

# British Political Missions To Sind

A narrative of negotiations from 1799 to 1843  
leading up to the state's annexation

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TO THE MEMORY OF  
MY PARENTS

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## Preface

Strategically, Sind became important to the British rulers towards the closing years of the eighteenth century when Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt and openly talked of his ambition to lead his armies to India across Asia Minor. Under the stress of the French threat combined with the Afghan danger to their dominion from the northwest, the British Government in India sent the first political mission headed by Nathan Crow to Sind in 1799 to secure the goodwill of the Sind rulers. Later, from 1830 onward it was the fear of Russia invading India from the northwest which exercised the minds of British authorities. Thus, as part of their scheme to ensure the safety of their Indian empire from the northwest, the British Government sent a series of political missions to Sind from the beginning of the 19th century to 1843, the object of which was to bring this frontier state steadily within their sphere of influence.

These missions mark a distinct phase in the history of Sind. It is possible to discern through a study of these missions—the factors that motivated them, instructions issued to the envoys, the manner in which they conducted their negotiations, and the detailed data they collected on the state of the country—how gradually Sind was moving towards its final subjugation. With each mission the sheltering walls of isolation around Sind were slowly falling away. A study of these missions also brings into focus the role that Sind played in the shaping of the north-west defence policy of the British Government.

The materials consulted on this subject have been listed in the Bibliography. Besides secondary works and contemporary accounts of travellers and envoys and other published materials, I have drawn mostly on unpublished records available in the record offices. The original documents containing government despatches, accounts of envoys' proceedings, minutes recorded



by Governor-Generals, secret letters to Court etc., were available in the National Archives of India (New Delhi), the Secretariat Record Office of Bombay and the Sind Commissioner's Office at Karachi. For permission to consult these materials I am thankful to the Government of India, the Bombay Government and the Sind Commissioner's Office, Karachi.

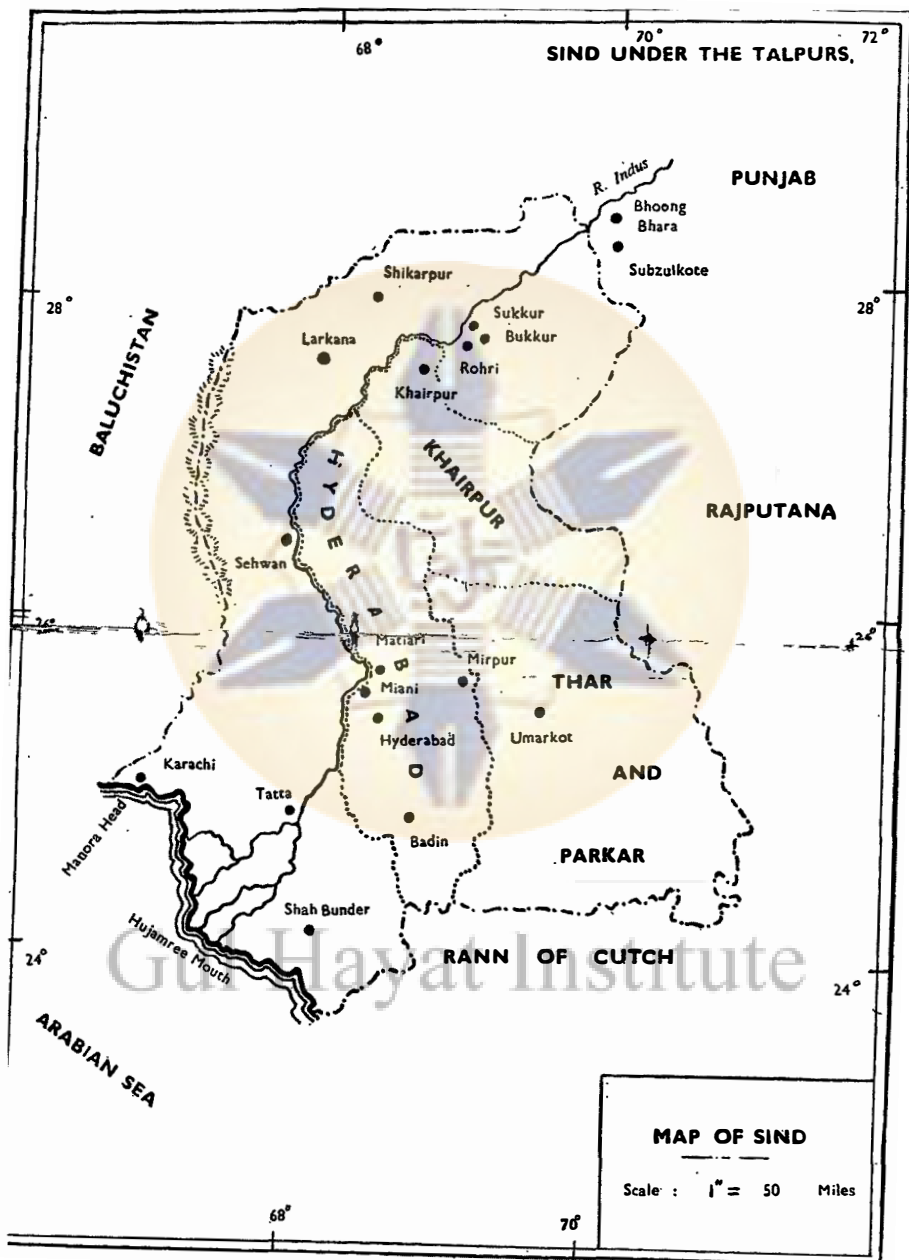
I remember with deep gratitude the late Dr. Adrian Duarte, Principal of the Government College, Hyderabad (Sind) for helping me to choose this subject and guiding me in my research. I am indebted to Professor G. M. Moraes for his help and suggestions in the preparation of this book. My thanks are due to Mr. P. L. Madan, Assistant Archivist in the National Archives of India, who has done the maps. I am especially grateful to Dhan Keswani for the invaluable help and encouragement I have received from her all along in this work. And I would like to express my thanks to Pushpa Rege for reading the typescript and making useful suggestions.

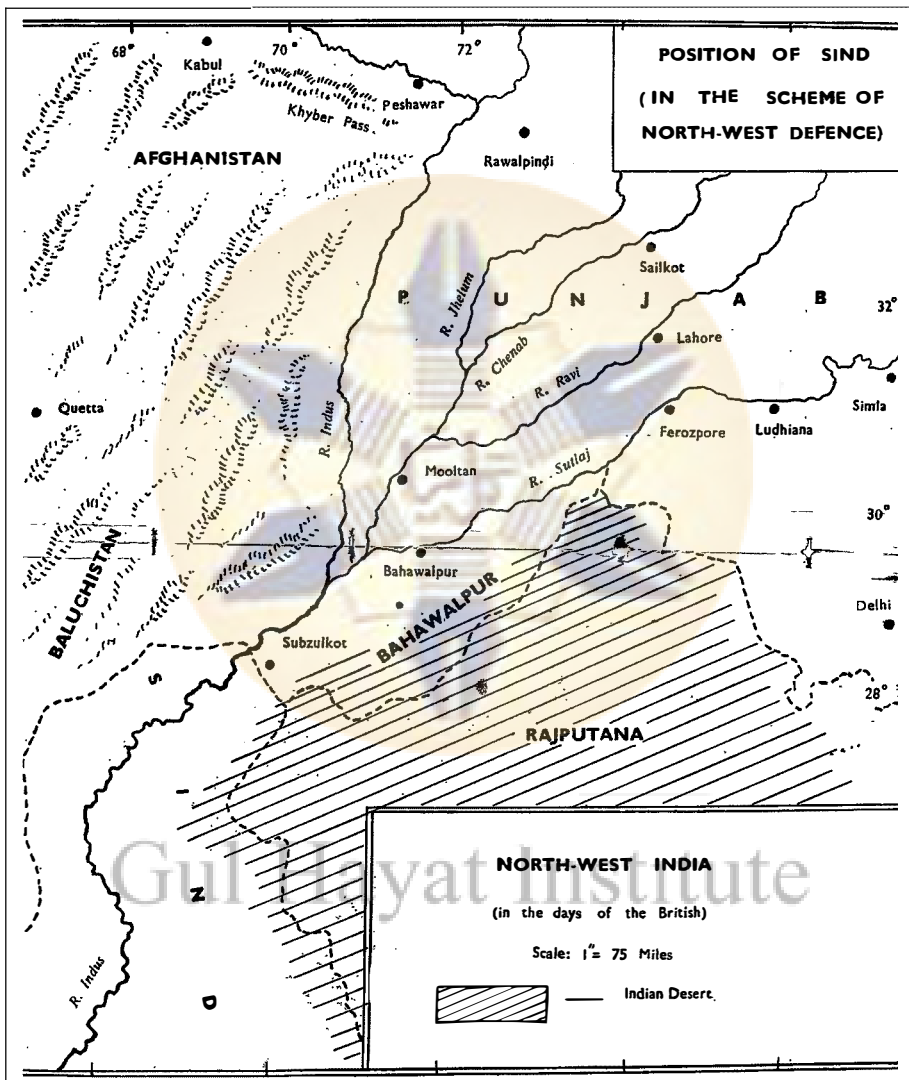
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# 1

## Introduction

The expansion of British dominion in India in the eighteenth century was dictated mainly by considerations of commerce and finance. The policies of the East India Company throughout this period were governed by the principle enunciated in the famous resolution of 1689, announcing "in unmistakable terms the determination of the Company to guard their commercial supremacy on the basis of their territorial sovereignty".<sup>1</sup> Pursuing this objective relentlessly the British East India Company continued to extend its frontiers until, at the turn of the century, it had acquired control over most of India and become a major political power in the sub-continent.

In the nineteenth century the process of expansion was motivated essentially by the need to protect this vast dominion whose security was threatened in the northwest, first by France and later by Russia. To guard against a possible invasion from these powers, the British Government in India initiated a policy of missions that went to all the states situated in the northwest for the purpose of securing their friendship and cooperation. Sind and Punjab constituted two important frontier states within the sub-continent which still retained their independence and which now assumed strategic significance. It was apparent to the British authorities that for the security of their eastern empire it was necessary to cultivate good relations with these states.

Accordingly, in 1799 a mission headed by Nathan Crow was sent to Sind, charged with political objectives though outwardly it professed commercial ends. From that time to 1843 when Sind was annexed, the British Government sent a series of such political missions, the object of which was to bring the state more and more within the British sphere of influence in order to ensure the safety of their Indian frontier in the northwest. These missions mark a distinct shift in British policy towards Sind, for up to 1799 this state had attracted but little notice. Indeed it is possible through

a study of these missions—the circumstances that motivated them, instructions issued to the envoys, how they conducted their negotiations and so on—to follow, as it were, the compulsions of an expansionist policy. Every envoy who came to Sind applied himself diligently to collecting detailed information on Sind. Their reports served to break down the walls of isolation that had so far sheltered this state and kept it out of the all-India picture. Once this happened and Sind was exposed to the same pressures of territorial expansion as the rest of India, its final destiny was only a matter of time.

Sind had first attracted the Company's attention in the seventeenth century. In 1615 Sir Thomas Roe came to India to explore trade prospects and his report on Sind and the commercial possibilities of 'the River of Syndu' (Indus) was very favourable. He petitioned the Emperor Jahangir for the grant of trade facilities in Sind<sup>3</sup> which, since its subjugation by Akbar in 1592, had formed a part of the Mughal empire. But he did not immediately succeed, for the Portuguese who were already trading with Tatta<sup>3</sup> were firmly entrenched and their influence with the Mughal authorities sufficed to defeat the English attempt to obtain a footing in this area. In 1623, however, the English traders were permitted by the Surat authorities to carry on free trade in Sind, though it was not until 1635 that the Company authorities despatched an English ship *The Discovery* which, sailing upwards, anchored off Lahori bunder (the port of Tatta) in November 1635. On 3 December the party landed at Lahori bunder at midnight and was welcomed by the local officials.<sup>4</sup> After five days the party left for Tatta where it reached on 10 December. For two months William Fremlin and John Spiller, the pioneers of the party, were busy exploring trade possibilities. Indigo, saltpetre and opium offered a good field and the Directors of the East India Company, impressed by the samples sent by the broker along with a favourable report from Fremlin, authorized the Surat factors, in a despatch dated 16 March 1638, to establish a factory in Sind, "for the goods received from thence this shipping are the flower of the whole parcell".<sup>5</sup> In 1640 John Spiller came out to Sind as chief factor and established a factory at Tatta with its outpost at Lahori bunder.

The factory prospered but in a modest way. Spiller's reports to his masters recorded an alternate rise and decline in trade transac-

tions. The unrest that accompanied the succession of Aurangzeb to the Mughal throne and the terrible famine that ravaged northern India in 1658 had serious repercussions on trade. In April 1660 Scrivener, the Company's factor at Tatta, received orders from Surat to stop buying cotton goods in Sind.<sup>6</sup> In Sind itself conditions were far from stable, for it was about this time that the Daudpotra and Kalhora families began to contend for supremacy. As a result conditions in the province continued to deteriorate. In June 1660 the factors at Tatta were instructed to prepare to withdraw at short notice.<sup>7</sup> After that nothing is heard of the factory, and so it may be concluded that about that time the factory in Sind was finally closed down.

Nearly a hundred years were to pass before the East India Company renewed its efforts for a second commercial venture in the state. During this period the Kalhoras had established themselves as the rulers though they had been conquered twice by foreign invaders, Nadir Shah from Persia in 1739 and Ahmad Shah Durani from Afghanistan in 1747. Each of these conquerors obliged them to pay tribute in recognition of his sovereignty; otherwise the rulers were left entirely independent in the exercise of their authority.

The Kalhoras did much to normalise conditions of life. They undertook agrarian reforms, dug canals and created conditions conducive to trade. Thus it was in 1758 when Gulam Shah Kalhora was the ruler that the East India Company made its second bid to enter the field of Sindhian commerce.<sup>8</sup> Two reasons induced the Company to do so : (a) a chance of obtaining a monopoly in saltpetre, and (b) a demand for woollen goods among the people to the northwest. On 22 September 1758 Gulam Shah granted a *parwana* to Mr. Sumption, agent of the Company, to establish a factory in his dominions, with many trade concessions and immunities from taxation. The English traders were to pay one and a half per cent of customs duty on the market price of their export and only one-half of customs duty paid by local merchants on their import. The English were to carry on their trade unmolested; their gardens were guaranteed protection and their personal luggage exempted from search. If Mr. Sumption wished to buy or build a house at the port or at Tatta, he was to be rendered every possible assistance.<sup>9</sup>



A factory was accordingly built at Tatta and commerce was carried on in the export of saltpetre and import of woollens. Three years later Mr. Sumption was replaced by Mr. Erskine who obtained another royal *parwana* from the same ruler, granting further concessions and excluding all Europeans, except the English, from trading in Sind. Concessions and immunities guaranteed under the first *parwana* were confirmed.<sup>10</sup>

This British connection with Sind lasted only till 1775, for in 1772 Gulam Shah Kalhora died and was succeeded by his son Sarafraz Khan, a weak incompetent ruler under whom a general wave of disorder spread through the land. Nor was the new ruler favourably inclined towards the British as his father had been. He imposed 50 per cent duty on woollens sold by the English to the Afghan king.<sup>11</sup> Then, about 1773, a bitter power struggle began between the Kalhora ruling family and the Talpurs, a Baluchi tribe which had originally migrated to Sind from the hilly regions of Baluchistan at the invitation of the first Kalhora ruler. All these changes had an unsettling effect on the English trade and so it was finally decided in November 1775 to withdraw the factory.

The internal strife lasted for nearly a decade. It was not before 1783 that the Talpurs finally overthrew the Kalhoras and their leader Mir Fateh Ali Khan established himself as the *Rais*<sup>12</sup> of Sind. As the state was formally under the suzerainty of the Afghan kings since 1747, the new Sindhi ruler secured a *firman* from Shah Zaman of Kabul confirming him in his rights. Thereafter, the Talpurs branched off to establish their authority at three different places.<sup>13</sup> Mir Fateh Ali Khan established himself at Hyderabad in Lower Sind, associating also his three younger brothers in the government. This unique arrangement earned them the appellation '*Char Yar*' or four friends. Mir Sohrab Khan, nephew of Fateh Ali Khan, settled with his adherents at Rohri in Upper Sind, while his son Mir Tharo moved eastward to Shah Bunder with his followers. Each of them occupied the adjacent territory as his own and in time declared himself independent of the head of the house, Mir Fateh Ali Khan. The Talpurs thus came to be divided into three branches—the Hyderabad family, descended from Fateh Ali Khan, ruling over Central and Lower Sind; the Sohrabani house, descendants of Mir Sohrab, ruling in Upper Sind with its capital



at Khairpur; and the Mirpur or Manikani house descended from Mir Tharo, ruling at Mirpur in the eastern part of Sind. It was during the rule of the Talpurs that the British sought to revive their connection with this state, which was eventually to lead to its conquest.

Under the Talpurs the Baluchis became a powerful and privileged class, claiming a place in the government both as their supporters and as kinsmen. To them the Amirs gave away lands in *jaghirs* and *inams*,<sup>14</sup> by virtue of which these chieftains held "immediate control and influence over their retainers whom they fed and maintained and who obeyed them alone". Occasionally they presented themselves at court to pay respect to the rulers as a matter of etiquette or when summoned. Thus it happened that under a feudal structure of this kind, the army of the Amirs was composed of a motley of rude, inefficient members, undrilled and untrained in the arts of war. In times of emergency the Amirs called on their chieftains to provide levies, who assembled together in a haphazard fashion from all corners of the state.

This Baluchi hegemony had unfortunate effects on other sections of the population who were engaged in agriculture and trade and who formed the backbone of Sind's economy. Relegated to the background they gradually lost their spirit of independence and enterprise. Administration was inefficient and vast tracts of land were covered with jungle in which the Amirs maintained their *shikargahs* (game preserves), the only thing in which they took great interest. Constant feuds among the chieftains, their arrogance and arbitrary methods, led to oppression and a consequent sense of dissatisfaction among the common people.

Such in brief were the conditions prevailing in the state when the Crow mission was sent in 1799 to counter possible danger from the northwest. The mission marked the opening of a new phase in Anglo-Sind relations.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Ilbert, *The Government of India*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>2</sup> Foster, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe*, 1615-1619, Vol. I, p. xx and p. 152.

<sup>3</sup> Tatta, situated at the apex of the delta of the Indus, was then the em-

- porium of the province and at the height of its glory with Lahori bunder or Larribunder as its port. Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 72
- <sup>4</sup> Foster, *English Factories in India*, 1634-1636, p. xvi
- <sup>5</sup> Foster, *The English Factories in India*, 1637-1641, p. 57
- <sup>6</sup> Foster, *The English Factories in India*, 1655-1660, p. 311
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313
- <sup>8</sup> Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol. VII, p. 324
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 337-338
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 341-343. Also see Postans, *Personal Observations on Sindh*, pp. 283-286
- <sup>11</sup> National Archives of India (hereinafter NAI), Political Consultation 26 September 1799, No. 11. Resident's letter dated Tatta, 28 May 1775
- <sup>12</sup> 'Rais' is a title applied to the senior head of the government
- <sup>13</sup> Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 324
- <sup>14</sup> 'Jaghir' is land given away on tenure; 'inam' is land given away as a reward for services rendered. Jaghir may be claimed back or confiscated on an evidence of bad behaviour, but land given as inam cannot be taken back. It is land given away for good. For an account of the Kalhora-Talpur contest for power and the form of government of the Talpurs, see Postans, *Personal Observations on Sindh*, Chapter XI.

## Crow Mission to Sind

Towards the closing years of the eighteenth century the British Government in India viewed with growing concern Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt and his openly professed ambition to lead his army to India across Asia Minor. To this end the French general was believed to be intriguing with Tipu Sultan of Mysore. About the same time the Afghan king Shah Zaman, grandson of the indomitable Ahmad Shah Durani who had crossed the Indus twenty-seven times into India, was also thought to be entertaining similar designs. This ruler, endowed with something of his grandfather's zeal for conquest, had increased his dominions which, at the height of his power, extended from the mouths of the Indus to the parallel of Kashmir, and from the boundaries of the Sikhs, at some distance eastward of the great river Attock, to the vicinity of the Persian Terschish<sup>1</sup> including the territories of Kabul, Kandahar, Peshawar, Ghazni, Gaur, Khorassan and Kashmir. Already in 1796 he had ventured towards India, reaching as far as Lahore, when in 1797 he had abruptly to turn back homeward to put down his brother who had incited disturbance in his dominions.<sup>2</sup> This invasion had greatly perturbed the British authorities at Calcutta.

Now, in 1798, rumours were again afloat about the Afghan danger, possibly in cooperation with the French. Sind, acknowledging Afghan suzerainty since 1747, seemed to offer the most likely invasion route to the invaders in the northwest. Guarding the northwest frontier of India thus became a matter of prime necessity.

Lord Wellesley was the Governor-General of India at this time. Hoping to divert the Afghan ruler's attention from the sub-continent he despatched a mission to Persia under Sir John Malcolm, while within the country he sought to raise as many enemies to the Shah as he could.<sup>3</sup> In such a scheme of things Sind occupied a strategic position where it was considered necessary to

obtain a footing that would enable the British to probe into the manoeuvres of the Afghans and the French. Therefore the Governor-General tried through the Bombay Government to renew their old contact with Sind "not so much with a view to commercial as to political advantages".<sup>4</sup>

To explore the ground for opening negotiations with the Sind rulers, the Bombay Government deputed Aga Abul Hasan, a merchant of Bushire. He carried with him three letters addressed by the Bombay Governor to the Amirs, recalling the old commercial ties between the two Governments and expressing a desire for re-establishing those ties again if possible.<sup>5</sup> There was a secret clause added in the letter addressed to the Aga himself, a clause that he was not to disclose except under unavoidable circumstances. This clause was a stipulation promising British military assistance to the Amirs, should they decide to oppose the Shah's advance by force of arms.<sup>6</sup>

The Aga met with conspicuous success in his mission. At his interview with the Hyderabad rulers on 2 March 1799, his persuasive arguments so impressed them that they agreed to revive the old venture on exactly the same terms as had obtained earlier, and issued three *parwanas* that gave back to the English the factory house with all its apparatus, four bighas of land for a garden free of all duties on trees, and finally fixed a list of duties on merchandise at the rates that had formerly obtained.<sup>7</sup> Mir Fateh Ali Khan wrote back to the Bombay Governor inviting him to depute an agent to Sind to reopen the old establishment.<sup>8</sup>

Forwarding the *parwanas* to the Governor, the Aga particularly stressed the commercial nature of the enterprise contemplated. "It is for the sake of trade and the advantages the country may derive from it, that the ruling authority in Sind has assented to the English gentleman residing here," he wrote, "therefore the gentleman to come must bring with him articles of trade, such as sugarcandy, black pepper, articles of chinaware; English steel and different kinds of cloth." The goods were to be landed at "Kurachee bunder on the sea-side, through which all the merchandise for Kabul and Kandahar finds vent, and which is, indeed, a place of immense trade".<sup>9</sup>

Mr. Nathan Crow of the Bombay Civil Service was selected for this assignment. His instructions from the Government underlined

two objectives, commercial and political.<sup>10</sup> The first was to be his principal care and the second his real but guarded aim. In pursuing the first objective he was simply to concern himself with the running of the factory in order to create an immediate advantage to the Company. In pursuing the second, he was required (a) "to watch the occurrences of the court and country of Zemaun Shah and particularly any intrigues of the French"; (b) he was to make an attempt to promote some intercourse of friendship or convenience with the Shah; (c) he was to suggest means of diverting the Shah's hostility from India, though on this point it was clearly enjoined upon him not to enter into any engagement with the Shah that might be prejudicial to the friendly relations that the Government was trying to establish with Persia.<sup>11</sup> The amicable connection with the Afghan ruler was to be on strictly commercial lines, namely, to promote the sale of English broad-cloth and other staples of the British Isles in the countries of Kabul and Kandahar. Lastly, Crow was directed to put a stop to the underground correspondence that the Shah was said to be carrying on with Tipu Sultan.<sup>12</sup> In the concluding part of the despatch the agent was told that, should all his attempts with the Shah fail to have any effect, he was "to create as many enemies to him as possible in that vicinity. . . . by offering to those parties such aid as they may require of us in Military Stores. . . . provided that we stand not thereby committed into any aid either by the active service of our troops in so remote a quarter or by payment of a subsidy".<sup>13</sup> It is clear from these instructions that the British Government at this time was not prepared to go to the extreme measure of undertaking a war beyond its frontiers.

The Drake under Captain Margotty was placed at the disposal of the agent to convey him and his party to Karachi where they arrived on 26 May 1799.<sup>14</sup> In his letter to the Government, Crow gives an interesting account of the cool reception he received from the rulers from the moment he touched the Sind territories. He had expected some cordiality of salute to greet him on his arrival because it had always been a custom with the former rulers to send an officer and equipage to the port to receive the new Resident and have him conveyed to Shahipoor situated above Hyderabad. But all such civilities were dispensed with in the case of Crow, and his arrival was altogether ignored.<sup>15</sup> To add to his

difficulties the local mercantile community set up a systematic opposition to the re-establishment of the English factory and represented to the Amirs, protesting against their return.<sup>16</sup> In the face of so much hostility Crow was unable to dispose of the cargo profitably.

From Karachi Crow forwarded the Governor's letters to the Princes informing them of his arrival. In a few days he received a reply written in 'ordinary style and phrase' requiring him to proceed to Tatta to pursue his commercial duties and report himself to the rulers after his arrival there.

Crow landed at Tatta bunder on 24 June, "unwelcomed by any person except a few of the merchants whom interest or curiosity had brought down to the water-side".<sup>17</sup> The Kardar of Tatta met him near the town and then let him proceed to the factory on his own without the ceremony of accompanying him. Here also among the merchants Crow encountered the same hostile attitude to the English as in Karachi.

The agent pushed ahead for Hyderabad to meet the Amirs. His approach to the capital was unnoticed by the rulers but the vizier sent him a barge for accommodation up to Hyderabad as well as an attendance of horses and some persons to greet him on his arrival. In the evening Mir Fateh Ali Khan sent his *khitmatgar* (a confidential officer of the Government) to attend on the agent and that, observed Crow, was the first sign of attention he had received from the chiefs ever since he set foot in their territories. He was told that the Princes wanted him to be their guest during his stay in Hyderabad but Crow declined the offer because that would have restricted the period of his stay and thus fettered him in his negotiations.<sup>18</sup>

The immediate question now before him was to settle the ceremonial of his first audience with the Amirs on which a long, protracted discussion ensued. The agent was required to dismount from the horse at the front gate and walk to the palace with two or three unarmed attendants. At the door he was to take off his shoes, remove his hat in the rulers' presence and sit down on the floor cross-legged. Next day they added another condition—that the agent must advance to the feet of the senior Amir with a gold mohur and a rupee placed on a handkerchief in his right hand. "This ceremony is the humblest test of dependence and inferiority



in Asiatic etiquette", wrote Crow and he refused to make such an abject submission.<sup>19</sup> In the end, the last condition was withdrawn.

All settled, Crow's public audience with the Amirs took place on 17 July, where he observed, "all the grandeur of the court was summoned for the occasion". In such a formal setting he found he could not say much, for "the Princes were more intent on displaying themselves than receiving me".<sup>20</sup> They demanded to see the presents he had brought and refused to fix the day for a private audience until this had been done. Crow was aghast at the indelicacy of the demand. He pointed out to them that the giving of presents was a gesture that should flow from mutual goodwill and understanding, adding that he would not let himself be treated as the 'meanest broker' out to display his retail merchandise. The Princes' attitude was more conciliatory after this, and a private audience was finally fixed for 23 July.

At this interview Crow found to his dismay that the occasion had been planned on an even more formal and elaborate scale than before. Consequently he was unable to throw off his reserve. All he could request for was that the various *parwanas* granted earlier by the Kalhora ruler, Gulam Shah, "be consolidated into one instrument and our privileges at Curachee digested into another".<sup>21</sup> Mir Fateh Ali Khan agreed to grant Shah Bunder as the port for the import and export of goods, but not Karachi which offered far superior advantages in this respect. It was obvious to the agent that the representations of the mercantile community against the English had had some effect.

As days passed Crow observed that the temper of the court was rising and getting more irritable each day. The merchants continued to be hostile and unceasing in their efforts against the British enterprise. Fearing that things might get out of hand, Crow came forward with the presents. The gesture worked a miracle in the Amirs' demeanour. "The Prince and his brothers were daily afterwards sending their people to me, upon some pretence or inquiry. . . . He never returned from hunting now without sending me some game and his inquiries after me were prodigal",<sup>22</sup> the agent wrote. The Prince even asked him to fix his residence at Hyderabad and select a suitable house for the purpose.

At last, after a long and trying period of waiting, Crow received the *parwanas* duly sealed and signed on, 26 August 1799. One

confirmed the factory at Tatta in its old rights and privileges except the exclusive privilege of exporting saltpetre.<sup>23</sup> The other granted a similar establishment at Karachi on a limited scale. In effect this offered very little but Crow considered it "sufficient for our purposes" for, he explained, "the reluctance of the Prince to our establishing a factory at that place was so great and the interest of the merchants so strong against it that to get a footing there on any terms was to be deemed an acquisition".<sup>24</sup> Both *parwanas* precluded the admission of any other European merchants to Sind.

His work done, Crow left for Tatta on 29 August. At his audience of leave on the 27th, the Prince was friendly and cordial, investing him with a *loongee* of silk and gold thread, "the highest mark of honour and rank he could bestow," and presented him with a sword-blade in his personal capacity. The Prince promised to depute an officer to Tatta and Karachi to attend the British Colours hoisting ceremony.

The Company's flag was hoisted on the establishment at Tatta on 8 September and at Karachi on 29 September 1799. With that, the British position in Sind seemed fairly secure. Crow envisaged a bright future. "Upon a survey of all circumstances, there seems every reason to hope that the Honourable Company may both commercially and politically derive great advantage from it."<sup>25</sup> Diligently he set to work about his objectives. A skirmish between Sind and Cutch gave him an opportunity to look closely into the country's resources and carry out a full research into the geography of the area involved. He reported Afghan moves and wrote that the Amirs were greatly alarmed at the rumoured intention of Shah Zaman to come and plant 4,000 Afghan families on the Sind soil.<sup>26</sup> To open a line of communication with Kandahar, he suggested that the first thing to do was to send a deputation or set up an establishment in Ahmad Shahy.

Crow paid his next visit to the court in March 1800. This time his reception was more than cordial.<sup>27</sup> Five miles from Hyderabad he was met by the rulers' *khitmatgars* and when he reached the city, he was overwhelmed with attentions of compliment and congratulation. At the public audience on 21 March the Princes received the agent and his colleagues with the same courtesy and attention. A private audience was fixed for the same evening.



On this occasion Crow was gratified to note that the Amirs were relaxed in their manner towards him. "Their good nature and familiarity exceeds my most sanguine hopes," he wrote. He followed this up with a separate interview with the second Prince, Mir Gulam Ali Khan. At this meeting the Resident tried to dispel the ruler's suspicions regarding the British intentions, for rumour had gone round that conquest, not commerce, was the objective of the English enterprise. The sole object of his Government in the present enterprise, Crow affirmed, was to promote commerce to the mutual advantage of both parties and to cultivate amity and perfect understanding with the state of Sind. He referred to the many efforts he had made since his arrival to conciliate the local mercantile sections of the community. Gulam Ali assured Crow that "the hostility of the merchants had no weight with them" and desired him to feel himself at home and pursue his affairs with tranquillity and confidence.<sup>29</sup> At their second meeting the Prince showed the agent his swords and horses, a highly cherished possession of the Amirs. All this was extremely gratifying to the English representative.

Crow left Hyderabad, feeling reassured and immensely happy with what he had been able to accomplish. He had gained a direct approach to the Amirs and secured for the Company two more *parwanas* conferring greater mercantile privileges on the establishment at Karachi in order "to set the pre-eminence of the factory beyond dispute". The provisions of the first *parwana* were:<sup>30</sup> (1) remission of one-third of the *foujdaree* fee; (2) remission of the whole of the *moajdaree* fee on the Company's trade at Karachi; and (3) suspension of the *moree* on the importation of the English vessels. The second provided for the more honourable ingress and egress of the Company's Resident through the gates of the Karachi fort.<sup>31</sup> "Upon the latter I have to observe," wrote Crow, "that it is intended by the Prince to confer in favour of the Resident a mark of rank and confidence greater than enjoyed by the highest of his Beloochee chiefs." As further proof of their favourable disposition he was showered with presents for himself and the Governor at the time of leave-taking and invited to spend a short holiday with them at one of their hunting seats.

However, it was clear to Crow during this visit that as far as the political goals of his mission were concerned, he would have

to proceed with extreme caution. For example, the Princes had questioned him pointedly about the objects of the British mission to Persia. His reply that its object was simply to cultivate friendship with Persia had not, he noticed, convinced them. Then again, in the course of one of his meetings with Mir Fateh Ali Khan, he had expressed his intention of opening a commercial line with Afghanistan by establishing subordinate agencies at Shikarpore and Kandahar. Despite the Amir's apparent assent to this proposal, it seemed to Crow that his approval was 'more polite than sincere.'<sup>33</sup> Therefore, for the present he contented himself with establishing just a formal link with Afghanistan, that is, through Mir Fateh Ali himself. Crow approached Ulkatah Khan, the Afghan agent in Sind who was there to collect tribute, for the purchase of superfine cloth to the amount of Rs. 40,000 for the Afghan king. To have approached the agent directly would have aroused the Amir's suspicions, and Crow was on his guard. "After the Residency is less the subject of jealous scrutiny, inquiries may be prosecuted and connections established that will correctly ascertain the real state of the Afghan Empire,"<sup>33</sup> he wrote to his Government.

The British Government also saw no reason for precipitate action. In Afghanistan the dictatorship and tyranny of Waffadar, the vizier of the Afghan king, had caused widespread anger against the Shah. A revolutionary undercurrent was in the air, and Shah Zaman was anxiously watching developments. With his attention centred on the home front he was not likely to disturb the Indian sub-continent. In Sind the situation was under control. Assessing their position, Crow was optimistic about the future. He foresaw the Company's establishment growing "to a great maturity of political and commercial advantage".<sup>34</sup> In his view the political advantages were: (a) the Afghan Government would be disposed to grant them admission in their territories on the strength of their position in Sind; (b) in the event of offensive measures being undertaken against the Afghan kingdom Crow was hopeful that the Amir would grant the British Government a passage for their troops through their territories; and (c) a footing in Sind would give them a base from where a vigilant eye could be kept on the Afghan moves. In fact it seemed to Crow that their position in Sind gave them a strategic advantage. "By occupying

this ground we anticipate our natural enemies in any part of the world wherever they have made an appearance.”<sup>35</sup>

Before concluding his despatch he briefly listed the commercial advantages, of which the sale of British woollens was the principal. At Karachi the import of British staples like china sugar, Malabar pepper and other articles amounted to two or three lakhs of rupees annually. He estimated the total demand for British imports at Karachi and Tatta, apart from the sale of British woollens, to the amount of four lakhs of rupees per annum.

Crow visited the Princes again in June 1800 at their hunting seat. He was treated with marked cordiality and indulgence. Presents and civilities were exchanged. On this occasion the Resident took the opportunity to make a careful study of the Princes, the condition of the local population and the general state of the country. The main result of his trip this time, he reported, was ‘an increase of intimacy’ with the rulers.<sup>36</sup>

But Crow was soon to find that he had misjudged their mood, for barely two months later there came an order from Mir Fateh Ali Khan dissolving the Karachi establishment and ordering the Resident to repair to Tatta with all possible expedition. Delay or hesitation to comply with the summons was threatened with grave consequences. Crow received the order on 15 August 1800 and he was in Tatta on the 23rd, breathless and sick “after a severe journey of four days through a deluge of almost impracticable country and a continual vicissitude of rain and scorching sunshine”.<sup>37</sup> Subordinate officers in charge of the Karachi port behaved with insolence and treated the British members with scant respect. The *munshi* and the broker of the Residency who followed Crow, were waylaid and robbed of all their effects which included some important papers and correspondence accounts.<sup>38</sup>

The *parwana* closing down the Karachi establishment was issued on 12 August 1800. It forbade the importation of vessels at Karachi. Hereafter Kukrala was to be the port. The factory at Karachi was dissolved and the English were required to confine their business activities to Tatta and Shah Bunder. No Englishman was to reside at Karachi except for a specified reason and with the previous permission of the Amirs. For the purpose of transacting business, a Hindu native agent (*gumashtha*) was allowed to reside at the place to officiate for the English.<sup>39</sup>

What could have caused the Amirs to take such a drastic step? Crow was at a loss to understand. He tried to consider the various possible reasons.<sup>40</sup> One reason, he felt, could be the presence at this time of the Maratha vakeel at the Hyderabad court, who was reported to be poisoning the rulers' ears against the English. Another reason could be that it was Shah Zaman who had expostulated with Mir Fateh Ali Khan for admitting the British into Sind without his knowledge. Haji Omar, an influential merchant at the court, said that letters had been incessantly pouring in from all quarters, warning the Princes against giving the English a footing on the coast; that the revolution at Surat and its ultimate seizure by the British had added to their alarm. According to Aga Abul Hasan, the Amirs were in a state of nervousness, particularly the younger Prince Gulam Ali Khan who was "like a man suffocating with the heavy oppression of his fears and begging in piteous and positive strain that every despatch might be used towards getting the factory from Curachee."<sup>41</sup> Fateh Ali Khan and other brothers were said to have remonstrated against the extremity of the step. But Gulam Ali was not to be reasoned with. The utmost limit he could be persuaded to go to was to soften the tone of the order by having Aga Abul Hasan or Mirza Ismail Khan sent to convey it.<sup>42</sup>

The severity of the expulsion order, as Crow saw it, bespoke of something deeper than mere dread or alarm. It seemed to him to proceed from a "systematic design in the Princes to drive us from the country altogether," a supposition which, at this stage he was not yet ready to accept.<sup>43</sup> So, from Tatta he applied for an interview with the rulers in order to ascertain from the senior Prince directly the causes that had led him to dissolve the Karachi establishment, thereby going back on the engagements "given under his hand and seal".

The interview took place in September 1800. Crow was received with a great show of public attention. The agent immediately saw that the senior Amir himself was favourably inclined; it was Mir Gulam Ali and the other two brothers who were mainly responsible for the recall of the Karachi factory.<sup>44</sup> At his private interview with them Mir Fateh Khan mentioned three reasons that had caused him to take the step, namely, complaints from the merchants, letters of warning from abroad, and smallness of the English trade. He, however, assured the Resident that by his

prompt compliance with the orders, he had falsified glanders and established the bonafides of the British Government. The Prince spoke hurriedly and his speech, it seemed to Crow, proceeded more from constraint than will.<sup>46</sup>

Explaining his case, the Resident presented an elaborate address dealing with the circumstances that had brought him to Sind, his unimpeachable conduct in managing his affairs and his absolute conformance with the wishes of the rulers. By taking such a drastic step without cause or reason, he pointed out, they had done a "flagrant injury to the English such as they never in any country experienced before".<sup>46</sup> This was bound to impair relations between the two Governments and he suggested it to the Amir to send a deputation to Bombay to atone for the outrage. The Princes accepted the suggestion, regretted the insubordination of the officials at Karachi and permitted him to go to Karachi for a month to settle all accounts and dispose of the property.

But Crow's subsequent interview with Mir Gulam Ali placed him in proper grasp of the situation and dispelled whatever hopes he had of putting things right. He saw that Gulam Ali and his brothers were bent on expelling the English from Sind. They looked upon them as intruders, and a threat to their independence and the harmony prevailing among the rulers themselves. At first Gulam Ali forbade Crow to go to Karachi at all and later, after much remonstrance, permitted him only ten days in which to complete his work.

Disappointed in his mission and sick with fever, Crow left Hyderabad on 26 September and reached Tatta on the 28th. His ill-health prevented him from attending to business for some time. On 26 October 1800 came another order from the senior Amir dissolving the factory at Tatta and expelling the English from Sind.<sup>47</sup> It required him to quit the country bag and baggage within five days of the receipt of the order. Writing to the agent, Ibrahim Shah the vizier explained that at his intercession the chiefs had agreed to extend the time-limit to fifteen days. The reason assigned for this drastic measure was the imperial order said to have come from Shah Zaman ordering the Amirs to turn the English out of Sind immediately, by force if necessary.<sup>48</sup> Accordingly, the rulers had issued the order, wrote the vizier, and despatched a few men to see that the order was carried out. Delay



on the Resident's part to obey the order was threatened with disgrace.

Crow could just manage to get away with his life. His proposal to stay on board a dinghy outside the Karachi harbour for a few days to settle accounts was promptly turned down. He therefore left behind a young reliable man with Aga Abul Hasan to look after the Company's property and himself reached Lahori bunder on 5 November 1800.

Thus ended the first British mission of the 19th century to Sind. The Bombay Government suffered a considerable financial loss on account of the dissolution of its factory. In the bargain it suffered an insult which in later years would have provoked stern retaliatory action. But in the present context of things the circumstances that had prompted the Crow mission had changed. The French threat to India had receded following Napoleon's involvement in a renewed aggression against Austria. Shah Zaman had been checked in his ambitions on India. Thus the main objective of the mission, namely, to probe into the manoeuvres of the Afghans and the French was no longer there. Consequently the British authorities showed no great concern over Crow's expulsion except to demand reparations from the Amirs for the loss sustained.

As far as Sind was concerned, this mission marked the opening of a new phase in its history. Up to now Sind had remained apart from the crucial events unfolding in the rest of India. That isolation now received a fatal blow. Crow's mission broke down the barriers that had so far sheltered the state, and made it a part of a bigger picture. His survey of the country, its people and its rulers threw light upon many important aspects of Sind's life. It was clear that in the years to come Sind would figure in the history of British rule in India.

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Mill & Wilson, *History of India*, Vol. VI, p. 126
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 126-128
- <sup>3</sup> Martin, *Wellesley's Despatches*, Vol. I, p. 308. In his letter dated Fort William, 24 October 1798, Earl of Mornington wrote to Jonathan Duncan, Governor of Bombay: "I must repeat my desire that you will imme-

- diately employ all practicable means of exciting the people of Sind and any other tribes occupying the countries which border on Moultan and Candahar to alarm Zemaun Shah for the safety of his possessions in those quarters." To achieve his object he was prepared to help them with a liberal supply of arms and ammunition.
- <sup>4</sup> Sind Commissioner's Office (hereinafter SCO), *Selections from the Records of the Commissioner in Sind*, file 203, p. 500
  - <sup>5</sup> Bombay Records (hereinafter BR), Secret and Political Department Diary 77 of 1799, Government of Bombay to Aga Abul Hussan dated 26 December 1798, pp. 2990-2991
  - <sup>6</sup> *Ibid*
  - <sup>7</sup> SCO, file 203, pp. 510-514 (Enclosures in Aga's letter), Aga Abul Hussan to Honourable Jonathan Duncan dated 17 March 1799
  - <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 503
  - <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 504
  - <sup>10</sup> BR, Secret and Political Department Diary 78 of 1799, Instructions addressed to Nathan Crow by the Board dated 8 May 1799, pp. 3511-3518
  - <sup>11</sup> *Ibid*
  - <sup>12</sup> *Ibid*
  - <sup>13</sup> *Ibid*
  - <sup>14</sup> BR, Secret and Political Department Diary 84 of 1799, letter from the Resident dated 30 September 1799, pp. 6133-6134
  - <sup>15</sup> *Ibid*
  - <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6138
  - <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6137-6138
  - <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6140-6141
  - <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6142
  - <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6143
  - <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6149
  - <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6155
  - <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6166
  - <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6158
  - <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6168
  - <sup>26</sup> BR, Secret and Political Department Diary 85 of 1799, Resident's letter dated 29 October 1799
  - <sup>27</sup> BR, Secret and Political Department Diary 102 of 1800, Resident reports proceedings dated 17 May 1800, p. 7059
  - <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7069
  - <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7071
  - <sup>30</sup> BR, Secret and Political Department Diary 100 of 1800, Parwana dated 14 April 1800, pp. 6079-6080
  - <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6081-6082
  - <sup>32</sup> BR, Secret and Political Department Diary 102 of 1800, *op. cit.*, pp. 7076-7077
  - <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7098
  - <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7092
  - <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7093-7097

- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, Crow to Jonathan Duncan dated 31 July 1800, p. 7114
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, Resident advising of the dissolution of the factory at Karachi dated Tatta, 26 August 1800, p. 7137
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7156-7158
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7138-7139
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7040
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7144
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7150
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, Crow reports proceedings dated Tatta, 29 October 1800, pp. 7208-7211
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7223
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7225



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## The 1809 Treaty with Sind

In the years immediately following the expulsion of Crow, the British Government made no attempt to renew its links with Sind. Lord Wellesley's forward policy kept him too busy with wars calculated to establish the supremacy of the British on the sub-continent. The power he had to contend with after the decisive defeat of Tipu was the power of the Marathas welded in that powerful union called the 'Maratha Confederacy'. The Treaty of Bassein, concluded in 1802, paralysed the head of the Maratha Confederacy and dealt a severe blow to the Maratha power from which it never recovered. When Lord Wellesley left in 1805, the whole of the Carnatic and the Southern regions were in the hands of the British or their feudatories. At the commencement of his governor-generalship he had found the East India Company one of several powers in India; when he left, it was undisputably paramount.<sup>1</sup>

But his policy had entailed heavy expenditure and involved the Company into enormous debts. The home authorities realised that they could not for some time afford the luxury of wars. Thus Lord Cornwallis who succeeded Lord Wellesley came determined to pursue a policy of non-involvement. He was followed by Sir George Barlow who also subscribed to the same policy, that is, to wage no wars, to pursue a peaceful non-interfering policy. Nothing eventful took place in the two years of his rule.

