

THE
MIGHTY AND SHREWD MAHARAJA
[Ranjit Singh's Relations with other Powers]

By

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PREFACE

The story of Maharaja Ranjit Singh will long remain a fascinating field of study. Starting as a petty chief he soon emerged as a ruler who could face on equal terms the all-Indian British power in its youthful vigour and confidence. Could the British and Sikh authorities, so different in their methods and outlook, though essentially based on military prowess, co-exist? The political situation in this region headed towards a crisis when the weak and divided Sind aroused Ranjit Singh's rapacity. The Sikh ruler's cherished desire to occupy that province which would have provided the Sikh dominion an outlet to the sea, on the one hand, and extreme British anxiety not to allow him to extend his influence in that direction, on the other, presented one of the thorniest problems of the time. A little later Ranjit Singh's occupation of Peshawar (1834) raised a chain of knotty problems on the North-West Frontier of India.

These and other important questions which cropped up in the north-west of India during the first four decades of the 19th century are dealt with critically in the present volume, which is mostly based on an examination of records preserved in the Government archives in Lahore and New Delhi. The material was originally collected by the author for the preparation of his Ph.D. thesis. Certain chapters from the thesis which was published by the Panjab Government Record Office in 1950, are being reproduced here, *mutatis-mutandis*, by courtesy of the Panjab Government.

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R. R. SETHI

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CHAPTER I

Relations with the English Company up to 1823

The Sikh power in the Punjab rose in the wake of the invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali which shattered the already tottering edifice of the Mughal Empire. The Sikhs, who had been driven into mountain defiles after Banda's execution in 1716, now re-emerged to share the spoils of the dying Empire. It was after Ahmad Shah's last invasion in 1766-67, that they settled down in different areas on both sides of the Sutlej in groups, or formations, known as the Misl.¹

These different Misl, composed largely of sturdy, militant and unruly elements, lost no time in embarking on a career of internecine strife for gaining supremacy of one over the other. This, in turn, inevitably led to the emergence of a leader of extraordinary ability among them—Ranjit Singh of the Shukerchakia Misl—who succeeded by the end of the century in reducing them all to his own control, and building up a strong and extensive kingdom.

The first contact between Ranjit Singh and the East India Company came off in 1800, when Munshi Yusuf Ali Khan brought presents from the Governor General to the rising Sikh Chief.² This meant that the British were not unmindful of how political affairs were shaping in the then anarchic Land of the Five Rivers. This interest grew permanent after their occupation of Delhi in 1803, as between their newly established outposts and the rapidly extending boundaries of Ranjit Singh there hardly existed any natural or strong barrier.

In 1805, an occasion for a closer contact between Ranjit

1. The most important Misl were :

(i) Bhangi, (ii) Ramgarhia, (iii) Kanheya, (iv) Nakai, (v) Ahluwalia, (vi) Dalewalia, (vii) Nishanwala, (viii) Fyzulpuria, (ix) Karorasinghia, (x) Shahid or Nihang, (xi) Phulkian, (xii) Shukerchakia. (Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab*, pp. 29 sqq.)

2. Amar Nath, *Zafarnama-i-Ranjit Singh*, p. 13.

Singh and the British arose through Jaswant Rao Holkar's fugitive appearance at Amritsar, and Lord Lake's chasing him up to the banks of the Beas. Holkar sought to enlist Ranjit Singh's help, but the latter with all his youth and impetuosity proved too wise to identify himself with a lost cause and fall out with a power of far greater resource. Instead, he sought to establish friendly relations with the British by sending Sardar Fattah Singh Ahluwalia to Lake's camp to make a friendly understanding with him.³ The Treaty of Lahore of January 1, 1806, was thus concluded, Sardars Ranjit Singh and Fattah Singh agreeing "to cause Jaswant Rao Holkar to remove with his army to the distance of 30 kos from Amritsar immediately, and never again to hold connection with him or aid him with troops or assist him in any manner." The British Government, on its part, undertook that as long as those chiefs refrained from holding any friendly connection with its enemies or from committing any act of hostility, its armies would not enter their territories, nor would it form any plans for seizing their possessions or property.⁴ Holkar retired, and "a vague but friendly alliance"⁵ came now to exist between the British and Ranjit Singh.

This settlement secured Ranjit Singh, at least for some time, from English interference in his plans of conquest north-west of the Sutlej.⁶ But the country south-east of that river up to the

3. Wade to Metcalfe, August 1, 1827. Despatch reproduced in Chopra, *The Punjab as a Sovereign State*, p. 312.

Sohan Lal (*Umdat-ul Twarikh*, Daftar II, p. 59) writes that Holkar pressed Ranjit Singh for an alliance against the English, on which the Sikh Chief replied, "In this world the British are the only nation favoured by God".

4. Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol. I, p. 33.

5. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 134.

6. The fact that the treaty was signed by the East India Company with Ranjit Singh and Fattah Singh (with whom he had exchanged turbans), shows that up to 1806 the former had not built unquestioned authority in the Punjab, but that Fattah Singh was still his equal in status. But, during the next three years, Ranjit Singh directed his attention to the subjugation of the country round about Lahore and Amritsar, and successfully carried out campaigns against the rulers of Jhang (1806), Hoshiarpur (1806), Kasur (1807), Gujrat

(Continued on page 3)

Jumna had not yet been the subject of mutual agreement, and from the point of view of both the British and Ranjit Singh was a sort of no man's land to be occupied at any convenient time. It was divided among a number of Sikh chiefs, whose incessant mutual quarrels soon provided an excuse for Ranjit Singh to make inroads into it.⁷

Ranjit Singh's aggressions naturally alarmed the cis-Sutlej chiefs. They had, on the one hand, no desire to accept him as their overlord, while, on the other hand, there was the danger from the English having established themselves on the Jumna. Between the lion and the wolf, they had thus to come to terms with the stronger, when they decided to seek the British protection.⁸ For this purpose, a deputation consisting of Raja Bhag Singh of Jind, Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal, and Chen Singh, an agent of the chief of Patiala, waited upon Seton, the Resident at Delhi, in March, 1808,⁹ to sound him as to the extent and kind of protection his Government was willing to afford them.¹⁰ Seton, as instructed, put them off with vague answers at the moment.¹¹

(Continued from page 2)

⁷ 1809) and various other places, and, by 1809, succeeded in absorbing the central Punjab into single kingdom—Chopra, *op. cit.*, p. 15. Also Wade's report, P.G.R. Book No. 206, pp. 16—21.

7. Invitations came to Ranjit from cis-Sutlej chiefs for active help or arbitration in some disputes. He gladly arbitrated in the disputes between Patiala and Nabha (1806) and between the Raja and Rani of Patiala (1807). He turned these occasions to his own advantage by seizing several places. He compelled the chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Maerkotha, Kaithal and other places to pay tribute and look for protection and guidance to him rather than to any other power beyond the Indus or the Jumna. (Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, pp. 92 *sqq.*, Amar Nath, *op. cit.*, p. 41, and Chopra, *op. cit.* pp. 33-34.)
8. The Chiefs arrived at the decision to prefer British overlordship to Ranjit's after some deliberation. To them the former appeared to be the lesser of the two evils. They compared Ranjit's domination to brain affection with its immediately fatal effects, and the British overlordship to consumption with its more gradual results. (Chopra *op. cit.* pp. 52-53, and reference there cited.)
9. Griffin, *op. cit.* p. 98.
10. Idem, pp. 100—102.
11. The English were disposed to protect them, but had not yet determined how to act. The reply to the deputation was, therefore, cautiously vague.

The deputation returned only to find Ranjit Singh's agents waiting with reassurances. Foreseeing with despair the chances of their subjugation by the Sikh ruler after the discouraging reception which they had received from the British Resident, they felt now disposed to trust his clemency and opened negotiations with him to this end. The conference in which Ranjit was trying to allay their fears was still in progress when news reached of the arrival of Metcalfe, the British Envoy, at Kasur, in September 1808.

An *ex post facto* study of the attitude of the Company's Government towards the Indian Rulers, after the time of Lord Wellesley, reveals the change in its attitude towards Ranjit Singh also. After Wellesley's recall Cornwallis was charged with the policy of non-intervention. His tenure being short-lived, he was succeeded by Barlow who, in spite of the remonstrances of Lake and other officials, followed the lines that his predecessor had indicated¹² at the instance of the Directors. Reversion or departure from the strictest interpretation of this policy came soon, however, due to a new situation in the international field. Minto, who had come out to India wedded to the policy of "imperturbable forbearance and scrupulous non-intervention"¹³ felt obliged to depart from it. Once more the fear of French intrigues, which had operated so powerfully in extending the red line of British dominion on the map of southern India, was to exercise a similar influence in a new direction.

The charlatan of genius, Napoleon, in 1807, at Tilsit¹⁴, suggested his famous joint operations with Russia against *les possessions de la compagnie de Indes*, the French proposing to march through Asia Minor and Persia.¹⁵ At this a fit of Franco-

12. Metcalfe described their policy, rather unfairly, as "disgrace without compensation, treaties without security and peace without tranquillity". (Roberts, *History of British India*, pp. 263-64.)

13. Kaye, *The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, Vol. I, p. 245 "A strictly defensive system was to be maintained—not that defensiveness which is nine parts aggression, but rigid non-interference, which turns its back upon its neighbour until it receives a blow from behind."

14. The peace of Tilsit marked the zenith of Napoleon's power. Russia was now joined to France and, in fact, with the exception of Sweden, the whole of Europe was on her side.

15. Morison, *A Survey of Imperial Frontier policy*, p. 4.

phobia took possession of British statesmen, and "impatient politicians" in India sitting idle on their side of the ring-fence established by the Directors in 1805. Minto felt that the neutrality of Cornwallis and a defensive attitude could no longer be sustained, as he could not dismiss the practicability of the rumoured operations as beyond the scope of energy and perseverance of Napoleon. He thought it wise "to act under a supposition of its practicability, and to adopt whatever measures are in our judgment calculated to counteract it, even at the hazard of injury to some local and immediate interests."¹⁶ For the purpose, therefore, of "counteracting the French demonstrations, and of throwing up barrier after barrier against the threatened expedition from the Black Sea and the Caspian,"¹⁷ he sent missions to rulers of states on and beyond the north-western border of India, viz., Persia, Afghanistan, Sind and the Punjab.¹⁸

Almost about the same time, Minto's attitude towards the cis-Sutlej States also changed. In March, 1808, he wrote to the Secret Committee: "Although as a general principle we cordially recognise the wisdom and the justice of abstaining from all interference in the contests, disputes, and concerns of States with which we are unconnected by the obligations of alliance, and are fully convinced of the embarrassments and inconvenience of extending our protection to petty chieftains, who

16. Lady Minto, *Lord Minto in India*, p. 102.

When towards the close of 1807, in the Council Chamber at Calcutta, Minto and his colleagues received the first definite news of the pacification of Tilsit, which "had leagued against British, the unscrupulous ambition of the great French usurper and the territorial cupidity of the Russian autocrat", it was no idle terror which haunted their imagination. (Kaye, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 239.)

17. Lyall, *The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India*, p. 277.

18. The objects of these missions in Minto's own words were "to conciliate the princes..., to obtain their consent to the passage of our troops through their country, or their admission into their territories, for the purpose of opposing a French army in their projected invasion of Hindustan, ... to establish such defensive engagements with these Governments as may obtain their co-operation, or at least, their friendly aid and assistance, to our military operations and to our cause generally", and also to remove from the minds of these Princes any suspicions regarding the attitude of the British Government towards them, and to plant "the seeds of confidence and union". (Lady Minto, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-49.)

are unable to protect their territories from the aggressions of more powerful neighbours, yet we are disposed to think that cases may occur in which a temporary deviation from those general principles may be a measure of defensive policy, the neglect of which might be productive of much more danger and embarrassment than the prosecution of it, and that the certain resolution of the Rajah of Lahore to subjugate the States situated between the Sutlege and the frontier of our dominion would, under other circumstances than the present, constitute a case on which, on grounds of self-defence, the interposition of the British power, for the purpose of preventing the execution of such a project, would be equally just and prudent." "Runjeet", wrote Minto in another despatch, "had alone been induced to meditate the extension of his dominions over the territories between the Sutlege and the Jumna, by a manifestation of our intention not to exercise those rights of supremacy over the southern Sikhs which had been exercised by the Mahrattas. If we had not at an early period of time declared the Sikh chiefs to be entirely independent of our control ; if at the time when the Rajah projected his first invasion of those territories we had declared a resolution to protect them ; or even if we had attended to the united solicitation of the chiefs of these territories about the middle of last year to protect them against a second projected invasion, by announcing that resolution, no doubt can be entertained that the mere declaration of it would have been sufficient to deter Runjeet Singh from the execution of his design."¹⁹

Metcalfe was sent to the Court of Lahore as English Envoy, the ostensible object of his mission being to counteract the designs of the French. Countering the aggressive policy of Ranjit Singh against the cis-Sutlej States was an additional motive for deputing the mission. Metcalfe had a difficult task to do, viz., "to woo the great Rajah to an alliance, while refusing him the increase of territory on which he had set his heart."²⁰

Metcalfe started upon his arduous journey from Delhi towards the end of July, 1808, and having crossed the rivers

19. Lady Minto, *op. cit.*, pp. 145-46.

20. *Idem*, p. 151.

Sutlej²¹ and Beas,²² came face to face with the 'Lion of the Punjab' for the first time on September 12.²³ On the 22nd he detailed his proposals for an offensive and defensive alliance against the French menace.²⁴ Ranjit Singh, to whom this danger appeared far too vague, had no objection to it ; but he wanted his sovereignty over the cis-Sutlej chiefs recognised as the price of his support.²⁵ This the Envoy declared he had no authority to grant. The negotiations came to a standstill, as the point was referred to the Government at Calcutta. Meanwhile, Ranjit set out to bring the cis-Sutlej chiefs, one by one, under his sway, perhaps, with the object of facing the British with a *fait accompli*. The Envoy protested against this conduct, but in vain, and matters drifted in this manner till December.

Then a momentous change occurred in the European background. Napoleon became entangled in the Peninsular War, and there was a marked improvement in England's relations with Mahmud II, the new Sultan of Turkey, leading to the Treaty of Dardanelles (January, 1809). The British were now no longer apprehensive of Napoleon reaching within a striking distance of India, and his menace was wearing away.

The result of this new development was noticed in the counter offensive which Metcalfe was now able to launch. The Supreme Government had already concluded that it would be better for it to have a number of small States on its frontier, rather than a single strong kingdom under a chief, whose friendship, in any case would be doubtful. In a note, dated December 12, 1808, Metcalfe had accordingly informed the Maharaja in unmistakable terms that his Government had decided to confine Ranjit's territories to the Sutlej, and that he would have to return all the places occupied by him since the Mission's arrival.²⁶ Ranjit's efforts to evade compliance were of no avail.²⁷ The

1. 1/6. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, September 2, 1808. P. G. R.
22. 1/9. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, September 5, 1808. „
23. 1/10. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, September 13, 1808. „
24. 5/15. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, September 22, 1808. „
25. 5/16. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, September 24, 1808. „
26. 5/35. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, December 12, 1808. „
27. 5/42. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, December 20, 1808. „

change in the European background had strengthened British hands.

In the middle of November, the British had decided to advance a detachment under Col. Ochterlony to the banks of the Sutlej to establish a military post there,²⁸ and to support Metcalfe in his negotiations. This decision was announced to the Maharaja some time between December 22 and 26.²⁹

Ochterlony crossed the Jumna on January 16, and on February 9 issued a proclamation declaring all the cis-Sutlej states to be under British protection.³⁰ On the 19th he reached Ludhiana. It was on this day that the foundation of the Ludhiana Agency was laid.

About the middle of the same month Ranjit Singh was informed that there was no need for an alliance against the supposed danger of a Franco-Russian invasion, and that the object of the British was simply to confine his territories to the Sutlej. Ranjit was thus brought to bay. He found himself soliciting the very treaty of friendship which he had previously agreed to grant only at a price.³¹ He thought it prudent not to dare a conflict with the British at that stage in his career.

