

BRITISH POLICY  
TOWARDS SINDH  
UPTO  
THE ANNEXATION

By  
P. N. KHERA

MINERVA BOOK SHOP  
LAHORE

# BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS SINDH

UPTO

THE ANNEXATION, 1843

*by*

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WITH A FOREWORD

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#### NOTE

In the foot-notes the numbers of Letter-Books and letters are shown as Book/Letter *e.g.*, 140/70 means Book No. 140, letter No. 70. The same may also be shown as B140, L70. The letters P. G. R. stand for Punjab Government Records and P. P. for Parliamentary Papers relating to Sindh.

## PREFACE

In the following pages I have tried to trace the relations of the British Indian Government with Sindh from the earliest connections in the seventeenth century to the annexation in the middle of the nineteenth. A detailed history of Sindh during that period has not been attempted.

The records consulted for this essay have almost all been in manuscript form and are found in the Letter Books of the Punjab Government's Records Office at Lahore. These have never been published and seldom used by historians. This fact has been a great advantage to me, and perhaps my only justification for writing on a subject like this.

But these records are by no means complete, and relate primarily to the history of the Punjab. I had, therefore, to consult secondary authorities, viz. Parliamentary Papers relating to Sindh and certain other printed works. But I have tried to substantiate all opinions expressed or criticisms made by quotations from original documents or other standard works.

All these four chapters were originally published in the form of a series of papers in the *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society* and were highly appreciated by a number of Indian historians. This encouraged me to revise them and publish them in book form. I hope I have not been too vain in doing so.

I should like to thank Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan for his generous foreword, Prof. J. F. Bruce, University Professor of History, Lahore, for constant friendliness and interest and Dr. G. L. Chopra, Keeper of Records to the Punjab Government, for much sound advice and criticism in the final revision of the book.

Finally, I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Pandit Dina Nath Raina for having prepared the index, and to Messrs. Minerva Book Shop for shepherding this little book through the press with such interest and promptitude.

Sholapur.

P. N. KHERA.

## FOREWORD

I have read the little book entitled *British Policy Towards Sindh* by Mr. P. N. Khera with great interest. Mr. Khera has retained his interest in historical research after his graduation from the Punjab University, and has chosen a subject which is bound to arouse considerable interest. Mr. Khera has thrown new light on Ranjit Singh's relations with Sindh. I am inclined to agree with him in the view that, but for the intervention of the British, Ranjit Singh would have invaded Sindh and probably annexed it.

Mr. Khera's treatment of a highly controversial subject is essentially judicious and temperate and his analysis of the treaties contracted by the British Government with the Amirs of Sindh is marked by a spirit of powerful moderation and sane criticism.

Chapter IV deals with the annexation of the "Sick Man of India" and discusses the justice or otherwise of the conquest of that country. The subject bristles with difficulties, and the personality of Sir Charles Napier assumes gargantuan proportions after his tempestuous arrival in the valley. Sir Charles was a curious blend of the conquistador and the knight-errant, but in the subjugation of Sindh it was the former element that predominated and submerged the latter. Sir Charles argued that he had not come to Sindh to carry on a wordy polemic with the Amirs as to the equity of the treaties which the Amirs had previously signed with the British Government. This was not the function of the Commander-in-Chief; it was the concern of the Governor-General. He went to Sindh to carry out his orders and this he did with a thoroughness that destroyed all the vestiges of the Amirs' rule in Sindh. Morally, of course, the annexation was not justified, and Outram's magnanimous and chivalrous protest still rings in our ears. Sir Charles himself sheepishly admitted that it was a 'piece of rascality'.

On the side of the British Government it may be urged with a certain amount of justification that the Amirs of Sindh

had seriously violated the treaties which they solemnly signed by intriguing with the Sikhs, the Afghans, the Persians and others. A number of incriminating documents were intercepted by responsible British officers, and there can be no question of their complicity in such plots. The government of the Amirs was undiluted despotism, and their administrative principles were intrinsically crude and primitive.

I do not think I can discuss such a controversial subject further, but it must be clear to the meanest understanding that Sindh has benefited considerably under the British Government and its future is now assured.

Mr. Khara's enterprise deserves encouragement and it might serve as an incentive to young Indian scholars who have yet to tap the sources of our national story which are scattered in different parts of India.

SHAFAT AHMAD KHAN.

27, Elgin Road,  
Allahabad.  
*August 8, 1941.*

To  
“S”



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## CHAPTER I

THE London East India Company received its Charter from Queen Elizabeth on the last day of the year 1600. Its early efforts were directed towards the Spice Islands of the Malaya Archipelago where the Dutch had already established a strong foothold. But the mainland of India was not neglected, and as early as 1608 Captain Hawkins landed at Surat on the Western Coast and visited the Court of Jehangir at Agra. By 1612 an English factory was established at Surat. Connections were established through this factory with Agra and a few other inland centres of trade whence goods were brought by merchants moving in *Kafilas*. It was intended to establish factories among other places, in Sindh, and Sir Thomas Roe was sent to the Court of Jehangir in 1615 to secure concessions from the Mughal Emperor. The Portuguese were already doing some trade with Tatta in Sindh and Prince Khurram (later Shah Jahan), under their influence, was not in favour of allowing any extension of the English trade in that province. Roe, therefore, had to content himself with whatever concessions he could obtain in Gujrat.<sup>1</sup> The idea of opening a trade with Sindh was thus given up for the time being, the Portuguese being left without any European rivals in that part of the country.

In the late twenties of the 17th century a severe famine broke out in Gujrat and provided the English Council at Surat with a serious problem. Although northern India had not been affected, and supplies of goods might be procured from Agra, it was necessary to look for fresh sources of supply, and these were found in the region of Sindh where indigo and coarse calicoes were manufactured in large quantities and at reasonable prices.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas Roe was forced to admit that Prince Khurram was all powerful in the Court at that time and he thought it necessary to conciliate him. Foster, *England's Quest of Eastern Trade*, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

In 1630, within barely a generation of the institution of the Company, a *Firman* was obtained from the Mughal Emperor for trade in Sindh. Asaf Khan, the Minister, also gave them a *Parwana*. In 1635, he, of his own accord, sent them another *Parwana*, investing them with such privileges in ports of Sindh "as they enjoyed in other ports." Although Gujrat was now beginning to recover, a couple of ships were sent from Surat to Lahribunder,<sup>3</sup> the port of Tatta, situated in the Indus delta.<sup>4</sup> Hitherto that district had been largely a preserve of the Portuguese in point of foreign trade, yet a convention had been concluded at Goa, a little earlier, providing for a cessation of hostilities and the admission of the English to the Portuguese harbours.<sup>5</sup> This removed all fear of interruption from that quarter. The new-comers went from Lahribunder to Tatta<sup>6</sup> where they were cordially received by Daulat Khan, the governor of the place and other officials in view of the *Parwanas* of Asaf Khan, and were allowed to extend their operations throughout the province.<sup>7</sup>

The Commerce thus inaugurated continued until 1622, when the factories in Sindh were withdrawn in pursuance of the Company's policy of contracting its trade in western and northern India to Surat—a policy that was partly the result of the constant turmoil and insecurity that marked the close of the reign of Shah Jahan and the early years of Aurangzeb.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Or Lahoribunder. It was for long the port of Sindh in general and of Tatta in particular. It was situated on the right bank of the Piti branch of the river Indus, though its exact location cannot now be established without doubt. The place was then ruled by Rana Jeeah, son of Rana Umar. See Foster, *English Factories in India, 1634-1636*, p. 213. The use of the title 'Rana,' a typically Hindu word, indicates that these Muslim Princes were local Hindu Chiefs converted to Islam.

<sup>4</sup> Foster, *English Factories in India, 1634-1636*, pp. 243-244.

<sup>5</sup> The convention was concluded between President Methwold of the Surat Factory and the Portuguese Viceroy at Goa.

<sup>6</sup> The City of Tatta is of great antiquity. The "Pattala" of Alexander's time is sometimes identified with this place. It was a prosperous place in the 17th and 18th centuries but the civil disorders of Sindh affected it adversely. When Burnes saw it in 1831, the city was decaying. See Burnes' *Travels to Bokhara*, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Foster, *English Factories in India, 1634-1636*, p. 127.

<sup>8</sup> *England's Quest of Eastern Trade*, p. 316.

The Daud-potras and Kalhora families began their contest for supremacy in Sindh about the year 1658. This caused constant disorders in the country. It was not before 1711 that the Kalhoras were finally established as the rulers of Sindh, though they were soon afterwards (1739) subjugated by Nadir Shah who forced them to pay a tribute. His supremacy over Sindh was passed on to Ahmad Shah and to Shah Zaman, the Durrani rulers of Afghanistan. Locally, however, the Kalhoras continued to rule and were ultimately able to evolve conditions favourable to trade.<sup>9</sup> The idea of establishing a British factory was again revived, and on the 22nd of September 1758, Ghulam Shah, the Kalhora prince, granted a *Parwana* to Mr. Sumption of the Company's service for the establishment of a factory in Sindh. To that permission were added certain immunities and exemptions and the Sindhian officers and subjects were generally ordered to allow the English gentlemen to carry on trade unmolested. But it was added that "no other Englishman is to have a house or any encouragement." A factory was consequently built at Tatta on the Indus and a commerce, confined to the export of saltpetre and import of woollen clothes, was started. Three years later the same prince issued a further order on the occasion of the arrival at his court of Mr. Erskine as Resident in Sindh for the affairs of the Company. This document ratified previous advantages and excluded all Europeans except the English from trading with Sindh. On the whole Ghulam Shah showed a very friendly disposition towards the servants of the East India Company.<sup>9a</sup>

Trade connections thus established continued till 1775, when, owing to the political excitements of Sindh, and the discouraging attitude of the new ruler, Sarfaraz Khan, the factory was withdrawn. The struggle between the Talpuras and Kalhoras which was to end in the final overthrow of the

\* Among the inscriptions recently collected by the Archæological Survey of India, from the Districts of Karachi, Dadu, Larkana, Sukkur and Hyderabad, there is one on a marble slab which served as the foundation stone of the city of Hyderabad. The inscription bears the title *Ghazi* after the name of Ghulam Shah Kalhora. The use of the title *Ghazi* was generally assumed by independent Kings, and indicates that Ghulam Shah had succeeded in proclaiming his independence of Kabul.

<sup>9a</sup> See Appendices Nos. I and II, p. 64.

latter in 1783 continued and the country was rent by civil disorders and revolution.<sup>10</sup>

All relations with Sindh thus came to an end, to be revived only after two decades owing to European political developments.

During the last years of the 18th century, Napoleon Bonaparte was supposed to be intriguing with Tippu Sultan of Mysore for an invasion of Hindustan. In August 1798, there was published in London by one John Fairburn, of 146 The Minories, a coloured map styled as follows:—

“Fairburn’s New Chart exhibiting The Route of General Bonaparte in the Mediterranean Sea with the countries through which the French Army must pass, *viz.*, Egypt and the Red Sea and the Gulph of Persia To Mangalore. In the territory of Tippu Sahib in the East Indies.”

#### THE BRITISH RENEW RELATIONS, 1799

The rumours about such a campaign were believed to be true and in 1799 Lord Wellesley made an effort (through the Bombay Government) to revive commercial relations with Sindh “with the ostensible object of furthering trade but in reality to counteract the then highly dangerous and spreading influence of Tippu and the French, and to interrupt the growing ambitions of Zaman Shah, the Kabul monarch.”<sup>11</sup> Negotia-

<sup>10</sup> After a struggle lasting for about ten years, Mir Fateh Ali Khan of the Talpur family made himself the ruler of Sindh in 1783, and obtained a Firman from Zaman Shah. But his nephew, Mir Sohrab Khan, settled at Rohri and his son, Mir Tharo Khan, removed himself to Shahbandar where they each possessed themselves of the adjacent country, renouncing the authority of Fateh Ali. Thus the Talpuras were divided into three distinct branches:—

- (i) Hyderabad family, descendants of Fateh Ali, ruling in Central Sindh;
- (ii) Mirpur family, descendants of Mir Tharo, ruling Mirpur; and
- (iii) Khairpur branch, governing at Khairpur.

Mir Fateh Ali Khan, head of the Hyderabad family, also called the Shahdadpur family, associated with himself, in the government of his part of the province, his three younger brothers. Hence these four Hyderabad princes, who began to rule jointly, were called the *Char Yar* or the “four friends.”

<sup>11</sup> Postan’s *Personal Observations on Sindh*, p. 286.

tions were therefore opened with Fatch Ali Khan, the founder of the Talpur house, through Abdul Hassan, a native agent deputed for the purpose. Fatch Ali and other Amirs gave every assurance of help and encouragement, and consequently Mr. Nathan Crow of the Bombay Civil Service arrived in Sindh with full powers to further the Company's commercial and political interests in that country.

#### MR. CROW EXPELLED BY THE TALPURAS IN 1800

But the influence of Tippu Sultan and the jealousy of local traders, aided by the anti-British party at Hyderabad (Sindh), overcame the favourable inclination of the ruling Talpur Prince and, in 1800, Mr. Crow was peremptorily ordered to quit the country within ten days. The reason given by the Amir for this procedure was an order from Zaman Shah, which may also be true.<sup>12</sup> Mr. Crow left Sindh and the British Government quietly pocketed the insult.<sup>13</sup>

#### THE FIRST TREATY

In June 1807, Napoleon concluded the alliance of Tilsit with Alexander I of Russia, one of the details of which was a combined invasion of India by the land route. From that year may be dated the bogey of Russian advance which kept exercising the minds of British statesmen throughout the nineteenth century. In Sir MacMunn's words 'from that day the bear has always cast his shadow forward on the borders of India.'

To provide against this fresh danger, it was thought necessary to have a barrier between British India and Russia. The conception of such a barrier took the form of an outer and an inner layer of states. The inner layer were to be Lahore, Bahawalpur and Sindh, the outer layer, Kabul, Herat and Persia. Accordingly, three missions, namely that of Metcalfe to Lahore, Elphinstone to Kabul and Malcolm to Tehran were

<sup>12</sup> Zaman Shah, who considered the Sindh Amirs as his tributaries, was suspicious of English designs.

<sup>13</sup> Napier's *Conquest of Sindh*, p. 38, also Postan's *op. cit.*, p. 290.

sent by Lord Minto to arrange alliances. Sindh was not forgotten either, and a Mr. Hankey Smith was sent to arrange a defensive agreement with the Amirs. Mr. Smith had a difficult task, for the Amirs assumed a very haughty tone, being encouraged by the previous attitude of the English in suffering quietly the insult to Mr. Crow in 1800. But in the end they entered into a treaty, which is the first regular treaty with Sindh.<sup>14</sup> It was a very brief agreement consisting of only four articles. It began with the usual professions of eternal friendship and stipulated for the exclusion of the "tribe"<sup>15</sup> of the French from Sindh, and the despatch of agents to each other's court.

This treaty was renewed in 1820 with the addition of some new articles which excluded the Americans<sup>16</sup> also and purported to decide some border disputes on the side of Cutch, for the British Frontier, after the final defeat of the Maratha Confederacy in 1818, touched on Sindh. The Amirs engaged to restrain the Khosas and other predatory tribes from making inroads into Cutch. The Khosas, however, were not restrained till 1825, when the British assembled a force for demonstration in Cutch and this had the desired effect. It may, however, be noted that this second treaty with the Amirs could only be enforced by a show of force.

#### RANJIT SINGH AND SINDH

Apart from this the interest of the British Government in Sindh during the twenties of the last century was mainly confined to watching and ascertaining the activities and designs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh towards that valley. Ranjit

<sup>14</sup> For full terms see Appendix III, p. 65.

<sup>15</sup> The word "tribe" is used for the French probably to show contempt for them, or to impress upon the Sindhian Amirs that the French are a backward tribal people and therefore undesirable.

<sup>16</sup> Why the Americans should have been excluded is not quite clear. Two probable explanations are: (i) Between 1809 (the date of the First treaty) and 1820, there had been a war between England and America (1812—14); and (ii) Many deserters from the English army in India were in the habit of calling themselves Americans in order to hide their identity. Perhaps it was intended to prevent this kind of subterfuge. See Appendix IV, p. 66.

Singh established his first regular contact with that country soon after his conquest of Multan in 1818.<sup>17</sup> In the beginning there were no regular Vakils of either power representing their courts, but there existed an annual interchange of presents and civilities between the Amirs and Ranjit Singh through specially deputed envoys.<sup>18</sup> In 1823, the Maharaja with a large force marched down the side of the Indus from Bakhar, deputing a portion for collecting tribute from Tank and Bannu. He himself reached as far down as Sultan Shahr from where he sent Allard and Ventura to Mithankote. The Amirs, alarmed at his progress, sent envoys who accompanied the Maharaja to Lahore. Since that time it became a point of anxious concern with the Amirs to cultivate the friendship of the Maharaja, and a regular communication ensued between Lahore and Sindh.<sup>19</sup>

In the same year (1823), following an adverse decision of the British Government with regard to the Wadni case, Ranjit Singh began to make extensive military preparations and concentrated his forces around Lahore. It was suspected that he entertained hostile designs against the British Government, but Captain Wade (who had succeeded to the office of British Agent at Ludhiana in June of that year) was of opinion that his real object was the conquest of the upper provinces of Sindh and Shikarpur.

The Maharaja's military preparations continued during the years 1824 and 1825 under the guidance of his newly employed French officers. The object of the contemplated expedition was given out to be the punishment of the Bilochees who had

<sup>17</sup> By 1820, Ranjit Singh had established his authority in the Punjab and had reached its geographical boundaries. Kashmir in the north, and Multan and the Derajat in the west had been conquered. In the south-east Sulej had been his boundary according to the Treaty of Amritsar since 1809. In the north-east the hill chiefs had been humbled and subjugated. Sindh was the only direction in which the territories of the ambitious Sikh monarch could possibly be extended.

<sup>18</sup> Wade to Colebrook, August 11, 1828, Book 96, Letter 113 (96/113), Punjab Government Records.

<sup>19</sup> Wade to Elliott, 24th August, 1823 94/15 and Wade to Colebrook, August 11, 1928, 96/113.



attacked the Sikh troops near Multan.<sup>20</sup> In 1825 the Maharaja's forces marched towards the Chenab with the design of seizing Shikarpur, but the occurrence of a scarcity in Sindh induced him to return to Lahore by the end of that year.<sup>21</sup>

All these movements were carefully watched without any definite idea of what policy the British Government itself was going to follow towards Sindh. The decade from 1820 to 1830 was, with one minor exception in 1825, marked by what may be called *non-interference, coupled with keen watchfulness*. From 1825, when Ranjit Singh's army was well organised, until the early years of Lord William Bentinck's period when the British Government changed its policy of non-interference and developed further interest in Sindh in the pursuit of peaceful commercial projects, Ranjit Singh could have attacked Sindh, and probably seized a portion of that country without inviting even a British protest, let alone British interference. In fact the British were not at this time 'interested' in Sindh. Ranjit Singh, realising this, made plans for attacking Sindh, by providing himself with an excuse in 1826, when he demanded from the Envoys of the Amirs at his court the tribute which the latter had been paying to the Afghan Government. His argument was that since the dismemberment of the Kingdom of Kabul he had acquired the greatest share of it and had succeeded to its rights. This claim is practically similar to the one previously asserted by the British in the case of the cis-Sutlej territory when they declared themselves the successors of the Marathas.<sup>22</sup> The Envoys of Sindh

<sup>20</sup> Wade to Elliot, 7th August, 1823, 94/11.

