last. Mahomed Reza Khan of Seistan is also said to have promised to assist them with 100 camels, and to send horsemen to escort them to this frontier. This news appears to be *vraisemblable* in the extreme. If the ex-Sirdars can get away from Shuhur-i-Babek, either with or without the connivance of the Persian Government, nothing is more likely than that they should make an attempt to recover Candahar; and I should greatly dread their appearance on this frontier, for we are enabled to keep up the form, and something of the power of a local government, almost solely from the adherence to us of the old Barukzye retainers—people on whose fidelity we could not possibly depend if the Sirdars took the field against us."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal: April 4, 1842.*]

[160] "A messenger from Shah Persund Khan of Laush reports that two of the horsemen sent down to Kohun-dil-Khan in January by Meerza Ahmed returned lately, and gave out that they were only a few days in advance of the Sirdars, who had left Shuhur-i-Babek secretly, and were coming here *viâ* Seistan."—[*Major Rawlinson to General Nott: April 8, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[161] Kohun-dil-Khan did not make his appearance in person in the Candahar territory till the beginning of 1843, when we had announced to the Persian Government that we had withdrawn behind the Sutlej, and were indifferent as to what became of the Sirdars of Afghanistan.

[162] *Mr. Maddock to General Pollock: February 24, 1842. Published Papers.*

[163] "The information received with respect to the conduct of Shah Soojah during the late transactions is necessarily imperfect, and, moreover, of a somewhat contradictory character. It is not probable that the insurrection against our troops should have originated with him. It is most probable, and it is almost proved, that he has adopted it, and, powerless in himself, is prepared to side with either party, by which he may hope to be maintained upon his precarious throne."—[*Governor-General in Council to Sir Jasper Nicholls: March 15, 1842. Published Papers.*]

[164] *Mr. Maddock to General Nott: April 19, 1842. Published Papers.*

[165] This is not only a remarkable letter in itself. It is remarkable for its misadventures. Its outer history is somewhat curious. It never found its way into the published volume of correspondence, and its existence was only to be inferred from the fact of a reference to it in another letter. It was at last brought to light by the inquiries in Parliament of Lord Lansdowne and Lord Palmerston. It was to be found nowhere in England; but a copy was at last elicited from India. The Governor-General then declared that "the original despatch of the 13th of May never reached the office, and must have been lost in transit. The duplicate was received and acknowledged on the 11th of July. It is the practice of the Secretary's office to keep the unreported papers on all important subjects for each month together, and to forward copies of them to the Secret Committee by the monthly Overland Mail. The despatch in question was inadvertently put up in its proper place in the May bundle of reported papers, instead of being left for a time, as it should have been, among the unreported papers of July. Hence, when the July papers were copied for transmission to the Secret Committee, this despatch was omitted." Nothing less explanatory than this was ever offered in the way of explanation. It does not appear whether the original letter miscarried altogether on its way to Lord Ellenborough, or whether it miscarried only on its way to the office. There is an equal obscurity about the history of the duplicate which was "received and acknowledged on the 11th of July." It might be inferred from this that it was received on the 11th of July, and acknowledged on the same day. But it happens that the duplicate was despatched on the 30th of May—and ought surely to have come not among the July, but among the June papers. In this letter of the 11th of July the Secretary says: "I am directed to state that the original letter has never reached me, and that the duplicate *has only lately been received* and laid before the Governor-General, whose previous instructions to you appeared to render any special reply to this communication unnecessary."—[*MS. Records.*] In the face of so distinct a denial as this, little can be said, except that in a letter from Pollock of

May 20th, which was duly acknowledged, reference is made to the letter of the 13th. If that letter had not been received, some allusion certainly ought to have been made by Government to its non-receipt.

[166] There was no scarcity of provisions at Jellalabad at this time. But, to secure a continued supply, Pollock was sensible of the necessity of encouraging a belief throughout the country that the intentions of the British Government inclined towards a forward movement. "We are all quiet here," he wrote on the 6th of May to Mr. Clerk, "grain coming in in abundance; at least, in as great quantities as we could expect after the dreadful alarm into which this force seems to have put the whole country. Every village was deserted. I did my utmost to protect them from plunder, and in most cases succeeded; and the consequence is that we, in a measure, command the resources of the country." And on the 11th of the same month, writing again to Mr. Clerk, he said: "While I remain here I can command supplies, and I have no doubt that I shall be able to do so as long as the natives suppose that we intend remaining in the country; but if they thought otherwise, our supplies would be stopped."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[167] *Published Correspondence relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.*

[168] *MS. Correspondence.* In his journal, too, Rawlinson wrote: "The order to retire came upon us like a thunderbolt. We had not, from Lord Ellenborough's former letter, thought such a measure possible until Caubul should be retaken. As there is no discretionary power, however, vested in General Nott by the late letter, he has only had to consider the best way of carrying the order into effect."—[*MS. Journal.*]

[169] The 2nd, 16th, and 38th.

[170] "In a late letter to government," he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief on the 24th of May, "you will have seen how anxious I was that any proposed movement towards Peshawur should be communicated to no one from whom it could be withheld. The moment such a thing is known, it is probable supplies will cease to come in; we should be in difficulty about forage; all who are now friendly would be ready to oppose us; and if I had not time to secure the pass, the consequences might be serious indeed."—[*Published Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.*]

[171] In this letter of the 20th of May, Pollock says: "I have already, in my letter dated the 13th inst., entered on the subject (of withdrawing to Peshawur), and must receive a reply before I shall be able to move." If that letter of the 13th had not been received and read, surely this allusion to it would have called forth a remark to that effect.

[172] It was outwardly only an acknowledgment of the General's inability to retire at an earlier period—but there was more meaning in it than this, for on the same day the Chief Secretary wrote to Nott: "I am directed to inform you that, in consequence of the very defective state of the means of movement possessed by Major-General Pollock, it appears to be out of his power to retire from Jellalabad until October, when his retirement will certainly take place."—[*Published Papers.*]

[173] *Major Pottinger to General Pollock: Tezeen, April 20, 1842. Published Papers.* Together with this letter from Pottinger came a paper from Akbar Khan himself. It was without seal and signature, for the Sirdar was fearful of compromising himself with his countrymen, and the document might have fallen into their hands. After some allusions to the painful past, and a declaration that he was unable to restrain the disorganised mob of Afghans from attacking the English army, the Sirdar went on to say: "If I allow the English, who are my guests, to depart according to your suggestion; or according to Pottinger Sahib's advice, if I allow the English ladies to depart before the gentlemen, in either case all Mahomedans will look upon me as their enemy, and the whole multitude will be opposed to me. Under these circumstances I beg you to reflect, that not having come to an understanding with you, and having made enemies of them, how can I exist?... I prefer your friendship to the throne of Caubul, because, if I was to go to Caubul now, the men of Caubul would push me forward, and then it would be difficult to release my guests and to be on friendly terms with you. On this account I have written to show my friendship for your government. Please God my services shall exceed the injuries I have done you."

[174] *General Pollock to Major Pottinger: Jellalabad, April 26, 1842. Published Papers.*

[175] *General Pollock to Government: Jellalabad, April 28, 1842.* In reply to this letter, the Chief Secretary wrote: "It is not consistent with the honour of the British Government to enter into any terms for the making of a provision for so great a criminal. We might engage to spare his life if he were to fall into our hands, because it would be difficult so to bring him to trial as to protect the government from a colourable charge of violently prosecuting an unworthy revenge; but no more than this can be done, and this only if he should promptly do all he can to repair the crimes he has committed."—[*Published Papers.*]

[176] *Major Pottinger to General Pollock: May 3, 1842.* I have quoted from the original in Pottinger's hand-writing. But the letter is given among the published papers, with the usual official emendations. Thus the passage, "They have asked for the money, if it is paid, to be given to Sir-Bolund Khan"—is printed, "They have asked for the money, &c., to be given to *his Colund Khan*." It may puzzle the future historian to discover who "his Colund Khan" may have been.

[177] *General Pollock to Major Pottinger: Jellalabad, May 10, 1842. Published Papers.* Lord Ellenborough was unwilling that any money should be paid for the release of the captives; but was inclined to exchange Dost Mahomed and his family for the prisoners in the hands of the Sirdar. "Undoubtedly," he wrote, "on the 26th of April, you remained authorised, by the instructions of the 24th of February, to give money on the public account for the release of individual prisoners; and if, previously to the receipt of my letter of the 25th of April, you should have concluded a negotiation for the release of any individual prisoners on that condition, the Governor-General would feel himself under the necessity of sanctioning any payment of money to which you may have then pledged yourself. After the receipt of that letter, you will, of course, in any future negotiation, have adhered to the instructions contained in it. It cannot but be a subject of much regret that you should have considered it to be necessary, under any circumstances, to have had any communication whatever of a diplomatic nature with Mahomed Akbar Khan, in whom it must be impossible for any one to place any trust."—[*Published Papers.*] Akbar Khan, at this time, seems almost to have considered the release of his father and family as hopeless; and Pollock did not think he was authorised to propose an exchange of prisoners; for although, on the 24th of February, Lord Auckland suggested that he "might speak of the release of Dost Mahomed as an event which might not be altogether impossible," he did not know how far such a measure might be sanctioned by Lord Ellenborough. Moreover, Pollock believed that the exchange had only been authorised in the event of his being able to treat for the release of the whole of the British prisoners; and they were not all in the hands of Akbar Khan.

[178] The questions were—"1st, What were the terms negotiated by Sir W. Macnaghten with the rebels? 2nd. What alteration was made by Major Pottinger? 3rd. What does Major Pottinger allude to when he talks of breach of faith? 4th. What were the manner and causes of Sir W. Macnaghten's murder?" I have found the information conveyed in Captain Mackenzie's answers of some use in the course of my narrative.

[179] On that day Akbar Khan sought an interview with Lady Macnaghten. Painful as such a meeting must have been, the bereaved widow was not in a position to refuse to see her husband's murderer. He spoke very kindly to her; and as she sat in silent sorrow before him, he declared that he would give his right arm that the deed which he so much regretted might be undone.

[180] *Captain Johnson's Journal.* The writer adds: "At the commencement of the defile, and for some considerable distance, passed two or three hundreds of our poor miserable Hindostanees, who had escaped up this unfrequented road from the massacre of the 12th. They had not a rag to cover them, and were all more or less frost-bitten, wounded, or starving. The poor wretches were huddled together in thirties and forties, so as to impart to each other a little animal heat, as other warmth was denied them by the barren, inhospitable wilderness around them. We afterwards learnt that scarcely one of these poor wretches escaped from the defile in which they had taken shelter; and that, driven to the extremes of hunger, some of them had for a few short hours sustained life by feeding on their dead comrades. The wind was blowing bitterly cold at our

bivouac. No shelter of any kind for the ladies of our party during the whole night. Happiness is comparative; and truly fortunate did General Elphinstone, Brigadier Shelton, and myself consider ourselves when one of our Afghan attendants told us to accompany him inside a miserable cow-shed, which on our first entrance was so blackened with the dense smoke from a good blazing fire in the centre of the hut, that we could see none of the objects around us, until we had stretched ourselves at length on the floor, and consequently out of the influence of the smoke, when we perceived our companions to be three or four half-starved Hindostanees, who had accompanied our party. Our attendant wished to eject them; but we too truly sympathised with their sufferings to permit such an act of tyranny. We shortly afterwards got an invitation from Mahomed Akbar to join him and his party to dinner inside the fort. The room of our reception was not much better than that we had left. We had, however, a capital dinner, some cups of good tea, and a luxurious rest for the night, the room having been heated with a good blazing fire and lots of smoke, with no outlet for either, except the door and a small hole in the roof."—[*MS.*]

[181] Captain Johnson says in his journal: "Both Mahomed Akbar and his chiefs were most attentive in escorting over in safety the ladies and their children and wounded Europeans." There is other testimony to the same effect: "Many of the ladies, being mounted on ponies, were obliged to dismount and ride astride on the chargers of their Afghan acquaintance, to avoid getting wet. Nothing could exceed the politeness and attention of Mahomed Akbar on this occasion, who manifested the greatest anxiety until all had crossed over in safety."—[*Eyre's Rough Notes of Imprisonment in Afghanistan.*] "The chiefs gave us every assistance. Mahomed Akbar Khan carried Mrs. Waller over behind him on his own horse. One rode by me to keep my horse's head well up the stream. The Afghans made great exertions to save both men and animals struggling in the water."—[*Lady Sale's Journal.*]