When Lord Minto came to India to assume the reins of government in July 1807, the situation in Europe had changed. France was on the march again. The peace of Amiens concluded in 1802 after the surrender of the French army in Egypt had proved to be transient. War was resumed in 1803, and France and Russia, fighting one another met in the fiercest battles ever fought at Eylau and Friedland. After that, the fighting ceased; the two armies fraternised, and the two emperors "embraced each other on a raft floating on the surface of the river Niemen". The result of their

fraternal posture was the conclusion of the Treaty of Tilsit in 1807. Among the many projects of conquest they formed, their one conjoint project was directed "contre les possessions de la campagne des Inde". Here indeed was a grave crisis. The spectre of a combined Russo-French army moving on India was too grim to be taken lightly. For the English authorities in India this was a signal for alert on the northwest frontier.

Lord Minto took measures in anticipation of the danger. There was disaffection in the country, the neighbouring states were none too friendly. An actual approach of the enemy to the frontiers of India might incite them to rebel. Thus, sound policy demanded that it would be well to meet "an expected danger while yet distant rather than await its approximation".<sup>2</sup> The Governor-General had grounds to suppose that France would attempt an entry through Persia, for it was no secret that the latter had turned to the French in 1805 after being let down by the British in failing to observe the treaty concluded with General Malcolm in 1799. Therefore his strategy was to fight the enemy in that country itself. In a letter to Sir George Barlow he wrote that if this great conflict had to be faced, "we ought to meet it as early and as far beyond our own frontiers as possible. We ought to contest Persia itself with the enemy and to dispute every step of their progress".<sup>3</sup>

In January 1808 he learnt that a French army was on its way to Persia while a great military embassy attended by four and twenty French officers and three hundred French soldiers had actually arrived there as the advance guard of the army.<sup>4</sup> The Governor-General was alarmed. To meet the situation he, in consultation with his advisers, worked out two lines of action. One was in accordance with the suggestion by Sir John Malcolm to carry out a survey of countries lying between Persia and the northwest frontier. For this assignment Captain Monier Williams was appointed the Surveyor-General with instructions to ascertain the resources, population and natural characteristics of these countries as well as to carry out a full geographical survey of them.<sup>5</sup> The other line of action envisaged a carefully planned policy of deputing a series of missions to the frontier states to enlist their friendship and cooperation. The states to be conciliated were Persia, Afghanistan, Punjab and Sind.

To Persia was deputed Sir John Malcolm at the head of a magni-

ficent mission to renew the bonds of friendship with that country. The mission could not have been timed better, for France, by concluding the Tilsit Agreement had abandoned the cause of Persia to Russia. To Kabul went Elphinstone empowered to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance against a possible combined move by France and Persia. Charles Metcalfe was sent to Punjab to negotiate an alliance with Maharajah Ranjit Singh that would secure the latter's cooperation in a concerted plan of action against the external danger as well as check that ambitious ruler's advance towards the south.

The mission to Sind was prompted by similar considerations. Rumours were rife about French intrigues in Persia and their 'emis-saries' endeavours to reach Sind through Persia. As if to lend credence to these rumours, N. H. Smith, the Resident at Bushire reported that the arrival of a mission from Sind at the Persian court had been taken advantage of by the French to have their ships admitted into Sindhi ports.<sup>6</sup> These reports had the expected effect. "It becomes the duty of this Government to employ corresponding efforts of active counteraction and leave unturned no means of converting to the purposes of our own security those interests which, if exposed without opposition to the influence of French intrigues, may probably be turned against us," the Governor-General wrote to the Bombay Governor.<sup>7</sup>

A connection with Sind had to be established. But the question was how? Since the expulsion of Crow, the Sind rulers had made a few attempts to cultivate friendship with the British Government, but to no effect. For example, in 1803 the Afghan ruler Shah Shuja, successor to Shah Zaman, had led an army on Sind to enforce his tributary claims. While the army was still on its way, the ruling Amir Mir Gulam Ali Khan (his brother Mir Fateh Ali Khan having died in 1802) applied to the British for help. His application was met with a counter-demand for indemnification and atonement for the Crow outrage. As the Sind ruler showed no disposition to comply with the demand, the matter remained where it was.<sup>8</sup> Then, in 1806 the Sind Government made yet another attempt to conciliate the British Government by inviting them to establish a Residency in their territories. The latter's reply dated 6 March 1806 rejected the overture, and explicitly stated that it was not the object of the British Government to establish a

British Resident in Sind until the old grievance was redressed.<sup>9</sup>

The year 1808 however was not 1806. A crisis now threatened the Company's very existence in India. A line of friendly states on the northwest border was necessary to their security. A Residency in Sind offered decided advantages. It promised to afford the Government "the means of obtaining important and authentic information on the nature, extent and progress of the views of the French not only in that country but also in the countries to the northward of Scinde as far as Candahar and Cabul". Further it promised to provide the Government with an additional source of intelligence on the proceedings of the French in Persia. Therefore, under the circumstances, it was deemed necessary to overlook 'punctilious considerations' and Lord Minto wrote to Jonathan Duncan, the Bombay Governor to initiate measures "to re-establish a Residency at Sind in the person of some servant of the Honourable Company".<sup>10</sup>

Minto's directive on the subject gave clear instructions. It stated firmly that the objective in the present case, was 'entirely of a political nature', that of securing the establishment of a political Resident to function as a channel of constant and authentic intelligence in that quarter. The envoy however was not to spell out his Government's objects in such plain language. On the contrary he was to represent as the first ostensible object of his mission "the demand of indemnification and atonement for the expulsion of Mr. Crow and the forcible removal of the British factory". This line of approach was calculated to give him a psychological advantage so that he could then proceed to press the main object in view by 'a discreet and gradual concession' of the demand of reparations.<sup>11</sup> Should the Sind Government refuse altogether to concede the factory on any terms, the emissary was to sacrifice it to the bigger object of securing a Residency. The main duty of the political agent, it was stressed, must be to ascertain the degree of connection existing between France and Sind, or between Sind and Persia since France was working her way through Persia. He should also suggest means of counteracting those intrigues. Further, the political agent should extend inquiries into the countries northward of Sind, particularly in relation to the activities of the French in such quarters. Finally, the agent's duty was to ascertain

the practicability of the march of a European army from Persia to Gujarat through Sind.

The Bombay Governor acted promptly. His task at this time was greatly facilitated by the arrival of one Meher Ali, an agent from Sind, presumably to buy some articles for his rulers. He carried with him a letter from the chief of the Talpurs of Hyderabad addressed to the Governor.<sup>12</sup> Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Governor appointed Sayyid Tucky, the Bombay merchant who had business dealings with Meher Ali to so arrange things that the latter himself should appear the 'apparent author' of the proposed mission to Sind.<sup>13</sup> The result was that Meher Ali applied to the Bombay Government asking for a person of 'credit and importance' to accompany him back on the ground that the distance that separated the two states rendered correspondence inconvenient on matters of importance. He guaranteed that proper attention and respect would be shown to the envoy by his Government. On 11 April 1808 the Governor granted him an audience and officially entertained his application.

The envoy selected for this assignment was Capt. David Seton, formerly Resident at Muscat. He and the Sind agent were to travel together upto Cutch; from there Seton was to proceed by land to Hyderabad while Meher Ali was to take the sea-route via Karachi.<sup>14</sup>

The Bombay Government's instructions to Seton were set forth in a letter dated 30 April 1808.<sup>15</sup> He was to demand indemnification for the Crow incident (the Government estimated the loss at Rs. 70,000) as a preliminary to any negotiation. Secondly, the envoy was not to disclose the ultimate views of his Government before taking some preparatory measures to ensure their success such as gaining the confidence of Mir Gulam Ali and establishing his personal influence at the court. The primary object of his deputation, it was emphasised, was to secure the establishment of a permanent political agency, his secondary object to secure the establishment of a commercial factory. The two objects were quite distinct. Should the Government of Sind concede both, they were to be entrusted to two separate agents, one charged with diplomatic duties, and the other with looking after the factory. In the event of a tie, the first had to be given precedence over the second. Finally, the envoy was to extend his inquiries northward of Sind, and to that end send native agents to those countries with



the object of collecting information on the political state and general condition of those countries. On this point he had to exercise the utmost caution so as not to arouse the suspicions of the rulers.<sup>17</sup>

On the whole, these instructions were in conformity with Lord Minto's directive. It was in regard to the item concerning inquiries into other countries that the Bombay Government's instructions gave wider scope to the envoy, a fact that was later to cause much trouble. Elucidating this item, the Bombay Government emphasised that Afghanistan should claim the envoy's special attention. It went on to say that in 1806 the state of Kabul had made overtures for a friendly alliance with the British Government, a gesture that had been rebuffed. This was now deemed a matter of regret. However, a remedy was still possible, for Sher Muhammad, the vizier who had made these moves was still in power. Therefore, while furnishing Seton with copies of correspondence exchanged between Bombay and Calcutta on this subject in 1806, the Government despatch continued, "You will avail yourself of any good opportunity to renew that proffered connection, or any other, with the governing power for the time being, that may appear to you most promotive of the great object of establishing in that country, an adverse interest to that of the French".<sup>18</sup>

Armed with his brief, Seton left Bombay towards the end of April 1808, accompanied by an aide, an assistant surgeon, one officer in command of sixty rank of native infantry and many presents for the rulers.<sup>19</sup> Meher Ali was dismayed to see such a magnificent array and feared that his masters would not approve of the step he had taken. On his remonstrating against it with Sayyid Tucky, Seton was directed to leave a great part of his retinue at Mandavie in Cutch before continuing his journey to Hyderabad.<sup>20</sup>

The mission arrived at Mandavie on 15 May. The envoy carried with him two letters from the Governor to the ruler of Sind, one to be forwarded from Cutch announcing his approach to the capital and the second to be presented personally at the court. Accordingly, Seton now despatched the first of the Governor's letters, adding also a note from himself to say that he was awaiting an escort from the Amirs to accompany him to their territories. Meher Ali meanwhile proceeded to Hyderabad to prepare his Government for the arrival of the mission.

In retrospect Seton's halt at Cutch was to prove most inopportune. For, while he waited for the escort and let time pass, an envoy from Persia arrived at the Sind court, had his audience with the Amirs and gained sufficient time to work for the joint interests of Persia and France. By the time Seton was able to resume his journey, which was not before 10 June 1808<sup>21</sup>—the Amirs' reply and escort took three weeks to arrive—he had lost much precious time. The mission finally reached Hyderabad on 16 July and disembarked at night as the condition of the party was not fit for a public reception.

The mission's first audience with the rulers took place on 18 July 1808. It passed off cordially. Streets were lined with crowds of curious people as the envoy and his colleagues rode past on their way to the durbar.<sup>22</sup> And now began that chain of negotiations that was to bring home to Seton how ill-advised he had been to tarry at Mandavie. He found that the Persian envoy had ingratiated himself with Mir Gulam Ali and offered terms for an alliance which the Amirs seemed ready to accept unless the English envoy could offer something more worthwhile. Seton lost his nerve. In his panic he overlooked the fundamental principle of his instructions, which was to urge the demand for reparations as a first preliminary. Without weighing the pros and cons he gave his consent to a deed proposing an offensive and defensive alliance between the two Governments.<sup>23</sup> The treaty contained clauses of mutual assistance and affirmed that friends and enemies of one were the friends and enemies of the other. It further provided that neither Government should protect the enemies of the other; that the servants of the Sind Government wishing to purchase wartime stores in any of the ports belonging to the Honourable Company should be assisted in their purchases. An agent representing the Company was to reside at the Sind court. As regards the Company's commercial interests, it stipulated that all claims on account of former loss should be dropped. A British factory was conceded but it could be established only after the Amirs' trust in the British had been restored.

Such was the treaty that led to the recall of Seton. In his anxiety to gain lost ground, the envoy failed to see that under the provisions of mutual assistance the British Government could be called upon to assist Sind against the Afghan kingdom which

figured prominently as a state to be conciliated in their northwest frontier policy, or that it could get involved in a war with the Raja of Jodhpur who was their ally. Assistance as Seton saw it meant assistance only against France.

With regard to Kabul, the agent made yet another blunder. According to the Governor-General's directive he had to ascertain the chances of opening a connection with Afghanistan. As a preparatory measure he had first to find out from the means available to him the disposition of the court of Kabul, the chances of success a mission had, if deputed. It was no part of his duty to deal directly with the Shah. But under the Bombay Government's instructions requiring him to take advantage of any opportunity that offered itself to renew the proffered connection of 1806, he had much more latitude for action. He therefore addressed a letter to the Shah and forwarded it through the merchants at Karachi having business connections at Kandahar.<sup>24</sup> In the letter he spoke of the danger that threatened the Afghan dominions, namely, the alliance between Persia and France. If the Shah wished to concert measures with the British Government against their common enemy, the envoy wrote, he was prepared to repair personally to the throne, if so desired, and act according to the ruler's directions. Alternatively, he suggested, the Shah could deal directly with his Government by sending an agent to Bombay.<sup>25</sup> As mischance would have it, the Amirs came to know of this letter. They took serious exception to it and demanded an explanation from the envoy as well as an unqualified apology for such behaviour. He was further ordered to withdraw the letter immediately.<sup>26</sup>

The whole course of Seton's proceedings was viewed with grave concern by both Duncan and Minto. The former considered the mutual assistance clauses 'the most exceptionable' and said that the treaty must be unreservedly disavowed.<sup>27</sup> The Governor-General's reaction was more sharp. Characterising the treaty as 'an instance of humiliation' and a presumption on the part of the Sind Government to put on airs of equality with the British Government, Minto stated categorically that "we do not consider this treaty to be susceptible of any beneficial modification. We have therefore resolved to annul it".<sup>28</sup> Referring to Afghanistan he described Seton's letter to the Shah as 'a premature disclosure of our



views' likely to hazard the success of the British mission which had in the meantime been sent to Kabul. To turn an ill-effect to advantage the Kabul envoy Mountstuart Elphinstone was instructed to declare Seton's letter and the treaty with Sind "unauthorised" which the Government meant to annul at an early date. Not only that. He was further to point out to the Afghan king the implications of the article on 'military assistance', that is, (a) it indicated a desire on the part of the Sind Government to break away from the overlordship of Kabul, and (b) it showed that the Amirs were willing to transfer their rights of paramountcy to any power that might offer them the required assistance. Thus, continued the Government despatch, this unhappy incident if exploited with tact, would allay the Shah's fears about the English and help to show him that his real interests lay in making common cause with the British Government against the danger from France and Persia.<sup>29</sup>

In regard to Sind there were now three courses open to the British Government to get out of the difficult situation. (1) It could disavow the treaty straightaway. (2) It could render the envoy the medium of such a disavowal. (3) The Central Government could depute a direct mission of its own, which by virtue of the higher authority vested in it could overrule the proceedings of the earlier mission.

The first two courses were open to grave defects. If the treaty was disavowed, it would impair the dignity of the representative character of the Government. The second course was sure to lower the personal influence of the envoy with the rulers. Therefore the third course, free from such disadvantages, seemed the best solution.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, independent of Seton's proceedings, there was now another factor which favoured a direct mission to Sind. Soon after Seton's deputation the Governor-General had sent missions to Kabul and Persia, the objects of which were closely connected with the objects of the mission to Sind. Thus it was not simply a better course but altogether essential that the whole course of negotiations be placed under the same superintending authority, especially as the interests of Sind and Kabul were so precariously balanced.

Guided by these considerations Seton was directed to continue at Hyderabad till the arrival of the new envoy. He was to suspend his negotiations, representing to the Amirs that the treaty

concluded by him required as a matter of course the ultimate sanction of his Government.<sup>31</sup>

Seton had referred the treaty to his Government in August 1808. He had already waited a long time for his instructions. By now the atmosphere around him had become tense and the Amirs were tired of waiting. They insisted on the early departure of the mission.<sup>32</sup> At last, exasperated by their attitude, he decided to leave even before the Government's instructions reached him.

On 8 October 1808 he had his audience of leave. The Amirs sent with him a present of four horses for the Governor and appointed Akhund Bucka to accompany the English envoy back to Bombay. They further commissioned their agent<sup>33</sup> to seek the British Government's support in their ambitions on Cutch; failing that, its neutrality. The agent was also instructed to bring with him a representative of the British Government with an escort of not more than fifteen or twenty armed men.

In answer to these developments came Nicholas Hankey Smith, formerly Resident at Bushire, as envoy from the Governor-General. In the letter to Mir Gulam Ali, Minto said that the deputation of Smith would afford the Amirs "the strongest testimony of a favourable disposition on the part of the British Government by removing the veil of an intermediary authority and opening a direct communication between the Supreme Government and the state of Sind.... From this measure you will duly appreciate the extent of my inclination to remove all former grounds of misunderstanding and permanently to establish the foundations of harmony and friendship between the two States."<sup>34</sup> The Bombay Government was strictly forbidden to have any discussions with Akhund Bucka, the Sind vakeel, lest that should lead to the embarrassment of a double negotiation and so handicap the new envoy in his dealings with the Amirs.<sup>35</sup>

In a despatch dated 28 November 1808, Neil B. Edmonstone, secretary to the Central Government, sent detailed instructions to Smith.<sup>36</sup> The latter was required to resume the negotiations of his predecessor and put them on a proper basis, to announce the impracticability of ratifying the treaty concluded by David Seton on the ground that he was merely the representative of the Bombay Presidency. For his part Smith was directed to impede rather than promote the conclusion of engagements with Sind,

for the Government felt it would be more advantageous if the final outcome of the negotiations were left vague. In regard to Kabul, he was to try and relieve the Amirs' mind of any apprehensions they might entertain of British intentions there. In this connection the emissary was to point out clearly to the rulers that the mission to Kabul had gone to conclude an alliance with that Government against the danger represented by France and Persia. In spite of that, should the Amirs still show an inclination to encourage and assist the projects of the enemies of the British power, they were to be warned that the English and the Kabulis would close their ranks in a manner adverse to Sind.<sup>37</sup> In fact, the Government had empowered their envoy to Kabul to listen to any propositions from that court having for their object the complete reduction of Sind, should the latter be seen confederating with Persia and France.<sup>38</sup> But he (Elphinstone) was to receive no such propositions if Sind on the other hand showed a favourable disposition towards the British cause. In the same manner Smith was now enjoined to balance the interests of these two states and avoid getting involved in the affairs of Sind that might tend to embarrass negotiations at Kabul. In the event of the Sind Government seeking British mediation in her relations with Kabul, he was to refer the proposal to the British Government. Finally, he was to take advantage of the internal dissensions to the extent possible to promote British interests. This referred to the claims of the Kalhora who was scheming to get back the throne of Sind. A formidable opposition to the ruling power existed in the person of Mir Tharo, their own relative who was supporting the claims of Muhammad Raza Khan, the Kalhora. In concert these parties had approached the British Government through the British Resident at Cutch for help. The Government, continued Edmonstone, though convinced of the justness of the Kalhora's claim, had nonetheless refused to back him against the rights of the reigning house. These documents were now forwarded to Smith, requiring him to produce them, if need be, in proof of the British Government's favourable and protective disposition towards the Sind Government. Edmonstone wrote:

"These various means of inspiring apprehension and of conciliating the goodwill of the ruling power in Sind employed with judgement and address may enable you to establish permanent foot-

ing and influence in that state or at least serve to maintain that intercourse and communication with 'the Government which will afford the means of watching its proceedings and of obtaining authentic intelligence of any projects or intrigues of our enemies in that quarter.'<sup>39</sup>

Having set forth the Government's objectives in deputing the mission, Edmonstone's communique went on to specify the tone of address that Smith should adopt in his negotiations with the Amirs. His approach to the rulers, he was told, must be on the basis of a superior power treating with a petty principality. He must assume a patronising air and the Amirs must be made to feel the weight and obligation of entering into a connection with a powerful Government instead of deluding themselves with the belief that their goodwill was of any essential importance to the British interests.<sup>40</sup> It was realised of course that the demand for atonement and indemnification could not now be revived in view of Seton's proceedings, but the envoy could make it a subject of reference on suitable occasions to drive home the point that the British Government though powerful to enforce it was yet magnanimous enough to drop it for the sake of a more enlightened policy, that of establishing cordial amity and confidence between the two Governments.

Smith mission came one year after the Seton mission—a crucial year in which much had happened. The invasion of Spain by Napoleon and the commencement of the Peninsular war had diverted French attention from the East. Consequently the Company's possessions in India stood no longer in imminent danger of an invasion. This turn of events served to vindicate Seton's line of action inasmuch as the treaty he proposed with Sind had had the advantage of holding things up and preventing the Amirs from falling into the hands of the Persian envoy. By the time Smith came and took charge, the situation had taken a favourable turn for the British, enabling the new envoy to be in a far better bargaining position than his predecessor. In fact it must be said for Seton that situated as he was, there was little else he could have done. On the one hand he was under constant strain of the Persian envoy exerting his full influence at the court against the English.<sup>41</sup> On the other, the Amirs themselves were by no means easy to handle. They changed their stand so often that he wrote:

"Their ignorance and dread of they know not what, renders it difficult to bring them to consent to what they see is wished by another as they suppose there are advantages in it they cannot see, and that will operate to their disadvantage they know not how."<sup>42</sup> Moreover, when writing to Shah Shuja, Seton had been unaware of the Governor-General's decision to depute missions to Kabul, Lahore and Persia to concert measures for a system of alliance all along the northwest frontier. Compared to that, Smith was in a far happier position and his task was much simpler. In 1808 the situation had called for an urgent remedy, in 1809 it called for long-term measures which could be considered rationally. This shift in the Government's policy was reflected in Edmonstone's despatch to Smith dated 6 March 1809 :

"We had then to provide against a danger believed to be actually impending, against the effects of hostile intrigues supposed to have commenced. Both may be considered to have ceased for a time. We have not now to counteract measures and proceedings on the part of Sind, resulting from the influence of our European enemy but it is an object to establish such connection with the state of Sind as may afford us the means of counteracting that influence hereafter."<sup>43</sup>

Smith thus had a clear idea of what he had to do. Friendship with Sind was desirable, but he had time to work for it; it was no longer something to bargain for. The primary object of his mission was to establish a connection that would secure them a permanent means of communication with the Government of Sind. That connection, he was instructed, should take the form of a commercial Residency or a political Residency upon a scale inferior to the present mission. But the more extended scale of measures, which had formerly been the ultimate object of the Government, relating to the mission of his assistants into the neighbouring territories to discover the progress of French intrigues was not considered necessary in the same degree and could therefore be relinquished.<sup>44</sup>

Smith and his party left for Sind in April 1809. The *Maria*, country ship, was hired to convey the mission to the port of Karachi from where the Company's Cruiser *the Prince of Wales*, Capt. Allen and three armed gallivats were ordered to take charge.<sup>45</sup> The envoy's escort consisted of three assistants (Mr. Ellis, Lieut.



Robert Taylor and Lieut. Henry Pottinger) a surgeon and two surveyors with about 40 sepoys. The surveyors' job was to survey the route they took and collect geographical data on the country and its resources with an eye to military operations.

The ships entered the Karachi harbour on 10 May 1809 and shortly after the Governor, attended by a large retinue and carrying presents of sheep and vegetables, came on board the ship to visit Mr. Smith. The sight of two armed ships lying at anchor in the harbour occasioned great alarm among the authorities and people alike and immediate orders were issued against the entry of the party into the Karachi port while a large body of troops was ordered out within eight miles of the place to keep a close watch over the movements of the mission.<sup>46</sup> The envoy retaliated by refusing to see the Governor until the orders were withdrawn. In the next few days more unpleasant incidents followed. People who provided the mission with provisions or served them in any capacity were threatened with severe punishment and it was made impossible for the mission members to venture beyond their camp units. The Amirs' alarm on hearing these reports was no less great and they promptly despatched one reinforcement after another for the garrison and defence of Karachi. Finally Akhund Bucka came from the Amirs, representing their fears and it was after much explaining that the air was cleared and the mission allowed to proceed further.<sup>47</sup>

The party arrived at Tatta on 16 June, where officials of the Government and a state barge waited in readiness to convey them to the capital. Smith had planned to invent a 'plausible excuse' to break up the mission in two parties here, one proceeding by water and the other by land in order to obtain the utmost knowledge of the country as well as its river Indus. This was not necessary. The state barge that awaited them only served to perfect his plans for it was found to accommodate just half the party. So Mr. Ellis, Capt. Maxfield and Lieut. Pottinger took the barge while the envoy with the rest of his officers proceeded by the land route.<sup>48</sup>

Owing to severe indisposition on the way Smith could reach Hyderabad only on 8 August 1809, several days later than the party that came by water. His reception was very cordial. The mission's encampment was pitched on the bank of the Fuleli river and to this place messengers came again and again from the Amirs'

side enquiring about his health and comfort.<sup>49</sup> As usual, the first point to be settled with the Government concerned the ceremonial of the public audience. In accordance with his instructions the envoy assumed a superior tone. He complained of the disagreeable occurrences at Karachi and demanded prompt redress. He stressed the exalted status of his Government and insisted that the Amirs should rise to receive the mission as they had done in the case of the Persian ambassador. He further demanded that he must have a chair to sit on while talking to the rulers.<sup>50</sup> The Amirs would not agree to his conditions, especially the last one. Their *musnud* was just a few inches above the ground, they explained, and if they gave him a chair, they would be raising him above their heads. Finally Smith gave up this point while the Amirs agreed to rise to receive the mission and place the agent on the right of the *musnud*.

On 14 August 1809, the day of the public audience, crowds of people watched the stately procession of the mission making its way to the palace. Everything went off according to the ceremonial arranged and the stage was set for negotiations. Smith adopted the written mode as his means of communication with the Amirs. His reason for doing so was (a) to dispense with the intermediary Mushtaq Ram in whom he had no confidence, and (b) to take up a tone of 'just but necessary complaint' with the rulers.<sup>51</sup> Mushtaq Ram had a personal grudge against the British Government, for during the earlier attempts of the Sind Government to renew old ties with the English he had led a deputation to Bombay but the Bombay Governor had refused to recognise him as the accredited agent of his Government. Smith, therefore, assumed that he would not miss an opportunity to misrepresent the British Government if given the chance.

On 15 August Smith submitted his memorandum elucidating the views of his Government.<sup>52</sup> His Government, he said, sought friendship with Sind because it was the established policy of the Honourable Company to cultivate relations of amity and friendship with neighbouring states. His Government could not ratify the 'quolnama' concluded by Seton because the terms it contained were not authorised by the deputing authority. In its relations with neighbouring states the British Government sought to cultivate friendship with them through the permanent residence of its agents



at their courts. Thus, his Government would like to establish a permanent agent at the court of Sind. Furthermore, his Government desired to re-establish the commercial factory offering mutual advantages to both sides. He pointed out that the advantages to the state of Sind from such a connection would be: security from outside aggression (of states like Kabul and Cutch); access to the mediation offices of the British power in disputes between Sind and other powers; concession of the demand for indemnification and atonement for the Crow outrage; a sense of weight and consequence to Sind from a connection with the British Government. The memorandum concluded with a brief alternative. If the Government of Sind refused to concede the British Government's demand from feelings of timidity or suspicion, it would incur the latter's displeasure and forego the benefits of mediation now offered to it. Or, if the rulers refused to comply from hostile feelings, the British Government would not hesitate to unite with states bordering on Sind to invade its territories.

The Amirs were not taken in by Smith's arguments. They could see clearly that the so-called advantages enumerated by Smith lacked substance. As pointed out by their deputy Wali Muhammad Laghari, the British Government wanted a footing in Sind through a Residency that would be an effective barrier against the French, but what were they offering in return? Talk of security against Kabul and Cutch had no meaning, for the first was no more than a nominal head while the other state was too weak to attempt aggression.<sup>53</sup> Therefore the Amirs put forth a counter-proposal demanding the active assistance of the British Government in their ambitions on Cutch; failing that, its neutrality. In return for 'active assistance' they promised to restore the factory. In return for 'neutrality' only, they were prepared to enter into engagements with the British against the French.<sup>54</sup>

Smith affirmed in definite terms that their demand for active assistance was simply impossible, that his Government would never even countenance such a proposal. It would be, he pointed out, an act of "unprovoked aggression against a friendly state, a gross violation of public faith" and said that such an act must undermine even their (the Amirs') faith in the honour and integrity of the English nation.<sup>55</sup> When he found that the Amirs would not change their position despite all he had to say, he referred the

proposal to the Governor-General for consideration. In due course a reply was received by Gulam Ali Khan from Minto, firmly stating that such projects of hostility were inconsistent with the policy of the British Government, that the presence of a British detachment in Cutch was there for the purpose of upholding the independence of the state.<sup>58</sup>

While pursuing his objectives Smith had scrupulously avoided getting involved into engagements of any kind, but when the negotiations seemed about to end, the Amirs expressed surprise that the envoy had suggested no written engagement without which relations between the two Governments must necessarily remain a matter of speculation. Smith tried to hedge but they argued that a written document officially executed by both sides was necessary for two reasons:<sup>59</sup> (a) it would give a tangible form to the friendly sentiments that actuated both Governments to come closer to each other; and (b) a written document would be an effective check against the overtures of the French. They suggested an offensive and defensive alliance based on the same principles as those underlying the treaty with Seton. Smith retorted that his Government having declared them 'an objectionable basis', they could not possibly be revived again.<sup>60</sup> In the end Mr. Ellis drew up a promissory engagement consisting of four articles.<sup>61</sup> The first two clauses avowed eternal friendship between the two Governments and eschewed enmity, the third proposed mutual exchange of vakeels by both sides and the fourth enjoined upon the Government of Sind not to "allow the establishment of the tribe of the French in Sindh". Gulam Ali would not agree to having a British political Residency but he had no objection to a native of India residing in Hyderabad on behalf of the British Government. After some resistance to the last two clauses the Amirs gave their consent and the engagement was concluded on 22 August 1809 under the full seal and signature of the Sind Government.

In concluding this treaty Smith knew that he was acting contrary to his instructions, but he also saw that unless he met the Amirs' wishes on this point he would be leaving the Sind territories with the certain knowledge that the French would step in, and that the present mission, far from achieving any of its objects, would have only served to arouse the Amirs' suspicions and thus closed the door on future negotiations. After all, his primary concern was the

French and he felt that if there was any secret understanding or connection existing between the Sind court and the French, such an engagement was the only way to effect its immediate dissolution.<sup>60</sup> Besides, the proposed exchange of vakeels and the residence of an Indian would secure them a channel of correct and regular intelligence regarding the doings of the Sind durbar. Therefore he exercised his discretion even at the risk of incurring the displeasure of his Government.

With an apology he submitted the treaty to the Governor-General for ratification. But far from being displeased the Central Government expressed entire approval of his proceedings. The way he had conducted his negotiations, Edmonstone wrote, showed "more than ordinary degree of diplomatic ability".<sup>61</sup> For, in substance this treaty met all the objects of the mission without in any way committing the British Government to awkward promises of aid against Afghanistan or any other power. The French were excluded and a future communication with Sind was ensured through the medium of annual missions. True, a political Residency was not achieved but through the native agency the envoy had succeeded in securing a 'channel of information' that would give his Government news on all aspects of political life in that quarter. To this post Smith appointed Munshi Muhammad whose duties were:<sup>62</sup> regular transmission of information regarding the general state of affairs in Sind; to report on the possible renewal of intercourse between the French and the Amirs either directly or through the king of Persia; non-interference in the durbar intrigues; and to avoid exciting the Amirs' suspicions that might lead to his dismissal.

While the negotiations were still in progress, Smith heard that emissaries from the neighbouring states of Jodhpur and Bhawalpore had come to the Amirs with the reports that the British operations under Col. Walker undertaken against the freebooters in Cutch were ultimately directed against Sind, that the English commander was only waiting for the rainy season to be over before launching the attack. To lend support to this report, it was pointed out to the rulers that the British mission to Sind had been sent to pry into the resources and military strength of the state.<sup>63</sup> The Amirs' fears were aroused and they thought of dismissing the mission or, in the alternative, detaining the members as hostages

To anticipate dismissal which would have been highly slighting to his Government, and since the negotiations had all but concluded, Smith himself asked for permission to depart. This reassured the Amirs and they set a date for the envoy's final audience with them.

Smith had his audience of leave on 23 August and left Hyderabad two days later, carrying a present of horses for the Governor-General from the Amirs. Mirza Muhammad Zuba Zubi, son-in-law of the late vizier Ibrahim Shah was appointed to be the Sind Government's representative to accompany the mission back and to present their proposal to Minto for British assistance against Cutch.<sup>64</sup> A factor that had helped Smith immensely in his negotiations was the valuable cooperation given him by Haji Omar and Wali Muhammad Laghari, the two deputies appointed by the Amirs to negotiate on their behalf. The former, a merchant by profession, enjoyed the personal confidence of the rulers. Right from the days of Crow, Haji Omar had shown a sustained loyalty to the cause of promoting friendly relations between Sind and the British Government. It was from him that Smith had learnt of the Amirs' intention to dismiss the mission. Wali Muhammad Laghari was a nobleman of stately appearance, and gifted with many qualities. Both Pottinger and Ellis in their accounts speak of him as a man of character and versatility, held in high esteem by everyone.<sup>65</sup> Had it not been for their assistance it is doubtful if Smith could have conducted his negotiations so smoothly.

With the conclusion of the 1809 Treaty between Sind and the British Government, the former came one step closer to its eventual subjugation. Slowly but surely the sheltering walls around Sind were falling away. The process had been set in motion by the Crow mission. The Smith mission was the next to make a dent. Mr. Ellis' account of Sind dealt with the internal state and resources of the country, constitution and administration of the Government. Lieutenants Maxfield and Christie worked on a geographical survey of the country, collecting data on the roads and routes of Sind with particular reference to the military operations.<sup>66</sup> The imperial tide that had swept over most of India was moving relentlessly towards this frontier state.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Marshman, *The History of India*, Pt. II. pp. 110-111
- <sup>2</sup> NAI, Secret Letters to Court 1808, S. No. 27. General Letter to the Secret Committee dated 31 March 1808
- <sup>3</sup> Basu, *op. cit.*, p. 604 (Quotes from Countess Minto's work *Lord Minto in India*)
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 603
- <sup>5</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 20 March 1809, No. 20
- <sup>6</sup> NAI, Secret Letters to Court 1808, S. No. 27. Letter dated 31 March 1808
- <sup>7</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 14 March 1808, No. 1. Governor-General in Council to the Bombay Governor
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>12</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 25 April 1808, No. 7. Chief of the Talpurs to Jonathan Duncan
- <sup>13</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 16 May 1808, No. 3. State of the Governor's proceedings on the subject of the instructions
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>15</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 16 May 1808, No. 2. Duncan to Minto dated 14 April 1808
- <sup>16</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 30 May 1808, No. 14. Francis Warden to Seton dated 30 April 1808
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>19</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Consultation 30 May 1808, No. 12. Governor of Bombay to Governor-General in Council dated 30 April 1808
- <sup>20</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Consultation 30 May 1808, No. 14
- <sup>21</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Consultation 1 August 1808, No. 20
- <sup>22</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Consultation 3 October 1808, No. 8. Seton's proceedings, letter dated 24 July 1808
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>24</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 5 December 1808, No. 20. Seton to Jonathan Duncan dated 24 August 1808
- <sup>25</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Consultation 5 December 1808, No. 22. Seton to the Shah dated Hyderabad, 28 August 1808
- <sup>26</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Consultation 5 December 1808, No. 32. Governor-General in Council to Jonathan Duncan dated 5 December 1808
- <sup>27</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Consultation 5 December 1808, No. 17. Governor in Council to the Governor-General in Council dated 8 November 1808
- <sup>28</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 5 December 1808, No. 32

- 29 NAI, Secret Letters to Court 1808, S. No. 27. General Letter to the Secret Committee dated 15 December 1808
- 30 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 10 October 1808, No. 6. Governor-General in Council to Governor of Bombay dated 10 October 1808
- 81 *Ibid*
- 82 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 17 October 1808, No. 2. Seton's despatch dated Hyderabad, 2 September 1808
- 33 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 21 October 1808, No. 12. Seton to Jonathan Duncan dated 6 October 1808
- 34 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 10 October 1808, No. 7
- 35 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 5 December 1808, No. 32. Governor-General in Council to Bombay Governor
- 36 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 28 November 1808, No. 10. Edmonstone to Smith dated 28 November 1808
- 37 *Ibid*
- 38 NAI, Secret Letters to Court 1808, S.No. 27. General Letter to the Secret Committee dated 15 December 1808
- 39 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 28 November 1808, No. 10
- 40 *Ibid*
- 41 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 17 October 1808, No. 2. Seton's despatch to Jonathan Duncan dated 2 September 1808
- 42 NAI, Secret and Separate Consultation 5 December 1808, No. 19. Seton to Jonathan Duncan dated 24 August 1808
- 43 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 6 March 1809, No. 2. Edmonstone to Smith dated 6 March 1809
- 44 *Ibid*
- 45 Pottinger, *Travels in Beloochistan and Sind*, p. 332
- 46 *Ibid.*, pp. 333-334
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 335-340
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 348
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 363
- 50 NAI, Secret Consultation 7 August 1812, No. 7. Enclosure No. 2 dated Hyderabad, 11 August 1809. (Smith reports proceedings)
- 51 *Ibid.*, No. 5, Smith to Edmonstone dated 1 October 1809
- 52 *Ibid.*, No. 12, Smith's memorandum. Enclosure No. 7 dated 15 August 1809
- 53 *Ibid.*, No. 13. Enclosure No. 8 dated 15 August 1809
- 54 *Ibid.*, No. 5
- 55 *Ibid*
- 56 NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 12 December 1809, No. 8. Letter to Gulam Ali Khan dated 16 November 1809
- 57 NAI, Secret Consultation 7 August 1812, No. 17. Enclosure 12 dated 21 August 1809
- 58 NAI, Secret Consultation 7 August 1812, No. 16. Enclosure 11 dated 21 August 1809



<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 17. Enclosure 12 dated 21 August 1809

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 5

<sup>61</sup> NAI, Secret and Separate Department Consultation 12 December 1809, No. 6. Edmonstone to Smith dated 16 November 1809

<sup>62</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 7 August 1812, No. 5

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 19. Enclosure 14 dated 22 August 1809

<sup>65</sup> Pottinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-351

<sup>66</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 7 August 1812, No. 5



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## Sadlier Mission to Sind

For some years after the 1809 Treaty nothing eventful happened to disturb the Anglo-Sind relations. Apart from some sporadic correspondence there was little contact between the two sides. Then in 1819 a minor incident occurred that led to an exchange of letters whose tone was far from cordial. In that year the Jasmi pirates infesting the Sind coastline caused considerable damage to the Company's ships. The trouble was not new; it had been recurring from time to time since 1810.<sup>1</sup> Such incidents were doing much harm to the Company's coastal trade. So far the British Government had been content to make representations to the Amirs through their native agent in Hyderabad, but on this occasion the Governor of Bombay remonstrated with the rulers and asked them to permit the English ships to deal with the pirates. The Amirs refused, saying that as long as the Company's ships kept within their bounds, Sind would know how to manage her affairs.<sup>2</sup>

Hardly was the incident over when, in the same year, the Parkar banditti raised its head. These people, called the Khosas, were bands of marauders wandering over the desert stretches of Thar and Parkar which formed part of the Hyderabad Amirs' dominions in search of loot and plunder.<sup>3</sup> From the safety of their base in the desert, they raided villages in Cutch and the neighbouring states of Kathiawar and Gujarat and then escaped back into Sind. In 1819 they led large-scale incursions into Cutch which had by now become virtually a British dependency. The Bombay Government strongly protested against these violations of British territory and prepared to take armed action. Fearing that the matter might take a serious turn, the Amirs assured the British Government in two successive letters that the marauders would be severely dealt with. They explained what measures they planned to take and insisted that Capt. Mcmurdo, in charge of the British troops in Cutch should keep strictly within his bounds and if in the course of ac-

tion any of the tribesmen escaped to Cutch, the British commander was at liberty to intercept them and deal with them in the manner he liked.<sup>4</sup>

The incident passed. But in 1820 the same thing happened again, this time causing more than a rumble in the placid relations between the two Governments. In that year the Khosas carried out a bold incursion into some Cutch districts. Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, was in no mood to lodge any more protests. Determined to take decisive action, he fitted out a large armed force under the command of Lt. Col. Barclay and ordered it to proceed to Parkar to chastise the lawless tribesmen. The force proceeded by slow marches via Baroda and Radhanpur and crossed the desert Runn which surrounded the insulated district of Parkar.<sup>5</sup> In the meantime the Amirs, hearing of these warlike preparations, took the precaution of sending some troops to guard the frontier. When this force was within a short distance of Parkar, intelligence reached the British commander that a band of Khosas had encamped about 40 miles from the British camp with the intention of surprising the English troops into sudden action. Barclay acted immediately. Taking a select party of his cavalry he arrived upon the scene and engaged the supposed Khosa party in action. He discovered his mistake only after the action was over in which several Sindians were killed. The Sindian troops, incensed beyond measure at this unprovoked action, retaliated and attacked the village of Luna in Cutch and a series of hostile exchanges took place.<sup>6</sup>

The situation was explosive and looked as if it might well lead to a full-scale war. Anxious to avoid it the Amirs hastened to send their vizier Sayyid Ismael Shah accompanied by a deputy named Lala Doulat Rao to Bombay to offer an apology for the Luna mishap and to bring back a British representative with them.<sup>7</sup>

The Bombay Government, however, advocated a tough line of action. They maintained that the British Government was right and fully justified in taking military action, for the Sind rulers had failed to keep the Khosas in check even after repeated remonstrances from the British side. Their action was taken in self-defence, Bombay contended, and the Amirs had no ground whatsoever for their precautionary steps.<sup>8</sup> They therefore went ahead with military preparations. Writing to Charles Metcalfe in a despatch dated

23 May 1820, Francis Warden, secretary to Bombay Governor, gave details of armed forces that would be required in the war against Sind. One force was to be collected on the Indus, somewhere below Tatta while another was to enter Sind from Cutch. Both were to join together to march to Hyderabad. To support the movements of these forces, another was to be stationed on the frontier line to act as a reserve.<sup>9</sup>

The crisis was averted by the intervention of the Central Government. It was in fact wholly due to the good sense of Metcalfe, political secretary to the Governor-General, whose moderation and advice prevailed with Lord Hastings from taking this extreme step. He wrote to Warden: "Few things in his Lordship's judgement can be conceived to be more impolitic than a war with Sind. Not to dwell on the expense and unprofitableness of such an undertaking, of the chances of failure inseparable from all human enterprises, it is evident that the most prosperous result of war with Sind would be an evil as tending to involve us in disputes, jealousies, enmities, intrigues, negotiations, wars and incalculable embarrassments in the countries beyond the Indus."<sup>10</sup> Metcalfe held the view that the British should stabilise gains already acquired and consolidate their power in the dominions they held. So he advised Bombay that an apology from the Amirs or a disavowal of the act, false or true, should be considered sufficient without insisting on the demand for indemnification. It was of course the duty of the British Government to protect its subjects from the depredations of the Sind Government but "the Governor-General in Council anxiously hopes that our obligation to our subjects and allies may be fulfilled without involving us in a most impolitic war".<sup>11</sup>

On this point however the Bombay Governor was hard to convince. He had heard the report that the Amirs were assembling troops to enforce their stand by means of arms and on that ground given orders to speed up military preparations against Sind.<sup>12</sup> "Nothing less than a formidable attack can avert a swarm of invaders of the Noomries of old from the wilds of Baluchistan," Warden wrote and he went on to outline the Government's plan of operations which envisaged attacking Sind at more than one point. The Bombay Government also planned to send naval armaments to both mouths of the Delta to support their field forces.<sup>13</sup>

The Central Government refused to change its stand. The Amirs' sincerity was beyond dispute as was evident from their action to depute vakeels to offer an explanation, Metcalfe replied. Indeed, he continued, there could be no greater misconception than to think that the British Government alone was the injured party, for the outrage had been committed by both sides.<sup>14</sup> Justice of the case therefore demanded not only the recognition of the claims of the Amirs for indemnity but also that a public inquiry be instituted into the conduct of Lt. Col. Barclay "with the view of showing the pain with which our Government contemplated the accident and our readiness to punish any criminal aggression which might be substantiated. The solicitude to offer this justice to an independent neighbouring state would in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, be incumbent on us in proportion as that state was weak and unable to vindicate its own interests".<sup>15</sup> Accordingly the Governor-General laid down that the Amirs' disavowal of the raid, ascribed to the "ungovernable irritation of the Bel-lochees" satisfied the point of honour and must be accepted as such.