Apart from extending his boundaries, Ranjit Singh, perhaps, wanted gradually to feel his way to the sea coast. This is suggested by Captain Wade, who was a very accurate judge where Ranjit Singh was concerned. He wrote, "It is the Raja's design to extend his power to that part of India with a view (perhaps it is hardly chimerical to suppose) of attempting to secure a maritime intercourse in that direction." See Wade's letter, dated 11th September, 1823. No other writer, however, has attributed such a design to Ranjit Singh.

<sup>21</sup> *Vide* Cunningham, Chap. VII, p. 194 (first edition).

<sup>22</sup> *Vide* Metcalfe's correspondence, B-5, L-35, dated 12th December, 1808, P. G. R.

"By the issue of a war with the Marhattas, the British Government became possessed of the power and rights formerly exercised by that

Amirs disputed the claim of Ranjit Singh who did not press it any further<sup>23</sup> because of the new danger which, just at this time, appeared in the direction of Peshawar. A formidable foe of the Sikhs, the fanatic Syed Ahmad, offered armed opposition and engaged the whole attention of the Sikh ruler for several years. Thus, though the Syed was finally defeated and killed by Kanwar Sher Singh in 1831, he had indirectly saved Sindh from falling into the hands of the 'infidels.' In 1831, when his hands were free, the Maharaja found that a change had come over his English allies in their attitude towards Sindh. This, among other matters, led him to suspend his contemplated measures further for a period of three or four years.

Let us now briefly examine the circumstances that were changing the policy of the British Government and inducing them to be prepared to interfere in the affairs of the countries on and beyond the Indus.

#### TREATY OF TEHRAN, 1812

The decay of Turkish power in the eighteenth century had laid Persia open to Russian attack. In 1812 the Persians had sought and obtained the alliance of the British Government after having been disappointed by Napoleon who, in spite of the Treaty of Finkenstein (1807) in which he had guaranteed the integrity of Persia, had even refused to mediate for the Shah. In 1826, there was war between the Persians and Russians and the former, remembering they had a treaty with the British, appealed for help. Lord Canning, the then British Foreign Secretary who was co-operating with the Russians over the Greek question, could not go to war with them in support of the Persian alliance from which he therefore obtained release by paying the Shah a moderate subsidy. The Persians were defeated by the Russians to whom some territory had to be ceded in 1828. From this date the Persians began to lean towards an alliance with Russia. Wishing to push still more eastwards the Russians advised and

nation in the North of Hindustan" (Metcalfe's note to Ranjit Singh).

<sup>23</sup> Wade to Prinsep, 137-8, P. G. R.

encouraged the Persians to expand in that direction. Herein lay a great danger for the British. To counteract and check the influence of Russia through Persia in the countries to the east of the latter country was considered essential for maintaining the stability of the British power in India. It was therefore decided to acquire some knowledge of the possibilities of military movements through these countries and to learn the geographical conditions of the continental approach to India. Though outwardly nothing definite had been said or done about the matter, yet there grew a general belief among the people that the British Government was interested in the countries beyond the Indus. In 1831, Lord Allenborough, the President of the Board of Control, actually decided to send Lieutenant Alexander Burnes<sup>24</sup> out to India with a view to explore the possibilities of navigation of the river Indus for purposes of commercial intercourse between Northern India and Britain. From Lahore he was again, in his private capacity, though with the full approval and financial assistance of Government, to proceed to Kabul and Bokhara. A pretence for going up the Indus was found in the fact that King William IV had sent some dray-horses for Ranjit Singh and they had to be conveyed to Lahore by water.<sup>25</sup> The real purpose was the collection of political and geographical information.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Lt. A. Burnes was the Assistant to Col. Pottinger, who was in Political charge of Kuchh and of the British relations with Sindh. He had been in the Quarter Master General's Department and was thus eminently qualified for the purpose. He was accompanied by Ensign Leckie, who was to take charge in case of anything happening to Lt. Burnes. No troops were sent so as not to alarm the Amirs of Sindh. *Prinsep*, p. 154.

<sup>25</sup> The presents consisted of one dray horse, four dray mares, and a carriage added to the presents at Bombay. Prinsep to Resident at Delhi January 5, 1831. B. 115, L. 111, P. G. R.

<sup>26</sup> "The authorities both in India and England contemplated that much information of a political and geographical nature could be acquired in such a journey." Burnes' *Travels*, p. 1. Compare also Murray's Report compiled by Prinsep, p. 153. Lieutenant Burnes was given his final instructions in a secret letter from the Chief Secretary at Bombay in which he was informed that "the depth of water in the Indus, the direction and breadth of the stream, its facilities for steam navigation, the supply of fuel on its banks, and the condition of the princes and people who pos-

The journey of Burnes aroused natural suspicions in the minds of the Amirs who put every obstacle in his way. Burnes reached Mandavi on the 18th of January 1831. From here the expedition finally sailed for the Indus, and got into Sindh in five days. Here he met with such uncivil treatment from the local authorities that he was obliged to come back.<sup>27</sup> He started a second time on February 10, but his fleet was dispersed by a violent gale, and two of his four boats receded to Mandavi. The Amirs had been earnestly requested by the Bombay Government and by the Resident in Bhoj to give Burnes and party a safe escort through their territories, and it was not expected that 'so moderate a request' will be refused, especially when they had been informed that there was not a single armed man with the mission.<sup>28</sup> But the Amirs were very suspicious, and considered in their ignorant way that the large cases with Burnes contained 'some mysterious power which was to overturn all opposition and take the country by force whenever required.'<sup>29</sup> They, however, put forth a very plausible excuse. They dilated upon the difficulty of the navigation and of the distracted state of the country between Sindh and Lahore, and finally refused a passage. As a result, Col. Pottinger opened a correspondence with the Amirs on February 23, and tried to overcome their repugnance to Burnes' mission. The task was, however, not so easy and nothing was decided until the first week of March. It was even suggested that the horses might be despatched next cold weather by land.

Captain Wade was asked to explain the delay to Ranjit Singh as best he could.<sup>30</sup> When the Maharaja learnt it he remonstrated with the Sindhian Amirs,<sup>31</sup> who replied that the

sess the country bordering on it are all points of the highest interest to government." Burnes' *Travels*, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> P. G. R., B. 115 L. 106. From Pottinger, Resident in Bhoj to Prinsep, February 24, 1831. See also *Travels*, second edition. Chaps. I and II. Compare also *Murray*, pp. 155-157.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 115-106, P. G. R.

<sup>29</sup> Postan's *Observations on Sindh*, p. 298.

<sup>30</sup> Prinsep to Wade, 19th March 1831. Also Wade's *Narrative*, p. 71.

<sup>31</sup> The three principal chiefs of Sindh, namely the Amirs of Hyderabad, Khyrpur and Mirpur, all had one agent each attending the Court of

object of Burnes' mission as given out was a mere pretext, that the carriage which he was bringing was full of gold Mohurs for the purpose of being given to Syed Ahmad, the Maharaja's enemy, and that the Amirs had decided to collect a lakh of men and dispute his passage.<sup>32</sup> This, however, failed to excite any suspicion in the Maharaja's mind. He ordered Mon. Ventura to make a demonstration from the frontier of Dera Ghazi Khan against the Amirs. It was chiefly due to this remonstrance that the Amirs were induced to allow Lt. Burnes to pass<sup>33</sup> and the horses reached Lahore on the 19th of July, in the same year. Ranjit Singh's action here seems to have been prompted by personal motives. The presents were meant for him, and it was as much his insult as that of the British Government if they were not allowed to reach him. Secondly, he probably feared that if the Amirs persisted in refusing a passage, the British might take offence, and forestall him by actively interfering in Sindh. He enquired of Jacquemont (the French traveller, who was then at his court), "It is said that the Sindhis have refused to allow Burnes to pass with the horses. If that is true what will the British do?"<sup>34</sup> Ranjit Singh was anxious to avert a breach between the two powers so that the field be kept clear for himself. As already remarked, his efforts were fruitful, as the Amirs, fearing to precipitate an invasion of their country by the Sikhs, allowed the mission to proceed up the river. Mir Murad Ali of Hyderabad explained to the Maharaja that he had stopped Burnes because in the treaty between his government and the British it had been stipulated that no European shall enter

Ranjit Singh. 137/12 Wade to Prinsep, 23rd May 1831.

<sup>32</sup> Wade to Prinsep, enclosure No. 1, 137/4 being a letter from Ranjit Singh to Lala Kishen Chand, his Agent at Ludhiana, P. G. R.

<sup>33</sup> Wade to Prinsep, 21st May 1831, 137/10, P. G. R. Prinsep suggests that it was a strong letter of Pottinger that induced them to allow Burnes to pass. P. 156. But I think it was the result of Ventura's demonstration. Nothing else can explain the sudden change in the attitude of the Amirs and the cordial reception of Burnes at the Durbar of Hyderabad. After this demonstration he was given all facilities, and met with absolutely no difficulties. See Burnes' *Travels*, Wade's letter quoted above and *Prinsep*, p. 156.

<sup>34</sup> *Vide Social and Political Hindustan*, Part I, Section 1; Monograph No. 18, Punjab Government Record Office Publication.

the Sindhian territory and no Bilochi should enter the territory of the British, that Burnes came from Bhoj by sea without permission and was therefore stopped and that later when it was learnt that he was the bearer of some letters and presents for the Maharaja, he was provided with all facilities and allowed to pass.<sup>35</sup> Burnes had no further difficulties and was very well received at Bahawalpur and other places in the territories of the Sikhs and the Nawab.<sup>36</sup>

Burnes thus reached Lahore and the Indus was explored. But, to quote from Major William Napier, "it is remarkable that the strong natural sense of two ignorant men should have led them separately to predict the ultimate consequences.

'The mischief is done, you have seen our country,' cried a rude Bilochi soldier when Burnes first entered the river.

'Alas! Sindh is now gone, since the English have seen the river, which is the high road to its conquest!' was the prescient observation of a Syed near Tatta.<sup>37</sup> Eleven years later the prophecy came true.

As already mentioned, Ranjit Singh was, just at this time, anxious to know the intentions of the British Government regarding Sindh and Burnes' mission, in spite of its friendly character, could not have failed to arouse his suspicion.<sup>38</sup> He had already asked Jacquemont regarding the views of the British Government towards that country and when Wade visited him at Adinanagar the same year, he tried to

<sup>35</sup> L. 12 being translation of a letter sent by Amir Murad Ali of Hyderabad to Darvesh Mohammad Khan, his Agent with Ranjit Singh, P. G. R., B. 137.

<sup>36</sup> 115/85, Burnes to Resident Delhi, 6th June, 1831, reports the hospitable reception by the Nawab and writes, "His liberality has amounted to munificence and his hospitality quite exceeds all bounds."

<sup>37</sup> *Conquest of Sindh* by W. Napier, pp. 38-39. Compare also Burnes *Travels*.

<sup>38</sup> Capt. Wade, however, wrote to Government that when the despatch of the mission through the Indus was announced, the Maharaja betrayed no feelings of jealousy, notwithstanding the fact that any attempt made by that route militated against his own interests. 137/125, Wade to Prinsep, September 1, 1831, P. G. R.

elicit information from him also. While both drank together, the Maharaja recalled what he had asked Sir David Ochterlony, *viz.*, whether the Company was anxious to extend its territory and his reply "No, the Company is satiated." He inquired of Wade whether that was still the case?<sup>39</sup>

By the defeat and death of Syed Ahmad, Ranjit Singh's hands were now free and it was expected that, with a large and disposable army impatient of repose, it would not be long before he directed their operations to a new quarter.<sup>40</sup> From Peshawar along the right bank of the Indus to the frontier of Sindh the country was already subjected to his power. Westward to that line of territory the poverty of the country and the hardy character of the inhabitants offered no temptation, and it was only in the direction of Shikarpur that he was likely to lead his troops.<sup>41</sup> He had frankly confessed that he had no love for mere territory if the acquisition of it did not bring him wealth. In 1830, he had said to Jacquemont, 'What would be the good of my taking Tibet? It is rich countries that I want; could I not take Sindh, it is said to be very rich? But what would the British say?'<sup>42</sup> After the defeat of Syed Ahmad, the subject was uppermost in his mind. In October of 1831, he seems to have made some proposal, or hinted at a joint British and Sikh expedition against Sindh, for on the 19th of that month Captain Wade, the British Political Agent, who was escorting the Maharaja from Amritsar to Ropar, and in whom the Maharaja placed the utmost confidence, wrote to his Government from Amritsar that, before any negotiations were started with Sindh, it would be desirable to secure the co-operation of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who exercised great influence in the Courts of the Amirs and who was desirous of acting in concert with the British Government.<sup>43</sup> Then again, in the meeting at Ropar, the Maharaja definitely proposed that the British should join him in a common expedition against the Sindhians<sup>44</sup> much in the same way that the Russian Czar

<sup>39</sup> Wade to Prinsep, 137/13, 25th May 1831, P. G. R.

<sup>40</sup> 137/8 Wade to Prinsep, P. G. R.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Jacquemont part I, Section I. Monograph No. 18, P. G. R.

<sup>43</sup> 137/34 19th October, 1831. Wade to Prinsep, P. G. R.

<sup>44</sup> *Hugel*, p. 408.

proposed to England the partition of the Ottoman Empire nine years later. Failing this, he sought their neutrality in case he attacked the Amirs, who had detained Burnes. No definite answer was given to him except that he could remonstrate with the agents of Sindh Amirs who were then present in his camp. No notice was taken by the Governor-General of the hints he gave of the riches, the weakness and the insolence of the Amirs.<sup>45</sup>

#### OPENING OF THE NAVIGATION OF THE INDUS AND THE SUTLEJ

Ranjit Singh's proposals for being allowed to extend his influence towards Sindh were naturally bound to be received with indifference for the British Government had views of its own in that direction. Not that the British Government's immediate object was the conquest of Sindh, but as a consequence of the reports which Burnes drew up of the Indus and the surrounding countries, it was decided to open that river and the Sutlej to commercial navigation. It was considered that Indus, in the possession of the Amirs, offered every facility which could be desired for transporting the commerce coming from the sea as well as from the great land route to Shikarpur which was then the great emporium of the Western trade, and through which also (*via* Kandhar), one of the principal routes is to be found for an invasion of India.<sup>46</sup>

That the motive of the British Government was not purely commercial is evidenced from the following extract from a letter of Government to Lt.-Col. Pottinger, the Resident in Cutch. This extract also shows that the fear of Russian influence did not originate altogether from Calcutta, but was partly inspired from London: "The Secret Committee of the Court of Directors have expressed great anxiety to obtain the

<sup>45</sup> *Hugel*. Compare also Murray's *Ranjit Singh*, p. 167 :—

"He then made allusions to the Meers having sent back Lt. Burnes and to their general character for haughtiness. It appeared evident that the Maharaja had learned or at least suspected that the British Government had some further views in respect to Sindh; also that nothing would be more gratifying to him than to be invited to co-operate in an attack upon that state."

<sup>46</sup> 98, 181, P. G. R.



free navigation of the Indus with a view to the advantages that must result from *substituting our influence for that derived by Russia* through her commercial intercourse with Bokhara and the countries lying between Hindustan and the Caspian Sea, as well as because of the great facilities afforded by this river for the disposal of the produce and manufacture of the British Dominions both in Europe and in India.”<sup>47</sup>

One of the motives was, therefore, clearly that of “substituting our influence for that derived by Russia.” Ranjit Singh, however, was not to be told about this, and a little later Captain Wade was directed by the Governor-General to remove from the Maharaja’s mind “any suspicion that the British Government under the cloak of commercial objects was desirous of extending its influence.”<sup>48</sup>

It is a significant fact that the above letter to Pottinger, ordering him to open negotiations with the Sindh Amirs, was written from Ropar, where the Maharaja was going to meet the Governor-General and to make a proposal for a joint expedition against that country. The Maharaja was evidently too late, for during the period that he was occupied with Syed Ahmad, the views of the British Government had changed, and they were now ‘interested’ in Sindh. It was recognised by the Governor-General that this scheme would be viewed with disfavour by Ranjit Singh “inasmuch as he may think that it will connect our interests and power with those of Sindh and thus create an obstacle to his designs of future aggression upon the Amirs, a design which he frankly acknowledge to Lt. Burnes.”<sup>49</sup> At the same time, it is just probable that Ranjit Singh’s own keenness with regard to Sindh might have precipitated the British decision to

<sup>47</sup> 98/181, Government to Pottinger, P. G. R.

<sup>48</sup> G. G. to the Court of Directors, 2nd July, 1832. Quoted in appendix to Wade’s *Narrative of Services*. Compare also Prinsep’s *Ranjit Singh*, p. 168:—

“It was not thought advisable to make any communication yet to the ruler of Lahore; for it was conceived that if made aware of the intentions of the British Government, he might, with every profession of a desire to forward them, continue by intrigue and secret working to counteract the negotiations.”

<sup>49</sup> 98/181, Government to Pottinger, P. G. R.

negotiate with the Amirs for opening up the navigation of the Indus.

The Government's argument in their letter to Lt.-Col. Pottinger may be summed up as follows :—

“ Lt. Burnes finds the Indus very much suitable for commercial navigation. The causes of the departure of commerce from the Indus and its tributaries are, therefore, political. These obstacles can be removed through the mediation of the British Government. The Indus from the ocean to its point of junction with the united stream of the Punjab rivers runs exclusively within the territories of (1) Amir Murad Ali Khan (the last survivor of the *Char Yar*) having his capital at Hyderabad and (2) Rustum Ali Khan, the second in rank and having his capital at Khyrpur (north of Hyderabad) possessing both banks from Shwan to northern extremity of Sindh. The Indus north of this point together with the rivers of the Punjab excepting the Sutlej was, with the intervention of a small tract, in the possession of the Daud-potras (of Bahawalpur) and governed by Bahawal Khan under the dominion of Ranjit Singh. Of the Sutlej Ranjit Singh held the right bank, and the left was occupied by the British, the Nawab of Bahawalpur and the Protected Sikh States. No difficulty was expected either from Ranjit Singh or Bahawal Khan or the Protected States with regard to Indus and Sutlej running through their respective territories. The greatest difficulty was with regard to Sindh. And here, too, the difficulty lay only with one of the Amirs, namely with Amir Murad Ali of Hyderabad. The Amir of Khyrpur was, according to Burnes, very friendly and was expected to agree at once. The Mir of Mirpur (lying towards Kachh whose territory, however, did not border on the Indus) had also expressed a desire to place himself under the British protection. Both these Amirs were afraid of Ranjit's encroachments and wished to be protected by the British Government.<sup>50</sup> Lord William

“ At this time Ventura resumed every place west of the Indus hitherto farmed by Bahawal Khan from Ranjit Singh, thus bringing the Maharaja's direct authority in immediate contact with the territory of Mir Rustum Khan of Khyrpur and making him still more desirous of

Bentinck, however, refused protection.<sup>51</sup> At the same time the Amir of Hyderabad who controlled the mouths of the Indus was rather difficult. He was, at this time, negotiating for the marriage of his son with a Princess of Persia and thought much of himself. The British Indian Government felt that this matrimonial alliance might have been suggested by Russia "with a view to a future political alliance and to the establishment of an immediate relationship through Persia with an Indian State by means of which, whether for intrigue or for actual attack, a ready access would be afforded to our Indian Empire."<sup>52</sup> But Mr. Campbell, the British Envoy at Tehran, did not agree with this view, for he felt that the Shah of Persia will never "under any pretext or consideration lend himself to further the designs of that power (*i.e.*, Russia) for whom he entertains a just and deep-rooted hatred."<sup>53</sup>

The prince royal of Persia who was then overrunning Khurasan and whose movements were causing alarm to the Government of India was no doubt doing so under the guidance of Russia, but his real object was, first, to write off the payment of the last instalment of one crore of the indemnity by manifesting a compliance with the desire of the Autocrat who had promised to forego that sum if the Prince Royal acted as desired by Russia, and secondly, to establish his (Prince Royal's) own authority over Khurasan as soon as the first object was gained rather than to allow Russia to extend its influence.<sup>54</sup>

Mr. Campbell was, however, quite convinced that it is in the interests of the British Government to avert an alliance between Persia and Sindh, "since the Amir can by such an alliance only seek to protect himself against us, and

forming an alliance with British Government. P. G. R. 137/32, Wade to Prinsep. Compare also Murray's *Ranjit Singh*, p. 137. The Amir sent a letter to the G. G. through Burnes.