[182] "*Jan. 17, 1842.*—Early in the morning we were, to our surprise, told to prepare for a march higher up the valley, and further removed from Jellalabad, from which place Tugree is about thirty miles distant. All our hopes, which we had entertained hitherto of being escorted to Jellalabad, are now blighted, and we see plainly that we are nothing more nor less than prisoners, until such time as General Sale shall evacuate Jellalabad, or Dost Mahomed Khan be permitted by our government to return to the country. Started at nine, and arrived at Budeeabad, almost at the top of the valley, and close to the first range of hills towards Kafiristan. It belongs to Mahomed Shah Khan, is nearly new, and has a deep ditch and *fausse-braie* all round it. Our abode consists of five rooms on two sides of a small square. This space is to accommodate nine ladies, twenty gentlemen, and fourteen children, and in the Tei-Khana are seventeen European soldiers and three European women—all prisoners."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

[183] *Lady Sale's Journal.*

[184] "Last night, Mahomed Akbar and I had a long conversation. He was very anxious for the release of his father, and made many promises in his name if we would release him. I pointed out that at least two months must elapse before we could in any way have the instructions of government regarding the release of the Ameer. I can see no objection to the release of the Ameer, unless government intends making an example of the city of Caubul. Our release and that of the hostages at Caubul appears to depend upon his release. His family's release requires that of the women here. I wish for these last something could be done; but I fear not. You must use your influence. They tell me we shall be forwarded to Peshawur if you evacuate Jellalabad; and the Sirdar begs me that I write you on the subject. I have explained that I have no authority now, and said that I cannot promise anything of the sort. I hope government will see nothing prejudicial to its interests to release the Dost and family."—[*Major Pottinger to Major Macgregor: Lughman, January 18, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[185] "*January 19.*—Changed my clothes for the first time since leaving Caubul, January 6, and was fortunate enough to have a clean shirt. My feet had become so swollen that I could not again put on my boots when once pulled off. My eyes still very sore from the effects of the snow on the march."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

[186] Subsequently the materials were served out to the prisoners and

dressed by their own Hindostanee servants.

[187] "*January 29.*—The Sirdar and Sooltan Jan came to see us. Made a bet with the latter of 1000 rupees that Dost Mahomed Khan, the ex-Ameer, will be released by the 30th of January, and will return to Afghanistan. The former gave 1000 rupees to be distributed among us for the purpose of purchasing sugar and other little luxuries. My share is fifty rupees; which sum is very acceptable, as I have not had a pice about me since leaving Caubul."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative. MS.*]

[188] It was dangerous to send military or political news in the ordinary form of epistolary correspondence. So the officers at Jellalabad hit upon the expedient of dotting off letters in old newspapers, so as to form words and sentences—"an easy mode of carrying on secret correspondence not likely to be detected by an Asiatic." These dotted letters communicated to the prisoners the tidings of Wild's repulse in the Khybur Pass—the despatch of General Pollock to Peshawur—and the arrival of Dr. Brydon at Jellalabad.

[189] The letter is given in the Appendix.

[190] See Appendix.

[191] The 1st of April was not forgotten. It is a curious proof of the irrepressible love of practical joking which clings to our countrymen in all places and in all situations, that the prisoners in Afghanistan, on the 1st of April, turned their misfortunes into food for a joke. Captain Johnson says: "*April 1, 1842.*—Was awakened early by M—— telling me a letter had been received by L—— from Macgregor at Jellalabad, informing him that our ransom had been effected for three and a half lakhs of rupees, and that we were to start in five or six days. Was up in an instant —off to L——; and heard the story confirmed by him. The report spread through the whole fort, among our servants as well as the Europeans, in less than a minute. All was intense delight; when, on its being a little sobered down, to my horror, I was told that the story was all fudge. I was half mad with rage at being made such an April fool of, on a subject which, of all others in our situation, should have been the last for any of our party to have expended his wit upon."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

[192] "Up to this date, Mirza Báudín Khan (who had saved Captain Mackenzie's life on the assassination of Sir William Macnaghten, and who had previously to the breaking out of the insurrection informed that officer of the advent of Akbar Khan at Bámian) had been the keeper of the prison. This man was secretly well affected to the English, and professed an especial friendship for Troup and Mackenzie, to whom he immediately confided his intention of marching out with the prisoners and his garrison (the majority of whom he had gained over) to meet Sale's troops as soon as he should hear of their proximity; for he naturally expected that the General would have followed up his decisive victory over Akbar by marching direct upon Badeeabad, distant from Jellalabad not forty miles. As evening drew on, he became very anxious, frequently visited the ramparts to look out for the British force, and, passing over Sale as of no account in the matter, grievously abused Macgregor for not coming to the rescue. This might have been very easily accomplished, not only without risk, but with an effect on the fortunes of Akbar and his party, which might have saved much subsequent misery to the captives; expense, and bloodshed, in the advance upon Caubul; and vacillation and moral cowardice in the councils of the supreme government. But Sale came not, although the road was quite open; and the following morning the friendly gaoler was deposed, and his place taken by the Nazir or chief-steward of Mahomed Shah Khan, whose insolence and brutality contrasted disagreeably with the conduct of Báudín Khan."—[*MS. Memorandum.*]

[193] "*April 9.*—The whole of this day and yesterday passed in the greatest suspense. Reports reached us to-day that the Sirdar and Mahomed Shah Khan had arrived at the fort of the latter, about two miles distant from us. The rout of the Afghan army appears to have been perfect, and we hear that they have lost all their guns, camp-equipage, and private property. All our guard appear very mysterious—group together—and talk in whispers. The inhabitants of the fort have removed their property and left their homes. Towards the afternoon, several of our guard, with whom we had been in the habit of conversing, and who had always been kind to us, on our asking them what would become of us, would shake their heads and say, 'You are in the hands of God.'

A frightful stillness appeared to prevail. By degrees we began to hear fearful rumours that we were all to be massacred at sunset. Whether these first originated in the imaginations of some of our party, or in those of the Afghans, I cannot say—but knowing the revengeful temper of those in whose hands we were, nothing appeared to us more probable; and our anxiety and suspense increased as the day wore on. At about sunset a report was brought in that Mahomed Shah Khan was on his way to visit us. Even this was a relief to us, as we knew that what would happen to us must take place shortly. In about ten minutes he arrived with a large party of his followers. On coming up to us, our alarms were at an end as concerned our lives, as he regarded us civilly, and shook hands with the whole of us. We all sate down together. He entered slightly into the defeat of the day before yesterday, and told us that we must be in readiness to leave Budeeabad in the morning, without, however, giving us any hint as to our destination; nor had any of us inclination to ask questions of him. His will is law to us. After sitting for some time he wished us 'Good evening,' and withdrew. He slept in the fort that night, and we were busy making preparations for the morrow's march. These, however, were shortly at an end. All my worldly goods and chattels might be stowed away in a towel or a handkerchief."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

[194] "*April 10.*—Up at daylight; had a cup of tea and was ready for the march. Took out my saddle to put on my horse; found that some rascal had stolen my stirrups. This was soon rectified by a piece of rope. As I was about saddling my horse, which was a good Hissar-stud animal, Mahomed Shah Khan sent a man to tell me that this was to be his property, and that he would furnish me with some other beast, as none of us were to be permitted to ride horses for fear of making our escape.... In the mean time, Mahomed Shah Khan, having heard that Lady Macnaghten was possessed of a great number of magnificent shawls and valuable jewels, which she had been so lucky as to have saved up to this time, went inside and coolly commanded her, without sending any previous message, to open her boxes. These were all very soon ransacked; and shawls and jewels to the amount of near two lakhs of rupees were taken possession of by this chief of freebooters—politely telling her ladyship that she might retain one or two shawls and any particular jewel for which she might have more value than another. Many of the little things were also taken possession of by a young whelp—the worthy son of so worthy a sire. Remonstrance was useless. About 9 A.M. we started; but still without the slightest knowledge of where we were going."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

[195] *Captain Johnson's Narrative. MS.*

[196] On the 20th, Mrs. Waller, who had been necessitated to perform the dreadful march from Budeeabad on horseback, was delivered of a daughter. She was allowed an interval of one day's rest, and was then hurried onwards by the same distressing mode of conveyance.

[197] General Elphinstone's remains were sent by Akbar Khan, for interment, to Jellalabad. The General's faithful servant, Moore, accompanied the body. "I have the honour to inform you," wrote Pottinger to Pollock, on the 26th of April, "that Mahomed Akbar Khan yesterday despatched to you the body of the late Major-General Elphinstone. It was, however, intercepted by a party of the Ghilzyes, under the supposition that the Prince in Caubul had sent it, the party made prisoners, and the European servant, who had been allowed to accompany it, wounded. The savages, however, on hearing that Mahomed Akbar Khan had sent it, deputed one of their number to learn the truth. The Sirdar is much grieved at the accident, and now sends a party, with Private Moore, the General's servant, to replace the corpse and forward it on. The Sirdar at present is unable to release the two servants from the hostility of the intermediate clans; but he promises to do so as soon as a person may arrive sufficiently powerful to protect them."—[*Major Pottinger to General Pollock: Castle of Afzool Khan, Tezeen, April 26, 1842. MS. Records.*] The General's remains subsequently reached Jellalabad, and were interred with military honours.

[198] I am informed that one of Conolly's inducements to visit Bokhara was the hope of persuading Stoddart outwardly to recant his profession of Mahomedanism. My informant, who was at this time at Caubul, writes: "Arthur Conolly availed himself of a certain margin left him in his instructions for visiting Kokund and Bokhara, to proceed to the latter place, principally to obtain Stoddart's release, and also with a view to his restoration to that

precious faith in a Divine Redeemer, which he had outwardly denied. True it is, that He who cannot lie has declared that whosoever denies Him before men, him will He deny before God the Father; but, if ever an act of apostasy called for tears of compassion, it is that of the martyr Stoddart, for he, too, like Cranmer, died for the Faith which he once denied. Long before Conolly's arrival, the Ameer of Bokhara, who was accounted even by his own countrymen an incarnation of perfidy and ferocity, had been led by the contempt with which his letter to the Queen had been treated by the Foreign Office, to wreak his vengeance on the only individual of the offending nation in his power. By his order, Stoddart was kept in a loathsome prison, frequently severely beaten, *which never extorted a groan from him*, and starved into a state of pitiable weakness. Meanwhile, he was repeatedly ordered to become a Mahomedan, which he steadfastly refused to do. To conquer his obstinacy, the Ameer threw him into the Chah-i-Seeah (or black pit), a place of torment for the vilest criminals. It is such a pit as that into which Jeremiah was cast, the bottom of it being composed of indescribable filth—men's bones, decomposed animal matter, &c. In it, amongst other vermin, are large ticks, which bury themselves in the flesh of the victim, producing noisome sores. Before life was extinct, Stoddart was drawn up from this horrible dungeon, and, on reviving somewhat, was exposed in one of the great gates of the city, all who entered being instructed to spit in his face and buffet him. Still he refused to abjure Christianity. The next day he was again severely beaten, his grave dug before his face, and it was announced to him that, unless he pronounced the Mahomedan confession of faith, in that very grave he would forthwith be buried alive. Hitherto, this noble gentleman's resolution had not failed him; but in this fearful moment of temptation, when *mere* human nature could sustain no more, to use his own expression,—'The grating of the spades against the sides of the grave jarred on his shattered nerves beyond endurance.' Certain Mahomedans, whose sympathy had been enlisted by his noble constancy, besought him almost with tears to spare them the disgrace of his murder, and to pronounce the confession as a mere matter of form; and thus, almost unconsciously, he with his mouth owned the Arabian impostor as the true Prophet of God. Arthur Conolly's arrival, exhortations, and prayers speedily produced the blessed effect aimed at. Stoddart renounced Mahomedanism (having previously refused to live with the wife assigned him as a new convert), and thus subjected himself to a new series of cruelties and indignities which, as we have seen, ended in his and Conolly's public martyrdom."—[*MS. Memorandum.*]

[199] In July, Stoddart wrote to Major Rawlinson, saying: "Conolly is not yet here from Kokund, nor have my messengers to him yet returned. They conveyed the orders from Caubul, and an invitation from the Ameer to return by this route."—[*MS.*]

[200] "The Ameer was very much enraged at finding that the Queen had not answered his letter; but had referred Colonel Stoddart to the Indian Government, for all matters connected with Bokhara. About five days after this, intelligence was received that Sir Alexander Burnes had been murdered at Caubul. On the receipt of this intelligence a servant of the Ameer was sent to call the two gentlemen to his presence. The Ameer asked Colonel Stoddart which road he could now take, even supposing he (the Ameer) was willing to release him. The Colonel said he could go either by Russia or Persia. The Ameer said he would release him in seven or eight days, and keep Captain Conolly. A few days afterwards the English gentlemen were sent for to the palace and confined."—[*Statement of Shah Mahomed, Populzye, one of Captain Conolly's attendants. MS. Records.*] This part of the statement is entirely confirmed by that of Saleh Mahomed, Akhondzadeh, as taken by Colonel Sheil.