The same despatch went on to point out why extension towards or beyond the Indus was a hazardous proposition, that there could be no object gained by the taking of Hyderabad for its permanent holding was not feasible while its temporary holding was fraught with embarrassments. "Defeated the Sindians would return to where we could not follow them, and as we receded they would again come forward. In short there does not appear to the Governor-General any particular feature in the enemy's country the seizure of which would reduce him to distress and acceptance of terms capable of affording us (our only rational object) an improved security against future depredation."<sup>16</sup>

Left with no alternative the Bombay Governor invited the deputies of the Sind Government to an audience with him.<sup>17</sup> At this interview Sayyid Ismael Shah presented a detailed version of the case, representing the raid on Luna to be a fray between two Baluchi tribes, Jats and Changs, who were age-old enemies. He said that the force sent by the Amirs to guard the Sind frontier had with them a party of the Baluchi tribe of Changs whose leader, Sungen Chang, had been cut up by the British troops in the surprise attack launched by Barclay. Under the irritation occasioned by the loss of their leader, the Changs headed for Luna on the frontier

of Cutch where another Baluchi tribe of Jats had taken refuge after they had been forced to flee from Sind by Sunger Chang. Surely the ensuing action could not be magnified into an invasion of Cutch, he urged. When the Amirs heard of the incident, he said, they "were much grieved lest from this circumstance the friendship of the Governments might be broken". They had therefore lost no time in declaring it 'unauthorised' and to prove that, had sent him to clear the misunderstanding.<sup>18</sup> Elphinstone accepted the explanation but insisted that something more than a mere disavowal of the incident was necessary to put matters right. He demanded a definite guarantee against a future recurrence of these incidents. The Sind agent assured the Governor that the Amirs had decided to move the whole body of predatory tribes from the frontier to the west of Sind and engage them in peaceful occupations there. He concluded his explanation by requesting the Governor to depute a representative who should return with him to Sind to settle all these matters.<sup>19</sup>

Before leaving Bombay the Sayyid concluded an agreement with the British Government, which was signed on 9 November 1820. It provided for perpetual friendship and mutual exchange of vakeels between the contracting parties, the exclusion of Europeans and Americans from Sind, and measures to be taken by the Amirs for the control of the Khosas and the prevention of inroads into British territory.<sup>20</sup>

This agreement was to form the basis of the talks that Capt. G.F. Sadlier was now deputed by the Governor to conduct with the Amirs in response to the Sayyid's invitation. The envoy's instructions were to impress on the Amirs to take effective measures against the Khosas so as to prevent future incursions, and to ratify the treaty concluded by the Sind agent or frame a new one based on the same principles.<sup>21</sup> Sadlier was further to tell the Amirs that no freebooters, guilty of excesses, should escape unpunished, whether they happened to reside in Sind or in territories under British jurisdiction. By this demand the British Government was claiming the right to punish Tahir Looniaee, the notorious ring-leader of the robbers and his gang who were fugitives from Cutch, seeking asylum in Sind. Furthermore, the envoy was to insist that the Amirs must back their intentions by stationing a strong force in Parkar as the most effectual means of checking



the banditti from venturing into Cutch or other neighbouring states.<sup>22</sup>

Sadlier and his party sailed from Bombay on 5 December 1820. In the letter to the Amirs, the Governor spoke of his Government's desire for peace on its frontiers and said that Capt. Sadlier was being deputed at their invitation as a "proof of the restoration of the relations of amity between the two countries" and to explore means that would ensure the continuance of good relations by providing against the recurrence of incidents that tended to lead to unpleasant consequences.<sup>23</sup> The mission anchored in the Karachi Bay on the evening of 16 December and entered the harbour the following day after some initial resistance from the local authorities.<sup>24</sup> Owing to a gale on 13 December, three of the mission's boats had strayed away, with the result the envoy had to prolong his stay in Karachi till they should arrive. Thus it was not until 29 December that Sadlier and his party were able to continue their journey, accompanied by Sayyid Ismael Shah and a large retinue of officials sent by the rulers ostensibly to welcome the mission but which the English representative suspected were there to keep a watch on their movements. The mission finally reached Hyderabad on 10 January 1821.<sup>25</sup>

On the occasion of the public audience which was held on 16 January, the Amirs were cordial and expressed happiness at the mission's arrival,<sup>26</sup> but at his private meeting with them the next day Sadlier noticed that the rulers were not interested in discussing anything with him. They seemed wholly preoccupied with the Afghan danger for which, curiously enough, they were responsible. Earlier, when the Bombay Government had threatened Sind with invasion and started preparations for war, the Amirs, greatly alarmed and almost certain of the English attack, had deputed Mirza Muhammad Kazmi, brother of Sayyid Ismael Shah, to Kabul inviting Afghan aid against the English. And so it happened that while the Sayyid was engaged on a mission to Bombay, his brother was engaged on a counter-mission to Afghanistan.

By an irony of circumstances both missions succeeded. Afghanistan was willing to help provided Sind paid up her arrears of tribute as well as the next year's tribute in advance. The Amirs agreed and soon a large Afghan force commanded by Azeem Khan was on its way to Sind.<sup>27</sup> At Bombay the Sayyid was also success-

ful and the English envoy had come to Sind at their request. Thus, the Amirs were caught in a dilemma. Everytime Sadlier brought up the subject of the Khosas, they pleaded their inability to discuss it. How could they spare troops to fight the Khosas when all their military strength was needed to combat the Afghan danger, they argued? "A few Brigadocias are more acceptable to the Amirs than the presence of a mission, every act of which is misconstrued and viewed with jealousy and suspicion,"<sup>28</sup> Sadlier wrote to the Governor. Even in the matter of ratification of the agreement concluded by the Sayyid, the Amirs were lukewarm and pressed for a closer alliance than that stipulated in the terms of the treaty. Sadlier's instructions on this point however were quite clear and firm. "In the event of the Ameers renewing their overtures (which it seems probable they may do for the purpose of intimidating the Afghans), they must be told explicitly that it is entirely foreign to the policy of the British Government to extend its connections beyond the Runn and the desert."<sup>29</sup>

The Amirs adopted dilatory methods in order to protract the course of negotiations as much as possible. They suggested to Sadlier that they would like to depute a vakeel with him to Bombay to assure the Governor that they would take measures against the Khosas after they had settled the issue with Azeem Khan. The envoy replied that deputing another vakeel to Bombay would detract from Sayyid Ismael Shah's earlier deputation and thus impair the dignity of that personage. Again, with regard to the complaints listed in the Luna outrage, the Amirs demanded that the complaints should be substantiated and the victims actually produced before them before they would consider the question of restitution. Sadlier replied that the Governor himself had ascertained the complaints to be just and factual; hence the question of further investigation did not arise.<sup>30</sup>

While these talks were still going on, there was another daring raid on Cutch and the persons suspected in this case belonged to a gang believed to be under the Sind Government's protection. The leader of the gang was Tahir Loonaee, who with his seventy other associates resided in villages situated on the outskirts of the Runn and which were held in *jaghir* by Tahir from Mir Murad Ali Khan.<sup>31</sup> This fresh outrage added considerably to the envoy's difficulties for his Government directed him to demand the surrender



of the gang as well as the restitution of property plundered. Sadlier wrote: "The delicate situation in which I found myself, as an envoy to confirm the renewal of the former relations of friendship and amity, and obliged to obtain retribution for intermediate offences committed in the breach of the treaty, rendered it necessary to argue those points with many persons to give publicity to the demands of my Government, which have been ultimately acknowledged by the Umeers and cannot be denied by any of their adherents who have all had a full scope for displaying their abilities."<sup>32</sup> In his interview with the rulers on 23 January he was able to obtain a promise from them to take stern measures.<sup>33</sup> He followed this up with a suggestion at a subsequent meeting that the Amirs take advantage of the presence of a number of Khosa chiefs in Hyderabad by making them responsible for the acts of their followers in the desert. He further proposed the name of Mir Bodha, their maternal uncle, to be placed in charge of the Parkar expedition. The Amirs accepted his suggestion.<sup>34</sup> Sadlier also proposed to his Government that the money taken from the Amirs now by way of restitution should be returned to them on the surrender of the culprits.<sup>35</sup> His proposal was accepted.

Even in regard to the agreement Sadlier's tenacity prevailed and the Amirs finally gave their consent and fixed their seal and signature on the document on 5 February 1821. "The same arguments continually introduced have proved to the Ameers the necessity of adhering to a constant line of conduct with the agents of the British Government," he wrote in his letter of 7 February to the Governor.<sup>36</sup> Having secured the ratification of the treaty, the mission had their last audience with the rulers on 14 February.<sup>37</sup> Leave-taking was cordial. The envoy was entrusted with presents for his Government and Diwan Toremal was appointed to accompany the mission up to Luckput bunder on the Cutch border where he was to hand over the gang of bandits and receive the refund of money. Soon after the Amirs left for Larkana to settle matters with Azeem Khan whom they placated by agreeing to pay up all their debts of tribute in regular instalments.<sup>38</sup>

Although Sadlier and the Amirs had parted on a friendly note, the latter wrote a long letter of complaint against him to Elphinstone. Detailing every mark of respect they had shown to the mission and the envoy throughout their stay, they wrote: "In what

terms can we describe the violent and harsh temper of that gentleman? From the moment that he landed at Kurachee and arrived at Hyderabad until he departed for Bombay, he without any cause was sure to behave every day in a rough and quarrelsome way towards our people."<sup>39</sup> Taken aback by the charges, Sadlier gave a long explanation of his proceedings at the Sind court and expressed surprise at the Amirs' 'inexplicable and contradictory behaviour' especially when they had parted on friendly terms.<sup>40</sup> The British Government deplored the fact that the mission whose sole object was conciliation should end in complaint and remonstrance. Writing to the Amirs the Bombay Governor assured them that Sadlier meant no ill in whatever he had said and if in the course of his duties they had found any incongruity in his behaviour, it was simply due to the diversity of custom and temperament that existed between nations and often led to misunderstanding.<sup>41</sup>

In the years that followed the Sind Government kept its word and took effective measures against the *Mhosas*, which included the surrender of Tahir and his gang. There was no recurrence of trouble in Cutch except once in 1825 when the British Government forced the issue to a military demonstration which had its effect.<sup>42</sup> But for that interruption, relations between the Sind and British Governments remained friendly and peaceful.

In terms of immediate results, the chief value of the Sadlier mission lay in getting the Amirs to accept moral and financial responsibility for all incursions into British territory from the Sind side. But its more significant value lay in the light the envoy's reports shed on the dissensions that had crept in among the rulers. Sadlier spoke of the divided counsels of the Amirs and the lack of unity among them, unity that had been a marked feature of the earlier Amirs' regime. Said Sadlier: "They have no one minister, each has his separate informants, who offer their opinions without regard to their masters' interests; this will account in some measure for their inconsistency and prove that patience and perseverance must be alternately exercised to obtain the end required."<sup>43</sup> It was now clear that an element of discord had set in, which was sure to undermine their solidarity. This internal weakness was an ominous sign.

Another significant feature of note about the Sadlier mission is that it marked the end of one distinct phase of British policy to-

wards Sind: Uptil 1821 the policy of the British Government towards this state was haphazard, dictated more by expedient than by principle. Missions were sent to explore means of defence against dangers as and when they arose, but the moment the danger had passed, Sind was forgotten, to be remembered again when the next danger arose. Sadlier mission was the last of the missions to come to Sind on a momentary impulse of policy. At this stage annexation of Sind was neither the object of British policy nor even considered desirable. In fact a golden opportunity had now presented itself to the British Government to do so, and if they had needed an excuse for aggression, they had one ready at hand. As Elphinstone recorded in his minute of 25 September 1820 : "We had now cause for war and an army prepared, we were at peace with all the rest of the world. . . if therefore we did not take this opportunity, the Amirs might be convinced, we would never willingly do so."<sup>44</sup> In the counsels of the Supreme Government Metcalfe's was the decisive voice in shaping central policy and his instructions to Bombay when the latter yearned to strike were very definitely to steer a safe course with the Sind rulers. He wrote, "If an eventual rupture with Sind be rendered unavoidable by further provocations and perverseness on the part of that Government, it is his lordship's earnest wish that at least it be not precipitated by any measures of a hostile tendency on 'our part'".<sup>45</sup>

Metcalfe did not rule out the possibility that events might arise in the future necessitating British interference in this region. But such an eventuality, he urged, should not be precipitated. "At some future period perhaps we may be forced in self-defence to pass that boundary and establish ourselves in regions with which at present we have no connection, but it behoves us most studiously to avoid, by all means consistent with our Honour, every measure having a tendency towards such an issue and to devote ourselves to the consolidation of our power within its present sphere."<sup>46</sup>

That time came nine years later when Burnes was sent to navigate the Indus. The missions then followed in quick succession pursuing a line of calculated policy to obtain a firm and lasting foothold in Sind. It is therefore interesting to note that upto Sadlier's time the English made no deliberate attempt to divide the Amirs. The three branches of the Talpur ruling house were treated as one family, with Hyderabad acting as the acknowledged

head. In dealings with the Sind Government, Hyderabad was taken to represent the whole of Sind and till 1830 the British Government made no attempt to disturb the arrangement. Then came the voyage of Burnes up the Indus, followed by the mission of Henry Pottinger, both of which were dictated by the need to gain a lasting footing in the state. Now, in pursuance of their objective, it became necessary to accentuate differences between the rulers and the English did not hesitate to do it. Pottinger who came in 1831 concluded one treaty with the Hyderabad house and another with the Khairpur house. The imperial tide that had swept over most of India had turned in the direction of Sind.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 12 October 1810, No. 49. Letter from the Secretary to Government of Bombay dated 11 September 1810
- <sup>2</sup> Talpur-British Correspondence 1815-1819, JSHS (*Journal of the Sind Historical Society*), Vol XIII, p. 7
- <sup>3</sup> Aitkin, *Gazetteer of Sind*, p. 138
- <sup>4</sup> Talpur-British Correspondence, op. cit., pp. 9-12
- <sup>5</sup> Nagar Parkar was a tract of land about 44 miles long and 15 miles wide, environed by the Runn and sand hills
- <sup>6</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 22 July 1820, No. 4. Chief Secretary, Bombay Government to C. J. Metcalfe dated 18 June 1820
- <sup>7</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 12 August 1820, No. 4. Acting Assistant Resident at Bhooj to Warden dated 20 June 1820, forwarding a letter of 3 June 1820 from Moonshi Mahomed Yusuf, the Native Agent at Hyderabad
- <sup>8</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 22 July 1820, No. 4. Warden to Metcalfe, 23 May 1820
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>10</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 29 July 1820, No. 9. Metcalfe to Warden, 29 July 1820
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>12</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 9 September 1820, No. 12. Warden to Metcalfe, 2 August 1820
- <sup>13</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 23 September 1820, No. 9. Despatch dated 16 August 1820
- <sup>14</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 7 October 1820, No. 2. Metcalfe to Warden, 7 October 1820
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>17</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 14 November 1820, No. 17. Minute by the Governor of Bombay dated 25 September 1820

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>20</sup> BR, Vol. 7/53 of Political Department 1820-21. Agreement between the East India Company and the Ameers of Sind dated 9 November 1820. (Consultation 15 November 1820, No. 3)

<sup>21</sup> BR, Vol. 47/56 of Political Department 1820-21, pp. 37-40. Secretary with the Governor to Sadlier conveying instructions, 8 February 1821. (Consultation 28 February 1821, No. 13)

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>23</sup> BR, Vol. 7/53 of Political Department 1820-21. Governor to the Amirs dated 27 November 1820

<sup>24</sup> BR, Vol 47/56 of Political Department 1820-21. Sadlier to the Governor, 21 December 1820

<sup>25</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 7 April 1821, No. 2A. Sadlier to the Governor of Bombay dated 14 January 1821

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>27</sup> BR, Vol. 47/56 of Political Department 1820-21. Sadlier to the Governor dated 8 February 1821. (Consultation 14 March 1821, No. 35B)

<sup>28</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 5 May 1821, No. 3. Sadlier to Governor, 10 February 1821. 'Briggadocias' refers to the call of the Amirs to the Khosas to come and join them against the Afghans

<sup>29</sup> BR, Vol. 47/56 of Political Department 1820-21, *op. cit.*, instructions to Sadlier, 8 February 1821

<sup>30</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 5 May 1821, No. 3. Sadlier to Governor dated 8 February 1821

<sup>31</sup> BR, Vol. 47/56 of Political Department 1820-21, pp. 192-209. Sadlier to Governor of Bombay dated Buddcen, 2 March 1821

<sup>32</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 5 May 1821, No. 3. Sadlier to Governor, 7 February 1821

<sup>33</sup> BR, Vol 47/56 of Political Department 1820-21, p. 223. Sadlier to Governor dated 8 February 1821. (Consultation 14 March 1821, No. 35 B)

<sup>34</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 5 May 1821, *op. cit.*, No. 3. (Report of an interview with the Amirs on 6 February 1821)

<sup>35</sup> BR, Vol. 47/56 of Political Department 1820-21, Sadlier to Elphinstone dated 2 March 1821. (Consultation 30 May 1821, No. 10)

<sup>36</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 5 May 1821, *op. cit.*, No. 3

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, letter dated 15 February 1821

<sup>38</sup> BR, Vol. 47/56 of Political Department 1820-21, p. 322, Paper E. Native Agent at Hyderabad to Bombay Governor

<sup>39</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 11 August 1821, No. 2

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 3. Sadlier to the Secretary to Government, 11 June 1821

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 5. Elphinstone to the Amirs dated 6 July 1821

<sup>42</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 21 October 1825, No. 15

<sup>43</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 7 April 1821, No. 2A. Sadlier to Governor dated 24 January 1821

- <sup>44</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 14 November 1820, No. 17. Governor's Minute dated 25 September 1820
- <sup>45</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 29 July 1820, No. 9. Metcalfe to Warden dated 29 July 1820
- <sup>46</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 29 July 1820, No. 9. Metcalfe to Warden, 29 July 1820



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## Navigation of the Indus

Upto Sadlier's deputation, British policy towards Sind had followed a fitful course, dictated more by expedient than by principle, but from 1830 onward it took on a new, more purposeful direction. And, interestingly enough, it was the river Indus that provided the focal point in the formulation of that policy.

In the year 1825, a horse-breeder and veterinary surgeon, William Moorcroft, who had just returned from his most enterprising journey in the Himalayan regions of Hindustan recorded in his book that the Indus, "although little known to Europeans, as it has not been attempted by them, since the days of Nearchus, is perfectly practicable for boats of considerable burden,"<sup>1</sup> and he recommended the opening of the river for purposes of commerce. About the same time a document compiled at the instance of Sir John Malcolm and entitled "Memoranda on the North-West Frontier of British India—and the Importance of the River Indus as Connected with its Defence" was brought out, containing the views of various persons whose opinion was considered authoritative on the subject. In the memorandum it was observed: "Should ever an enemy appear on our North-West frontier, the possession of Sind will become a point of the utmost importance to British interests in India, as commanding the navigation of the Indus; a position, in case of such an event occurring, of vital consequence to the defence of the country."<sup>2</sup> The European enemy they dreaded at this time was Russia. Russia was strong in Central Asia by reason of her commercial ascendancy, and on the death of the king of Persia, it was feared that she would acquire political preponderance throughout the Muslim states in the north-west, a position which would pose a serious threat to the British in India. This fear had a profoundly disturbing effect on the British authorities both in England and in India.

One way to meet the Russian challenge, the authorities felt, would be to establish British commercial ascendancy in Central



Asia by means of the Indus. In their view such an ascendancy would counteract Russian influence to a great extent, a view to which Lord Ellenborough who had become chairman of the Board of Control in 1829 fully subscribed.<sup>3</sup> Also, it was thought that such a pre-eminent position in trade would offer in the ultimate analysis more than just commercial advantages. Therefore it seemed to John Malcolm who was Governor of Bombay, that the English as "an act of preventive policy, must establish a commanding influence in Sind".<sup>4</sup>

If the Indus was to be opened, the first thing necessary was to explore the river. The reason to do so was soon found in the proposed exchange of courtesy presents between Maharajah Ranjit Singh of Punjab and the King of England. It happened that in 1828 the retiring Governor-General Lord Amherst had been requested to take a Kashmir shawl tent as a present from the Maharajah to King William IV. The occasion of returning this gift now offered an excellent pretext for surveying the Indus. Ranjit Singh was known for his predilection for fine horses. So Ellenborough proposed a present of dray horses—one horse and four mares—which was got ready and speedily despatched to Bombay to be sent to the Sikh ruler by way of the Indus. To give more plausibility to the idea, John Malcolm added an old coach "lined inside with blue velvet and coarsely painted without" to make the carriage heavy and so unfit for the land journey.<sup>5</sup> What was more natural than that care should be taken not to expose this expensive gift to a long and fatiguing land journey! Lord Ellenborough wrote to the Maharajah, acknowledging the latter's present of shawls to the English king, who in appreciation of the gesture, was reciprocating by sending him a gigantic breed of England to match with his best breed of Asia, and added, "As their great weight makes it inexpedient that they should undergo the fatigue of a long march in a hot climate, I have directed that they should be conveyed to your Highness by the Indus, and such River of the Panjab as may be more easy of navigation."<sup>6</sup>

The Governor of Bombay appointed Lieutenant Alexander Burnes, a young enterprising man of 25, on this important errand. The young emissary was instructed to make a thorough survey of the river, to collect information on the depth of the water in the Indus, the direction and breadth of the stream, its facilities for

stream navigation, the supply of fuel on its banks and the general state of the countries bordering on it.<sup>7</sup> It was fully realised that the proposed voyage would not be regarded with favour by the Amirs. In fact, anticipating trouble from that quarter it was proposed that Col. Henry Pottinger, British Resident in Cutch (who in 1809 had accompanied the Smith Mission to Sind) should write them a letter, requesting them to lend their assistance in forwarding the present to its destination. He was to charge Burnes with messages regarding the predatory tribesmen of Thar and Parkar and authorise him to discuss measures with the Amirs for the suppression of the Khosas.<sup>8</sup> As the success of the plan depended on its swift execution, it was decided that it should be kept secret until the carriage had actually left Mandavie for Tatta. After that a letter was to be despatched to the Sind rulers, telling them about the voyage, the idea being that should they refuse to grant it passage, Burnes would have advanced too far up on the Indus to turn back.<sup>9</sup>

Burnes left Bombay for Cutch and on 21 January 1831 he sailed from Mandavie, accompanied by Ensign J. D. Leckie, a surveyor, a doctor and some servants. Pottinger's parting advice to him was to exercise the utmost caution in his job, to take his notes on the survey in strict privacy, and to say or do nothing that might excite the Amirs' suspicions.<sup>10</sup> Three days earlier he had written to Mir Murad Ali Khan, advising him of Burnes' voyage, and requested the Amirs to help the emissary with the hiring of boats and provide him with a guard if necessary.<sup>11</sup> After Burnes had sailed for Lahori bunder, Pottinger wrote another letter to Murad Ali Khan, dated 7 February 1831, in which he explained why the water route had been preferred to the land route, that their first intention had been to send the present via Calcutta and Shah Jehanabad to Lahore, but that the bulk of the carriage rendered it unfit for the hazards of a land journey, that it was decided to take the Indus route because its course was connected with Lahore and Kashmir through Mandavie.<sup>12</sup>

The Amirs, on receiving the letters, were seized with panic. They were certain that Burnes was the 'avant courier of an army'. Summoning the British native agent they observed that no Englishman before this had ever come to Sind in this manner; that his coming now was an infringement of the 1809 Treaty according to which

no person, except a native of India, could enter Sind, or be allowed to reside in Sind; that Burnes would not be allowed to proceed up the Indus, and that they would instruct their officers not to allow him to disembark.<sup>13</sup> They further argued that the voyage was fraught with danger because of the presence of bandits along the river banks, that the whole enterprise was unpractical because there were no boats of suitable size available that could be dragged against the stream as far as Lahore. They rushed deputies to Pottinger to explain the impossibility of the enterprise, particularly stressing the point that their dinghies were small which could only carry four or five men while their state barges had neither masts nor sails which rendered them unsuitable for the purpose. They also instructed their messengers to find out if the English were assembling an army to support their demand with force.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile Burnes was not allowed to land. Having arrived within a few miles of Lahori bunder, he was harassed and abused by a party of armed men, and so on 6 February 1831 he was obliged to turn back and return to anchor in the eastern mouth of the Indus.<sup>15</sup> When Pottinger heard of this, he sent peremptory orders to Burnes to hasten back to Lahori bunder before the Amirs could hear of his retreat. On his part he addressed a strong letter to the native agent "to convey to their Highnesses my hope, that under all circumstances they will guard against any of their officers or chiefs committing any act towards the mission which might compromise the long standing friendship between the two Governments".<sup>16</sup>

Nonetheless the Amirs did not give their consent until towards the end of March, and the circumstance that finally broke their opposition was military action by Maharajah Ranjit Singh near their border. It happened that just before Burnes started on his voyage, the Maharajah had sent a force under Col. Ventura to the western frontier of Bhawalpore to collect tribute from that state. While the operations were in progress, news came of the Amirs' refusal to let Burnes pass and immediately the Sikh ruler directed that force to proceed to Dera Ghazi Khan from where, because of its proximity to Shikarpore, its presence had the effect of forcing the Amirs to give in.<sup>17</sup> Thus, on 12 April Burnes and his party embarked in the native boats on their voyage up the Indus and reached Hyderabad on the 18th.<sup>18</sup> The Amirs' procrastination had only helped to serve

his purpose better for in the intervening period when he was not being allowed to land, he had made three trips up and down the coast of Sind, entered all the mouths of the Indus, made charts and surveyed the land route to Tatta.

In the capital his reception was most cordial. Nothing was spared to make him and his party comfortable, so much so that Burnes noted in his journal that it was hard to believe they were the same unwelcome party who had taken three months to reach Hyderabad from Cutch.<sup>19</sup> His interview with the Amirs was equally gratifying. Burnes took the opportunity to discuss the subject of Parkar banditti and finally left Hyderabad, laden with presents. A state barge was placed at his disposal to convey him to the frontiers of Sind. "Their jumptee," wrote Burnes in his journal, "was a vessel of the most comfortable and convenient description with masts and sails, which His Highness had so often represented in his different letters to the Government and Pottinger as quite unsuited to the purposes of navigating the Indus."<sup>20</sup>

From Hyderabad Burnes proceeded to Khairpur, where Mir Rustam's welcome to the mission was positively effusive. One deputation had been sent to welcome them when they were still 80 miles from the capital while another waited at the river bank to greet their arrival.<sup>21</sup> At the state durbar held on 17 May the mission members were treated to the most lavish hospitality. The Amir offered Burnes a state barge for his conveyance and appointed a special deputy to accompany the mission up to Subzulkote, the frontier point of Sind. Why Khairpur was so extravagant in its attentions was soon clear to Burnes for throughout his journey from Khairpur Mir Rustam's deputy continued to urge the desire of his master to enter into an alliance with the British Government on the same basis as the latter had with Jessulmere, Bikaner and Bhawalpore.<sup>21</sup> Burnes promised to convey these sentiments to his Government, which he accordingly did in a letter dated 20 September 1831 to Henry Prinsep, a secretary to the Governor-General. In this letter the young emissary was particular to point out that this Amir possessed by far the most advantageous portion of the Indus. Bukkur, its fort, commanded the navigation of the Indus and possessed all the military, political and commercial advantages, while Shikarpore, the flourishing emporium of the state, was only 22 miles from it, commanding a communication with Jessulmere

which did not cross the Hyderabad territories.<sup>23</sup> Bukkur however was a jealously guarded point which even Burnes was not allowed to see.

Leaving Sind on 21 May, Burnes sailed up the river, crossed Bhawal Khan's territory and reached Lahore in July. He was received by Maharajah Ranjit Singh in the old royal palace where the presentation was made to the salute of guns and much fanfare,<sup>24</sup> though the present itself failed to satisfy the Maharajah. Says Hugel, "To send four brewers' horses and a monstrous dray horse to a prince who has a peculiar fancy for the most elegant saddle horses, is something like giving a man who loves the rare flowers which adorn his beautiful hot house, a cart-load of potatoes... The mares were forthwith sent to graze, without receiving any further notice, as these animals are very rarely used in the Panjab."<sup>25</sup>

However, the Sikh ruler's satisfaction was of little concern to Burnes. On reaching Lahore he immediately sent off a memoir on the Indus, a map of the river and a narrative of his journey up to Lahore, to Bentinck at Simla whilst he himself followed there a few days later for a personal conference with the Governor-General.<sup>26</sup> Impressed with the findings of Burnes' report, Bentinck wrote to Lord Clare, Governor of Bombay, saying, "I have now received the official reports of Lieut. Burnes' voyage, and the result has satisfied me that the importance of the River Indus in a political point of view, not less than as a route of commerce, has not been overrated."<sup>27</sup> He therefore announced his intention of entering on a negotiation with the Amirs of Sind for the opening of the Indus, which was in accordance with the views expressed by the Secret Committee. The man chosen to be envoy to the court of Sind was Col. Henry Pottinger, British Resident in Cutch.

The Supreme Government's letter of instructions to Pottinger pointed out to him that the Secret Committee of the Honourable Court of Directors were anxious to obtain the free navigation of the Indus "with a view to the advantages that might result from substituting our own influence for that derived by Russia, through her commercial intercourse with Bokhara in the countries lying between Hindoostan and the Caspian Sea, as well as because of the great facilities afforded by this River for the disposal of the produce and manufactures of the British Dominions both in Europe and in India."<sup>28</sup> The findings of Burnes' voyage, it went on to say, had



proved that the river was ideally suited for commerce, but trade had not flourished on its waters because of the political condition of the countries bordering on its banks. In these countries, the despatch stated, want of security, heavy and forcible exactions and discord and jealousy among petty chieftains were common conditions which were highly injurious to trade. The Governor-General was anxious to remedy this state of affairs and had therefore decided to take the first step in this direction which was to approach the chiefs whose dominions touched the banks of the Indus.<sup>29</sup>

The river Indus from the ocean to the point of junction with the united stream of the Punjab rivers, ran exclusively within the limits of the Amirs' territories. Mir Murad Ali was in possession of both banks of the river running as far as Sehwan, while Mir Rustam controlled both banks from Sehwan to the northern extremity of Sind. The Indus, north of Sind, was under the dominion of Maharajah Ranjit Singh, while some intervening portion of it came under the jurisdiction of the Khan of Bhawalpore. The Governor-General could not at first decide whom to approach first, the Amirs or the Maharajah. The proposed project, though beneficial to the Sikh ruler commercially, was from the political point of view a hindrance to his long-cherished ambition of extending his dominions towards Sind, and of which he had made no secret to Burnes on the occasion of the latter's mission to Lahore.<sup>30</sup> After some thought Bentinck decided to conduct the negotiation first with Sind and addressed letters to the two Amirs concerned—Mir Murad Ali Khan of Hyderabad and Mir Rustam of Khairpur.

Of these two, Mir Rustam's acquiescence was taken almost for granted in view of his warm reception to Burnes and his expressed desire for an alliance with the British Government. As far as Mir Murad Ali Khan was concerned, Pottinger's brief required him to be firm and refuse to take no for an answer. In the Governor-General's view the river Indus was a boon to which all countries situated on its banks had a common right. In the event of the Amir refusing to agree to the navigation of the river, it had to be pointed out to him whether he had the right to close the navigation of the whole river when he possessed only a part of it. Didn't Ranjit Singh and Bhawal Khan have an equal claim to its benefits? "Has this chief alone the right to seal hermetically its mouths, to arrogate the sole and exclusive dominion of its navi-



gation and to deny the right of an innocent use and passage of this great channel of commercial intercourse? . . . It will be important to set before him the principles which have regulated the practice of other countries in similar cases and which may be said to constitute the law of nations."<sup>31</sup> The Governor-General intended, Prinsep wrote, to stress this aspect of the scheme, namely, to render the Indus "as in ancient times the highway of commerce for the interchange of commodities between Upper Hindoostan and Central Asia on one side and the Dukhun and countries beyond the sea on the other".<sup>32</sup> If, in spite of all these arguments the Hyderabad Amir remained intransigent, Pottinger was to assert "strongly and decidedly the right possessed by all other states situated and bordering upon the many streams which concentrate on the Indus".<sup>33</sup> The implied threat of Ranjit Singh, Bhawal Khan and the British acting together, Bentinck knew, could not fail to have its effect for it was now a known fact that the ruling family was a house divided, with its different branches pulling in different directions. Not only was Khairpur seeking to establish an identity of its own, the Mirpur branch under Mir Ali Murad had also made overtures to Burnes for a separate alliance with the British Government which the latter rejected only because they at present had no need of Mirpur's friendship.<sup>34</sup> Bhawal Khan was already under their protection. In the event of Hyderabad holding out, the British plan was to concert common action with all these chiefs against the Amirs of Hyderabad. It could well happen, continued the same despatch, that Mir Murad Ali Khan, realising his helplessness, might seek to concede the British demand by a show of favour and ask for certain concessions in return. To such a demand Pottinger's answer must be "that where there exists a natural right and the power to enforce it, both justice and reason reject all title to concession or compensation in return".<sup>35</sup>

Another circumstance to which the Government's letter drew Pottinger's attention was the rumoured matrimonial alliance between Persia and Sind.<sup>36</sup> This was causing much concern to the authorities in Calcutta and for obvious reasons. Russia was strong in Persia, and if the proposed marriage materialised, Russia, it was feared, would command a direct access to India through Sind. Pottinger was instructed to ascertain the truth behind the move.

The mission sailed from Bombay on 4 December 1831, arriving

at Mandavie on 7 December. From here Pottinger addressed a letter to Mir Murad Ali Khan informing him of his deputation and requesting for an escort that should convey him from Luckput bunder to Sind.<sup>37</sup> If at Luckput bunder, he wrote to his Government, he did not find an escort from the Amirs, he would cross into Sind just the same and go ahead till he found an officer to conduct him to the capital.<sup>38</sup> This however was not necessary as Pottinger had a reply from the Amirs on 30 December, and when on 10 January 1832 the mission reached Luckput bunder, he found officials from the Sind Government awaiting his arrival. The party continued its journey and reached Hyderabad on 26 January.

No trace of ill-feeling marked the mission's reception into the capital. The principal Amir was particularly attentive and friendly in his enquiries about the mission. But though outwardly the chiefs were cordial Pottinger saw and heard enough to realise that they were extremely uneasy about British intentions towards them. One rumour current about the mission was that it was coming to demand a passage for its army up the Indus for the purpose of opposing Russian aggression.<sup>39</sup> Another rumour was that the British Government wanted to help Ranjit Singh with troops and money to oppose invasion from the west. As a result the mission's heavy baggage which Pottinger had sent from Mandavie by boats was detained for fifteen days on the way and thoroughly searched before being allowed to pass through to Hyderabad.<sup>40</sup>

The mission had their first audience with the rulers on 28 January when Pottinger presented the Governor-General's letter to Murad Ali Khan. "My friend", wrote Bentinck, "the welfare of Sindh and the prosperity of your Highness's family and dominion are primarily concerned in the propositions that will be submitted to you." The river Indus was to be opened to trade as it had been in earlier times and thereby restored to its former glory, the Governor-General continued and he expressed his earnest desire "to see this commerce revived, so that the Indus like the Ganges at present shall swarm with boats proceeding up and down, all engaged in conveying goods and travellers from one point of India to the other".<sup>41</sup> After reading the letter Mir Murad Ali expressed surprise that it made no reference at all to political matters, that it merely expressed his Lordship's desire to have the Indus opened to trade, which was so already as far as the Asiatics were concerned.



MIR RUSTAM OF KHAIRPUR

THE GRAND OLD AMIR OF SIND

"I met him in the jungle, surrounded by his faithful retainers, unprovided with the decencies of life."—Outram



**SIR HENRY POTTINGER**  
**RESIDENT FOR THE AFFAIRS OF SIND**

**"So far as my duties and measures at this capital are concerned ... Nur Mahomed can say, or do nothing that will change my sentiments."**



As for Englishmen, he would indeed question their right to its use. Pottinger replied that such an attitude of distrust could never make for amity between the two Governments, that the river Indus was the gift of God to which all nations had an equal right, whether they were situated on its banks or not.<sup>42</sup> "The Governor-General has asked as a favour which he must have demanded as a right, and that too, to benefit both states by traffic," Pottinger said.

Negotiations started with Mir Murad Ali preparing a draft treaty which he read out to the English envoy at their next meeting. Pottinger was dumbfounded. "Nothing that has occurred since I have been in Sind has tried my patience more than listening to this preposterous document," he wrote to his Government.<sup>43</sup> The document consisted of nine articles, two of which provided for merchandise to be carried up the Indus by Hindus, Muslims and Jews alone, and for the regulation of duties. For the rest, it stipulated against the Europeans coming to Sind, except Englishmen, and it contained a proviso that the English would not seize Shikarpore. It further provided that the enemies and friends of one contracting party should be the enemies and friends of the other. The last article stipulated that the Governor-General address letters to Kabul and Lahore informing them of the new treaty concluded between Sind and the British Government.<sup>44</sup> Controlling his temper, Pottinger declared that the draft was unacceptable and in order to prevent the negotiations from coming to an abrupt end, he drew up his own draft which he put before the Amir as "the utmost limit in concession".<sup>45</sup> This draft contained the following terms:<sup>46</sup> (a) continuance of friendship between the two Governments; (b) Sind Government to permit traffic on the Indus subject to two conditions—that no armed force or military stores would be carried up its waters without the previous sanction of the Sind Government, and that no vessel of war was to come to Sind and no Englishman coming to Sind was to settle down in its territories but return after transacting his business, the length of his sojourn depending on the nature of his work; (c) fixation of a rate of duty to regulate the traffic; and (d) modification of former treaties and confirmation of provisions retained.

On the basis of Pottinger's draft Murad Ali now suggested another draft. In this he sought to provide for the succession of his children to the *musnud*, to which the English envoy agreed. The

second article in the latter's draft provided for the conveyance of military stores up the Indus with the sanction of the Sind Government. This the Amir summarily rejected. After much argument the point was eventually referred to the Governor-General for decision.<sup>47</sup> With regard to Englishmen coming to Sind on business, the Amir insisted on putting a time-limit on their stay, a restriction which Pottinger would not agree to. "It was very probable," he said to the Amir's deputy that "not five Englishmen would pass in any one year, but that there might be five hundred, and both the number and period of sojourn must be left to chance."<sup>48</sup> The Amir had no objection to the last two articles of the envoy's draft.

At this stage, having practically concluded his talks with Hyderabad, Pottinger announced his intention of going to Khairpur to parley with Mir Rustam for the same purpose. Though taken by surprise Mir Murad Ali guessed the British intention behind this move. He therefore tried his best to dissuade the English envoy, saying that there existed perfect accord between the different branches of the family, that Rustam would do exactly what the Hyderabad Amir wished, but if Pottinger insisted on talking to Rustam directly he would send for the latter here.<sup>49</sup> Pottinger replied that he questioned neither the unanimity of the Talpur house, nor the willing obedience of Rustam to the Hyderabad Amir's wishes, but that he must go to Khairpur simply in obedience to his Government's wishes. Even so Murad Ali arranged a meeting between the envoy and Mir Mubarak Khan, Rustam's younger brother, who happened to be in Hyderabad at this time. At this meeting Mubarak Khan represented himself as the real chief of Upper Sind and told Pottinger to settle with him all that he had to settle with Mir Rustam at Khairpur. But the determined envoy would have none of this. Thereupon the Amir, wrote Pottinger, remarked that "our faith was celebrated and excellent but that we snatched at trifles to extend our dominions."<sup>50</sup>

It was settled that the mission should leave for Khairpur on 12 February, but a sudden family quarrel in the Khairpur branch assumed such proportions that Pottinger had to postpone his departure.<sup>51</sup> While he waited for the atmosphere to clear, news arrived in Hyderabad that a Sikh force under Kharrack Singh was on its way to join M. Ventura who was at Dera Ghazi Khan, pre-



sumably with the intention of attacking Shikarpore.<sup>52</sup> The Amirs were in a panic. They rushed spies to Cutch, Gujarat and the western boundaries of India to see if any British troops were being marched to Sind to join the Sikh force and informed Pottinger to return to Cutch in view of the emergency. Not wishing to harass the Amirs, Pottinger agreed to return to Luckput bunder and wait there till the emergency lasted, assuring Mir Murad Ali that he would proceed to Khairpur only with his consent.<sup>53</sup> The contingency however did not arise, for on 20 February the rulers heard of Kharrack Singh's return to Multan. The news had a miraculously soothing effect on the Amirs and they became at once more confiding and agreeable to Pottinger, a change that caused the envoy to write in his later despatch to Prinsep, "I have faint hopes that our plain dealing and the tone of superiority without intimidation which I have assumed throughout my negotiations are gradually winning on the suspicious character of the old Ameer."<sup>54</sup>

Accompanied by an escort provided by Murad Ali and a few of his mission members Pottinger left Hyderabad on 27 February and arrived at Mithani, the first village in Mir Rustam's territories, on 10 March, a distance of 220 miles by river.<sup>55</sup> Here he was met by representatives of the Khairpur Government. Continuing his journey, marked by warm welcome and cordiality at every stage, the party finally reached the capital on 21 March.