In the meantime, Minto and his colleagues were wondering whether it would be expedient to conclude a treaty of general friendship with Ranjit Singh which might, at some future date, embarrass their actions. Metcalfe pointed out that without a treaty Ranjit's suspicions would not be allayed, but that he would think that the British were hostile to him, and that no harm would result if the treaty was of a general character unencumbered with details.³² The Government was thus prevailed upon by the young Envoy, and on March 13, he received instructions to conclude such a treaty with the Maharaja. The terms were actually signed on April 25.³³ Ranjit Singh was

28. 6/1. Edmonstone to Ochterlony, November 14, 1808. P. G. R.

29. The exact date is not known, the despatch in question being missing. Kaye gives it as December 22, 1808—*op. cit.* p. 295.

30. P.G.R. Vol. II, Ludhiana Agency, 1808—1815, p. 55.

31. 5/55 Metcalfe to Edmonstone, February 19, 1809. P.G.R.

32. *Ibid.*

33. The treaty was ratified by the Governor-General in Council on May 30, 1809. Antohison, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 34.

guaranteed non-interference on the part of the English north of the Sutlej, but was definitely restrained from meddling in the affairs of the cis-Sutlej chiefs, or making any more conquests on that side of the river.³⁴

The treaty deprived Ranjit Singh of the chances of achieving the great purpose of uniting the Khalsa under his banner. A definite political cleavage being caused between the Manjha and Malwa sections of the Sikhs³⁵ by the treaty, all possibilities of his becoming a common leader of all the Sikhs were spoilt. It, however, had some advantages for the Maharaja. It gave him a *carte blanche* so far as the region north of the Sutlej was concerned.³⁶ All danger of aggression or hostility from east of the Sutlej being removed, he could now leave that frontier almost unprotected, and transfer the whole weight of his arms against the principalities of the south-west, the north, and the north-east.

The Company came out of this diplomatic transaction with

34. Kanhaiya Lal (*Ranjit Nama*, pp. 256-57) gives the terms of the treaty as follows in Persian verse :—

۱. یکے آنکہ سالار پمجباب را بجز اُلفت و مہر صدق و ۱۰
۲. بسر کار فکیریز باشد نہ کار بہر حال و ہر وقت و لیل و ہنر
۳. ہمیشہ دوسرکار اہل ظفر مددگار باشند با یک دگر
۴. دوم آن دھیان عالی وقار کہ دارند آئروئے منہلیم قرار
۵. ندارند کاری سرکار شاہ شود ایمن از تیغ خونخوار شاہ

35. The Manjha is the name of the Bari Doab in the neighbourhood of the cities of Lahore and Amritsar, while Malwa is the country immediately to the south of the Sutlej, stretching towards Delhi and Bikaner.

36. The British policy towards Ranjit Singh at this time is comparable to that of Bismarck's towards France. After annexing Alsace and Lorraine he encouraged France in her colonial expansion to make her forget that loss. Similarly, the British seem to have encouraged Ranjit in his conquests (after extending their own protection over the cis-Sutlej States) to alleviate his mortification at being thwarted from uniting the whole of the Khalsa.

much gain. The sphere of its influence was enlarged from the Junna to the Sutlej. Its north-western provinces were saved from disturbances emanating from the habitual ravages of the Sikh chieftains,³⁷ including those of the trans-Sutlej area, who were soon brought under the iron rule of Ranjit.³⁸ Moreover, it reaped the advantage of being surrounded by a confederacy of grateful chiefs bound to it by ties of self-interest.³⁹ It could enlist a portion of their permanent forces, even without pay, in an emergency.⁴⁰

This treaty is also significant as it influenced the trends of the future history of the Punjab. It secured the cis-Sutlej chiefs from mutual interference, and saved the three kindred States of Patiala, Nabha and Jind from extinction. It enabled Ranjit Singh to divert his restless ambition and energy to the conquest of Kashmir, Multan, the Derajat and Peshawar, and thereby dam the current of north-western invasions, drive the erstwhile invincible Afghans into their mountain defiles, and thus reverse the tide of conquest from east to west—a thing so far unknown in Indian history.

In view of the new relationship, it became necessary to define precisely the relations that were to subsist between the protecting power and the cis-Sutlej chiefs. The latter were full of doubts about British intentions as expressed in some of their measures. They felt uneasy at their occupying Ludhiana, and repairing and improving its fort.⁴¹ Ochterlony's premature enquiries into the resources of the Protected chiefs further excited unfavourable surmises, and filled the air with distrust of British aims. All efforts made to assure the chiefs of their independence failed.⁴² Accordingly, on May 2, 1809, an *Itlanama* was circulated to the chiefs guaranteeing them security against the power of Ranjit Singh, leaving them absolute in their own territories, exempting them from tribute but requiring from them every

37. Wade's Report, *ut supra*, pp. 25-26.

38. Jacquemont, *Letters from India*, pp. 98-99.

39. 6/3. Government to Ochterlony, December 29, 1808. P.G.R.

40. 10/9. Ochterlony to Adam, March 17, 1809. P.G.R.

41. Ranjit Singh's agents did something to feed this feeling—16/14. Seton to Edmonstone, April 3, 1809. P.G.R.

42. *Ibid.*

kind of assistance and co-operation in time of war.⁴³ This proclamation completed the severance of relations between Ranjit Singh and the cis-Sutlej chiefs.

Freed of all danger, the cis-Sutlej chiefs began to prey upon each other *ad libitum*.⁴⁴ The absence of clearly defined boundaries of the states accentuated troubles,⁴⁵ for the more powerful chiefs usurped the weaker possessions; and feuds, and quarrels, attended with loss of life and bloodshed, became rampant. Each day furnished a new proof of the violation of the most sacred duties and obligations,⁴⁶ only to give the British a further alarm for the safety of their proteges.⁴⁷ It led Metcalfe to believe that their mutual aggression would not be checked unless intervention into their internal affairs was sought, and their mutual relations were clearly defined.⁴⁸ This necessitated the third procla-

43. P.G.R. Vol. II. *ut supra*, pp. 99-100.

44. Ochterlony to Edmonstone, July 30, 1811. P.G.R. Vol. II, *ut supra*, p. 265.

45. Griffin. *op. cit.*, p. 295.

The land could not be surveyed properly, because the people were both ignorant and suspicious, and generally thought that the survey of their territory was only a preliminary to its annexation. Phula Singh's attack on Lt. White, the Surveyor, is a clear example of the case—(P.G.R. Vol. II, *ut supra*, p. 148 *sqq.*)

46. Ochterlony to Lushington, December 30, 1809. (*Idem*, p. 161.)

47. If not secured in their possession somehow "the oppressed would necessarily have recourse to the only other person who could use coercion with effect, *viz.*, to the Raja of Lahore" a contingency which the English could not stand after having done so much to consolidate their authority in that region. (Gunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 142.)

48. For Metcalfe's intervention into the affairs of the chiefs appeared inevitable. He wrote: "I do not perceive how this interference can be avoided without producing still greater evils than those which attend it. Yet we consider the necessity to be unfortunate, for it alarms all the Chiefs and makes them apprehensive that our interference will gradually extend itself till it reaches to every part of internal administration of their dominion." Ochterlony, on the other hand, thought the suspicion of the chiefs regarding British interference was only transient or occasional idea. He was also convinced that the interference of British Government was generally felt and acknowledged as a blessing. He maintained that if such a control existed under certain limitations it would only tend to the superior prosperity of the country and the augmentation of the revenue of

(Continued on page 12)

mation issued by Ochterlony on August 22, 1811, declaring that the Government would respect the previous proclamation (of 1809), but, should it become necessary, it reserved to itself the option of interference in the internal affairs of the States,⁴⁹ and "demand the repayment of whatever collections may have been made from the usurped lands, together with a compensation for any injury that the lands or their inhabitants may have sustained by the transactions, together with a fine to an amount adopted to the circumstances of the case."⁵⁰

This proclamation, however, was not applicable to the feudatories of Ranjit Singh. In case of their encroachments upon the British proteges, the Maharaja was to be held responsible for redress and compensation.⁵¹ This declaration placed the Maharaja on a new footing with the British Government with regard to the cis-Sutlej States. Every time an atrocity was committed by his feudatories, he was called upon to explain, and *vice versa*. This dragged the two parties, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, into frequent diplomatic acrimony.

The nature of the British relationship with Ranjit Singh, with regard to the cis-Sutlej chiefs, was such that the Maharaja was not to be suffered to extend his suzerainty over the Protected chiefs, and they were to be independent of his control only to the degree which made them dependent upon the British.⁵² But as most of them had their agents at Lahore,⁵³ and had sworn allegiance to Ranjit,⁵⁴ they were to be allowed to send independently messages of purely complimentary nature, while, in other cases, they had to get the sanction of the British authorities.⁵⁵ In military matters again, apart from those who

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the very men who deprecate its establishment.—Ochterlony to Edmonstone, July 30, 1811. (P.G.R. Vol. II, *ut supra*, pp. 265–67.)

49. *Idem*, pp. 269–70.

50. Edmonstone to Ochterlony, July 5, 1811. (P. G. R. Vol. II, *ut supra*, p. 261.)

51. Edmonstone to Ochterlony, September 27, 1811. (*Idem*, p. 272.)

52. 6/14. Edmonstone to Ochterlony, April 10, 1809. P. G. R.

53. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

54. Thompson, *The Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, p. 97.

55. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

held lands on the right bank of the Sutlej, if others so chose, they were to be permitted to attend Ranjit on his military expeditions, for prohibition was likely to tend to wear an unfriendly appearance towards the Punjab chief.⁵⁶ By this double-edged policy the British saved themselves from the censures of Ranjit Singh, and at the same time threw a *cordon sanitaire* round their proteges in their own favour.

A treaty of friendship had been concluded between the British and the Maharaja, but this had hardly created complete confidence between them. The cis-Sutlej settlement, brought about by a show of force, had left behind it a legacy of mutual distrust. Each side tried to obtain information of the other's diplomatic and military moves through the service of spies.⁵⁷ The British were assured that Ranjit had made propositions to Sindhia; agents from Gwalior, Holkar and Amir Khan continued to show themselves at Lahore for years, their object being to invite Ranjit for a united action against the strangers. The English further believed that Ranjit was anxiously trying to induce the Sikhs of Sirhind to throw off their allegiance, and to join him and Holkar against them.⁵⁸ With such apprehensions in mind Ochterlony thought it prudent even to lay in supplies and throw up defensive lines at Ludhiana.⁵⁹

Ranjit's suspicions had been equally aroused,⁶⁰ and his first

56. Adam to Ochterlony, February 4, 1814. (P. G. R. Vol. II *ut supra*, p. 163.)

57. Sohan Lal *op. cit.*, Daftar II.

58. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-47.

59. Ochterlony to Lushington, December 31, 1809. (P.G.R. Vol. II, *ut supra*, p. 165.)

Also Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

The British officers on the frontier had been instructed to watch the proceedings of Ranjit, and to require instant redress in case of any infringement of the terms of the treaty. (Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 70.)

60. Ranjit's suspicions appear justified when one goes through the note by the Governor General regarding the question of detachment at Ludhiana. It runs: "The propriety of manifesting a confidence in the Raja of Lahore's adherence to the faith of his engagements renders the removal of the detachment almost a necessary consequence of the conclusion of the treaty, for, the detachment having been stationed for the express purpose of guarding against the Raja's

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care, therefore, had been to strengthen both his frontier posts of Phillor, opposite Ludhiana, and Govindgarh, the citadel at Amritsar, which were to serve as watch towers. But, on the whole, his suspicions were vaguely expressed, and were "rather to be deduced from his acts and correspondence than be looked for in overt statements or remonstrances."⁶¹

However, this mutual distrust subsided by degrees. In 1810, the Governor General sent Ranjit Singh a present of a carriage and a pair of horses "to signify to him that the British Government had nothing more at heart than to maintain the existing system of harmony and confidence with him."⁶² The occasion of the nuptials of prince Kharak Singh in 1812, when Ochterlony was treated with extreme cordiality at Lahore, provided a further satisfactory evidence of the change in the Maharaja's sentiment towards the English.⁶³ Henceforth, rumours of invasion of British territory by Ranjit "served to amuse the idle and to alarm the credulous without causing uneasiness to the British Government."⁶⁴

The English conduct, too, showed new signs of unequivocal friendliness towards the Sikh chief. The Gurkha overtures

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encroachments when the conclusion of treaty embracing that object was not under contemplation, its continuance would manifest a distrust of the Raja's faith now pledged by a solemn engagement to abstain from those encroachments which the detachment was intended to prevent, and although the Raja was compelled to acquiesce in its continuance, the restoration of real confidence is incompatible with that exterior indication of mistrust which the permanent establishment of a British post at Ludhiana for the purpose above described necessarily involve." Edmonstone to Seton, June 3, 1809. (P. G. R. Vol. II., *ut supra*, pp. 120-21.)

61. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-48 :

In this connection Ochterlony wrote to Government on December 30, 1809.

"I cannot bring myself to believe that he (Ranjit) would singly involve himself in a war with a power which, though I do not think he justly appreciates, I am persuaded he still fears". (P.G.R. Vol. II., *ut supra*, p. 164.)

62. Edmonstone to Ochterlony, May 29, 1810. (P.G.R. Vol. II., *ut supra*, p. 216.)

63. *Idem*.

64. Cunningham : *op. cit.*, p. 147.

to effect a joint conquest of the Punjab were repelled,⁶⁵ Sahib Singh was warned to abstain from taking sides with the Gurkhas,⁶⁶ and all attempts to invoke British interference in Ranjit's designs against Multan were discountenanced.⁶⁷ Munshi Abdul Nabi Khan, Ochterlony's wakil, visited Lahore in 1814, and expressed words of sympathy and consideration which peculiarly sank in the Maharaja's heart.⁶⁸

Henceforward missions of pure complimentary nature were frequently exchanged between the two powers, the Maharaja often deputed Faqir Aziz-ud-Din to Ochterlony for "strengthening the relations of friendship, unity and mutual consideration"⁶⁹ and the English reciprocated similarly. Such mutual

65. To expunge the disgrace of his failure in Kangra and to wreak vengeance upon Ranjit, Amar Singh Thappa, the Gurkha chief, proposed to Ochterlony in 1809 a joint conquest of the Panjab. The Maharaja got apprehensive, and was prepared to meet Thappa on his own ground, when the Governor General's reply that he might not only himself cross the Sutlej to chastise the invading Gurkhas in the hills, but that he would receive English assistance in case the Gurkhas descended upon plains, gave Ranjit a conclusive proof of the friendship of the British. (*Idem*, pp. 148-49.)

66. It was Sahib Singh's earnest desire to assist the Gurkhas against Ranjit with a view that such assistance would be rewarded by them by the gift of some villages belonging to the Simooreh chief, but the British Government did not approve of his interference, because such a procedure would bring upon them the hostility of Ranjit whose supremacy over the trans Sutlej states was recognised by them in 1809. (10/43. Ochterlony to Lushington, December 30, 1809. P.G.W. Also 6/31. Lushington to Ochterlony, January 23, 1810. P.G.W.)

67. An attempt on Multan (1810) having failed, Ranjit suspected that Maffar Khan's tender of allegiance might not only be made but accepted by the British Government, so he proposed to Ochterlony a joint conquest of the territory on fifty-fifty basis. But the correspondence that followed from the English showed him that he would not be interfered within his designs upon Multan, and that the Sutlej was to be as good a boundary in the south as in the north. (Cunningham. *op. cit.*, p. 151.)

68. Ranjit had just suffered reserves in Kashmir expedition. The Munshi conveyed to him British sympathies, and told him: "In the expedition of Kashmir if you had asked for a *Paltan* from the glorious Sahibs, it could be placed at your disposal, out of friendship, to give you assistance. Henceforth, at any rate, I hope you would seek help from the Glorious Sahibs." (Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Daftar II, p. 163.)

69. *Idem*, p. 113 sqq.

goodwill between the two States was in the interests of both alike. Convinced that the English had no intention of encroachment, and that a defensive system of policy was the only object it desired, Ranjit Singh committed his territories along the Sutlej to its integrity, withdrew his troops that had been allotted to their defence, and diverted his energies in other directions. He conquered Multan in 1818, the Derajat in 1818-20, Kashmir in 1819, Peshawar in 1823, and thus "became master of the Panjab almost unheeded by the English."⁷⁰ The English, on the other hand, were themselves engaged in right earnest against the Nepalese (1814-16), in extirpating the Pindaris (1817), and in overthrowing the Maratha confederacy (1817-18).

70. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

CHAPTER II

THE CIS-SUTLEJ STATES

(The Controversy between Murray and Wade)

Before entering upon an examination of the problems of the cis-Sutlej States after 1823, it is necessary to review the relationship and difference of opinion which developed between Captains Murray and Wade. When the latter arrived at Ludhiana as Assistant to the former, both had perfectly cordial relations. But official prejudices soon developed, expressing themselves in personal conflict and animosity from 1827 onwards, and influencing in no small measure the subsequent history of the cis-Sutlej States.

Wade and Murray were appointed—the former Political Assistant, Ludhiana, and the latter Superintendent, Sikh and Hill affairs, Ambala,—on February 28, 1823. Wade reached Ludhiana on June 29, and assumed his official duties, which were of a purely local character.¹ Such duties placed him under the control of the Resident at Delhi.² But in all cases of emergency, and when engaged in communication with the Protected States, Wade was to act in subordination to Murray, through whose office all the former's correspondence had also to pass.³

Matters moved on, however, smoothly for some time, Wade being actively engaged during this period in impressing on Ranjit's mind the superiority of the British arms.⁴ But all this

1. 23/183. Elliott to Murray, September 9, 1823. P.G.R.

2. 11/1. Metcalfe to Wade, January 14, 1826. P.G.R.

3. 23/63. Elliott to Murray, September 9, 1823. P.G.R.

4. During 1824-25 Ranjit Singh was busy seizing Afghan tracts around Jhawalpur; but the ill-success of the British in the initial stages of the war against the Burmese made him pause, and suspend his
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while, Wade protested against his being required to submit Lahore 'Akhbar' through Murray's Office, pleading that indirect communication was derogatory to his dignity.⁵ This was the beginning of official prejudices, leading up to personal jealousy and animosity between the two, which continued for eight years, till Murray's death in 1831. But the malady was in a mild state at first. It headed towards a crisis late in 1829, when the warnings of the Governor-General repressed its unseemly growth, though it did not subside altogether.

Wade, it appears, would not lose his independence of action, or agree to play a subsidiary part. He seemed to be very jealous of his personal dignity, which he saw being injured through his subordinate office. The result was that he often laboured to make that office more important. But his fastidiousness for authority was Murray's abhorrence, his sense of self-respect the latter's repulsion. This conflict of dispositions and interests resulted in frequent collisions between the two.

Wade wished an augmentation of his authority and power. An opportunity presented itself in 1826. Ever since the grant of protection to cis-Sutlej chiefs the political Agent at Ambala had been the conduit of business between the British and Ranjit Singh, as also between the Protected chiefs and Ranjit Singh's cis-Sutlej possessions. Ranjit Singh had repeatedly expressed a desire to have his disputes settled by the Political Assistant at Ludhiana, "who is at hand instead of the Deputy Superintendent who is 50 kos away."⁶ Wade was all for this change,

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operations against the Afghans. Assembling all his troops around Lahore he got ready to avail himself of any serious British reverses by joining the insurgent Raja of Bharatpur and other chiefs disaffected with the British Government. Wade proved equal to the occasion, and dissuaded the Maharaja from any such designs. (*Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. xx, p. 412, s. v. Wade. Also 24/168. Wade to Murray, September 9, 1824. P.G.R.; 94/105. Wade to Murray, October 5, 1825. P.G.R., and 94/80. Wade to Murray, September 1, 1825. P.G.R.)

5. 23/163. Elliott to Murray, September 9, 1823, P. G. R.

6. 95/47. Wade to Metcalfe, December 3, 1826, P. G. R.

The arrangement appeared to Ranjit as inconvenient to his people who had to go to a distant place for the settlement of their disputes.

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for its own sake,⁷ possibly also as it promised an increase in the importance of his office.⁸ Murray, on the other hand, thought it would make for less efficiency,⁹ and opposed its adoption vehemently. He observed: "from the circumstances which have been forcing themselves on my attention for three years past, it appears that the Political Assistant came to his situation possessed with a very inadequate conception of the few simple duties which he had to perform, and that he has not strictly adhered to the responsible nature of a situation", and argued that such delegated powers would be "utterly incompatible with the conditions, habits and prejudices of the numerous Sikh chieftains by constituting a divided authority which could not exist but by the subversion of all the fundamental principles which have been laid down by the Government as the basis on which we have for a period of seventeen years regulated and conducted the affairs of these States."¹⁰

Wade's main argument was that "the Sikh States protected by Government form a charge separate from the possessions of Ranjit Singh on the left bank of the Sutlej; and if a collision of duties were liable to occur by investing the Assistant with the power of adjusting disputes of the fore-mentioned description, a serious objection might be applied to every case of public functionaries, who in course of their official duties, though acting independently, are obliged, as a part of their duty, to communicate with each other on subjects connected with official functions."¹¹

In 1827, Wade conducted a complimentary mission from Ranjit Singh to the Governor-General, Lord Amherst,¹² who sent in return some presents through him to the Court of

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The Maharaja might have apprehended also, quite naturally, a conflict of interests as the Political Agent at Ambala was charged to guard the interests of the Protected States.

- 97/47. Wade to Metcalfe, December 3, 1826. P. G. R.
8. 110/22. Encl. Metcalfe to Stirling, July 7, 1827. P. G. R.
9. 111/184. Murray to Trevelyan, November 4, 1827. P. G. R.
10. 3/54. Murray to Metcalfe, March 26, 1826. P. G. R.
11. 95/47. Wade to Metcalfe, December 3, 1826. P. G. R.
12. 95/86. Wade to Metcalfe, April 6, 1827. P. G. R.

Lahore.¹³ This occasion gave Wade an opportunity to give fresh force to his arguments through the instrumentality of Ranjit Singh.¹⁴

The Government had a strong desire to agree to the change, but there were certain *contretemps* in the way. The disputes between the Protected States and the Maharaja's cis-Sutlej territory were bound to occur, and if Wade was empowered to deal with such disputes, it would be tantamount to placing two masters over the Protected States, which would lead to a clash of authority.¹⁵ Then, there were Murray's objections to be got over. Though while at Ludhiana he had supported the measure,¹⁶ he now protested against it on grounds of inefficiency in business, and diminution of his authority.¹⁷ He even hinted at his suspicion that Wade had elicited the proposal from Ranjit Singh.¹⁸

The matter was finally settled in accordance with Metcalfe's suggestion by placing the officers at Ambala and Ludhiana in charge of distinct duties. The superintendence of Murray over the Protected States and that of Wade over Ranjit's cis-Sutlej possessions were made entirely distinct.¹⁹ All disputed problems were to be settled by the two Agents through mutual correspondence, but the final decision would rest with the Resident at Delhi.²⁰ Ranjit Singh and Wade were satisfied with this decision, though for different reasons. Murray, however, felt discomfited and depressed, as his hopes of gaining a dominant control over Ranjit's affairs through the subsidiary agency of Wade were lost.²¹

Another factor estranging the two officers was that Wade had been keen on the attendance at his office of authorised

13. 115/18. Stirling to Wade, May 2, 1827. P. G. R.

14. 95/110. Wade to Metcalfe, June 20, 1827. P. G. R.

15. 115/22. Trevelyan to Wade, October 27, 1827. P. G. R.

16. Murray to Elliott, June 25, 1822. P. G. R.

17. 74/164. Murray to Trevelyan, November 4, 1827. P. G. R.

18. *Ibid.*

19. 27/284. Colebrooke to Murray, December 9, 1827. P. G. R.

20. 115/27. Colebrooke to Wade, December 9, 1827.

21. Regarding political situation and Anglo-Sikh relationship, Ludhiana carried far more prestige than Ambala.

vakils from the States in the neighbourhood of Ludhiana to facilitate and aid him in solving questions concerning their territories.²² Murray, while at Ludhiana, had certain persons from the surrounding States to help him, but all these (excepting *vakils* from Ranjit Singh and the Ladwa chief) had retired in the interval between Murray's departure and Wade's arrival there.²³ Wade wanted to revert to the old system.²⁴ Murray now opposed this plan with the observation: "the Political Assistant is desirous of creating himself into a substantive authority with attendant agents from several Sikh chieftains and a consequent participation in their concerns."²⁵

In this matter, Murray carried his point by impressing upon the Governor-General that the *vakils* attendant on him, while he was at Ludhiana, were not public functionaries, and that they had been sent by different chieftains to help him in his researches, as he was writing 'the Political and Historical Review of the Sikh States'.²⁶ Consequently, Wade did not get the attendance of the *vakils* of various Protected chiefs during Murray's life-time.

Murray always endeavoured to find lacunae in the proceedings of Wade with the definite view of bringing upon him the censure of the Government for negligence in affairs on which depended the safety and mutual goodwill of two States.²⁸ He would not hesitate even to prefer charges of mal-practice, corruption²⁹ and underhand dealings³⁰ against Wade, his motive being to hang him on the tenderest of all points in the

22. 23/19. Wade to Murray, September 18, 1823. P. G. R.

23. 67/1. Wade to Metcalfe, February 5, 1827. P. G. R.

24. 22/59. Wade to Murray, September 18, 1823. P. G. R.

25. 73/1. Murray to Metcalfe, March 26, 1826. P. G. R.

26. *Ibid.*

27. 29/40. Wade to Hawkins, November 3, 1829. P. G. R.

Wade wrote to Hawkins, "It was necessary...to Murray's purpose to draw that inference in order to make me appear culpable of dereliction of duty". (*Ibid.*)

28. 1/166. Wade to Hawkins, October 3, 1829. P. G. R.

29. 76/40. Murray to Hawkins, September 27, 1829. P. G. R. And

97/115. Wade to Hawkins, October 3, 1829. P. G. R.

30. 97/26. Wade to Colebrooke, February 17, 1829. P. G. R.

character of a public officer. The correspondence on the cases of Fatehgarh and Talwandi,³¹ besides revealing the extent of differences of these two officials, illustrates how Murray was adept in the art of perverting truth and distorting facts, and seem to have ever delighted in such indulgence.³² He often charged Wade with violation of principles, but his own practice did not always accord with the doctrines he preached or pleaded in condemning the conduct of his colleague.³³

Wade relied on the judgment of the Government for a full exoneration of the imputations which Murray strove to fasten to him.³⁴ Recrimination, he seems to have thought, could serve no good purpose, and not in a single case did he wish to justify himself by exposing the proceedings of Murray. The latter had a better hearing and influence with the Governor-General's Council,³⁵ while Wade possessed "neither fortune nor patronage,"³⁶ but what he had been endeavouring to acquire with his Government during the past six or seven years by a conscientious devotion to his duty.

A detailed study of the correspondence which passed between the two shows that it is full of acrimony and unfriendly feelings, though actual vituperation was spared to each other. Both used exceptional and provoking language,³⁷ and yet we find Murray alone transgressing limits of decency or decorum sometimes, when, for instance, he used epithets like "puerile" for Wade's proceedings.³⁸

Murray was an ardent expansionist wishing, every time an occasion arose, to curtail the power of Ranjit Singh, and fur-

31. *Vide* Chapter IV, *infra*.

32. 97/180. Wade to Hawkins, October 14, 1829. P. G. R.

30/6. Hawkins to Murray, January, 15, 1830. P. G. R.

33. 97/183. Wade to Hawkins, October 16, 1829. P. G. R.

34. 98/8. Wade to Hawkins, December 7, 1828. P. G. R. And

97/224. Wade to Hawkins, December 7, 1829. P. G. R.

35. 98/99. Wade to Hawkins, June 23, 1830. P. G. R.

36. 98/9. Wade to Hawkins, January 11, 1830. P. G. R.

37. 115/65. Hawkins to Wade, January 15, 1830. P. G. R.

38. 76/125. Murray to Hawkins, December 3, 1829. P. G. R. And

30/17. Hawkins to Murray, February 4, 1830. P. G. R.

ther the interest of the Company.³⁹ His views were always levelled against the Maharaja. As early as 1824, he had advised the Government that "policy, justice and necessity seem to call upon us to curb the career and check the influence of Ranjit Singh in all feasible cases on this side of the Sutlej."⁴⁰

Wade, on the other hand, thought that "the officers of the Government are bound to preserve to Maharaja Ranjit Singh the integrity of his territory as much as to any other independent State"⁴¹ According to him, it could not be maintained that "the Protected States are to enjoy immunities in favour of their subjects who happen to be living within the domain of Lahore at the expense of the just authority and independence of that Power."⁴² Such a privilege was not only contrary, Wade believed, "to the acknowledged principles of international policy, but one which the Government in India had pointedly disavowed."⁴³

The differences and controversy arising between Murray and Wade could not escape the Governor General's notice. A note of warning was issued to both by the Deputy Secretary to Government, who wrote: "The Governor-General-in-Council has been pained with regret and dissatisfaction, on several occasions... to the unfriendly feelings existing between Captains Murray and Wade, and the tone of acrimony which pervades their correspondence. The spirit and temper in which the former officer has taken up and commented upon the proceedings of the other, are not such as Government can approve, and there is no doubt but that the latter.....in defending his conduct and motives and repelling the attack made upon him, has been betrayed by his feelings into the use of language, inconsistent with

39. G.O. 230. Wade to Hawkins, December 29, 1829. P. G. R. And

40. G.O. 175. Wade to Hawkins, October 13, 1829. P. G. R.

41. G.O. 219. Murray to Elliott, November 19, 1824. P. G. R.

42. G.O. 180. Wade to Hawkins, October 14, 1829. P. G. R.

43. *Id.*

43. *Id.*

Wade's main object was to bring about and maintain harmony between the British and Sikh Governments, with this end in view he fought on Ranjit's behalf over the question of the Maharaja's cis-Sutlej possessions.

official decorum. Both the public interests are injuriously affected, and the character of the British administration brought into discredit by these repeated altercations and angry collisions between frontier authorities, entrusted with the joint charge of one of the most important circles of our political relations, and I am instructed, accordingly, to intimate the expectation of Government that Captains Murray and Wade will endeavour, for the future, to lay aside their feelings of personal animosity in the discharge of their public duty, and co-operate cordially and zealously for the general good. Any neglect of these injunctions will compel the Governor General-in-Council to adopt decisive measures for correcting the mischiefs which must ensue from the continuance of such unseemingly and discreditable misunderstandings."⁴⁴

Murray felt "the full force and justice of the admonition of His Lordship."⁴⁵ He instantly wrote a contrite letter to Hawkins promising that "I.... shall confine myself to simple reports to my immediate superior without risking any observations which may give pain to Captain Wade; and where the public good requires our co-operation I can adopt myself under the instructions of the superior authority to whom we both acknowledge subordination."⁴⁶

Their relations improved for the time being, but it was not till Murray's death at Subathu in June, 1831, that Wade saw his way clear to play an important part in the Anglo-Sikh relations.

The animosity between the two officers, however, stood both the British and the Maharaja in good stead. Wishing to foil each other's arguments they thrashed threadbare, as we shall see in the following three chapters, the complicated problems of the cis-Sutlej States from all possible angles. This fact proved of immense help to the Governor General and his Council that controlled the reins of Government from thousands of miles, to arrive at an impartial judgment.⁴⁶ It also secured the Maharaja

44. 30/22. Encl. Stirling to Hawkins, January 29, 1830. P. G. R.

45. 76/190. Murray to Hawkins, February 21, 1830. P. G. R.

46. Hawkin's letter to Stirling, Deputy Secretary to Government on this point is very striking :—

against any unlawful usurpation of his territories on the part of either the Protected chiefs or the British Government.

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"Captain Wade has intimated his intention of shortly submitting a report of circumstances connected with Talwandi which will show the subject in a different point from that in which it has been placed by Captain Murray, and, therefore, it is possible that I may have occasion to alter hereafter the opinion I at present entertain respecting this place." (30/6. Encl. January 14, 1830. P.G.R.)