[201] Some of these papers, written closely on both sides, had been cut into three pieces, and apparently sent by as many messengers.

[202] Allahdad Khan, the Afghan envoy, who accompanied Captain Conolly, had been permitted to take his departure from Bokhara, but was afterwards brought back and confined. He remained for some days in the same apartment with Stoddart and Conolly, but was subsequently removed to other quarters. The servants of the latter officer were also thrown into prison—some of them into the well, or log-house, in which Stoddart had been incarcerated.

[203] An Afghan over-coat.

[204] Saleh Mahomed, the Akhondzadeh, made a similar statement to

Colonel Sheil. I see no reason to doubt the statements of this man, which are confirmed in many particulars by the accounts of other witnesses.

[205] *Arthur Conolly's MS. Journal.*—A Russian Mission was then at Bokhara, under the charge of Colonel Boutenoff, who seems to have been in higher favour than the English gentlemen; and to have greatly pitied their condition. On the 15th of February the prisoners despatched a letter to him by the hands of one of their dependents known as Long Joseph, whose exploits are thus recorded:

"*February 15.*—This day Long Joseph gallantly darted into our room, and carried off a note which we had written for Colonel Boutenoff, to inform him of our situation.

"*February 16.*—Long Joseph having won a servant of the Topshee-Bashee's, conveyed to us a note from the gaoler, and sent it to him; Stoddart writing to government through Sir J. M'Neill."

Colonel Stoddart had interchanged visits with the Russians before Conolly's arrival. Saleh Mahomed says: "There was an ambassador at this time from the Russian Government who came twice to see the English gentlemen, who also visited him."—[*MS. Records.*]

[206] Obscure in *MS.*

[207] Obscure in *MS.*

[208] *MS. Correspondence of Arthur Conolly.*

[209] The men formerly in Dr. Gerrard's service, enslaved fifteen years ago, whom I had ransomed at Khiva by order of Government. A. C.

[210] *MS. Correspondence.*—Arthur Conolly was painfully anxious to remove from the minds of his friends the impression which might have been produced upon them by his letter of the 11th of March. Again he wrote in his journal-letter: "I take this opportunity of explaining that my letter of the 11th of March was written when I was very ill with fever. Thinking that he might forcibly be sent away from me on the departure of the Russians (as they brought a request for his dismissal), or that we might be otherwise separated, Stoddart had begged me to give him a memorandum of my opinions regarding the policy to be pursued towards these states; and I wrote off a hasty summary of these notions, which were running in my head, with many things that I was anxious to say about my unfortunate servants, and to my friends, when under excitement, which must have made my expressions very wild and incoherent. I hoped that the paper containing them remained in the hands of Long Joseph; but he, misunderstanding our instructions, instead of keeping it, gave it to Eusofee-i-Roomee (Augustin), who, apparently, went off at once with it to Caubul. When I got better I drew up for Stoddart the memorandum which he had asked for, and which he now decides on forwarding. It is written in a more calm and less indignant tone than the letter aforesaid, but allowance must be made for the brevity and freedom of the propositions, for we were so liable to be interrupted and discovered, that I could only pen my opinions by snatches, and paper is a scarce article with us."—[*Arthur Conolly's MS. Journal.*]

[211] General Pollock exerted himself to obtain an adjustment of the claims of Captain Conolly's servants; and he succeeded. The letter which was written in reply to Pollock's application shows in what light Lord Ellenborough regarded Conolly's mission: "With reference," wrote the Chief Secretary, "to your letter of the 23rd ultimo, on the subject of the remuneration applied for, on behalf of the servants attached to the mission of Lieutenant A. Conolly to Kokund, I am directed to inform you that the Governor-General has no knowledge of Lieutenant A. Conolly's mission to Kokund having been authorised. On the contrary, his Lordship was informed, by the late President of the Board of Control, that Lieutenant A. Conolly was expressly instructed by him not to go to Kokund; and, in all probability, he owes all his misfortunes to his direct transgression of that instruction. The servants entertained by him, however, are not responsible for the indiscretion of their master. They were in the service of an officer apparently employed on a public mission by his government, and the Governor-General is prepared to consider their position favourably. His Lordship, therefore, authorises the disbursement of the sums stated in the papers attached to your letter, under reply to be due to these several persons; but the sums so paid on account of wages accruing to these several persons, after they left Khiva (after deducting therefrom the

amount of wages which would have become due during a direct march to Caubul) will be made a charge against Lieutenant A. Conolly, who will be required to refund the amount, as well as all sums which may have been drawn on account of such an unauthorised extension of his mission."—[*Mr. Maddock to General Pollock: Simlah, Nov. 3, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[212] An abstract of this letter was forwarded by another route, and it reached John Conolly at Caubul on the 4th of July. In this letter, Stoddart reports the success of the Ameer at Kokund. "The Ameer," he wrote, "entered Kokund on the 11th of May, and gave it up to pillage—destroyed its rulers—unpeopled its capital, and is now on his return, having distributed the different governments among his own Bokharan chiefs. He is become master of immense treasure, and will now probably march against Khiva, which, unless saved by some demonstration from Persia or Afghanistan, must fall in August or September, after a short campaign." With reference to the efforts of the Russian Mission, he says: "The Russian Mission left this towards the end of April. I feel convinced that Colonel Boutenoff's kind desire to procure our release failed solely in consequence of the unreasonableness of the Ameer."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[213] General Pollock officially reported Captain Conolly's death from Caubul, in a letter dated September 30; but he added: "The only authority for the death of this very intelligent officer is conveyed in a Persian letter from a native of Caubul, who writes from Bokhara to Moollah Ahmed Khan, of this city, saying, 'Tell Moostafah (Captain A. C.'s servant) that his uncle, whom he left here sick, saying he was a great traveller and had visited Kokund, was taken very ill, and though we gave him medicine and did all in our power, it was of no avail. It was the will of God that he should die.' Moostafah and Moollah Ahmed Khan are both of opinion that Captain A. Conolly is the person alluded to, and as the letter proceeds to say that the effects of the deceased are at Bokhara, and can be sent when required; and as Moostafah had no uncle, to whom could the description apply? I fear there can be no reason to doubt the death of the above-named officer. Colonel Stoddart is, from native report, said to be alive, and still in confinement."—[*MS. Records.*] This is mere conjecture; and by no means tallies with the more credible account of the execution of the two prisoners. On the 3rd of November, 1842, the Supreme Government assumed that Conolly was still alive. But the home authorities adopted Saleh Mahomed's story, and struck Stoddart's name out of the army list, from the 17th of June, 1842. I believe this really to have been the date of their deaths. Major Rawlinson, on the morning of the 16th of September, 1842, met one of Stoddart's servants near Caubul, and the man whom he knew, informed him that he had come direct from Bokhara, having started immediately after the execution of his master.—[*MS. Notes.*] The reader may consult the works of Captain Grover and Dr. Wolff.

[214] See the *Edinburgh Review, July, 1845*, for an account of these efforts. The paper derives additional value from the assignment of its authorship to Sir John M'Neill.

[215] *Colonel Stoddart to Major Rawlinson: Bokhara, July 7, 1841. MS. Correspondence.* It may be gathered from this letter that Stoddart had no intention of awaiting Conolly's arrival at Bokhara; and that Conolly proceeded thither under orders from Caubul, and an invitation from the Ameer. An attempt has been made to control, in some measure, the flood of sympathy which sets in so strongly towards Arthur Conolly, by asserting that he was not authorised to proceed even as far as Kokund, and that he therefore brought his misfortunes down upon his own head. But I have before me the strongest proof that Conolly *was* authorised by the Supreme Government to proceed to Kokund, and to use his best endeavours to obtain the liberation of Colonel Stoddart. In a letter, an official copy of which is now before me, the Chief Secretary writes to the Envoy and Minister: "As in the present aspect of affairs it does not seem necessary to continue the restriction which had at first been imposed, his Lordship in Council authorises you to permit Captain Conolly to proceed from Khiva to Kokund, if he should think it expedient, and if he finds that he can do so without exciting serious distrust and jealousy at the former place. In his personal intercourse with the Khan of Kokund, he will be guided by the instructions which have been issued, prescribing the purport of his written communications. Captain Conolly may, in such a journey, find increased means of using an useful influence at Bokhara for the release of Colonel Stoddart; and his Lordship in Council need not add, that he would wish every such means to be employed with the utmost earnestness and diligence for that purpose."—[*Mr.*

*Maddock to Sir W. Macnaghten: Dec. 28, 1840. MS. Records.*]

[216] Two other notes were written by the prisoners on the back of this paper: one to Miss Stoddart at Norwich, and the other to John Conolly at Caubul. “Don’t believe all you hear or may hear,” wrote Stoddart. “Keep all friends informed of my health, and don’t let them be disturbed by rumours,” wrote Conolly.

[217] *MS. Correspondence.*

[218] *MS. Records.*

[219] Captain Grover.

[220] The extracts from Captain Conolly’s letters and journals in this chapter are all made from the originals, and have, in some places, been deciphered with much difficulty; the manuscript, written in very minute characters, being greatly defaced by damp and attrition.

[221] On the 5th of May, Mohun Lal wrote: “The Prince (Futteh Jung) is very, very anxious that the General should march to Caubul; he appears now involved in difficulties, and undoubtedly is friendly to our government. He says he would not allow Ameen-oollah and the Populzye rebels to come into the palace, the evening they were obliged to leave the city, but by allowing them to come in, he entertained two objects. Firstly, to employ their services against the enemies of both states (the Barukzyes, who murdered the Envoy and also his father, the King, placed by the English Government on the throne) till the arrival of General Pollock. Secondly, he may keep them quietly in his possession, and catch them as rebels, when you approach.”—[*MS. Records.*]

[222] “The Prince,” said Mohun Lal, “is of course very liberal to those that espouse his cause, while the Barukzyes pay very little by selling jewels and finery. The Kohistanees or disciples of Meer Hadjee are towards the Barukzyes; but they groan to receive money lesser than those who are with the Prince.”—[*MS. Records.*]

[223] “Khan Shereen Khan,” wrote Mohun Lal, on the 9th of May, “came last night to me and said, that the Barukzyes press upon him to side with them to oppose the Prince; and if he does agree he is sure he will be ruined. He says he is going to send his wives to some of the country forts, and then either go into the Balla Hissar or wait upon you at Jellalabad; and then he thinks that the whole of the Persians will follow him.”—And again, on May 10th: “Yesterday, about noon, ... Mahomed Akbar Khan came in person to Khan Shereen Khan, and persuaded him, after a long talk, to side with him to oppose the Prince towards Benee Hissar. When Mahomed Zemaun Khan heard this he got jealous, and sent a message to Khan Shereen Khan, if he did not go himself or send his son to assist Soojah-ool-Dowlah, as the Newab had requested him, he had better not go, with Mahomed Akbar too. The latter at last succeeded.”—[*MS. Records.*]

[224] “When Mahomed Akbar,” wrote Mohun Lal, “appeared in the field opposite the first or distant fort, Abdul Salem became traitor, and waited on Mahomed Akbar, who gave him a horse and desired him to go to his village. Upon this the people of the Prince, who were stationed in the forts between the fort of Abdul Salem and Balla Hissar, became disheartened and cowardly, obliged to desert the forts without fighting, and fly to the Balla Hissar. Mahomed Akbar’s people followed the fugitives to the very gates of the Balla Hissar, and possessed the gun of the Prince. Mahomed Akbar had taken Major Pottinger also with him to the fight.”—[*MS. Records.*]

[225] “In consequence of establishing the British harmony.”—[*Mohun Lal’s Translation.*]

[226] *MS. Records.*

[227] *MS. Records.*

[228] *MS. Records.*

[229] According, however, to our English notions, the contest was very far from a vigorous one. John Conolly wrote from Caubul: “The contending parties continue to amuse themselves with firing long shots with their guns and jezails, and the Balla Boorj is attacked—that is, fired at for three or four hours by one or two thousand men every third night or so.”—[*MS. Correspondence.*] Conolly says, in the same letter: “There is an anecdote here, that three Feringhees arrived at the Balla Hissar in disguise, and that on hearing this the Barukzyes withdrew their outposts to a

considerable distance." In another letter (May 26) he says: "The Prince holds out still in the citadel. The Barukzyes have been battering at the Upper Boorj, and firing into the Balla Hissar. According to our ideas, their efforts have been almost harmless; but the garrison, I fear, have become alarmed, and would be glad to see relief."—[*MS. Records.*]

[230] The Prince had no powder. Mohun Lal, however, contrived to procure some and to convey it to the Balla Hissar, through the agency of the Kuzzilbash chiefs.