<sup>51</sup> See Wade's *Narrative*, p. 35. The request was conveyed through Capt. Burnes.

<sup>52</sup> Governor-General to Pottinger—*Op. Cit.* 98 181, P. G. R.

<sup>53</sup> The Envoy in Persia to Government of India, 4th December 116/13, P. G. R.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

may at some future period solicit the interference of Persia in any measure that unforeseen events may compel us to adopt in regard to Sindh,"<sup>55</sup>

The negotiation entrusted to Pottinger was, therefore, virtually confined to the Amir of Hyderabad who was supposed to consider his security as better effected by the exclusion of all foreigners from his territory and was therefore expected to reject the proposition for the navigation of the Indus. The question then would arise (in the words of the despatch to Pottinger) "whether he or any other state possessing only a portion of a stream has a right, either by prohibition or, what is tantamount to it, by the imposition of excessive duties, or by a connivance at a system of plunder by his subjects on the trader, to deprive all other people and states of an advantage which nature has given to all." And, again, "Has this Chief alone the right to seal hermetically its (Indus') mouths, to arrogate the sole and exclusive dominion of its navigation and to deny the right of an innocent use and passage of this great natural channel of commercial intercourse." In this respect the principles of International Law must be explained to the Amir. The following passage taken from *Vattel* (P. 120 S. 292) upon the right to passage through straits connecting two seas was quoted in the letter for the Resident's guidance :

"It must be remembered with regard to the straits that when they serve for a communication between two seas, the navigation of which is common to all or to many nations, he who possesses the strait cannot refuse others a passage through it, provided that passage be innocent and attended with no danger to the state. Such a refusal without just reason would deprive these nations of an advantage granted them by nature ; and indeed the right of passage is a reminder of the primitive liberty enjoyed in common. Nothing but the care of his own safety can authorize the master of the strait to make use of certain precautions and to require the formalities commonly established by the custom of nations. He has a right to levy small duties on vessels that

<sup>55</sup> The Envoy in Persia to Government of India, 4th December, 116/13, P.G.R.

pass, on account of the inconvenience they give him by obliging him to be on his guard, by the security provided them in protecting them from the enemies and keeping pirates at a distance, and the expense he is at in maintaining lighthouses, sea marks and other things necessary to the safety of the mariners..." In addition to the principles and practice of international law, Pottinger was instructed to explain to the Amir, the benefits he would derive by an increase of trade in his country. If all these representations and arguments fall on deaf ears, Pottinger was authorised to declare "strongly and decidedly" the right possessed by the British Government and by all other states situated and bordering upon the many streams which concentrated in the Indus. But "nothing like menace" was to accompany this declaration.

If, instead of accepting the just demand, the Amir puts some conditions for its acceptance, *e.g.*, the acknowledgment of Hyderabad as an independent state or a defensive alliance against Ranjit Singh and the Afghans or perhaps an annual pecuniary payment, he should be told that "when 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>56</sup>

There is no doubt that a natural right existed and, in 1831, no one would have denied the justice of the British Government's claims. But the Amirs had always been suspicious, and with that peculiar instinct which characterises human beings even in the lower grade of civilisation, they had foreseen that the independence of their country was gone since the English had seen the river. The English were now demanding use of the Indus for commercial purposes. Who could say that they would not begin to use it for military purposes?<sup>57</sup> Two hundred years back they had come to India as mere traders with absolutely no intention of conquering

<sup>56</sup> All the above observations are from Government's letter to Pottinger, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>57</sup> Prinsep also admits that "the object of entering upon this negotiation, at the particular juncture was perhaps in some measure political, having reference to the necessity of being prepared against the possibility of designs on the part of Russia, should she succeed in establishing her influence in Persia." *Ranjit Singh*, p. 168.

lands, but they were now masters from Fort William to the banks of the Jamna. Nearer home they were touching the Sindh frontier on more than one side. The approach of the inevitable John Bull was already casting its shadow on Northern India, and they feared that Sindh might fall under its sway at any time.

Pottinger went to Sindh and started his negotiations. The Amirs, who were suspicious of his ulterior designs, began to invite Shah Shuja who was then at Ludhiana, negotiating with Ranjit Singh for help, to recover his long lost kingdom. They also sent letters to the Barakzai brothers of Kabul intimating their willingness to pay all arrears of tribute if they would only avert the threatened invasion of the English.<sup>58</sup>

The Maharaja came back from the Ropar meeting quite satisfied in other respects but disappointed in the matter of Sindh. Soon afterwards Capt. Wade was ordered to go to Lahore and to explain the objects which the Governor-General had in view in deputing Pottinger to Sindh. He was to "remove from the Maharaja's mind any suspicions that the British Government under the cloak of commercial objects is desirous of extending its influence and prosecuting views different from those stated in the letter of the Governor-General to His Highness's address."<sup>59</sup> The letter to Ranjit Singh gave the following objects for the new scheme: <sup>60</sup>

1. A desire on the part of the Governor-General to promote the interests of the Maharaja by an 'improvement of the means of intercourse between His Highness's territories and those of the British Government by the route of the Indus.'

2. To make the rivers Indus and Sutlej a channel for commerce thus making the Punjab as accessible to the merchants and travellers of Southern India and other countries as if it were situated on the sea-shore.

Ranjit Singh was not satisfied. He felt that if an active commercial intercourse was established on the Indus, he might be required to give up his designs towards Shikarpur. He main-

<sup>58</sup> Mackeson to Wade, 105.

<sup>59</sup> 115/102, Prinsep to Wade, December 19, 1831.

<sup>60</sup> Enclosure to 115/102 *Op. Cū.*, being translation of a letter from the G. G. to Ranjit Singh.

tained that according to the relations subsisting between the two powers (based on the Treaty of Amritsar, 1809) he could only be checked on the left bank of the Sutlej, and that river according to him, ended at the place where it merged into the Indus. Therefore Shikarpur, or any other portion of Sindh for the matter of that, was not comprehended by the terms of the treaty. Early in 1832, he therefore wrote back in answer to the Governor-General's letters that he was willing to co-operate in the opening of the navigation of the Indus, but he hoped that nothing will be done to disturb the treaty.<sup>61</sup> He did not say it in so many words but what he clearly seems to have meant was simply this that he shall not be required to enter into any fresh stipulation tending to take away from him the right which he had under the treaty of 1809, to do as he pleased in territories other than those situated on the left bank of the Sutlej. But Captain Wade who was sent to reassure him was able to set his doubts at rest and after some further negotiations, wherein he (Ranjit Singh) showed some anxiety to be assured of the advantages which the Lahore State would derive from an opening of the rivers to navigation<sup>62</sup> he entered into what is termed the "Indus Navigation Treaty of 1832."<sup>63</sup>

The Nawab of Bahawalpur, to whom also Wade had been sent to approach personally, agreed to the opening of the navigation of the Sutlej and wished the matter to be settled by a treaty, which<sup>64</sup> was concluded soon afterwards.<sup>65</sup>

In Sindh Lt.-Col. Pottinger ultimately met with success.<sup>66</sup> He had sent intimation to the Amirs that he had been commissioned by the Governor-General to negotiate with them on important matters and had asked for permission to proceed to Hyderabad for the purpose. This having been granted he had

<sup>61</sup> 138/4 Undated, being translation of a letter from Ranjit Singh to the G. G., P. G. R.

<sup>62</sup> Wade to Macnaughten, 23rd July 1832, 138/32, P.G.R.

<sup>63</sup> See Treaty in Appendix.

<sup>64</sup> Wade to Macnaughten, August 1832, 138/37; also Macnaughten to Wade, 19th September, 1832, 116/28.

<sup>65</sup> See 105/17, July 14th, 1833, Mackeson to Wade and 139/10, Wade to Government, dated 25th February, 1833.

<sup>66</sup> Macnaughten to Wade, 6th May, 1832, 116/8.

arrived at that place in February 1832, and immediately opened negotiations and declared his purpose. After protracted negotiations separate treaties were concluded with both the Amirs of Hyderabad and Khyrpur in April, 1832. These treaties consisted of seven and four articles, respectively, the Amirs agreeing to allow the use of the Indus and the roads of Sindh to the merchants of Hindustan. The most important article was No. 3 of the Treaty with Hyderabad (which also applied to Khyrpur), in which were set down the three conditions on which the Amirs agreed to allow the use of the river and roads of their country.<sup>65</sup>

The three conditions agreed upon were :

- (i) That no person shall bring any description of military stores by the above river or roads,
- (ii) that no armed vessel or boats shall come by the said river ; and
- (iii) that no English merchant shall settle in Sindh.<sup>66</sup>

The arrangements as finally settled were as follows :

The lower part of the Indus and the whole of the Sutlej were thrown open to commercial navigation. A British Agent to watch over the trade of these two rivers was stationed at Mithankote on account of its nearness to that spot at which the territories of Sindh, Punjab and Bahawalpur coincided and the united rivers of the Punjab joined the Indus. The idea of imposing a tariff on goods was abandoned and a fixed toll of so much per boat, whatever the nature of its cargo, was decided upon. From the Himalayas, or more strictly from Ropar to the sea the toll was fixed at Rs. 570 per boat.

The toll was calculated at Rs. 19 per Kharrar and all the boats were to be considered of 30 Kharrars each, thus doing away with all disputes regarding their size, etc.<sup>67</sup> The shares of the various states were fixed as follows :—

1. The Sindh Amirs	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
(a) Mir of Hyderabad	...	160	0	0;	240	0 0
(b) Mir of Khyrpur	...	80	0	0;		

<sup>65</sup> This, it may be remembered, was the article which Lord Auckland ignored in 1838.

<sup>66</sup> See Treaty Appendix VI, p. 68.

<sup>67</sup> Pottinger to Trevelyan, 14th May, 1834, 105.42, P.G.R.



	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
2. The Lahore State						
(a) For territories on the right bank of the Sutlej	...	154	4	0		
(b) For territories on the left bank of the Sutlej	...	39	5	1		
Total share of Lahore State	...	193	9	1		
3. The British Government and Bahawal- khan	...	...	...	136	6	11
				<hr/>		
Total	...	570	0	0		

The toll was to be levied at three places only, *viz.*, the mouth of the Indus, Mithankote, and Harike near Ferozepur. At each of these three places, a British Agent, though not necessarily a European, except at Mithankote, was stationed to keep a watch over the trade.<sup>70</sup> Arrangements were made to suppress the predatory habits of the tribes living on the banks of the Sutlej especially near Pakpattan,<sup>71</sup> and the right of searching boats on intermediate ghats was not recognised, although the Nawab of Bahawalpur continued to urge it for some time.<sup>72</sup> The inland duties on cargo that disembarked on any intermediate ghats were left to the discretion of the authorities of the state to which the cargo went for sale. The trade on the Indus and the Sutlej was thus started, though it never proved very flourishing.

Under these circumstances Ranjit Singh gave up, for the time being, his project to seize Shikarpur as it would disturb the trade and annoy the British but he did not conceal from Captain Wade the opinion that the commercial measures of the English had really abridged his political power.

<sup>70</sup> At Mithankote Lt. Mackneson was stationed. The Court of Directors approved of these arrangements. See Ct. of Directors to G. G., 20th September, 1837.

<sup>71</sup> Book 99, Letter 12, P.G.R.

<sup>72</sup> Mackenson to Wade 14th July, 1833, 105/17, P. G. R.

## CHAPTER II

**MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH**, as we have seen, had for a long time been casting greedy eyes on Shikarpur. The commercial schemes of Lord William Bentinck and the insurrection of Syed Ahmad had induced him to postpone his designs towards that country. After the defeat of Syed Ahmad his hands were free and he grew still more eager to extend his influence in that direction. In 1833, the matter was precipitated by Shah Shuja who set out from Ludhiana towards Shikarpur to make yet another attempt to win his throne of Kabul. While Shah Shuja was on the way to Shikarpur Ranjit Singh thought of forestalling him there and, accordingly, his Vakil even hinted it to Mr. Fraser, the British Resident at Delhi. The British Government's reply was that "to advance upon Shikarpur, 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>1</sup>

### WILLIAM BENTINCK'S VIEWS REGARDING SINDH

The British authorities themselves, under Lord William Bentinck, were not willing to adopt any active political measures with regard to Sindh. The Governor-General steadily pursued a policy of neutrality, though he quite realised that it might have to be reversed later on. This is quite clear from the following reply of the Supreme Government to W. Fraser, their Agent at Delhi, when the latter suggested the desirability of obtaining the cession of Bakhar on the Indus from the Amirs of Sindh through Shah Shuja : "However desirable it may be for us eventually to obtain a commanding position on the Indus, it would be premature at

<sup>1</sup> Enclosures in the letter of Macnaughten to Wade, 5th March 1833, B. 117, L. 3, P. G. R.

present to discuss the means of accomplishing that object.”<sup>2</sup> Although the Governor-General was not willing to interfere directly in the affairs of Sindh, he had indirectly interfered by licensing the direct passage of opium from Central India (where then, as now, certain states grew it largely) to Bombay, diverting it from Karachi. The British Government thus secured the profits which the Amirs of Sindh lost.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, he, in a vague manner, gave Ranjit Singh to understand that Sindh was to be considered a sort of British “sphere of influence.” This was an attitude which Ranjit Singh could not understand. To him it seemed that the British had no intention of seizing any part of Sindh; for if they had, that was the best time to do it. But if they had no designs of their own, why should they view his with an eye of disapprobation? And yet they had hinted to him that to advance upon Shikarpur merely because Shah Shuja had proceeded thither would not be consistent with principles of international conduct. Would it not be better to make more certain of the British attitude before taking any step?

#### THE SIKH MISSION OF 1834

He, therefore, decided to send a “friendly” mission to Calcutta, probably with a view to ascertain the real opinion of the British Government about his designs on Sindh.<sup>4</sup> Sirdar Gujjar Singh headed the mission, but he does not seem to have been much of a diplomat. Instead of interesting himself in his official task at Calcutta, he became infatuated with the charms of a European woman to an extent that he threatened to renounce the world and become a *fakir* for her sake.<sup>5</sup> He was, however, prevented from doing so by the

<sup>2</sup> Enclosures in the letter of Macnaughten to Wade, 5th March 1833, B. 117, L. 3, P.G.R. See Fraser's suggestion in his letter to Government, dated February 21, 1833 and Government's reply given as enclosures to Letter 3 of Book 117. P. G. R. In the reply Government's attitude towards Shah Shuja's enterprise is described as “strictly neutral.”

<sup>3</sup> Quoted from Demetrius C. Boulger's *Lord William Bentinck*, by Thompson and Garratt in their *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, p. 300.

<sup>4</sup> Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs*, p. 200.

<sup>5</sup> Wade to Government, B. 141, L. 65, P. G. R. Massey calls Gujjar

British authorities, and the mission returned to the Punjab in April 1836, after an absence of about a year and a half<sup>6</sup> without having accomplished the object.

Ranjit Singh now decided to take action regardless of what the British attitude would be. It was expedient, however, to find some excuse for his designs and the Bilochee freebooters called Mazaris provided him with one.<sup>7</sup>

#### THE MAZARIS

The Mazaris lived a few miles south-west of Mithankote, in the 'no man's land' between the Punjab and Sindh. Rojhan, their capital city, was the seat of their chief Behram Khan. They were a semi-barbaric people and lived in small huts made of reeds and covered with coarse blankets. Munshi Mohan Lal, who visited their country in the thirties of the last century, tells us in his delightful journal that the Mazaris had a 'multiplicity of wives' and among them a wife could be bought for about six rupees.<sup>8</sup> These freebooters would often make plundering raids into Ranjit's territory and then disappear into the territory of the Amirs of Sindh, whose subjects they were supposed to be. Ranjit Singh cited their depredations as a ground for punishing the Amirs who did not restrain their subjects from violating the Sikh frontier,<sup>9</sup> and for extending his authority over their country. Kanwar Naunihal Singh was ordered to proceed to Multan and from there to Mithankote and inform the rulers of Sindh that if they did not agree to pay the Maharaja the tribute which they used to pay to the Kings of Kabul, Shikarpur would be occupied.<sup>10</sup> The Amirs refused to pay.<sup>11</sup> The Sikhs occupied

Singh "the Black Sheep of the Majithia family." See *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 1890 edition.

<sup>6</sup> Wade to Government, April 4, 1836, 142/18, P. G. R. Also Macnaughten to Wade, August 10, 1835, 118/36, P. G. R.

<sup>7</sup> Wade to Government October 5, 1836, B. 142, L. 70, P. G. R.

<sup>8</sup> Munshi Mohan Lal's *M. S. Journal from Mithankote to Shikarpur*, in the Punjab Government Records, B. 107, pp. 79 to 84.

<sup>9</sup> Wade to Macnaughten, September 16, 1835, 141/84, P. G. R.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Wade to Government, 19th August, 1837, 142/58, P. G. R.

Rojhan, compelled the chief of the Mazari tribe to indemnify them for their losses and to promise better conduct in the future.<sup>12</sup> The Sikh troops then withdrew. But there were fresh aggressions on the part of the Mazaris, and the Sikh officers on the Mithankote frontier, again marched against them. The hostilities continued for a time. The Amirs sent envoys to Diwan Sawan Mal, the Governor of Multan, and engaged themselves to be answerable for any losses that the Sikhs might have sustained, provided they would withdraw to their own territory. But the Sindhian officers did not observe these terms faithfully and the encroachments of the Bilochee tribe on the Sikh frontier grew more frequent and daring.

In August, 1836, Captain Wade received intelligence from Lahore that the Maharaja was moving his troops towards Sindh.<sup>13</sup> He thought that the Maharaja was anxious to move his troops, even in that inclement season, because he was afraid of being thwarted in his projects by the invitation which the Amirs had lately sent to Shah Shuja and, therefore, wished to be there beforehand.<sup>14</sup> So the Maharaja's operations against the Mazaris began again and Diwan Sawan Mal captured Rojhan, the seat of Behram Khan, their Chief.<sup>15</sup>

The Maharaja was anxious to know whether his designs on Sindh were approved by the British Government or not. Some time back he had asked if he might be allowed to import firearms by way of the Indus when it was thrown open for navigation, and had received, through Captain Wade, a very spirited reply to the effect that the Governor-General in Council could never encourage any project which would virtually infringe the treaty (between Sindh and the British Government), one clause of which distinctly provided that the navigation of the river should not be used for the transit of fire-arms.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Wade to Government, 5th October, 1836, P. G. R.

<sup>13</sup> Wade to Government, 19th August, 1836, 142/58, P. G. R.