It was obvious from the outset that Pottinger's insistence on having talks with Rustam arose from his intention to keep negotiations with Hyderabad and Khairpur on a separate footing. In fact, in a letter dated 17 March 1832, Macnaughten, a secretary to the Governor-General, had written to Pottinger that should Rustam evince a desire for a British alliance such as he had expressed to Burnes, he (Pottinger) might drop a hint about Khairpur receiving a British agent at Bukkur, as a safeguard against the designs of Maharajah Ranjit Singh.<sup>56</sup> Bukkur was a strategic point, strictly guarded by the Amirs and the British Government knew that if they could secure a foothold there, their purpose would be more than served. But at Khairpur Pottinger was in for a setback. To provide a starting point for their discussions, he drew up a draft outline of a treaty and submitted it to Mir Rustam. The draft, consisting of four articles,<sup>57</sup> provided for eternal friendship

between the British Government and Khairpur, free navigation of that portion of the river that ran through Mir Rustam's dominions to be ceded to the British Government for its merchants, a moderate rate of duties to be established in due course, and regular intercourse by means of vakeels to ensure friendly relations: Rustam referred Pottinger to his brother Mir Mubarak for discussing this draft and settling its details. Accordingly a meeting was arranged on 27 March between the envoy and Mir Mubarak, at which the latter echoed his elder brother's desire for a close alliance with the British Government and having read the draft, proposed the inclusion of a clause confirming each state in its possessions and guaranteeing them against the other and a provision declaring that the friends and enemies of one should be the friends and enemies of the other.<sup>58</sup> Pottinger agreed to the first but rejected the second. So a new draft was prepared by the Khairpur side and sent to him. Pottinger was quite unprepared for the shock he received, for the draft now before him was totally different from that he had expected and had been so worded as to render the navigation of the Indus, even within Khairpur limits, entirely dependent on Hyderabad's wishes.<sup>59</sup> No amount of arguing on his part had any effect on the Khairpur rulers. To every one of his arguments Mubarak replied that if the British Government was not prepared to make friends and enemies on a mutual basis, how could they expect him to isolate himself from his brothers? Pottinger saw clearly now that Rustam would not defy Murad Ali openly. Even his suggestion of leaving a member of the mission behind or appointing a British native agent at Khairpur was promptly turned down.<sup>60</sup> Thus on 6 April 1832 Pottinger wrote, "As far as the treaty goes, they (negotiations with Khairpur) may be said to have merged into that of Hyderabad."<sup>61</sup>

The sum and substance of the treaty that was finally concluded with Khairpur and signed on 4 April 1832 was very different from what Pottinger had hoped for. It provided for the continuance of friendly relations between Khairpur and the British Government. The merchants of Hindustan were to be granted the use of the river that ran through Khairpur dominions on the terms to be settled with Mir Murad Ali of Hyderabad.<sup>62</sup> The Khairpur Government was to provide a statement of customs to be levied. The article providing for an occasional despatch of vakeels by the

contracting parties, proposed in Pottinger's first draft, was dropped because Rustam insisted on an alteration which, in the envoy's opinion, would have made the stipulation purely one-sided. Under that stipulation, he wrote, Khairpur Government could have sent its representatives at will but the British Government could have done so only by special invitation.<sup>63</sup>

Seeing that nothing more was to be gained from further talks with the Khairpur chiefs, Pottinger had his audience of leave on 8 April 1832. At this meeting Mir Rustam took the envoy to his private apartments and asked him if he was offended. The Amir said that he was anxious to ally himself with the British Government, but that he could not do so in defiance of his brothers' wishes. Writing about this interview Pottinger reported, "His Highness, in the course of conversation shed tears and I did all I could to remove his impression that I was offended."<sup>64</sup> He assured the Amir that his object, that of opening the Indus to trade, had been attained, but added that his (Rustam's) hesitation to settle the terms of the treaty in regard to the use of the river, and his suspicion regarding the fifth article which simply provided for an exchange of vakeels, were difficult to be reconciled with his oft-repeated sentiments of friendship professed to Lieut. Burnes and now to himself.<sup>65</sup> At this point Rustam's two brothers, Mir Mubarak and Mir Ali Murad, entered the room and joined their brother in professing friendly sentiments for the British Government. The treaties were exchanged and Mir Rustam assured the envoy that the elimination of the fifth article would not come in the way of their relations, that very shortly he would depute a vakeel to India and similarly an agent from the Governor-General would be welcome at his court any time he came. Taking advantage of the moment Pottinger dropped his 'casual hint' regarding the reception of a British agent at Bukkur which, he explained, would be of advantage to Khairpur in that it would give them protection against the Sikhs. Mir Rustam replied that he was not afraid of the Sikhs.<sup>66</sup> The interview then came to an end and the envoy took his leave.

Pottinger realised that his mission to Khairpur had achieved nothing except perhaps to underline the fact that Murad Ali wielded complete supremacy over the different branches of the Talpur family. All the main stipulations in the treaty concluded

with Khairpur depended for final consent on Hyderabad. After he had bidden goodbye to the rulers Pottinger even doubted if Rustam would have the courage to depute a vakeel to India as he intended.<sup>67</sup>

Returning to Hyderabad on 16 April, the envoy informed Mir Murad Ali that the mission proposed to start on their homeward journey within a few days. Thus on 20 April the treaty was finally settled and signed. It consisted of seven articles<sup>68</sup> stipulating (a) that the friendship provided for in former treaties between the two Governments should remain unimpaired and binding and this firm connection was to descend to the children and successors of Mir Murad Ali Khan from generation to generation, (b) that neither of the contracting parties should covet the possessions of the other, (c) that the merchants and traders from India were to use the river and roads of Sind for transporting their goods and merchandise from one country to another subject to the proviso that no military stores and no armed vessels would be so allowed and no Englishman would be permitted to settle in Sind, (d) that all merchants visiting Sind would have to obtain a passport from the British Government and the Hyderabad authorities would have to be informed of the granting of such passports, (e) that the Government of Hyderabad would fix a fair rate of moderate duties to be levied on goods and merchandise to facilitate trade and would not arbitrarily delay merchants, (f) that those parts of former treaties not modified by the present treaty would remain in force, and (g) that the two states would exchange vakeels for the transaction of business or promoting friendly relations whenever considered necessary or desirable.

Another negotiation subsidiary to the main negotiations that Pottinger also brought to a successful conclusion before leaving Sind related to the Parkar banditti. On 23 April 1832 he prepared a memorandum which was confirmed into a supplemental treaty<sup>69</sup> with the Hyderabad Government providing for a concerted drive by the Governments of Sind, Calcutta and Jodhpur against the Parkar freebooters. Furthermore it provided for the levying of a fair rate of duties mentioned in the fifth article of the Perpetual Treaty.

Having concluded his negotiations Pottinger and his party left Hyderabad on 28 April, accompanied by an escort from the Amirs

and presents for the Governor-General. Bentinck ratified the treaties on 19 June 1832 and returned them to Pottinger who had now assumed charge of Sind affairs in addition to his duties as Resident in Cutch.

The importance of Pottinger's mission to Sind vis-a-vis the Amirs lies mainly in the fact that his dual mission to Hyderabad and Khairpur was the first open attempt of the English to divide their ranks. By now these chiefs had become too weak to offer any effective protest. In fact Pottinger had scant respect for them and made no secret of it. "I believe the contempt with which I have treated them and the plain language I have used as to our resources and power have been of far more avail to my negotiations and have been more worthy of my situation as his lordship's representative," he wrote to his Government.<sup>70</sup> Besides their weakness, the Amirs were openly divided and it required no shrewdness on his part to see that. Thus he observed in his despatch: "The country is in a most unsettled state and different competitors for the *musnud* do not hesitate to mention publicly the numbers of their partisans and supporters in the expected struggle. Jealousies prevail amongst the different branches of the family."<sup>71</sup> Throughout Pottinger's stay in Hyderabad Mir Nasir Khan and Mir Nur Muhammad Khan, the sons of the principal Amir, were separately courting the English envoy. Nor was Pottinger slow to exploit these differences. Discreetly and without openly committing himself, he tried to convey to these Princes that "so far as it is in my power, I am most desirous of showing them every civility and kindness".<sup>72</sup> Accordingly he complied promptly with all their requests for medicines and other things and thus managed to cultivate their favourable disposition.

As far as Sind was concerned, the conclusion of the treaty, by opening the Indus to trade, marked in a very real sense the beginning of the end. It drove as it were a nail in the defences of the state. At the time of Burnes' voyage, an illiterate sayid had remarked, "Alas! Sind is now gone, since the English have seen the river, which is the road to its conquest."<sup>73</sup> These words were soon to come literally true. The Amirs knew what was happening, and made feeble attempts now and again to hold their grip. Thus it is interesting to note that Pottinger was not able to get their consent to the survey of the Indus, which was essential to the



working of the scheme, nor was he able to persuade them to accept British residents at Hyderabad and Khairpur.

After Pottinger's return to Cutch the Governor-General deputed Capt. Wade on a similar assignment to Punjab and Bhawalpore. Prinsep's letter to Capt. Wade dated 19 September 1832 stated: "The main point will be to obtain security for the Trade in its transit up and down the River which will be most effectually accomplished by a reciprocal engagement between the two powers above mentioned not to harbour plunderers from the opposite side of the river and to inflict prompt chastisement upon any of their own subjects who are guilty of similar practices."<sup>74</sup> With regard to duties, the rate was to be fixed from Ludhiana to the sea with reference to those which were collected on the land route "at such a total amount as will give the merchants' sufficient inducement to enter upon the Navigation".<sup>75</sup>

Wade went first to Punjab. Bentinck's letter to the Maharajah explained the objects of Pottinger's deputation to Sind, and alluding to the Sikh ruler's wish expressed recently at their Rupar meeting to see vessels of speed plying on the river, said: "By the favour of God if my views for opening the navigation of this River are crowned with success, Your Highness's wishes will be accomplished and the Panjab will become as accessible to the merchants and travellers of South India and other countries as if it were situated on the sea-shore."<sup>76</sup> Wade however found the Maharajah lukewarm about the scheme, not because he was opposed to the opening of the Indus but because he feared that it would "expose his country to an indiscriminate resort of Europeans and produce causes of collision from which his territories are now defended".<sup>77</sup> In spite of these reservations, Wade reported, the ruler gave his consent to the scheme, mainly because he realised the impolicy of setting himself in direct opposition to the views of the British power.<sup>78</sup> After concluding the treaty with the Maharajah, Wade proceeded to Bhawalpore where his negotiations with Bhawal Khan were equally successful. A treaty was concluded with the Nawab providing for the navigation of the river and for the suppression of predatory tribes inhabiting its banks.

With the conclusion of the treaties the next step was to finalise the details necessary to the working of the scheme such as the levy of duties and ensuring conditions of safety for the merchants. At



the request of the Governor-General, C.E. Trevelyan, deputy secretary to the Central Government prepared a paper on the Indus Tariff in which he underlined a fact hitherto unknown, that a considerable trade already existed between Gujarat and Rajputana. The existence of a direct commercial intercourse made the working of the new scheme more difficult for it would require considerable effort to direct trade from an established channel into a new commercial channel. He suggested that the duty levied by the Amirs should be on the value of the cargo rather than on the size of the boat or weight, that the cargo should be taxed only once on the trip and the proceeds should be divided among Sind, Punjab, Bhawalpore and the British Government. Giving his views on Trevelyan's suggestions Pottinger also prepared a minute<sup>79</sup> in which he stated that the obstacles to trade presented by corrupt officials, jealous chieftains, and indisciplined sayyids and religious mendicants who roamed the land were such as would scare away any merchant. He therefore suggested that the important steps to take were to establish a colony of labourers at the mouths of the Indus under the special protection of a British consul, undertake firm measures to restrain the sayyids and beggars, and levy duties only at the commencement and the end of the trip.<sup>80</sup> For collecting a tax on the Indus, Pottinger proposed that a toll should be fixed in relation to the size of the boat. In all these arrangements he expected no opposition from Mir Rustam but he felt that where Murad Ali was concerned it was not the financial arrangement that would evoke his opposition but the general aspect of working the scheme at all. "His sole aim is to render the late treaty a dead letter by excessive duties and will not oppose the exactions extorted by Syeds on the ground that it was their right."<sup>81</sup> He therefore advised his Government to take a firm line with the Amirs: "I intend (that) the British Government should assume a dictatorial tone on this occasion and it will by so doing, neither invade nor injure any existing right or property; it is bound, I conceive, to place the whole matter, at once, on a foundation commensurate with the high interests at stake."<sup>82</sup>

The Governor-General accepted most of his proposals and instructed Pottinger to go ahead with his negotiations with the Amirs. He was to assure the rulers that there would be no interference of any kind with the internal trade of the country, that "the moment

goods are landed at Tatta, Hyderabad or anywhere else in their dominions, they will become subject to local duties levied by the Ameers in their own country".<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, Pottinger was told that for the effective working of the scheme the residence of a British agent at the mouths of the Indus was most essential, for where goods were to be transferred from the river to the sea-boats and tolls collected, the agent's superintendence was necessary to prevent delays, harassment to the merchants and other kinds of friction. "This forms so principal a part of the main plan that it should be treated in your negotiations with the Ameers as much as possible as a matter of course, and should the Ameers evince a disinclination to the arrangement, you will use every argument to persuade them how essentially conducive it would prove to the preservation of the most amicable relations which so happily subsist between the two states."<sup>86</sup>

These instructions to Pottinger were issued in October 1833 but just then Mir Murad Ali Khan died. He was succeeded by his son Mir Nur Muhammad Khan as the principal 'Rais' of Lower Sind to whom Pottinger addressed a letter in April 1834, covering matters regarding the fixing of a toll, the share of each Government in the scheme, need to decide about the place from where the toll was to be collected, and the residence of a British officer to supervise the arrangements.<sup>86</sup> In reply the Amir agreed to all the provisions of the proposed toll treaty but he firmly refused to accept the fourth providing for the residence of a British officer in Sind. He said that this article was at variance with the provisions of the last (1832) treaty, that a British officer might come to Sind on business for a short period, but that he could under no circumstances be allowed to reside in Sind.<sup>86</sup> Pottinger was equally vehement on this point. He wrote to Trevelyan, "Whether the Meer accedes or not I shall see that the fourth article of the Treaty provides for the Governor General's agent for Sind deputing one of his assistants to the mouths of the Indus whenever he may consider it expedient and I daresay it will in time cease even to excite observation, and be tacitly overlooked, like the British outpost at Parkar about which the Hyderabad Government was at one time so quarellous."<sup>87</sup>

The Amirs however continued to resist. Their opposition to this provision was so firm that they deputed agents to Bhooj to explain their point of view personally to Col. Pottinger, but the de-

puties returned saying that the British Government attached the greatest importance to the permanent residence of a British officer at the mouths of the Indus, that on that provision depended every article of the Perpetual Treaty.<sup>88</sup> The Sind Government's obstinacy so wearied the Governor-General that he wrote to Pottinger, "It would be no less suitable to the importance of the occasion than derogatory to the dignity of the British Government to tolerate any longer the vexatious delay and studied evasions of the Sind chiefs and you are authorized to intimate to them distinctly that unless within a reasonable period, they fulfil the engagements which have been solemnly contracted in the matter of the Treaty, the Governor General of India in council will be reluctantly compelled to adopt such measures as may be necessary to ensure their compliance."<sup>89</sup>

Pottinger lost no time in conveying the warning. Already more than three weeks had passed since he had written to Nur Muhammad returning the latter's draft and requiring him to have another on the basis of his (Pottinger's) draft.<sup>90</sup> Pottinger pointed out to Macnaughten that in the Amir's draft there was a proviso against armed vessels but no clause providing for the deputation of an agent to Sind.<sup>91</sup> Accordingly he had refused to accept it and sent it back to the Amir for revision. Now he wrote another letter fixing a time-limit for the Sind rulers to come to a decision or face the consequences. He wrote: "Should I, however, be disappointed in this hope, I have been directed by the Governor-General to inform your Highness that if you do not within three days of the receipt of this letter, furnish our Native Agent with another Treaty duly signed, exactly a verbatim according to my draft... his Lordship in Council will be unwillingly obliged to take steps to compel you to comply with the demand now made of you."<sup>92</sup>

The warning had its effect and Mir Nur Muhammad Khan though seething with anger at the insolence of the demand, signed the Indus Toll Treaty exactly similar to the one notified by the Governor-General. The treaty, sealed and signed by all the Amirs reached Pottinger on 30 October 1834.<sup>93</sup>

It consisted of five articles<sup>94</sup> and provided for a uniform toll on all boats, irrespective of their size, proceeding up or down the river Indus. The toll was to be levied on each boat at the rate of nineteen Tafta rupees per Tatta Khurra, assuming the size of

a boat to be thirty Tatta Khurrars, large or small. Of this amount eight rupees were to be the share of Hyderabad and Khairpur and eleven rupees were to be shared by Lahore, Bhawalpore and the Company. For the purpose of assisting in the collection of the toll due to Sind (which amounted to 240 Tatta rupees per boat) and for the speedy and satisfactory adjustment of disputes likely to arise among the merchants, boatmen and others, a native agent under the authority of Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Pottinger was to be stationed at the mouths of the Indus. However, on matters requiring special attention and for resolving difficulties Pottinger could depute one of his assistants to Sind, who after attending to his work was to return to Bhooj. The last article of the treaty related to internal trade and stipulated that if any part of goods or merchandise of a boat was landed in Sind, it would become subject to the existing local duties.

Thus, despite its persuasive arguments and warnings, the British Government could not get the Amirs to accept a British agent in their territories. For the present Bentinck did not press the point. After Sind similar treaties were concluded with the Governments of Lahore and Bhawalpore, in pursuance of which Lieutenant Mackeson was appointed the British agent at Mithenkote in Punjab, while Sayyid Azim-u-din Husain and Sher Ali Khan were appointed the British native agents at the mouths of the Indus.<sup>95</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Moorcroft, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab*, etc. Part II, p. 338

<sup>2</sup> Malcolm, *Memoranda on the North-West Frontier of British India*, p. 8

<sup>3</sup> Edward Law, *A Political Diary 1828-1830* (Lord Ellenborough), II, p. 92

<sup>4</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 14 October 1830, No. 4. Governor's Minute dated 9 August 1830

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> NAI, Foreign Department, *Loodhiana, Umballa and Sabathoo Papers*, Vol. I, 1830-1831, pp. 139-140. Letter from Ellenborough to the Maharajah, 21 June 1830

<sup>7</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 14 October 1830 *op. cit.*, No. 4. Governor's Minute

- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>10</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 18 March 1831, No. 2. Pottinger to Burnes, 18 January 1831
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Pottinger to Murad Ali, 18 January 1831
- <sup>12</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 18 March 1831, No. 7. Pottinger to Murad Ali, 7 February 1831
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 6. Enclosed letter from the Native Agent to Pottinger dated Hyderabad, 1 February 1831
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 9. Pottinger to Charles Norris, Chief Secretary to Government of Bombay, 10 February 1831
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>17</sup> NAI, Foreign Department, *Loodbiana, Umballa and Sabathoo Papers, op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 329-330. Captain Wade to H. Prinsep, 21 May 1831
- <sup>18</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 17 June 1831, No. 8. Burnes to Pottinger, Hyderabad, 21 April 1831
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Extract from Burnes' Journal, dated 18 April 1831
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Extract from Burnes' Journal, dated 21 April 1831
- <sup>21</sup> BR, Vol 76/519 of Political Secret Department 1831-33, Burnes to Prinsep dated 20 September 1831. (Political Consultation 15 November 1831, No. 3034)
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>24</sup> NAI, Foreign Department, *Loodbiana, Umballa and Sabathoo Papers, op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 379-382. Wade to Prinsep, 22 July 1831
- <sup>25</sup> Hugel, *Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab*, p. 325
- <sup>26</sup> Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara*, III, pp. 187-188
- <sup>27</sup> BR, Vol. 76/519 of Political Secret Department 1831-33, Governor-General to Governor of Bombay, 22 October 1831. (Political Consultation 15 November 1831, No. 3030)
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Prinsep to Pottinger, 22 October 1831. (Political Consultation 15 November 1831, No. 3033)
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>37</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 6 February 1832, No. 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>, Pottinger to Prinsep, 23 December 1831
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>39</sup> NAI, Secret Letters to Court 30 April 1832 to 19 December 1834, Pt. II. 50. Secret General Letter to Court, 2 July 1832

- <sup>40</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 19 March 1832, No. 3. Intelligence from Native Agent to Pottinger, 15 January 1832
- <sup>41</sup> BR, Vol. 76/519 of Political Secret Department, Governor-General to Mir Murad Ali Khan. (Political Consultation 15 November 1831, No. 3037)
- <sup>42</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 2 April 1832, No. 8, Enclosure E. Pottinger reports proceedings, 31 January 1832
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 7. Pottinger to Prinsep, 31 January 1832
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 9
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 10. Outline of a treaty sent to the Sind ruler on 2 February 1832
- <sup>47</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 28 May 1832, No. 5
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 6, Enclosure A
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 8. Enclosure C in Pottinger's despatch dated 11 February 1832
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 5. Pottinger to Prinsep dated 11 February 1832
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 9. Pottinger to Prinsep, 22 February 1832
- <sup>55</sup> NAI, Secret Letters to Court, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, 50. Secret General Letter, 2 July 1832
- <sup>56</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 28 May 1832, No. 12. Macnaughten to Pottinger, 17 March 1832
- <sup>57</sup> NAI, Secret Letters to Court, *op. cit.*, Secret General Letter dated 2 July 1832
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>63</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 2 July 1832, No. 9. Pottinger's proceedings at Khairpur dated 14 April 1832
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>68</sup> Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, pp. 354-355
- <sup>69</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 6 August 1832, Nos. 18-22. Pottinger to Prinsep dated 1 May 1832
- <sup>70</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 28 May 1832, *op. cit.*, No. 5
- <sup>71</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 2 April 1832, *op. cit.*, No. 7
- <sup>72</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 28 May 1832, *op. cit.*, No. 9
- <sup>73</sup> Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara*, III, pp. 36-38
- <sup>74</sup> NAI, Foreign Miscellaneous, Letters to and from Resident at Amballa 1832, S. No. 260, Prinsep to Wade, Simla, 19 September 1832
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*



- <sup>76</sup> SCO, Sind File 300, p. 54. Governor-General to Maharajah Ranjit Singh, 19 December 1831
- <sup>77</sup> NAI, Foreign Miscellaneous, Letters to and from Resident at Amballa 1832, *op. cit.*, Extract of a letter from Wade dated 8 February 1832
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, Wade to Prinsep, 13 February 1832
- <sup>79</sup> BR, Vol. 42/616 of Political Secret Department 1833/34/35, Pottinger's remarks on 'Indus Tariff', dated 4 July 1833 (Consultation 14 August 1833, Nos. 2431 and 2432)
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, Macnaughten to Pottinger, 10 October 1833
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>85</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 29 May 1834, No. 14. Pottinger to Nur Muhammad dated Bhooj Residency, 9 April 1834
- <sup>86</sup> BR, Vol. 42/616, *op. cit.*, Pottinger to Trevelyan, dated 14 May 1834
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, Pottinger to Trevelyan, 20 June 1834
- <sup>88</sup> BR, Vol. 42/516 of Political and Secret Department 1833/34/35, Pottinger to Macnaughten, 26 July 1834. (Consultation 3 September 1834, No. 2615)
- <sup>89</sup> BR, Vol. 42/616, *op. cit.*, Macnaughten to Pottinger, 5 September 1834. (Consultation 1 October 1834, No. 94)
- <sup>90</sup> BR, Vol. 42/616, *op. cit.*, Pottinger to Macnaughten dated 8 September 1834
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, Pottinger to Nur Muhammad Khan, 6 October 1834. Enclosure in his letter No. 367 of 1834 addressed to Macnaughten dated Bhooj Residency, 8 October 1834
- <sup>93</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 23 January 1835, No. 37. Pottinger to the officiating Chief Secretary to the Government of India, 30 October 1834
- <sup>94</sup> Aitchison, *op. cit.*, VII, pp. 357-358
- <sup>95</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 23 January 1835, No. 39. Secretary to the Government of India to Pottinger, 23 January 1835

## Establishment of the Residency in Sind

The opening of the Indus to trade marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Indo-Sind relations. After the conclusion of the 1834 treaty it became an object of prime importance to the British authorities to promote this channel of commerce, for it seemed to afford them the best means of securing a Residency in Sind on which their sights hereafter were firmly set.

But the task was not easy because the Indus was not suited for trade. Apart from having no mouth like the Ganges and the inconstancy of its stream, it was an untried route and therefore a risky proposition for the merchant. The first voyage undertaken in 1833 extended only upto Shikarpore and the merchants, although considerably put out by opposition from the local officers, found sufficient encouragement in the venture to renew the attempt next year.<sup>1</sup> The second voyage was undertaken in March 1834 when five boats left Ludhiana with cargo for the Afghan merchants at Mithenkote. The attempt of 1835 was of a bolder nature. Passports were issued to the merchants and the cargo was sent from Sind to Bombay. On the voyage the merchants were subjected to many hardships and even their goods were taken away from them. However, when the matter was taken up with the rulers the goods were returned to the owners and the boat reached its destination in 1836. Commenting on these voyages the Governor-General wrote :

"The circumstance that the three voyages were made in succession from Loodhiana, in 1833, 1834, and 1835 is of itself a strong indication that the route is looked upon by the Merchants, who have acquired some knowledge of it, as likely to prove profitable."<sup>2</sup>

Another event of note occurred in 1836 which raised the question of stranded vessels. In that year a vessel bound from Bombay for Luckput bunder was forced to take shelter in the mouth of the Indus due to some mishap. In the attempt it touched upon a sandbank. Immediately the officers of the Hyderabad Government

seized the vessel and when the British Government remonstrated with the Amirs, the latter replied that it was their custom that whenever a vessel ran aground, it was forfeited to its owners.<sup>3</sup>

All such incidents, the authorities felt, pointed to the need for a proper survey of the Indus. Two years earlier the Government had ordered a survey of the mouths of the river so much so that in January 1834 a cruiser *Shamon* had sailed out from Bombay, but by the time it arrived in the Luckput bunder the Amirs, hearing the news, were so alarmed that they ordered an embargo on the Company's vessels in their harbours.<sup>4</sup> Pottinger threatened retaliation with a blockade of their ports and the embargo was lifted. Nevertheless the survey was suspended until a more favourable opportunity came along.

That opportunity presented itself in 1835 when the Amirs deputed Munshi Jethanand, the British native agent, to Col. Pottinger at Bhooj with some messages. One of the messages was a proposal asking for British aid in the conquest of Derajat —districts belonging to Ranjit Singh on the right bank of the Indus south of Attock and some part of the country of Brakooes Baluchistan. Conveying the proposal to Macnaughten Pottinger explained what the Amirs were prepared to offer in return: "That in the event of our acceding to this proposal, the two states shall enjoy their conquests in equal proportions and that the Ameers will be prepared to establish an English Residency at Hyderabad, or any other place we prefer in their dominions."<sup>5</sup> To make the proposition more attractive the Amirs had also offered the English a 'Kotee' (factory) in their country. Pottinger was aware that the idea of entering into such an alliance with Sind was unthinkable but instead of rejecting it he considered it more politic to use the opportunity to start talks with the Amirs about survey of the Indus, the question of stranded vessels and the various questions they had raised in their messages. So he decided to depute his political assistant, Lieutenant Alexander Burnes to Sind to settle these issues, and especially to find out more about the idea of a Residency.<sup>6</sup>

Burnes proceeded to the court of the Amirs in October 1835. As soon as the preliminaries of his public reception were over, he took up his work seriously, assuming a suitable tone of superiority in his dealings with the Amirs. From the outset he emphasised his exalted standing, expressing to Khushiram, the Amirs' munshi

"that we were far more potent in India, and more firmly established in our possessions than the Emperors of Delhi in the zenith of their power".<sup>7</sup> He explained to the Amirs why the British Government could not accept their proposal for the conquest of Derajat, that Ranjit Singh was their ally while the ruler of Baluchistan, a part of whose territory was also included in the Amirs' plan, had done them no harm whatsoever. Would it not be a violation of good faith on the part of the British Government and an infringement of treaties existing with these states if his Government acceded to the Amirs' proposal?<sup>8</sup> To do so would be wanton aggression. Indeed, it would undermine the Amirs' own trust in the English. He pointed out that the Amirs seemed to be under an erroneous impression that his Government sought to establish a 'kotec' in their dominions through a British agent. The British agent's job, he stressed, would be simply to protect the navigation of the Indus.<sup>9</sup>

Burnes' mission was successful. The Amirs gave their consent to the survey of the Indus and they gave up their claim to stranded vessels. He took his leave on 5 December. His exploratory talks about a Residency had also evoked a favourable response for on 30 November he had received from the Amirs a set of proposals which in his view conceded a British Residency in Sind. The proposals were to the following effect:<sup>10</sup> that a British agent residing at Shikarpore or elsewhere for the purpose of giving efficiency to the treaties for opening the river Indus would be admitted to Sind, that the said agent should not interfere in the internal administration of the rulers, that the British Government should undertake to protect the Amirs against the Sikhs, Afghans and all external enemies.

Commending these proposals to his Government, Burnes strongly urged that accepting them involved no fundamental change of policy on the river. Pledged as the British Government was to all states situated on the Indus and to the interests of the mercantile community, the instrument in question gave them an ideal opportunity to fulfil their obligations. Instances of friction would always arise between these states, calling for the intercession of the British Government and Burnes was of the view that the Amirs' offer gave them just the position they were looking for. He wrote, "If the wishes of the Ameers of Sinde are granted, we gain our own

ends with but little sacrifice and, by a method which will certainly never require the presence of our troops and very probably not even an intimation to the Lahore Chief or his successors.”<sup>11</sup>

Pottinger strongly supported Burnes. He pointed out that the Amirs' third stipulation seeking British protection against the Sikhs was nothing new for they had in a manner already agreed to do so under the existing treaties. To him the proposals seemed to offer “the best means of our establishing a political influence throughout the whole course of the Indus”,<sup>12</sup> not because he feared a Russian invasion which he considered ‘a chimera’ and doomed to failure if attempted, but because he saw in it many advantages other than purely strategic. The main advantage of a British Residency in Sind as he saw it was that it would check Ranjit Singh's advance in that direction. The Maharajah, he went on to say, already held more than he could manage. A weak successor would not be able to control so extensive a kingdom, with the result a war or any serious disturbance in the Punjab would throw Sind and other neighbouring states into a state of anarchy that would be highly injurious to British interests on the Indus and eventually call for British interference. Therefore he held the belief that the Indus must remain a secure base for the British; with friendly, submissive powers around it. “I have always deprecated hostilities with Sind or the other states bordering on the Indus. I have ever held that it is highly desirable to strengthen our alliance and extend our influence in that quarter, and I now conceive that we have an opportunity of doing so with the smallest degree of political embarrassment that could possibly be hoped for.”<sup>13</sup> He did foresee a remonstrance from Ranjit Singh against the proposed arrangement but that he felt could be explained away by a reiteration of British anxiety to preserve general tranquillity on the Indus, so necessary to trade. He firmly advised against rejection of the Amirs' proposals. Such a step would mean that “we reject the only sincere and cordial advances ever made from that country and thus we shut for ever the door against friendly intercourse we have so long desired to bring about”.<sup>14</sup>

The Central Government however entertained different views on the subject. They would not accept a stipulation that ran the risk of antagonising the powerful Ranjit Singh. The Governor-General wrote that while he recognised the importance of a close

connection with Sind, he could not purchase the proposed advantage by an arrangement that would involve them willy-nilly in the external relations of Sind and so alienate other states in the bargain. He was all for accepting the first two proposals offering a Residency but rejected the third, adding that he did so not from a lack of cordiality to the Amirs but from a feeling of regard for those principles of policy which prompted the British Government not to interfere in the affairs of her independent neighbours.<sup>15</sup> Pottinger conveyed this decision to the Amirs with the hope that the latter would view it in the same light and allow him to have a draft incorporating the two clauses relating to the establishment of a Residency. Such an instrument, he wrote, "will redound to your Highness's foresight and wisdom amongst the surrounding states and will prove to the Seiks, the Brahooes of the Upper Country, the Uffghans, and all the world, that the British and Sinde Governments are really one".<sup>16</sup> But Nur Muhammad Khan thought differently. To him the third stipulation was an important component of his proposals and it was up to the British Government to take the offer as a whole or leave it.<sup>17</sup> The matter was allowed to drop.

Events that followed were soon to prove Pottinger right in his analysis of the situation. Now the roles were reversed and it was the turn of the British Government to offer what it had rejected only a few months earlier. And ironically, it was Maharajah Ranjit Singh who was responsible for this turn of events.

The ambitious Sikh ruler, bent on extending his dominion and power over as large a territory as possible had been thwarted by the English in his advance beyond the right bank of the Sutlej by the Treaty of Amritsar, 1809. He had therefore turned his energies northward and conquered Kashmir and the territories to the north of it. He had rendered Peshawar tributary and extended his power up to the Khyber Pass. By 1820 he had conquered Multan and across the Indus taken Derajat which brought him very close to the borders of Sind. He could now expand only in this direction. In 1823 the Maharajah marched down the Indus with a large force, reaching as far as Sultan Shahr from where he sent his French commanders Col. Allard and Col. Ventura to Mithenkote with the professed object of punishing a party of Baluchis who had attacked Sikh troops near Multan. The Amirs, greatly alarmed, sent envoys



to placate him. From that time onward the Amirs tried their utmost to cultivate his goodwill while the Maharajah on his part was only waiting for a suitable opportunity for a move. He had to wait because around this time he was kept fully occupied by the fanatic Syed Ahmed who had risen in revolt against him in Peshawar. Syed Ahmed engaged his attention for a number of years and it was not until 1831 that the rebel was finally defeated and killed. Now he felt free to turn his mind to Sind which formed an important part of his plan of conquest. He was particularly keen on Shikarpore, the frontier town which he demanded from the Amirs, arguing that since he had succeeded to a major part of what had been Afghan rulers' possessions in India in the past, he had acquired the title to all rights and privileges attached to the Afghan authority. But by this time the British had developed an interest in this region, a fact that the Maharajah was slow to grasp. Thus with regard to his claim on Shikarpore, the British Government took the stand: "The title of Shikarpore as assumed by the Maharajah had no validity as a dependency of Peshawar—it may with equal justification be claimed by the King of Persia, the chiefs of Kabul and by the British Government as having been at different times in dependence upon their dominions." Again, at the Rupar meeting between Ranjit Singh and Bentinck, the former was said to have expressed 'characteristic' views on Sind but the Governor-General had left him in no doubt about British reaction. "Much discussion took place about Sind and about the navigation of the Indus, Ranjit Singh agreeing that that river and the Satlej should be open to commerce. He also gave up for the time his designs on Shikarpore (1832) on which he had fixed his mind." But the Sikh ruler was not one who gave up his ambitions easily. In 1833 he made yet another attempt to further his designs. In that year Shah Shuja, the deposed Afghan ruler who was then at Ludhiana, set out with an army towards Shikarpore with a view to recover his throne. Promptly the Maharajah thought of making this a pretext to follow the Shah. He conveyed the intention to Mr. Fraser, the British Resident at Delhi. The reply from the British Government was: "To advance upon Shikarpore, the country of a friendly power, merely on the ground of the Shah having proceeded thither would hardly seem to be reconcilable with those principles by which the conduct of nations is ordinarily governed."<sup>19</sup>

This attitude of the British Government, although highly puzzling to Ranjit Singh, was consistent with their policy which at this time sought no territorial extension beyond the Indus but simply an extension of influence in the area. The Supreme Government in fact rejected the proposal of Mr. W. Fraser suggesting the desirability of obtaining the cession of Bukkur upon the Indus through the good offices of Shah Shuja.<sup>20</sup> Territorial acquisition entailed heavy expenditure and responsibility which the Government wished to avoid at the moment. What they did want was to establish a British sphere of influence to ensure 'peace upon the Indus' in order to promote trade which required a line of friendly, peaceful states bordering the Indus.<sup>21</sup> The Governor-General was of the view that the annexation of Sind by the Maharajah would disturb the balance of power on the northwest frontier. He wrote: "In a struggle between the two powers, it cannot be doubted that Runjeet Singh would obtain a decided superiority...there would be from that result a disturbance of territory which it is our wish to preserve."<sup>22</sup> A too powerful Ranjit Singh posed a security risk. With Sind added to his dominions, it was feared that in the event of an invasion from the westward, he would be in a position to dictate terms to the British Government. Such a contingency had to be avoided at all costs.

The Maharajah however failed to see the real motive behind the British moves. He could not understand why the British Government opposed his advance and yet made no attempt to annex the state to its dominions. He therefore determined to take a decisive step for which an ideal opportunity presented itself in 1836. In that year a predatory tribe of Mazaris, notorious for their lawless habits and inhabiting a no man's land between Punjab and Sind, somewhere near Mithenkote and nominally dependent on the Amirs carried out a daring raid into the Maharajah's territory. The raid was one of the several carried out before but this time Ranjit Singh took advantage of the incident to despatch a force under Kanwar Nihal Singh to Mithenkote from where the Sikh commander demanded 12 lakh rupees as tribute from the Amirs. The latter refused to pay. Thereupon the Sikh force marched into the Mazari country and occupied Rojhan, its capital town. In the action they also carried by assault a fort garrisoned by the Sindhian troops in the neighbourhood of Shikarpore. From

here they prepared to open a large-scale campaign against Sind.<sup>23</sup>

The Maharajah was anxious to know the British reaction. He had some time back approached the British Government for a large supply of arms to be sent him by the Indus. That request was now seized by the Governor-General to make known his Government's stand. He reminded the Maharajah of an article in the Treaty of 1832 with Sind which prohibited the use of the Indus for military purposes and he asked Capt. Wade, the British Political Resident at Ludhiana to proceed to Lahore to use his influence with the Maharajah in the way of friendly remonstrance to prevent him from advancing upon Sind.<sup>24</sup> Should that fail, the envoy was instructed to employ every recourse, short of actual menace, to deter Ranjit Singh from hostilities. Macnaughten wrote to Wade: "His Lordship in Council entertains the conviction, that the Government of India cannot view with indifference any disturbance of the existing relations of peace between the several States occupying the banks of the river."<sup>25</sup> It was pointed out that the first effect of hostilities between the Governments of Lahore and Sind would be to harm the projected scheme of the navigation of the Indus and so the Governor-General felt that the position of Sind "in reference to the British territories, to Afghanistan, and the Punjab, and to the share which it possesses in the command of Indus, must ever induce the Government of India to watch the political condition of that country with anxious attention, and dispose it to cultivate a close connection, on terms which may be beneficial to both parties, with the Sind Government".<sup>26</sup> Against this background any opportunity which promised to establish British influence on a solid basis, commercially and politically, in that region, was to be the constant care of the envoy. Capt. Wade was directed to comply with the Maharajah's application for medical aid, but if the ruler persisted in his expedition against all advice and persuasion, the Resident was to withdraw from the former's attendance any officer bearing a commission from the East India Company. If, on the other hand, the Maharajah listened to British advice and desisted from his contemplated operations, the British Government offered to obtain for him the redress of his grievances by mediating between the two states for the equitable settlement of all matters that had caused the friction. In this.

context the despatch added, "The arrangements to be made for the further control of the Mazarees will become a subject of future negotiation."<sup>27</sup>

While Wade was to talk to Ranjit Singh, Colonel Henry Pottinger was directed to proceed to Hyderabad to offer a closer alliance to the Amirs, under the terms of which the British Government offered to mediate between Punjab and Sind, in return for a reasonable equivalent, namely, that the Amirs would consent to receive a body of British troops to be permanently stationed at their capital, the expense of the detachment being paid from the Sind revenues, and further that they would receive a British agent at Hyderabad.<sup>28</sup> The despatch stated, "The present mediation of the British Government with the Maharajah Runjeet Sing, may be promised, on the condition of the reception of a British Agent at Hyderabad, and, of course, of all the relations between Sind and Lahore being conducted solely through the medium of British officers, and of the expense of any temporary deputation of the British troops, which may now be found requisite, into Sind, being defrayed by the Ameers."<sup>29</sup> The force was actually assembled by the Bombay Government but its despatch was made conditional on the Maharajah's reaction. As regards the second stipulation Pottinger was told, "You will understand that the establishment of a British Agent in Sind is a point to which his Lordship in Council attaches importance, and you will not neglect to avail yourself of any favourable opportunity for securing that object, which may offer itself."<sup>30</sup> Pottinger was also empowered to make final arrangements in connection with the river navigation.

Pottinger left for Sind in early November 1836, reaching Hyderabad on 21 November. His journey throughout and reception at the court were extremely cordial.<sup>31</sup> In a letter to the Governor-General's private secretary dated 25 November 1836, Pottinger was able to report that the matters concerning the river had been satisfactorily settled.<sup>31</sup> By 30 November the agreement was sealed and signed, providing for the surveying of the coast and harbours, fixing of buoys and landmarks, the re-establishment of the native agency, the warehousing of goods at Vikkur or Tatta without payment of duties, the establishment of an annual fair in Sind, the clearing of jungle along the banks of the Indus to facilitate tracking up the river, and it provided for the appointment of

a British Superintendent-General to come to Sind to supervise the arrangements.<sup>33</sup> Further the Amirs agreed to hold the Mazaris in check. For the control of the latter Pottinger suggested that Mir Nur Muhammad and Mir Rustam station a body of troops under an influential officer on the northern frontier of the Mazari districts.<sup>34</sup>

Regarding Sind's affairs with Punjab, Pottinger concluded another agreement with Nur Muhammad Khan and wrote to Captain Wade on 30 November 1836, acquainting him with it. According to the terms of the agreement<sup>35</sup> the Amir agreed to have a British officer residing at Shikarpore to be the medium of communication between the Maharajah and the Amirs on all subjects. Accordingly, the Hyderabad and Khairpur Amirs were to recall their vakeels from Lahore and hold no communication with that Government except through the British Government. If the Maharajah persisted in attacking Sind, and it was found necessary to send troops to help Sind, the Amirs agreed to defray the expenses of the force. Furthermore Nur Muhammad Khan agreed to cede one-fourth of Shikarpore and its dependencies to meet the expenses of the British agent, his guard and escort. It was left to the Governor-General to decide the number and description of troops to be sent while the Sind rulers promised to make available every facility for cantoning and provisioning them, and letting all supplies coming from India for the army pass free of duty. On 5 December Pottinger left Sind with an assurance from the Amir that he would religiously abide by the stipulations of the agreement, that "if he ever wanted our advice or assistance regarding his other neighbours, he would consult with me or take no step as to external policy without the Governor-General's concurrence.... That I must be his vakeel with the Governor-General as I was his Lordship's with him".<sup>36</sup>

Ranjit Singh, finding himself faced with so much opposition, knew better than to persist in his course. He accepted the British offer of mediation in his differences with the Amirs and gave orders to his officers on the Sind frontier to abstain from further hostilities. As a further proof of his goodwill he allowed Burnes, then on a commercial mission to Punjab and Kabul to discuss the establishment of entrepôts and annual fairs on the river banks to encourage trade, to proceed up the river and gave his ready acquiescence in



all the final arrangements for opening trade on the Indus.<sup>37</sup> He however informed Wade that he would continue to occupy Rojhan and the Mazari territory.<sup>38</sup> In turn the British Government, fully appreciative of the Maharajah's conciliatory attitude, did not press the point for his withdrawal from Rojhan, and even wrote to Pottinger disapproving of the latter's assurance to the Amirs that the British Government would demand the immediate withdrawal of Ranjit Singh's troops from Rojhan. Macnaughten pointed out that the object of British interference and the offer of mediation was simply to dissuade the Sikh ruler from the invasion of Sind which would have resulted in the annihilation of that state's political independence. Macnaughten wrote, "It was not the intention of the Governor-General in Council that the immediate abandonment by the Maharajah of the position actually held by him in the Mazaree country should be the necessary consequence of our intervention.... This very question, concerning the Mazaree country, was the main point in dispute between the Maharajah and the Ameers; and if it had been intended to decide it beforehand in favour of the Ameers, there would have been obviously no advantage in entering upon any plan of mediation."<sup>39</sup> Justifying the Maharajah's action against the Mazaris and calling attention to his immense strength and power, the Governor-General instructed Pottinger to assure the Amirs of a full and impartial inquiry into the matter if they accepted mediation. In the event of refusal, the Governor-General warned that "the relations of all parties must then revert to what they were before our last interposition in favour of the Ameers."<sup>40</sup> At Ludhiana Wade was given similar instructions to placate the Maharajah. "You will bear in mind that His Lordship in Council considers it of first importance that you should personally confer with Ranjit Singh and if after you have completely assured His Highness of the disinterested and friendly views of the British Government then you can proceed to Mithenkote."<sup>41</sup>

In view of Ranjit Singh's favourable response which ruled out the possibility of military action, Auckland wrote to the Secret Committee on 2 January 1837 that their negotiations with Sind had now narrowed down to securing two objects<sup>42</sup>—getting the Amirs' consent to stationing a British agent at Hyderabad, and the adjustment of differences between the Amirs and Ranjit Singh.