[231] On the 5th of June, Mohun Lal wrote to Sir R. Shakespear, Pollock's military secretary: "If you will not march immediately, or in four days, to Gundamuck, you will lose all your prisoners, and the Barukzyes will possess the riches of the late Shah, as well as the Balla Hissar and the artillery."—[*MS. Records.*] John Conolly's letters, written about this time, contain the same urgent exhortations to advance, as the only means of saving the Balla Hissar and the prisoners.

[232] The mine was altogether the merest bug-bear. It frightened the Prince and the garrison; but Mohun Lal assured the former that it could not by any possibility do him any harm, as it had not been properly dug, nor run sufficiently far under the works to damage them, even if the strength of the masonry were not such as to bid defiance to the attempt.

[233] *Correspondence of Mohun Lal. MS. Records.* Futteh Jung continued to write to the British authorities that he had little or no money; and that if the British did not advance, the royal family would be ruined and disgraced. "It is well known to you," he wrote to General Pollock, "that Mahomed Akbar has made peace, with the view to derive wealth from me; but I know that I have none. If I could sell everything that I possess, I should not be able to raise a lakh of rupees."

[234] The Newab had little money; but the most valuable jewels of Shah Soojah were in his possession. The Shah was wont to carry them about with him in a bag; and he had them in his possession at the time of his murder. "Mahomed Zemaun Khan," wrote Mohun Lal to Sir Richmond Shakespear, "has got hold of the most valuable jewels of the late King, who, report said, had them thrown into a ditch when Soojah-ood-Dowlah murdered him. This was seen by an Afghan at a distance, who after some days went to the place and took out the small bag of jewels, which he, being ignorant of their worth, sold them for 600 rupees. This was reported to the Newab, who imprisoned the bidders and got all the jewels from them. The bankers say that they are worth 50 lakhs of rupees, but here are no men to purchase them."—[*MS. Records.*] Akbar Khan had contrived to extract a considerable sum of money from the Prince. On the 17th of June, Mohun Lal reported that the Sirdar had received a lakh and a half of rupees from the royal treasury. On the 18th, John Conolly wrote that the Sirdar had drawn two lakhs, adding: "He has taken an inventory of all the property and treasure in the citadel; and has his own men there." "It will be a great consolation to us all," he wrote in conclusion, "if you will tell us that no negotiations beyond the ransom of the prisoners will ever be entered into with Akbar. He is certainly the most uncompromising villain that ever lived."—[*Lieutenant Conolly to Captain Macgregor: Caubul, June 18, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[235] "The Prince was seated on the throne on the 29th. Akbar constituted himself prime minister of all Afghans. The Hindostanee dependents on the Prince had been previously removed from the Balla Hissar, and none but his immediate attendants were allowed to remain—the garrison being composed of Akbar's own soldiers. The remnant of the royal jewels, treasure, and property, even to a few silver cooking utensils, had been also made over to Akbar. It was Akbar's intention to have deposed the Prince; and several meetings were convened to discuss the question. The resolution to crown the Prince was sudden, and suggested by an idea that the Populzyes who had connected themselves with Timour at Candahar might be induced to recognise the present arrangements in a preference to a Suddozye King under British auspices."—[*Lieutenant J. B. Conolly to Sir Richmond Shakespear: July 1, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[236] All the circumstances attending their surrender ought to be related. The incident is thus feelingly chronicled by Captain Johnson: "Two days after the death of Shah Soojah, the people of Caubul demanded that our hostages, who had been left under charge of Mahomed Zemaun Khan, should be given up to the

care of the son of the late High Priest, Meer Hadjee. The former noble-hearted gentleman, than whom no father could have behaved more tenderly to his children, begged and entreated with tears that the separation should not take place—adding that he was willing to give up his own family to the popular will, but not the English gentlemen who had been entrusted to his care, and who were his honoured guests—that he would, if the people so willed it, make over to them his own son, with his sword round his neck, and his turban for a winding-sheet, to be dealt with according to their pleasure; but that force alone should deprive him of the society of his friends. When all entreaties failed, he hoped to work upon the feelings of the party at the conference by telling them that their chief and his own sister and relations were in the hands of the British Government, and that vengeance would assuredly be dealt upon them if the English gentlemen sustained the slightest injury. On this, a grey-bearded old gentleman told him and the rest that they might make their minds perfectly easy as regarded the Afghan prisoners in India, as it was contrary to the uses of Englishmen to hurt a hair of the heads of their captives. The clamour of the people prevailed over all that the Newab could urge, and with many a bitter feeling did this amiable man make over the hostages to Meer Hadjee, with prayers and entreaties to the latter that he would behave kindly to them; and at the same time he sent with them to the latter's house all the females of his family, as the surest means of their protection; for however excited a Mussulman population may be, it is seldom or ever that they violate a harem."—[*Captain Johnson's MS. Journal.*]

[237] Mohun Lal's own account of his sufferings is worth quoting: "I have the honour to address you, for the information of Major-General Pollock, C.B., that Akbar Khan, on the night of the 11th inst. (July), put me in charge of Moollah Said, Atchekzye, in whose house I was forced to lay down, and a couch placed over me, on which the people jumped, and are beating me with sticks in a very unmerciful manner. Akbar wants 30,000 rupees from me—says, otherwise, that he will pull out my eyes. All my body has been severely beaten. I cannot promise anything without government's order, but see myself destroyed.... All my feet is wounded by bastinadoing."—[*Mohun Lal to Sir R. Shakespear: July 14, 1842. MS. Records.*] "I suffer very much. Sometimes I am pinioned and a heavy stone is placed on my back, whilst the red pepper is burnt before my nose and eyes. Sometimes I am bastinadoed. In short, I suffer every conceivable agony. He wants 30,000 rupees, out of which he has hitherto got 12,000, after using me very rudely. The remainder, if not paid in the course of ten days, he says he will pull out my eyes, and burn my body with a hot iron."—[*Mohun Lal to Sir R. Shakespear: July 17. MS. Records.*]

[238] The cause of this hasty removal is to be found in Akbar's suspicions that the Jabbar Khail, the most powerful of the western Ghilzye clans, intended to carry off the prisoners and sell them to General Pollock on their own account. This plot really existed, and had been suggested to the chiefs of the Jabbar Khail by Captain Mackenzie during his journeys to and from Jellalabad.

[239] They were turned out of the fort, indeed, to make room for the prisoners, to the infinite annoyance of the unhappy chief, who made every possible excuse for not receiving them, but was overruled by Akbar Khan, who obtained admittance for them, in the first instance, on the plea that he only required accommodation for the night, and then urged that the fort would suit them better than any other place in the neighbourhood. It was altogether a most unfortunate occurrence for Ali Mahomed, as, subsequently, on the advance of the British, the fort was levelled with the ground, and the garden destroyed.

[240] "I attach much weight," wrote Lord Ellenborough, at the end of May, "to what Major Sleeman says of the disposition of the Mahomedans; but I am surprised that it has not occurred to him and to others, that whatever may be the disposition of the Mahomedans, it is the absence, not the presence of our troops, of whom more than three-fourths are Hindoos, that alone can lead the Mahomedans to act against us. The danger is in the position of the army, almost without communication with India, too far off to return quickly at any season, unable from the season to return now, without adequate supplies of food or carriage. This is the danger which all the great statesmen in India would perpetuate if they could, and while they maintain it, destroy the confidence of the Sepoy and ruin our finances. *If I save this country, I shall save it in spite of every man in it who ought to give me support, but I will save it in spite of them all.*"—

[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[241] Some readers, not having maps before them, will better understand the nature of this retirement if I liken it to the case of a man wishing to retire from Reigate to London, and taking Dover and Canterbury in his way.

[242] The services rendered by Mr. Robertson to his country, at this time, have never been adequately acknowledged, except by General Pollock himself, who never lost an opportunity of expressing his gratitude for the assistance he had derived from the exertions of the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. Mr. Robertson, aware of the difficulty of collecting camels in sufficient number for the purposes of the army, ordered letters to be addressed to the principal collectors in Upper India, calling upon them to purchase as many ponies and mules as they could get together in their several districts. And it was in no small measure owing to these exertions that Pollock was at length enabled to advance.

[243] *Mr. Maddock to General Pollock: July 4, 1842. Published Papers.*

[244] *Mr. Maddock to General Nott: July 4, 1842, and Lord Ellenborough, same date. Published Papers.*

[245] "If I have not," wrote Pollock, "lived long enough to judge of the propriety of an act for which I alone am responsible, the sooner I resign the command as unfit the better. I assure you that I feel the full benefit of being unshackled and allowed to judge for myself."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[246] A letter, too, was sent by Captain Troup to Akbar Khan with a request that he would forward it to Nott. A few harmless lines were written in ink; and much important matter in rice-water, to be brought out by the application of iodine. The employment of Akbar Khan himself, as the medium of communication between the two Generals, who were contemplating his destruction, is not one of the least amusing incidents of the war.