CHAPTER III
THE CIS-SUTLEJ STATES (*Continued*)
(The Territorial Disputes)

The duties of the Political officers at Ambala and at Ludhiana having been separated, it became imperative that the area of their jurisdictions should also be definitely marked so as to eliminate all misunderstandings between them. The Resident at Delhi asked Wade for a detailed list of the districts which he proposed to take under his charge.¹ It took Wade about a month to procure from the Lahore agent at Ludhiana a list of all those places to which the Maharaja preferred his claims.² The list contained 47 distinct places,³ including some which the British had already taken under its protection.⁴

Murray, when called upon to investigate the validity of Ranjit Singh's claims, forwarded two lists,⁵ one showing "the names of places on the left bank of the Sutlej appertaining to the State of Lahore and its vassals and against the validity of which no reasonable objection can be urged", and the other, detailing those places to which the claims of the Maharaja were premature and doubtful.⁶ He took no objection to Wade's taking charge of districts and villages included in the first list, but cautioned the authorities against entrusting to his superintendence, without full discussion, places mentioned in his second

1. 115/23. Colebrooke to Wade, November 9, 1827. P.G.R.

2. 95/135. Wade to Colebrooke, December 7, 1827. P.G.R.

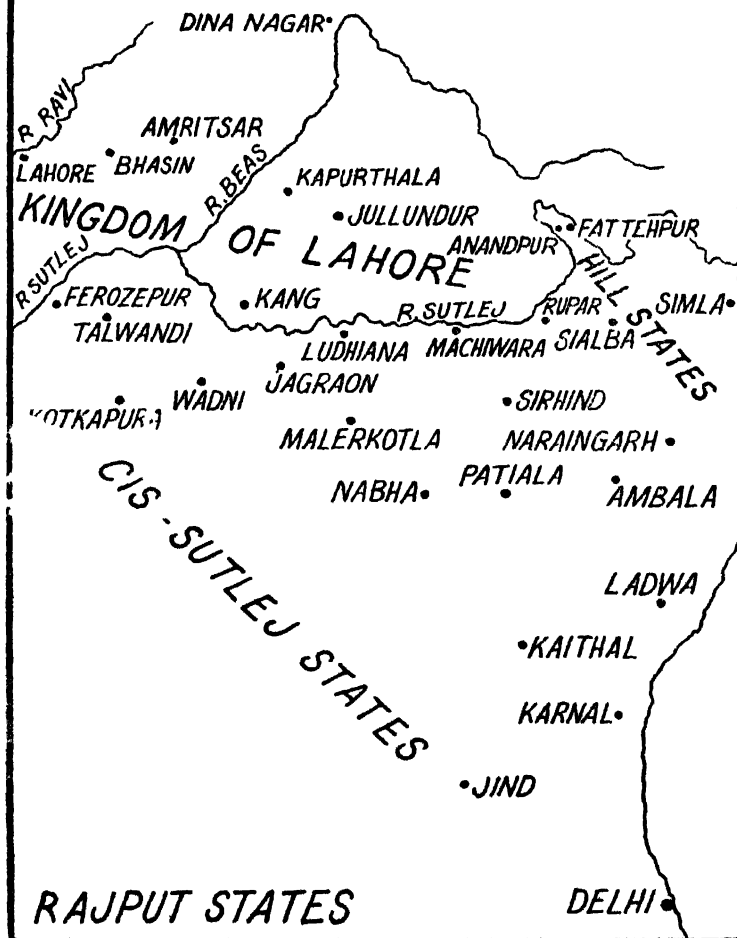
3. Some of these places had been conquered by Ranjit Singh during the course of his first two campaigns across the Sutlej (1806-1807), whereas others were the ancestral possessions of the trans-Sutlej feudatories, as will be revealed in the subsequent pages.

4. 95/135. Wade to Colebrooke, December 7, 1827. P.G.R.

5. 74/202. Murray to Colebrooke, December 18, 1827. P.G.R.

6. *Ibid.*

THE CIS-SUTLEJ STATES AND THE ADJOINING TERRITORIES



list, or else, this would "afford a plea to the State of Lahore to exercise a sovereign sway over places to which its right is at present denied and disputed by our proteges or, at any rate, to which the Raja has a dubious title."⁷ Murray stood for the prevention of "the Lahore interference and encroachment to the south of the Sutlej, for, if the southern chiefs be compelled, by their interests, to attach themselves to a neighbouring powerful State, that State may, by their aid and influence, strengthen itself against the power which it feels to be dangerous to it."⁸ Murray argued that if Ranjit Singh were allowed to meddle with the affairs of the cis-Sutlej principalities "we augment the means and replenish the resources of a competitor to whose standard the ambitious and discontented will have recourse, and we, at the same time, dilapidate the strength of the lesser States whom it is our interest to foster and protect."⁹

Wade took charge of the places mentioned in list No. 1, at the order of the Resident at Delhi.¹⁰

Murray's second list contained the following important *ilagas* :—

1. Wadni, Himmatpur, etc.,—Possessions of Rani Sada Kaur.
2. Jagraon, Naraingarh, etc.,—Possessions of Fattah Singh Ahluwalia.
3. Possessions of Hari Singh Kang.
4. Ferozepur.
5. Sialba.
6. Machiwara.
7. Anandpur.
8. Chamkour, Amarala, Tughul, etc., etc.¹¹

Murray asserted that those in possession of these places had actually denied their dependence upon Lahore. Wade did not

7. 74/202. Murray to Colebrooke, December 18, 1827. P.G.R.

8. 75/17. Murray to Colebrooke, February 19, 1828. P.G.R.

9. *Ibid.*

10. 115/26. First Assistant, Delhi Residency, to Wade, December 29, 1827. P.G.R.

11. 74/202. Murray to Colebrooke, December 18, 1827. P.G.R.

brook and delay in taking up the cases of the Ahluwalia possessions,¹² the Sodhi holdings,¹³ Wadai,¹⁴ Ferozepur,¹⁵ Sialba,¹⁶ and Kalal Majra,¹⁷ and in impressing upon the Resident at Delhi that an impartial reference to these chiefs would prove contrary to Murray's assertion. Moreover, he pointed out to the Government that Murray's objections were calculated to excite the apprehensions of the Maharaja. He, therefore, suggested that sooner the matter was decided, the better for the maintenance of harmony and mutual goodwill between the two States.¹⁸

Official action, however, was much delayed in this matter. The Government was engaged in looking into its archives for producing proofs of having taken under protection certain places¹⁹, while the Maharaja strove for the immediate occupation of some of them, of course, not without justification. This gave

12. "The Sardar depends on the Raja's authority, not only by the deed voluntarily executed by Sardar Pattice Singh on his reconciliation with the Maharaja (March, 1827), but also by the admission of Captain Murray himself, in lately communicating to the Sardar the orders of the Resident in the case of Maha Singh, a refractory vassal of the Ahluwalia chief who holds the lands of Bhurog". (96/4. Wade's Clerk, January 10, 1828. P.G.R.)
13. "The Sodhis, no doubt, exercise a domestic authority. But in stating that the Sodhis owe obedience to no chief, Murray refers presumably to spiritual and not to temporal affairs, for, if they owe obedience to no chief, it may be asked why they should be deemed to belong to the Protected states. Sodhi Faujdar Singh of Machiwara, however, admits his assalage to Ranjit." (*Ibid.*)
14. "Even since their reconciliation, the affairs of Government were controlled by the Maharaja's agents. No *Vakil* from Mai Sada Kaur resided at the office of the Political Agent at Ambala before the year 1842, who was not introduced in the first instance by the Maharaja's *Vakil* and acted in concert with him." (*Ibid.*)
15. "Ferozepur continued subject to the Maharaja's Government till 1814—fourteen long years after the Treaty of Amritsar" (*Ibid.*)
16. "The proprietor of Sialba is a *Jagirdar* of the Maharaja and avows himself as his vassal." (*Ibid.*)
17. "This is a village tributary to the Ahluwalia Chief, and hence could not be conferred by the Political Agent at Ambala without infringing his own principles stated in Paper B". (*Ibid.*)
18. (*Ibid.*)
19. 115/36. Colbrooke to Wade, April, 28, 1828. P. G. R.

rise to immediate consideration by the Government of the following important cases.

1. Wadni.

Wadni was in the possession of one Main Noudha of the tribe of Dharewal, who held lands under the Delhi Emperors. When the Sikhs began to plunder the country and exact tribute, he occasionally made them presents of horses. In 1777, Baghel Singh seized the fort of Pattoki from Main Noudha, and retained it for several years, with the exception of Himmatpur, Wadni and three other villages which remained in the Main's possession. In 1806, Pattoki was seized by Bir Singh and Dip Singh, the Bhadaur chiefs. In 1808, Ranjit Singh sent Diwan Mohkam Chand to collect tribute from this area. The Main proposed to eject the troops of the Bhadaur chiefs from Pattoki, but the Diwan himself took the fort, and left his own garrison there. Main Noudha, however, retained his former possessions.²⁰

In September, 1808, when Ranjit Singh had crossed the Sutlej, Rani Sada Kaur²¹ obtained from him an unconditional grant of the Wadni domain on payment of Rs. 15,000. In this way, she was put in possession of the Pattoki fort and other villages held by Mohkam Chand. On October 25, 1811, Main Noudha was declared to be the Rani's *Zamindar* and her authority was extended over Himmatpur and Wadni also. But it was only in 1817, that the Rani actually dispossessed the Main's son of Wadni.²²

In 1820 Sada Kaur was imprisoned by her son-in-law²³ whose troops occupied the fort. The Rani appealed to the British. The

20. 75/17. Murray to Colebrooke, February 19, 1828. P. G. R.

21. "The Rani, the mother-in-law of the Maharaja, was one of the most artful and ambitious of her sex who ever figured in Sikh history, and became the ladder by which Ranjit Singh ascended to power"—Gordon, *The Sikhs*, p. 84.

22. 75/17. Murray to Colebrooke, February 19, 1828. P. G. R.

23. It was characteristic of Ranjit Singh that no tie of kinship, no sentiment of gratitude was strong enough to stand in his way. The main cause of the dispute between him and his mother-in-law was that he desired that Sher Singh and Tara Singh, her grandsons, should each be given a separate estate by her, and this she refused to grant.—Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, p. 290.

British Agents treated her as an independent representative of the interests of the Kanheya confederacy of the Sikhs on their side of the Sutlej, and, therefore, as having a claim on their protection.²⁴ Accordingly, an English detachment ejected the Sikhs from the fort at the instance of the Agent at Ludhiana. Ranjit Singh fretted and fumed, but prudently avoided a collision with the British troops.²⁵

The orders of the Government on October 11, 1822, had declared Sada Kaur's territory to be an escheat to the British on the death of the Rani. But about the time when Ranjit Singh's claims on the cis-Sutlej lands were being taken up for consideration, the Government contemplated the restoration of the Rani's possessions to a representative of Main Noudha from whom she had seized them.²⁶

Wade pressed the Maharaja's claim on the Rani's territory on the following grounds : — (a) that no *wakil* from Sada Kaur attended at the office of the Political Agent at Ambala before the year 1822, without being introduced in the first instance by the Maharaja's *wakil* in concert with whom he invariably acted ;²⁷ (b) that a reconciliation had taken place between Ranjit Singh and Sada Kaur who was desirous of relinquishing her claim to that territory in favour of her son-in-law,²⁸ and (c) that Ranjit Singh had obtained Ochterlony's permission in employing a force on the left bank of the Sutlej for establishing the Rani's authority in that district. Had her territory been included in the Protected states, Ochterlony would have hardly permitted the Maharaja's military interference in lands under British suzerainty.²⁹

In view of these arguments, the British right of protection could not be maintained, and the Government withdrew all opposition to the Maharaja's claim of sovereignty in that domain.³⁰

24. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, pp. 163-64.

25. Chopra, *The Punjab as a Sovereign State*, p. 68.

26. 115/36. Colebrooke to Wade, April 28, 1828. P. G. R.

27. 95/136. Wade to Colebrooke, December 7, 1827. P. G. R. And 96/4. Wade to Clerk, January 10, 1828.

28. 95/136. Wade to Colebrooke, December 7, 1827, P. G. R.

29. *Ibid.*

30. 28/326. Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828. P. G. R.

1. The Ahluwalia Possessions.

Sardar Fattah Singh Ahluwalia held territories both in the trans and cis Sutlej areas. Towards the end of 1825, he with the whole of his family fled across the Sutlej,³¹ and took refuge at Jagraon, in the cis-Sutlej area, situated about 25 miles from Ludhiana³². The Sardar sent his confidential servants to Murray at Ambala and to Wade at Ludhiana, to plead for British protection. He firmly believed that Ranjit Singh contemplated the seizure of his person, the sequestration of his trans-Sutlej possessions and the confiscation of his private property; and represented that these were the causes which induced him to secure his honour and dignity by precipitately retreating into the Protected zone.³³ The Sardar desired from the British, at all hazards, a guarantee for the security of his trans-Sutlej possessions, such as had been accorded by them to the Phulkian chiefs.³⁴ This, however, was impossible, without coming to an open rupture with the Maharaja.³⁵ Hence all his trans-Sutlej territories were allowed to be confiscated by the Punjab Ruler.

Ranjit Singh, on his part, was surprised to find that his old friend had run into the arms of the English. This made him sober enough to express an earnest desire for a reconciliation with Fattah Singh, promising any assurances that might be

31. Fattah Singh Ahluwalia was a fast friend of Ranjit Singh from the very early years. In 1802, both these Sardars exchanged turbans as a mark of friendship and brotherhood. It was this Prince of Ahluwalia *misl* who dissuaded Ranjit from offending the British by helping the fugitive Holkar. In the Treaty of 1806, he as well as Ranjit Singh were styled by Lake as "Sardars". But the weak, yielding and unasserting nature of Fattah Singh made him subservient to Ranjit, who began to treat him as a mere vassal, commanding his services on every military adventure and insisting upon his constant attendance at Lahore. Matters at length became intolerable even to the amiable Fattah Singh, and, in 1825, he fled across the Sutlej—Punjab District Gazetteers, Kapurthala State, p. 5.

32. 94/116. Wade to Metcalfe, December 27, 1825. P. G. R.

33. 94/118. Wade to Metcalfe, December 29, 1825. P. G. R.

34. Mussy, *The Chiefs and Families of Note*, p. 37. Also Griffin, *The Rjas of the Punjab*, p. 535.

35. Mussy, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

desired for the security of his person and possessions.³⁶ In April, 1827, Fattch Singh returned to Lahore.³⁷ The British protection was extended to Fattch Singh for his ancestral cis-Sutlej possessions. The rule, expressed by Metcalfe in his letter of January 14, 1826, set down definitely that "whatever possessions on the left bank of the Sutlej were held by Fattch Singh, or his ancestors, previous to his alliance with Ranjit Singh and of consequence independently with regard to that Chieftain, should be confirmed to him under our protection, and this might also be extended to acquisitions on the same bank of the river made in co-operation with Ranjit Singh at a time when their conquests were partitioned on footing of equality. But with respect to any, if any there should be, held under a grant of Ranjit Singh which would imply sovereignty on his part and subordination on that of Fattch Singh, the claims of the Maharaja must be admitted."³⁸

Now that the question of Ranjit Singh's cis-Sutlej possessions had arisen, his old nature reasserted itself, and he preferred his claims once again to Fattch Singh's possessions which consisted of 454 villages, of which 291 were held by him in sovereignty, and 163 were in possession of the *jagirdars*.³⁹ The districts of Jagraon and Naraingarh had been obtained by him from Ranjit Singh in lieu of a *nazrana* prior to Metcalfe's mission.⁴⁰ Wade adduced the following arguments on behalf of the Maharaja :—(a) that asked by Captain Birch to station a *vakil* with him for the transaction of affairs connected with the Sarder in his office, Fattch Singh had replied that the agent of his affairs was in the hands of the Maharaja's *Vakil*;⁴¹

36. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 536.

37. *Ibid.* and 74/49. Murray to Metcalfe, April 25, 1827. P. G. R.

38. 26/12. Metcalfe to Murray, January 14, 1826. P. G. R.

39. 72/474. Murray to Metcalfe January 8, 1826. P. G. R.

40. 72/174. Murray to Metcalfe, January 8, 1826. P. G. R.

Ranjit Singh had granted away portions of his early conquests to the south of the Sutlej for certain pecuniary equivalents. He had then probably no other end in view than to raise an immediate supply of cash for the payment of the arrears due to his troops, and the gratification of bestowing the lands of others on the chieftains who followed his standard. The grant of Jagraon and Naraingarh in return for a *nazrana* to Fattch Singh was made similarly.