He wrote : "You will perceive that our negotiation is now narrowed to two objects; the improvement of our relations with the Ameers of Sinde, by stationing a British Agent at their capital; and the adjustment, with the consent of both parties, of the present differences of the Ameers with Runjeet Sing ; should these objects be attained, of which there is every probability, the preservation of tranquillity along the whole course of the Indus will be the natural consequence."<sup>43</sup>

As far as the first was concerned, Pottinger during his last deputation to Sind (November 1836) had brought up the question but with no more success than he had had on former occasions. Of all Princes, the strongest opposition to the idea came from Mir Sobdar, cousin of Nur Muhammad Khan and son of Mir Fateh Ali, the senior member of the *Char Yar*. Sobdar and his group of supporters were openly hostile to the British and would not hear of admitting a British agent in their territories.<sup>44</sup> As for Nur Muhammad Khan, his stand was that the said agent could come and go as he liked but that he would not agree to his permanent residence in Sind.<sup>45</sup> To Lord Auckland this was central to the whole issue. In his view a Residency in Sind was necessary<sup>46</sup>(a) for the command of the navigation of the whole course of the Indus, and (b) to detach Sind from the influence of the Muslim countries that were more closely situated to the westward influence, namely Russian influence. He was anxious to secure the entire control of the Indus, for in that alone could he see the effectual barrier that he wished to raise against the machinations of Russia. Accordingly, after averting Ranjit Singh's attack on Sind, he drew up a draft embodying the two objects of British policy mentioned above and sent it to Pottinger, laying particular emphasis on the stipulation providing for the residence of an agent at Hyderabad.<sup>47</sup>

Talks on these matters were now entrusted to the British native agents. In April 1837 Pottinger forwarded the draft treaty to the Amirs and directed Agha Azim-u-din Husain, the British native agent at the mouths of the Indus to proceed to Hyderabad, with instructions that he must insist on the appointment of a British Resident as the one necessary condition of British mediation in the Lahore-Sind dispute. The Agha arrived in Hyderabad and had a secret conference with the Amirs on 20 April when Nur Muhammad Khan presented him with a memorandum of five points<sup>48</sup> pro-

viding that the Governor-General would establish a European agent at Hyderabad to arbitrate and settle all disputes between Sind and the Sikh state; that while the said agent was in Sind, no one should come to Sind in the capacity of an agent of the British Government but that another person could succeed him after he left; that the said agent would hear no complaints against the Amirs, and if any came to his notice, he was to report them to the Amirs, that if any insult was offered to the agent, the act must not be imputed to the Amirs who would deliver up the culprits as soon as identified. Finally the memorandum provided that the British Government would undertake to protect their country from Shikarpore to Subzulkote.

When referred to the Governor-General the memorandum was promptly turned down. It was considered "so totally at variance with the spirit and form of the agreement", that Pottinger addressed a letter to Mir Nur Muhammad, expressing surprise at the tone of the communication and adding, "should his Highness, from whatever cause, feel himself precluded from receiving a British Resident without such stipulations as those now proposed by him, it would be better at once to say so candidly, and let all matters rest as they were."<sup>49</sup> In regard to the 'protection' clause the British Government affirmed that "it is not in the policy of this Government, by promises of general arbitration, and by an absolute guarantee of protection, to be implicated without reserve in the uncertain policy and conduct of Sind, and in the maintenance of all its existing Frontiers variously acquired as these have been, and wild and ill-controlled as, in many parts, they are".<sup>50</sup>

As negotiations progressed it became apparent that the Amirs attached the greatest importance to the clause guaranteeing British protection against all internal and external enemies. In the end the Amirs' insistence had its effect and the Governor-General guided by second thoughts, instructed Pottinger to accept the stipulation but condition it with a request from the Amirs' side for a subsidiary force in Sind.<sup>51</sup> Macnaughten wrote to Pottinger, "His Lordship would look upon the establishment of a subsidiary force in Sind to be an object of much political importance" provided there was no hitch to it in the external relations or internal policy of Sind.<sup>52</sup> At the same time Lord Auckland also wrote to Nur Muhammad Khan and Nasir Khan saying that he had no wish to

force the proposal for a subsidiary force on them if they did not want it themselves, adding, "The sole object of the proposition to which it is my hope that you will accede is to promote commerce, to establish tranquillity, and to manifest to the world my friendly sentiments towards you".<sup>53</sup>

In all this dialogue the Amirs were still hesitant about receiving a British agent in their territories, and on 21 February 1838 the Governor-General wrote to the Secret Committee that "the negotiations with the Ameers for the establishment of a British Resident at the capital of Sind, are still pending".<sup>54</sup> Seeing that nothing seemed to break the Sind rulers' obstinacy on this point, Pottinger warned Nur Muhammad that unless that point was conceded the British Government could not exert its influence with the Maharajah for the restoration of the Mazari districts and the relinquishment of his designs on Sind.<sup>55</sup> Pottinger also wrote to Mir Sobdar, the most vocal opponent of the idea, pointing out to him the advantages of the arrangement proposed and asking him to reconsider his position.<sup>56</sup> At last the Amirs, including Sobdar, agreed unconditionally to the Governor-General's memorandum which was ratified into a treaty on 20 April 1838 concluded between the British Government and their Highnesses Mir Nur Muhammad Khan and Mir Nasir Khan of Hyderabad.

It consisted of two articles.<sup>57</sup> The first provided for the mediation of the British Government in the Amirs' differences with the Maharajah and the second for the residence of an accredited British minister at Hyderabad for promoting relations of amity and peace between the two Governments. The British representative could change his place of residence if he thought it necessary, attended by such escort as was deemed suitable by his Government. The Amirs too were at liberty to depute a vakeel to reside at Calcutta if they chose. Each of the four junior Amirs was given a separate document of the agreement in his name, with a stipulation providing that the East India Company agreed never to covet one rea of his revenues, nor interfere in their internal management, that the Company would maintain the same friendly relations with him and his descendants as it did with the other Amirs in conformity with the provisions of the Perpetual Treaty.<sup>58</sup> Pottinger however was instructed to let it be known to the junior Amirs that the documents granted to them in their names were to be considered an

indulgence from the British Government rather than a recognition of their right for an independent standing. That the Government would by no means include their names in other national engagements concluded or to be concluded with Sind.<sup>59</sup> This was indeed a clever idea to ensure manoeuvrability in future negotiations because, hereafter, if it suited the British authorities to divide the Amirs, they could do so with ease for the basis had been laid. If, on the other hand, it was more convenient to deal with a single head of Government, they could say that the agreements with the junior Amirs had no future binding.

With the conclusion of the treaty, Lord Auckland issued an order appointing Pottinger as his 'Public Minister' at the court of Sind and vesting him with all the authority of that office. Captain P.M. Melville was appointed the Assistant Resident under Pottinger as well as the British Agent for the navigation of the lower course of the Indus.<sup>60</sup>

Thus, by the middle of 1838 the two major objectives of British policy in this region had been attained. The survey of the Indus, permission for which had been secured by Burnes, had been conducted by Lieutenants Carless and Wood, with every facility from the Amirs, and completed in December 1837.<sup>61</sup> The report submitted by these officers was a comprehensive document showing clearly the limitations of the river Indus as an avenue of commerce. To Lord Auckland however the limitations seemed but a minor detail and he still felt that trade could be encouraged by the establishment of entrepôts and annual fairs on the river banks, in pursuance of which he again deputed Alexander Burnes on a mission to Lahore and Kabul. The second British objective, and a more important one, was to secure the establishment of a Residency in Sind. This was also attained a few months after the completion of the survey. As far as the British Government was concerned, they had now nothing further to do but watch the course of events.

The Treaty of 1838 dealt the first mortal blow to the independence of Sind. According to William Napier it was a 'loaded shell' placed in the palace of the Amirs to explode at his (the Governor-General's) pleasure for their destruction.

If the opening of the Indus to trade was the first step, the establishment of a Residency at Hyderabad was the second step taken towards the final subversion of the state's independent existence.

NOTES

- 1 NAI, Political Consultation 5 September 1836, No. 11. Governor-General's Minute on 'Navigation of the Indus' dated 19 August 1836
- 2 *Ibid*
- 3 *Ibid.*, No. 9. Trevelyan's Paper dated 19 June 1836
- 4 *Ibid*
- 5 BR, Vol. 22/693 of 1835, Political Department, Pottinger to Macnaughten, 2 October 1835
- 6 *Ibid.*, Pottinger to Burnes, 15 October 1835
- 7 BR, Vol. 35/696 of 1835, Political Department, Burnes to Pottinger, Hyderabad, 16 November 1835. (Consultation 31 December 1835, No. 37458)
- 8 *Ibid.*, Pottinger forwarding Burnes' despatch of 25 November 1835 to the Secretary, Bombay Government dated Bhooj Residency, 4 December 1835 (Consultation 31 December 1835, No. 3793)
- 9 *Ibid*
- 10 NAI, Political Consultation 18 January 1836, No. 23. Burnes to Pottinger dated Hyderabad, 5 December 1835
- 11 *Ibid*
- 12 *Ibid.*, No. 22. Pottinger to Macnaughten, 25 December 1835
- 13 *Ibid*
- 14 *Ibid*
- 15 *Ibid.*, No. 24. Macnaughten to Pottinger dated 18 January 1836
- 16 NAI, Political Consultation 11 April 1836, No. 28. Pottinger forwarding copy of his letter addressed to Nur Muhammad Khan dated 8 March 1836, to Macnaughten, 11 March 1836
- 17 NAI, Political Consultation 16 May 1836, No. 50. The British Native Agent to Pottinger dated 13 April 1836
- 18 *Cambridge History of India*, V, p. 542
- 19 Enclosures in the letter of Macnaughten to Wade, 5 March 1833, Book 117, letter 3, Punjab Government Records, quoted by Khera, *British Policy towards Sindh upto Its Annexation*, pp. 48-49
- 20 *Ibid*
- 21 NAI, Secret Consultation 23 January 1837, No. 16. Minute by the Governor-General dated 26 December 1836
- 22 *Ibid*
- 23 PP, Correspondence relative to Sind (hereinafter SC) 1836-38, No. 1. Governor-General of India in Council to the Secret Committee, 28 November 1836
- 24 NAI, Secret Consultation 3 October 1836, No. 17. Minute by the Governor-General dated 22 September 1836
- 25 PP, SC 1836-38, No. 2. Macnaughten to Wade, 26 September 1836
- 26 *Ibid*
- 27 *Ibid.* Also see Cunningham, J.D., *History of the Sikhs*, pp. 182-184

- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 3. Secretary to the Government of India to Pottinger, 26 September 1836
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 6. Pottinger to the Secretary to Government of India, 10 December 1836
- <sup>32</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 23 January 1837, No. 11. Pottinger to Private Secretary with the Governor-General, Hyderabad 25, November 1836
- <sup>33</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 26 June 1837, No. 52. Commercial articles entered into with the Government of Hyderabad, 25 November 1836
- <sup>34</sup> PP, SC 1836-38, *op. cit.*, No. 6
- <sup>35</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 23 January 1837, No. 13. Pottinger to Wade dated, Hyderabad 30 November 1836
- <sup>36</sup> PP, SC 1836-38, *op. cit.*, No. 6
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 1. Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee, 28 November 1836
- <sup>38</sup> Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 185. Wade to Government, 3 January 1837
- <sup>39</sup> PP, SC 1836-38, No. 9. Macnaughten to Pottinger, 2 March 1837
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>41</sup> Macnaughten to Wade, 14 November 1836. Quoted by Khera, *British Policy Towards Sindh*, p. 62
- <sup>42</sup> PP, SC 1836-38, No. 4. Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee, 2 January 1837
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 6. Pottinger's letter dated 10 December 1836
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 8. Enclosure B in Pottinger's letter to Secretary to Government of India, 1 February 1837
- <sup>46</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 23 January 1837, No. 16. Minute by the Governor-General dated 26 December 1836
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 17. Government despatch to Pottinger dated 2 January 1837
- <sup>48</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 19 June 1837, No. 30. Pottinger to Macnaughten dated Bhooj Residency, 11 May 1837
- <sup>49</sup> PP, SC 1836-38, No. 11. Governor-General to the Secret Committee, 27 December 1837, No. 32
- <sup>50</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 19 June 1837, No. 32. Secretary to Government of India to Pottinger, 19 June 1837
- <sup>51</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 9 May 1838, No. 86. Macnaughten to Pottinger dated 1 February 1838
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 87. Auckland to Amirs dated 1 February 1838
- <sup>54</sup> PP, SC 1836-38, No. 12
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>56</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 4 July 1838, No. 24. Pottinger to Macnaughten dated Bhooj Residency, 17 March 1838
- <sup>57</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 7



- <sup>58</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 4 July 1838, No. 24A. Pottinger to Macnaughten dated Bhooj Residency, 23 March 1838
- <sup>59</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 24 July 1838, No. 24B. Macnaughten to Pottinger, 11 April 1838
- <sup>60</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 29 August 1838, Nos. 44 and 40
- <sup>61</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 14 February 1838, No. 68. Pottinger forwards Carless' communication dated Karachi harbour, 29 December 1837



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## The Afghan Expedition

With the establishment of the political Residency, British political missions to Sind came to a virtual end. Thereafter it was no longer necessary to depute envoys, for British affairs were to be handled by the British Resident posted at Hyderabad. But though the missions in a formal sense had ended, the tangible results of what they had been able to achieve in terms of reducing the state to utter helplessness were only just beginning to be felt. The events that followed bore eloquent testimony to their work.

The Afghan war started it.

From 1830 the fear of Russia invading India from the north-west had been assuming frightful proportions in British minds. In the 'Memoranda on the North-West Frontier of British India' Sir John Malcolm had included a minute on the Russian invasion of India in which he said: "Russia has entertained and still entertains designs of invading India.... to my knowledge, the invasion of India is a constant and favourite theme of conversation and speculation with the army of that nation."<sup>1</sup> In support of his theory he pointed out how Russia had continued to advance. Her frontier in 1797 had been on the north of the Caucasus. In 1830 it was on the Araxes. The Treaty of Adrianople in 1834 made her position dangerously strong and it seemed clear to Malcolm that Russia was slowly but steadily advancing towards India through Persia. In his view her route to India would be via Persia and Khorassan to Herat. Making a concerted move with Persia, she would force her way through Kandahar and Kabul, who were too weak to resist the aggressor, and so reach the banks of the Indus 'in two, if not in one campaign'.<sup>2</sup>

Malcolm was not alone in his apprehensions. In 1832 Alexander Burnes had, with the Governor-General's permission, undertaken an extensive journey to Afghanistan and other countries along the Indus to find out more about Russian designs. After a year's travel through Afghanistan (where he met the Kabul

ruler Dost Mahomed Khan) and countries of Central Asia he returned in 1833, his worst fears confirmed. He recorded that the Kabul chief had evinced a great interest in Russia. To Burnes it seemed a curious fact "that the politics of a distant and powerful nation in Europe should form a matter of greater interest and anxiety within 200 miles of the Indus than the adjacent territory of Hindoostan".<sup>3</sup>

Besides Burnes' opinion Lord Auckland also found a useful guide to this problem in the minute of Lord William Bentinck in whose day the possibility of a Russian invasion was first discussed. Bentinck wrote: "It is in the interest of Russia to extend and strengthen the Persian Empire, which occupies a central position between the double lines of operation of the Autocrat to the eastward and to the westward, and as Persia can never be a rival of Russia the augmentation of her strength can only increase the offensive means of Russia."<sup>4</sup> He went on to say that from Herat the army would find no real difficulty in its march to the Indian territories. "The Afghan confederacy, even if cordially united, would have no means to resist the power of Russia and Persia. They probably would make a virtue of necessity and join the common cause . . . . Ranjit Singh has no means to resist their advance," and so the army thus advancing would soon be in India and in occupation of the fertile parts of the sub-continent.<sup>5</sup>

The main factor responsible for creating the fear psychosis in British minds was a series of disquieting reports sent by the British Minister at Persia, Mr. McNeill who spoke in awesome tones of the enormous influence wielded by Russia in the counsels of the Persian king and of the latter's Eastern projects which included among others the capture of Herat and Kandahar.<sup>6</sup> In 1836 he published a pamphlet in London entitled 'Progress of Russia in the East' in which he represented the Russian danger to British interests as being 'greatest and most imminent'. He wrote, "It signifies little to object that the Russian troops are not even yet at Herat; the time may not be ripe for the last decided step of military occupation, but it is fast approaching."<sup>7</sup> McNeill's pamphlet along with reports from Burnes, Malcolm and Fraser aroused keen interest in India and British apprehensions about the Russian danger began to take a definite shape.

When Auckland took charge, the home authorities impressed

on him the need to take some concrete measures urgently to meet the situation. The Secret Committee's despatch of 25 June 1836<sup>8</sup> called the Governor-General's attention to 'this very important question' and left it to his discretion to decide whether he should send a confidential agent to Dost Mahomed of Kabul to watch the progress of events, or whether he should enter into engagements, commercial or political, with that chief "in order to counteract Russian influence in that quarter". The Secret Committee felt that it had become necessary to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan for the purpose of preventing Persian domination in that region and "to raise a timely barrier against the impending encroachments of Russian influence".<sup>9</sup>

Auckland had come out to India in March 1836. In May he received a congratulatory letter from Dost Mahomed who also spoke of some differences with the Sikhs in which he sought the Governor-General's advice.<sup>10</sup> The latter took advantage of this opportunity to inform the Afghan ruler of his intention to send a commercial agent to his court to discuss commercial matters with him. With regard to his differences with the Sikhs, Auckland said, "My friend, you are aware that it is not the practice of the British Government to interfere with the affairs of other independent states."<sup>11</sup>

The commercial agent appointed was Alexander Burnes who proceeded on his mission in November 1836 that finally brought him to Kabul on 20 September 1837.<sup>12</sup> Burnes found Dost Mahomed most friendly. The Afghan chief was anxious to enlist British support in recovering Peshawar from Ranjit Singh. The proposal was communicated to Auckland who would have none of it. He insisted that Dost Mahomed must waive all claim over Peshawar. In the meantime Burnes' task at the Afghan court had become immeasurably more difficult by the presence of the Russian envoy, Captain Vikovitch, who was trying to lure Dost Mahomed into an alliance with Persia. Burnes wrote desperate letters home. "It remains to be reconsidered why we cannot act with Dost Mahomed", he wrote in his letter of 2 June 1838. "He is a man of undoubted ability, and has at heart high opinions of the British nation; and if half you must do for others were done for him, and offers made which he could see conduced to his interests, he would abandon Persia and Russia tomorrow."<sup>13</sup> But Auckland would do nothing. The utmost he was prepared to do was to give the

Afghan ruler a guarantee against Ranjit Singh's further encroachments in Afghanistan when, says Marshman, "it was well known that the mere mention of the Khyber Pass as General Avitabile affirmed, gave his soldiers the cholic and that Ranjit Singh had no more idea of marching to Cabul than to Pekin". Even Burnes' engagement with the Dost, offering him British help against the invasion of his territories by Persia, was promptly disowned by the Governor-General.<sup>14</sup> As against this, the Russian envoy offered concrete terms. Dost Mahomed waited as long as he could and when nothing emerged from the British side except a haughty communication from Auckland, "every sentence of which was calculated to kindle a flame of indignation in the Afghan nobles and chiefs",<sup>15</sup> he hastened into an alliance with Persia, guaranteed by Count Simonich that Kandahar would be defended against all external attack.<sup>16</sup> Dost Mahomed was reported to have exclaimed when taking this decision, "I have not abandoned the British, but the British have abandoned me." Burnes left Kabul on 26 April 1838.<sup>17</sup>

The siege of Herat brought matters to a head. Kamran, the ruler of Herat, was guilty of many violations of treaties existing between Herat and Persia. The Shah of Persia demanded prompt redress of his grievances. McNeill used every argument to dissuade the Shah from taking extreme action, for to him it seemed that the advance of Persia to Afghanistan meant the virtual advance of Russia towards the Indus. The Russian envoy Count Simonich, on the other hand, encouraged the Shah to go ahead with the expedition.<sup>18</sup> Finally the Russian influence prevailed and the Shah set out for Herat in July 1837, heedless of Lord Auckland's warning that such an expedition would be viewed as a "scheme of interference and conquest on our western frontier".<sup>19</sup>

The Herat expedition created a stir in Central Asia. Its effect in India was profound. The subject was widely discussed and there was a general feeling in the air that something was about to happen. The siege of Herat commenced on 21 November 1837. Auckland, feeling that a vigorous policy was called for, decided to replace the unfriendly Dost Mahomed with a ruler more favourably disposed towards the British. His choice fell on the exiled Afghan ruler Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk with whom he now entered into negotiations. The third party invited to the negotiations was Maharajah Ranjit Singh.

Auckland proposed direct military intervention in Afghan affairs. The time factor did not figure in his calculations. In his review of the situation on 12 May 1838 he outlined three possible courses of action open to the British Government.<sup>20</sup> The first was to confine their operations to the line of the Indus and abandon Afghanistan to its fate. This course he felt was defeatist and would give Russia and Persia a free field for their intrigues. The second course was to lend assistance to Afghanistan, but this he rejected on the ground that Dost Mahomed might utilise the resources thus afforded him against Maharajah Ranjit Singh. The third was to encourage the Sikh ruler to march on Kabul, backed by an expedition headed by Shah Shuja to establish his authority in east Afghanistan where he was to be helped with British contributions in money and officers to train his troops together with the presence of an accredited British agent at his court. The last course seemed to him the most practicable and upon it he finally resolved.

On 1 October 1838 Auckland issued a Declaration which Marshman calls "one of the most remarkable state papers in the records of British India, whether considered with reference to its glaring misstatements, the sophistry of its arguments, or the audacity of its assertions".<sup>21</sup> The Governor-General talked of the failure of Burnes' mission for which he fixed the blame on Dost Mahomed. He talked of Persian intrigues backed by Russia and encouraged by the Kandahar rulers. He affirmed that the army of Dost Mahomed had made a sudden, unprovoked attack on Ranjit Singh whereas in truth it was the latter who had made repeated, uncalled for attacks on Afghan territory. He characterised the attack on Herat as 'a most unjustified and cruel aggression' in which he accused the chiefs of Kandahar of assisting the Persians. Thus, the Declaration went on to say:

"In the crisis of affairs consequent upon the retirement of our Envoy from Cabool, the Governor-General felt the importance of taking immediate measures for arresting the rapid progress of foreign intrigues and aggression towards our own territories.

"It has been clearly ascertained, from the information furnished by the various officers who have visited Afghanistan that the Barukzye Chiefs, from their disunion and unpopularity, were ill-fitted, under any circumstances, to be useful Allies to the British Government and to aid us in our just and necessary measures of national



defence.... The welfare of our possessions in the East requires that we should have on our Western Frontier, an Ally who is interested in resisting aggression, and establishing tranquillity, in the place of Chiefs ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile Power, and seeking to promote schemes of conquest and aggrandizement.

"After serious and mature deliberation, the Governor-General was satisfied that a pressing necessity, as well as every consideration of policy and justice warranted us in espousing the cause of Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk."<sup>22</sup>

The Secret Committee on the affairs of India approved of Auckland's policy and stated in its despatch dated 24 October 1838 :

"We have heard with the utmost regret that the Mission to Kabul, conducted by Lieut.-Col. Sir Alexander Burnes, has failed, and that Major Leech, who was accredited to the Court of Kandahar, has also been obliged to return from that city... A due regard even for the security of British India, to say nothing of the character which we have hitherto maintained in the regions bordering on our North-Western frontier, makes it indispensable that we should re-establish whatever influence and authority late occurrences may have deprived us of in Afghanistan.

"We have hitherto declined to take part in the intestine dissensions of the Afghan states.... But as our efforts to cultivate a closer alliance with Dost Muhammad and his brothers of Kandahar have not only failed, but those Princes have, as it were, thrown themselves into the arms of a Power whose nearer approach to the Indus is incompatible with the safety of Her Majesty's Indian possessions, it becomes our imperative duty to adopt some course of policy by which Kabul and Kandahar may be united under a sovereign bound by every tie of interest as well as gratitude to become, and to remain, the faithful ally of Great Britain."<sup>23</sup>

A little later Sir John Hobhouse wrote to Auckland, "Had you received our Despatch of October 24 before your Proclamation issued, you would have had nothing to say except that you had taken the course in pursuance of orders from home." It was as though a blind had descended on the minds of British authorities at this time. The sagacious voice of Charles Metcalfe warning against extension beyond the Indus was forgotten. There were still a few who sounded a note of caution and among them was

Sir Henry Fane, the Commander-in-Chief, who had given very sensible advice in 1837: "Every advance you might make beyond the Sutlej to the westward in my opinion adds to your military weakness. . . . If you want your Empire to expand, expand it over Oudh or over Gwalior and the remains of the Mahratta Empire. Make yourselves completely sovereigns of all within your bounds. But let alone the far West".<sup>24</sup> Elphinstone and Sir Henry Willock pointed out the difficulties of distance and climate. Nobody listened to them. The siege of Herat was raised in October 1838. After it was raised there was no justification whatsoever to the 'wild king-making crusade' about to be undertaken. It was generally expected that in the altered circumstances the proposed expedition would be relinquished. But that was not to be. The 'fatal infatuation' that characterised the policy of Lord Auckland led him on to another Declaration of 8 November 1838 in which he announced the decision of his Government to go ahead with the expedition "with a view to the substitution of a friendly for a hostile power in the Eastern provinces of Afghanistan and of the establishment of a permanent barrier against schemes of aggression on the North West Frontier".<sup>25</sup>

The first step towards the misguided Afghan venture was taken with the conclusion of the Tripartite Treaty between Shah Shuja, Ranjit Singh and the British Government. The treaty was signed on 26 June 1838, seven months after the siege of Herat and about nine months before an army from India could possibly reach Herat. The basis of this treaty was provided by the earlier treaty which Shah Shuja had concluded with Ranjit Singh in March 1833<sup>26</sup> when he had made his second futile attempt to regain his throne. At that time he had applied for British help, but Bentinck, while agreeing to help him with a four months' stipend in advance,<sup>27</sup> contended that the assistance of the British Government would be inconsistent "with that neutrality which on such occasions is the rule of guidance adopted by the British Government". However he had assured the Shah that whatever be the outcome of the venture, "your royal family will not be abandoned to destitution under any circumstances. On this point you may make your mind perfectly easy, relying on the well-known generosity of the British nation".<sup>28</sup> This time in 1838, without so much as even consulting the Sind Amirs it was decided that they must concede the right of transit

to the troops and also that they must defray part of the expenses of the expedition and to that end the defunct claim of Shah Shuja's right to tribute as Sind's suzerain was revived. Thus, curiously, the Tripartite Treaty to which Sind was not a party contained the following two articles that related to Sind:

"Article IV. Regarding Shikarpore and the territory of Sindh lying on the right bank of the Indus, the Shah will agree to abide by whatever may be settled as right and proper, in conformity with the happy relations of friendship subsisting between the British Government and the Maharajah through Captain Wade."<sup>29</sup>

Since 1824 Shikarpore was the Amirs' possession by conquest, so what was there to settle about it? A contemporary writer answered this question saying that the real meaning of this clause was that "Shah Shuja and Runjeet agreed to leave it to the British Government to determine what portion of Shikarpore should be given to Runjeet Singh for his assistance in seating Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk upon the throne, that the British Government after it had acceded to the treaty would determine what portion of Shikarpore should belong to Runjeet Singh, in the event of the Shah's success in his new attempt".<sup>30</sup> In other words, Ranjit Singh who had always coveted Shikarpore was to be rewarded for his help to the Shah with a portion of Shikarpore to be decided by the British Government.

Thus was Shikarpore disposed of. But a more flagrant instance of injustice and arbitrariness was Article XVI that revived the claim of tribute from the Amirs.

"Article XVI. Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk agrees to relinquish, for himself, his heirs and successors, all claims of supremacy, and arrears of tribute, over the country now held by the Ameers of Sindh (which will continue to belong to the Ameers, and their successors in perpetuity), on condition of the payment to him by the Ameers of such a sum as may be determined, under the mediation of the British Government; 15,00,000 of rupees of such payment being made over by him to Maharajah Runjeet Singh. On these payments being completed, Article IV of the Treaty of 12th March 1833, will be considered cancelled, and the customary interchange of letters and suitable presents between the Maharajah and the Ameers of Sindh shall be maintained as heretofore."<sup>31</sup>

The whole thing was an outrage. What was the status of Shah

Shuja that he should claim rights of paramountcy when he himself was no more than a humble pensioner of the British since 1816? The Amirs had never recognised Kabul's demand of tribute except by force and had stopped paying it altogether since 1813 consequent upon the breakup of the Afghan kingdom among the Barukzaye brothers into semi-independent states after the death of Zaman Shah. Shah Shuja, the last of the Durani rulers had been forced to flee the country in 1809 and seek asylum in India. Says Lushington, "Was there a possibility that Shah Shoojah, unaided by the English, would ever be in a position to enforce tribute from the Ameers? What strength, what soldiers, what money had Shah Shoojah, to establish his claim on Sinde, except what the English gave him?"<sup>32</sup> The sole justification for this article arose from the British Government's need for money to meet the expenses of the expedition. Shah Shuja was penniless and Ranjit Singh, far from paying a penny, demanded payment for the services he was going to render. The British Government had to find someone to share the brunt of the cost involved. Indeed, the Governor-General made no secret of his motives when he instructed Pottinger to demand tribute, adding that the Amirs may be supposed to be fairly wealthy.<sup>33</sup>

Arrangements were soon set afoot to implement the Tripartite Treaty. Shah Shuja decided to raise a contingent of his own in order to appear in his country as a popular monarch returning to his land with the support of his own people.<sup>34</sup> This was an illusion on which Lord Auckland had pinned most of his hopes, an illusion fostered by Burnes and Wade that the Afghans waited with open arms to receive their exiled king. When he was in Afghanistan in 1838, Burnes, while advocating the Dost's cause to the Governor-General had at the same time expressed the view that Shah Shuja enjoyed immense popularity, that "the British Government has only to send him to Peshawar with an agent and two of its own regiments as an honorary escort and an avowal to the Afghans that we have taken up his cause, to ensure his being fixed for ever on his throne".<sup>35</sup> Thus Lord Auckland declared in his Manifesto of 1 October 1838 :

"His Majesty, Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk, will enter Afghanistan, surrounded by his own Troops, and will be supported against foreign interference, and factious opposition, by a British Army

....Once he shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Afghanistan established, the British Army will be withdrawn.”<sup>36</sup>

W.H. Macnaughten, secretary to the Central Government, was appointed Envoy and Minister to represent the Government of India at Shah Shuja's court while Burnes was placed under Macnaughten and sent ahead on a mission to Kelat and other states to arrange for supplies and various facilities necessary for the army that was soon to start on its march to Afghanistan.

What was to be the army's route? The shortest and most direct lines of operations ran through the Punjab, Peshawar and the Khyber Pass to Kabul. “The invading army should have assembled with all its stores, not on the Upper Sutledge, but on the Indus and from thence have penetrated by the Khyber to Cabool, and by Deera Ishmael Khan, not a difficult route, to Ghusni and Candahar.”<sup>37</sup> The route running thus was five hundred miles from Ludhiana to Kabul.<sup>38</sup> But that meant a passage through the Maharajah's territories to which the latter firmly said no. The second line of advance lay through the Amirs' territories. This line running from Ludhiana to Rohri on the Indus and passing through Cutch Gundava to penetrate the defiles of Bolan and Kandahar and Ghazni to Kabul was not less than fifteen hundred miles.<sup>39</sup> The Governor-General resolved to take this route, thereby perpetrating on the helpless Sind rulers in the form of aggression that which he dared not even propose in the way of friendship to the powerful Ranjit Singh. In fact, Auckland's Declaration of 1 October 1838, remarked St. George Tucker, one of the leading Directors of the Company, “might have been supposed to emanate from the Chancery of Lahore”.<sup>40</sup> The plan of campaign in its final shape was as follows: The army of the Indus under Sir Henry Fane was to gather at Karnal. Another army under Sir John Keane was to proceed via Bombay and Sind. The Shah's army starting from Ludhiana was to proceed to Shikarpore while the Sikh force was to move via Peshawar.<sup>41</sup>

Having decided on the above details, Henry Pottinger was sent to Hyderabad as Resident of Sind to negotiate with the Amirs for the passage of the army through their territories under the terms of the April 1838 Treaty. To Khairpur went Alexander Burnes, en route to Kelat, to arrange with Mir Rustam for supplies and neces-



sary facilities for the army and to demand the cession of Bukkūr during the Afghan operations as 'a temporary measure' which was to come to an end as soon as the troops left Sind.<sup>42</sup>

Pottinger's instructions dated 26 July 1838 were all of a piece. He was required to state to the Amirs that "in the opinion of the Governor General, a crisis has arrived, at which it is essentially requisite for the security of British India, that the real friends of that Power should unequivocally manifest their attachment to its interests".<sup>43</sup> The crisis in question was the combination of powers to the westward "apparently having objects in view calculated to be injurious to our empire in the East", which had compelled the Governor-General to enter into a counter-combination for the purpose of frustrating those objects.<sup>44</sup> The counter-combination of powers was the alliance between the three contracting parties of the Tripartite Treaty. The Amirs were invited to join this counter-combination as much for their own benefit as for their friendship for the British Government. Their benefit, Auckland pointed out, lay in fulfilling Articles IV and XVI of the Tripartite Treaty and he hoped that Pottinger would have no difficulty in convincing the Amirs "of the magnitude of the benefits they will derive from securing the undisturbed possession of the territories they now hold, and obtaining immunity for all future claims on this account by a moderate pecuniary sacrifice".<sup>45</sup> The Resident's instructions further required him to apprise the Amirs that while the present exigency lasted, that article of the 1832 Treaty that prohibited the carriage of military stores up the Indus must necessarily be suspended.<sup>46</sup> Shah Shuja was expected to reach Shikarpore with his army and a contingent of British troops about the middle of November. Pottinger was desired to be at Shikarpore at that time. Should the Amirs resist or show a spirit of opposition to the Shah's advance, the brief continued, "temporary occupation should be taken of Shikarpore, and of as much of the country adjacent as may be required to afford a secure base to the intended military operations".<sup>47</sup> The Governor-General warned that he would not repeat this offer of mediation if the Amirs refused to take it now and he exhorted the Amirs as sincere friends and near neighbours to show some visible mark of attachment to British interests and some concession to meet the 'reasonable wishes' of the British Government.<sup>48</sup>



That was not all. The Amirs were known to have a long-standing connection with Persia which, the Governor-General stated, must now come to an end. If the Amirs had any engagements with that country, they must "in the present crisis of affairs, be considered as indicative of feelings of direct hostility to the British Government, such as cannot be tolerated with regard to the preservation of our interests".<sup>49</sup> Finally, the Resident was to ascertain the individual disposition of each Amir towards the British Government and those that were well inclined were to be rewarded with provisional engagements from Pottinger, a measure "best calculated to support the supremacy of the Ameer whose cause we may espouse".<sup>50</sup>

As soon as Pottinger received the instructions, he replied, assuring his Government that he would handle the Amirs firmly. He wrote, "I shall not fail to tell them distinctly, that the day they connect themselves with any other Power will be the last of their independent authority, if not of their rule, for that we have the ready power to crush and annihilate them and will not hesitate to call it into action, should it appear requisite, however remotely, for either the integrity or safety of our empire, or its frontiers."<sup>51</sup> At the same time the Resident was not without feeling a qualm of conscience as he contemplated the unpleasant task before him. "Had our connection existed some years," he wrote in his letter of 27 August, "and our Resident thereby had time, by constant kindly intercourse with the chiefs and people, to have removed the strong and universal impression that exists throughout Sind, as to our grasping policy, the case might have been widely different; but I enter on my new duties without anything to offer and with a proposal that will not only strengthen the above impressions, but revive a claim to tribute which has been long esteemed obsolete."<sup>52</sup>

Pottinger reached Hyderabad about the middle of September 1838. He prepared a memorandum for the Amirs, setting forth in full detail the circumstances that had necessitated the conclusion of the Tripartite Treaty, its provisions, the Afghan expedition and its route through Bhawalpore and Sind, and the tribute demanded of the Amirs.<sup>53</sup> He hoped the Amirs would see their benefit in the measures proposed and accordingly assist the British Government in its great objects. He pointed out that the situation was urgent and the British Government's decision final 'and not open

to further consideration.’<sup>54</sup> Hesitation on the part of the Amirs, no matter on what grounds, would be deemed a refusal—a situation for which additional troops were ready in Bengal and Bombay to apply the remedy.<sup>55</sup>

The Amirs were staggered by the demands. What was Shah Shuja’s standing, they argued, that he should demand tribute, urging with simple irresistible force, “It is a joke talking of it as a demand from the King; you have given him bread for the last five and twenty years, and any strength he has now, or may hereafter have, proceeds from you, so that the demand is literally yours.”<sup>56</sup> However, they produced two releases from Shah Shuja, signed and sealed on the Koran by the exiled ruler when he had made his earlier attempt to regain his throne; absolving them from all tribute payments.<sup>57</sup> Pottinger was puzzled and wrote to his Government seeking further instructions. His scruples were promptly laid to rest by the Governor-General’s reply:

“The Governor-General refrains for the present from recording any opinion relative to the releases which His Majesty Shah Shooja is stated to have executed. Admitting the documents produced to be genuine, and that they imply a relinquishment of all claim to tribute, still they would hardly appear to be applicable to present circumstances; and it is not conceivable that His Majesty should have foregone so valuable a claim without some equivalent, or that some counterpart agreement should not have been taken, the non-fulfilment of the terms of which may have rendered null and void His Majesty’s engagements.”<sup>58</sup>

In any event the Governor-General was not interested in the moral aspect of the case and wanted the matter closed. He wrote, “It is not incumbent on the British Government to enter into any formal investigation of the plea adduced by the Amiers” and he left the question to be arbitrated between Macnaughten who had been appointed Envoy to Shah Shuja’s court and the Amirs.

British demand for the passage of the army through Sind was another point which caused much protest and argument. Bukkur was the most jealously guarded strategic fort in Upper Sind. To have an army crossing at that point was the last thing the rulers liked. But to all their protests Pottinger replied that the orders of ‘his Lordship’ must be carried out. Exasperated, Nur Muhammad Khan observed that the Governor-General’s orders “were not

the decrees of the Almighty, and could, and should be altered".<sup>59</sup> But he knew and Pottinger knew that there was nothing the chiefs could do but carry them out.

Auckland now felt that it was time to conclude a new treaty with Sind that would facilitate the Afghan expedition. He had not long to wait for the opportunity. It so happened that a letter written by the Amirs to the Shah of Persia came into Pottinger's hands.<sup>60</sup> The letter contained nothing but some high sounding complimentary phrases addressed to the 'Defender of the faith' (the Shah of Persia). Pottinger himself did not ascribe any 'immediate political object' to it and considered it simply as proceeding from the bigotry of Shiasm to which faith all Amirs belonged except Sobdar who was a Suni.<sup>61</sup> But important or not, it was a handy tool for the Governor-General to beat the Amirs with. On 6 September 1838 Auckland addressed the Resident giving him detailed instructions about what he had to do to place British relations in Sind on a firm footing. He wrote:

"It seems open to you to decide upon proclaiming as soon as a force from Bombay may enable you to do so with effect, that an act of hostility and bad faith having been committed towards the British Government, the share in the Government of Sinde, which has been held by the guilty party, shall be transferred to the more faithful members of the family; and it may be thought right to accompany this transfer with a condition, that as a security for the future, a British subsidiary force shall be maintained in Sinde; or, secondly, the maintenance of this force may be required without the adoption of an act so rigorous as that of deposition; or, thirdly, it may be thought expedient, upon submission, and the tender by the Ameer of such amends as may be in his power, to point out to him that no better reparation can be given than by exertions to give effect to the Treaty formed for the restoration of Shah Shoojah, by a cordial adoption of its terms, and by exertions on every side to facilitate the success of the coming expedition, the party or parties to the breach of faith now commented upon being required to contribute much more largely than the other Ameer or Ameers, to the pecuniary composition to be paid to Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk."<sup>62</sup>

By way of reassuring the Amirs, Pottinger was directed to tell them that the occupation of their territories by the British troops

was not injurious to their interests.<sup>63</sup> On this Sir William Napier's remark was: "You are to die by my hands," said the executioner to the son of the Spanish Philip; "You are to die! Struggle not! Your father orders it for your good."<sup>64</sup>

The tense situation was beginning to affect the people no less than the rulers. On returning from Sobdar's durbar on 8 October, Pottinger and his party were pelted with stones from an angry crowd of men.<sup>65</sup> Seeing no way out the hapless Amirs finally gave the *parwanas* for grain and other requirements. Triumphantly the Resident wrote to Burnes: "After three hours' talking in this strain he said I was too strong for him; I replied our good faith and truth were too strong for the cause he had to support, which he tacitly admitted."<sup>66</sup> Nonetheless Pottinger knew that the Amirs' cooperation was the result of their fears for in the same letter he added, "The events of every succeeding hour satisfy me that we have nothing to look to from the cordial cooperation and sincere friendship of the Government of Sindh."<sup>67</sup> He expressed this opinion again in his despatch of 9 October 1838 to the Governor-General: "In conclusion I can only repeat what I have said to Captain Burnes that it would be foolish to hope for the cordial cooperation, or sincere friendship, of this Government. It would join our enemies tomorrow did it see they were stronger than we; and the assistance it is about to afford us is the fruit of its fears, and not of real goodwill."<sup>68</sup>

It was around this time that the siege of Herat was raised, followed by the Persian retreat. The news worked a miracle in the Amirs' attitude towards the British. Nur Muhammad declared his preparedness to go all the way to meet the Governor-General's wishes. He informed Pottinger that he had sent instructions to his officers at Shikarpore to help Burnes in every way; that he had despatched a special messenger to Vikkur to arrange for supplies and transport for the Bombay army.<sup>69</sup> So marked was the difference in their attitude before and after the siege of Herat that at the interview of 24 October Pottinger noted, "Nothing could be kinder than the Ameers were, and the whole interview was conducted in the most quiet and orderly style, forming a curious contrast to all my preceding visits."<sup>70</sup> But by now the iron door had closed upon the Amirs. Auckland was determined to pursue his fatuous course of action, so he decided he could not

condone their previous vacillating behaviour. Accordingly the Resident was told that in view of the recent inimical conduct of the Amirs, the Governor-General had resolved to establish a British subsidiary force in Lower Sind at the earliest practicable moment.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, Pottinger was authorised to open a negotiation with Mir Sobdar, the Amir uniformly well disposed towards the British, with a view to placing him at the head of the Government. In a letter dated 29 October, Macnaughten wrote, "The Governor-General is clearly of opinion that such a measure is just and necessary on the principle of a regard for our future security; whether, therefore, the present Ameers are suffered to retain power, an arrangement which his Lordship would now, in the first instance contemplate; or whether Meer Sobdar is raised to the Government under our auspices; the reception of a subsidiary force must be made a *sine quo non* of the new arrangement."<sup>72</sup> If this overture evoked no response from any member of the ruling family, the Governor-General said that he was prepared to consider the claims of the Kalhora Prince residing at Bikaner because, in his view, to have a friendly ruler as the head of the Sind Government was "absolutely indispensable to the safety and tranquillity of our Indian possessions". Pottinger was directed to await the arrival of British troops in Sind and then disclose to the Amirs that their authority was conditional on the establishment of a subsidiary force in their dominions.

Thereafter there was to be no limit to the demands of the British Government. Both the Government and the Resident vied with each other in inventing reasons for exacting more and more. Pottinger suggested to his Government that the Amirs be made to grant "free and unlimited use of the Indus for merchants and the total abolition of every description of toll between Roopur and the Sea."<sup>73</sup> And as his demands increased, so also in corresponding measure rose the temper of his tone. Nur Muhammad was at his wits' end with the Resident. He pleaded, he reasoned, he argued but to no avail. Pottinger dismissed all arguments "in such clear and explicit terms, that the party frequently hung down their heads and looked at each other like fools".<sup>74</sup> Seeing that he was unable to make a breakthrough with Pottinger, Nur Muhammad tried to open a communication with Burnes.<sup>75</sup> But in this he failed.