[247] Pollock was afraid that Nott would have commenced his retreat before the receipt of the despatch of July 4. "My movement will of course depend," he wrote in a confidential letter to Mr. Robertson on the 10th of August, "on General Nott's ability to meet me. Our late accounts from that quarter are not favourable. They say that General Nott is bent on retiring, and I very much fear that he will have made several marches to the rear before the government despatch can reach him.... I ought by this time to have heard from General Nott, in reply to my letter by the first of the five messengers. If he is not coming on, my negotiations for the prisoners will be a very simple affair; but it must ever be a subject of regret that he should so hastily retire, and at such a time, while he commands an army in every respect efficient, and amounting to about 15,000 men."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[248] It was reported in camp, and subsequently set forth in the local journals, that some women had been violated by our soldiery. "But," says Captain Macgregor, "I made the strictest inquiry into the matter, both from the Afghan chiefs who were with me, and from the inhabitants of the village, but could not trace in the slightest degree any just foundation for the report in question. Had there been any, it would doubtless have formed a subject of great grievance to the people, who are so very jealous of the honour of their women."—[*Captain Macgregor's Report on the Operations in the Shinwarree districts. MS. Records.*]

[249] *Captain Macgregor's Report. MS. Records.*

[250] There was no need to cut them down. It was sufficient to cut deep rings through the bark to the heart of the tree; for they seldom survived the operation. There is something in this so repugnant to our civilised and Christian ideas of righteous retribution, that it is only just that I should give in this place the explanation of an act, perpetrated, indeed, upon other occasions, in the words of an officer equally gallant and humane. "All the injury," said Captain Macgregor, "that we could do to their forts and houses could, with facility, in a short time be repaired by them. From their proximity to the hills, they could always obtain timber in abundance; and where water is plentiful they could rebuild easily the bastions we might blow up; and therefore a greater degree of punishment than this seemed to be necessary, and was completely within our power, if we destroyed their trees —a measure which seems barbarous to a civilised mind; but in no other way can the Afghans be made to feel equally the weight of our power, for they delight in the shade of their trees. They are to be seen under them in groups, during the summer, all day

long, talking, reading, weaving, and sleeping. Even women and children seek the shade of their trees. The Afghan mountaineer is not tangible to us in any other way. He removes his herds, flocks, and property to the hills on the shortest notice; and flies before our troops to places where he is inaccessible to them. The Goolai people, moreover, were deserving of no mercy. The amount of treasure they had plundered (viz., 18,000 or 20,000 rupees) was considerable. They had been very pertinacious in attacking Captain Ferris's cantonment; and equally so, subsequently, our troops at Jellalabad. Therefore the Brigadier determined at once to commence the work of destruction, desired that neither fort, house, tree, grain, nor *boosa* should be spared to them. This assuredly was the best plan for preventing the necessity of harsh measures in future. Working parties from the brigade were accordingly appointed for this purpose."—[*Captain Macgregor's Report. MS. Records.*]

[251] *Report of Brigadier Monteith: July 27, 1842. Published Papers.*

[252] "It is impossible," wrote General Pollock, "to guess how this mission may succeed, because, in dealing with Afghans, you deal with treachery and deceit; but appearances are as fair as they can be for the release of the prisoners. Captain Troup says that if it had depended on Mahomed Akbar alone, some of the ladies would have been sent with him; but Mahomed Shah appears to be a bitter enemy of ours—much more so than I had reason to suppose. The man who has come with Captain Troup was selected in opposition to the wish of Mahomed Akbar, who wished to send Dost Mahomed Khan, a brother of Mahomed Shah. Dost Mahomed was objected to by the chiefs as being too bigoted to his own party, whereas Hadjee Buktear Khan was considered neutral. He is a Candahar man—has been at Bombay and others of our settlements, and is better acquainted with the European character than the other."—[*Jellalabad, July 15. MS. Correspondence.*]

[253] "Captain Troup," wrote General Pollock, "is still here. I am glad that, in proposing terms, I insisted on having the guns, for I think there is almost a certainty of an objection being made to that, in which case, of course, I can back out.... On this occasion I have written nothing."—[*Jellalabad, July 18. MS. Correspondence.*]

[254] "I have my camp in two lines," he wrote a few days afterwards to Pollock, "the cavalry facing the river, and rear to the water—the front of our encampment an open stony plain—*a good place for a fight*. The left of our line rests on a small hill that commands a view all round."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[255] The Governor-General, however, seems to have considered it not wholly improbable that the contemplated military movement upon Caubul would be suspended by the favourable conclusion of the negotiations with the enemy; and actually authorised Pollock to exercise his discretion in ordering Nott to retire by Quettah, even though the march upon Ghuznee and Caubul had been commenced.—[*Lord Ellenborough to General Pollock: July 29, 1842.*] Subsequently the Governor-General seemed to awaken to a sense of the extraordinary character of this suggestion, for he wrote to General Pollock to say that he "could hardly imagine the existence of circumstances which could justify the diversion of Major-General Nott's army from the route of Ghuznee and of Caubul, when his intention of marching by that route shall have been once clearly indicated."—[*Lord Ellenborough to General Pollock: August 26, 1842.*]

[256] *MS. Correspondence.*

[257] Nott's letter was despatched on the 27th of July. It comprised but a few lines:

"Candahar, July 27, 1842.

"My dear General,—You will have received a copy of a letter from the Governor-General under date the 4th instant, to my address, giving me the option of retiring a part of my force to India *viâ* Caubul and Jellalabad. I have determined to take that route, and will write to you fully on the subject as soon as I have arranged for carriage and supplies.—Yours truly, W. Nott."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[258] The force consisted of the 3rd Dragoons; the 1st Native Cavalry; a squadron of the 5th and of the 10th ditto, with the head-quarters; 600 Sowars of the 3rd Irregular Cavalry; her Majesty's 31st Regiment; the 33rd Regiment of Native Infantry; the whole of Sir Robert Sale's and of Colonel Tulloch's brigades; with seventeen guns, a company of Sappers and Miners, and a regiment of Bildars (Pioneers) under Mr. Mackeson. A small

force was left (chiefly for want of carriage) at Gundamuck, and the rest remained in garrison at Jellalabad.

[259] In this affair we lost seven men killed, and about fifty wounded. Among the latter were four officers, Major Huish (26th Native Infantry), Captain Edwards (9th Foot), Captain Tait (Irregular Cavalry), Ensign Robertson (37th Native Infantry).

[260] With regard to the destruction committed at Mammoo Khail, see Appendix.

[261] "Hurrah!" he wrote; "this is good news. *All* here are prepared to meet your wishes to march as light as possible. *I* take no carriage from the Commissariat; and our officers are doubling up *four* in a small hill tent, and are sending all to the rear that they can dispense with.... *I am so excited that I can scarce write.*"—[*General Sale to General Pollock: Futtehabad, August 16, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[262] *General Sale to General Pollock: August 18, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*

[263] Pollock had received no later intelligence from Nott's camp than that contained in the brief letter of July 27, though he had despatched ten messengers to the westward. It was not until midnight of the 6th-7th of September that letters from Nott's camp were received by Pollock at Gundamuck.

[264] To many of his letters to General Pollock, Futteh Jung signed his name in English characters.

[265] Akbar Khan compelled the Prince to write to Pollock: "I have given to Sirdar Mahomed Akbar the full and entire management of all my property and affairs of every description, and have resigned to him in perpetuity full power to judge and settle all questions on all points. Whatever arrangement he may make with the English Government I agree to confirm, and no alteration shall be made." And again: "The arrangements which have been made with Captain Troup and Hadjee Buktear have been all approved of by me. I have delegated all powers over my country and wealth to the Wuzeer, Mahomed Akbar Khan, Barukzye!" But the Prince took the first opportunity to write privately to the General: "My friend, it will have been evident to you that in this matter I have been compelled to act thus. I did not even know that Captain Troup and Hadjee Buktear had been sent, and I had not the slightest knowledge of the proposals made by them. Captain Troup is well aware of this, since we had never met, nor had any of my confidential people been employed between us."—[*Futteh Jung to General Pollock: Translation. July 21, 1842. MS. Records.*] This letter was evidently written in a state of painful alarm. It concludes with the words: "You must be very careful not to let it be known that I have written to you; since, should these villains hear of it, they would put me and my family to death." In reply to this letter, Pollock expressed his surprise that, "notwithstanding his Majesty's friendship, the good-will of the chiefs, and the unanimity of the people at Caubul, still they cannot prevent the treachery of one man from causing dissension between the two governments, and that they are unable to show their good-will to us by releasing our prisoners." To this, on the 1st of August, Futteh Jung replied: "You express surprise at my many well-wishers not being able to find a remedy for one evil-disposed person. You write: 'If this could be effected, a great object would be obtained.' Eminent in rank! You write truly. But in a religious war, a father cannot trust his son—a son, his father."

[266] In consequence of this act, Aga Mahomed became a marked man. His father was assassinated, and he and his brother cut down by order of Akbar. Being ruined, he found his way to Hindostan, and became the guest of an English officer, who obtained from the Government a pension of twelve rupees a month for him. He served on the late expedition to Bushire, and died leaving a helpless widow, like himself, a convert to Christianity.

[267] A squadron of the 5th Light Cavalry; a squadron, and the head-quarters of the 10th Light Cavalry; the left wings of the 33rd and 60th N.I., with two guns of the 3rd troop 2nd brigade of Horse Artillery, were left at Gundamuck.

[268] They, however, diverted themselves with a little internal mutiny —rising up against the Sikh general, Gholab Singh Provindea, and burning his tent. The poor old man, in an extremity of terror, sought refuge under Pollock's skirts.

[269] *General Pollock's Report.*

[270] *General Pollock's Report.*

[271] For an account of the operations of the second division of Pollock's army, see Lieutenant Greenwood's "Narrative of the late Victorious Campaign in Afghanistan, under General Pollock."

[272] Captains Troup and Bygrave, when the other prisoners were sent to Bameean, had been taken by Akbar Khan to the Balla Hissar—but had subsequently been permitted to remove themselves to Ali Mahomed's force, where Captain and Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Trevor, with their children, had been left, on account of sickness, under charge of Dr. Campbell.

[273] They required Troup, however, to write a letter to General Pollock making known Akbar Khan's wishes, and inclosing one from the Sirdar himself. The letters were sent, but the messengers returned some days afterwards, declaring that they had not been able to penetrate the British camp.—[*Captain Troup to General Pollock. MS. Correspondence.*]

[274] Bygrave had before gone on to Tezeen with Sir-Bolund Khan.

[275] *Captain Troup to General Pollock. MS. Correspondence.* See Appendix.

[276] Nothing could have been better than the conduct of the troops throughout the whole of these operations. "I think no officer," wrote Pollock, in a private letter, on the 23rd of September, "could possibly have had finer regiments under his command than I have had, and to them do I owe all my success, which, as far as I am able to judge, has been so far complete. I hope the Governor-General may think so, and I shall be satisfied." In this letter, the difficulties with which Pollock had to contend, from the scarcity of cattle, are thus detailed. "I have had," he wrote, "great difficulties to contend against even to the last, from the great want of carriage-cattle. At Gundamuck, after my first engagement with the enemy, I found myself so reduced in cattle, that, to enable me to take on only fourteen days' supplies, I was obliged to leave at that place two horse-artillery guns, two squadrons of cavalry, and two wings of Native infantry; and yet with all this, all the camp-followers, public and private, were compelled to carry eight days' supplies. The fighting men carried three. The 1st Cavalry carried eight days' supplies on their horses. The rest of the cavalry carried three or four days'. In this way we were enabled to move.... The night before I left Gundamuck, I received an official letter and a survey report, setting forth that the whole of the camels of one regiment were unserviceable, and that they could not get up even without their loads. This was rather provoking, for I have only three Native regiments with me. My answer was short. 'Tell the commanding officer, that if his regiment can't march, he will relieve the two wings ordered to remain behind, and who are willing to go forward on any terms.' The regiment marched, and I heard no more about their camels. After our last engagement with the enemy (it was a severe struggle) we had 160 killed and wounded; and again carriage was in requisition. The spare horses of the cavalry were had recourse to; and I lent my own riding-horse to one poor fellow."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[277] "The view from the look-out in the city," wrote Rawlinson in his journal, "was now very fine. The hillocks on the right were crowned with masses of horsemen, numbering apparently about 1500—a crowd of footmen occupied the rocky heights in front of our line and beyond, the shoulder of the Peer-Paee-Mal hill was covered with human beings thick as a flight of locusts, bodies of horse continually debouching round the shoulder and pushing on to join their comrades on the right."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[278] Nott, in his public despatches, was always somewhat chary of his praise, but in his private letters he delighted to dwell upon the achievements of his Sepoy regiments. Writing to Hammersley about this affair of the 29th of May, he said: "You will hear enough of our affair of the 29th with the enemy. The troops behaved well, and I am really surprised that our loss was so trifling; but I have remarked that the Afghans fire high. Our Sepoys are noble fellows—1000 are fully equal to 5000 Afghans or more. A detail of the 1st Cavalry, under Chamberlaine, behaved very well indeed. The enemy had 8000 men in position and 2000 in reserve. We had 1500 of all arms in the field. The enemy have broken up. I expect Wymer back in a day or two, when I will drive the rebels out of the Candahar district. How I

should like to go to Caubul! It is wonderful that the people in Hindostan should be so panic-struck; and they seem to believe that our Sepoys cannot stand the Afghans. Now, I am quite sure, and should like to try it to-morrow, that 5000 Bengal Sepoys would lick 25,000 Afghans."—[*General Nott to Lieutenant Hammersley: June 2, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

[279] It is said that the widow of Akrum Khan, who was executed at Candahar in the preceding autumn, was in the field, riding her husband's charger, and bearing a Ghazee standard. Lieutenant Rattray writes: "As the enemy drew near, a white object was observed in the centre of their front ranks, which seemed the rallying-point for the Ghazees, chieftains, Moollahs, kettle-drums, and standard-bearers. This proved to be no less a personage than the heroic widow of the slaughtered Akrum Khan. Throwing aside her timid nature with her 'Boorkha,' she had left the sacred privacy of the Zenana for the foremost rank in the battle-field, had bestrode her husband's charger, and with his standard in her hand had assembled the tribes."