41. 96/147. Wade to Colebrooke, November 23, 1828. P. G. R.

(b) that three years after the Treaty of 1809, Fattch Singh sent an Agent to Ludhiana for the first time, and that he was introduced by the Maharaja's *Vakil*, and transacted his business through him as occasion arose ; (c) that on his reconciliation with the Maharaja in March, 1827, Fattch Singh had voluntarily executed a deed which could satisfactorily prove his dependence on Ranjit Singh ; and (d) that in the case of Maha Singh of Bhirog, a refractory vassal of Fattch Singh, the Government had not considered it necessary to interfere with the Maharaja's action in directing him to desist from proceeding against Bhirog.⁴²

But the correspondence between Fattch Singh and Ochterlony from 1809 to 1813, positively averred that both of them had considered the former's cis-Sutlej possessions to be under the British protection.⁴³ Moreover, in 1826, Metcalfe had assured the Ahluwalia chief of the protective guarantee.⁴⁴ The mere declaration of the Chief himself at that time was regarded insufficient to release him from his allegiance to the English.⁴⁵ But according to the distinction laid down by Metcalfe in his dispatch of January 14, 1826 (cited above), the districts of Jagraon and Naraingarh were declared to be amenable to the Lahore supremacy.⁴⁶ Considering that the Sardar still held a high place in the service and confidence of the Maharaja, the Governor General allowed him to serve the Lahore Government.⁴⁷

3. The Kang Possessions.

Hari Singh of Kang,⁴⁸ like Fattch Singh Ahluwalia, owned lands on both sides of the Sutlej.⁴⁹ By 1824, he found his

42. 96/4. Wade to Clerk, January 10, 1828. P. G. R.

43. 115/34. Travelyan to Wade, March 22, 1828. P. G. R.

44. 28/60. Colebrooke to Murray, March 21, 1828. P. G. R.

45. 28/326. Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828. Enclosure from Stirling. P. G. R.

46. 28/60. Colebrooke to Murray, March 21, 1828. P. G. R.

47. 28/326. Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828. Enclosure from Stirling, P. G. R.

48. Kang is a village in the vicinity of Lohian in the Jullundur Doab near the confluence of the Sutlej and the Beas.

49. 24/215. Elliott to Murray, November 11, 1824. P. G. R.

service under Ranjit Singh burdensome,⁵⁰ and fled across the river leaving behind his trans-Sutlej possessions.⁵¹ He applied for British protection.⁵²

Hari Singh's ancestors were attached to the Dalewalia Misl⁵³ under Tara Singh Gheba who died in 1807.⁵⁴ The Kang Sardars were the dependants and *jagirdars* of, and belonged to the same tribe as Tara Singh.⁵⁵ Dharam Singh, the uncle, and Bir Singh, the brother, of Hari Singh had interviewed Ranjit Singh at Sialkot in 1807-08, and agreed to serve him with a contingent of 100 horses and a tribute of Rs. 1,000 annually.⁵⁶

Hari Singh argued that his territories were acquired by his ancestors by sword and that they "are the gifts of God (*Dad*

50. 115/29. Colebrooke to Wade, January 16, 1828. Enclosure from Swinton. P. G. R.

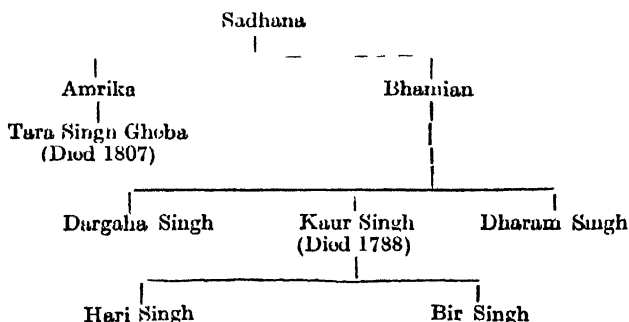
51. 24/215. Elliott to Murray, November 11, 1821. P. G. R.

52. 115/29. Colebrooke to Wade, January 16, 1828. Enclosure from Swinton. P. G. R.

53. Dalewalia Misl was so named after the village Dala near Sultanpur, in the Kapurthala State, not far from the junction of the Sutlej and the Pous. (Massy. *op. cit.*, pp. 323-24).

54. 74/150. Murray to Colebrooke, September 15, 1827. P. G. R.

55. Hari Singh was related to Tara Singh Ghoba according to this genealogical table :—



(Massy, *op. cit.*, p. 306).

56. 74/150. Murray to Colebrooke, September 15, 1827. P. G. R. Encl. *arzi* of Kishan Chand, Ranjit's agent.

Wali), and that I am not dependant for them on any other except the British Government ' 57 But his Diwan admitted that "his master agreed to maintain 50 horses and held the lands of Kang on feudal tenure" from the Maharaja.⁵⁸ The latter was in no mood to yield over the matter, and promptly reported to the Governor General not to extend protection to Hari Singh, his refractory *jagirdar*.

Murray, who had been asked to make inquiries into the matter,⁵⁹ held that Hari Singh made a spontaneous relinquishment of his ancestral possessions on the north of the Sutlej, because the Maharaja had sent troops to occupy his villages, and had secured the ferries on the river, and had held out a threat of ejecting him from his remaining lands. As a result, the Sardar had resolved to forego all his claims in Ranjit's dominion, and to seek ease and retirement in his remaining post of Fattahgarh under the protection of the British.⁶⁰ Murray observed that Ranjit Singh could usurp the Sardar's estates on the north of the Sutlej, but to permit him the same privilege in regard to the Fattahgarh domain would be to encourage him to build influence and ascendancy with the Protected chiefs.⁶¹ Murray's contention, in short, was that Hari Singh was a dependant of Ranjit Singh for his lands on the right bank of the Sutlej, and a Protected chieftain under the British for his territory on the left bank. He recommended that the Sardar be taken completely under British protection.⁶²

Meanwhile, a *parwana* from Ranjit Singh regarding this case had reached Wade, intimating that he had no intention of treating Hari Singh with any severity, but that he certainly expected that the Sardar should discharge his obligations towards him.⁶³ Wade took up cudgels on the Maharaja's behalf, and secured the Government's decision in Ranjit Singh's favour.

57. *Ibid.* Encl. answer of Hari Singh to the statement of Kishan Chand.

58. *Ibid.*

59. 24/124. Elliott to Murray, November 11, 1824. P. G. R.

60. 72/219. Murray to Elliott, November 19, 1824. P. G. R.

61. 72/294. Murray to Elliott, February 9, 1825. P. G. R.

62. 72/219. Murray to Elliott, November 19, 1824, P. G. R.

63. 93/3. Wade to Colebrook, January 5, 1828. P. G. R.

The Government observed that "the simple fact of Hari Singh having served the Ruler of Lahore and acted as his avowed vassal and dependant for a long course of years,.....whilst up to 1824, when he found that service had become burdensome, he never held communication with the British authorities nor performed any act indicating acknowledgment of the Company's sovereignty or a wish to benefit by its protection and discharge the duties of allegiance, must deprive him of any claim to consideration personally, and the Governor General further does not discern in the statements which he has advanced any evidence so clear and decisive as would justify our asserting at this late time of day a title to supremacy over his possessions, which we have allowed to be dormant for so many years, in opposition to the case on Ranjit Singh's side."⁶⁴ After the final decision, the charge of Hari Singh's possessions was given to Wade.⁶⁵

Hari Singh died on March 26, 1828,⁶⁶ leaving behind two widows who were residing at Ambala. The Maharaja occupied the entire territory of the deceased to the south of the Sutlej,⁶⁷ without having recourse to force or sending his troops across the river.⁶⁸ He offered a provision in favour of the two widows of Rs. 5,000 a year, including the patrimonial village of Kang, or a *jagir* on military tenure, provided the ladies agreed to reside at Amritsar within his territories.⁶⁹ The ladies' agents solicited British interference, but were told that they should not expect any interposition in their favour from the Government in regard to the terms on which Ranjit Singh offered them a provision.⁷⁰ Thus Ranjit Singh was left the liberty of disposing of the estate as he liked.⁷¹ Later, the ladies realising their helplessness came to terms with the Punjab Ruler by accepting an annual provi-

64. 115/29. Colebrooke to Wade, January 16, 1828. P. G. R.

65. 115/30. Colebrooke to Wade, January 22, 1828. P. G. R.

66. 75/31. Murray to Colebrooke, March 7, 1828. P. G. R.

67. 75/104. Murray to Colebrooke, June 2, 1828. P. G. R.

68. 95/68. Wade to Colebrooke, June 3, 1828. P. G. R.

69. 96/93. Wade to Colebrooke, July 15, 1828. P. G. R.

70. 28/174. Colebrooke to Murray, July 21, 1828. P. G. R.

71. 115/30. Colebrooke to Wade, January 22, 1828. P. G. R.

sion of Rs. 4,900, and agreeing to reside in their patrimonial village.⁷²

4. **Kutub-ud Din Khan of Kasur.**

Kutub-ud Din Khan held lands from the Maharaja on both sides of the Sutlej in virtue of which he served him until 1826. Ranjit Singh had acquired the feudal services of the Khan by right of conquest, prior to the Treaty of Amritsar of 1809. The dispute of the Chief of Kang led the Khan to approach the British for protection. In 1825, Ranjit Singh had conferred Mumdot and Ramnuwala on the Khan on the left bank as a reward for his military services. He now made an appeal through Wade to the faith and justice of the British to recognise and enforce the Khan's submission to his authority.⁷³

Murray held that these districts on the south of the river were not under the protection of the Maharaja, and it was by a forgery that these had been conferred on the Khan.⁷⁴ The Government upheld Wade and rejected Murray's suspicions. It definitely decided not to extend protection to the Khan because during the whole period of the British connection with the Sikhs the Khan had been avowed follower and acknowledged subject of the Ruler of Lahore. At the time of Metcalfe's mission to Lahore, the Khan was present with the army of Ranjit Singh. It could not be supposed that he became independent merely because he wished to transfer his allegiance to another power.⁷⁵

5. **Sialba.**

The Sialba territory, situated south of the Sutlej, was acquired in 1763, on the defeat of Zain Khan,⁷⁶ by Hari Singh

72. 96/116. Wade to Colebrooke, August 14, 1828. P. G. R.

73. 5/44. Wade to Metcalfe, November 29, 1826. P. G. R.

74. 73/207. Murray to Metcalfe, October 18, 1826. P. G. R. Also

73/235. Murray to Metcalfe, November 25, 1826. P. G. R.

75. 26/265. Metcalfe to Murray, December 10, 1826. P. G. R.

76. Zain Khan was the Afghan Governor of Sirhind. About the end of 1762, the Sikhs had some designs of overpowering him, but were prevented from doing so by the invasion of Ahmad Shah. Later, they marched towards Sirhind, and the Court of Delhi was incapable of raising an army in support of its dependant. Zain Khan gave battle to the Sikhs in December, 1763, but was defeated and slain, and the plains of Sirhind, from the Sutlej to Jumna, passed into the hands of the victors. (Cunningham *op. cit.*, pp., 101-02).

(father of Dewa Singh) who retained it in his own right, free of all service, tribute etc., to the State of Lahore. The family possessions to the north of the river were held by him at the will of Ranjit Singh, those to the south under the British protection.⁷⁷

Dewa Singh was no doubt an officer in personal attendance in the Maharaja's service and high in his confidence,⁷⁸ but in 1825, he had been imprisoned by his master who placed his own garrison in the Sardar's stronghold, Bagwain, in the trans-Sutlej area.⁷⁹

Wade held that the proprietor of Sialba was a *jagirdar* of the Maharaja, and considered himself his vassal, and as such the Maharaja's claim over Sialba must be upheld. But the correspondence between Ochterlony and Dewa Singh during 1809,⁸⁰ definitely induced the Government to consider the latter under its protective guarantee. Therefore, the Maharaja's claim over Sialba was rejected by the Government on November 14, 1818.⁸¹

6. Machiwara.

Sodhi Karam Singh acquired Machiwara from Tara Singh Chahla in 1772. He improved the place at much personal expense. In 1797, he died leaving behind three sons, Kharak Singh, Churrit Singh and Puhar Singh. The present owner was Faujdar Singh son of Kharak Singh.⁸²

Murray maintained that these Sodhis had never performed any service for the Ruler of Lahore, and that the latter had not even the slightest concern in their affairs⁸³. On the contrary, the Maharaja pleaded that Faujdar Singh had served him.⁸⁴

77. 7/17. Murray to Colebrooke, February 19, 1828. P. G. R.

78. 2/326. Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828.

79. Enclosure from Stirling. P. G. R.

80. 4/355. Murray to Elliott, May 17, 1825. P. G. R.

81. 4/17. Murray to Colebrooke, February 19, 1828. P. G. R.

82. 4/326. Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828. Enclosure from Stirling. P. G. R.

83. 75/17. Murray to Colebrooke, February 19, 1828. P. G. R. P. G. R.

84. *Ibid.*

85. 28/140. Birch to Stirling, June 17, 1828. Encl. Arz of Govind Jas. P. G. R.

The Government expediently decided to transfer his allegiance to Ranjit Singh.⁸⁵

7. Anandpur.

In 1807, this place was under the supremacy of the Hindur and Singhpurian chiefs. But in the town the authority of the Sodhis was established. When Diwan Mohkam Chand took Hethawat in 1807-08, he did not interfere with the established rights of the Sodhis.⁸⁶

Murray argued that the Sodhis had had their agent at Ambala since 1809, and that all their concerns had been transacted through his office.⁸⁷ Wade, on the other hand, maintained that they considered themselves under the temporal authority of the Maharaja, that a *rakil* had attended not long before at Ambala, but was recalled by them on the representation of the Lahore Ruler, and that their affairs were always transacted through the agency of the Maharaja's *Vakil*.⁸⁸ Govind Jas, the Lahore agent, stated in his *arzi* that "this place was in my master's possession before the time of Metcalfe's mission and long before that a *thana* of my master's troops was stationed there, and that the entire collection of revenue and the administration of justice were carried on in his name."⁸⁹

The Governor General, after a full consideration of all the facts, decided that "the claims of the Ruler of Lahore to the Districts of Machiwar, Mokhowal and Anandpur may be expediently admitted without any further discussion, since our right in them, whatever it may amount to, does not appear to be worth maintaining and adverting to the caste and character of their inhabitants, they will doubtless be best managed under the sovereignty of a chief of their own religious persuasion".⁹⁰

85. 28/326. Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828. Encl. from Stirling. P. G. R.

86. 75/17. Murray to Colebrooke, February 19, 1828. P. G. R.

87. *Ibid.*

88. 96/4. Wade to Clerk, January 10, 1828. P. G. R.

89. 28/140. Birch to Stirling, June 17, 1828. Encl. *Arzi* of Govind Jas. P. G. R.

90. 28/326. Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828. Encl. from Stirling. P.G.R.

8. Ferozepur.⁹¹

The dispute over Ferozepur was not between a cis-Sutlej chief and Ranjit Singh, but strictly between the latter and the British Government which was anxious to take over the place at all costs.

This dispute presents one of those matters in which British Government's selfishness, in its relations with Ranjit Singh, superseded all other considerations. It also illustrates the Sikh Ruler's character; he gauged the extent to which the British would yield to his self-seeking demands, and when his hypocritical claims did not meet the arguments and determination of the Government he resorted to the artful method of preserving friendship by himself yielding.