In a despatch dated 19 November 1838 Auckland now authorised Pottinger to expunge Nur Muhammad's name from all engagements concluded with the junior Amirs in order to destroy his precedence and confirm each ruler in his separate possessions on payment of a fixed subsidy. The reasons advanced for this arrangement were as follows:

"The Governor-General is of opinion that much of advantage may be expected from this subdivison of authority. By separating the territorial possessions of each chief, a separation of their interests will probably follow, and they will be deprived of the motive by which they appear to have been more or less actuated to combine, with a view to the injury of our power."<sup>76</sup>

The Resident was also to stipulate for free navigation of the Indus. Intoxicated with success Pottinger became progressively worse in his manner towards the Amirs. To Burnes he wrote, "So far as my duties and measures at this capital are concerned, it is almost superfluous to observe that Nur Mahomed can say, or do nothing that will change my sentiments."<sup>77</sup> This was an understatement. Far from changing his sentiments the Amirs' helplessness only served to stimulate his imagination and whereas he had formerly suggested the cession of Karachi to his Government, he now put forth a claim to "the cession of all the country lying on the right bank of the Indus south of an imaginary line to be drawn due west from that river at a point ten miles (more or less) north of Tatta, until it meets the frontier of Baloochistan, at the base of the mountains. This would give us a compact territory, the complete command of the river and possession of the only seaport".<sup>78</sup> His reason for proposing this arrangement, he explained, was to introduce habits of civilisation among a barbarous population. He further proposed a distribution of the subsidiary force to be stationed in Sind. His plan was to have a regiment of native infantry and a company of artillery at Karachi with all the rest of the troops at Tatta which had an admirable site on the Mukalla Hills, west of the city, for a cantonment. Another detachment of the Bengali troops was to be kept at Sukkur on the Indus. "With these troops, and British agents residing at Hyderabad and Khyrpore, I look on it that our perfect supremacy throughout Sinde will be as fully established as though we had entirely subjugated it."<sup>79</sup>



Pottinger's proposals found instant favour with Auckland who instructed the Resident on 31 December 1838 to take further steps for the payment of thirty lakhs of rupees as tribute and for the passage of the British army through Sind.<sup>80</sup> The burden of payment was to be so divided among the rulers as to throw the larger portion upon those of the Amirs whose conduct had been less friendly to them. To ensure the unopposed advance of the army Pottinger was to inform the Amirs that the Governor-General proposed to take occupation of all their military posts in the state "for the safe maintenance of communication between the army and the sea, and for the easy return of the British force, when all operations shall be concluded, to the Presidency of Bombay".<sup>81</sup>

In the light of these instructions Pottinger drew up a new draft treaty consisting of 23 articles which he intended to place before the Amirs only after the British troops had landed in Sind.<sup>82</sup> The new draft provided for a reserve force to be stationed at Tatta, the Amirs paying a subsidy to defray its expenses (Mir Sobdar was exempted from paying any tribute or subsidy), non-interference of the British Government in the internal administration and a guarantee of protection to Sind from foreign aggression. The Amirs were to have no connection with foreign states except with the knowledge of the British Government. They were to lend the use of Karachi bunder during the Afghan operations and give permission for building a store-house at Karachi as a depot for stores. They were to furnish military aid to the British Government, if required. The toll was to be abolished on boats from the sea to Ferozapore, though all goods landed and sold, except those that were sold in the British camp or cantonment, were to remain subject to duties levied in Sind and other states. Articles twenty-one and twenty-two provided for the conclusion of separate treaties with Mir Rustam of Khairpur and Sher Muhamad of Mirpur while the last article stipulated that the British Government undertook to guarantee to the different Amirs, their heirs and successors the perpetual enjoyment of their respective possessions on the observance of the terms of this treaty. Having prepared his draft Pottinger now waited for the British troops to reach Sind before taking his next step.

Meanwhile Alexander Burnes was heading for a big triumph at Khairpur. His instructions required him to seek the Amirs' co-

operation in providing supplies and carriage for the advancing army and to demand the temporary occupation of Bukkur for their magazines and hospitals. In return for these concessions he was authorised to receive any proposal that Mir Rustam might make for a separate treaty with the British Government in recognition of his state's independent status and refer it to the Governor-General.<sup>83</sup> Burnes had arrived in Khairpur on 18 October 1838. Earlier, at Rohri he had been welcomed by Mir Rustam's Minister and informed that the Hyderabad Amirs had written to Mir Rustam asking him to join them in taking a firm stand against the English. Burnes was delighted with this piece of news and wrote to his Government, "We have much to gain by a want of union between them of which we may take the more advantage, since it is not of our seeking."<sup>84</sup> At Khairpur he was overjoyed to see how well inclined Mir Rustam was towards the British. The Amir declared himself against all who were enemies of the English and unhesitatingly gave *parwanas* for grain and supplies to Burnes for the army.<sup>85</sup> He even refused to receive the Persian prince who had been lavishly entertained by his cousins at Hyderabad and wrote to Nur Muhammad 'to make friendship with the English'.<sup>86</sup>

Auckland reciprocated Mir Rustam's goodwill by exempting him from money payment to Shah Shuja. As he had anticipated, the Amir was keen to have a separate treaty with the British Government. Accordingly Khairpur drew up a draft in which Burnes saw how they could advantageously occupy the fortress of Bukkur. "They set forth that we are not to touch the forts on this bank or that bank of the river, without alluding to one on an island, and consequently neither, but I place no reliance on such a meaning of the passage, though it is an amusing instance how often cunning men overreach themselves."<sup>87</sup> Burnes now drew up a draft which provided that in view of the long friendship between the two Governments, the Governor-General would mediate in differences between Ranjit Singh and Mir Rustam, that to give effect to the first article a British Minister should reside at the court of Khairpur with freedom to change his residence from time to time, that the East India Company would not covet a reia of revenue of the three Khairpur Amirs nor interfere in its internal management. The Khairpur Government approved of this draft, adding one more stipulation for British protection.

Burnes forwarded the draft to Pottinger and asked for a quick reply "or these people will be sunk in despair; and they certainly deserve another fate".<sup>88</sup> He went on to say how daily, almost hourly, Mir Rustam was showing further proofs of friendship for the British cause. For example, the Amir wished to send his Minister and his son with presents to the frontier to greet the British Commander-in-Chief on arrival in Sind. He wrote, "With such adherence I feel quite at a loss to know how we can either ask money, or any favour of this family. I have never doubted their sincere disposition to cling to us, but in their weak state I did not expect such firmness in the day of trial."<sup>89</sup>

Pottinger however was not to be swept off his feet. He pointed out that Rustam's letter to Nur Muhammad was but "a specimen of most object servility," expressing readiness to be guided by the latter's orders. The Resident demanded a more positive proof of Khairpur's attachment to the British and he drew up another draft which he insisted must form the basis of a separate treaty with Khairpur. The terms he proposed were:<sup>90</sup> unequivocal and distinct renunciation of Khairpur's adherence to Hyderabad except a friendly intercourse with them; a binding to hold no correspondence with the said Amirs or any other foreign state except with the knowledge of the British Government; a pledge of fidelity and allegiance to the British Government, and submission of its disputes with foreign states to the arbitration of the British Government.

Burnes reported that his negotiations on the cession of Bukkur were also well advanced. On 17 December 1838 he wrote to Willoughby Cotton, "I am negotiating for the fortress of Bukkur, and think I have nailed it; if not we must just take it. The poor chiefs of Khyrpore are civil, and well inclined towards us."<sup>91</sup> He presented the revised draft treaty and the separate article on Bukkur together for Rustam's acceptance or rejection as a whole. The Amir's reaction was pathetic. Bukkur, he said, "was the heart of his country—his honour was centred in keeping it—his family and children could have no confidence if it were given up". But Burnes' munshi who was the go-between demanded a 'plain answer' to a 'plain question' and Mir Rustam applied his seal to the treaty.<sup>92</sup>

On 30 January 1839 Bukkur passed quietly into English hands.<sup>93</sup> Triumphant Burnes wrote to his friend Dr. Lord, "I have got the

fortress of Bukkur ceded to us on our own terms.... You did not expect such a chef-d'oeuvre as this, which is a fit ending to the Cabul Mission, since by Bukkur the Macedonians bridled the neighbouring nations."<sup>94</sup> The Governor-General sent Mir Rustam an assurance that British occupation of Bukkur would be a temporary measure for which there was his written testimony "such as may remain among your records in pledge of the sincerity of the British Government". The value of the pledge was soon to be proved by the succeeding Governor-General Lord Ellenborough who without so much as a passing doubt decided to keep it as a permanent British possession.

The treaty concluded with Khairpur consisted of ten articles.<sup>95</sup> In the main, it was based on Pottinger's draft with an addition of two more stipulations providing that the Khairpur Government should furnish troops and other assistance to the British Government if called upon to do so and approve of all defensive preparations made during the Afghan war, and that Mir Rustam should cooperate in measures undertaken to promote commerce and navigation of the Indus. For the rest it provided for perpetual friendship between Mir Rustam, his heirs and successors and the East India Company. The British Government engaged to protect the principality and territory of Khairpur. Mir Rustam and his heirs acknowledged British supremacy and undertook to act in subordinate cooperation with the British Government and not to enter into negotiation with any other chief or state without its knowledge. All disputes were to be submitted to the arbitration of the British Government. An accredited British Minister with an appropriate escort was to reside at Khairpur, with option to change his place of residence as might from time to time seem expedient. The treaty signed on 28 December 1838 and ratified by the Governor-General on 10 January 1839 established the paramountcy of the British Government over the state of Khairpur. Its deeper significance lay in the fact that it drove a wedge between these two branches of the Talpur family. Separate agreements were given to the junior Amirs—Mir Mubarak, Mir Ali Murad and Mir Mohamed—providing for the continuance of friendly relations between the contracting parties and pledging that the British Government would not covet a reeve of their revenue nor interfere in the internal management.<sup>96</sup> Mir Mubarak was singled out for

particularly severe treatment. Actually Burnes was against giving him a separate agreement on the ground that he had all along acted as the agent of Nur Muhammad and tried to thwart the negotiation. But on Mir Rustam's intercession Burnes gave him an agreement subject to the Governor-General's ratification and Auckland decided that on account of his inimical feelings to the British, the entire share of tribute for the Khairpur branch which amounted to seven lakhs of rupees should be collected from this refractory chief.

The army of the Indus for whose arrival Pottinger was waiting was now close to Sind. It consisted of three divisions: Bengal Division under the command of Major-General Sir Willoughby Cotton, Bombay Division under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir John Keane, and the Shah's force commanded by Brigadier Simpson from the 19th Bengal Infantry.<sup>97</sup> The Bombay Division consisting of 5,000 men anchored off the Hujamree mouth of the Indus on 27 November 1838. Pottinger had sent his assistant Lieutenant Eastwick to meet the army and get them disembarked and conveyed to Vikkur where an excellent camping ground had been prepared for them.<sup>98</sup> However, the troops on landing found neither carriage nor provisions to aid them in their march. Military authorities therefore made their own arrangements and sent Captain Outram, an Extra-Aide-de-Camp on Sir John Keane's staff, to Cutch to procure camels for the army. In consequence a long detention of the force was unavoidable and it was not until Christmas eve that the Bombay Division left Vikkur and moved on for Tatta.<sup>99</sup> Reaching Tatta on 28 December, the Division made a long halt to give support to Pottinger's negotiations. The Bengal Division consisting of 54,150 strong, entered Sind territory at Subzulkote on 14 January 1839 and reached Rohri on the 24th. A bridge of boats was thrown across the Indus to facilitate the crossing over of the army on the Sukkur side.<sup>100</sup> On 26 January Mir Rustam and his brothers Mir Mubarak and Ali Murad waited on the Commander-in-Chief Sir John Keane and later accompanied him to a review of the cavalry brigade.<sup>101</sup>

With the army right on the premises to back him, Pottinger now made his next move and on 13 January 1839 he deputed Captain Eastwick and Captain Outram to Hyderabad with the draft of 23 articles. Urging Nur Muhammad to accept it he wrote:



"It is necessary for me to point out to Your Highness, the wealth that will flow into Sind from the British force stationed in it, which will give employment to thousands of the people of this country, will cause a vast increase to the revenues from the demand for grain, and every other article of consumption, and will bring merchants from every quarter to settle in the country."<sup>102</sup> He further assured the Amir that there would be no interference of any kind with their *shikargahs*.

Pottinger's brief to Eastwick on how the latter was to conduct his parleys with the rulers was couched in similar terms. "You will tell the Ameers that Sind forms a natural and integral portion of Hindoostan, that the supremacy of that empire has devolved on us, and that we cannot, and will not, allow any other Power to intermeddle; that it thence follows, that they have now no option left to them of binding their interests irrevocably with ours, and, that if they neglect the opportunity, they may deeply repent it, when it is too late."<sup>103</sup> Pottinger foresaw that the Amirs were bound to ask for a security that would guarantee them against future demands of this nature. To that Eastwick was to reply: "It is the strong instance of our good faith, and wish to preserve our amicable relations, as exemplified in the Treaty you convey to them." Continued Pottinger in the same vein:

"They cannot doubt our power to do as we like, and some of them, at least, must feel, that their acts deserve severe retributory measures, instead of which we tender them our renewed friendship and protection on such moderate terms, and accompanied by so many advantages, that their refusal of the former will show to the world their resolution not to meet us half-way, and to oblige us to take by force, what we ask as friends and protectors."<sup>104</sup>

Regarding Article XXIII which provided for a complete separation of interests among the rulers and dealt a blow to the pre-eminence enjoyed by Mir Nur Muhammad, Pottinger wrote, "He may be told, that he has either shown that the pre-eminence was merely nominal, or that he would not exert it in fulfilment of his solemn engagements; and, in whichever light we view his conduct, the utmost he can now look for is, that his personal rights shall be respected."<sup>105</sup>

The deputies arrived at Hyderabad on 20 January and duly forwarded the Resident's letter to the Amir. On 22 January they



had their audience with the three Amirs, Nur Muhammad, Nasir Khan and Mir Mohamed. The atmosphere was tense. Quietly Nur Muhammad produced a box, from which he took out all the former treaties and asked :

"What is to become of all these?... Since the day that Sinde has been connected with the English, there has always been something new; your Government is never satisfied; we are anxious for your friendship, but we cannot be continually persecuted. We have given a road to your troops through our territories, and now you wish to remain. This the Baloochees will never suffer. But still we might even arrange this matter, were we certain that we should not be harassed with other demands."<sup>106</sup>

Regarding payment of tribute to Shah Shuja, Nur Muhammad observed:

"Why can we obtain no answer on this point? Four months have now elapsed since this question was first discussed. Is this a proof of friendship?"

Eastwick replied that the draft before him permitted no delay, that troops were on their way to Karachi to take possession of it but that their destination could still be changed if the Amirs gave their consent in time. He then went on to enumerate the benefits that the proposed treaty would confer on Sind. He said:

"As to the benefits resulting from the introduction of a British force into Sinde, they were clear and palpable; employment would be given to thousands, a vast influx of capital would encourage commerce and manufactures, this would eventually find its way into the treasures of their Highnesses. The Indus, now so barren, would teem with vessels, jungles would yield to the plough, and prosperity succeed to decay and depopulation."<sup>107</sup>

To which Nur Muhammad replied:

"What benefit do we derive from these changes?... You tell us that money will find its way into our treasury, it does not appear so; our contractors write to us, that they are bankrupt; they have no means of fulfilling their contracts; boats, camels, are all absorbed by the English troops; trade is at a stand; a pestilence has fallen on the land."<sup>108</sup>

Replying to Eastwick's observation that the strength of the people was the strength of its rulers, the Amir said, "You tell me the country will flourish, it is quite good enough for us, and not

so likely to tempt the cupidity of its neighbours. . . . No, give us our hunting preserves and our own enjoyments free from interference, and that is all we require." Thereupon Eastwick warned the Amirs that if they persisted in rejecting the terms offered, they ran the risk of having to yield to more and bigger concessions in consequence.<sup>109</sup>

On the morning of 23 January, Eastwick learnt that the Amirs had conferred together and finally decided to resist the demands. Throughout that day hostile demonstrations were held against the English. Parties of armed Baluchis lingered around the English camp, abusing camp followers and threatening those who took up service with them. The Amirs issued orders to the shopkeepers not to sell anything to the Residency people and the native agent reported that the greatest excitement prevailed among the Baluchi chiefs and retainers who were taunting Nur Muhammad of being a coward and clamouring for a ruler who would lead them against the British.<sup>110</sup> About one in the afternoon a party of two or three hundred armed men crossed the river and took up a position to the right of the camp. Fearing a night attack, Eastwick arranged to have the baggage and servants moved into the boats as a precautionary measure. Nothing happened. Next day Eastwick received a message from Nur Muhammad saying that they would not be responsible for the safety of the Residency officers, for the Baluchis had gone beyond their control. In order to avoid a collision Eastwick along with the Residency staff and their baggage left Hyderabad in boats. They dropped down to Keane's camp in Jerruck where the Bombay Division had moved in on 25 January.<sup>111</sup>

The British troops were now well within Sind territories and moving threateningly in all directions. The reserve force had instructions to rendezvous at the mouth of the Indus and proceed at once to Karachi to occupy it. On 26 January Keane wrote to Willoughby Cotton asking for a column of the Bengal army to march to his assistance in a combined movement on the city and fort of Hyderabad. The latter complied immediately.<sup>112</sup> About the same time Simpson was also marching down from Shikarpore to take possession of Larkana. Exultantly Sir John Keane wrote to the Governor-General on 31 January that if matters with Hyderabad came to an issue, "this will be a pretty piece of practice for the army".<sup>113</sup>

Confronted with these army movements the Amirs gave in. On 1 February a deputation from the Amirs arrived at the English camp accepting British terms in toto.<sup>114</sup> On 4 February the army moved up opposite Hyderabad and halted for a week to enforce actual fulfilment of the terms while the same afternoon it was reported that the English troops had occupied the fort of Karachi.<sup>115</sup> The Amirs paid up their share of tribute to Shah Shuja by the evening of 9 February.<sup>116</sup> The Bombay Division then resumed its march on 10 February while the Bengal column turned back "highly chagrined at the result of the expedition" and joined the main body at Rohri about 14 February.<sup>117</sup> Elated with success Pottinger wrote:

"During each of the days that the force was here, that is, from the 4th to the 10th instant, I was tormented amidst my more important concerns, by almost hourly deputations and messages from the Ameers. . . . to all of which I held but one tone, and that was the future total and unqualified submission of the Hyderabad rulers to the pleasure of the Governor-General, as the only chance that remained of their forgiveness."<sup>118</sup>

In vain did Nur Muhammad strive to arrive at some understanding with the Resident. All his gestures were met by rude repulses. "In fact", wrote one English commentator, "it seems evident that it was the Resident's object to keep open the sources of complaint against the Ameers in order to afford the Governor-General a pretext for enforcing and carrying into effect precisely such measures as were deemed necessary for accomplishing the objects connected with the restoration of Shah Shoojah."<sup>119</sup> One thing was certain. Pottinger was behaving like a man who had lost his mind. As soon as the Amirs had tendered their submission, he proclaimed:

"Every man in Sindh has seen that we had the country at our feet, that our armies were ready simultaneously to overwhelm all opposition, and to come from all quarters like the inundation of the Indus. . . . It has been, and will be, my study to inculcate this impression; and the world will now acknowledge that if our power is great, our good faith and forbearance are still more to be wondered at."<sup>120</sup>

Commenting on these developments and the callous British attitude to the Amirs a contemporary writer wrote in the *Calcutta*

*Review*, "The wolf in the fable did not show greater cleverness in the discovery of a pretext for devouring the lamb than the British Government has shown in all its dealings with the Amirs."<sup>121</sup> The occupation of the Karachi fort was another telling instance of this nature. When the Bombay Division was on its way to chastise the Hyderabad Amirs, H.M.S. *Wellesley*, the H.C.'s Transport *Hannah* and H.C.S. *Syren* were under orders to carry the reserve force to Karachi. As the *Wellesley* approached the harbour, the fort at Karachi fired one or two shots—a customary salutation to greet the incoming ship. Colonel Valiant, the naval C-in-C took this as a signal for resistance and immediately gave orders to level the fort with the dust.<sup>122</sup> The fort, already in a ruinous state, gave way entirely before the British fire. On 2 February the reserve force took possession of Karachi after Colonel Valiant had had the satisfaction of battering down the whole south face of the fort at the mouth of the harbour.<sup>123</sup> The agreement for the surrender of Karachi was signed on 3 February 1839, ceding the fort and town of Karachi to the British forces and engaging to provide for all the facilities required by them.<sup>124</sup>

As soon as the news about Karachi reached Calcutta, Auckland decided to treat it as a British conquest and directed Pottinger to discuss it with the Amirs as "a subject of convention and renewed negotiation" that required the final ratification of the Governor-General.<sup>125</sup> In his view its occupation as a military post during the Afghan operations was very essential; furthermore he felt that "its retention as a conquest will be a fitting punishment of the perfidious and hostile conduct of the Ameers".<sup>126</sup> Accordingly he expunged Articles 13, 14 and 15 from Pottinger's draft as being no longer applicable under the altered circumstances. "We wanted an excuse to take it," observed a writer, "and we soon found one, and as we could not well do without it, we have another pretext for retaining it."<sup>127</sup> The arrangement finally evolved was to leave the civil government to the local authorities while retaining the military occupancy in British hands.<sup>128</sup>

Facts that later came to light about the Karachi episode were heart-breaking. On 7 April Pottinger was in Karachi, on his way to Bombay. He himself testified to the fact that it was a long-standing custom with the Sind authorities to fire a gun from the fort whenever a square-rigged vessel was sighted. This Pottinger

had witnessed himself in 1809 and later again in 1830.<sup>129</sup> The Jam of the Jokeyas who visited the Resident during his journey from Hyderabad to Karachi, told him that he was in command at the fort of Manora that fateful day when the English ship battered it down to dust; that under the fire of the English ship they all left their arms and accoutrements in the fort in order to escape.<sup>130</sup> At Karachi Pottinger's personal enquiries proved that the place was in no state of preparation to resist the English force; that there was not a ball in the gun that fired the shot; that the whole supply of gunpowder amounted only to six Karachi seers, kept in an earthen pot and the garrison consisted only of 16 men with no arms except their swords. So little indeed did they expect what followed, that they were all standing out looking at and admiring the *Wellesley* when that ship started firing. As if this vandalism were not enough, the first action of the British occupation authorities was to disarm the people of Karachi. The Governor of Karachi came to give evidence before Pottinger like an ordinary menial. Even the hardened diplomat was moved at the sight. "I refrain from enlarging on the evil and cruelty of degrading men of any class by such a system,"<sup>131</sup> he wrote with feeling and went home to plead the cause of the wronged Amirs. On the question of occupation he gave his unqualified opinion that the agreement by which Karachi was ceded to the British Government be abrogated; that in its place a supplemental treaty to that which was under consideration should be concluded providing for the free ingress and egress of the English to that port, for the payment of a moderate rate of duties on goods by the English merchants, and lastly for the maintenance of such troops at the seaport as may be decided by the Governor-General.<sup>132</sup>

The treaty that was finally ratified by Auckland<sup>133</sup> differed from Pottinger's draft in that it was far more severe in its terms, and consisted of fourteen articles instead of the latter's twenty-three. In the preamble providing for lasting friendship between the contracting parties an alteration was introduced substituting the words 'British Government and the Four Ameers of Hyderabad' for 'Amirs and the British Government' and 'amity' for 'unity of interests' in order to emphasise the equal and separate status of each Amir. The second article of Pottinger's draft providing for Tatta as the site for a British cantonment was so



worded as to leave the issue open for a final selection between Tatta, Karachi, "or such other place westward of the River Indus as the Governor-General of India may select." Article VIII of Pottinger's draft rendering the Company's rupee legal tender in Sind admitted the right of the Amirs to a rate of seignorage. The Governor-General did not agree with this; he questioned the right of the Amirs to claim a rate of seignorage from the paramount power. Regarding Articles IX and XIII of Pottinger's draft he observed:

"The Governor-General is not aware that, since the British Government became the paramount authority in India, an obligation so restrictive of its supreme power, has ever been proposed for its acceptance. . . . Such a stipulation appears inconsistent with our position, as exercising sovereign power over all India, and it would be particularly unsuitable in a treaty which is intended to establish the supremacy of the one party, and the position, as subordinate allies, of the other party."<sup>134</sup>

Accordingly, Auckland reworded Article VI of the treaty in such a way as to give effect to the object contemplated in the above-mentioned two articles without leaving any doubt about who the paramount party was. The article requiring the Amirs to furnish troops on requisition was enlarged to include the employment of troops even beyond the frontiers of Sind. While the troops acted within the territories of Sind, the Amirs were to defray the expenses. The strength of this force was also to be determined by the Governor-General although the intention was that it should not exceed 5,000 men. Mir Nur Muhammad Khan, Mir Nasir Mohamed Khan and Mir Mohamed Khan were each to pay one lakh of Company rupees annually, making a total of three lakhs of rupees in part payment of the expenses of the British force every year. Mir Sobdar was exempted from such payment. Furthermore the British Government took upon itself the protection of the territories possessed by the Hyderabad Amirs from all foreign aggression and the four Amirs were separately confirmed as absolute rulers in their respective principalities. They were to refer any complaint of aggression among themselves to the British Resident in Sind for mediation, and the Governor-General if satisfied that action was called for, would render necessary assistance to the aggrieved party. The Amirs could not enter into negotiation



with any foreign chief or state without the knowledge and sanction of the British Government. The Amirs were to act in subordinate cooperation with the British Government for purposes of defence and furnish a body of 3,000 troops horse and foot, whenever required; and the British Government would pay these troops if employed beyond the Sind frontiers. The Company's rupee was declared to be of equal value with the Bakroo or Timooree rupee current in Sind, and the British Government could establish a mint in Sind for coining the Bakroo or Timooree rupee on payment of a seignorage on the coinage to the Amirs after the close of the Afghan operations. No toll was to be levied on trading boats passing up and down the Indus within the territories of the Hyderabad Amirs, but any goods landed from such boats and sold were to be subject to the usual duties of the country, but goods sold in a British camp or cantonment would be exempted from such duties. Goods of all kinds could be brought by merchants to the mouths of the Indus (Gorabaree) and kept there till the best period of the year for sending them up the river but if any merchant landed and sold any part of his merchandise at Gorabaree or anywhere else (except at the British cantonment), he was liable to pay the usual duties.

Auckland ratified this treaty in March 1839 and forwarded it to Pottinger under four separate documents for each of the Amirs, saying: "We shall henceforth, under the operation of our present Treaties, find more strength in their differences, or at least from a lack of unity among them, than could be expected from an adherence to our former course of policy."<sup>185</sup> He himself was highly satisfied with it and wrote to the Secret Committee, "To ourselves it is so desirable to have the military control of the Indus, that it would have been highly expedient to introduce our troops into Sindh, even were the whole cost to be paid from our own treasuries."<sup>186</sup>

The Amirs' reaction to the treaty was one of helpless dismay. They expressed surprise that it differed so materially from the one they had given their consent to. Their chiefs argued that the treaty of twenty-three articles, reduced to fourteen, might as easily be reduced to seven. Where was the guarantee? Pottinger had by now softened a little in his attitude to the Amirs and he could appreciate their point of view. "I by no means feel surprise or irri-

tation, either at the Ameers' procrastination, or at this advice of the chiefs. It would be a miracle if they felt otherwise than suspicious of our designs and motives," he wrote.<sup>137</sup> In fact, he had been advocating for some time now a more straightforward line of action. Thus, in a letter dated 11 March 1839 to the Bombay Government he had written :

"It seems to me, that it would be better at once to take possession of Sinde (or such parts of it as we require) by force, than to leave it nominally with the Ameers, and yet deal with it as though it were our own. The one line is explicit and dignified, and cannot be misunderstood ; the other I conceive to be unbecoming our power, and it must lead to constant heartburnings and bickerings, if not to a rupture of all friendly relations."<sup>138</sup>

The Amirs signed the Governor-General's treaty on 14 July 1839. However, they begged his indulgence on five points:<sup>139</sup> (a) that they be allowed to pay the subsidy in Hyderabad rupees instead of the Company's rupees, (b) that the seaport of Karachi be restored to them, (c) that the British troops be cantoned some 20 or 30 koss from Hyderabad (they proposed Sehwan or Tatta), (d) that the Sindhian troops if requisitioned by the British Government should not be made to serve beyond the Bolan Pass, and (e) that the possessions of the Amirs from the sea to Shikarpore and from Subzulkote to the Desert, be specified in the treaty. To this Mir Sobdar added another request, seeking a guarantee that he would be allowed to carry on his friendly intercourse with Mir Sher Muhamad of Mirpur. Pottinger supported the Amirs. Writing to the Governor-General he said that payment in Company rupees would press heavily on the Amirs whose income was barely sufficient to support their families and numerous establishments. About Karachi he repeated what he had said before. He also agreed with the Amirs that the cantonment for troops should be some distance away from their capital and recommended Tatta as the best site. Their fourth request, he observed, was easy to concede, for the Baluchi soldiers were "an insufferable and licentious rabble who could be turned to no earthly purpose."<sup>140</sup>

But Auckland was in no mood for leniency. He rejected the first request summarily. In Company's rupees the amount payable by the Amirs worked out to two-ninths of the total income of the three rulers and that, the Governor-General pointed out,

was not more than what was contributed by other princes of India for the same purpose.<sup>141</sup> Their second request for the restoration of Karachi was similarly turned down. "The Governor-General will not call in question the correctness of the reports from the naval C-in-C, from which it appears that no attention was paid to his pacific overtures, before he felt himself compelled to resort to force."<sup>142</sup> On the other hand, the Amirs by delaying Keane's force for a week had put the Government to an extra expense of twenty lakhs for which they may fairly be held accountable. However, the Governor-General was generous enough not to go to that extreme and was quite prepared instead to retain the fort of Manora in British hands and demand for the British vessels a free ingress and egress to the fort. So he suggested that the Amirs draw up a fair and moderate rate of port duties and customs to promote trade and revenue. Their third and fourth requests were conceded. The Governor-General's intention was to have a reserve force at Sukkur with inconsiderable detachments at Tatta and Karachi and he assured the Amirs that their troops would not be required to serve beyond the frontiers of Sind or beyond the plains of Cutch Gundava.<sup>143</sup> Their fifth request, Auckland stated, entailed an impossible task. Therefore, while guaranteeing each Amir in his separate possessions, he magnanimously agreed to act as umpire in cases of dispute.<sup>144</sup>

Meanwhile the army of the Indus, having awed the Amirs into submission, had resumed its march towards Afghanistan. The Bombay Division, marching via Sehwan, reached Larkana on 3 March and halted there for nine days. The Bengal Division crossing over the bridge of boats at Bukkur proceeded in the direction of Shikarpore where it joined the Shah's force to swell the total strength of the army to 15,000 with 80,000 followers.<sup>145</sup> On 23 February the Bengal Division resumed its march towards the Bolan Pass. On 11 March Sir John Keane moved with his Division from Larkana towards Cutch Gundava, and with that the last of the army of the Indus had marched out of Sind.

After the conclusion of the 1839 Treaty, there remained only the Mirpur chief with whom the British Government had as yet no treaty. The situation was soon rectified for in January 1840 this chief himself approached the British native agent for this purpose.<sup>146</sup> The Governor-General's reply was favourable, stipu-

lating two conditions, namely, that the ruler should pay Rs. 50,000 annually as his share of the tribute, and further that he should submit his boundary dispute\* with the Hyderabad Amirs to the arbitration of the British Government.<sup>147</sup> So keen indeed was the latter to bring the whole of Sind under British protection that it even offered to help the Hyderabad Amirs in their dispute with Sher Muhamad if this chief happened to reject their condition regarding arbitration.<sup>148</sup> Matters however came to a speedy settlement with Sher Muhamad accepting the terms offered. A treaty of 14 articles was concluded with him on exactly the same basis as with Hyderabad on 18 June 1841. With the conclusion of a treaty with Mirpur, the whole of Sind virtually came under the paramountcy of the British Government.

Sind affairs were now being looked after by Major James Outram who had succeeded Henry Pottinger as political agent for Lower Sind when the latter left Sind in January 1840 owing to ill-health. Subsequently, Mr. Ross Bell of the Bengal Civil Service who had been appointed political agent for Upper Sind in May 1838 and was Resident at Shikarpore also died in August 1840 at Quetta. After him, Major Outram assumed charge of the whole political agency of Upper and Lower Sind.

The focus of interest after the march of the army of the Indus from Sind shifted to Afghanistan, where the war was on. Everything went well in 1839. Kandahar was the first conquest to fall to British arms. Thereafter, on 7 August 1839 the Shah, accompanied by Macnaughten and Burnes on either side of him made a grand entry into Kabul and was received, the former wrote, "with feelings nearly amounting to adoration",<sup>149</sup> while Marriot wrote that the Shah entered Kabul "amid the sullen silence of the people".<sup>150</sup> Events that followed bore out the truth of Marriot's observations.

In the beginning things were moving as planned. Shah Shuja had regained his throne and Dost had fled the capital. The occasion seemed to call for a celebration. An Afghan order of the 'Durani Empire' was founded, conferring distinctions on all those

\*The late Mir Murad Ali had unjustly deprived his father of several good districts. Mir Sher Muhamad, anxious to get them back, was prepared to go to an armed conflict with his Hyderabad cousins.

Parliamentary Papers, *Correspondence relative to Sind*, 1838—43, No. 228.

who had played a prominent part in the expedition. Thus Macnaughten was made a baronet and Sir John Keane became Lord Keane of Ghazni. However, as time passed, it soon became apparent that the Shah did not enjoy the favour and confidence of his people. The chiefs of the countryside had not flocked to his court, governors of prestige had not come to pay him their homage and it became evident that the British must remain to keep him on his throne as they had helped to restore him to it. Some reductions of the army did take place but a strong British force consisting of two British regiments and seven native battalions with two regiments of native cavalry and the Shah's contingent stayed behind to support the Shah's authority.<sup>151</sup> It was there where the trouble began.

Throughout 1840 an atmosphere of general quiet prevailed. According to Macmunn "the country sat down to watch what manner of man the old king might be",<sup>152</sup> and he with the English Envoy went to spend the winter at Jalalabad. In November 1840 something unexpected happened. The deposed ruler, Dost Mahomed, made his appearance and one fine day rode up to the Envoy to surrender himself. The gesture so touched Macnaughten that he had the Dost escorted to India by Sir Willoughby Cotton, to be offered an honourable exile as the guest of the British Government. Buoyed by these events, Macnaughten reported that the country was in a state of tranquillity "perfectly miraculous". The miracle enabled the wives and children of soldiers and politicians to join their menfolk.<sup>153</sup>

The tranquillity however proved wholly illusory. The fierce Afghan, a creature of the untamed highlands, refused to bend his knee to a master foisted on him by rank outsiders. Added to that was the fact that Macnaughten, supremely efficient in a secretarial role, was just not the man for this part. He had never handled men and affairs on the spot, however ably he might control and dictate from his seat in the secretariat.<sup>154</sup> With characteristic impolicy he started raising troops all over the country to support the Shah, little realising how seriously this offended the people. In the early months of 1841 discontent began to show itself. There were risings of the Ghilzais and Duranis but the 'infatuated' Macnaughten persisted in making light of every symptom of danger. Apart from that, the Government of India, breaking under the fin-



ancial strain, issued an order to the Envoy to reduce the allowances of the tribal chiefs. The action spelt tragedy. It immediately led to the Ghilzais closing the passes between Kabul and Jalalabad. Akbar Khan, the Dost's son needed no more to stir up strife in the vicinity. The dying year at last struck its final note.

On 2 November 1841, without warning, a truculent crowd surrounded Burnes' house and in a very short time hacked him and his guard to pieces. Revolts broke out in all directions. Macnaughten was murdered in December 1841. Thereafter things hurried to an inglorious capitulation. On 1 January 1842 General Elphinstone who had replaced General Cotton, signed a treaty for evacuation and placed his disarmed forces under the protection of Muhammad Akbar Khan. The latter promised to conduct them safely to the frontier but the wild tribesmen of whom he was the leader turned the retreat into a horrible massacre. Of the whole force of 4,500 men, only Dr. Brydon survived to tell the gruesome tale of murder and butchery. In April 1842 Shah Shuja himself was murdered at Kabul.

A wave of anger swept through England over these happenings as English newspapers told the horrible tale of massacre in banner headlines. People demanded swift action. Lord Auckland resigned, and in February 1842 Lord Ellenborough arrived in India to take his place.

The first problem that faced the new Governor-General on assuming office was to extricate themselves from the Afghan crisis. He began by issuing his proclamation of 15 March 1842, ordering Pollock, Nicolls and Clerk to set out with armies of retribution for the relief of the British army in Afghanistan and "the establishment of our military reputation by the infliction of some signal and decisive blow upon the Afghans".<sup>155</sup> In July Ellenborough issued another proclamation ordering the withdrawal of the army by way of Ghazni and Kabul. This was in keeping with the views he had expressed in 1839 when, condemning the trans-Indus policy of Auckland, he had said: "A war in Asia would lead to a war in Europe and that war would soon become general. We must therefore at the earliest possible period withdraw our army from Afghanistan."<sup>156</sup>

Afghanistan was evacuated. The retreat back was uneventful except for the 'farical burlesque' of Ellenborough who had ordered



Nott to bring back the gates of Somnath which Muhammad Ghazni had carried away in 1024.' Ellenborough received those gates at Ferozapore amidst splendid reviews and with a grand flourish of trumpets. Thus ended the first Afghan war and with it the sad drama of British humiliation and disaster. Dost Mahomed was sent back to Kabul to his *gadi*.