[280] *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.* It appears that early in June the enemy's suspicions of our intended withdrawal were confirmed in a curious manner, and that they seemed then to think of terms. Rawlinson says: "It appears that when the entire party of the Douranee chiefs were on the point of dissolution, a Hindostanee deserter joined the camp from the town, saying that he and his comrades had received letters from India, stating positively that orders had been sent up for our retirement. The man, in fact, explained in detail all our plans—the abandonment and destruction of Khelat—the march of the brigade to bring up camels from Quettah—and he even asserted that we were preparing to destroy the four corner bastions of the city and the gateways, and that we should leave in a month hence. This decided the chiefs on dropping their offers of accommodation, and holding on until events became more developed."

[281] It is to be borne in mind that the supreme political authority had been vested by the Indian Government in the General. Nott, however, was not inclined to interfere in the political management of affairs, and Rawlinson continued to conduct them very much as he had done before the order was issued; but he referred all important questions to the General, who, for the most part, deferred to the opinions of his more experienced political associate.

[282] *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*

[283] "The particular object to be gained by adopting this latter route it was difficult to divine, and the generally-received impression among the officers—perhaps because the one most desired—was that our General was to lead us on to Caubul, and that the mention of Dehra Ismael Khan was merely to throw dust in the eyes of the natives. Indeed, it was afterwards accounted for, whether justly or not, by this fact, that if the Lohaunies, upon whom we were dependent for a large proportion of our camels, had had an idea that our intention was to have marched on Ghuznee and Caubul, they would have declined accompanying our army."—[*Neill's Recollections.*]

[284] *Major Rawlinson to Major Outram: Ghuznee, September 7. MS. Correspondence.*

[285] "We accordingly marched on unmolested to our encamping-ground, and as we passed the source of the Turnuck, with the precipitous hill on our left, and the strong grounds intersected with bogs and canals, and supported by forts upon our right, every one acknowledged that there was no better defensible position on the entire road from Candahar to Caubul."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[286] "The General first learnt of what was going on about two o'clock, when an orderly came back from Captain Delamain reporting that no enemy was in sight, and asking for orders. The General immediately ordered the troops back. Shortly afterwards Lieutenant Brett galloped in, saying that about 2000 of the enemy had appeared in front of Captain Delamain, and were too strongly posted on some rising ground to be attacked. The General again ordered the troops back. A third orderly came galloping, to say the cavalry were engaged; and very shortly afterwards other men came from the field, declaring our Horse to be annihilated. The General now went out with all the troops, for the enemy's force was reported to be above 7000, and we expected them to be flushed with their success. The horse artillery reached first, and Leslie took the command. We came up shortly afterwards, and found the cavalry still in a body, but

having evidently suffered a defeat."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[287] "The General now turned down to some forts, from which some shots were reported to have been fired. The villagers all came out with Korans and ropes round their necks, praying for quarter. The General granted quarter, but sent in the light company of the 40th to search the houses. A shot was fired from some Ghazee in the place, and orders were then given for an indiscriminate massacre. The women and children were spared, but I suppose 100 of the villagers were butchered. I do not think the men were to blame—had they supposed themselves committed, they would have fled to the hills before the troops moved out, but no doubt there were *Ghazees* in the place, desperate men who had no wish to save their own lives, provided they could destroy an infidel, and to the infatuation of these few men were the others sacrificed. Five Commissariat camels were found inside, so that parties in the fort had certainly been plundering; and as we approached the place, I remarked a Moollah from one of the Boorjes, evidently haranguing the people and urging them to die as Ghazees. It has been a most unsatisfactory business altogether, and a few more such affairs will compromise us seriously."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[288] Reeves and Bury—"Reeves was shot. Bury was cut down. Mackenzie received a severe sabre-wound in the elbow joint of his right arm.... Ravenscroft had been shot before the charge; but the wound turns out not to be dangerous. Malet had a very narrow escape. His hunting-cap (round which a shawl was wound) saved him, but he was slightly wounded in the face. Christie was ridden over in the confusion and lost his horse, but was remounted by one of his Native officers and saved."—[*Major Rawlinson to Major Outram Ghuznee, September 7, 1842. MS. Records.*]

[289] He declared that one of them was Nott's.

[290] *Major Rawlinson to Major Outram: September 7, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*

[291] Fired, however, from a height, the balls never ricocheted, and did but little mischief.

[292] *Major Rawlinson to Major Outram: September 7, 1842. MS. Records.*

[293] *Colonel Stacy's Narrative.*

[294] *General Nott's Official Despatch.*

[295] "The extensive village or town of Roza is situated about two miles from Ghuznee, and is lovely to behold. When this city was taken by the force under my command, Roza was full of inhabitants—men, women, and children. My troops were encamped close to its walls. Its gardens and its houses were full of property; its barns and farmyards were well stored; its orchards were loaded with fruit; its vineyards bent beneath a rich and ripe vintage; the property taken from our murdered soldiers of the Ghuznee garrison were seen piled in its dwellings.... Four days the victorious Candahar army remained encamped close to this village, with all these temptations before it, and at its mercy; but not a particle of anything was taken from the Afghans. The fruit brought for sale was paid for at a rate far above its value. No man nor living thing was injured."—[*General Nott to the Adjutant-General: Lucknow, April 4, 1843.*]

[296] "An active and spirited enemy might have annoyed us exceedingly during this movement; but the Afghans appeared to have lost all heart from the affair of the morning, and a little cavalry skirmishing was all that occurred."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[297] "The enemy appear to have been unable to traverse their big gun sufficiently to bring it to bear on our new position; and I suspect, also, they must have expended their shot, for the last two rounds which were fired as we were changing ground, and which fell short, were old shells of ours filled with earth."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[298] Colonel Palmer and the other British officers had been carried to Caubul.

[299] The engineer officers fathomed the great well in the citadel, and found fifty-one feet of water in it. The bottom of the well is

believed to be below the level of the river, so that it could not be drained. The fear of a failure of water ought not, therefore, to have driven Palmer to surrender. He might easily have secured the possession of the well by running a covered way from it, and protecting it with his guns.

[300] "I visited Roza in the evening, took another copy of the Cufic inscription upon Mahmoud's tomb, and had a long conversation with the Moollahs of the shrine. They assert that the tomb was constructed in its present state immediately after Mahmoud's death; that it remained intact during the Ghuzneevide and Ghooride dynasties, but that when Ghenghiz Khan, in his pursuit of Jellaladeen, threatened Ghuznee, the inhabitants heaped the tomb over with earth and ruins to preserve it from desecration, and deserted the place. They further pretend that the tomb thus remained buried until the time of Sultan Abdool Rizak, the grandson or great-grandson of Timour, to whom the spot was revealed in a vision, and who excavated and repaired the place, and dedicated to it rich endowments of lands. The endowments remained, they say, till the time of Nadir, when they were resumed by the government, and since that time the establishment at the tomb has been dependent for support upon a few gardens attached to the village, and the voluntary offerings of devotees. The Moollahs uphold that the gates are really those of Somnauth, and that the inscriptions on the tomb date from the time of the son of Mahmoud; but this I hold to be morally impossible, for although the Cufic may possibly be of the form used in that age (which, however, I doubt), the inscription in the Nuskh character on the reverse of the sarcophagus, which details the precise date of the Sultan's death, is obviously of a much later age. From many circumstances, I feel positively certain that the tomb does not boast a higher antiquity than that of Sultan Abdool Rizak, who built the present walls of Ghuznee, and who is himself buried in a rude mausoleum on the outskirts of the village of Roza. The gates, therefore, are certainly not those of Somnauth; but it is of course the interest of the Moollahs to keep up the delusion, and to affect for the spot the odour both of sandal and sanctity. I was much struck by the crowds of pilgrims, Mussulman officers in our ranks, who thronged the tomb during my visit there to make the *Ziarut*."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[301] Major Rawlinson's account of the removal of the gates is very interesting. "We moved our camp," he writes, "this morning from the west to the east of Roza, preparatory to fairly setting out on the march to Caubul; and during the day the measure was carried into effect of removing the gates of Mahmoud's tomb. The work was performed by Europeans, and all possible delicacy was observed in not desecrating the shrine further than was absolutely necessary. The guardians of the tomb, when they perceived our object, retired to one corner of the court and wept bitterly; and when the removal was effected, they again prostrated themselves before the shrine and uttered loud lamentations. Their only remark was: 'You are lords of the country, and can of course work your will on us; but why this sacrilege? Of what value can these old timbers be to you; while to us they are as the breath of our nostrils?' The reply was: 'The gates are the property of India—taken from it by one conqueror, they are restored to it by another. We leave the shrine undesecrated, and merely take our own.' The sensation is less than might have been expected; and no doubt the Moollahs, who have had the guardianship of the tomb for generations in their family, will be the chief sufferers by the measure. I doubt if the Afghan tribes lately risen from obscurity to power, and holding the country rather as conquerors than citizens, possess that feeling of unity with each other, and identity with the interests they are supposed to protect, to view the abduction of the gates as a material outrage. The act may be made use of by the priesthood to excite fanaticism against us; but if the Barukzye chiefs could only retain their darling plaything, power, they would care little about the gates of Somnauth. With Shah Soojah the case was different. As the representative of the Suddozye family, aiming at the reconsolidation of monarchical power, he could not but view the demand of Runjeet Singh for the gates as a national indignity, powerfully affecting his own personal and political interests. At present, religious excitement is alone to be apprehended from our carrying off these trophies. I call them trophies, although assured that they are spurious, for the belief in their genuineness is, politically considered, the same as if they really were so."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[302] The enemy harassed our camp at night, firing on our picquets, and working us other annoyance. "I doubt the policy," wrote Rawlinson, "of our firing a few forts and going no further. It

exasperates the Afghans without intimidating them. I believe that we should either have abstained altogether from retribution, or have carried fire and sword before us."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[303] "The attack upon the heights and their subsequent abandonment," says Major Rawlinson, "might have led to unpleasant consequences, had not the news of Akbar's defeat arrived just in time to prevent Shumshoodeen from availing himself of this advantage. We were all most anxious to have gone straight on to Mydan, and to have attacked Shumshoodeen in his position, throwing the light companies along the heights to the left, which were already in our possession, the whole way down to the Mydan gorge; but the General would not stir beyond the place he had first marked out for his encampment, for fear of harassing the cattle."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[304] *MS. Notes.*—See also the following from Rawlinson's Journal: "As it appeared desirable that a direct communication should be established between the camps as soon as possible, I proposed to the General, on arriving at Urghundeh, that I should ride in and see General Pollock. My offer was accepted, and I immediately put on an Afghan dress, and escorted by the Parsewans who had come out to the camp, rode in through the town to the race-course, where I found the Jellalabad force encamped. I experienced no sort of difficulty or inconvenience on the road, being generally taken for an Afghan. I now learnt from General Pollock that there were no fresh orders from Lord Ellenborough regarding the establishment of an Afghan Government; in fact, that he was prohibited from pledging the government to recognise any one, but that still, as Futteh Jung had thrown himself on our protection, and that as it was absolutely necessary something like a government should be established, in order to enable us to obtain supplies (the Jellalabad Commissariat being entirely exhausted) as well as to facilitate our subsequent departure, General Pollock had resolved to give Futteh Jung such indirect assistance as he was able. In this view he had recommended the Kuzzilbash and Douranee chiefs to tender their allegiance to him, and he had so far given him his countenance as to accompany him to the Balla Hissar in the morning, and even, as the Shah elect took his seat on the throne, to fire a royal salute, ostensibly for the remounting of the British colours on the citadel of Caubul, but of course, in the apprehension of the Afghans, as an honorary recognition by us of the new monarch's accession. I met Macgregor in my way to the camp, coming into the Balla Hissar with all the chiefs to make their salaam to Shah Futteh Jung as he is now called, and I now hear that Macgregor, who conducts all the political duties of General Pollock's camp, endeavoured, in a private audience which he had of his Majesty after the Durbar, to come to an explanation with him regarding our inability to support him with men, money, or arms, and the necessity, in consequence, of his relying entirely on his own resources. At first sight, it appears to me out of the question that Futteh Jung should be able to hold his own after our departure, and I see no great object even in making the attempt, but I cannot yet form a proper judgment."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[305] Shakespear, with characteristic gallantry, had volunteered for this service. The Kuzzilbashes had tendered their services to Pollock.