The growing needs of the British to have places of strategic importance for the defence of their ever expanding empire, and their desire to hem in the territory of the Maharaja by erecting a fence of posts all along the Sutlej frontier, made them look at Ferozepur covetously. Murray had reported to the Government of the military and political superiority of Ferozepur over

91. *Early History of Ferozepur.*

In 1771, Gurbukhsh Singh, who had his territories to the north of the Sutlej, acquired Ferozepur. He had four sons, Dina Singh, Dhanna Singh, Gurmukh Singh and Jai Singh. About 1792, the old Sardar divided his possessions among his sons. Dhanna Singh received as his share the fort and territory of Ferozepur. Soon after his accession, Nazam ud-Din Khan, the Pathan chief of Kasur, invaded the country, and got a half share of the seven villages comprising the Ferozepur domain. Ranjit Singh acquired Kasur in 1807, and assigned it as a *jaqir* to his favourite and co-adjutor, Sarlat Nihal Singh Atariwala, who soon dispossessed Gurbukhsh Singh and his three sons of their trans-Sutlej possessions in the neighbourhood of Kasur. He was invited by the Dogras of the Ferozepur territory to dislodge Dhanna Singh from his fort, but he failed to conquer it. In 1808, Nihal Singh again crossed the Sutlej with Ranjit Singh. Occupying Duleli on the north, Bareilly on the west and Khair on the south-west, he hemmed in the Ferozepurians and shared the produce of their lands equally with Dhanna Singh. In 1809, British protection was extended to this place. In 1818, Dhanna Singh died, and was succeeded by his widow, Lachhman Kaur, the daughter of Rai Singh of Baria and Jagadhri—Punjab District Gazetteers, Ferozepur District, pp. 25—26.

the post of Ludhiana.⁹² The latter place was distant from Lahore and was useless as a post of check or observation in time of peace or as a depot in time of war.⁹³ On the other hand, Ferozepur, situated close to the boundary line of Bahawalpur, could ensure the Government an effective control over the Protected chiefs and the Nawab of Bahawalpur, and also, its occupation would enable the English to keep a vigilant watch on the Maharaja's movements towards Sind. Moreover, it had an effective appeal for commerce, being situated in such a position as to command the passage to the great ferry station of Hari-ke-pattan.⁹⁴

Accordingly, the Government instructed Wade in unqualified terms that Ranjit Singh should not be permitted to obtain possession of Ferozepur.⁹⁵ Wade reported that the place had been subject to the Maharaja's control until 1823,⁹⁶ and that he claimed it because his dependants, the Kasurians, held the town conjointly with the Ferozepurians.⁹⁷

Sardarni Lachhman Kaur, in the meantime, sent a petition to Captain Ross of her claims over Ferozepur. The particulars were communicated by Murray to Ranjit Singh, and the latter restored her to her rights.⁹⁸ Henceforward, Lachhman Kaur occasionally invoked the British help to control the turbulent elements in her territory. She expressed a strong desire to exchange Ferozepur for a portion of Bilaspur State under the British, which would on her demise become an escheat to the British Government.⁹⁹ Murray was all for the acceptance of this arrangement for he feared that the Sardarni, to relieve herself of the expense and worry to maintain a strong post, might cede it to Ranjit.¹⁰⁰ The Government did not, however, accept the

92. 71/231. Murray to Elliott, December 12, 1823. P.G.R.

93. 71/231. Murray to Elliott, December 12, 1823. P.G.R.

94. *Ibid.*

95. 115/33. Colebrooke to Wade, March 18, 1828. P.G.R.

96. 96/4. Wade to Clerk, January 10, 1828. P.G.R.

97. 103/49. Wade to Mackeson, November 17, 1836. P.G.R.

98. 75/7. Murray to Wade, January 30, 1828. P.G.R.

99. 75/66. Murray to Colebrooke, April 21, 1828. P.G.R.

100. 71/231. Murray to Elliott, December 12, 1823. P.G.R.

Sardarni's offer, as "the measure would doubtless excite alarm and suspicion in the mind of the Maharaja and perhaps not unnaturally be objected to by him as an encroachment on our part", but, at the same time, to exclude the Maharaja's right the Government declared that it had the best title to the sovereignty of the Ferozepur domain.¹⁰¹ The plain fact of the matter was that the British were in no hurry to take possession of the town, as they did not expect trouble while Ranjit lived, and knew that Lachhman Kaur was without an heir, which would mean the automatic lapse of the place to them after her demise. The Sardarni continued to remain under the British protection.

With the exception of some occasional boundary disputes between Ferozepur and Kot Kapura (Ranjit's possession) the question of the Maharaja's claim over Ferozepur was not again brought up till 1835, when Lachhman Kaur died.¹⁰² The territory lapsed to the Government and Wade took possession of the estate.¹⁰³ Mackeson, a British official, had been deputed to the Lahore Court to notify the object of Wade's arrival at Ferozepur.¹⁰⁴ Ranjit Singh endeavoured to impress upon this official his feeling that the occupation by the British of so near a place to his capital was unpalatable to him.¹⁰⁵ Faqir Aziz-ud-Din put forward two propositions: (i) that the fort and town of Ferozepur be levelled to the ground, and then the claims to the possession of the territory be taken into consideration; (Mackeson did not pay any serious attention to this proposition; as he thought it was more likely the result of the Faqir's art of finesse than to have emanated from the Maharaja himself), or (ii) that the British Government should accept in exchange for Ferozepur the territory of equal value elsewhere.¹⁰⁶

101. 326. Colbrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828. P. G. R.

102. 3109. Clerk to Metcalfe, October 4, 1835. P. G. R.

103. 6/65. Mackeson to Wade, January 11, 1836. P. G. R.

104. A letter of Captain Wade simply informed the Maharaja that "I have in obedience to the orders of my Government arrived in Ferozepur for the purpose of taking possession of the estate of late Sardarni Lachhman Kaur, who was one of its dependants."

104. 106/66. Mackeson to Wade, January 15, 1836. P. G. R.

105. 142/27. Wade to Macnaghten, April 23, 1836. P. G. R.

106. 106/66. Mackeson to Wade, January 15, 1836. P. G. R.

Mackeson, however, evaded the proposition, and told the Maharaja positively that there was no utility in the latter's reviving his claim.¹⁰⁷

The Maharaja had not so far given up the idea of urging his claim to supremacy over the place altogether, but now his hopes grew fainter, and when invited by Wade to settle the dispute 'in accordance with amicable relations', he did not talk about his claim.¹⁰⁸ The Governor General was glad that Ranjit Singh had relinquished a claim "so destitute of foundation".¹⁰⁹ But the Maharaja to whom the British intentions were perceptible would not allow them to swallow the place without making it stick in their throats. He reiterated his right and claimed Ferozepur by virtue of his success over the Kasurians (1807) who had held the town conjointly with the Ferozepurians. He also demanded it by right of conquest.¹¹⁰

Wade charged Mackeson with the duty of examining the Lahore Government's claims on Ferozepur.¹¹¹ But the examination of these claims was futile, for the Government had a preconceived plan up their sleeves,¹¹² and had no intention of relinquishing the town at any cost. It remained with the British. In 1838, the importance of the place was further augmented by its conversion into a military cantonment.

With the loss of Ferozepur it appeared as if a pistol had been pointed at the temple of Ranjit Singh.¹¹³ He, however, swallowed this loss in a spirit of helplessness.

9. Minor Territorial Disputes.

The other cases of dispute were Rajwana, Tughal, Kulal Majra, Kot Guru Harsahai, Amrala, Chanakour and Mottevala.

107. *Ibid.*

108. 142/27. Wade to Macnaghten, April 23, 1836. P. G. R.

109. 118/78. Macnaghten to Wade, May 23, 1836. P. G. R.

110. 103/49. Wade to Mackeson, November 17, 1836. P. G. R.

111. *Ibid.* and 107/37. Mackeson to Clerk, November 28, 1836. P. G. R.

112. 108/78 A. Mackeson to Wade, January 26, 1837. P. G. R.

113. That the loss of Ferozepur was regarded by Ranjit Singh as weakening his political influence with the neighbouring Princess is evident from the fact that as a countermove he attempted to establish a cantonment at Kasur in 1836.

These cases possessed little value. As the point of lawful right in each case was more or less doubtful, the Governor General admitted the Maharaja's supremacy over these places observing that "we shall do best to desist from contesting with Ranjit Singh the question of supremacy in these several estates and villages."¹¹⁴

In the end, it may be remarked that in all these cases Ranjit Singh acted by demanding something more than what rightly belonged to him, and when he got all that he really deserved, or a bit more, he rejoiced in the decision of the British Government. The British, on their part, exulted over the fact that all the intricate problems were amicably settled to the satisfaction of the Maharaja with whom they could not brook any hostility over such small matters in those critical years.¹¹⁵

Fatehgarh and Tolwandi.

The amicable settlement of Ranjit Singh's claims to places in the cis-Sutlej zone—Wadni, the Kang and Ahluwalia possessions and Ferozepur—removed, at least for some time, all causes of friction between the Governments of Lahore and Calcutta. But new circumstances arose soon afterwards, and led to the abandonment of the English attitude of non-intervention. This is exemplified through their interference in the two important cases of Fatehgarh and Talwandi.*

Fatehgarh.

It was a mere *Garhi* (mud fortress) about 25 paces square with a few huts attached to it, constituting a part of the town of Anandpur¹¹⁶ which was occupied by several Sodhis and some religious recluses, as it was held holy by the Sikhs. They exercised authority over their own immediate dependants, and the

114. 28/126. Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1838. P. G. R.

115. In 1828, following a defeat, sealed by the Treaty of Turkomanchai, Persia passed into the sphere of Russian control. Thenceforth, her policy under Russian influence developed a new and sharp point aimed potentially at British India. The British could ill-afford at that time to antagonize Ranjit Singh. *Vide* Chapter XI, *infra*.

* The cases in themselves were not so intricate, rather the complications were spun and woven round them by Wade and Murray.

116. 97/149. Wade to Fraser, September 19, 1829. P. G. R.

general administration was vested in a *thanedar* stationed there for the last 23 years by the Lahore Government.¹¹⁷

On August 30, 1829, Murray informed Fraser, the Resident at Delhi, that the fort and village of Fattchgarh had been forcibly occupied by the Lahore troops under the command of Chait Singh who was accompanied by Jai Karan, a *chaprassi* from the Ludhiana Agency.¹¹⁸ He requested that the place and property be restored to the Singhpurians¹¹⁹ to whom those, in fact, legally belonged. He also stated that great excitement and alarm were created in the minds of all the neighbouring chiefs, whom he succeeded in preventing from attacking the Lahore detachment and retainers in their position at Kiratpur.¹²⁰

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It is interesting to note that Anandpur was composed of various divisions or *mohallas* such as Fattchgarh, and in each of these principal divisions, there were sub divisions of property belonging either to the feudatories of the British Government or those of Lahore. There were altogether 28 estates in this town.

(97/224. Wade to Hawkins, December 19, 1829. P. G. R.)

117. 29/224. Hawkins to Murray, September 25, 1829. P. G. R. And
97/149. Wade to Fraser, September 19, 1829. P. G. R.

118. 76/6. Murray to Fraser, August 30, 1829. P. G. R.

119. The founder of the Singhpurian family was one Kapura Singh, a Jat of the village of Fyzulpur (afterwards called Singhpur) situated in the Jullundur Doab. He was succeeded by his son, Khushal Singh, who acquired the districts of Jullundur and Amarnkot and a considerable territory in the neighbourhood of Kupar and Anandpur Makhawal. In 1795, he was succeeded by his son, Budh Singh, who built the fort of Fattchgarh in 1800 for the collection of rent from the neighbouring estates. Continually harassed by the soaring ambition of Ranjit Singh, his pride and honour rebelled, and relinquishing all his territory in the Jullundur Doab, Budh Singh retired to the south of the Sutlej to invoke British protection. Ochterlony favourably responded to his petition, and by the order of the Government of July 11, 1810, he was vouchsafed British protection. But he could not be spared from the terror of Ranjit Singh who successfully invaded his territory in 1815, and broken hearted Budh Singh breathed his last on September 15, 1815. In the following year, his estate was divided by Murray among his sons, the deed of distribution was duly ratified by Ochterlony in 1817—76/105. Murray to Hawkins, November 2, 1829. P. G. R. Also 76/249. Murray to Hawkins, May 19, 1830. P. G. R.

120. 76/6. Murray to Fraser, August 30, 1829. P. G. R.

At the same time, he complained against Wade for having countenanced the proceedings of the Lahore Court,¹²¹ and blamed him for having "entailed upon himself a very heavy responsibility by ejecting the troops of the Chief under the protection and guarantee of his own Government from an ancestral possession and delivering it over, without enquiry, to a foreign state to be destroyed".¹²²

Wade, who was prepared to face allegations and distortion of facts by Murray, lost no time in refuting them by maintaining that the Maharaja was compelled to launch this punitive expedition, because the persons who occupied this *Gurhi* on the part of the Singhpurians, had for a long time evinced a spirit of contumacy and defiance to the orders of the *thanedar* by openly playing sympathetic hosts to thieves and offenders.¹²³ Wade further contended that the order of the Government of November 14, 1828, had placed Anandpur under the supremacy of the Lahore Government,¹²⁴ and as Fatehgarh formed a part of Anandpur Mukhowal, Ranjit Singh could deal with it as he pleased.¹²⁵ Wade denied categorically that his *chaprassi* accompanied the attacking party to Fatehgarh with his authority.¹²⁶

121. / /

122. 105 Murray to Hawkins, October 2, 1829 P. G. R.

123. 7/119 Wade to Fraser, September 19, 1829 P. G. R.

Wade wrote "It is a hard case that the peace and security of a large town should be continually disturbed, the authority of the Maharaja thwarted, because a few people inimical to him, encouraged in their hostility by the Singhpurians, happen to occupy a corner of the town."

124. 28/326 Colebrooke to Murray, December 19, 1828 P. G. R.

125. 97/149 Wade to Fraser, September 19, 1829 P. G. R.

Wade wrote "While any doubt existed whether Anandpur belonged to Lahore or the Protected states, the officers of Ranjit Singh were afraid of taking any decisive measure to coerce the occupants of the Gurhi but when the supreme authority in it was confirmed on the Maharaja, his officers, responsible for the peace of the place, felt entitled to exercise the same powers of jurisdiction in it as in any other town which acknowledged their master's supremacy."

126. 26/24 Hawkins to Murray, September 26, 1829. Encl. from Wade. P. G. R. Wade had deputed his *chaprassi*, Jai Karan, to Anandpur on January 11, 1829. On May 16, he was requested by Murray to depute a *chaprassi* to help the Ambala *chaprassi* in measuring the depth

(Continued on page 48)

Murray promptly rebutted Wade's contentions. In respect of the contiguity of Fatehgarh to Anandpur, he asserted that Fatehgarh was distinct from the town of Anandpur and had never been, in any way, dependent upon it or subject to the authority of the rulers of that town, being under its own Chief and *thanedar*.¹²⁷ He further contended that the possession of Fatehgarh for the previous fifty years by the Singhpurian Chiefs and the confirmation of it to them by Ochterlony in 1817,¹²⁸ combined with the fact that the State of Lahore had never advanced any claim to it, appeared to him to be clear and unequivocal proofs of the undisputed right of Singhpurian Sardars.¹²⁹

Wade, however, could not be reconciled to the line of argument preferred by Murray.¹³⁰ He observed that whosoever possessed the sovereignty in Anandpur, to him belonged the right of jurisdiction over every place contained in it,¹³¹ and that

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of a channel of the Sutlej. Jai Karam was ordered to execute this duty. This explains the presence of Wade's *chaphans* in Fatehgarh. Wade declared that "if he accompanied the party which took possession of the Garhi, I am conventionally able to declare that he did so without any authority from me".

127. 76/103. Murray to Hawkins, November 1, 1829. P. G. R.

128. On the death of Budh Singh in 1815, his sons applied to Murray for the distribution among them of their father's property. Murray decided, in consultation with Ochterlony, to distribute it according to the principle of 'Chundabund'. The matter was, however, referred to the Patiala Minister for decision. His decision was finally ratified by Ochterlony in 1817. Murray considered that it was not a common deed of distribution, but a regular confirmation of Budh Singh's sons in British protection. Fatehgarh was included in the inventory of the property then divided—76/105. Murray to Hawkins, November 2, 1829. P. G. R.