<sup>14</sup> Wade to Government, 19th August, 1836. Wade thought that various schemes had been set on foot by the Amirs to counteract the progress of Sikh power. Overtures were made even to Shah Zaman who was told that if he would go to them they would make him king.

<sup>15</sup> Wade to Government, 29th August, 1836, 142/59, P. G. R.

<sup>16</sup> Macnaghten to Wade, 2nd August, 1836, 107/8, P. G. R.

It is an irony of history that only two years later (*i.e.*, in 1838) the Governor-General bade Col. H. Pottinger, the Resident at Hyderabad, to inform the Sindh Amirs that the article in the treaty of 1832, "which forbade our using the Indus for the conveyance of military stores, must necessarily be suspended during the course of operations undertaken for the permanent establishment of security to all those who are a party to the treaty."<sup>17</sup> Ranjit Singh was to be further informed that the Amirs of Sindh were now on terms of friendship and good understanding with the British Government by whom they would invariably be treated with kindness and consideration, and that his designs on Sindh would endanger peace, which was necessary for the promotion of trade and the opening of the Indus to navigation.<sup>18</sup> The Maharaja's request was thus refused, and Captain Wade thought that if he had been allowed to import arms he would have considered the reply "tantamount to a licence to prosecute his designs on Shikarpur."<sup>19</sup>

The Maharaja next wrote to Captain Wade for a doctor who would in the first instance be employed on a campaign.<sup>20</sup> Wade thought that the Maharaja wished to make political use of the doctor whose presence would serve to show to his simple-minded neighbours that his intended expedition was approved by the British Government.<sup>21</sup> For his success it was necessary that Shah Shuja too should be prevented from being tempted to fish in troubled waters. As mentioned above, the Amirs had made overtures to him and to Shah Zaman offering them the kingship of Sindh. Ranjit went one better and offered to restore the Shah to the throne of Kabul on certain conditions.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Quoted from Captain L. J. Trotter's *Lord Auckland*, p. 76 (Rulers of India Series).

<sup>18</sup> Macnaughten to Wade, 2nd August, 1836, 142/54, P. G. R.

<sup>19</sup> Wade to Government, 13th September, 1836, 142/66, P. G. R.

<sup>20</sup> Wade to Government, 30th August, 1836, 142/60, P. G. R.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> The Conditions were :—

(i) The Shah to relinquish all claims to Peshawar and *Shikarpur*.

(ii) The Shah to engage not to molest him (Ranjit) after being placed on the throne of Kabul.

The ambitious Shah seems to have been tempted. He sent an agent to Ludhiana to discuss this matter with Captain Wade. Shuja, it seems, was suspicious of Ranjit Singh's intentions and therefore wished to make Captain Wade a party or at least a witness to the treaty. Why Ranjit Singh wished to make the British Government a party to it is very clear. This would settle once for all the question of Shikarpur. By recognising the treaty the British Government would be recognising his claims to Shikarpur. But Captain Wade foiled this diplomatic move of the Maharaja by refusing even to discuss it.<sup>23</sup>

The Sindhian Amirs were of course alarmed to learn that Ranjit Singh positively entertained the intention of attacking Shikarpur. They held a meeting and decided to request the British Government through Colonel Pottinger, the Resident at Kachh, to interpose.<sup>24</sup>

Captain Wade was of the opinion that it would be beneficial if the Maharaja was informed of the dissatisfaction with which His Lordship in Council regarded the aggressive policy which the Sikhs continued to follow towards their neighbours. It would awaken the Maharaja to the line of policy which the British Government was determined to adopt for the spread of commerce, the establishment of a state of peace and those friendly relations with foreign powers by which reciprocal benefits could best be secured.<sup>25</sup>

Thus the policy of the Government of India determined that the power of the Sikhs was not to be allowed to extend along the line of the Indus both for commercial as well as for political purposes. Neither the Sikhs nor Shah Shuja was

(iii) Captain Wade to become a party to such a treaty which was to be signed in his presence.

See Wade to Government (giving Lahore intelligence), September 5, 1836, 142 61, P. G. R.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Wade to Government, 13th September. Wade sends Lahore intelligence from 26th August to 3rd September and also gives the above intelligence as having been received in a letter from Sindh by a member of the Kabul ex-Royal family.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

to be allowed to usurp the territories of the Amirs of Sindh. In a letter to Lieutenant-Colonel H. Pottinger, Agent for the affairs of Sindh, it was clearly laid down by the Government that "the Governor-General in Council sincerely desires that the extension of British influence in the direction of the Indus should be effected by the pursuit of commercial and peaceful objects alone, but on the other hand His Lordship in Council cannot view with indifference the extension of the Sikh power throughout the whole course of the Indus to the borders of our Bombay Government."<sup>26</sup>

The Sikh power was allowed to expand as long as it served as an effective buffer-state, but was not to be allowed to extend its influence to the "borders of our Bombay Government" and to become too powerful. That the maintenance of peace for commercial reasons was an anxious desire of Lord Auckland is beyond doubt. He rightly thought that the first effect of hostilities between Sikhs and Sindhians would be to postpone the rendering of the Indus a channel of safe and extensive commerce.<sup>27</sup> But that his motives in restraining Ranjit Singh were political as well is also beyond question, for his secretary wrote: "His Lordship in Council entertains the conviction that the Government of India is bound by the strongest considerations of political interest to prevent the extension of the Sikh power along the whole course of the Indus."<sup>28</sup> The position of Sindh in reference to the British territories, to Afghanistan and to the Punjab, and the share which it possessed in the command of the Indus induced Lord Auckland to watch the political developments in Sindh with anxious attention. Captain Wade was instructed to do his best to dissuade the Maharaja from hostilities against the Amirs, and he was also authorised to proceed to Lahore to discuss the matter personally with the Maharaja.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> See Mr. Macnaughten's letter to Lt.-Col. H. Pottinger of 26th September, 1836, a copy of which was sent to Captain Wade, along with a letter of the same date, 107/16, P. G. R.

<sup>27</sup> Secretary to Wade, 26th September, 1836, 107/16, P. G. R.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*



The letter of instructions issued to Captain Wade authorised him to "use every means in your power short of actual menace to keep His Highness at Lahore and to prevent the further advance of his army till you hear from Col. Pottinger to whom a letter has been written to-day."<sup>30</sup> A doctor was to be sent to the Maharaja according to his request, but if the Maharaja proceeded on any expedition contrary to the expressed wishes or policy of the British Government, Captain Wade was to withdraw any officers bearing a commission from the Honourable Company from attendance on him.

Shah Shuja's movements seemed, according to Wade, to have prompted the Maharaja to anticipate him in Sindh; so the Shah was to be informed that, should he leave Ludhiana without the express sanction of the Government, he would no longer be allowed an asylum within the British territories and the maintenance allowance to him and his family would be discontinued.<sup>31</sup>

Captain Wade was also authorised to tell the Maharaja that the Sindh Amirs had placed themselves under British protection, and the British Government was ready to "interpose its good offices" for the equitable settlement of all matters of difference between the Sikhs and Sindh.<sup>32</sup>

The letter to Col. H. Pottinger, Agent for the affairs of Sindh, is even more interesting and instructive as showing the real motive of Lord Auckland's Government. The Sindh Amirs were in a dangerous position. They were being threatened by Ranjit Singh. Shah Shuja could not place himself at their head, as he was not allowed by the British Government to do so. Their only hope now lay in the British Government itself, which was but too willing to come to their rescue. Pottinger was instructed to negotiate with the Amirs of Sindh in order to bring them under the protection of the British Government. For this purpose he was to

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> "Conduct such as that of the exiled monarch, so directly tending to the disturbance of neighbouring and friendly states ought, under any circumstances, to be prevented, and it is due to ourselves that measures should be taken for that purpose." Secretary to Wade, 26th September, 1836; 107/16, P. G. R.

<sup>32</sup> Secretary to Wade, 26th September, 1836, 107/16, P. G. R.

intimate to them frankly that in the dangerous position in which they then stood, it was essential for their very existence that they strengthened their relation with the British Government. He was to promise His Lordship's mediation in all disputes between the Amirs and the Government of Lahore. And in order readily to give effect to the mediation, it would be advantageous if the Amirs received a body of British troops to be stationed at their capital, the expenses of the detachment being paid from the Sindh revenues. His Lordship, however, would not insist upon this latter part of the proposal, which being so important was, perhaps, deliberately put forward in order to be given up, to make a show of compromise. The mediation was to be promised on condition of (a) the reception of a British Agent at Hyderabad; (b) all the relations between Sindh and Lahore being conducted solely through the medium of British officers; and (c) the expense of any temporary despatch of British troops which might now be found necessary into Sindh being defrayed by the Amirs. A necessary consequence of the terms would be to afford protection to the Amirs, even to the point of war with Ranjit Singh if necessary. In fact the Governor-General was prepared to go even to that length, if Ranjit Singh persisted in his aggressive designs against Sindh.

It is provided in the letter to Col. Pottinger that if the Amirs agreed on reasonable terms and armed interference was necessary, Pottinger was to apply for military aid to the Governor of Bombay, and inform Wade who would then make a final intimation to Ranjit Singh "of our having taken the Sindh State under our protection."<sup>33</sup> In accordance with these instructions, the Government of Bombay were directed to adopt all necessary measures for holding a force in readiness to act; and, at the same time, the Government at Madras was instructed to attend to any requisition for troops which might be made by the Bombay Government. Corresponding instructions were also sent to the Commander-in-Chief in India and to the Lieutenant-Governor of Agra,

<sup>33</sup> Mr. Macnaughten's letter to Lt.-Col. H. Pottinger of 26th September, 1836, a copy of which was sent to Captain Wade along with a letter of same date, 107/16, P. G. R. *Op. Cit.*

requesting their opinion as to the course of operations to be pursued in the event of the British Government being forced into hostilities against the ruler of Lahore.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile Wade was asked to try to prevent the march of the Maharaja's force till such time as he hears from Pottinger,<sup>35</sup> the intention evidently being to gain time for British troops to reach Sindh.

Although Lord Auckland was *ready* to go to war with the Sikhs, he was by no means *anxious* to do so. He expected that Captain Wade's remonstrances would check the advance of Ranjit Singh's army and then things would revert to their previous position.<sup>36</sup> He was anxious, however, that a British Agent should be received in Sindh.<sup>37</sup>

The motives that actuated the British Government to interfere seem to be three :

First, the desire for maintaining peaceful conditions in Sindh, which was essential for trade and commerce ;

Secondly, to thwart Ranjit's extending power towards Sindh ; and

Thirdly, to avail of the opportunity, which the interference offered, for gaining a diplomatic foothold in Sindh. The motives are quite intelligible, but one criticism may be made. While professing to interfere in the interests of peace, the British Government, in the same breath, told Col. Pottinger where to apply for military aid. If Ranjit had persisted in his design, there would have been certain war, the very thing it was desired to avoid. But Ranjit Singh was too wise to go against the wishes of his powerful friends. He yielded, though not without protests. His case may be summed up thus<sup>38</sup> :—

In the first place, every state is bound to protect its territory from unlawful incursion on the part of its neighbours, that the Mazaris, aided by the officers and servants of the

<sup>34</sup> Captain Wade's *Narrative of Services*, p. 37.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 92, 93.

<sup>36</sup> Letter to Pottinger, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* "But you will understand that the establishment of a British Agent in Sindh is a point towards which His Lordship in Council attaches importance and you will not neglect to avail of any favourable opportunity for securing that object which may offer itself."

<sup>38</sup> See Wade to Government, giving Ranjit Singh's reply, 5th October, 1836, 142/70, P.G.R

Sindh Government in charge of Kan (a district bordering on Rojhan), had actually plundered the territory of Mithankote, and once they had attacked even the town of Mithankote—a place which, having been selected as a commercial mart, it was the Sikh ruler's particular object to cherish. It had been plundered of several lakhs, while some fifty or sixty inhabitants had been slain. Such turbulent raids into his boundaries amply justified military action on his part.

Secondly, and this is very significant, the Maharaja hinted that Shikarpur was beyond the Sutlej, the boundary river of the Treaty of 1809.

The Maharaja, although he was presumed by Captain Wade to have suspended his designs, now that he saw them to be opposed to the wishes of the British Government, nevertheless assumed that, according to the treaty of 1809, he was at liberty to pursue whatever measures he pleased with regard to the countries beyond the Sutlej. He mentioned this on several occasions to Captain Wade in friendly banter, and strove to urge that such was a fair construction of the treaty. But when Wade reported this to the Government, this construction of the treaty was naturally repudiated by them. The British argued on the other hand that what the treaty of 1809 stipulated was merely that the British Government would have no concern with the countries *north of the Sutlej*, and that it never bound itself in anyway with respect to the countries west of the Indus.<sup>39</sup>

Legally, it is clear that the British Government were in the wrong in this matter. If north of the Sutlej did not mean west of the Indus, it might as well not mean west of the Jhelum or any other river running on the right side of the

<sup>39</sup> See Secretary, Mr. Macnaughten, to Captain Wade, 14th November 1836. He says :—

“ It would appear that the Maharaja regards the British Government having restricted (by the treaty of 1809) its relations to the countries south of the Sutlej, whereas in point of fact nothing more was stipulated in the treaty referred to, as regards the British Government, than that it should have no concern with the countries to the *north of that river*. Of countries to the westward of Indus no mention was made, and it cannot be admitted for a moment that the treaty had reference to those countries. It is of great importance that this misconception on the part of His Highness be delicately but clearly pointed out to him.”

Sutlej. If their construction was pursued to its logical conclusion, then the British Government would be justified in interfering even in the territories lying to the west of the river Jhelum and yet not violate the treaty of 1809, because that treaty does not say anything about the countries west of that river. This would practically nullify the whole treaty.

Moreover, there was the treaty of Lord William Bentinck with Ranjit Singh entered into at Ropar in 1831, which forbade the English from interfering with the ruler of Lahore in the country beyond the Indus. Latif, in his *History of the Punjab*, cites this treaty as an excuse for the non-interference of the Government of India in the question of Peshawar in 1838,<sup>40</sup> because if the Government was to be true to its promises it could not help Amir Dost Mohammad against the Sikhs. But if that was so, why did the Government of India interfere in the question of Shikarpur? Did it not violate the treaty of 1831, for Shikarpur, too, was on the west of Indus just as Peshawar was?

Captain Wade decided to go to Lahore to dissuade the Maharaja from his aggressive policy towards his British allies on the Indus.<sup>41</sup> But in reply to his letter to the Maharaja after the receipt of the news of the capture of Kan, he was informed and convinced that the Maharaja's offensive operations against Sindh had been abandoned,<sup>42</sup> so he decided not to go to Lahore. The Maharaja also expressed the desire to make the British Government a party to a treaty between the Sindhians and himself, and informed Wade that he had sent positive orders to his officers to cease hostilities.<sup>43</sup>

Ranjit Singh seemed very anxious at this time, as throughout his career, to remain friendly with the British Government. He suspended his activities against Sindh, seeing the British did not relish them and he expressed willingness to assist in promoting the navigation of the Indus and Sutlej by deputing Kharak Singh and Diwan Sawan Mal to meet the British delegates at Mithankote.<sup>44</sup> Yet he never really gave up all hope of

<sup>40</sup> Latif, *History of the Punjab*, p. 485 (1891 edition).

<sup>41</sup> Wade to Government, 10th October, 1836; 142/72, P. G. R.

<sup>42</sup> Wade to Government, 2nd November, 1836.

<sup>43</sup> Wade to Government, 3rd November, 1836.

<sup>44</sup> Wade to Government, 28th October, 1836, 142/81, P. G. R.

gaining Shikarpur. He had set his mind on gaining that portion of Sindh, and ambitious as he was, he bitterly felt the check placed upon him by his great friends. In spite of this chagrin, the value he attached to British friendship is shown by the fact that Captain Wade received from Lahore, at this time, some sweets and an invitation to attend the approaching marriage ceremony of Prince Naunihal Singh.<sup>45</sup>

The British Government, too, did not want any unnecessary straining of relations with him, and seeing that Ranjit Singh was willing to act according to their wishes, they changed their tone towards him.<sup>46</sup> Not only that, but Wade, who was still at Ludhiana, was instructed to visit Ranjit Singh and allay any feelings of uneasiness that might have arisen in his mind,<sup>47</sup> and not to require any formal abandonment of his claims to Shikarpur. "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 Mithankote."<sup>48</sup> He was at the same time instructed to discourage Ranjit Singh from entertaining any idea of the British Government being a party to a treaty between Lahore and Sindh.<sup>49</sup>

So Captain Wade decided to leave for Lahore in the month of December and reached there on Christmas eve.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Wade to Government, 29th October, 1836, 142/82, P. G. R.

<sup>46</sup> Captain Wade had informed the Government in his letter of the 5th October, 1836 (142/70), that Ranjit Singh may be presumed to have suspended his designs now that he sees it to be opposed to the wishes and views of the British Government. The Secretary must have received that letter long before he wrote to Wade again on 7th November 1836, and sent to him a copy of a letter to Pottinger which stated "that in endeavouring to improve our relations with Sindh, the object of preserving unimpaired our long and intimate friendship with the Ruler of the Punjab should never be lost sight of."

See Macnaughten to Wade, 7th November, 107/30, P. G. R.

<sup>47</sup> See Macnaughten to Wade, 14th November, 1836; and also G.-G. to Crt. of Drs., 10th April, 1837.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Macnaughten to Wade, 14th November, 1836.

<sup>50</sup> Wade from Lahore to Macnaughten, 27th December, 1836. Wade 'alighted' at the house of General Ventura on 24th December, 1836.

But before he reached there, he gave to the agent of the Maharaja assurances of the British Government's friendship and their satisfaction at the Maharaja's agreeing to order his officers at Mithankote to stop the aggressions.<sup>51</sup>

Meanwhile the Maharaja in a letter to his agent had made it again clear that he had not altogether abandoned his designs on Sindh. He tried to obtain the assent of Captain Wade to his project by clever cajolery.<sup>52</sup>

At Ferozepore, on his way to Lahore, Wade was met by Rai Gobind Jas, the Maharaja's Vakil, who read out to him a letter from his master, reiterating his desire to wrest Shikarpur, and again asserting his claims under the treaty of 1809.<sup>53</sup> Wade could not understand why the Maharaja had put forth his claim to Shikarpur "after the representations made by me on the one hand and the assurances received from him on the other."<sup>54</sup> He was, however, soon to learn the real cause of the Maharaja's agitation.

<sup>51</sup> Wade to Government, 15th December, 1836, 142/103, P. G. R.

<sup>52</sup> Ranjit Singh wrote a story in his letter to his agent which was related to Captain Wade by the agent. The story appears to be nothing but an effort to flatter Captain Wade into giving his assent. The story briefly told is this. Once a king was strolling in his city *incognito* at night time. He saw a group of friends discussing something and joined them. Everyone of them was boasting of something which he could easily accomplish. The king said that he could accomplish anything by a mere nod of his head. In the morning the king called those men to the Court. One of them recognised the king as the person who had boasted of being able to do anything, and said that that was the time to accomplish the desires of everyone by an inclination of the head. And at a mere beck of the king they got what they wanted.

After telling this story the Maharaja goes on to say, "As the Captain is charged with the conduct of the relations of the two States and (is) the promoter of them, and the affairs of Shikarpur are easy of attainment were he to give his assent it might be accomplished at once." See Wade to Government, 142 103, 15th December 1836, P. G. R.