[306] "*September 14.*—As we find that the prisoners have certainly been carried off to Bameean, and the Kuzzilbashes are disposed to assist us in their recovery, while General Pollock is not likely to encounter further opposition on his march upon Caubul, it was suggested to the General to-day that he should despatch a brigade from Urghundeh, where the Bameean road strikes off, to form a support for our party, assisted by the Hazarehs, to fall back upon. He would not, however, listen to this proposal, declaring that he had only one object in view, that of marching his force to India *viâ* Caubul, without turning to the right or left; and that he considered, from the tenor of all Lord Ellenborough's despatches, the recovery of the prisoners to be a matter of indifference to government."

"*September 15.*—It was again to-day urged upon the General to send a brigade to Bameean, or in that direction, to assist in the rescue of the prisoners, but he seems to have made up his mind that he will not separate his force unless positively ordered to do so by higher authority."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[307] *Statement of Lieutenant Mayne—MS. Correspondence of Officers on the Staff of General Nott.*—The only apologetic explanation of this which has yet reached me is to be found in

the assertion, that Mayne's escort crowded on Nott's staff. Mayne posted his horsemen on the reverse flank, and it is his belief that they were not in the way of the staff.

[308] *MS. Correspondence.*

[309] They had been joined by their fellow-captives from Ghuznee. See note in the Appendix. It may be mentioned that John Conolly, the last of three ill-fated brothers, had died at Caubul on the 7th of August, deeply deplored by all who had served with him in Afghanistan.

[310] "*August 28.*—Every hamlet and fort we passed after daybreak poured forth its inhabitants to stare and wonder at the Feringhee prisoners. Not an uncivil word or gesture have I ever heard or seen in all our wanderings; but, on the contrary, many a sympathising word and look has been expressed, and especially by people who had previously any knowledge of us."

"*August 29.*—On passing the above fort (of Mustapha Khan, Kuzzilbash), where Saleh Mahomed and I were the first to arrive, I was most agreeably surprised by the owner bringing out two or three large trays full of excellent cakes and sweetmeats, and begging I would distribute them among the ladies and children—expressing at the same time the most unfeigned sympathy for all of us. To people in our unfortunate situation, a civil word even is well appreciated, but such a mark of kindness as this worthy Persian showed us, is not easily forgotten. His very look bespoke him a man of generous and kindly feeling. Our little fellow-prisoners—both boys and girls—had such a feast as they have not had for many a day. On arriving at our bivouac, another Kuzzilbash, who had a fort close by, hearing from Ahmed Khan that I wanted to buy a horse, brought me one for sale. As I was, however, afraid of running out of funds, I told him my fears. His reply was, 'I know you, and I will be satisfied with your note of hand. I am a relation of Naib Sheriff Khan.' This was a mark of confidence I could not have expected in such dangerous times, when my life is not worth twenty-four hours' purchase. I did not take the animal."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative. MS.*]

[311] "The commandant of our guard appears very civil and inclined to oblige us in every possible way—at any rate he is so to me. I was quite delighted to hear him talk in such enthusiastic terms of my deceased and lamented friend Hopkins (his former commanding officer). On asking him why he deserted with his company to Dost Mahomed in September, 1840, his reply was, that he was disgusted with the abusive language used towards him by the European non-commissioned officers; and I do not doubt that this had a great effect in alienating him from our service, although certainly not the immediate cause of his desertion. Saleh Mahomed is a good-humoured, jolly fellow, and without any prejudices against us Kaffirs. He is a soldier of fortune, cares little whom he serves, has been to Bokhara, Yarkund, and was at the taking of Kokund a few months ago. Rode with him the whole march, and was much amused at his traveller's tales. He is the greatest hero in his own estimation I ever came across. There is no end to his feats of valour, to which I am a ready listener, for two reasons: *firstly*, that I am amused; *secondly*, that he is flattered by my being so good a listener—by which I hope to turn him to good account."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

[312] The words of the bond may be thus translated:—

"We gentlemen, Pottinger, Johnson, Mackenzie, and Lawrence, in the presence of God and Jesus Christ, do enter into the following agreement with Saleh Mahomed Khan:—Whenever Saleh Mahomed Khan shall free us from the power of Mahomed Akbar Khan, we agree to make him (Saleh Mahomed Khan) a present of 20,000 rupees, and to pay him monthly the sum of 1000 rupees; likewise to obtain for him the command of a regiment in the government service; and we attest that this agreement is not false; and should we have spoken falsely then will we acknowledge ourselves to be false men, even in the presence of Kings.

"E. Pottinger, C. Mackenzie,
"H. Johnson, G. St. P. Lawrence."

—[*Translated from the counterpart of the Agreement given by Saleh Mahomed to Captain Johnson.*]

[313] The agreement is thus worded:—"We, whose signatures are hereunto attached, do bind ourselves to pay into the hands of Major Pottinger and Captains Lawrence and Johnson, on condition of our release being effected by an arrangement with Saleh Mahomed Khan, such a number of months' pay and allowances as they shall demand from us—such pay and

allowances to be rated by the scale at which we shall find ourselves entitled to draw from the date of our release from captivity. We, who are married, do further agree to pay the same amount for our wives and families as for ourselves. We, whose husbands are absent, do pledge ourselves in proportion to our husbands' allowances." The agreement is drawn up on half-a-sheet of foolscap paper, in the hand-writing of Captain Johnson. The names of all the prisoners (officers and ladies) are attached to it; the first being that of Brigadier Shelton. There is a codicil to it, signed by Lady Macnaghten and Mrs. Sturt, in these words:—"We, who are widows, do pledge ourselves to pay such sums as may be demanded from us by Major Pottinger and Captains Lawrence and Johnson in furtherance of the above scheme"—"In our prison at Bameean: 11th September, 1842."—[*MS. Records.*]

[314] The European soldiers at Bameean were so reduced by sickness as to be scarcely able to hold a musket. And they had lost all heart.

[315] "In order," says Captain Johnson, from whose Narrative these details are taken, "to show as imposing a front as possible, there was no rear rank."

[316] Seeing that Saleh's Mahomed's men wore our English belts and pouches, the soldiers of Nott's division were disposed to fall upon them. It was intimated to the commandant that it would be expedient to remove them out of the way of danger.

[317] "On passing the corner of the street where I formerly lived, I could not forego the desire of looking on the ruins of a house in which I had passed a period of two years of happiness. Although I had expected to see the whole place unroofed, I was not prepared for such a scene of desolation. Not one brick was left standing on another in either my house or that of Sir Alexander Burnes (the adjoining one). They were nothing but a heap of dirt, covering the mouldering remains of our unfortunate people. A spot was pointed out to me in Sir Alexander's garden as that in which his body had been interred."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

[318] "*September 19.*—Our Sepoys and camp-followers, taking their cue, I fancy, from their officers, are very unruly, and commit extensive depredations on the lands and villages near our camp; and as the property thus plundered chiefly belongs to the Kuzzilbash chiefs, General Pollock, who relies mainly on these people for the consolidation of the new government, is subject to great embarrassment. I have a sort of misgiving that Caubul will, after all, be destroyed. In the present state of feeling, any accidental quarrel would lead to a general rush upon the town, and the Sepoys once there, massacre and conflagration would assuredly follow. General Pollock, by proclamations of encouragement, has been endeavouring to persuade the Caubullees to return to their houses and re-open their shops; but, after all that has happened, it is difficult to persuade the townspeople that we do not aim at retribution, and the proceedings about our camp at Char Deh are anything but calculated to allay their suspicions; the city continues, therefore, more than half closed, and supplies are procurable with difficulty."

"*September 20.*—Our men have been plundering to-day as usual about the camp, and in some scuffle which took place at Deh Afshur, four of the Kuzzilbashes, with Khassim Khan, a chief, were slain by the Sepoys."

"*September 21.*—The fort of Mahomed Meerza, one of our worst enemies, was given up to plunder, and we did not even respect the property at Aliabad, which belongs to Gholam Mahomed Khan, the lately appointed minister.... The townspeople had returned in small numbers to the town, and had re-opened their shops; but owing to the affair at Deh Afshur, I believe, a panic seized the people, and every one fled, believing that orders had been issued for a general massacre."

"*September 22.*—The depredations of the Sepoys and followers from this camp continue, notwithstanding all the efforts that are made to repress them. The Kuzzilbashes cannot help believing that we encourage these excesses, and in consequence they are not half satisfied of General Pollock's sincerity."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[319] The General forwarded a translation of the letter to Nott, who sent it back with his comments. The charges and the denials appear in the Appendix as they were forwarded to Pollock's camp.

[320] He asked Mayne, on the 17th, when that officer appeared in his

camp, as mentioned at page 347, how many days' supplies General Pollock had with him? and when Mayne replied that he believed the General had about a week's supplies for his troops, "What business, then," asked Nott, "has General Pollock up at Caubul with only a week's supplies?" Mayne, of course, made no answer.

[321] A considerable body of Kuzzilbashes, under the command of Shah-zadah Shahpoor and Khan Shereen Khan, the whole in charge of Captain Colin Mackenzie, had accompanied M'Caskill's force, and co-operated with much effect, especially in rescuing a number of sepoys and camp-followers of Elphinstone's force from slavery. General Pollock had appointed Captain Mackenzie to this important duty in consequence of Lord Ellenborough's request that he would select that officer or John Conolly, if within his reach, for any political mission that might be called for, even to the important duty of accompanying General Nott's force, if it were expedient for that officer to return by a different route from Pollock's. On reaching Hindostan, however, Mackenzie met with the same neglect and injustice as the other "children of another Government."

[322] See Papers in the Appendix.

[323] *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*

[324] "On the 9th our engineers set to work to blow up and destroy the *Char Chutta*. The cry went forth that Caubul was given up to plunder. Both camps rushed into the city, and the consequence has been the almost total destruction of all parts of the town, except the Gholam-Khana quarter and the Balla Hissar.... Numbers of people (about 4000 or 5000) had returned to Caubul, relying on our promises of protection—rendered confident by the comparative immunity they had enjoyed during the early part of our sojourn here, and by the appearance, ostentatiously put forth, of an Afghan Government. They had many of them re-opened their shops. These people have been now reduced to utter ruin. Their goods have been plundered, and their houses burnt over their heads. The Hindoos in particular, whose numbers amount to some 500 families, have lost everything they possess, and they will have to beg their way to India in rear of our columns. The Chundarwal has had a narrow escape. Safeguards have been placed at the different gates; but I doubt not if our parties of plunderers would not have forced an entrance had not the Gholam Khana stood to their arms, and showed and expressed a determination to defend their property to the last."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[325] Captain G. St. P. Lawrence, Sir W. Macnaghten's Military Secretary, who had been present at his murder, and had subsequently shared the perils of the captivity.

[326] "Futteh Jung had urged his people to set fire to the palace as he came out, observing that Shahpoor's rule would be a brief one, and that his own feelings revolted at the idea of the Suddozye seraglio falling to the lot of either Mahomed Akbar or the Ghilzyes. Some attempts were in consequence made at incendiarism, but the flames did not spread."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[327] They seem to have been admitted by Pollock, but to have been expelled by Nott. "General Pollock's camp," wrote Rawlinson in his journal, "is crowded with hangers-on, imperfectly provided with carriage or supplies, and he necessarily experiences much inconvenience in consequence. General Nott has positively refused to permit his force to be encumbered in the same way, and yesterday evening a general clearance of our camp took place, preparatory to the march. About 500 men were expelled from the Bazaar of the 16th Regiment alone, where they had taken refuge. Most of these people were the destitute Hindoos of Caubul and Ghuznee. They had hoped to have found means of returning to Hindostan with our column; but have been now obliged to go back to Caubul and bide their fate among the Afghans."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[328] Pollock took forty-four guns and a large quantity of ordnance stores; but not the least of his trophies were a large number of miserable mutilated natives of India, crippled by wounds or by the frost, who had escaped with their lives from the great wreck of Elphinstone's army. Pollock now provided them with carriage, appointed two officers to the charge of them, and conveyed them to Hindostan.