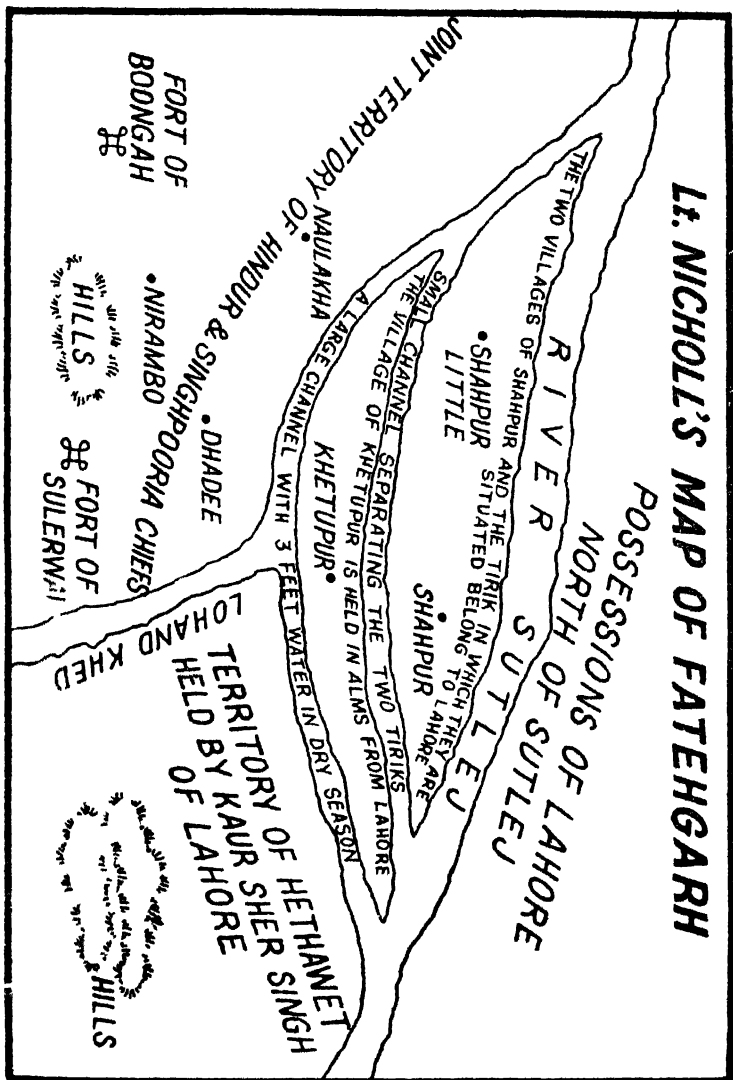
129. 76/75. Murray to Hawkins, October 10, 1829. P. G. R.

130. 97/230. Wade to Hawkins, December 29, 1829. P. G. R.

131. 97/180. Wade to Hawkins, October 14, 1829. P. G. R.

Wade wrote: "Government will find that Fatehgarh's exclusion from the jurisdiction of sovereign of Lahore cannot be maintained without directly departing from its own orders regarding the cession of that district to the Maharaja and rendering them nugatory."

(97/224. Wade to Hawkins, December 7, 1829. P. G. R.)



when Ranjit Singh was required to give a list of the cis-Sutlej places which he claimed, he did not specify Fatehgarh, naturally thinking that the term Anandpur would comprehend every place within the precinct of that town.¹³² Great weightage was attached by Murray to the deed of distribution effected by him in 1816, and signed by Ochterlony in 1817. These signatures to a deed of distribution, Wade considered, nothing more than a simple act of attestation which could not confirm the sovereignty of Fatehgarh to the Singhpurians.¹³³

The question at issue was whether Fatehgarh was a distinct fort and village, as stated by Murray,¹³⁴ or it was included within the natural limits of Anandpur, as represented by Wade.¹³⁵ The latter suggested to the Government to depute an officer of the topographical survey for the *echircissement* of Fatehgarh.¹³⁶ Thereupon, ordered by the Government to ascertain the exact position of Fatehgarh in relation to Anandpur, Wade with Dr. Murray¹³⁷ and Lt. Nicholl of the Horse Artillery visited the spot,¹³⁸ and prepared the sketch map (reproduced on page 49), which showed beyond doubt that Fatehgarh was a component part of the town of Anandpur.¹³⁹

132. 97/230. Wade to Hawkins, December 29, 1829. P. G. R.

133. 91/196-A. Wade to Hawkins, October 25, 1829. P. G. R.
Wade held that "Fatehgarh has never been confirmed to the Singhpurian chiefs 'by the local British authorities in 1817,' as assumed by Captain Murray... for if the mere signature of Sir David Ochterlony to the deed of distribution was to be considered a confirmation of the sovereignty of Fatehgarh to the Singhpurians, in like manner might a claim be started by Captain Murray to the supremacy of the two villages specified in the 'taqsimnamah' and situated across the Sutlej..... an act to which no British authority could give his confirmation without an infraction of the Treaty between the two States."

134. 76/103. Murray to Hawkins, November 1, 1829. P. G. R.

135. 97/180. Wade to Hawkins, October 14, 1829. P. G. R.

136. 97/185. Wade to Hawkins, October 17, 1829. P. G. R.

137. A Surgeon in the British Indian Army, about the end of 1826, was sent to attend Ranjit Singh, who was laid with sickness and had sought the aid of European skill—Cunningham. *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 186.

138. 97/230. Wade to Hawkins, December 29, 1829. P. G. R.

139. 115/65. Hawkins to Wade, January 5, 1830. P. G. R.

The British Government gave its verdict that the Singhpurian chiefs were Sodhis, and held their possessions within the limits of Anandpur on the same tenure and footing as other Sardars of the same class.¹⁴⁰ and that "the fort was fairly liable to be preserved or demolished at the pleasure of Ranjit Singh."¹⁴¹

A sense of defeatism overpowered Murray at this settlement, but he made a further inquiry into the matter, and despatched to Delhi a long report on the Singhpurians, and the tenure under which they held their lands. He pointed out that they were of Jat extraction, and were in no manner connected with the Sodhis, who were Khattris and the priests of the former.¹⁴² Therefore, he argued that the Ruler of Lahore could not claim supremacy over them even under the order of the Government of November 14, 1828.¹⁴³ The Governor-General accepted his new plea, because the assumption upon which the merit of the Fattengarh case was in part founded had fallen to the ground.¹⁴⁴

The Government was disgusted with the manner in which facts had been differently represented by their functionaries, but finally resolved not to disturb the arrangement by which Fatehgarh had been admitted to be under the jurisdiction of Ranjit Singh¹⁴⁵ because by overhaste Wade had already communicated the former orders of the Government to the Maharaja.¹⁴⁶ But it regretted that Murray did not bring these facts to light before the relinquishment of the English claims to supremacy

(Continued from page 50)

Hawkins writes: "The sketch appears to furnish the conclusive evidence that the fort of Fatehgarh must be considered as forming part of the town and subject to the jurisdiction of the power which exercises the supreme authority therein."—30/22. Hawkins to Murray, February 18, 1830. P. G. R.

140. 30/22. Hawkins to Murray, February 18, 1830. P. G. R.

141. 30/6. Hawkins to Murray, January 15, 1830. P. G. R. Encl. from Stirling.

142. 76/190. Murray to Hawkins, February 21, 1830. P. G. R.

143. 116/68. Hawkins to Wade, April 27, 1830. P. G. R.

144. *Ibid.* Encl. from Stirling.

145. 30/80. Hawkins to Murray, October 5, 1830. Encl. from Swinton. P. G. R.

146. 30/38. Hawkins to Murray, April 26, 1830. Encl. from Stirling. P. G. R.

over the place. Wade was censured for his ignorance of the fact that the Singhpurians were not Sodhis.¹⁴⁷ He tried to clarify his position by submitting that the Singhpurians being Khattris or Jats was of little consequence so long as Fatehgarh formed a part of Anandpur.¹⁴⁸

Murray all the time felt that grave injustice had been done to the Singhpurians. The Governor-General had proposed, in one of his minutes, to bring about an exchange or conciliation between the two parties.¹⁴⁹ Murray made use of this proposal, and suggested that a compromise might be effected by conferring the district of Bulolpur¹⁵⁰ on the Singhpurians for their loss in this case. But the Governor-General refused to resort to this exchange, for it would set a precedent for Ranjit Singh's further moves to concentrate his authority in one place instead of having disjointed possessions in the cis-Sutlej area.¹⁵¹

The Maharaja, on his part, was ready to reinstate the Singhpurians in their rights and privileges in that place provided they

147. *Ibid.*

148. 98/99. Wade to Hawkins, June 23, 1830. P. G. R.

Wade wrote: "When I consider, however, the altered view which is taken in Deputy Secretary's letter of the 3rd of April in reference to the case of Fatehgarh, the reason which is assigned for that alteration and the blame which is consequently attached to my proceedings, it appears to me to be very expedient that I should submit some observations on the subject to satisfy His Lordship in Council that the circumstance of the Singhpurians not being Sodhis does not alter the original feature of the case, nor lessen, according to the system of policy pursued by the British Government and acknowledged by the Law of Nations, the liability of those people to the jurisdiction of the State in which the sovereignty of Anandpur happens to be vested for the property which they possess within that town."

149. 30/38. Hawkins to Murray, April 26, 1830. Encl. from Stirling.

150. Bulolpur was one of the southern districts held by Lahore, and a little distant from the main territory of the Singhpurian Chiefs.
(76/247. Murray to Hawkins, May 19, 1830. P. G. R.)

151. The policy of exchange might have led Ranjit Singh, as suggested to him by his diplomatic minister, Faqir Aziz-ud Din, to give Lachhman Kaur some other cis-Sutlej territory in exchange for her right in Ferozepur, a place so much coveted by the English.

106/66. Mackeson to Wade, January 15, 1836. P. G. R.

submitted to his local authority, and conducted themselves as other inhabitants of Anandpur.¹⁵²

The position of the Protected chiefs *vis-a-vis* Anandpur was clarified by the orders of the Government which said that "Fatehgarh is actually within the town of Anandpur Makhowal while the domains held by the hill Raja of Bilaspur, the Sikh chief of Sialbah and the widow of Sobah Singh Nihang, are described to be in the vicinity thereof, and hence there was no room for any such predicament to occur in their cases."¹⁵³

Murray, who had striven to disturb Ranjit Singh in the possessions admitted to belong to him,¹⁵⁴ could not, for the time being, acquiesce in the judgment of the Government, for he felt it unjust to the Singhpurians.¹⁵⁵ The Government, however, in spite of his elaborate arguments remained adamant.

Talwandi.

While the Fatehgarh case was still being considered by the Governor-General, another dispute, that of Talwandi, arose to provide fresh fuel to Captains Murray and Wade to exhibit their mutual antagonism.

The fort of Talwandi was situated in the domain of the Protected States.¹⁵⁶ It was originally held by one Mangu Khan, but was seized by Sudha Singh of Dhanaura, the Rajgarhian chief. In 1803, it was forcibly seized by the Kang chief, but

152. 98/99. Wade to Hawkins, June 23, 1830. P. G. R.

153. 30/3. Hawkins to Murray, April 26, 1830. P. G. R. Enclosure from Stirling. Also 115/68. Hawkins to Wade, April 27, 1830. P. G. R. Enclosure from Stirling.

154. 97/230. Wade to Hawkins, December 29, 1829. P. G. R.

155. It is interesting to note that after obstinately persisting in his pleadings regarding Fatehgarh for a year and a half, Murray, in the long run, yielded to concur with Wade and the Government. He wrote: "The orders of Government under date September 16 last have set at rest the claims of Singhpurian Chiefs to the fort of Fatehgarh. I have now seen the spot and sense of right to the State of Lahore, and justice to yourself compels me to declare that Fatehgarh is a component part of the town of Anandpur under the authority of the Ruler of the Punjab."

(115/105. Murray to Wade, January 3, 1831. P. G. R.)

156. 76/89. Murray to Hawkins, October 23, 1829. P. G. R.

after long drawn out hostilities for two years, it was recovered by Sodhis Jai Singh and Surjan Singh (who were related to the Rajgarhian family) with the help of the neighbouring Sikh Sardars, and especially of Fatteli Singh, the Ahluwalia chief.¹⁵⁷ It then descended to Mai Sukhan, the widow of Sudha Singh, the last of the Rajgarhian family.¹⁵⁸ In 1808-09, British protection was extended to it by Ochterlony.¹⁵⁹ On the demise of Mai Sukhan in 1824, Sodhi Uttam Singh appealed to Murray for succeeding to her share. But his claims were set aside, and the place was given over to Mata Raj Kaur, the widow of Sodhi Tilok Singh, and her brothers, Didar Singh and Diwan Singh. Thus the Sodhis who held many villages of an eleemosynary tenure from the Protected States did neither hold this fort nor receive any protection from Ranjit Singh.¹⁶⁰

All the evils attendant upon the weak rule of a lady appeared in the Talwandi domain. Her rival claimant, Uttam Singh, with the help of Kabula Singh, the *thanedar* of Talwandi, turned the opportunity offered by the dissensions prevailing in the family to his own advantage, and seized Talwandi in July, 1828.¹⁶¹ At the request of Mata Raj Kaur, the British Government intervened, and restored her domain to her.¹⁶² But the troubles did not end at that, some time later Raj Kaur's officers rebelled against her and attempted a *coup d'état*.¹⁶³ This time she solicited Ranjit Singh's help for the restoration of her authority in the place. The Maharaja ordered his officers in Kot Kapura to reinstate her in her rights.¹⁶⁴ Ranjit Singh had intervened, it appears, to make an end of the trouble, but it proved, as will be seen, a beginning of the end of Raj Kaur's independence.

157. 115/68. Hawkins to Wade, April 27, 1830. P. G. R.

158. 30/86. Hawkins to Murray, April 5, 1830. P. G. R. Enclosure from Stirling.

159. 76/89. Murray to Hawkins, October 23, 1829. P. G. R.

160. *Ibid.*

161. 115/68. Hawkins to Wade, April 27, 1830. P. G. R.

162. 97/222. Wade to Hawkins, December 5, 1829. P. G. R.

163. 97/209. Wade to Hawkins, November 23, 1829. P. G. R.

164. 97/202. Wade to Hawkins, November 3, 1829. P. G. R.

In September, 1829, Murray informed the Resident that the Lahore troops had captured the fort of Talwandi.¹⁶⁵ Murray 'lamented', that Wade should have given the order, which the Lahore Agent stated in his representation to have been received five or six months back, for the fort to be violently taken by the Lahore troops.¹⁶⁶ Murray held that this territory was never dependent on the Lahore Darbar, that Ranjit Singh did not include it in the list of places to which he advanced claims and that "from its extent and celebrity. . His Highness and his advisers cannot, with any shadow of propriety, now allege that it escaped their memory."¹⁶⁷ He also accused the employees of the Ludhiana Agency for having accepted bribes from the Lahore Court.¹⁶⁸

Wade admitted that the fort of Talwandi had been captured by the Lahore troops,¹⁶⁹ but he positively denied the other charge, and challenged Murray to name any official of his office who could be proved guilty of bribery.¹⁷⁰ He also stated that some time back the Lahore Agent presented to him a petition from Mata Raj Kaur complaining to the Maharaja that her officers in Talwandi had rebelled, and requesting him to re-establish order in her territory.¹⁷¹ It was clear from the petition that Raj Kaur was a subject of Ranjit Singh.¹⁷² He further stated that the Sodhis had been declared to be under Lahore supremacy by the order of the Government of November 14, 1828.¹⁷³ According to "the plain sense and spirit of this order," Wade held, the sovereignty of Talwandi belonged to Lahore, and hence he did not deem it proper to interfere in the affair.¹⁷⁴

165. 76/40 Murray to Hawkins, September 27, 1829. P.G.R.

166. 76/89 Murray to Hawkins, October 23, 1829. P. G. R.

167. 76/111. Murray to Hawkins, November 12, 1829. P. G. R.

168. 76/40. Murray to Hawkins, September 27, 1829. P. G. R.

169. 29/255. Hawkins to Murray, October 17, 1829. P. G. R. Encl. from Wade.

170. 97/175. Wade to Hawkins, October 13, 1829. P. G. R.

171. 29/255. Hawkins to Murray, October 17, 1829. P. G. R. Encl. from Wade.

172. 97/175. Wade to Hawkins, October 13, 1829. P. G. R.

173. 97/202. Wade to Hawkins, November 3, 1829. P. G. R.