<sup>53</sup> The Maharaja's letter said: "The affair of Shikarpur is one which relates to the right bank of the Sutlej and the conduct of the two parties is guided by the terms of the existing treaty which is the envy of the world and the Captain, my sincere friend, may promote my object merely by an indication of his assent." Also that "the Sindhians have no pretensions to Shikarpur, it is the country of another." Wade to Macnaughten, December 21, 1836, Camp Ferozepore, 142/105, P. G. R.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

On arriving in Lahore, Wade found that the Maharaja had been considerably excited by the reports which had recently reached there of the arrival of Col. Pottinger in Sindh, the objects which he was supposed to have and also the suspected designs of the British Government in deputing Captain Burnes to Kabul.<sup>55</sup> In his first interview at which Wade announced that the Amirs had been taken under British protection, the Maharaja's manner was cold and repulsive. Immediately after the interview he ordered his tents to be struck, mounted his horse and went away from Lahore without sending Wade any message.<sup>56</sup> The unwillingness of the Maharaja to relinquish his project on Shikarpur arose, according to Wade, "both from a suspicion of our ultimate designs and a loss of reputation," if he agreed to do anything that might compromise the position he had assumed in that quarter.<sup>57</sup>

The Maharaja ultimately yielded to Captain Wade's remonstrances. "His deference, he said, to the wishes of his allies took place of every other consideration; he would let his relations with the Amirs of Sindh remain on their old footing, he would destroy the fort of Kan, but he would continue to occupy Rojhan and the Mazari territory."<sup>58</sup> The Government did not object to this declaration of Ranjit Singh, for they thought that if they were not willing to interpose to procure indemnification for any losses which Ranjit Singh might suffer from the Amirs and their dependants they would not be justified if they expected him to refrain from redressing himself if real provocation had been given.<sup>59</sup>

Thus ended the episode which threatened to bring about a complete break of the British Government's relations with

<sup>55</sup> See Wade (on a mission to Lahore) to Macnaughten, 27th December, 1836.

<sup>56</sup> Wade's *Narrative*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 38, foot-note.

<sup>57</sup> Wade's *Narrative*, p. 38. The Maharaja revived his claims to Shikarpur at the time of the Tripartite Treaty of 1838.

<sup>58</sup> Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs* (Edited by Garrett), p. 205.

<sup>59</sup> Government of India to H. Pottinger. Wade's *Narrative*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 40.



Ranjit Singh.<sup>60</sup> And Sindh was thus saved, though only for the time being.

<sup>60</sup> It may be remarked here that it was only Ranjit Singh's own prudence which prevented the threatened hostilities, for he was urged by his chiefs not to yield. Ranjit reminded his chiefs of the fate of two hundred thousand spears of Marathas. See Wade to Government, 11th January 1837.

## CHAPTER III

### BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS SINDH DURING THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR

THE policy of the British Indian Government towards Sindh from 1834 to 1837, as examined in the previous chapter showed how it was saved by that Government from being conquered by Ranjit Singh. The price which the Amirs had to pay for this protection, however, was that a permanent British Agent was stationed in their dominions, with permission to move about with an escort anywhere in Sindh.<sup>1</sup> This meant a complete reversal of the earlier attitude of the British towards that country, for even as recently as 1831 when Burnes was passing through Sindh the Amirs themselves had solicited British protection against the aggression of Ranjit Singh but had been refused by Lord William Bentinck. The same protection was now forced upon the Sindhians by Lord Auckland. In this way Sindh, "the Sick Man of India," received a new lease of life which lasted only for six years till it received a death-blow from its saviours of 1838.

Major-General W. F. P. Napier, in his work entitled *The Conquest of Sindh*, justifies the subjugation of that country by the British on the fundamental and inevitable grounds of the all round superiority of their administration over that of the Amirs. He writes: "Strangers coming from afar, more civilised, more knowing in science and arts, more energetic of spirit, more strong of body, more warlike, more enterprising than the people among whom they settle, must necessarily extend that power until checked by natural barriers or by a counter civilisation. The novelty of their opinions, political and religious, the cupidity of their traders, the ambition and avarice of their chiefs, the insolence of superiority and even the instinct of self-preservation, render collision with the

<sup>1</sup> Treaty concluded by Col. H. Pottinger dated April 20, 1838. Appendix VII, p. 70.

native populations and their rulers inevitable, and conquest as inevitable as collision."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the circumstances immediately leading to the conquest must be studied for purposes of history. These arose out of the First Afghan War, so much so that the Sindh conquest has been described even as a mere "tail of the Afghan storm."

When, in 1838, Lord Auckland decided to place Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul, there was at first no intention that the British should themselves fight.<sup>3</sup> England was simply "to remain in the background jingling the money-bag. But the bag had to be filled first with something to jingle; and it was not reasonable to expect England to find this metal. The Sindh Amirs were cast for the part of providers, Oudh being penniless and Bengal fully occupied with financial

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Vol. I, p. 25 (1844).

<sup>3</sup> While Macnaughten was proceeding to Lahore he was given instructions by the Governor-General for his guidance during his negotiations with Ranjit Singh. He was authorised to tell His Highness "that two courses of proceeding had, occurred to His Lordship, the one that the treaty formerly executed between His Highness and Shah Shuja should be recognised by the British Government, that while the Sikhs advanced cautiously on Kabul accompanied by British Agents, a demonstration should be made by a division of the British Army occupying Shikarpur with Shah Shuja in their company to whom the British Government would advance money to enable him to levy troops and purchase arms and to whom also the services of British Officers should be lent....." Again in the same letter: "If His Highness agreed that the operations of the allies should be conducted in concert with each other by means of British Agents in the camp of each, the Governor-General would be prepared to enter into a general defensive alliance with His Highness against the attack of all enemies from the westward." The purport of the above quotations is quite clear. The allies were to be the Sikhs and Shah Shuja, both helped by British Agents and Shah Shuja by money also. The Governor-General was, however, willing for a general *defensive* alliance. The second course was to "allow the Maharaja to take his own course against Dost Mohammad without any reference to us." And "His Lordship on the whole is disposed to think that the plan which is second in order is that which will be found most expedient." Thus both the courses implied that the British were not to fight; only to egg on the allies. See H. Torrens, *Offg. Secretary to Government of India with the Governor-General to Mr. Macnaughten, 15th May, 1838, being instructions on the eve of his departure for Lahore, 122/2, P. G. R.*

performances.”<sup>4</sup> This was the first significant act of injustice towards Sindh directly arising out of the Afghan campaign.

An excuse for this contribution from the Amirs was found in the fact that they had once been in (exceedingly loose) dependence on Afghanistan. It was decided that they should contribute 25 lakhs of rupees, out of which Ranjit Singh was to have 15 lakhs.<sup>5</sup> After this payment Sindh was to be free from all claims of Shah Shuja and was to belong to the Amirs and their successors in perpetuity.<sup>6</sup> This sum was to be levied because, in the opinion of the Governor-General, “a crisis had arrived, and the Amirs as friends of the British Government were expected to make some ostensible display of their attachment to British interests.”<sup>7</sup>

All this was decided without the consent or even the knowledge of the Sindhian rulers themselves. But it was thought that the Amirs were wealthy “in consequence,” as Mr. Macnaughten put it, “of the long suspension of tribute which was formerly paid to Kabul, and with reference to the known fact that during this interval they have not been engaged in any extensive operations.”<sup>8</sup> If they did not agree, they were to be told that the British Government would not at a future date be able to stop Shah Shuja from the assertion of those claims which he might eventually determine to adopt.<sup>9</sup> They were to be further told that it had been found indispensably necessary for the success of the Afghan campaign that “temporary occupation would be taken of Shikarpur and of as much of the country adjacent as may be required to afford a secure base to the intended military operation.”<sup>10</sup> Now to make Sindh the base for military operations

<sup>4</sup> *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, by Thompson and Garratt, p. 356 (1934).

<sup>5</sup> The original intention was to levy about 20 lakhs. See Secretary with the Governor-General to the Resident in Sindh, July 26th, 1838. Parliamentary papers relative to Sindh p. 9 (P. P.).

<sup>6</sup> Art. XVI. Treaty of June, 1838 (the Tripartite Treaty between Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja and the British). See Appendix VIII, p. 71.

<sup>7</sup> Parliamentary Papers relative to Sindh, p. 9 (P. P.).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid* No. 9, p. 10.

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

<sup>10</sup> Secretary with the Govr.-Genl. to Resident in Sindh, July 26th, 1838.

was both unwise and inequitable. It was unwise from a military point of view, being the longer and the more dangerous route; it was inequitable because the armies should have passed through the territories of Ranjit Singh, the contracting party to the Tripartite Treaty and an ally, and not through the land of the Amirs, who were never made a party to the Anglo-Sikh adventure. But Lord Auckland resolved "to perpetrate against the helpless Amirs, in the form of aggression, that which he dared not even propose in the way of friendship to the powerful Maharaja."<sup>11</sup>

In August, 1836, Ranjit Singh's request to be allowed to import fire-arms by way of the Indus had been refused by the British Government on the ground that it would infringe the treaty between Sindh and the British Government, one clause of which provided that the navigation of the river should not be used for the transit of fire-arms.<sup>12</sup> But now the Amirs were told that (while the present exigency lasts) that article of the treaty "must necessarily be suspended during the course of the operations undertaken for the permanent establishment of security to all those who are parties to that treaty."<sup>13</sup> Moreover, if it was found that the Amirs had entered into engagements with Persia and were not friendly towards the British Government, the Resident was given "full authority to request the immediate advance of a British force from the Bombay army, such as will suffice to take possession of the capital of Sindh" and to espouse the cause of any Amir who might still be friendly.

Naturally the Amirs demurred. The British Resident (Henry Pottinger) had already grave doubts as to their acceding to the pecuniary proposals<sup>14</sup> and he feared the Amirs

While the Amirs were being told this, Mr. Macnaughten was instructed to tell Ranjit Singh that with regard to Sindh the "British Government has never been actuated by any other motive than that of securing peace along the banks of the Indus....." See H. Torrens to Macnaughten, 15th May, 1838, 122/2, P. G. R.

<sup>11</sup> Napier, *Op Cit.*, p. 58.

<sup>12</sup> Book 107, letter 8, P. G. R. Also Art. III (1) of the Commercial Treaty of 19th June, 1832. Appendix VI, p. 68.

<sup>13</sup> P. P., p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> P. P., p. 12, 14.

might throw obstacles in the way of communications after Shah Shuja had passed on towards Afghanistan. Amir Sobdar and his party might even argue that the demand for money was a breach of the late agreement on the principle that, as the Resident put it, "without our assistance Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk had no means of exacting one reia from them; consequently that the demand may be considered our own."<sup>15</sup>

The Amirs even produced releases from obligations written in the Koran and signed by Shah Shuja,<sup>16</sup> but the Governor-General was adamant. Moreover the Amir of Hyderabad had written a letter to the Shah of Persia, whom he had addressed as the King of Kings.<sup>17</sup> This was construed by Lord Auckland as tender of allegiance to that sovereign and as implying hostility to British interests.<sup>18</sup> Energetic measures were therefore ordered to be adopted against the Amir.<sup>19</sup> Pottinger was empowered to employ the Bombay force to back his negotiations.<sup>20</sup> At the same time Lord Auckland was more anxious to have a hold on upper Sindh, as the Bengal Army was to cross the Indus there. Sir A. Burnes, then on a mission to Kelat, was accordingly ordered to turn aside and negotiate a treaty with the Khairpur Amirs as he passed. He was to demand a loan of the rock and fortress of Bakhar and, if asked for a consideration in return (for instance the guaranteed independence of Khairpur), was

<sup>15</sup> Resident to Government of India, August 27, 1838, P. P., p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> In this connection it may be remembered that the Amirs were quite right for in 1834, when the Shah had attempted to capture Kabul, he had entered into an agreement with the Amirs, one clause of which ran as follows:—"That the Shah should give up Shikarpur to the Amirs for an annual tribute of six lakhs of rupees on the condition that if he conquered Afghanistan they would continue to pay him a tribute of seven lakhs of rupees yearly, but should he fail in doing so, the first six lakhs should be considered as a donation from them, and that they would not give him a farthing after that." (See Wade to Government, 1st April, 1834, Punjab Government Records Book, 140, L. 25.) Because the Shah had failed to conquer Afghanistan in 1834, it followed from the above clause that the Amirs were now entirely free from any pecuniary demand on the part of Shah Shuja.

<sup>17</sup> P. P. No. 11.

<sup>18</sup> P. P. No. 15.

<sup>19</sup> P. P. No. 16.

<sup>20</sup> Book 121, L. 125, P. G. R.

to give an evasive reply.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile Shah Shuja had apprised the Amirs of Hyderabad, in a general way, of his desire to pass through their country. They replied that, the Bilochees being hostile, he should not come by that way. They said: "If the English and Ranjit Singh join you, there is a direct road from Ludhiana to Khurasan (Afghanistan) and we are ready to assist."<sup>22</sup> Lord Auckland was enraged at this "deep duplicity," as he termed it, and declared that Shikarpur and such other ports of Sindh as are necessary to facilitate the invasion of Afghanistan should immediately be occupied,<sup>23</sup> and in spite of Pottinger advising delay,<sup>24</sup> he urged him to immediate action.<sup>25</sup> It may be argued in defence of Lord Auckland that the route for the army was not adopted through the Punjab because there had been a verbal agreement with Ranjit Singh forbidding the passage of troops through his territories.<sup>26</sup> But that agreement was also broken in 1839. It would be interesting to know how Ranjit Singh felt on knowing that, after preventing him from occupying Shikarpur in 1836, the British Government now proposed itself to do the same thing. But Macnaughten had already satisfied his Government on that point by arguing that Ranjit Singh was a reasonable person and as such could not deny the justice of British occupation of Shikarpur.<sup>27</sup> As regards the placing of

<sup>21</sup> Secretary with the Governor-General to Sir A. Burnes, September 6, 1838, P. P. No. 16.

<sup>22</sup> Resident in Sindh to Secretary with the Governor-General, P.P. No. 17.

<sup>23</sup> P. P. No. 19, p. 21.

The Amirs were also to be told that a force was coming from Bombay, but it was "by no means intended to operate against their interests."

<sup>24</sup> "We must patiently await the development of the plot" (plot of Amirs with Persia).

<sup>25</sup> Book 121, L. 25, P. G. R. also P. P. 21.

<sup>26</sup> Book 123, P. 244, P. G. R. See H. Torrens' note. There was some difference of opinion regarding the interpretation of this agreement between the Sikh Government and the British Government. For the respective versions see Mr. Clerk's correspondence with Government on his second mission to Lahore in 1839 in Ludhiana Agency Records.

<sup>27</sup> Book 122, L. 19, P. G. R. While negotiating for the Tripartite treaty with Ranjit Singh Macnaughten had purposeily refrained from making any reference to Shikarpur, because he thought that, if the necessity should arise for occupying any place in Sindh, the Maharaja, friendly as he was,

a British Agent at Hyderabad, Ranjit Singh was to be told that the object was "solely by cultivating a closer acquaintance with the Amirs to obtain greater facilities for *general goodwill* (a favourite expression of Lord Auckland's time) and commerce."<sup>28</sup> If Ranjit reverts to his favourite argument of the Sutlej being the river of boundary between the two states according to the treaty, Mr. Macnaughten was to tell him that "in deprecating His Highness' contemplated attack upon Shikarpur, it (the British Government) did not look to the articles of any particular Treaty so much as to the preservation of general tranquillity and the maintenance of the integrity of a *friendly power* whom the British Government, if unrestrained by considerations of justice and tempted by the weakness of its neighbour, could at any time have reduced to the condition of a Tributary."<sup>29</sup>

The Amirs of Khairpur, with whom Burnes was negotiating, offered new agreements involving their passing generally under the British protection.<sup>30</sup> A treaty of nine articles was ultimately forced on them in December, 1838.<sup>31</sup> Beginning with the stereotyped formality of "perpetual friendship," it bound the British Government to protect the territory of Khairpur, and the Amirs to act in subordinate co-operation with that Government. An interesting illustration of the way in which the Khairpur territories were to be protected was provided by the addition of a separate article in the Treaty, stating that, in return for the protection offered to Khairpur State and *for not having coveted any of its possessions*, Mir Rustum should not object if the Governor-General in time of war should order the occupation of the fortress of Bakhar.<sup>32</sup> To expect a return for not coveting another's territory implies the acceptance of the principle that to covet is one's right, which can be foregone in return for a consideration. A typical example of the political morality of Lord Auckland's regime!

would be willing to admit the justice of the reasons that Government might assign for the measures.

<sup>28</sup> H. Torrens to Macnaughten May 15, 1838, 122/2, P. G. R.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 122/2, P. G. R.

<sup>30</sup> P. P. Nos. 39, 40, 41 and 42.

<sup>31</sup> P. P. No. 106.

<sup>32</sup> See the additional article of the treaty in Appendix X.



The Amir offered to cede some other fortress instead of Bukkur and requested to see Burnes personally. But Burnes would not hear of it. As he himself put it, he "asked a plain question and wanted a plain answer."<sup>33</sup> Would Rustum sign the treaty or not? Yes or no? No higgling. The poor old man had to say "yes" and put his signature, though not without hinting that, as he had been humiliated by the surrender of Bukkur, his enemies, the Hyderabad Amirs, ought to be deprived of Karachi.<sup>34</sup>

Thus upper Sindh was satisfactorily settled. But the Hyderabad Amirs were still procrastinating. They had not agreed to receive a subsidiary force. Their men had even plundered the stores collected in Hyderabad for Keane's army. It was necessary to coerce them. Thinking of military operations against them, Burnes declared that "nothing on the record of Indian history will be more justified than our bringing these men to reason."<sup>35</sup> Sir John Keane marched against Hyderabad, and the reserve held in readiness at Bombay was ordered to embark for Sindh. This latter force, on landing at Karachi, captured the town and the fort,<sup>36</sup> while "down the left bank of the Indus went Sir Willoughby Cotton with his troops glorying in the prospect before them. The treasures of Hyderabad seemed to lie at their feet. Never was there a more popular movement, the troops pushed on in the highest spirits, eager for the fray, confident of success. An unanticipated harvest of honour, and unexpected promise of abundant prize-money was within their reach."<sup>37</sup> The Amirs quailed before the storm and agreed to the terms of the treaty offered by Pottinger.<sup>38</sup> Cotton's troops returned without either the prize-money or what Sir John hoped would be "a pretty piece of practice for the army."<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> P. P. 105, p. 106.

<sup>34</sup> P. P. 105, p. 106. The Amir even said that if Karachi was not seized, he would commit suicide. This shows the natural jealousy of the Amirs and the degree of their patriotism.

<sup>35</sup> P. P. 69, p. 72, November 11th, 1838.

<sup>36</sup> P. P. Nos. 139, 143 and 144.

<sup>37</sup> Kaye: *History of the War in Afghanistan*, Vol. I, pp. 396-97.

<sup>38</sup> P. P. No. 151.

<sup>39</sup> Napier, Vol. I, p. 75.

Under the new treaty concluded on February 5, 1839, the Amirs were to receive a subsidiary force and pay three lakhs yearly for its maintenance.<sup>40</sup> In addition to other terms the British Government bound itself not to make engagements with external powers affecting the Amirs' interests without their concurrence, "thus virtually admitting the injustice of the Tripartite Treaty, though it was the basis of all their proceedings."<sup>41</sup> The treaty when sent to Government was modified by Lord Auckland to the effect that Karachi was to continue to be occupied by British troops "to prove to the Amirs and the people of lower Sindh the fatal consequences of resisting the power of this Government,"<sup>42</sup> and incidentally saving Rustum Khan from committing suicide.