[329] Major Rawlinson says: "It is whispered that the recognition of Shahpoor on the part of the Gholam-Khana has been a mere *ruse*

to save the Balla Hissar, and that the chiefs hope to make use of this successful manœuvre to propitiate Mahomed Akbar. The Kuzzilbash, however, if they do meditate anything of this sort, will assuredly overreach themselves, for if any *bonâ fide* Afghan Government succeeds in establishing itself at Caubul, the Gholam-Khana, after what has happened, will certainly be extirpated, root and branch."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[330] The late Colonel Sutherland. "It is, indeed," he wrote, "a comfort to be able to look a native in the face again with confidence; for although there was in reality no change that one could see in their bearing towards us in this region, yet one could not help feeling that we had fallen from our high position; and they would have felt this too, and in the end, perhaps, shown that they did, had not the noble resolution been taken of moving forward to retrieve our tarnished reputation. Now all is right. How easily achieved! And we stand on surer ground now in all quarters than we ever did at any former period of our Indian history."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[331] See letter, *ante*, page 284, *note*.

[332] "*October 1.*—The Governor-General brought me some papers to consult me upon. Among others, a proclamation announcing that we retire from Afghanistan, leaving to the Afghans the choice of their sovereign. It was on this day, four years ago, that Lord Auckland issued the proclamation announcing the grounds of his interference; and on the same day, *in the same room*, Lord Ellenborough signed his notification of altered intentions, in a clear, short, decided paper, which I much approve. He could not avoid avowing some of his predecessor's military errors; but he has not touched at any length on the political, further than that we lost our name and an army by neglect on the part of our agents."—[*Sir Jasper Nicholls's MS. Journal.*]

[333] Lord Ellenborough's explanations on this subject are to be found in the following letter to General Pollock, which calls for no comment:

"Simlah, Oct. 12, 1842.

"GENERAL,—I enclose for your information a copy of a proclamation, signed by me here on the 1st of this month, but withheld from immediate publication, with the view to the having previously made and circulated to the Native Courts, and amongst the natives generally, a correct translation which might be the official document in the native language, and prevent any misrepresentation, or misapprehension of the intentions of the government. I further wished not to make known here the intention of withdrawing the army, until I knew that you had actually the prisoners in your hands, and had made arrangements for leaving Caubul. Your letter received here on the 5th removed every ground for withholding the publication of the proclamation, had the translation been prepared; but in consequence of the absence of Mr. Clerk on duty in the plains, no such translation had been made as I could fully rely upon.

"In the mean time, by a combination of accidents, and some irregularity in the transaction of business in the Secretary's office, the printed copies of the proclamation were, without my knowledge, or that of the Secretary himself, transmitted to the presidencies and the political officers generally. There is no object in your publishing the proclamation in your camp. Mr. Clerk returned last night, and the translation will hardly be ready for transmission before to-morrow.

"I have, &c.

"ELLENBOROUGH."

—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[334] "*October 5.*—His Lordship sent me the draft of his letter to the Hindoo chiefs, relating to the gates of the Somnauth temple; and invited remarks on it, which I freely gave; and he took them in good part, adopting some of them."—[*Sir Jasper Nicholls's MS. Journal.*]

[335] The Governor-General, when he first drafted the proclamation, only knew that Nott had reached Caubul with the gates. He may have thought it expedient to withhold the issue of it, lest by some untoward accident the gates might be lost on their journey through the passes of Afghanistan.

[336] We have no word very fitly to represent the character of the affair. The French would have called it a *bêtise*. It was a *bêtise* of the first magnitude.

[337] *Memorandum, by Captain Peter Nicolson, of a Conversation with Dost Mahomed Khan: February 13, 1842. MS. Records.*

[338] He was candid enough, too, at one time, to acknowledge that, after the expulsion of the British from Caubul, the only chance of establishing a settled government was through the agency of Shah Soojah. "The Ameer concluded," says Captain Nicolson, in the memorandum cited above, "by using an expression exactly the same as one Shah Soojah uses in his letter to Captain Macgregor." He said: "The people cannot now do without the King, for there is no one else who could carry on the government."—[*MS. Records.*]

[339] Mr. Clerk was despatched to Lahore with an invitation from the Governor-General; and Shere Singh was inclined to accept it, but he was overruled in Durbar. The Crown Prince, Pertab Singh, and Dhyan Singh, the minister, were sent to represent the Maharajah at for Governor-General's Court.

[340] A smart skirmish between Nott's division and the enemy, on the Huft-Kotul, may, perhaps, be considered as an exception. Colonel Stacy describes it as "a severe affair;" and Nott, who was not inclined to write lengthy despatches, or to exaggerate the importance of his engagements, thought it worthy of a brief despatch. In *Colonel Stacy's Narrative* and *Captain Neill's Recollections of Service*, the reader will find ample details of all the operations of the rear division. *Lieutenant Greenwood's Narrative* may also be consulted for some particulars of the movements of M'Caskill's division.

[341] Lieut. Christie, of the Artillery; and Ensign Nicholson, of the 30th Native Infantry.

[342] "It was a night attack of some plunderers to obtain baggage. There appears to have been sad confusion. The two officers were about that time killed. But the guns were not, I believe, even attempted to be carried off; otherwise we certainly never should have seen anything of them again, whereas, the next day, the mountain howitzer and carriage were found in *statu quo,* and the carriage of the three-pounder; and were brought in. I dare say the three-pounder was not far. It in all probability upset, and parted from the carriage; but if an enemy (so usually termed) had made the attack, it is very improbable that either guns or carriage would have been left, for a very few men could carry gun, carriage, and all."—[*MS. Correspondence of General Pollock: Camp near Ali-Musjid, Nov. 1, 1842.*] Of this unfortunate business, another officer writes: "Night overtook our unfortunate 3rd Brigade. The enemy, emboldened by the darkness, came down upon them in strength. Some of our men were *cut off in the column*. Numbers of them were hit by stones, which were flying in all directions. The confusion must have been great. The Irregular Cavalry rode right over the infantry, knocking down several of the officers. Christie and his two mountain-guns were lost sight of in the dark, and are lost, himself killed. Young Nicholson, of the 30th, is killed. As to the number of men killed, nothing is yet known; but the whole of the Gholundauz that were with Christie are missing."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

[343] Pollock, determined to give the robber tribes as little opportunity as possible of plundering his baggage, ordered that every camel that could not come on should be shot, and that his load, if it could not be brought on, should be immediately burnt.

[344] One more glimpse at Afghan politics from Major Rawlinson's interesting journal, may be afforded before we finally close it: "A messenger arrived to-day from Caubul with letters from the Kuzzilbash party, inviting the Nizam-ood-Dowlah to return, as Gholam Mahomed Khan had already given offence by endeavouring to re-establish an exclusive Douranee influence round the puppet King. At present, Khan Shereen is, as far as real power is concerned, paramount, and he seems determined to carry things with a high hand, having given out that if Shapoor lends himself to Douranee intrigue he will force him to abdicate in favour of another Prince. A strong Kuzzilbash detachment has at the same time been sent to Ghuznee under Mahomed Hussein Khan, to occupy that place, and in conjunction with the Hazarehs to hold in check any possible movement of Ghilzyes or Douranees from the westward. Prince Hyder, with another party of the Gholam Khana, has gone to Bameean, and expects to secure the passes during the winter against the return of the Barukzyes. Mahomed Akbar's force, which remained for some time at Khanjan, is said to have completely dispersed, the Sirdar himself, with Ameen-oollah, having gone to Tash Noorghan, and the men having all returned to their homes at Caubul. Newab Zemaun Khan, Jubbar Khan, Oosman Khan, and Meer Hadjee, are said to be at Khooloom. The people of Caubul have nearly all returned to the city, and are

busy re-opening their houses against the winter. Many of the Kohistan chiefs, Gool Mahomed and Khoda Buksh, Ghilzyes, have also paid their respects to Shahpoor, and Ameen-oollah was expected shortly to return. Mahomed Akbar either really fears for his personal safety, now that a party with which accommodation is impossible has come into power, or he thinks it better policy to allow dissension to fructify in the capital before he makes his reappearance on the scene. The Douranees are in a large minority at Caubul, and must necessarily give way before the Gholam Khana, if Khan Shereen acts with any energy. I look to Candahar as their natural and necessary retreat, and no doubt at that place Suddozye royalty, supported by their influence, will continue to glimmer on, until Persia turns her attention to her eastern frontier, and pushes forward the Barukzye Sirdars to play a game for her. The Kuzzilbashes at the same time, cannot expect to hold their ground at Caubul for any length of time."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

[345] Lord Ellenborough had determined to bestow exclusive honours upon Sale's brigade; but Sir Jasper Nicolls desired to receive both Pollock and Nott with the same military distinctions. "I wished," he wrote in his journal, "to have one of the reserve divisions to receive each of the divisions as it came, but he (Lord Ellenborough) did not desire that the honours paid to the garrison should be extended to any other part of the army. This I regret, for they have all seen hard work, great exposure, and some arduous days of service."—[*Sir Jasper Nicolls's MS. Journal.*]

[346] The rejoicings, in the opinions of many, were very much marred by the prejudiced exclusiveness of the Governor-General, who seems to have set his face very strenuously against the political officers, no matter what their services. With all his admiration of the illustrious garrison, Lord Ellenborough slighted Macgregor, who was its very life and soul; and with all his appreciation of gallantry, he seemed unable to appreciate the services of Eldred Pottinger.

[347] I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I have neither censured nor ridiculed the assembling of the army of reserve at Ferozepore. I believe it to have been a very politic movement.

[348] Pollock and Nott received most deservedly the distinction of the Grand Cross of the Bath; and Lord Ellenborough, who was created an Earl, formally invested them at Agra, and delivered some flowery speeches upon the occasion. It may be mentioned here that the gates of Somnauth, which had been brought up from Ferozepore on a triumphal car, were deposited in the magazine of Agra.

[349] In confirming the acquittal of Colonel Palmer, Sir Jasper Nicolls wrote that "the circumstances under which Colonel Palmer surrendered Ghuznee to the Afghans, were such as he could neither control, alter, nor alleviate."

[350] And afterwards became again pensioners at Loodhianah, where several members of the family have died since the original edition of this work was published.

[351] It has now, however (1858), become a fact of some historical importance. The Captain Havelock to whom allusion is here made, is the late Sir Henry Havelock of Lucknow.

[352] *MS. Correspondence.*

[353] *MS. Correspondence.*

[354] *MS. Records.*

[355] *MS. Records.*

[356] Alluding to his Majesty's dismissing the troops at Sir William Macnaghten's request from the Balla Hissar.

[357] Mahomed Akbar.

[358] *MS. Correspondence.*

[359] *MS. Correspondence.*

[360] H.M. 1st Cavalry:—captain, 1; lieutenant, 1; resaldars, 2; rescudars, 2; naibs, 4; duffadars, 20; sowars, 220; trumpeters, 2; nishan burdurs, 5; and about 150 of the 2nd Jan Baz.

[361] *MS. Records.*

[362] Extract letter from the Governor-General to the Secret Committee, No 26, dated 6th April, 1843.

Letter from Major-General M'Caskill to Military Secretary to Government, 2nd April, 1843.

Letter to Adjutant-General Lumley, 2nd April, 1843, with enclosure.

Major-General Pollock to Lord Ellenborough, 2nd April, 1843.

Major-General Pollock to Lord Ellenborough, 16th April, 1843.

Major-General Nott to Military Secretary to Government of India, 4th April, 1843.

Major-General Nott to Adjutant-General Lumley, 4th April, 1843.

[363] Sir W. Nott's letter is to be found in Captain M'Neill's narrative, in the *Quarterly Review* (July, 1845), and elsewhere.

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