Throughout the course of this tragic drama the Sind rulers had been most cooperative. Major Outram, the new political agent, was a devoted civil servant who had served with distinction in the Afghan war. Endowed with a kindly disposition and understanding, he had been able to win the Amirs' trust. During his stay in Sind the rulers continued to fulfil their obligations in perfect good faith. In 1839 they relinquished the levy of tolls and duties on goods coming by sea. In 1840 they gave a remission of duties on inland trade without complaint even though it meant a considerable loss to them in revenue.<sup>157</sup> They paid the remaining balance of 11 lakhs of rupees to the Shah in January 1840. They offered to repair and extend the pier at Karachi; they facilitated the supply of fuel and reduced its price. In short, Outram wrote, "Every measure, which occurs to me at all calculated to facilitate navigation and promote commerce, is zealously undertaken and steadily pursued."<sup>158</sup> Another measure the Amirs proposed, although inspired by Outram, was to open all roads to free commercial intercourse from Sind to Rajputana, Gujarat and Cutch by a reduction of transit dues and the regulation of a fixed rate.<sup>159</sup> "Without that aid," wrote Outram, "it would have been impossible to retrieve the honour of our arms at Cabool;...instead of a triumphant march through, an ignominious and disastrous retreat must have followed."<sup>160</sup>

Nur Muhammad Khan died in 1841. The last act of the dying Amir was to entrust his brother and his young son, Mir Husain Ali to Major Outram's charge with the words, "You are their father and brother, you will protect them".<sup>161</sup> A warm friendship had grown up between the political agent and the deceased Amir, and the former lamented his loss both on personal and public grounds. "Whatever that chief's secret feelings towards the British may have been," Outram wrote in his last testimony to the departed, "certainly his acts latterly were all most friendly, and I cannot but place faith in almost the last words the dying chief uttered, solemnly

protesting the sincerity of his friendship for the British Government. . . in fact, I am satisfied that Meer Noor Mahomed Khan at last perceived that it was wiser to cultivate our friendship, than hopelessly to intrigue against our power; and he had sense enough, on more than one occasion, when the signs of the times encouraged others to hope our discomfiture, to prognosticate that temporary reverses or the machinations of the factious, would but cause the firmer rivetting of our power."<sup>162</sup>

Nur Muhammad Khan's two sons, Mir Shahdad and Mir Husain Ali succeeded to their father's estate with the recognition of the British Government. In the days following the Afghan expedition, all Hyderabad Amirs stood steadfastly by their obligations. Captain Postans, the assistant political agent in Sind at this time bears unequivocal testimony to their good faith from the commencement of the year 1840 to the autumn of 1842. "A most satisfactory state of tranquillity prevailed throughout the country; our steamers, of which we had a small flotilla, were allowed to navigate the river, not only unimpeded, but with every assistance; . . . the merchant or traveller, whether British subject or otherwise, traversed the Sindhian territories unmolested, . . . in short, matters were progressing admirably."<sup>163</sup> When the events in Afghanistan took a turn for the worse, did it affect the Amirs' conduct? Continues Postans, "During the violence of the Brahois of Kilat, which increased rapidly and ended in the murder of the British officer. . . large bodies of our troops were pushed through the Sindhian territories in every direction without the slightest interruption on the part of the Amirs, who, on the contrary, rendered us all the cordial assistance in their power by furnishing guides and supplies. Had the conduct of these chiefs been otherwise, our interest would have suffered severely; but in justice to them it must be recorded, that they fully made up on this occasion for their former hollow professions and want of faith, by a cordial cooperation."<sup>164</sup>

Not only Postans, but others too—Elphinstone, Eastwick, Marshman—testify to the Amirs' helpful disposition during the most critical period of British history. After the Kabul force had been annihilated and British reputation sunk to its lowest, the Amirs ungrudgingly offered them their help and furnished them with supplies and carriage which they might so easily have withheld without any infraction of the treaties. Wrote Marshman,

"The force, at Candahar could neither have retired to the Indus, or advanced to Cabul without the assistance of Sind, and it was solely by means of the three thousand camels sent up from that province that General Nott was enabled to march on the capital."<sup>165</sup> Captain Eastwick who held charge of the political relations in Sind after the departure of Henry Pottinger bears the most positive testimony to the Amirs' helpful conduct and good faith. He observes: "Throughout that eventful period which was characterized by disasters to our arms unparalleled in our Indian annals, the Ameers remained faithful to their engagements."<sup>166</sup> But most important of all is the testimony by Mountstuart Elphinstone who said: "Our movements in every direction from Candahar depended on the country supplies we received from all, all of which they might have withheld without any show of hostility or ground of quarrel with us. Had they been disposed for more open enmity, General England's detachment could neither have retired or advanced as it did; and it is doubtful whether Nott himself could have made his way to the Indus, through the oppositions and privations he must have suffered in such case. Advance towards Cabul he certainly could not without the assistance he received through Sind and the Kelat country."<sup>167</sup>

That was the Amirs' part in the ill-fated Afghan venture. Its aftermath spelt another and final blow for Sind's independence.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm, *Memoranda on the Northwest Frontier of British India*, p. 68

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73

<sup>3</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 6 June 1833, No. 7/8. Burnes' Memorandum on British relations on and beyond the Indus, 18 May 1833

<sup>4</sup> Boulger, *Lord William Bentinck*, p. 181. Governor-General's Minute dated 13 March 1835 (Rulers of India)

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183

<sup>6</sup> *Cambridge History of India*, V, pp. 489-490

<sup>7</sup> Colvin, *John Russel Colvin*, pp. 84-85

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 86-88. Despatch dated 25 June 1836 (Rulers of India)

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Trotter, *Lord Auckland*, p. 36 (Rulers of India)

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37

<sup>12</sup> *Cambridge History of India*, V, p. 491

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 496. Letter dated 2 June 1832

- <sup>14</sup> Marshman, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, p. 473 and pp. 469-470
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 472
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 469-470
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 473
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 465-466
- <sup>19</sup> Durand, *First Afghan War*, pp. 30-31
- <sup>20</sup> Marshman, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, pp. 474-475
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 478-479
- <sup>22</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 24 October 1838, No. 8. Auckland's Declaration of 1 October 1838
- <sup>23</sup> Colvin, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-126. Also p. 123
- <sup>24</sup> *Cambridge History of India*, V, p. 497
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 499
- <sup>26</sup> Parliamentary Papers No. 40 of 1839, No. 3 Indian Papers relative to the Expedition of Shah Shooja-qol-Moolk into Afghanistan in 1833-34 etc. No. 46, pp. 31-32
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 13. Macnaughten to the officiating Political Agent at Loodhi-ana, 13 December 1832
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 9. W. Bentinck to Shah Shooja dated Simla, 20 October 1832
- <sup>29</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 8. Tripartite Treaty of 1838
- <sup>30</sup> An East India Proprietor, *The Affairs of Sind*, p. 24
- <sup>31</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 8
- <sup>32</sup> Lushington, *Great Country's Little Wars*, p. 179
- <sup>33</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 9. The Secretary with the Governor-General to the Resident in Sind, 26 July 1838
- <sup>34</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 26 September 1838, No. 9. Auckland to Sir Henry Fane, 26 July 1838
- <sup>35</sup> Colvin, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103
- <sup>36</sup> NAI, Political Consultation 24 October 1838, *op. cit.*, No. 8
- <sup>37</sup> Napier, *The Conquest of Scinde*, I, p. 57
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>40</sup> Keene, *History of India*, Vol. II, p. 143
- <sup>41</sup> *Cambridge History of India*, V, p. 497
- <sup>42</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 14 November 1838, No. 57. Auckland to Mir Rustam, 6 September 1838
- <sup>43</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 9. Macnaughten to the Resident in Sind, 26 July 1838
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 10. Resident in Sind to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 13 August 1838

- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 14. Pottinger to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 27 August 1838
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 21. Memorandum given by the Resident in Sind to the Ameers, 27 September 1838
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 54. Pottinger to Burnes, 31 October 1838
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 46 and 47
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 83. Secretary with the Governor-General to Resident in Sind, 19 November 1838
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 27. Pottinger to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 13 October 1838
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 10
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 15. Macnaughten to the Resident in Sind, 6 September 1838
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 19. Macnaughten to the Resident in Sind, 20 September 1838
- <sup>65</sup> Napier, *op. cit.*, Pt. I, p. 69
- <sup>66</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 25. Pottinger to Burnes at Khyrpore, 8 October 1838
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 26. Pottinger to Governor-General, 9 October 1838
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 45. Pottinger to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 25 October 1838
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 52. Macnaughten to the Resident in Sind, 29 October 1838
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 58. Extract from a letter of Resident in Sind to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 2 November 1838
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 70. Pottinger to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 12 November 1838
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 76. Burnes to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 18 November 1838
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 83. Secretary with the Governor-General to Resident in Sind, 19 November 1838
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 87. Pottinger to Burnes, 23 November 1838
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 88. Pottinger to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 23 November 1838
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 112. Secretary with the Governor-General to the Resident in Sind, 31 December 1838
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 120. Draft of Treaty to be proposed to the Ameers of Hyderabad
- <sup>84</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 16. Macnaughten to Burnes, 6 September 1838
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 32. Burnes to the Resident in Sind, 17 October 1838

- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 34. Burnes to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 19 October 1838
- <sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 36. Mir Rustam Khan to Mir Nur Muhammad Khan, 21 October 1838
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 38. Burnes to Pottinger, 24 October 1838
- <sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 42. Burnes to Pottinger, 25 October 1838
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 48. Burnes to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 26 October 1838
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 51. Pottinger to Burnes, 29 October 1838
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 100. Burnes to Willoughby Cotton, 17 December 1838
- <sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 105. Burnes to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 25 December 1838
- <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 133. Burnes to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 30 January 1838
- <sup>94</sup> Kaye, *Lives of Indian Officers*, II, pp. 260-261
- <sup>95</sup> Aitchison, *op. cit.* Vol. VII, pp. 363-365
- <sup>96</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, Nos. 109-111. Agreements with the Khayrpore Amirs, 28 December 1838
- <sup>97</sup> Macmunn, *Lure of the Indus*, pp. 49-51
- <sup>98</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 80. Pottinger to Eastwick, 18 November 1838
- <sup>99</sup> Outram, *Rough Notes of the Campaign in Sind and Afghanistan in 1838-9*, pp. 12-13
- <sup>100</sup> Hough, *Narrative of the March and Operations of the Army of the Indus*, pp. 7-8
- <sup>101</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 132. Burnes to the Secretary with Governor-General, 29 January 1839
- <sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 121. Pottinger to Nur Mahomed Khan
- <sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 119. Pottinger to Eastwick, 13 January 1839
- <sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 130. Eastwick to the Resident in Sind, 26 January 1839
- <sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 151. Pottinger to Secretary to the Governor-General, 13 February 1839
- <sup>112</sup> Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan*, I, p. 396
- <sup>113</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 134. Sir John Keane to the Governor-General, Jerruck, 31 January 1839
- <sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 135. Keane to the Governor-General, 1 February 1839
- <sup>115</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, *op. cit.*, No. 151
- <sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>117</sup> Dennie, *Personal Narrative of the Campaigns in Afghanistan, Sind and Beloochistan*, p. 48
- <sup>118</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, *op. cit.*, No. 151
- <sup>119</sup> An East India Proprietor, *op. cit.*, p. 44



- 120 PP, SC 1838-43, *op. cit.*, No. 151
- 121 'Ameers of Sindh', *Calcutta Review*, I, p. 225
- 122 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 138. Pottinger to J. R. Colvin, Private Secretary to the Governor-General, 4 February 1839
- 123 *Ibid.*, No. 148. Pottinger to the Envoy with Shah Shooja, 10 February 1839
- 124 *Ibid.*, No. 144. Agreement for the surrender of Kurachee, 7 February 1839
- 125 *Ibid.*, No. 155. Maddock to the Resident in Sind, 21 February 1839
- 126 *Ibid.*, No. 163. T.H. Maddock to the Resident in Sind, 11 March 1839
- 127 An East India Proprietor, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68
- 128 PP, SC 1838-43, *op. cit.*, No. 163
- 129 *Ibid.*, No. 195. Pottinger to the Secretary to Government of India, 6 July 1839
- 130 *Ibid*
- 131 *Ibid*
- 132 *Ibid*
- 133 Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, pp. 369-371
- 134 PP, SC 1838-43, *op. cit.*, No. 163
- 135 *Ibid*
- 136 *Ibid.*, No. 166. Governor-General to the Secret Committee, 13 March 1839
- 137 PP, SC 1838-43, *op. cit.*, No. 195
- 138 *Ibid.*, No. 162. The Resident in Sind to the Secretary to the Bombay Government, 11 March 1839
- 139 *Ibid.*, No. 204. Pottinger to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 30 July 1839
- 140 *Ibid*
- 141 *Ibid.*, No. 214. T. H. Maddock to Pottinger, 2 September 1839
- 142 *Ibid*
- 143 *Ibid*
- 144 *Ibid.*, No. 222. Pottinger's Memorandum sent to the Hyderabad Ameers, 14 October 1839
- 145 Hough, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34
- 146 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 228. Pottinger to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 13 January 1840
- 147 *Ibid.*, No. 288. Maddock to Political Agent in Lower Sind, 26 April 1841
- 148 *Ibid.*, No. 295. Maddock to Political Agent in Lower Sind, 14 June 1841
- 149 Macmunn, *Lure of the Indus*, p. 61
- 150 Marriot, *The English in India*, p. 141
- 151 Macmunn, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64
- 152 *Ibid.*, p. 64
- 153 Marriot, *op. cit.*, p. 142
- 154 Macmunn, *op. cit.*, p. 70
- 155 Marshman, *op. cit.*, II, p. 557

- <sup>156</sup> Ellenborough's memorandum on the Afghan affairs dated 23 April 1839
- <sup>157</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 239. Political Agent in Lower Sindh to Secretary to Government of India, 6 April 1840
- <sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, Enclosure 27 in No. 379. Outram to the Private Secretary to the Governor-General, 8 August 1840
- <sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>160</sup> Outram, *Conquest of Sindh*, p. 51
- <sup>161</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 269. Outram to the Secretary to the Government of India, 26 November 1840
- <sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 270. Outram to the Secretary to Government of India, 6 December 1840
- <sup>163</sup> Postans, *Personal Observations on Sindh*, pp. 315-316
- <sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 316-317
- <sup>165</sup> Marshman, *op. cit.*, II, p. 382
- <sup>166</sup> Eastwick, *The Case of the Ameers of Sindh*, p. 14. Speech dated 26 January 1844
- <sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, Quotes Elphinstone

## The Finale

The advent of Lord Ellenborough on the Indian scene marked a decisive phase in the history of British relations with Sind. The policy he initiated represented a flagrant departure from what he had professed he would pursue in his speech at the dinner party given in his honour by the Court of Directors before he left for India. "The Government of India shall be exercised not for a party, but for the people," he had said and expressed the view that in his opinion the time was at hand when the people "shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. . . . Thus pursuing great and worthy means, I humbly trust that some portion of the blessing of Providence may attend my constant endeavour to promote the united interests of England and of India, of my native and my adopted country."<sup>1</sup>

Such sentiments and his long connection with Indian affairs as President of the Board of Control led people in India to believe that an era of peace was at hand, and they looked forward to the arrival of the 'moderate statesman' with hope. Nor were their hopes disappointed to begin with. After the British withdrawal from Afghanistan which was considered sound policy, Ellenborough issued a proclamation on 1 October 1842 in which he declared :

"The Government of India, content with the limits which nature appears to have assigned to its empire, would 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."<sup>2</sup>

In a minute dated 27 April 1842 the Governor-General spoke in the same sensible strain and expressed himself against further expansion, as it would endanger the stability and welfare of the state and place an excessive strain on its finances.<sup>3</sup> So it was generally believed that a period of quiet had arrived and that the new Governor-General would devote himself to the pursuit of those arts of peace to which he had repeatedly pledged himself.

This belief was soon to be dispelled. A brief look at the Indian scene told Ellenborough, or so he thought, that the supremacy of the British power had to be upheld by drastic measures. Expressing his views to Her Majesty the Queen of England, Lord Ellenborough wrote, "Your Majesty must regard India as being at all times in a state of danger, from which it can only be rescued by the constant exercise of vigilance, and by the occasional adoption of measures which may appear extraordinary, but which are practically adopted to the extraordinary position which the British Government occupies in this country."<sup>4</sup>

Ellenborough gave prompt effect to his views. War in Afghanistan had ended, but it had left the British image badly scarred. The sense of awe and invincibility which the British power had always inspired among the country powers had been seriously shaken. The Governor-General sensed danger in this and felt that the basis that supported the edifice of British rule in the sub-continent was crumbling. He wrote:

"I have adopted every measure which could have the effect of giving the appearance of triumph to the return of the armies from Cabool, but still it was a retirement from an advanced position, and it was the first retirement ever rendered necessary to a British army. . . I was deeply sensible of the impression which the reverses at Cabool had produced upon the minds of native princes, of the native population, and of our own troops. I knew that all that had taken place since and all I had said and done, although it must have much diminished, could not have obliterated that impression, and restored to our Government and to our army, the place they had before held in the opinion of India."<sup>5</sup>

Therefore it seemed to Ellenborough that a few victories were necessary to re-establish that reputation. He turned his gaze towards Sind and decided that to withdraw from Karachi, Sukkur and from every advanced position as stipulated in the treaties was going a bit too far. To hold a position on the Indus was absolutely essential. In short, he decided that it was necessary to have a new treaty with the Amirs. Ellenborough himself confessed to the Duke of Wellington his real motive for demanding a new treaty with Sind. "I hardly know how I could have accomplished the object of retaining possession of a commanding position upon the lower Indus without a breach with the Ameers.

We could hardly have justified our remaining at Kurachee, we could not have justified our remaining at Bukkur, after the termination of the war in Afghanistan, without a new treaty.”<sup>6</sup> Therefore in forcing the final showdown with Sind the British Government had no better justification than that the Amirs had to be chastised for the chastisement the British had received from the Afghans. It was very much as Elphinstone described it: “Coming after Afghanistan, it put one in mind of a bully who has been kicked in the streets and went home to beat his wife in revenge.”<sup>7</sup>

As a first step towards maintaining their position on the Indus, Ellenborough proposed exchange of territory in remission of tribute that the Amirs had to pay under the 1838 Treaty. Actually this idea had been first suggested by Auckland to Pottinger in 1839, when Alexander Burnes had published his report on his travels to the northwest and recommended Shikarpore or Tatta as the mart where a fair might be held annually to give impetus to trade on the Indus and beyond.<sup>8</sup> Pottinger considered the idea highly advantageous in view of “the right which we should thereby acquire to interfere in the management of the place,”<sup>9</sup> but he could suggest no practical formula for putting it into effect as Shikarpore was held in shares by Khairpur and Hyderabad, the former holding the major share. So the idea remained on paper until it was revived in April 1842 by Ellenborough who wrote to Outram to report “on the manner in which a proposition to relieve the Ameers from their contribution in money, in lieu of the cession of Shikarpore, would probably be received by them.”<sup>10</sup> Accordingly Lieutenant Postans worked out a schedule on Shikarpore denoting the share of each Amir and Outram took up the subject with Mir Nasir Khan of Hyderabad to negotiate the terms of the proposed deal.

The Amir however showed such a strong disinclination to it that the tactful Outram allowed the matter to drop, his object being “to temporise for a time, never contemplating, however, that we could ultimately relinquish the most advantageous possession we should acquire on the Indus”.<sup>11</sup> The Governor-General now wrote to him in his letter dated 22 May 1842 that it was his intention “to retain a position on the Indus, and to have the means of acting upon both banks” till the affairs in Afghanistan were more satisfactorily settled.<sup>12</sup> He had therefore decided to hold

Karachi. Besides that, he proposed to occupy the island of Bukkur and the town of Sukkur as a sort of *tete de point* upon the right bank of the Indus "with such an ample *arrondissement* as may give every facility for the maintenance of a good police within the town, and for the formation of commercial establishments therein."<sup>13</sup> He said it was his intention to give every impetus to trade in order to secure "the establishment of unrestricted trade between all the countries of the Indus, the Sea, and the Himalaya and the total abolition of all internal duties in that vast territory". In this wide diffusion of commerce he saw the means to securing British ascendancy in Central Asia which was to challenge the ascendancy of Russia. Not only that. In his view, cession of territory for tribute was an ideal arrangement for promoting friendly relations with Indian states. He wrote:

"The payment of a tribute by the Native State, however equitable it may be in principle, cannot fail to affect the otherwise friendly nature of our relations with it; to introduce much of disagreeable discussion; to occasion the frequent visits of the officers in the unpopular character of exacting creditors; and to attach to the British Government, in the eyes of the subjects of the tributary state, much of the odium of the acts of extortion by which native administration is too frequently conducted. . . It would be very much more conducive to a permanent good understanding between the British Government and the protected States, if arrangements could be made whereby, either in exchange for territory, or in consideration for the abolition of duties burdensome to trade, such demand for tribute, on our part, might be altogether given up."<sup>14</sup>

This time Outram responded enthusiastically to the idea and wrote back suggesting how it could be carried out. He was sure the arrangement would be acceptable to the Amirs. He further went on to say that as the tolls on the river Indus were already abolished, to remit tribute on that account would not be feasible, for the Amirs would then insist that it was an admission of injustice on the British Government's part and so start cavilling all over again. He accordingly prepared a draft of a supplemental treaty giving substance to the Governor-General's proposal along with his own suggestions and forwarded it to Calcutta. The draft contained the following provisions:<sup>15</sup> (1) That the fortress of Bukkur and neighbouring islets shall be ceded to the British Government



in perpetuity; (2) that the site of ancient Sukkur along with the ground occupied by the British cantonment shall be ceded to the British Government in perpetuity; (3) that the town and harbour of Karachi shall be ceded likewise; (4) that there shall be free passage of articles of commerce between the sea at Karachi and the Indus at Tatta; (5) that the British Government shall be allowed to cut wood growing within 100 cubits of the river bank to employ it in steam navigation; (6) that the tolls shall be abolished altogether in transit on the river Indus; and (7) that for concessions rendered above, the Amirs (of Hyderabad, Khairpur and Mirpur) shall be released from all pecuniary obligations. The draft concluded with the article that the British Government pledged not to make any more claims, pecuniary or territorial on the Amirs thereafter.

The significant part of this letter, dated 21 June 1842, was Outram's statement that there were grounds for renewing negotiations with the Sind rulers in view of certain intrigues that had come to light which, in his opinion, compromised their word of honour given to the British Government. "The evidence, even if deficient of legal proof, gives, I consider, sufficient data for suspecting that intrigues were in progress to overthrow our power, and to authorise, consequently, our now taking the precautions necessary for self-preservation," he wrote, adding "our military positions are insecure, and our communications likely to be cut off."<sup>16</sup>

This was enough for Ellenborough's next move. The 'intrigues' along with some more accusations provided material for the long charge-sheet<sup>17</sup> that was now served on the chiefs of Lower and Upper Sind. This document listed no less than 18 charges against Hyderabad's Mir Mohamed Nasir Khan alone, most of which related to the violation of Article XI that forbade the levy of tolls or exaction of duties on foreign merchandise; it also included offences like delay in the payment of tribute, trying to embroil the British agent in some quarrel, annulling the deal on Shikarpore after learning of British reverses in Kabul, forbidding the flow of free supply of goods to the British cantonment bazaar at Karachi. One charge meriting special mention was the charge accusing this Amir of carrying on treasonable correspondence with Sawanmal, the Governor of Multan and Beerbuck Boogtie, chief of the Boogtie clan of the northern hill tribes, with

the object of expelling the English from Sind. This charge constituted the main ground in the case against Nasir Khan, convicting him of duplicity and treason. The charge against Mir Mohamed Khan of Hyderabad was that he had issued orders to his killadar at Karachi to prevent the free supply of goods to the British cantonment bazaar. In the same way Mir Husain Ali Khan and Mir Shahdad were charged with violating Article XI. Mir Sher Muhamed of Mirpur was accused of not having paid in time his share of the tribute amounting to Rs. 50,000.

As regards Upper Sind, Outram's 'Return of Complaints' against these chiefs listed five charges.<sup>18</sup> The first of these referred to a letter alleged to have been written by Mir Rustam to Maharajah Sher Singh of Punjab inviting his cooperation in some joint plan of action against the British. The second charge was directed against Fateh Mohamed Ghori, Mir Rustam's Minister, accusing him of having connived in the escape of Mohamed Sharif, a state prisoner, to Baluchistan in order to raise an insurrection. The third charge involved maltreatment of a British subject at the hands of one Bahadur Ali Shah, an agent of Mir Nasir Khan of Khairpur, for which the latter was held responsible. The fourth and fifth charges related to stoppage of boats, exaction of duties, seizure of British subjects and failure to offer reparations on their release.

The charges had little substance. The alleged letter from Nasir Khan of Hyderabad to Beeruck Boogie could not be supported by any reliable evidence. To the charge of levying tolls Nasir Khan replied that many merchants were in the habit of loading their boats in the name of the British Government to evade payment of rightful duties. If such a practice were allowed to continue, how were the Amirs to live and sustain themselves? Already, he pointed out, the Amirs had remitted all land taxes on supplies required for the consumption of the British camp. This had caused a considerable drain on their revenues, but the matter did not end there. Their own subjects, taking advantage of the order, bought all their goods from the camp bazaar at lower prices and sold them at higher prices outside. Banias of Sind had established godowns in the camp bazaar. Therefore, to safeguard their interests the rulers forbade the practice and had to issue orders to their kardars to punish such offenders and confiscate their properties.<sup>19</sup> The Amirs quoted Article V in support of their

action, which categorically stated that they would remain "absolute rulers in their respective principalities, and the jurisdiction of the British Government shall not be introduced into their territories. The officers of the British Government will not listen to, or encourage, complaints against the Ameers from their subjects". Was it the intention of that Government to maintain its cantonments against the Amirs and draw away all their inhabitants? If such were the case, said Eastwick who later pleaded on their behalf, how could the Amirs realise their revenues and pay their tribute? "We first impose a tribute, we take then from these unhappy princes the means of paying it, and then punish them for not paying."<sup>20</sup>

In the case of Khairpur, the first two charges in the charge-sheet were declared to be extremely grave. Rustam's letter to Maharajah Sher Singh intercepted in April 1842 vaguely referred to some treaty of alliance between them, having for its object the expulsion of the English from Sind.<sup>21</sup> The second charge indicting Fateh Mohamed Ghorî alleged that at the time of British reverses in Kabul he had been in constant communication with the disaffected hill tribes of the northwest, who wanted to overthrow the English from that quarter. For the offence of his Minister Mir Rustam was held responsible.

So Ellenborough decided to seize Subzulkote and Bhoongbara (yielding a revenue of Rs. 60,000 annually), belonging to the Amirs Nasir Khan of Hyderabad and Mir Rustam of Khairpur to confer them as a gift on Nawab Bhawal Khan for his uniform good conduct.<sup>22</sup> Conveying this proposition to the political agent in his letter of 4 June 1842, the Governor-General desired him to furnish particulars on the extent and situation of these territories in the Amirs' dominions. Outram replied that he considered this 'a most desirable arrangement' for it would deprive Nasir Khan of one of his richest districts and also of a position bordering on the Punjab "from whence his agents have every facility for carrying on their intrigues with the Sikhs",<sup>23</sup> and further that it would rightly punish Mir Rustam for carrying on an intrigue with Maharajah Sher Singh.

It was at this stage that Major-General Sir Charles Napier's appointment to the command of all the troops in Sind and Baluchistan was announced. The event was to prove decisive—and for

the Amirs, unfortunate. Sind's destiny now passed into the hands of those who had little understanding of it. The Governor-General had no personal experience of Sind; nor had Mr. Maddock, the Government secretary who was with him; nor any of his staff. The key position therefore in this frame-work would be of the man on the spot, that is, Napier. It was expected that he would bring a fresh mind to bear on the problems of Sind; but it was the freshness of ignorance, not only of this state but of India generally, with which he had set foot on her shores for the first time, and at the age of sixty. Napier arrived in Sind in September 1842. He was given a splendid reception by the rulers. On this occasion he ominously remarked, "Possibly this may be the last independent reception they may give as princes to a British General."<sup>24</sup> He had come with clear-cut instructions from his Government. He was to hold possession of Karachi and withdraw all his forces to Sukkur and its neighbourhood as soon as season permitted. He was to punish the Amirs for their hostile conduct and it was left to him to decide how best the Governor-General could reward Bhawal Khan at their cost. "It is my fixed resolution never to forgive the breach of faith, and to exact a penalty which shall be a warning to every chief in India," were Ellenborough's instructions,<sup>25</sup> and he had furnished Napier with a letter to the Amirs in which he sounded a stern warning to the following effect:

"On the day on which you shall be faithless to the British Government, sovereignty will have passed from you, your dominions will be given to others and in your destitution all India will see that the British Government will not pardon an injury received from one it believed to be its friend."

With this brief from Ellenborough there was nothing to stop Napier from realising his dreams of military glory and recognition with which his mind had been long obsessed. Napier came from a noble house—he was the great-great-grandson of Charles II, his cousin was Charles James Fox and his uncle the Duke of Richmond. He had joined the army early in life and seen long military service but that had consisted mostly of petty commands offering little scope for achieving distinction. He got his big chance when he received his appointment to India. By that time he was already sixty. Time was running out. "Charles ! Charles Napier !" he wrote in his Diary, "take heed of

your ambition for military glory, you had scotched that snake, but this high command will, unless you are careful, give it all its vigour again. Get thee behind me Satan!"<sup>26</sup> Later he confided to his Diary:

"My God! how humble I feel when I think! How exalted when I behold! I have worked my way to this great command and am grateful at having it, yet despise myself for being so gratified!... I despise my worldliness. Am I not past sixty? A few years must kill me; a few days may! And yet I am so weak as to care for these things!... He who takes command loves it."

Napier had grown up a soldier with a soldier's outlook on life. His orders and memoranda were characterised by brevity, precision and forcefulness, not unmingled with a quaint sense of humour. But his military training had deprived him entirely of a civilian sense of life. He had come to Sind knowing little of the people of the state, knowing even less of the rulers he had to deal with. But this did not worry him. Soon after his arrival he addressed a communication to the Amirs that struck the keynote of what was to follow.<sup>27</sup> In that he shortly stated:

"General Napier has been informed—

First: That your Highnesses have prohibited the inhabitants of Kurachee to settle in the Bazaar.

Second: That you have ordered everything landed at the Bunder to be, in the first instance, taken to the Custom house and taxed.

Third: That your Highnesses levy tolls on the boats belonging to the subjects of Sinde.

Fourth: That your Highnesses ground your infraction of the Articles and spirit of the Treaty, upon Article V of that Treaty.

Upon the above four points General Napier does, in the most explicit manner, state:

First: That the Governor-General of India will not suffer the slightest infraction of the Treaty.

Second: That Article V of the Treaty does not, and cannot, guarantee to the Ameers the power to break any other Article of the Treaty, still less the spirit of the Treaty throughout."



The above communication was totally uncalled for. A ruler has a right to safeguard his interests. The Amirs were doing no more than that when they prohibited their subjects to settle in the British cantonment bazaar because that resulted in a severe loss to their revenues. They imposed duties at the port of Karachi because it was their right recognised by the British Government as far back as October 1839. On 14 October of that year Pottinger had submitted a memorandum to the Amirs expressing the Governor-General's desire that the rulers would fix in concert with the Resident, a fair and moderate rate of port duties and customs.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Napier's approach and manner of address marked a complete departure from the forms of etiquette hitherto observed by British agents towards the Amirs. In August 1841 Outram had addressed a communication to Lieutenant Leckie on the rules that must guide the conduct of a political agent towards the chiefs of Sind. In that he had said, "The official demeanour of the British officers politically connected with the Ameers, towards their Highnesses, should be frank, friendly, unassuming and respectful."<sup>29</sup> Napier's approach, by contrast, was highhanded and meant to be so. He had no use for the political agent's forms of etiquette which he contemptuously termed 'knowing the people' and which he described thus in a private letter dated 16 January 1843:

"I found the Ameers and our Government in the position which a treaty made by Lord Auckland placed them. I had no concern with its justice, its propriety, or anything but to see it maintained. I found that all the politicals had gone on from the beginning, trifling. Sometimes letting the Ameers infringe the treaty without notice; at others pulling them up, and then dropping the matter; in short, I saw it was a long chain of infringement,—denial,—apology,—pardon, over and over. I therefore resolved not to let this, which old Indians call 'knowing the people' go on."<sup>30</sup>

Dispensing with all such niceties of protocol Napier prepared a memorandum for his Government, outlining what their future course of action ought to be. His approach was characteristic. "It is not for me to consider how we came to occupy Sind," he wrote, "we are here by the right of treaties entered into by the Ameers; and, therefore, we stand on the same footing with themselves, for rights held under a treaty are as sacred as the right which sanctions that treaty."<sup>31</sup> Having satisfied himself that they had



every right to be in the country, Napier argued that there were only two courses open to them in the future, either to evacuate the country, or to remain in the camps as guaranteed to them under the treaties. "If we evacuate this country, future events will inevitably bring us back to the banks of the Indus." And if they remained in the camps, he was sure that the camps would soon be crowded to overflowing with the subjects of the Amirs flying to them for refuge and relief while those who didn't would soon be facing "misery and starvation under the rulers' oppressive regime."<sup>29</sup> How long could such a state of affairs last? he asked.

"A Government hated by its subjects, despotic, hostile alike to the interests of the English, and of its own people; a Government of low intrigue, and, above all, so constituted that it must, in a few years, fall to pieces by the vice of its own construction; will such a Government, I ask, not maintain an incessant petty hostility against us? Will it not incessantly commit breaches of treaties—those treaties by which alone, we have any right to remain in this country, and therefore must rigidly uphold? I conceive that such a state of political relations could not last, and that the more powerful Government would, at no very distant period, swallow up the weaker. If this reasoning be correct, would it not be better to come to the results at once? I think it would be better, if it can be done with honesty."<sup>33</sup>

And his conception of honesty matched his reasoning. "We have no right to seize Sind, yet we shall do so, and a very advantageous, useful, humane piece of rascality it will be," he wrote in his Diary.<sup>34</sup> He felt impatient with the Amirs and their petty squabbles. Their intrigues seemed to him like a tangled web which it was his job to untangle. "We can cut the Gordian Knot as Alexander did—we are too strong to take the trouble to untie it," he said.<sup>35</sup>

The charge-sheet against the Amirs provided him with just the weapon he needed. Right from the moment of his arrival in Sind he had been frank enough to say that he wanted only a "fair pretext to coerce the Ameers",<sup>36</sup> and here was sufficient ground to give him that pretext for seizing Karachi, Sukkur, Bukkur, Shikarpore and Subzulkote. "They have broken treaties, they have given a pretext, and I have full conviction (perhaps erroneously) that what I propose is just and humane."<sup>37</sup> On 14

October 1842, Ellenborough authorised Napier to take steps for a révision of the treaty with the Amirs on the basis of ceding territory for tribute. The advantage of the proposed arrangement in his view was considerable. "The latter is a grievance constantly recurring. . . . The cession of territory is a grievance which, once submitted to, is in time almost forgotten."<sup>38</sup> In a subsequent letter dated 3 November 1842 the Governor-General forwarded the new draft and instructed Napier to base his new demand on (1) Nasir Khan's letter to Beeruck Boogae; (2) Rustam's letter to Sher Singh; and (3) flight of Mohamed Sharif with the connivance of Fatch Mohamed, for which Rustam was to be held responsible.

The new draft, the main purpose of which was exchange of tribute for territory, was in the main based on Outram's draft. But it went a few steps further. It stipulated for the establishment of a uniform currency throughout India, for the right of the British Government to cut down wood upon both banks of the Indus for the use of steamers, and for the cession of Subzulkote and Bhoongbhara from the Amirs, to be conferred as a gift on the Nawab of Bhawalpore for, observed the Governor-General, "I consider it to be a measure of true policy to show to all the States of India, that while we punish the infraction of engagements, we reward fidelity."<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, for the protection of trade on, and securing the military command of, the Indus, it was stipulated that the Amirs should make over Karachi, Tatta, Sukkur, Bukkur and Rohri "together with such arrondissement as may be necessary for the secure and convenient occupation of the places, and to give ample room for the extension of the towns and cantonments." Along with Tatta, the Governor-General also demanded the free use of the navigable creek between Karachi and Tatta, and of the road from that creek to Tatta. Two drafts incorporating the above terms were forwarded to Napier with the following instructions :

"The treaty proposed to be imposed upon Mir Roostum and Meer Nusseer Khans, rests, for its justification, upon the assumption that the letters said to be addressed by Meer Roostum to the Maharajah Shere Sing, and by Meer Nusseer Khan to Beeruck Boogtie, were really written by those chiefs respectively, and that the confidential Minister of Meer Roostum did, as is alleged, contrive the escape of the Syud Mahomed Shureef. . . . I know that you will

satisfy yourself of the truth of these charges, before you exact the penalty of the offences they impute.”<sup>40</sup>

It is interesting to note in the above correspondence that in Ellenborough's mind the outlines of who was responsible for what had got nicely confused. So he talked of the chiefs of Hyderabad and Khairpur as Nasir Khans. The areas demanded in lieu of tribute were in the possession of Nasir Khan of Khairpur whereas the charge of corresponding with Beerbuck Boogie was levelled against Nasir Khan of Hyderabad. This mistake was never brought to his notice by Napier although the Governor-General's instructions specifically urged the General to verify the truth of the charges before exacting penalty for them. To settle the details of the treaty with the Amirs Napier was to appoint a commissioner. Ellenborough also enclosed a letter for the Hyderabad Amirs which ran to the following effect:

“The Governor-General of India, having taken into his consideration all the infractions of the Treaty between the British Government and the Ameers of Hyderabad... has empowered Major-General Sir Charles Napier to require from the Ameers of Hyderabad their consent to the several provisions contained in the annexed Draft of Treaty.”<sup>41</sup> To add insult to injury, the letter continued, “The Ameers will see in this provision the regard which, notwithstanding their misconduct, the Governor-General of India has not ceased to entertain for the comfort and dignity of their Highnesses, and his sincere attachment to peace.”<sup>42</sup> The ‘comfort’ and ‘dignity’ of the rulers, it seemed to Ellenborough, lay in being relieved of their possessions and power!

Napier's system of investigation to test the authenticity of the letters was unique. Outram doubted the authenticity of Nasir Khan's letter to Sawanmal because it was not in the handwriting of the Amir's confidential scribe.<sup>43</sup> Napier himself was unable to obtain the authentic seal of Mir Nasir Khan to compare with the seal on the intercepted letter. But he solved the problem by deciding that the Amirs must keep two seals, one for secret purposes and another for official work, as a precaution against possible mishaps. Finally he managed to obtain the cover of another letter which contained some writing of Choithram, the Amirs' confidential munshi and so he satisfied himself that the letter was genuine.<sup>44</sup> In the case of Mir Rustam the alleged letter to Sher Singh

was procured from a source inimical to the Amīr.<sup>45</sup> Indeed Lieutenant Leckie officially reported that a man named Sukhumal carried on a wholesale trade in forged letters between the Sikhs and the Sind rulers.<sup>46</sup> Napier, knowing these facts, nonetheless refused to consider them. The letters were finally sent to Mr. Clerk, the British envoy at Lahore, for a further investigation as well as for his opinion on their authenticity. The latter's reply was positively discouraging. He wrote, "I failed in my endeavours to trace the cossids to their homes, as directed by Major Outram. The authenticity of these letters is yet a matter of some doubt to me, as it was to Major Outram when sending them".<sup>47</sup> This should have settled the matter, but against this, in Napier's view, there was the formidable testimony of Lieutenant Brown (an officer who could neither read nor write Persian) stating that the letters were genuine, and his opinion was deemed conclusive. Napier therefore prepared to confront the Amirs with the new draft and "to thrash them heartily, if they resolve to try their strength."<sup>48</sup> Recommending Outram for the commissioner's post, he proceeded to order a general parade of his troops to impress the Amirs with the might of British arms.<sup>49</sup>

All this military fanfare combined with Napier's highhanded manner made the Amirs apprehensive of their safety. There was something in the wind that bode ill for them and they felt they must take some measures for their defence. But every move on their side was magnified by Major Clibborn's intelligence department and reports began to pour in to Napier's headquarters about the excitement that prevailed everywhere. The Amirs were reported to be in touch with Kandahar and Lahore to deliberate on measures that should be taken to oppose the English. It was reported that confidential agents were about to be sent from Hyderabad to Khairpur "to consult with the Upper Sind Ameers, as to leaguings against us".<sup>50</sup> On 26 October Major Clibborn reported that Nasir Khan of Hyderabad and Mir Rustam had exchanged Korans, swearing fidelity to one another on the basis of an offensive and defensive alliance;<sup>51</sup> that Muhammad Khan Talpur, the Amirs' uncle had proceeded to Larkana to put all fighting men in readiness for a sudden emergency call; that the Amirs had deputed an agent to keep a close watch on the movements of Jeth Sing and Chatrasal who were supporting the English. "Among

themselves the Ameers talk in a most arrogant strain; and, in any negotiations, they intend to adopt a similar bearing, saying if they carry their heads lowly, the General will soon be riding across their shoulders.”<sup>52</sup> On 5 November the intelligence department reported that if hostilities broke out the Amirs said they would declare it a ‘jihad’ against the Feringees and drive them out as they had been driven out from Afghanistan. It was further reported that troops were being mobilised in all quarters, that Pathan horsemen were crossing the river daily in small bodies and obtaining immediate service with the rulers. Chiefs of various tribes were believed to be arriving in Hyderabad and the Amirs were reported to be saying, “we have eat (*sic*) and drunk well for many years and enjoyed our Ameere; if it is the intention of the English to fight with us, without a doubt, they shall find us ready for them.” Sawanmal was reported to be enlisting soldiers and carrying on extensive preparations in the Multan fort.<sup>53</sup> The intelligence reports stressed that preparations were being made for a siege and added, “The Beloochees are expected to harass our forces in such a way that we shall exclaim, ‘What infernal devils these are! What have we done to bring down upon us such a nest of hornets?’”<sup>54</sup>

None knew better than Napier himself that all this flourish of trumpets signified nothing more than a feeble attempt on the part of the Amirs to surround themselves with a false sense of security. Outram knew how weak and hopelessly divided they were among themselves and said later when recording his testimony on these events, “The Ameers of Sind had no intention of defying the gigantic power of the British nation. . . until they were finally goaded by desperation to strike a blow for the liberty and independence of their country.”<sup>55</sup> The Governor-General himself wrote in his letter of 14 November that “the designs of the Ameers would seem . . . to be of defensive character only,” but went on to add, “I know that the least sign of hesitation on our part would at once convert these defensive preparations into measures of a hostile nature, and that to yield the smallest sign in negotiation would have all the effect of a defeat in the field.”<sup>56</sup> He therefore authorised Napier to go ahead with the revision of the treaty on the evidence they had in hand saying:

“If a Government were to wait in every case of suspected hostility, until it obtained such proof of the hostile intention, as would



be sufficient to convict the person suspected in a court of justice, it would in most cases expose itself at once to disgrace and disaster. It is necessary to proceed upon a strong presumption of intended hostility, where hesitation might seriously affect great national interests."<sup>57</sup>

As if to lend finality to their intended course of action, Ellenborough (on Napier's advice) decided to withdraw the political officers in Sind and despatched orders closing down the political agency as of November 15, 1842.

It was at this juncture when tension was mounting daily on both sides that Ali Murad turned from his relations and walked into the enemy camp. He was the youngest brother of Mir Rustam who had been his guardian from childhood after the death of their father Mir Sohrab. Upto now Ali Murad had remained in the background, claiming no separate status from Mir Rustam who was the Rais of Upper Sind or from the rest of his brothers. The first time he did so was at the time of Alexander Burnes' visit to Sind just before the Afghan operations. He had asked Burnes for a separate treaty with the British Government. The latter had complied and concluded a treaty with him which was ratified on 13 January 1839. Burnes however left no record of it in the official files of the political agent.<sup>58</sup> When Ross Bell came to assume charge of the Upper Sind political agency, Ali Murad renewed his overtures. He had a long-standing dispute with his brother Mir Mubarak over the possession of certain villages. Mir Rustam's interposition had prevented an armed clash between the brothers and led to a deed signed on the Koran promising the restoration of those villages to Ali Murad, but that deed had not so far been honoured.<sup>59</sup> Ali Murad now appealed to Ross Bell to settle the dispute. The English agent was favourably inclined towards this refractory chief who, in his view, was "the only one among the Ameers who had any character for courage".<sup>60</sup> But he went on to point out that Ali Murad was a man of hasty and violent temper and had a strong body of Afghan mercenaries in his employ. Therefore, while commending his case to his Government Bell also advised that if it was decided not to support Ali Murad, "it will be necessary to take decisive measures against him". The British Government did not reject Ali Murad's claim but suggested that its adjustment be postponed, meanwhile directing Bell to



keep on friendly terms with the chieftains.<sup>61</sup> Encouraged by Bell's reaction, Ali Murad made a bid for independent status and requested the political agent to conclude a separate alliance with him on the same basis as they had with Mir Rustam. These negotiations were still in progress when Bell died suddenly in Khorassan. Ali Murad waited for some time to pass before forwarding Bell's draft to the British Government for a decision.<sup>62</sup> Outram wrote to his Government, saying, "His fidelity would be sufficiently rewarded by a guarantee by the British Government of his succession to the turban of chieftainship of Upper Sind, on the demise of Meer Roostum Khan."<sup>63</sup>

This did not satisfy the ambitious Ali Murad who now aspired to be the Rais even while his brother was alive. He decided to bide his time. He got his chance when Napier came to Sind. He saw at once that the General had little patience with the Amirs, he also saw that with a little cunning he could make the General a convenient tool in his hands to further his own ambition. So he declared that he "would rather trust to the professions of the English" than rely on the word of the Amirs and their fickle advisers.<sup>64</sup> On 30 October Ali Murad suddenly returned to Khairpur from his fort of Dejee-ka-Kote. Fateh Mohamed Ghori went to receive him and brought him to the durbar where all his brothers and others were present. Mir Rustam said, "Now is the time to smother all unfriendly feeling among ourselves" and entreated his brother to see how essential it was to stand united against the English at this critical hour when their very existence was at stake. Ali Murad listened to them in silence and seemed moved. He and Nasir Khan (Mubarak's son) embraced each other and dined together. Rustam made Ali Murad the chief of all his forces while Nasir Khan was entrusted with home affairs. It was further decided that a shikar party should proceed to Bubberlow from where Ghori was to go and meet the General at Shikarpore. The Hyderabad Amirs were also reported to have written to Rustam assuring him of their cooperation.<sup>65</sup>

On 9 November Ghori met the General and arranged a meeting between him and Mir Rustam for the 14th. On 10 November another conference of the Khairpur chiefs took place expressing a general lack of confidence in the Minister. So Ali Murad decided to follow Ghori to Bubberlow to keep a personal

watch on the movements of the General and ascertain the real strength of his army. On 12 November Ali Murad arrived at Buberlow and applied to the General for an interview. The latter refused because of his forthcoming meeting with Mir Rustam. On 14 November Mir Rustam pleaded illness and the scheduled meeting with Napier was cancelled.<sup>66</sup>

Napier now proceeded to work out his plan of action as he thought right. The Governor-General's letter of 14 November 1842 and the withdrawal of the political agency had given him a *carte blanche* to go his own way. "As your Lordship has been so good as not to give me a colleague, I mean to consult no one; I see my way clearly," he wrote to Ellenborough.<sup>67</sup> Ali Murad had met the General on 23 November to explain his case and told him that Mir Rustam was trying to secure the rights of chieftaincy for his own son after his death. The General assured him that the British Government would never countenance an arrangement that so grossly infringed the spirit of the existing treaties. It is evident from Napier's entries in his journal that he cared little about who kept the turban. What was important in his calculations is the fact that somehow he had lost his sympathy for Mir Rustam and wanted at all costs to support Ali Murad. According to Lambrick, Ali Murad got this understanding from the General during their meeting on 23 November. He says: "Unfortunately he gave a hint of this to Ali Murad—Rustam would keep the Turban unless he forfeited the Governor-General's protection. Napier had gone intending to say little, but he had said enough to seal the old chief's fate."<sup>68</sup>

On 29 November Ali Murad attended a review of the troops in the company of the General who later expressed his satisfaction on having secured the cooperation of a "vigorous-minded, ambitious and cunning" chief because it simplified their political dealings and made their objective easier to reach. Explaining his proposed course of action to Ellenborough in a letter dated 23 November 1842 and why he supported Ali Murad's claim to chieftaincy he wrote:<sup>69</sup>

"It is just. Ali Moorad has the right to the 'Turban' for his own life, after the death of Meer Roostum, and it promises to protect him in his right.

"It detaches Ali Moorad from any league among the Ameeris, and, consequently, diminishes the chance of bloodshed.

"It lays a train to arrive at a point which I think should be urged, viz. that we should treat with one Ameer, instead of a number. This will simplify our political dealings with these princes, and gradually reduce them to the class of rich noblemen, and their chief will be perfectly dependent on the Government of India, living as he will do, so close to this large station (Sukkur)."

On 2 December 1842 Lieutenant Stanley, the officiating aide-de-camp left Sukkur for Hyderabad, bearing the General's letter and the draft of the new treaty to the Amirs. On 4 December Captain French, officiating aide-de-camp proceeded to Khairpur for the same purpose.<sup>70</sup> Napier timed it thus in order to force the Hyderabad rulers to take a decision before they got in touch with Khairpur. While sending off the treaties he wrote to the Governor-General, "Four thousand infantry, 1,000 cavalry, and twenty pieces of cannon are ready to cross the river; 300 camels are across, with a strong force, and all the grain under pretence of preparing for the Bengal troops' march to Ferozpore."<sup>71</sup>

Mir Rustam was given precisely eight days to come to a decision. The old Amir called all his chiefs together to take their counsel. After much deliberation they decided to send two deputies to the General to protest against the proposed treaty; simultaneously they also rushed messengers to Hyderabad to ascertain what was happening there. A messenger was also sent to Ali Murad at Dejee-ka-Kote.<sup>72</sup> On 7 December the deputies returned from the General with a favourable report of their interview with the latter. Rustam was pleased. He forbade any further talk of war and directed Muhammad Husain who was in charge of the forces to discharge half the troops.<sup>73</sup> He also sent another deputation to Napier to assure him of his complete submission.