Soon after the treaty the tone of the Amirs became very friendly, perhaps in the hope of getting some improvement in the terms; but the Government did not budge in the least. The Amirs were now told by Pottinger that "they must henceforth consider Sindh to be (as it was in reality) a portion of Hindustan, in which our position made us paramount." The Amirs said that they quite realised it, that "their eyes had been opened."<sup>43</sup>

Thus in six months Lord Auckland's Government was able to make Sindh a secure base of operations for the Army of the Indus and for that purpose had placed in Sindh a subsidiary force which, as Colonel Malleon puts it, has always proved fatal to the independence of a native state. And all this under assurances of warm friendship! The feelings of the Amirs at this time are admirably summed up by Major-General W. F. P. Napier in a passage that amply bears full quotation. Addressing the British Government they might say:

"You besought us to make treaties of amity and commerce. We did so and you have broken them.

"You asked for our alliance. We did not seek yours. We yielded to your solicitations and you have used our kindness to our ruin.

<sup>40</sup> See Article III of the Treaty, P. P. No. 164 and 152. Appendix XI, p. 75.

<sup>41</sup> Napier, *Op. Cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>42</sup> P. P. 165.

<sup>43</sup> P. P. 161.

“You declared yourself without our knowledge or desire our protector against a man we did not fear; our mediator in a quarrel which did not concern you. In return for this meddling, which you termed a favour, you demanded permanent possession of our capital, military occupation of our country and even payment for the cost of thus destroying our independence under the masks of friendship! mediation!! protection!!!

“You peremptorily demanded our aid to ruin Dost Mohammad, who was not our enemy; and our backwardness thus to damage, against justice and against the interest of our religion, him and his nation, with whom we were at peace, you made a cause of deadly quarrel.

“To mollify your wrath, we gave your armies a passage through our dominions contrary to the terms of our commercial treaties. In return you have with those armies reduced us to a state of miserable dependence.”<sup>4</sup>

Can all this be justified on any ground either of international law or self-preservation? If the invasion of Afghanistan was an act of self-defence, then naturally the accessory policy towards Sindh could be palliated on the same ground. But it is the verdict of history that the Afghan campaign was not at all necessary, for if the danger against which it was intended to guard had been real, it would have become still greater on the failure of the campaign. But no such danger appeared. Then why was such a manifestly unjust and bullying policy followed towards Sindh? The answer lies in the fact that Sindh in the 19th century was like Italy in the 16th, rich and almost defenceless, and her neighbours were covetous and powerful.

But whereas all these circumstances were created by Lord Auckland's policy, the actual conquest came in Lord Ellenborough's time, though the latter has ample justification for what happened under him. His hands were tied. He had to sustain the wrong-doer's policy on the principle that in politics it is seldom wise to go back. Once the Afghan campaign began, the safety of the troops required that Sindh should continue to be occupied. When that campaign failed, and the

<sup>4</sup> *Op. Cit.*, p. 82.

reputation of British arms was lowered in the eyes of all Indians," it was necessary, if a universal commotion, even a possible insurrection throughout India was to be prevented, to strike a resounding blow. And as the Sindhian Amirs were smarting under the pain of their fresh wounds, it was decided to do away with those danger spots by a drastic operation. The surgeon chosen by Lord Ellenborough was General Napier, who felt that it did not necessitate even the use of an anæsthetic.

"Raja Dhyan Singh, the minister at Lahore, said at this time that "only an iron key can open an iron lock," meaning thereby that the English were not strong enough to fight the Pathans and only the Sikhs could keep the passes open. *Vide* Clerk to Government, March 6, 1842, B. 153, L. 41, P. G. R.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANNEXATION

#### *The Position in 1842*

LORD ELLENBOROUGH succeeded Lord Auckland in March, 1842, and inherited the situation which the latter had created. Sir Charles Napier had arrived in India three months earlier. The intricate situation which these two men found on their arrival was this. The British Army in Afghanistan had met a series of disasters, the news of which was received in the Punjab and Sindh with undisguised satisfaction. Auckland's invasion of Afghanistan had turned out to be what has so aptly been described as an 'Asiatic copy of Napoleon's invasion of Spain.' The reputation of British arms was at the lowest. Moreover, an insurrection had broken out among the Afghan tribes of Kakars and Kujjaks and the Murri Bilochees in 1840. The Sarwans had set up Mehrab Khan's son and assembled a large force. Thus the position of the British Agents at Quetta and Kelat had become critical and the safety of the Bolan Pass was in danger.<sup>1</sup> Major Clibborn, who had gone to relieve the Kahun outpost, had also met with reverses in the Marri Hills.<sup>2</sup> It was also reported that Diwan Sawan Mall, the Lahore Government's governor of the Multan Province, had rendered help to Dodeh Khan and had encouraged him to seize the Bolan Pass, though Outram did not believe it then.<sup>3</sup> Later on Outram changed his opinion and reported that Sawan Mall *was* intriguing with Marris.<sup>4</sup> The Diwan was at the same time suspected of carrying on a correspondence with the ruler of Hyderabad (Sindh) with

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Political Agent, Sukkur, to G. Clerk, Ludhiana. Letter 8, Book 112, P. G. R.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Digest of Intelligence from Hyderabad, L. 23, B. 112, P. G. R.

<sup>4</sup> L. 28, B. 112, P. G. R.

the purpose of strengthening friendship.<sup>5</sup> In such circumstances, was Ellenborough to sit silent and, in the words of Major William Napier, "foment the hopes of neighbouring powers, eager for war, by a show of humility which could only appear to them weakness?"<sup>6</sup> He, therefore, promptly decided on a bold policy and carried it through.

Soon after his arrival he wrote three letters to the Amirs, which clearly state that "on the day on which you shall be faithless to the British Government, sovereignty shall have passed from you." The threat contained in these letters was not idle. It was, as Lord Ellenborough's Secretary wrote to Major Outram, "a declaration of the Governor-General's fixed determination to punish, cost what it may, the first chief who shall prove faithless, by the confiscation of his dominion."<sup>7</sup> This threat was not only brutal in its frankness, but was denuded of all garb of friendship, which usually covered Lord Auckland's communications. Now, at least, the Amirs might know where they stood. Ellenborough quite realised that in going forward he would be forging another link in the chain of injustice started by Lord Auckland, but, as Sir W. Butler puts it, "in India to go forward has often been to go wrong, but to go back in that country has been always to admit the wrong, and once to do that is to admit the truth of an argument which, if prolonged to its fullest consequences, must lead us to the sea-coast."<sup>8</sup> Napier was in perfect agreement with Ellenborough and, in fact, had forwarded a plan to Calcutta giving his opinion as to how best the prestige of the British arms could be retrieved in Afghanistan and the countries of the Indus. But the new Governor-General, though ardently wishing to extend the frontiers of British India to the line of the Indus, was "far from aiming to take advantage of past misdeeds" and "gave warning for the future only."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> L. 26, B. 112; Also Parliamentary Papers relating to Sindh Nos. 399, 400 and 401.

<sup>6</sup> *Conquest of Sindh*, by W. F. P. Napier, Vol. I, pp. 96-97.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Sir C. Napier*, by Sir W. Butler, p. 107, (Englishmen of Action Series).

<sup>9</sup> Napier, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. 99.

Napier's objective was twofold. Firstly, he wished to obtain the power of acting on both sides of the Indus, for which it was necessary to continue occupying Karachi for communicating with Bombay, and to occupy Bukkur and Sukkur to insure a passage over the Indus, necessary for maintaining communication with British stations on the Sutlej and the army at Kandhar by the Bolan Pass. With Karachi on one side and Bukkur and Sukkur on the other, in the hands of the British, the Amirs would be completely brought into the orbit of their military control. Secondly, Lord Ellenborough aimed at controlling commerce by the Indus.<sup>10</sup>

It was, therefore, proposed to exchange all the arrears of tribute due from the Amirs under the Treaty of 1839, for permanent possession of Karachi, Bukkur and Sukkur and for the cession of a strip of land on both sides of the river. The new arrangements were to be based on a principle of cession of territory in commutation of the tribute because, thought Lord Ellenborough, "the obligation on the part of a Native State to pay tribute to our Government is one which places us in a false position. No character can be more offensive than that of an exacting creditor, with which this obligation invests us...It makes us appear to be the cause of all the exactions which the Native State inflicts upon its subject."<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile Major Outram had collected various evidences of the hostile designs of the Amirs. These were:<sup>12</sup>

(i) Intercepted letters from the ruler of Hyderabad to Diwan Mul Raj. This was considered a violation of the eighth article of the Treaty of 1839, which forbade the Amirs to negotiate with foreign States without the sanction of the British Government.

(ii) A secret plot of the Brahoes and Bilochees, encouraged by the Amirs, to rise against the British on a favourable opportunity. The rising was to be a religious one, "the sword was to be drawn for Islam."

<sup>10</sup> Parliamentary Papers relative to Sindh, No. 334.

<sup>11</sup> Ellenborough to Napier, November 4, 1842, P. P. No. 388.

<sup>12</sup> See B. 112, L. 26 and 28, P. G. R. Also P. P. Nos. 399, 400, 401. Also Enclosure 3 in P. P. No. 379 being "Return of Complaints" signed by J. Outram.

(iii) Intercourse with the Sikhs.

(iv) Intercourse with the Shah of Persia

(v) The dominating influence in the Courts of Hyderabad and Khairpur of a man called Fattah Muhammad Ghorî, the Minister of Rustum, well-known for his talents and his hatred of the English. Only Sobdar and Almorad of Khairpur were faithful to their engagements.

On these and other grounds Outram proposed the infliction of a new treaty on the Amirs, involving the cession of Bukkur, Sukkur and Karachi and the establishment of free communication between Karachi and the Indus at Tatta. But Ellenborough rejected the proposal and intimated his wish to take from the delinquent Amirs the districts of Subzulkote and Bhoongbhara and restore them to the Nawab of Bahawalpur, from whom they had been conquered by the Amirs about thirty years back. "It is my intention," wrote the Governor-General, "to seize the first opportunity of bestowing substantial benefits upon the Khan of Bahawalpur as a reward for the constant support which the British Government has received from him, and his ancestors."<sup>13</sup> Another object of transferring these districts to Bahawalpur was the desirability of not appearing selfish aggressors. Moreover, the fact of Bahawalpur being a Muslim State would render it impossible for anyone to create religious excitement against the British.<sup>14</sup> This restoration was contemplated in pursuance of a policy of "reward and punishment," a policy hardly based on any "principle of abstract justice" and somewhat similar to one established in continental politics by the Congress of Vienna in 1815.<sup>15</sup> By this time Major Outram had proved himself offensive to the Governor-General and was dismissed. Napier was ordered to Sindh and invested with the sole charge of Sindhian affairs.

Napier set out from Bombay on 3rd September, 1842. During the voyage cholera broke out on the ship and many soldiers died. He reached Hyderabad on September 25, and

<sup>13</sup> G. G. to Napier, P. P. No. 361, also P. P. No. 376.

<sup>14</sup> G. G. to Napier, 13 December, 1842, P. P. No. 430.

<sup>15</sup> See Napier, *Op. Cit.* Vol. I, 109, and enclosure of a letter of Mr. G. Clerk to Government, February 11, 1843; L. 16, B. 158, P. G. R.



had an interview with the Amirs, at which he warned them against any attempt to violate the terms of the treaties and especially against taking measures to isolate the British station of Karachi by driving their subjects from the bazar.<sup>16</sup> Early in October Napier arrived in Sukkur and found the following instructions waiting for him :—

“Should any Amir or Chief, with whom we have a treaty of alliance and friendship, have evinced hostile designs against us, during the late events, which may have induced them to doubt the continuance of our power it is the present intention of the Governor-General to inflict upon the treachery of such ally and friend so signal a punishment as shall effectually deter others from similar conduct, but the Governor-General will not proceed in this course without the most convincing evidence of guilt in the person accused.” Also.....“if the Amirs or anyone of them should act hostilely or evince hostile designs against our Army, 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.”<sup>17</sup>

The evidence of guilt was naturally to be collected by the man on the spot, and thus the whole moral responsibility was shifted on to the shoulders of Napier. Here for once the path was not clear to the General. The war in Afghanistan had been ended. Kabul had been retaken and burnt. Many old scores had been paid off. The prestige of British arms was re-established. Still more, the English army had safely passed the Bolan Pass. Was it necessary under these circumstances to follow a strong policy towards Sindh? Lord Ellenborough instructed him to draft a new treaty and force it on the Amirs.<sup>18</sup> The new treaty, which was ready by November, took away the right of coinage from the Amirs and was especially hard on the Khairpur Chiefs.<sup>19</sup> A letter of Rustum of Khairpur to the ruler of the Sikhs and the part which his Minister, Fatteh Mohammad Ghori, took in the escape of the rebel Syed Mohammad Sharif, affixed on that Amir the character of

<sup>16</sup> Parliamentary Papers, No. 372.

<sup>17</sup> Ellenborough to Napier; Parliamentary Papers, No. 361.

<sup>18</sup> Parliamentary Papers, No. 375.

<sup>19</sup> P. P. No. 392 (Draft of the new treaty).

an enemy.<sup>20</sup> Major Outram was again sent to Sindh as Commissioner on the request of Napier for the purpose of enforcing the treaty.<sup>21</sup> Outram pointed out that the present treaty was more stringent than that of Auckland.<sup>22</sup> But Napier was determined to enforce it, and tried to convince the Amirs that they would become richer by accepting it. But if they refused, he would allow them to "try the force of arms, at their own peril, if they are so pleased."<sup>23</sup> Major Outram rightly felt that this treaty would drive them to desperation and war and, not wishing that consequence, urged upon the government to make it less stringent. He supported his argument with Benjamin Franklin's authority to the effect that "no objects of trade warranted the spilling of blood, that commerce is to be extended by the cheapness and goodness of commodities, that the profit of no trade could equal the expense of compelling it by fleets and armies."<sup>24</sup> But his argument fell on deaf ears, as it was bound to, for the main object was not the extension of trade but the strengthening of the British position on the Indus. Moreover, Napier wanted war because, as Sir W. Butler puts it, "no lover ever longed for mistress more than did this man long for fighting."<sup>25</sup> His defender, James Napier, gives another explanation of his firmness. According to him, he was firm, not because he wished to precipitate war but because "he held it shameful and wicked to tempt the Amirs by any appearance of infirmity of purpose to display their arrogance, when the Governor-General had assured him the sword of vengeance would be inexorably bared for the first fault."<sup>26</sup> He too had prepared a list of the offences of the Amirs which included secret alliances and confederacies against the British Government and the

<sup>20</sup> Napier, *Op. Cit.*, p. 133. Also p. 379. Inclosure 6. This man Fattah Mohd. Ghori seems to have been an implacable enemy of the English. At this time, he allowed the rebel Syed to escape. Later on he played an important part in the attack on Outram.

<sup>21</sup> P. P. No. 416.

<sup>22</sup> P. P. No. 379. Inclosure 2.

<sup>23</sup> Napier, *Op. Cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>24</sup> Napier, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. 116.

<sup>25</sup> Butler, *Op. Cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>26</sup> Napier, *Op. Cit.*, p. 117.

troops from Kabul and many other infringements of the treaties.<sup>27</sup> In a letter to Lord Ellenborough he wrote: "We are here by right of treaties," and "there does not appear any public protest registered against the treaties by the Amirs; they are therefore to be considered as free expressions of the will of the contracting parties."<sup>28</sup> In another part of the same letter he admitted that "there is such hostility to us on the part of the Amirs, such a hatred of the treaties—such a resolution to break them in every way....."<sup>29</sup>

If the treaties had been a free expression of the will of the Amirs, they could not have been so determined to break them in every way. Evidently they had never willingly signed a single treaty, and Napier's attempt to justify his conduct under the shelter of treaties is futile. He is, however, on somewhat better ground when he takes his stand on interests of humanity particularly when these were identifiable with British interests. Speaking of the oppression practised by the Amirs on their subjects, he writes, "The question arises whether we shall abandon the interests of humanity and those of the British Government, which in this case are one, and at once evacuate Sindh, or take advantage of existing treaties and maintain our camps permanently." If the camps are maintained, they will "quickly grow into towns and the people within them will carry on a transit trade along the Indus to the exclusion of the subjects of the Amirs without. Among the latter misery and poverty will sojourn." Can such a state of things long continue? "I conceive such a state of political relations cannot last; the more powerful Government will at no distant period swallow up the weaker. Would it not be better to come to the results at once? I think it would be better if it could be done with honesty." Such was Napier's impatience of delay. With a sweep of the sword he wished to come to the results at once. Major Outram had pointed out

<sup>27</sup> It appears to me that much of the evidence on which the allegation of secret confederacies were based was of doubtful authenticity. In this connection see letter of Mr. Clerk, Agent at Ludhiana, regarding letters of Amirs to the Sikh Chiefs, P. P. No. 398.

<sup>28</sup> P. P. 379. Letter to Ellenborough, October 17, 1842.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

to him that the tribes on the river above that part possessed by the Amirs of Sindh, did levy tolls and therefore to allow those tribes to levy tolls and forbid the Amirs to do so would be unjust. Napier had a very simple answer to this argument, namely, to compel these tribes also to give up the tolls. In his own words, "to excuse the Amirs on the ground that others are not equally coerced is answered by coercing the others."<sup>30</sup>

As already pointed out, the draft of the treaty now prepared was approved by Ellenborough, even though it was more stringent than the treaty of Auckland and the one proposed by Outram. While the latter was negotiating for the acceptance of this treaty at Hyderabad, the Amirs began collecting troops and gathering their Bilochee feudatories. It is not unreasonable to suppose that their measures were entirely defensive and were inspired by Napier's own measures. Their apparently peaceful attitude, however, was considered by Napier as mere camouflage and he thought that they only awaited the hot season, which, they expected, would paralyse the British soldiers by its deadly heat. Napier therefore decided to strike before they could, and in the beginning of 1843 marched towards Imamgarh, a desert fortress, which was deserted on his approach and which he blew up. He did this without any declaration of war and then turned south and halted at Sakrunda for a few days on hearing from Outram that the Amirs had accepted the treaty. Here Napier intercepted some letters from Amir Mohammad of Hyderabad calling upon Bilochee chiefs of the Murrce tribe to march to Miani immediately.<sup>31</sup> This finally led him to decide for war, if at all he had harboured any irresolution so far.

On the 17th of February Outram was attacked in the Residency by Bilochees having previously been warned by the Amirs to leave. He escaped and joined Napier at Hala, thirty miles north of Hyderabad. Napier now marched towards Miani, where his twenty-two hundred soldiers fought against thirty thousand men of the enemy and won a fiercely contested battle. On the following day the British flag flew

<sup>30</sup> P. P. 379. Letter to Ellenborough, October 17, 1842.

<sup>31</sup> *Conquest*, Napier, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 276, 277.

over the tower of Hyderabad. Sher Mohammad, the real fighting man, was defeated at Dubba in the middle of March.<sup>32</sup> Mirpur was occupied in the same month, and Amarkote seized on the 4th of April. This completed the conquest of Sindh. Sher Mohammad who had escaped at Dubba and had gathered some ten thousand men about him, was again defeated by Roberts and Jacob some fifty miles north of Hyderabad and rendered a fugitive. Sindh was annexed in August and the Amirs sent into exile.<sup>33</sup> Napier who was appointed the Governor of Sindh, now set about introducing reforms with a view to establish a stable government in that unhappy valley.