The Hyderabad Amirs too had acted in a similar fashion. They had deputed vakeels to the General with full powers to treat with him on the details of the treaty. Thus it was evident that the Amirs were all too anxious to preserve peace. But the General had made his plans and was determined to carry them out. On 8 December, the very day on which the Khairpur rulers had discharged their levies, the General issued a proclamation annexing Subzulkote and Bhoongbara to the Bhawalpore territories.<sup>74</sup> The proclamation fell upon the Amirs like a thunderbolt. It was the first military measure in execution of Ellenborough's avowed policy. It was

also a decisive one. It extinguished the last flicker of hope they had of keeping peace and drove them over the precipice. It was clear to them that the General was bent on war. And, if they had to lose their land, why not lose it fighting than give it up without a struggle? They re-engaged the discharged troops and wrote to their chieftains, far and near, to assemble in Khairpur for the final battle with the English.<sup>75</sup>

Napier now came into his own. His tone and manner of address were as offensive as they could be. He issued a warning to the Khairpur Amirs on 9 December 1842, saying: "Your subjects (it is said) propose to attack my camp in the night time. This would, of course, be without your knowledge, and also be very foolish, because my soldiers would slay those who attack them, and, when day dawned, I would march to Khairpore, transplant the inhabitants to Sukkur, and destroy your capital city."<sup>76</sup>

In all this he had the firm backing of Ellenborough whose instructions to him were: "Whether they submit, or not, to the terms of the new Treaty, I think it most desirable, that you should require the immediate dispersion of the forces, whatever they may be which they may have collected, and insist upon your requisition to that effect being complied with, supporting it by the movement of your army. It is very necessary to make all the subjects of the Ameers see that their masters stand in awe of us; and the new settlement must be firmly established, before the great heats render movements on our part impracticable."<sup>77</sup> In a subsequent letter dated 15 December, he wrote, "Until they have actually experienced the superior strength of your arms, they will never abandon the thought of hostility."<sup>78</sup>

On 17 December the English dawks near Rohri were stopped and plundered. The General suspected it was done by Rustam's men acting under their master's orders. Immediately he wrote the Amir a curt letter ordering him to disarm his armed bands.

"My letters have been stopped near Khairpore; that has been done either by your order or without your consent. If by your order, you are guilty; if without your consent, you cannot command your people. In either case, I order you to disband your armed followers instantly. I will go to Khairpore to see that this order is obeyed."<sup>79</sup>

Rustam pleaded that he had done nothing to deserve such an order. "I have committed no fault; if any is alleged against me,

let me hear what it is, and I shall be prepared with an answer." About the charge of assembling troops he said: "God knows we have no intention of opposing the British, nor a thought of war or fighting. We have not the power."<sup>80</sup>

The General thereupon directed him to seek the advice of his brother Ali Murad in his future course of action. In a letter dated 18 December 1842 he wrote him: "You are helpless among your ill-judging family. I send this by your brother, his Highness Ali Moorad; listen to his advice, trust yourself to his care... Follow my advice, it is that of a friend."<sup>81</sup>

It was discovered many years too late that the man who caused the dawks to be intercepted was no other than Ali Murad himself who was planning to lay a train of crimes at the door of his brother so that he could become the Rais of Upper Sind.<sup>82</sup> It was firmly established by the commission of enquiry investigating this case that the principal munshis and native clerks through whom the information was obtained and which constituted the whole basis of Napier's subsequent proceedings against Rustam were bribed by Ali Murad.<sup>83</sup>

On 20 December Napier received a secret message from Mir Rustam through Lieutenant Brown, saying that he (the Amir) wanted to escape to the English camp for refuge.<sup>84</sup> This offered Napier an excellent opportunity to meet Rustam and confront him personally with all the charges alleged against him. This also offered him an ideal chance of ascertaining at first hand the ruler's real disposition towards the British Government and securing a peaceful settlement of the proposed terms of the treaty. But the General did not like this. He wrote to Ellenborough:

"I did not like this, as it would have embarrassed me very much how to act; but the idea struck me at once that he might go to Ali Moorad, who might induce him (as a family arrangement) to resign the Turban to him. (Ali Moorad)... I therefore secretly wrote to Roostum and Ali Moorad, and about one o'clock this morning I had an express from Ali Moorad, to say that his brother is safe with him... The chief of the Talpoors, frightened at the violence of his family, and our steady operations to coerce them, has thrown himself into his brother's power at my advice, otherwise I should believe some trick was intended."<sup>85</sup>

On 21 December Napier received a letter from Rustam say-



ing that he had surrendered the turban in favour of Ali Murad. For Napier the matter was settled. He wrote to Ellenborough on the 27th saying how fortunate it was that they had succeeded in replacing Mir Rustam with Ali Murad as the Rais in Upper Sind.<sup>86</sup>

From now on the events moved fast. With the happy thought that he had managed things so deftly Napier left Sukkur on 21 December and joined the camp on the Rohri side of the river. On the 22nd he proceeded to Khairpur and met Mir Shah Nawaz Khan, the eldest son of Mir Ali Murad. On the 23rd he met the vakeels from Mir Shahidat of Lower Sind conveying their chief's acceptance of the treaty. Thus all the Amirs of Sind had given their consent to the new treaty.<sup>87</sup> On the 26th Napier met Ali Murad who later sent him the deed signed on the Koran by Mir Rustam, known as the Treaty of Naunahar, by which the latter made over during his lifetime all his rights of chieftaincy to Ali Murad along with all the territories he held as patrimony from his father Mir Sohrab.<sup>88</sup> This raised a doubt in Napier's mind. He felt that Ali Murad may have frightened the old man into taking this foolish step by saying that the General intended to imprison him. Napier's interview with Ali Murad on the 27th confirmed his suspicion. "There is one point which I do not understand, some trick probably, but I cannot yet clearly see it. There is an evident objection to my seeing Mir Rustam; why, I do not know."<sup>89</sup> This ought to have been the starting point for an investigation into the question of the resignation of the turban. But for Napier this course of action would have been too inconvenient. During the course of the interview Napier told Ali Murad that he would see Rustam the next day, that is, 28 December. On the 28th morning Mir Rustam fled from his refuge of Dejee-ka-Kote towards the desert.<sup>90</sup>

The grand old Amir of Sind, once the faithful ally of the British, became an outcast, a fugitive in his own land. "I met him in the jungle, surrounded by his faithful retainers, unprovided with the decencies of life. A tent with a single awning not ten feet square, afforded the sole protection from the weather," wrote Outram.<sup>91</sup>

Rustam's flight marks the commencement of hostilities on the part of the Amirs. To see their aged Prince cast out and dishonoured roused the Baluchis to action as nothing else had been able to do. The Amirs of Lower Sind, encamped at Dingee, made com-



mon cause with their cousins of Upper Sind and together they called their levies to assemble for war. Napier himself reported:

"I had no sooner heard of the flight of Roostum, than intelligence reached me that his sons and nephews have struck up a close alliance with the Hyderabad Ameers; that Sobdar has been persuaded to join them; that their forces are assembling at Dejee in large numbers, and about 15,000 north of Larkana, and 2,000 in the fort of Shahghur, on the road to Jessulmere."<sup>92</sup>

Napier now decided to follow a course of action that would break the Amirs' 'implicit' faith in their deserts. Hearing of Rustam's flight, all the chiefs and their troops had gone in the southerly direction towards the desert fortress of Imamgarh where Rustam was reported to have fled. This fortress was a hundred miles into the desert and deemed impregnable. Napier decided to follow them there and show to the Amirs "that neither their deserts, nor their negotiations can protect them from the British troops."

He arrived at Dejee-ka-Kote, the fort belonging to Ali Murad, on 4 January. The route to Imamgarh was unknown and uncertain. Napier therefore left a large part of his force behind and on the night of 5 January he marched with 350 of the 22nd Queen's Regiment, two 24-pound howitzers and 200 of the Sind horse, reaching Choonka (25 miles from Dejee) the following day.<sup>93</sup> Here they came close on the traces of Mir Rustam and Outram went to meet him. The old Amir told Outram that he had surrendered all his rights under pressure from Ali Murad, that he had fled from Dejee because he had been warned that the General intended to imprison him. Distracted and perplexed in his agony, he implored to be taken to the British General, for the purpose of throwing himself on his mercy.<sup>94</sup> But the only mercy Napier was prepared to show him was a firm refusal to reinstate him in his rights. He wrote:

"I was at first startled at the escapade of Roostum, but more consideration convinces me it was even better it should be so; it makes the state of affairs more decided, and when I take Emaum Ghur, it appears to me that this circumstance will pretty nearly wind up everything."<sup>95</sup>

Napier arrived at Imamgarh on 12 January. He had met with no opposition on the way. When he reached the fortress he found no one there to defend it.<sup>96</sup> Firing even a single shot was unneces-

sary, but the General reflected "that the existence of Emaum Ghur can only serve to foster confidence in the Ameers of both Sindes, when discontented or rebellious, and will, sooner or later, force us to another and more perilous march perhaps, I made up my mind to blow it down."<sup>97</sup> The fortress belonged to Ali Murad by virtue of his lately acquired chieftaincy, and so on the evening of 15 January, with this chief's consent, Napier blew up the fortress of Imamgarh, with Ali Murad himself helping in its destruction by firing a few shots.<sup>98</sup> Napier justified his act of destruction as follows:

"I do not like this work of destruction, but reason tells me two things. First it will prevent bloodshed, and it is better to destroy temples made by men than temples built and used for oppression, and in future its ruins will shelter the slave instead of the tyrant."<sup>99</sup>

Napier now turned his attention to Hyderabad. On 15 January he wrote to the Amirs of both Upper and Lower Sind, asking them to meet Outram in conference at Khairpur on 20 January or send deputies with full powers to settle with him the terms of the new treaty, adding:

"If any vakeel shall declare that he has not such powers, I will exclude him from the meeting, and consider that his master refuses to treat; and I will enter the territories of such Ameer with the troops under my orders, and take possession of them in the name of the British Government."<sup>100</sup>

Accordingly, he moved from Dejee to Pir Abu Baker, nine miles onward on a direct road to Hyderabad to lend vigour to the proceedings.<sup>101</sup>

Despite the fact that the meeting was scheduled for the 20th, Napier continued to advance. Outram implored him to stop, but in vain. "It grieves me to say that my heart, and that judgement which God has given me, unite in condemning the course we are carrying out for his Lordship, as most tyrannical, positive robbery. I consider that every life that may hereafter be lost in consequence will be a murder."<sup>102</sup> Outram wrote to Napier. But the latter was in no mood to listen. On the day of the meeting the Hyderabad Amirs' deputies arrived with full powers to treat with the commissioner but no one showed up from Khairpur. Outram suspected Ali Murad's hand in this and felt that Rustam's failure to come for the meeting or send deputies

must be in some way connected with this chief's duplicity. His main concern now was to save the Hyderabad Amirs before it was too late. He therefore suggested to Napier that he be allowed to go to Hyderabad for personal talks with the rulers. On his insistence he was allowed to proceed while the General himself marched closer in on Khairpur "to walk over them all as I do over the stubble before my tent".<sup>103</sup> From here he issued a stern warning to the Amirs of Upper Sind :

"Ameers, you imagine that you can procrastinate till your fierce sun drives the British troops out of the field, and forces them to seek shelter in Sukkur. You trusted to your Desert, and were deceived; you trust to your deadly sun, and may again be deceived. I will not write a second letter to you."<sup>104</sup>

He gave them ten days in which to make up their minds. Meanwhile, he said, "my military operations must go forward."

Outram's object in going to Hyderabad was to prevent a meeting between the Amirs of the two Sinds, for on that hung the fate of Hyderabad. Outram was certain that if the Amirs met, Hyderabad rulers would throw in their lot with Khairpur regardless of consequences. Outram sincerely wished to prevent that. Napier also realised this and wrote to Outram to reach Hyderabad before Rustam reached there. But this letter was intercepted on the way by Ali Murad's men. Thus, by the time Outram reached Hyderabad, Rustam had preceded him by four days. The object of his visit was nullified, if not exactly frustrated.<sup>105</sup>

On 8 February the commissioner held a conference with all the principal Amirs of Upper and Lower Sind.<sup>106</sup> They received him cordially and after the exchange of courtesies they produced all the treaties that had so far been concluded between the two Governments. Mir Nasir Khan pointed to the treaty dated April 1839 which contained a stipulation pledging that the British Government would never covet one reau of the Amirs' revenues and territories, and asked : "Why is it that you now make new demands? Four years have only passed since your Sirkar thus pledged that nothing more should be required of us." The commissioner justified new demands on grounds of violation of former treaties. The Amirs firmly denied having infringed an iota of those treaties. In regard to the treasonable correspondence on which the proposed terms were based, Nasir Khan had written to Napier, "God is

my witness that, up to this moment, I know not whether the name you mention as belonging to the Boogties, is that of a man or of a whole tribe. I know them not. As to Sawan Mull, it is true that, in accordance with Article VIII of the new Treaty, I have occasionally corresponded in a friendly way with that person, but always, I would observe, with the knowledge of the Political Agents of the British Government. This correspondence has never related to other than trifling matters, and I court investigation into the charges preferred against me."<sup>107</sup> He now demanded to see the letters and asked, "Why were those letters not produced? Why don't you give us an opportunity of disproving them? We never wrote them." Outram had no reply to these questions, nor authority to soften or modify in any way the terms proposed. He asked them to accept the treaty in its entirety and leave everything else to the General. "If not," he said, "the army under Sir Charles Napier will continue to advance. If you do, I shall endeavour to arrange the consequent details as fairly as possible to each Ameer, which is my only duty." Finally the Amirs agreed to subscribe to the treaty but on one condition that Rustam would be restored to his rights. The old Amir stated his own case thus:

"By the General's own direction, I sought refuge with Ali Moorad who placed me under restraint, and made use of my seal, and compelled me to do as he thought proper. Would I resign my birthright of my own free will?"

Mir Rustam was prepared to prove the forgery of the paper containing the Treaty of Naunahar. He was prepared to prove the falsity of every charge alleged against him.<sup>108</sup> To all his pleadings Outram's reply was that only a full and unconditional acceptance of the new treaty would induce the General to halt. He left the Amirs finally with the advice to expedite their decision, for delay would only be injurious to them. He said to them: "Resistance must end in their destruction; and all attempts to appear formidable, by calling together their Beloochees, would avail them nought towards checking the advance of the British troops, or causing us to relax one iota in our demands."<sup>109</sup>

On 9 February the durbar munshis came to request Outram to be present at another consultation with the Amirs. Outram refused. He said it would serve no purpose for he had said whatever there was to say. At five that evening the deputies from the

five Amirs of Hyderabad waited on him and applied their masters' seals to a written pledge accepting the proposed treaty.<sup>110</sup>

Napier was now very close on Hyderabad. He had continued to advance despite the Amirs' assurances conveyed to him by Outram as well as the latter's own repeated requests to him to halt. It was his firm belief that every move and every word of the Amirs cloaked a secret motive and a sinister design. On 12 February Captain Jacob of the Sind horse captured twenty-five armed Baluchi horsemen of the Murri tribe who were on their way to Hyderabad. A search revealed that they carried two letters from the Hyderabad rulers exhorting their men to collect at Miani, 12 miles from Hyderabad, after the feast of Mohurram which fell on the 9th, to give battle to the English.<sup>111</sup> This convinced Napier that their frantic requests to make him halt were subterfuges designed to lull him into a false sense of security so that they could fall upon him with the sudden fury of all their numbers behind them. Napier therefore continued to press forward.

On 12 February Outram again conferred with the Amirs when they formally applied their seals to the proposed treaty.<sup>112</sup> On their way back Outram and his companions had to make their way through a dense crowd of violent armed Baluchis; who had been flocking into the capital after hearing the news that the British army had crossed the frontier. As a precaution the Amirs therefore provided a strong escort of horse under their most influential chiefs to accompany the officers to the Residency.<sup>113</sup> On the 13th the Amirs' deputies went to the commissioner with the message that the Baluchis demanded redress of Rustam's wrongs, that the rulers were helpless before them. "At least give us some pledge that justice shall be done, by which the Ameers may endeavour to allay the excitement of the people, and persuade them to disperse," they urged.<sup>114</sup> In the alternative they simply asked to be given the fair right to settle their differences with Ali Murad and without the intervention of the British. Outram replied that that would be an act of hostility against the English. "This is very hard," said the deputies, "you will neither promise restoration of what had been taken from them by Ali Moorad, nor will you allow them to right themselves." The deputies left at last saying that if they did not return with a reply that night, Outram was to take it that the Amirs could do nothing.



The deputies did not return.<sup>115</sup>

Outram knew that hostilities were now inevitable. The Amirs had signed the treaty on the 12th. For two days after that they tried to contain the indignation of their followers but without success. The Baluchis were bent on taking up for Rustam. They demanded that he be reinstated in his rights. That venerable old man had helped the British in their hour of crisis, placed all his resources at their disposal, and now, when terrified by the General's proceedings and a wholesale confiscation of his territories all he asked for was to see the General and an assurance that would dispel his doubts, both interview and a reassuring word were denied him. Even his relations were not being allowed to act for him. To bring home to their rulers what they had been reduced to, one Baluchi presented Nasir Khan with a woman's dress.<sup>116</sup> The Amirs realised that things had reached a pass where the only option left to them was to fight.

Their decision led to the battle of Miani.

On the morning of 15 February, a body of cavalry and infantry led by Mir Shahdad, Mir Muhammad, Nawab Ahmad Khan Laghari and other principal chiefs surrounded the agency compound on three sides, taking up positions in the gardens and houses immediately commanding the Enclosure and opened fire. The Residency was protected on the fourth side by the steamers *Planet* and *Satellite* anchored about 500 yards away. The agency was ably defended by Captain Conway with the help of the light company of the 22nd Regiment, a few sepoy and six British officers. After four hours' continuous firing the defenders ran short of ammunition and decided to evacuate. With some difficulty they managed to reach the steamers. So the *Planet* and *Satellite* sailed away, joining Napier's camp at Muttaree 20 miles north of Hyderabad on the 16th.<sup>117</sup>

On 17 February at 4 a.m. Napier marched to Miani, ten miles from Muttaree. His strength was 2,800 men of all arms and twelve pieces of artillery. The Amirs were posted with woods flanking them on either side. Napier had despatched Outram the previous night with 200 sepoy to set fire to the Amirs' flank on the left. Napier formed his ranks and opened fire.

"Then, my Lord, was seen the superiority of the musket and bayonet over the sword and shield and matchlock. The brave Beloo-



chees, first discharging their matchlocks and pistols, dashed over the bank with desperate resolution but down went those bold and skilful swordsmen under the superior power of the musket and bayonet."<sup>118</sup>

At the end of the day, all was over. Victory was Napier's. The Baluchis had fought desperately and lost. Their untrained ranks were like the surge of a wave breaking against the rocks. As they stood and fired, they heard their returning fire grow fainter and fainter and finally lost in the thunderous noise of the musket and the bayonet. At last they knew they were beaten and turning back "with a swinging stride, they slowly stalked away".

Such was the battle of Miani fought within sight of the Hyderabad towers. The action was short and conclusive. The loss of the Baluchis was heavy. Within a circle of fifty paces' radius, four hundred corpses were counted. In all Napier estimated the loss at 5,000. The whole of the Amirs' artillery, ammunition, standards and camp, with considerable stores and treasure were taken. On 18 February Napier wrote to the Governor-General, "The forces under my command have gained a decisive victory over the army of the Ameers of Upper and Lower Sind."<sup>119</sup>

The Amirs came before the General on the 18th and surrendered their swords as prisoners of war. Seeing them thus Napier felt no sense of elation. He returned them their swords. But there still remained one more chief, Sher Muhamad of Mirpur, to contend with. At the time of the battle of Miani he was encamped with 10,000 men, six miles from the battlefield. Even after Napier's conclusive victory he refused to disperse his troops. Therefore, after some reinforcements had arrived, Napier engaged Sher Muhamad in action at the village of Dabo situated close to Fuleli river on 22 March 1843. Sher Muhamad fled to his capital and thence to Umercote. Napier pursued him there. At last on 14 June 1843 Captain Jacob defeated this chief and drove him out of Sind.<sup>120</sup>

The whole thing was over. The annexation of Sind was formally announced in August. With that the last chapter of Sind's history as an independent state came to an end.

The events of the post-Afghan war period constitute a sad commentary on this episode. Was Napier alone to blame for it? Undoubtedly he hastened the end but it would be disproportionate

to hold him wholly responsible for what happened. Ground had been prepared for him by the envoys who had come before him, by the Governor-Generals who had laid down in clear terms the line of policy to be followed. The conquest of Sind represented but the culminating point in the British policy of diplomacy set in motion by the Crow mission. Surveying the scene of desolation after the battle of Miani Napier remarked in self-acquittal, "My conscience acquits me of the blood which has been shed. The tyrannical and deceitful Ameers brought on the battle, the deceitful tribe of Beloochee robbers were resolved that it should be so, and bravely did they execute their resolution."<sup>121</sup>

After Miani Napier issued the following proclamation to the people of Sind on 3 March 1843 :

"Beloochees of Sinda:

"Your Princes are prisoners, their capital and their treasure are in my possession. You fought like brave men, but you were defeated, and many of your chiefs slain.

"Master of Sinda I now address you in the words of reason, in hopes that I may not be obliged to shed more of your blood.

"The Talpoors have fallen before the swords of the English as the Caloras fell before the swords of the Talpoors, so God had decreed it should be, and so it is. The decrees of God are unchangeable. If you resist, I will treat you harshly, and drive you over the Indus. I have abundance of soldiers. Thousands more will come. Your blood will be shed. But if you are tranquil and return to your homes, your jagheers and possessions of all kinds shall be respected, and the English will be your friends. You will be happy."<sup>122</sup>

On 5 March 1843 Ellenborough issued a notification announcing that "the most decisive victory has been gained upon the best fought field" and he directed a salute of 21 guns to be fired at all stations of the army to celebrate the occasion.<sup>123</sup> To Napier and his troops he offered "the tribute of his own admiration, and of the gratitude of the Government and people of India". On 13 March the Conqueror of Sind was appointed Governor of Sind.

That Ellenborough did not have the support of the home authorities in his Sind policy and his arbitrary proceedings in relation to the Amirs is clear from some of the despatches from the Secret Committee. Even before Miani, in a letter dated 4 February

1843 the Secretary of State, replying to the Governor-General's recent communications relating to the Amirs and the treaties existing between these chiefs and the British Government, had expressed his doubts as to the measures Napier was adopting. "We wish that the responsibility of deciding whether the Ameers should be adjudged to be guilty or not and the responsibility of acting, without further reference upon that decision, had not been so entirely devolved upon Sir Charles Napier."<sup>124</sup> He further went on to say :

"We are fully alive to the benefits which must result from the British Government possessing a perfect command of the Navigation of the Indus. We cannot be insensible to the advantages that may be expected from an exchange of tribute for territory,... But, great as those advantages would be, it is of paramount importance that the character of our Government should be beyond impeachment, or suspicion, in respect of its good faith. We have a right to insist on the strict observance of treaties, but we must be careful that we are not led, for the sake of rewarding a faithful adherent, or with a view to obtain general benefits however questionable, to trespass the bounds which justice and good faith prescribe and to avail ourselves of the power which we possess to enforce on the Ameers terms, which undoubtedly we can at this moment dictate to them."<sup>125</sup>

Napier's action in forcing events to a military clash aroused considerable controversy. His own words 'I have Scinde' were punned into 'Peccavi' (I have sinned) by Punch.<sup>126</sup> "A more disgraceful act never stained the history of our country," was Eastwick's comment,<sup>127</sup> on the battle of Miani. But all these strictures were of little avail. Between them Ellenborough and Napier had pushed matters to a point from where there was no going back. With the exception of Ali Murad all other Amirs were sent as captives to Calcutta. Regarding the former, Ellenborough wrote to Napier that he must be confirmed in his possessions and receive some more additions to his territory.<sup>128</sup> Some time later a suggestion was made by the Secret Committee that the Amirs be restored to their landed possessions divested of sovereign rights. The Governor-General in Council rejected the proposal. In his letter dated 28 August 1843 he said that "the restoration of the banished Ameers to their landed possessions with permission

to reside in Sind, would whether they were reinstated or not in their sovereign authority materially weaken the position upon the Indus which your Hon'ble Committee has decided that we should permanently retain; and ultimately lead to another, and an unnecessary contest for a country now subdued."<sup>129</sup> In his view such a step would unsettle the minds of the people and give to the Baluchis a rallying point for opposition to British rule. Explaining his views at length the Governor-General concluded:

"We regret that we are unable to acquiesce in the principle of the measures proposed by you. We consider that the adoption of them would be incompatible with the tranquil possession of our intended positions upon the Indus and with the success of our endeavours to improve the condition of the country and people of Scinde, and under this impression, exercising the unfettered discretion you have left to us, we shall proceed to carry into effect the views for the administration of that country as a province permanently annexed to the British Empire in India."<sup>130</sup>

The treatment meted out to the Amirs was another subject that came in for bitter criticism and there were many who tried to plead on their behalf. But despite the fact that the Sind question was debated in Parliament nothing was done for these grievously wronged chiefs. After some years, in 1852 Viscount Jocelyn moved a motion in the House of Commons "to obtain for these unfortunate princes not all that justice demanded, but all that it was now left in the power of the British Government to bestow", namely, to return the chiefs to their native land.<sup>131</sup> Sir R.H. Inglis supporting the motion, declared that "the pages of the history of the English in India were not all sullied but he verily believed that, in no country and in no age, had such a history been written of the English rule".<sup>132</sup> Lord Dalhousie also made a fervent appeal on their behalf. The Amirs sent their own deputies with a representation to the British sovereign. Outram, Pottinger, Eastwick, all did their best. It was not until 1855 that they, or rather their descendants, were allowed to return to Sind as pensioners of the Crown.

What became of Ali Murad? In April 1850 a commission of inquiry was appointed to go into his doings leading to the Treaty of Naunahar and it was conclusively proved that the copy of the treaty forwarded by Ali Murad to Napier was a forgery, also that

Rustam's unconditional surrender of the turban was a fabrication. An agreement had indeed been signed between Ali Murad and Mir Rustam on 20 December 1842 and the latter had abdicated in favour of Ali Murad, relinquishing his personal territories to facilitate negotiations with the British but he had made four conditions. The documents when despatched to Napier along with Rustam's letter was intercepted by Sheikh Ali Hussein, Ali Murad's Minister and the forged version was sent to the General in its place.<sup>133</sup> As a result of these findings, Ali Murad was deposed and his territories annexed by the British.

Thus Sind passed into British hands. With that the history of Talpur rule and that phase of Anglo-Sind relations which started with the Crow mission to this state came to an end.

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Colchester, *History of the Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough*, p. 168
- <sup>2</sup> 'Administration of Lord Ellenborough', *Calcutta Review*, I, pp. 524-525
- <sup>3</sup> *Cambridge History of India*, V, pp. 528-529
- <sup>4</sup> Colchester, *op. cit.*, p. 101. (Letter dated 20 October 1843)
- <sup>5</sup> 'Amirs of Sindh', *Calcutta Review*, I, p. 232
- <sup>6</sup> Colchester, *op. cit.*, p. 356. (Letter dated 22 March 1843)
- <sup>7</sup> Thompson and Garret, *Rise and Fulfilment of the British Rule in India*, p. 352
- <sup>8</sup> Burnes, *Navigation of the Indus*, pp. 108-117 (Report on the Establishment of an Entrepot or Fair for the Indus Trade, January 1838)
- <sup>9</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 221. Pottinger to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 10 October 1839
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 287. Maddock to the Political Agent in Lower Sind, 5 April 1841
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 318. Political Agent in Sind to the Private Secretary to the Governor-General, 2 February 1842
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 334. Maddock to the Political Agent in Sind, 22 May 1842
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 344. Sketch of a Proposed Supplementary Treaty submitted by the Political Agent in Sind, 21 June 1842
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 343. Outram to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 21 June 1842
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Inclosure 22 in No. 379. Memorandum of the acts contained in the charge-sheet

- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Inclosure 3 in No. 379. Outram to Napier, 14 October 1842
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Inclosure 34 in No. 379, F. No. 1. Translation of a Parwana bearing the seals of the four Ameers
- <sup>20</sup> Eastwick, *The Case of the Ameers of Sind*, p. 28. Speech dated 26 January 1844
- <sup>21</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 399
- <sup>22</sup> Bhoongbhara yielding a revenue of Rs. 60,000 annually had been wrested from the Nawab of Bhawalpore thirty-three years before and Subzulkote had been similarly taken the following year. PP, SC 1838-43, No. 349. Lieutenant E.J. Brown to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 9 July 1842
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 347. Outram to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 26 June 1842
- <sup>24</sup> Napier, *Life and Opinions of General Sir Charles Napier*, II, p. 196. Also see Lambrick, *Sir Charles Napier and Sind*, pp. 71-72
- <sup>25</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 361. Governor-General to Napier, 26 August 1842
- <sup>26</sup> Napier, *Life and Opinions of Sir Charles Napier*, II, p. 189 and p. 266
- <sup>27</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 372. Napier to the Ameers of Hyderabad, 25 September 1842
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 222. Memorandum sent by the Resident in Sind to Hyderabad Ameers, Bhoj, 14 October 1839
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 304. Outram to Captain Leckie, 18 August 1841
- <sup>30</sup> Napier, *Conquest of Scinde*, I, pp. 175-176  
Extract of a private letter from Sir Charles Napier dated 16 January 1844
- <sup>31</sup> PP<sup>3</sup>SC 1838-43, Inclosure I in No. 379. Observations by Sir Charles Napier on the occupation of Sind, 17 October 1842
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>34</sup> Napier, *Life and Opinions of General Sir Charles Napier*, II, p. 218
- <sup>35</sup> Outram, *Conquest of Scinde*, p. 26
- <sup>36</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, *op. cit.*, Inclosure 1 in No. 379
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 388. Governor-General to Napier, 4 November 1842
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 389. Governor-General to Napier, 4 November 1842
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 390. Governor-General's note to the Ameers of Hyderabad with the draft of the Treaty, 4 November 1842
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, Inclosure 9 in No. 338. Political Agent in Sind to Lieut. Leckie, 29 April 1842
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 410. Napier to the Governor-General, 18 November 1842
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, Inclosure 9 in No. 338
- <sup>46</sup> Eastwick, *op. cit.*, p. 38. Speech dated 26 January 1844
- <sup>47</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 398. George Clerk to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 12 November 1842
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 409. Napier to the Governor-General, 17 November 1842



- 49 *Ibid*
- 50 *Ibid.*, No. 362. Minute by Sir George Arthur, Governor of Bombay, 2 September 1842
- 51 *Ibid.*, No. B 384. Intelligence received by Major Clibborn, 27 October 1842
- 52 *Ibid*
- 53 *Ibid.*, No. 408. Intelligence from Sindh, 15 to 20 November 1842
- 54 *Ibid.*, No. 425. Intelligence from Sindh, 30 November to 6 December 1842
- 55 Outram, *Conquest of Sindh*, pp. 218-219
- 56 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 406. Governor-General to Napier, 14 November 1842
- 57 *Ibid.*, No. 415. Governor-General to Napier, 24 November 1842
- 58 *Ibid.*, No. 216. Ross Bell, Political Agent in Upper Sindh to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 13 September 1839
- 59 *Ibid.*, No. 199. Mir Ali Murad Khan to the Political Agent in Upper Sindh, 27 July 1839
- 60 *Ibid.*, No. 205. Ross Bell to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 31 July 1839
- 61 *Ibid.*, No. 208. Secretary with the Governor-General to Ross Bell, 12 August 1839
- 62 NAI, Secret Consultation 10 August 1842, No. 91
- 63 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 347. Outram to the Secretary with the Governor-General, 26 June 1842
- 64 *Ibid.*, No. 385. Intelligence from Sindh, 30 October to 6 November 1842
- 65 *Ibid*
- 66 *Ibid.*, No. 403. Intelligence from Sindh, 7 to 13 November 1842
- 67 *Ibid.*, No. 421. Napier to the Governor-General, 30 November 1842
- 68 Lambrick, *Sir Charles Napier and Sindh*, p. 86
- 69 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 413. Napier to the Governor-General, 23 November 1842
- 70 *Ibid.*, No. 425. Intelligence from Sindh, 30 November to 6 December 1842
- 71 *Ibid.*, No. 421. Napier to the Governor-General, 30 November 1842
- 72 *Ibid.*, No. 425
- 73 *Ibid.*, No. 431. Intelligence from Sindh, 7 to 13 December 1842
- 74 *Ibid*
- 75 *Ibid*
- 76 *Ibid.*, No. 429. Napier to the Ameer of Khayrpore, 9 December 1842
- 77 *Ibid.*, No. 430. Governor-General to C. Napier, 13 December 1842
- 78 *Ibid.*, No. 435. Governor-General to Napier, 15 December 1842
- 79 Huttenback, *British Relations with Sindh*, p. 86  
Quotes from Correspondence relative to Sindh, supplementary to the Papers presented to Parliament in 1843, No. 11, Napier to Rustam, 18 December 1842
- 80 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 433. Meer Roostam Khan to C. Napier
- 81 Huttenback, *op. cit.*, p. 87

- <sup>82</sup> Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Third Series, Vol. CXXII, pp. 1248-1249
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1249
- <sup>84</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 439. Napier to the Governor-General, 20 December 1842
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>86</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 445. Napier to the Governor-General, 27 December 1842
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 444. Intelligence from Sind, 21 to 27 December 1842
- <sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 446. Napier to the Governor-General, 29 December 1842
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 445
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 446
- <sup>91</sup> Outram, *Conquest of Scinde*, p. 193
- <sup>92</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 446
- <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 453. Napier to the Governor-General, 7 January 1843
- <sup>94</sup> Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, *op. cit.*, p. 1246
- <sup>95</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 453
- <sup>96</sup> Outram, *Conquest of Scinde*, p. 228
- <sup>97</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 455. Napier to the Governor-General, 13 January 1843
- <sup>98</sup> NAI, Secret Consultation 7 October 1843, No. 319. Napier to Governor-General, 3 July 1843
- <sup>99</sup> Napier, *Life and Opinions*, II, p. 289
- <sup>100</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 458. Napier to the Ameers of Upper and Lower Sind, 15 January 1843
- <sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 460. Napier to the Governor-General, 22 January 1843
- <sup>102</sup> Outram, *Conquest of Scinde*, p. 290
- <sup>103</sup> Napier, *Life and Opinions*, II, p. 304
- <sup>104</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 464. Proclamation by Napier to the Amirs of Upper Sind, 27 January 1843
- <sup>105</sup> Outram, *Conquest of Scinde*, pp. 298-299
- <sup>106</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 468. Notes by Outram of his conferences with the Ameers, 8 and 9 February 1843
- <sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 434. Meer Nusseer Khan to Napier
- <sup>108</sup> Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, *op. cit.*, p. 1249
- <sup>109</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 468
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, Inclosure 1 in No. 471. Napier to the Governor-General, 13 February 1843
- <sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 468. Notes of conference with the Ameers on 12 February 1843
- <sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, Notes of conference on 13 February 1843
- <sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>116</sup> Eastwick, E.B., *Dry Leaves from Young Egypt*, p. 213
- <sup>117</sup> PP, SC 1838-43, No. 472. Outram to Napier, on board the 'Planet', 15 February 1843

- 118 Holmes, *Charles Napier*, p. 78. Also see Lambrick, *op. cit.*, chapter on Miani
- 119 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 473. Napier to the Governor-General, 18 February 1843
- 120 Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 90
- 121 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 473
- 122 NAI, Secret Consultation 7 October 1843, No. 15
- 123 PP, SC 1838-43, No. 474. Notification by the Governor-General of India
- 124 Secret despatch from Secretary of State to the Governor-General, 4 February 1843, No. 917
- 125 *Ibid*
- 126 Roberts, *History of India*, p. 330
- 127 Eastwick, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
- 128 NAI, Secret Consultation 7 October 1843, No. 16. Governor-General to Napier, 15 March 1843
- 129 NAI, Secret Letters to Court 1842-43, S. No. 58. Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee, 28 August 1843
- 130 *Ibid*
- 131 Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, *op. cit.*, p. 1255
- 132 *Ibid.*, p. 1256
- 133 Lambrick, *op. cit.*, pp. 353-355

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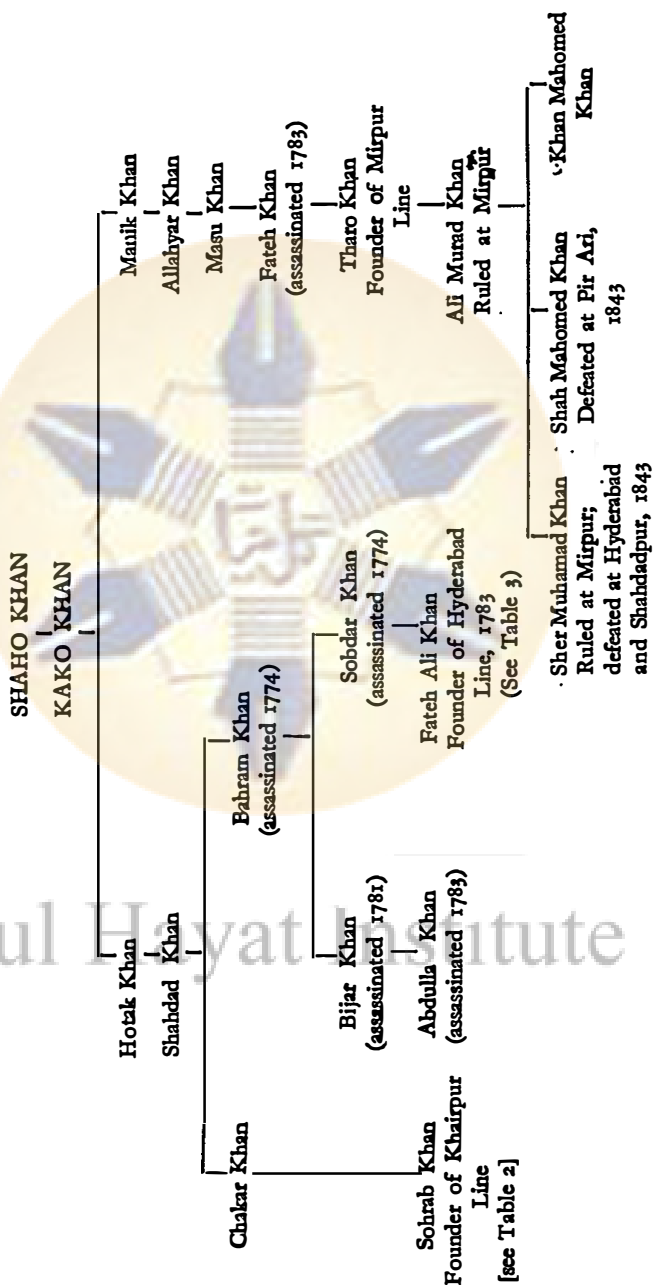
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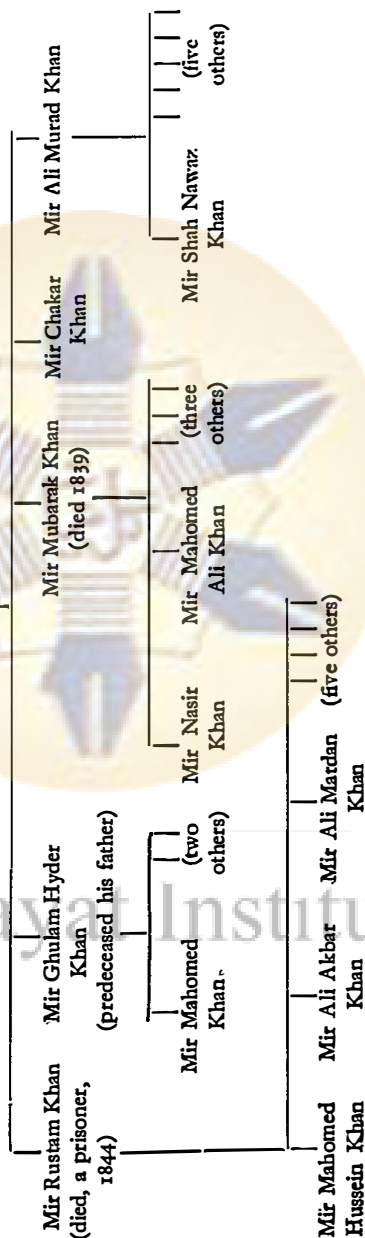


Gul Hayat Institute

TABLE 1  
DESCENT OF THE THREE RULING HOUSES OF THE TALPURS  
SHOWING THE MIRPUR LINE DOWN TO 1843



T A B L E 2  
THE RULING HOUSE OF KHAIRPUR  
MIR SOHRAB KHAN,  
(died 1830)

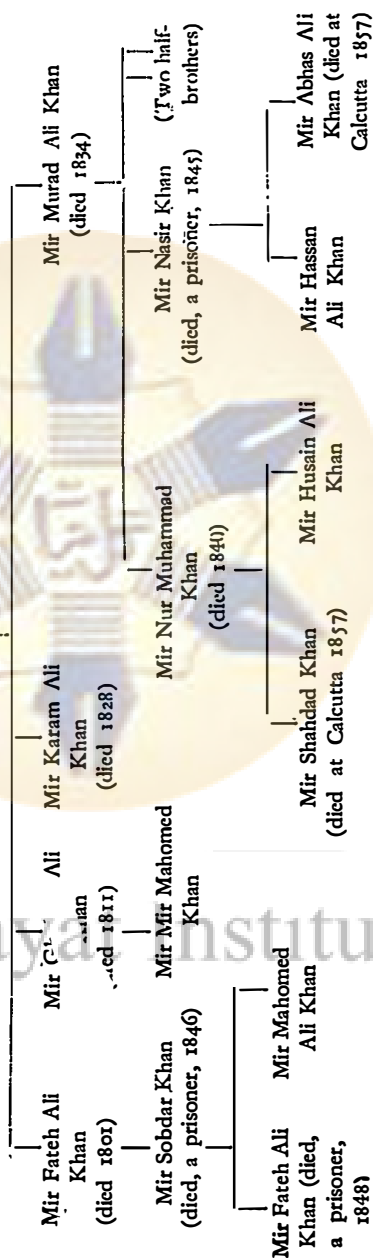


T A B L E 3

## THE RULING HOUSE OF HYDERABAD

MIR SOBDAR KHAN

(assassinated 1774)



# Glossary

Bunder	.. A sea-port or a river port.
Coss	.. About two miles.
Cummerband	.. A belt highly ornamented.
Durbar	.. A hall of audience; Court.
Dinghy	.. Appellation for a boat.
Feringees	.. Foreigners. Englishmen.
Firman	.. An order.
Jaghir	.. An alienated land.
Jehad	.. Holy war.
Jamadar	.. A sergeant in the Indian army.
Jumptee	.. State barge.
Kardar	.. Appellation for a revenue-collector in the days of the Talpurs.
Killadar	.. Commander of a fort or garrison.
Loongee	.. A coloured silk cloth peculiar to Sind. It was generally worn round the waist or used as a turban.
Mehmandar	.. Host, one who entertains.
Mohur	.. A gold coin equivalent to about fifteen rupees.
Muharram	.. First month of the Muslim New Year. It is a day of mourning on account of the martyrdom of Husain, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad.
Munshi	.. A sort of secretary: a scribe.
Musnud	.. The Amirs' throne on which they sat.
Parganah	.. Sub-division of a district.
Parwana	.. A written order.
Quolnama	.. A deed.
Rais	.. Ruler; chief.
Sanad	.. A title deed; charter.
Sardar	.. Chieftain; nobleman.
Sbikargah	.. A hunting preserve
Sipahi	.. Term applied to an Indian soldier.
Sirkar	.. Government
Soubah	.. A Province.
Vakeel	.. Authorised representative of a government; a sort of ambassador.
Vizier	.. Minister.
Zamindar	.. A land-holder.



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