The annexation of Sindh aroused hot passions and controversies at the time. Ellenborough and Napier were both condemned and praised.

Many contemporary Englishmen of eminence considered the policy towards Sindh and its annexation a mistake. Henry Lawrence hated the whole affair and wrote to Lord Hardinge, "I do not think that Government can do better than restore it to the Amirs."<sup>34</sup> Mr. Gladstone afterwards revealed that Sir Robert Peel's cabinet, of which he and the Duke of Wellington were both members, disapproved, he believed unanimously, of the conquest.<sup>35</sup> In England, Elphinstone's contemptuous comment was: "Coming after Afghanistan, it put one in mind of a bully who has been kicked in the street and went home to beat his wife in revenge."<sup>36</sup> But while judging the contemporary condemnations of Napier and Ellenborough one must remember another factor which

<sup>32</sup> The medals for "Scinde" bear two names, "Meanee" and "Hyderabad," the latter being the official name for the Battle of Dubba.

<sup>33</sup> The Amirs of Khairpur and Hyderabad were sent to Bombay as State prisoners. In the following year they were conveyed to Calcutta, but in 1854, Lord Dalhousie, the then Governor-General allowed them to return to Sindh. See *Gazetteer of the Province of Sindh.*, A. W. Hughes, 1876.

<sup>34</sup> H. Lawrence to Lord Hardinge, April 24, 1847. In Morrison's *Lawrence of Lucknow*, p. 178.

<sup>35</sup> *Contemporary Review*, November 1876. Cited from *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, by Thompson and Garratt, 358-59.

<sup>36</sup> Letter to Metcalfe, *Life of Elphinstone*, cited by Thompson and Garratt, *Op. Cit.* 359.

contributed to the feeling against these two men. Napier's brilliant generalship against heavy odds at Miani stood out in great contrast against the timidity and irresolution shown by British generals in Kabul a year earlier, just as Ellenborough's resolute attitude towards the regions beyond the Indus provided a glaring contrast with the blundering policy of Auckland. In a retrospect of a century we are in a position to judge better. It is quite clear that the Amirs of Sindh were a barbarous, avaricious and cruel set of people. It is also clear that from the stand-point of international ethics the British Government of India had no more right then to appoint themselves protectors of the "interests of humanity" in Sindh than had Italy recently to hold herself the custodian of the material welfare of the Abyssinians. Major James Napier, the defender of his brother, Sir Charles Napier, makes much of the fact that the subjects of the Amirs were mal-administered and that it was natural to respond to the cry of oppressed humanity. We know, however, that that was neither the real nor the most important consideration which finally determined the decisions of the British Indian rulers. The fact was that owing to the disasters of the Afghanistan campaign, Lord Ellenborough considered it necessary to extend the frontiers of British India to the Indus, and Napier supported him largely out of the soldier's innate love for glory. In reality he was most impatient, as is clear from his letter to Lord Ellenborough already quoted. On the point of honesty he satisfied his own conscience and that of Lord Ellenborough by diligently preparing a list of the infringements of the treaty. In this he was justified to a great extent, for there is no doubt that the Amirs had not been faithful to their engagements. But he never gave a thought to the justice or injustice of those treaties on the strength of which he tried to defend his own conduct. His conduct though just in itself was based on injustice; for it seems that he himself considered those treaties unjust. In a private letter, dated 16th January, 1843, he writes, "I found the Amirs and our Government in the position in 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." Again, in the same

letter, "Mind I always reason upon affairs as both Lord Ellenborough and myself found them. I cannot enter upon our right to be here at all; that is Lord Auckland's affair."<sup>37</sup> The only conclusion to be formed is that Napier wanted the war and prepared the case; Ellenborough wanted Sindh and believed the case; and the conquest was the result.

Why did Ellenborough want Sindh? Because of a political necessity. Herein lies his only defence and justification, as James Napier admits it when he writes, "Take away this ground (of necessity) and it was a continuation of Lord Auckland's aggressive policy."<sup>38</sup> The Amirs wished for peace till the very last moment. At least that was the impression which the people had. Prince Soltykoff writes in *Voyage Dans L'Inde* that while at Hyderabad in February 1843, he was told that the "Amirs were still in hopes of a settlement and that the desire of the Amirs was all for peace."<sup>39</sup> They had accepted the new treaty even after Napier had destroyed Imamgarh without any provocation or declaration of war and without any offence having been committed by Mir Mohammad Khan of Khairpur, the owner of the castle. Napier also plundered the castle, "although no resistance was attempted, and although he had assured the Amirs that he would neither plunder nor slay them if they did not make any resistance."<sup>40</sup> This uncalled for spoliation of Imamgarh, which Napier termed "the Gibraltar of Sindh," although it did not offer any resistance, was bound to give "consistency to the prevailing rumours of intended aggression on our part which then agitated the Amirs," and thus drive them to measures of self-defence which, as Outram puts it, were afterwards assumed as ground for aggression.<sup>41</sup> Napier himself wrote that he was going to take Imamgarh "although

<sup>37</sup> Extract of a private letter of Sir C. Napier (Appendix to *Conquest*, Napier, p. 175).

<sup>38</sup> *Conquest*, Vol. I, p. 121.

<sup>39</sup> Translation of *Voyage Dans L'Inde* by H. L. O. Garrett, Monograph No. 18; p. 130, P. G. R. Office Publication.

<sup>40</sup> Outram in *A Commentary on the Conquest of Sindh*, p. 537-38.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 535.

war has not been declared, nor is it necessary to declare it.”<sup>42</sup> Not only had he a contempt for the formalities of war but also for arguments which he thought utterly useless. He pointed out to the Amirs, “I cannot go into argument. I am not Governor-General, I am only one of his commanders.”<sup>43</sup> It is not surprising under the circumstances that the Amirs lost control over their Bilochee tribesmen, who were seething with anger against the Feringhee, and, collecting them at Miani, gave battle to the English General.

In fact the case against Sir Charles Napier is so well established that even the most zealous of his defenders Major General James Napier, abandoning all moral or legal aspects, takes his stand on what he calls “utility, irrespective of abstract justice.” In another place he says: “It (the annexation) was expedient because it was for the interests of England. It was benevolent, because the well-being of the Scindian people and even of the Belochees, fairly considered, was secured thereby. It was wise, because it was benevolent, and because it promoted civilisation and commerce in barbarous countries.”<sup>44</sup> Two motives impelled Napier to war, firstly the love of glory and secondly the desire to bestow the blessings of the British Raj on the people of Sindh even against their will. That I think is the only possible explanation of his conduct. Behind all his talk of the breaches of treaty by the Amirs, and their hostile designs, one can perceive a substratum of that missionary spirit which implies an implicit faith in one’s right and capacity to do good. One cannot deny Napier’s capacity to do good, which he clearly proved in his administration of Sindh, but whether he had any right to do so is altogether a different matter.

<sup>42</sup> Letter to Governor-General, December 27, 1842. *Conquest, Op. Cit.*, 229.

<sup>43</sup> Outram, *Commentary, Op. Cit.* p. 184.

<sup>44</sup> *Conquest*, p. 473.



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM GHULAM SHAH, PRINCE OF SINDH, TO  
MR. ROBERT SUMPTION.

DATED 11TH DECEMBER, 1758

“ I now inform you that I am arrived with all my forces in the fort of Shah Bunder, and have determined to collect no customs (not even a single pice) on the goods that any King's merchants may bring to Shah Bunder, but on all exported from hence they are to pay the usual customs. You may be sure of this my determination, and import goods from any parts to trade here.

I hope you will soon send your man here to choose a place for building a house or factory. ”

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### APPENDIX II

ORDER OF GHULAM SHAH, PRINCE OF SINDH, TO HIS OFFICERS,  
DATED DECEMBER 18, 1758

“ You are hereby ordered not to demand any customs on the goods which Mr. Sumption may import, and likewise to let him have any place which he may choose for building a factory on. Give him all the assistance in your power, and be a friend to him that he may think himself at liberty in carrying on his trade for the good of the port.”

**APPENDIX III****TREATY WITH THE AMIRS OF SINDH, OF AUGUST 22, 1809.**

**I.** There shall be eternal friendship between the British Government and that of Sindh, namely Mir Ghulam Ali, Mir Karim Ali, and Mir Murad Ali.

**II.** Enmity shall never appear between the two States.

**III.** The mutual dispatch of the Vakils of both Governments, namely the British Government and Sindhian Government, shall always continue.

**IV.** The Government of Sindh will not allow the establishment of the tribe of the French in Sindh.

**APPENDIX IV****TREATY WITH THE AMIRS OF SINDH, NOVEMBER 9, 1820.**

The British Government and the Government of Sindh having in view to guard against the occurrence of frontier disputes and to strengthen the friendship already subsisting between the two States, Meer Ismael Shah was invested with full power to treat with the Honourable the Governor of Bombay and the following articles were agreed on between the two parties.

I. There shall be perpetual friendship between the British Government on the one hand and Mir Karim Ali and Mir Murad Ali on the other.

II. A mutual intercourse by means of Vakils shall always continue between the two Governments.

III. The Amirs of Sindh engage not to permit any European or American to settle in their dominions. If any of the subjects of either of the two States should establish their residence in the dominions of the other, and should conduct themselves in an orderly and peaceable manner in the territory to which they may immigrate, they will be allowed to remain in that situation; but if such persons shall be guilty of any disturbance or commotion, it will be incumbent on the local authority to take the offenders into custody, and punish or compel them to quit the country.

IV. The Amirs of Sindh engage to restrain the depredations of Khoosas and all other tribes and individuals within their limits, and to prevent the occurrence of any inroad into the British dominions.

Bombay, November 9, 1820.

## APPENDIX V

TREATY OF PEACE BETWEEN THE E. I. COMPANY AND THE  
STATE OF KHYRPUR, APRIL 4, 1832.

I. There shall be eternal friendship between the two States.

II. The two contracting powers mutually bind themselves from generation to generation never to look with the eye of covetousness on the possessions of each other.

III. The British Government having requested the use of the river Indus, and the roads of Sindh, for the merchants of Hindustan, etc., the Government of Khyrpur agrees to grant the same within its own boundaries on whatever terms may be settled with the Government of Hyderabad, namejy Mir Murad Ali Khan Talpur.

IV. The Government of Khyrpur agrees to furnish a written statement of just and reasonable duties to be levied on all goods passing under this treaty and further promises that traders shall suffer no loss or hindrance in transacting their business.

## APPENDIX VI

TREATY WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF HYDERABAD IN SINDH,  
(19TH JUNE, 1832)

I. That the friendship provided for in former Treaties between the British Government and that of Sindh remain unimpaired and binding and that this stipulation has received additional efficacy through the medium of Lieutenant-Colonel Pottinger, envoy, etc., so that the firm, connecting and close alliance now formed between the said States shall descend to the children and successors of the house of the above-named Mir Murad Ali Khan, principal after principal from generation to generation.

II. That the two contracting powers bind themselves never to look with the eye of covetousness on the possessions of each other.

III. That the British Government has requested a passage for the merchants and traders of Hindustan by the river and roads of Sindh, by which they may transport their goods and merchandize from one country to another, and the said Government of Hyderabad hereby acquiesces in the same request on the three following conditions :—

*1st*—That no person shall bring any description of military stores by the above river or roads.

*2nd*—That no armed vessels or boats shall come by the said river.

*3rd*—That no English merchants shall be allowed to settle in Sindh but shall come as occasion requires, and having stopped to transact their business, shall return to India.

IV. When merchants shall determine on visiting Sindh, they shall obtain a passport to do so from the British

Government and due intimation of the granting of such passports shall be made to the said Government of Hyderabad by the Resident in Kutch, or other officer of the said British Government.

V. That the Government of Hyderabad having fixed certain proper and moderate duties to be levied on merchandize and goods proceeding by the aforesaid routes shall adhere to that scale, and not arbitrarily and despotically either increase or lessen the same, so that the affairs of merchants and traders may be carried on without stop or interruption, and the custom house officers and farmers of revenues of the Sindh Government are to be specially directed to see that they do not delay the said merchants on pretence of awaiting for fresh orders from the Government or in the collection of the duties, and the said Government is to promulgate a Tariff or Table of duties leviabie on each kind of goods as the case may be.

VI. That whatever portions of former treaties entered into between the two States have not been altered and modified by the present one remain firm and unaltered, as well as those stipulations now concluded, and by the blessing of God no deviation from them shall ever happen.

VII. That the friendly intercourse between the two States shall be kept up by the despatch of Vakils whenever the transaction of business, or the increase of the relations of friendship may render it desirable.

W. C. BENTINCK.

## APPENDIX VII

TREATY BETWEEN THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AND THE AMIRS OF SINDH, CONCLUDED BY COL. HENRY POTTINGER, AGENT TO THE G.-G. FOR SINDH, ON THE ONE PART AND THEIR HIGHNESSES MIR NUR MOHAMMAD KHAN AND MIR NASIR MOHAMMAD KHAN ON APRIL 20, 1838.

I. In consideration of the long friendship which has subsisted between the British Government and the Amirs of Sindh, the G.-G. in Council engages to use his good offices to adjust the present differences which are understood to subsist between the Amirs of Sindh and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, so that peace and friendship may be established between the two states.

II. In order to secure and improve the relations of amity and peace which have so long subsisted between the Sindh State and the British Government, it is agreed that an accredited British Minister shall reside at the Court of Hyderabad and that the Amirs of Sindh shall also be at liberty to depute a vakil to reside at the Court of the British Government, and that the British Minister shall be empowered to change his ordinary place of residence as may, from time to time, seem expedient, and be attended by such an escort as may be deemed suitable by his Government.

## APPENDIX VIII

RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE TRIPARTITE TREATY OF 1838,  
BETWEEN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, SHAH SHUJA  
AND RANJIT SINGH.

IV. Regarding Shikarpur and the territory of Sindh, 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 Maharaja through Captain Wade.

XVI. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk agrees to relinquish for himself, his heirs and successors all claims of supremacy and arrears of tribute over the country now held by the Amirs of Sindh (which will continue to belong to the Amirs and their successors in perpetuity) on condition of the payment to him by the Amirs 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 Maharaja Ranjit Singh. On these payments being completed, article 4 of the treaty of the 12th March 1833,<sup>1</sup> will be considered cancelled, and the customary interchange of letters and suitable presents between the Maharaja and the Amirs of Sindh shall be maintained as heretofore.

<sup>1</sup> Between Shah Shuja and Ranjit Singh.



## APPENDIX IX

MEMORANDUM GIVEN BY THE RESIDENT IN SINDH TO THE AMIRS, DATED 27TH SEPTEMBER, 1838, CONTAINING THE INFORMATION REGARDING THE SIGNING OF THE TRIPARTITE TREATY AND TELLING THEM OF THE BENEFITS WHICH THEY WILL SECURE BY MAKING A PAYMENT TO SHAH SHUJA.

“The Amirs must likewise perfectly understand that the measures described in this memorandum are not open to further consideration, but have been finally resolved on, and that any hesitation on their part.....to comply with what is asked of them must be deemed to be a refusal, and immediate steps taken to remedy it, which it is obvious can only be done by calling in additional troops which are all ready both in Bengal and Bombay territories.”<sup>1</sup> ,

<sup>1</sup> Pages 23—25 of the Parliamentary Papers.

## APPENDIX X

## TREATY WITH THE KHYRPUR STATE, JAN. 10TH, 1839.

I. There shall be perpetual friendship, alliance and unity of interests, between the Hon'ble East India Company and Mir Rustam Khan Talpur and his Heirs and successors, from generation to generation, and the Friends and Enemies of one party shall be Friends and Enemies of both.

II. The British Government engages to protect the principality and territory of Khyrpur.

III. Mir Rustam Khan and his Heirs and successors will act in subordinate co-operation with the British Government and acknowledge its supremacy and not have any connection with any other chiefs and states.

IV. The Amir, and his Heirs and successors will not enter into negotiation with any Chief or State without the knowledge and sanction of the British Government, but the usual amicable correspondence with friends and relations shall continue.

V. The Amir and his Heirs and successors will not commit aggressions on any one. If by accident, any dispute arise with any one, the settlement of it shall be submitted to the arbitration and award of the British Government.

VI. The Amir will furnish troops according to his means at the requisition of the British Government, and render it all and every necessary aid and assistance throughout his territory during the continuance of war and approve of all the defensive preparations which it may make while the peace and security of the countries on the other side of the Indus may be threatened, but the English Government will not covet a Dam or Drain of the territories enjoyed by His Highness and his Heirs, nor the fortresses on this bank or that bank of the river Indus.

VII. The Amir and his Heirs and successors shall be absolute rulers of their country and the British jurisdiction shall not be introduced into that principality, nor will

any of the Bilochee servants, dependents, relatives or subjects of the Amir, be listened to, should they complain against the said Amir.

VIII. In order to improve by every means possible the growing intercourse by the river Indus, Mir Rustam Khan promises all co-operation with the other powers in any measures which may be hereafter thought necessary for extending and facilitating the Commerce and navigation of the Indus.

IX. In order to further secure the relations of amity and peace which have so long subsisted between the Khyrpur State and the British Government, it is agreed that an accredited British Minister shall reside at the Court of Khyrpur, and that the Amir shall be at liberty to depute an agent to reside at the Court of the British Government; and the British Government shall be empowered to change his ordinary place of residence as may, from time to time, seem expedient, and be attended by such an escort as may be deemed suitable by his Government.

X. This treaty of nine articles having been concluded and signed and sealed by Lieutenant-Col. Sir A. Burnes, Knight, Envoy on the part of the Right Honourable Lord George Auckland, G.C.B., G.-G. of India, and Mir Rustam Khan on the part of himself, Chief of Khyrpur, the Ratification by the Right Honourable the G.-G. shall be exchanged within forty-five days from the present date.

KHYRPUR, 24TH DECEMBER, 1838.

A. BURNES

RATIFIED BY THE G.-G. ON 10TH JAN., 1839

*Separate Article.*—Since the British Government has taken upon itself the responsibility of protecting the State of Khyrpur from all enemies, now and hereafter, and neither coveted any portion of its possessions nor fortresses on this side or that of the Indus, it is hereby agreed upon by Rustam Khan and his heirs and successors, that if the Governor-General in time of war should seek to occupy the fortress of Bukkur as a Depôt for treasure and munitions, the Amir shall not object to it.

A. BURNES

Envoy at Khyrpur.

## APPENDIX XI

## TREATY BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND HYDERABAD GOVERNMENTS AS CONCLUDED BY THE RESIDENT IN SINDH

(FEBRUARY 5, 1839)

I. There shall be lasting friendship, alliance and amity

.....

II. The Governor-General has commanded that a British force shall be kept in Sindh and stationed at the city of Tatta where a cantonment will be formed. The strength of this force is to depend on the pleasure of the Governor-General of India, but will not exceed 5,000 men.

III. Mir Nur Mohd. Khan, Mir Nasir Mohd. Khan and Mir Mohd. Khan bind themselves to pay annually the sum of three lacs of rupees in part of the expense of the force, from the presence of which their respective territories will derive such vast advantages.

IV. (Not important).

V. The British Government pledges itself neither to interfere in any degree, small or great, in the internal management or affairs of the several possessions of the Amirs, nor to think of introducing in any shape its regulations or *adawlut*s.

VI. (Not important).

VII. The British Government agrees to protect Sindh from all foreign aggression.

VIII. (Not important).

IX. Should any Amir attack or injure the possessions of another Amir, or those of his dependents, the Resident in Sindh will on being applied to by both sides, and on receiving the sanction of the Governor-General of India act as mediator between them, but it is to be distinctly understood that he (the Resident) is not to intermeddle in trifling points.

X. Should any Bilochee or other chief rebel against the authority of the Amir to whom he appertains, or attack the

lands or other possessions of any other Amir or chief, and the Amir to whom he appertains shall declare his inability to coerce such chief the Governor-General will take the case into consideration on its being submitted to His Lordship by the Resident, and will, should his Lordship see sufficient reason, order such assistance to be given as may be requisite to punish the offender.

XI. Their Highnesses agree to form no new treaties or enter into any engagements with foreign states, without the knowledge of the British Government, but their Highnesses will, of course, carry on friendly correspondence with all their neighbours.

XII. The British Government agrees on its part, not to form any Treaty or enter into any engagement that can possibly affect the interests of Sindh, without the concurrence and knowledge of their Highnesses the Amirs.

XIII. (Not important).

XIV. The Amirs agree to either build or allow the British Government to build an enclosure and store-house at Karachi as a depôt for stores ; their Highnesses incurring no sort of expense on this account, and being repaid for any outlay they may incur.

XV. (Not important).

XVI. Amongst the great objects of the Governor-General in fixing a British force in Sindh is that of perfecting the arrangements which have been in progress for several years for opening the Indus to traders, and as the thoroughfare will now be increased a hundredfold, the contracting Governments agree to abolish all tolls on the river from the sea to Ferozepur.

XVII. (Not important).

XVIII. (Not important.)

XIX. Should the British Government at any time require and apply for the aid of the army of Sindh, their Highnesses the Amirs agree to furnish it according to their means, and in any such case, the troops thus applied for are not to exceed 3,000 men, are not to proceed beyond the frontier of Sindh, and are to be paid for by the British Government.

XX. The terms of this treaty except the 3rd article are to be considered applicable to His Highness Mir Sobdar Khan of Hyderabad.

XXI. (Not important).

XXII. Should Mir Sher Mohammad of Mirpur wish it, a treaty on this basis will be made with him.

XXIII. The British Government undertakes to guarantee to the different Amirs, their heirs and successors, on their acquiescing in the terms of this treaty, the perpetual enjoyment of their respective possessions, and the friends and enemies of the one party shall be friends and enemies of the other.

HENRY POTTINGER.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This treaty was ratified by the Governor-General with slight modifications on March 11, 1839. See P. P. No. 164.

## APPENDIX XII

DRAFT OF TREATY BETWEEN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT  
AND THE AMIRS OF KHYRPUR, NOVEMBER 4, 1842

I. The perganna of Bhoong Bhera and the third part of the district of Subzulkote and the villages of Gotkee, Malader, Chaonga, Dadoola, and Azizpur, and all the territories of the Amirs of Khyrpur or any of them intervening between the present dominions of his His Highness the Nawab of Bahawalpur, and the town and district of Roree are ceded in perpetuity to his His Highness the Nawab.

II. The town of Sukkur, with such *arrondissement* as shall be deemed necessary by Major-General Sir Charles Napier, and the Islands of Bukkur and the adjoining islets, and the town of Roree, with such *arrondissement* as may be deemed necessary by Major-General Sir Charles, Napier, are ceded in perpetuity to the British Government.

III. The Commissioner appointed by Major-General Sir Charles Napier for the execution of this treaty, and of the treaty to be concluded with the Amirs of Hyderabad, shall appropriate the surplus tribute, from which the Amirs of Hyderabad will be relieved by that Treaty or lands of equal value in lieu thereof, first to the indemnification of such Amirs of Khyrpur other than Mir Rustam Khan and Mir Nasir Khan, as may make cessions of territory under this treaty, and then for the benefit of Mir Rustam Khan, and Mir Nasir Khan in proportion to the annual value of the cessions made by them respectively under this Treaty.

IV. (Not important).

V. The only coin legally current in the dominions of the Amirs of Khyrpur after the 1st of January 1845, shall be the Company's rupee, and the rupee hereinafter mentioned.

VI. The British Government will coin for the Amirs of Khyrpur such number of rupees as they may require from time to time, such rupee bearing on one side the effigy of the

sovereign of England, with such inscription or device as the Amirs may prefer.

VII. Such rupees, so to be coined for the Amirs, shall contain the same quantity of silver, and of the same fineness, as the Company's rupees, and for every rupee so coined, the Amirs shall deliver to the officers of the British Government who may hereafter be from time to time appointed to receive the same, a quantity of silver, equal to that contained in such rupee, and of equal fineness; or approved bills of equal value; and such rupees so coined for the Amirs shall be delivered over to them within four months after the receipt, by the appointed officer, of the silver equivalent thereto, or within four months after the payment of the approved bills for the amount without any charge for coinage, which charge will be wholly borne by the British Government.

VIII. The Amirs in consideration of the above engagement, renounce the privilege of coining money, and will not exercise the same from the date of the signature of this treaty.

IX. (Not important).

X. The British Government renounces every claim heretofore made upon the late Mir Mubarak Khan or upon Mir Nasir Khan, or the other sons of the late Mir Mubarak Khan on account of Nazrana, in the name of the late Shah Shuja or on account of annual tribute and the arrears thereof and interest thereon on its own behalf.

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## APPENDIX XIII

## SIR C. NAPIER TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

My Lord,

I am ashamed to send your Lordship an essay, rather than a letter, upon the state of Sindh. All that I have said is supported by documents enclosed to Mr. Maddock, placing under cover to your Lordship only those papers that are necessary. I wish I could have made my observations more concise, but I had to learn, as well as to describe, our position in Sindh, as regard the Ameers.

I have etc.,  
C. J. NAPIER

---

Inclosure I in Napier's letter

OBSERVATIONS BY SIR C. NAPIER UPON THE OCCUPATION  
OF SINDH

1. It is not for me to consider how we came to occupy Sindh, but to consider the subject as it now stands, viz., 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.

2. There does not appear to be any public protest, registered by the Ameers, against the treaties. They must, therefore, be considered as the free expressions of the will of the Contracting Parties. Such, then, is the relative position of the British Government and the Ameers of Sindh at this time.

3. The English occupy Shikarpore, Bukkur, Sukkur, and Karachi by treaties, which, if rigidly adhered to by the Ameers, would render these Princes more rich and powerful and their subjects more happy, than they now are.

4. If sticklers for abstract rights maintain—as no doubt they will—that to prevent a man from doing mischief is to

enslave him, then it might be called hard to enforce a rigid observance of these treaties; but this is not the case. The evident object of these treaties is to favour our Indian interests, by the abolition of barbarism, by ameliorating the condition of society, and by obliging the Ameers to do, in compliance with treaties, that which honourable and civilised rulers would do of their own accord. It is very necessary to keep this in view, because, although the desire to do good would not sanction a breach of treaty on our part, it does sanction our exacting a rigid adherence to the treaties on the part of the Ameers; and the more so, that their attempt to break such treaties evinces the barbarism of those Princes, their total want of feeling for their subjects, and their own unfitness to govern a country. These things must be always kept before the mind, or what I am about to say will appear unjust, which is not the case.

5. By treaty, the time for which we may occupy our present camps is unlimited; but there is such hostility to us on the part of the Ameers—such a hatred to the treaties—such a resolution to break them in every way; there is, among their people, such a growing attachment to the British rule, that, putting these facts together, the question arises whether we should abandon the interests of humanity, and those of the British Government (for in this case they are one), and at once evacuate Sindh; or, shall we take advantage of existing treaties, and maintain our camps permanently?

6. If we evacuate this country, future events will inevitably bring us back to the banks of the Indus.

7. If we remain, our camps will soon be filled with the subjects of the Ameers, flying from their oppression. These camps will thus quickly grow into towns, and the people within will carry on a transit trade along the Indus, to the exclusion of the subjects of the Ameers without. Among the latter, misery and poverty will sojourn; for the exactions of the Ameers will, in a great measure, destroy both commerce and agriculture among their people. Such appears to be the probable result if we adhere rigidly to the Treaty, and permanently occupy our camps.

8. This produces another question, *viz.*: Is it possible that

such a state of things can long continue? 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.

9. 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. Let me first consider how we might go to work in a matter so critical, and whether the facts, to which I called attention in a former part of these observations, will bear me out in what I propose.

10. Several Ameers have broken the Treaty in the various instances stated in the accompanying "Return of Complaints" against them. I have maintained that we want only a fair pretext to coerce the Ameers, and I think the various acts, recorded in the return, give abundant reason to take Kurachee, Sukkur, Bukkur, Shikarpore, and Subzulkote, for our own; obliging the Ameers to leave a track-way along both banks of the Indus, and stipulate for a supply of wood; but at the same time, remitting all tribute, and arrears of tribute, in favour of those Ameers whose conduct has been correct; and, finally, enter into a fresh treaty with one of these Princes alone as Chief, and answerable for the others.

11. I cannot think that such a procedure would be either dishonorable, or harsh. I am sure it would be humane. The refractory Ameers break the Treaty, for the gratification of their avaricious dispositions; and we punish that breach. I can perceive no injustice in such proceeding.

12. If it be determined to keep possession of Sukkur and Bukkur, I do not think it would be politic to give up Shikarpore; my reasons for this opinion are as follows:—The town of Sukkur stands on an elbow of the Indus, which surrounds

the town on two sides; on the other two, at about four miles distance, it is closed in by a large jungle, through which passes the road to Shikarpore where the jungle finishes. Now, if we evacuate Shikarpore, the robber tribes will descend from the hills, and establish themselves in this jungle; so that Sukkur will be blockaded; and no one be able to move beyond the chain of sentries without being murdered. To clear this jungle with infantry would be impossible; the robbers would retreat before the advancing troops, and when the latter retired, the former would again occupy their position in the jungle. But, if we occupy Shikarpore, a body of cavalry stationed there, would spread along the outskirt of the jungle, while infantry would (by concert) push through the wood from Sukkur. The robbers, thus cut off from their hills, would receive such a terrible punishment, as to deter any other tribe from trying the same experiment.

13. In a commercial point, I consider Shikarpore to be of considerable importance. It forms a depôt for the reception of goods from the north and west; with which countries it has long possessed channels of communication; circumstances of an adverse nature may for a while interrupt these; but, under a firm protecting Government, they would soon be again opened out; and from Shikarpore goods would be sent to Sukkur, there to be shipped on the Indus, and would also be passed by land to Larkhana, and thence on to Kurachee. These seem formerly to have been the great lines of trade. They are geographically and naturally so, and will therefore quickly revive. But if Shikarpore be left to the mercy of the surrounding gangs of freebooters, commerce cannot thrive, nor, without Shikarpore being strongly guarded, can it pass through the jungle to Sukkur. These two towns are so placed as naturally to support each other in commerce.

14. In a political light, Shikarpore has the advantage of being chiefly inhabited by a Hindu population, tolerated for ages by the Mussulmans, and, consequently, forming a pacific link of intercourse between us and the nations north and west; through Shikarpore, these Hindoos will be the means of gradually filtering the stream of commerce and social intercourse between the Mahomedans and ourselves,

and, in time, unite those who will not abruptly amalgamate. Shikarpore contains many rich banking houses, which is a sure evidence of its being a central point of communication between the surrounding countries, and, consequently, one where the British Government would learn what was going on in Asia. The money market is, generally speaking, the best political barometer.

15. The robber tribes in this neighbourhood have kept down this town despite its natural and acquired advantages; in fact, the robber is everywhere the master. Therefore all round is barbarous and barbarous must continue to be, till civilisation gradually encroaches upon these lawless people; and, I think, Shikarpore is precisely one of those grand positions that ought to be seized upon for that purpose. I have, therefore, directed Major-General England not to evacuate this town till further instructions are received from the Governor-General.

16. I shall keep this memorandum till the arrival of Major Outram, and will request of him to peruse it, that he may give his opinion upon the view which I have taken; an opinion, which his experience of these countries, his abilities, and the high situation in which he has been placed by the Governor-General, all render very important. If Major Outram concurs in the opinions which I have ventured to express they will be strengthened; if not, the Governor-General will be made acquainted with the objections of one possessing great local knowledge.

17. I have drawn up this memorandum entirely on my own considerations of the subject; but, since Major Outram's arrival, which took place when I finished the last paragraph, he has given me every possible assistance. He concurs in all I have said in the foregoing paragraphs, but, at the same time, he has added much to my local knowledge, and, in justice to the Ameers, I must, with this increase of information, enlarge upon what I have stated. The Ameers say that they did not understand Article XI of the Treaty with Hyderabad, to prohibit the levying of tolls on their own subjects. It seems that they urge, in proof of their misconception, that they resisted the signing the Treaty, because of other Articles, less

important, yet never objected to Article XI, because they relied upon Article V. This may be, and I would willingly, if possible, suppose that they really did conceive that the Treaty gave them the right of levying tolls on their own subjects; but my answer is that they have attempted to levy tolls on the boats of the Khan of Bahawalpore, which the Treaty assuredly does not give them any right to do; and they have even fired into the boats of merchants from that place. The Treaty could not be misconstrued on these points, and, therefore, I do not believe that they misconstrued the terms of the Treaty, but broke Article XI purposely. The Treaty has also been broken by treasonable correspondence, and other vexatious acts, as set forth in the accompanying return.

18. Now, what will be the punishment, which I propose to inflict for their misconduct, amount to? Injury to their family? No! Injury to their subjects? No! To what then? To the reduction of their territory by four places; two of which (Sukkur and Bukkur) are barren spots, yielding no revenue, and the other two (Kurachee and Shikarpore) towns that their tyranny has nearly ruined; and for one of which, Shikarpore, we have negotiations yet pending; and, to obtain these places in seigniorage, it is proposed to remit all tribute in arrear, and, for the future, withdraw our resident from Hyderabad, ensure the amelioration of the impoverished state in which their subjects now languish, and in time, add to the power and wealth of the Ameers themselves, by opening the commerce of the river.

19. To their selfish feelings and avarice, and love of hunting, are such great general interests to be sacrificed? I think not; the real interests of the Ameers themselves demand that their puerile pursuits and blind avaricious proceedings should be subjected to a wholesome control, which their breaches of treaties, and our power, give us, at this moment, a lawful right to exercise, and the means of peaceably enforcing. If any civilised man were asked the question, "Were you the ruler of Sindh, what would you do?" His answer would be, "I would abolish the tolls upon the rivers, make Kurachee a free port, protect Shikarpore from robbers, make Sukkur a mart for trade on the Indus. I would make a track-way along

its banks ; I would get steam-boats." Yet all this is what the Ameers dread.

20. They have broken treaties, they have given a pretext, and I have a full conviction (perhaps erroneously) that what I propose is just and humane. I will go further, and say that, as Nusseer Khan of Hyderabad has openly broken the Treaty, if the Governor-General chooses to punish him, he might justly seize the district of Subzulkote, and give it to the Khan of Bahawalpore, as I have understood there was some intention of doing.

21. The second point to which Major Outram has drawn my attention is a very strong one. He tells me that the tribes on the river above that part possessed by the Ameers of Sindh, do levy tolls, and that there is no treaty or public document forthcoming, in virtue of which we can call upon the Ameers, of even Upper Sindh, not to levy tolls upon their own subjects. It is, therefore, evident, that to call upon the Ameers of Hyderabad to desist from levying tolls, but not to prevent the others from doing so would be unjust to the Ameers. The answer to the argument, "That tolls are levied on the Northern Indus," is just this : we should say to these northern tribes, "We have with great trouble secured to your boats a free passage on the river through Sindh; we are resolved to open the commerce of this great highway of nations; and you, who all receive benefit, must join in this great measure for the good of all, and to the loss of none." Therefore, to excuse the Ameers upon the ground that others are not equally coerced, is answered by coercing the others.

22. Having thus given the best view that I can take of this intricate subject, I shall accompany this report by various documents among which there is one giving a kind of return, if I may so call it, of the accusations against the Ameers; upon which accusations, relative to which I have read every paper, I have founded my opinion of their conduct; and, by referring to this return, it will be seen whether I have justly estimated the complaints made against them by the Political Agents.

23. I have also added the documents verifying each transaction. I have also begged of Major Outram to give me

a memorandum of the state in which the Treaty with the Ameers, for the purchase of Shikarpore, remains, as it has been in abeyance since last year. From this memorandum it would appear, that, in addition to the great advantages to Sukkur, which would attend the occupation of Shikarpore, this district would be a very valuable acquisition, in point of revenue, in time; and cover, with the aid of Kurachee, the expense of guarding our newly-acquired towns on the banks of the Indus.

24. Should it hereafter be deemed proper to make the proposed arrangements with the Ameers, so as to punish those who have broken the Treaty, the details of such arrangements can be easily made. The transfer of tribute due would adequately repay whatever portions of the districts in question belong to the Ameers whose conduct has been loyal when compared with that of others.



## APPENDIX XIV

PROCLAMATION ADDRESSED BY SIR C. NAPIER TO THE AMIRS  
OF UPPER SINDH, JANUARY 27, 1843

I was ordered to make a new treaty with you. Your Highnesses agreed to the Draft of that treaty in words, while you raised troops to oppose it in deeds. You were ordered to disperse your troops, you did not disperse them. You hoped to deceive me by a pretended agreement to the Draft Treaty. You thought you could procrastinate till the hot weather should prevent any military operation by the British troops; then you imagined you could assail us on all sides with impunity. If we marched against you before the heat came, you thought our march would be late and you resolved to resist with arms, if worsted in fight, you looked to the desert as a certain refuge. You were right, had we abided your time, and marched by the road you expected. But we preferred our own time and our own road, we marched into your desert, we destroyed your magazine of powder and of grain, we destroyed also the fortress in which they were (as you vainly supposed) safely lodged, and we returned out of the desert, and we have yet three months of weather fit for war. But I want to prevent war. I, therefore, wrote to you to meet Major Outram at Khairpur on the 25th instant, there to discuss and arrange the details of the draft treaty, or accept or reject them as seemed best to your Highnesses. What is the result? Your Highnesses have neither replied to my letter nor sent delegates invested with authority to meet my Commissioner. This conduct is insulting to the Government I serve. I told you that if you so acted, I would take possession of your territories but my object is to avoid hostilities while I obey the orders of the Governor-General. I, therefore, will still give you to the first of February to send your Vakeels to my headquarters, in hope that you may correct the impru-

dence with which you have hitherto acted and which I deeply regret. My military operations must, however, go forward, but your persons shall be respected; you shall be considered as friends up to the first day of February, after that day I shall treat all as enemies, who do not send Vakeels to meet me.

**AMIRS,**

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, nor a second time expose the authority which I represent to indignity; but this proclamation will, I hope, induce you to adopt a manly instead of an insidious course.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

I have made use of letters in the following Letter-Books in the Punjab Government's Records Office at Lahore. All these books contain century old letters, written with hand, and sometimes badly written.

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The following four books have been particularly useful :— Nos. 107, 115, 137, 142.

The following printed works have also been consulted and made use of :—

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2. *Outram*—A Commentary on the Conquest of Sindh.
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*This book traces the relations of the British Government with Sindh from the middle of 17th century to the annexation in 1843. The treatment of a highly controversial subject is essentially judicious and the analysis of the treaties contracted by the British Government with the Amirs of Sindh is characterised by a spirit of powerful moderation and sane criticism. The author, as a University Research Scholar, had an access to original documents and manuscript records of the Punjab Government and he has based his opinions on these documents. As these records have never been used before the author has been able to make a valuable contribution to the existing knowledge on this important subject of history.*