174. *Ibid.*

Murray was 'astonished' by the assertion that Raj Kaur was a Lahore subject. He contended that as Talwandi was never dependent on, and had never had the least connection with, the Lahore dominion, Raj Kaur could not be ranked among the subjects of Ranjit Singh.¹⁷⁵ Wade, however, was firm in his assertion that supremacy over the place belonged to Ranjit Singh.¹⁷⁶

Both Wade and Murray had been beating about the bush, and maintaining divergent views. In spite of their best efforts to place their viewpoints on reason they could evolve no agreed and equitable decision on behalf of the Government. The latter had, therefore, to institute a further enquiry, under Murray, into the affair,¹⁷⁷ though, instead of facilitating a decision, it complicated the problem still further. Mata Raj Kaur affirmed that Talwandi was taken violently without her knowledge, while,¹⁷⁸ on the other hand, the Persian documents, alleged to be those of the Mata and produced by Ranjit Singh in his defence, seemed to show that he had interfered in the matter at her own explicit request.¹⁷⁹ Wade pleaded that the Mata was compelled to falsify her letters which she had addressed to Ranjit Singh for the restoration of her authority over Talwandi, by threats and intimidation and at the dictation of Murray.¹⁸⁰

175. 76/89. Murray to Hawkins, October 23, 1829 P. G. R.

176. Wade tried to show up Murray as possessing scanty information on the subject by saying: "Murray first prefers a complaint of the capture of a fort which he claims and admits to belong to the widow of Sodhi Tilok Singh, not in alms, but by inheritance. He then says, 'I am astonished to hear the widow of Tilok Singh ranked among the subjects of the Ruler of the Punjab.' It is now stated that she is alleged to be a subject of Lahore and the fort was wrested from Sodhi Uttam Singh. Mata Raj Kaur is artfully made at one time to deny her own acts and complain that the Maharaja's troops have taken her fort and when the place and property are restored to her it is asserted that the place was not wrested from her but from Sodhi Uttam Singh."—97/209. Wade to Hawkins, November 23, 1829. P.G.R.

177. 76/125. Murray to Hawkins, December 3, 1829. P. G. R.

178. 69/64. Translation of a letter received by Murray from Mata Raj Kaur on October 2, 1829. P. G. R.

179. 97/209. Wade to Hawkins, November 23, 1829 P. G. R.

180. 98/8. Wade to Hawkins, January 11, 1830. P. G. R.

While the case was still pending before the Governor-General a petition was presented to Wade by Sodhis Didar Singh and Diwan Singh of Anandpur.¹⁸¹ It showed that other persons also were interested in the Talwandi fort besides Uttam Singh and Raj Kaur. New complications thus cropped up.

Ranjit Singh, on his part, ordered the restoration of the fort to the rightful proprietor.¹⁸²

The Government was in a fix, and as a temporary arrangement asked Murray on December 28, 1829 to depute a person to take charge of the place.¹⁸³ Wade was directed to co-operate with him in the proper execution of the task, and to deliver the fort of Talwandi and any property that might have been taken from there over to Murray's Agent.¹⁸⁴ In January, 1830, Chuhar Lal (of Lahore Government) handed over Talwandi to Ram Parshad, a *chaprassi* of the Ambala Agency.¹⁸⁵

Thenceforward, Wade supported the claims of Ranjit Singh, Raj Kaur, Didar Singh and Diwan Singh,¹⁸⁶ whereas Murray pleaded for the claims of Uttam Singh.¹⁸⁷ Wade recommended to the Government that justice would be done to both parties, only if the case was properly investigated at the Resident's office at Delhi.¹⁸⁸

After a full consideration of all the statements submitted by Wade in support of Ranjit Singh and his dependants, and by Murray on behalf of Uttam Singh, the Governor-General concurred with the view of the former, and admitted for the time being the claims of Raj Kaur, Didar Singh and Diwan Singh

181. 29/194. Hawkins to Murray, November 30, 1829, P. G. R. Enclosure from Wade.

182. 29/299. Hawkins to Murray, December 4, 1829. P. G. R.

183. *Ibid.*

184. 29/309. Hawkins to Murray, December 28, 1829. P. G. R. Encl. from Wade.

185. 98/8. Wade to Hawkins, January 11, 1830. P. G. R.

186. 76/125. Murray to Hawkins, December 3, 1829. P. G. R.

187. 76/111. Murray to Hawkins, November 12, 1829, P. G. R.

188. 98/8. Wade to Hawkins, January 11, 1830. P. G. R.

over Talwandi.¹⁸⁹ But it was provided that the place would be held under British protection subject to the possibility of Ranjit Singh succeeding in proving his own supremacy over the place.¹⁹⁰

The Government had further enquiries made with a view to finding, if possible, whether the parties in possession of Talwandi at the time of the Treaty of 1809 were independent of Ranjit Singh or held that place under him.¹⁹¹ Murray opined that the Sodhis were then independent, and owed allegiance to no body.¹⁹² The Government dismissed this view as unwarranted by evidence.¹⁹³ Wade contended that the fact that Ranjit Singh had assisted the Sodhis in 1803-04, lent colour to the view that he would not have done so, had he not been acknowledged as their superior, and that, therefore, the Sodhis were not independent.¹⁹⁴ Murray refused to subscribe to the views of Wade arguing that "the succour granted on emergent occasions by friendly powers to each other cannot, on any known principle of International Law, be construed into an admission of fealty on the part of one or the other."¹⁹⁵ But the Government waived aside this plausible but inconclusive argument.

Murray's death in June, 1831, resulted in the slackening of interest in the controversy, and the case remained undecided by the Government for some time. In 1835, Wade brought the

189. 30/38. Hawkins to Murray, April 26, 1830. P. G. R. Encl. from Stirling.

Also 115/68. Hawkins to Wade, April 27, 1830. P. G. R. Encl. from Stirling.

190. 30/38. Hawkins to Murray, April 26, 1830. P. G. R.

Hawkins wrote: "The general impression on the mind of the Governor-General is by no means adverse to the validity of the Maharaja's claim."

191. 30/80. Hawkins to Murray, October 5, 1830. P. G. R.

192. 76/327. Murray to Hawkins, October 11, 1830. P. G. R.

193. 30/36. Hawkins to Murray, November 22, 1830. P. G. R.

194. *Ibid.* Encl. from Wade.

195. 76/350, Murray to Martin, December 13, 1830. P. G. R.

case into prominence again,¹⁹⁶ and two years later, the Governor General when partitioning the Jind State finally gave his decision in favour of Ranjit Singh¹⁹⁷

196. 102/40. Wade to Clerk, July 25, 1835. P. G. R.

Wade pointed that "Government should be apprised of the expectation of parties for a decision, for while it is deferred, not only is the Maharaja kept in suspense as to the ultimate intention of Government, but the revenue of the villages which has hitherto been collected by the Sodhis is withheld from them "

197. 106/45. Clerk to Wade. August 17, 1837. P. G. R.

CHAPTER IV

JIND CHIEFSHIP

The disputes now to be examined are such wherein Ranjit Singh, the British and the Raja of Jind¹ were the interested parties. These afford glimpses into the true nature and extent of British relationship with the Ruler of Lahore and the cis-Sutlej chiefs. How far the English stood by their Proclamations of 1809 and 1811 made to the Protected chiefs,² and to what extent their recently created connection with those chiefs was affected by their Treaty of friendship of 1809 with the Maharaja, will be revealed in this chapter.

The Aitiana Dispute.

Aitiana, situated 15 miles from the Ludhiana cantonment,³ was one of those places over which Ranjit Singh had preferred his claims in his long list of 47 possessions of the cis-Sutlej region.⁴ It was held by one Baba Ram Singh, who was claimed by Ranjit Singh as his vassal, but the British had yet to examine this claim.⁵

Ram Singh petitioned to Wade that he had been obliged to quit his village in consequence of some violent demonstrations

1. The Lahore and Jind families were on very good terms even before the English appeared in the Punjab. Raj Kaur, Ranjit Singh's mother, was a daughter of Gajpat Singh, the founder of the Jind family. In his early years, Ranjit Singh often bestowed on his maternal uncle, Bhag Singh of Jind, many *jagirs* as a mark of appreciation for his willing help and co-operation during his cis-Sutlej expeditions. Later, Raja Sangat Singh (grand son of Bhag Singh) paid a number of visits to Ranjit Singh who seems to have taken a liking for him and bestowed on him many presents and *jagirs*.—Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, pp. 322 sqq.
2. *Vide* pp. 10-12, *supra*.
3. 96/66. Wade to Colebrooke, May 31, 1828. P. G. R.
4. *Vide* p. 26, *supra*.
5. 96/54. Wade to Colebrooke, May 25, 1828. P. G. R.

from Raja Sangat Singh's subjects.⁶ Wade learnt the very next day that Sangat Singh's men had actually seized the place on the plea of a grant from Ranjit Singh.⁷ He informed the Resident about this incident, expressing his own inability to check the unlawful aggression because no *vakil* from Jind was in attendance at Ludhiana.⁸ At the same time, he urged Murray to impress upon the Jind Chief that if he or his people had any cause of dispute with Ram Singh, they should refer their complaint through the constituted authority rather than create trouble by occasional aggressions, whether justifiable or otherwise.⁹

Murray, on his part, denied to Ranjit Singh any right over Aitiana, because it had not yet been admitted.¹⁰

When called upon to explain his conduct, Sangat Singh produced before Colebrooke papers "purporting to be the copies of a grant from Maharaja Ranjit Singh and of a counterpart engagement from him to the Lahore Chief for the village in question, and two other villages, Rajoona and Joghul (also situated on the south bank of the Sutlej), for a *nazarana* of Rs. 30,000, a female *sowaree* elephant, and a horse of high price."¹¹

Ranjit Singh's conduct in granting a village which did not belong to him, and of Sangat Singh in accepting or purchasing villages from a foreign power while under British protection, was considered by the British as reprehensible.¹²

The Maharaja denied having executed any deed of gift of the village of Aitiana in favour of the Jind Chief.¹³ The evidence on both sides was conflicting, and it was after a laborious journey through the quagmire of 'interests' that the Government arrived at a decision.

Sangat Singh was directed to restore the villages without

6. 94/54. Wade to Colebrooke, May 25, 1828. P. G. R.
7. 96/66. Wade to Colebrooke, May 31, 1828. P. G. R.
8. 36/54. Wade to Colebrooke, May 25, 1828. P. G. R.
9. 96/56. Wade to Murray, May 25, 1828. P. G. R.
10. 75/109. Murray to Colebrooke, June 9, 1828. P. G. R.
11. 115/37. Colebrooke to Wade, June 14, 1828. P. G. R.
12. *Ibid.*
13. 115/38. Colebrooke to Wade, June 23, 1828. P. G. R.

delay. He was administered a severe rebuke for entering, without the knowledge or permission of the Government, into negotiations with Lahore. He was required henceforth to give up that connection of allegiance which he was forming with Ranjit Singh, because that directly impinged upon the protection which the Company had guaranteed him in 1809.¹⁴

The Raja had no choice but to obey, and surrendered Aitiana to the lawful proprietor (Ram Singh),¹⁵ who was also paid the value of the property plundered, and allowed to retain the other two villages.¹⁶ The Maharaja obtaining Ram Singh's attendance in his presence confirmed him in the possession of Aitiana afresh.¹⁷

An inconspicuous matter in itself, the Aitiana dispute is of real significance. As this matter was clearing up towards the end of 1828, another of a much greater weight arose, viz., whether the Protected chiefs should be prohibited from accepting any similar grant from the Maharaja in the future or not.¹⁸ The continuance of this system, though of advantage to the Protected chiefs, foreboded perpetual conflicts between the two States.¹⁹ The Government, therefore, decreed that the Protected chiefs were not to enter into any such correspondence or negotiation with the Lahore Government,²⁰ and that they were to abstain from interfering in the affairs of the Maharaja and his feudatories without intimating the local British Agent.²¹

The British Government had by the Treaty of 1809 effected a political cleavage between the Sikh chiefs on either side of the Sutlej. This mandamus further widened the gulf between them.

In July, 1829, Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha, as unscrupulous and grasping a chief as any other in the cis-Sutlej area, had

14. 115/37. Colebrooke to Stirling, June 12, 1828. P. G. R.

15. 28/210. Colebrooke to Murray, August 19, 1828. P. G. R.

16. 96/90. Wade to Colebrooke, July 5, 1828. P. G. R.

17. 96/118. Wade to Colebrooke, August 15, 1828. P. G. R.

18. 115/38. Colebrooke to Wade, June 23, 1828. P. G. R. Also

96/80. Wade to Colebrooke, June 19, 1828. P. G. R.

19. 115/39. Colebrooke to Wade, June 24, 1828. P. G. R.

20. 115/40. Colebrooke to Wade, July 29, 1828. P. G. R.

21. 96/90. Wade to Colebrooke, July 5, 1828. P. G. R.

been to Lahore,²² the object of his visit, according to well informed belief, being the securing of a *jaqir* from the Sikh Ruler.²³ When called upon by Wade to interfere, the Governor General refused to do so, as he was not, in any way, authorised to restrain the Maharaja from making grants of *jaqirs* to the Sikh chiefs.²⁴ But at the same time, for future guidance, His Lordship declared that "the chiefs on this side of the Sutlej, i. e., the cis-Sutlej chiefs..... who stand in a feudatory relation to the British Government are not at liberty to accept territorial grants from a foreign Prince tending to involve them in connections and to create interests eventually incompatible with the duties of allegiance to the Paramount Power without their knowledge and sanction."²⁵

This unqualified assertion of exclusive British control formed a logical supplement to the Government's directive in the case of Aitiana, and proved a big stride forward towards the building up of British ascendancy over the Protected chieftains.

Case of Dheri and Shujatwala.

The Aitiana dispute arose between the Rulers of the two States of Lahore and Jind, with the British acting as mediators. The present case was between the subjects of two villages lying in these two States.

Dheri was situated in Jind State while Shujatwala belonged to the feudatories of Lahore.²⁶ The boundaries of the two villages, being contiguous, affrays between their occupants arose inevitably. In 1828 boundaries were demarcated and differences settled." But matters did not work smoothly for long, for in

22 "....the acknowledged feudatories of the British Government are not allowed to enter into correspondence or negotiations with a foreign state - yet the Protected chiefs continued this practice in prosecution of their several designs without reference to the channel of communication and in direct opposition to the declared order."—

97/28. Wade to Colebrooke, February 20, 1829. P. G. R.

23. 37/113. Wade to Colebrooke, July 27, 1829. P. G. R.

24. 115/63. Colebrooke to Wade, September 16, 1829. P. G. R.

25. *Ibid.*

26. 97/76. Wade to Colebrooke, April 25, 1829. P. G. R.

27. *Ibid.*

the following year, the *zamindars* of the two villages staged an open fight resulting in some loss of life to the Dheri inhabitants.²⁸ Ranjit Singh's Agent Desa Singh, threw the *zamindars* of Shujat-wala in confinement.²⁹ However, Wade, before whom they had pleaded not guilty, referred the case to Murray, and requested him to investigate it and settle it promptly.³⁰ The investigations led to no conclusion, so that Wade had to suggest the 'fair and equitable method' of arbitration for settling the dispute.³¹ The arbitrators' testimony confirmed the plea of the Shujat-wala *zamindars* that the villagers of Dheri had been the first to provoke quarrel by using insulting gestures and taunting language towards them.³² Wade urged Murray to call upon the Raja of Jind to take preventive measures against repetition of such affrays.³³ Murray, on grounds of justice, hesitated to act on Wade's suggestion.³⁴ The Government concurred with Murray and censured Wade for instigating the former to interfere in the internal affairs of the Protected State which might have resulted in the disaffection of the Chief concerned.³⁵ The facts of the case remained as decided by the arbitrators.

Succession to the Jind Chiefship.

Raja Sangat Singh of Jind passed away suddenly at the premature age of twenty-four on November 3, 1834,³⁶ and left no lineal heir to succeed him.

The principality, according to Sikh custom, might justly have been treated as an escheat to the Suzerain Power, the

28. 97/79. Wade to Murray, April 27, 1829. P. G. R.

29. 97/83. Wade to Murray, April 29, 1829. P. G. R.

30. 97/79. Wade to Murray, April 27, 1829. P. G. R.

31. 97/114. Wade to Murray, July 27, 1829. P. G. R.

32. 97/170. Wade to Murray, October 7, 1829. P. G. R.

33. 97/170. Wade to Murray, October 7, 1829. P. G. R. Wade sent a similar request to Desa Singh, Ranjit's Agent, to remonstrate with the Jind Raja.

34. 76/86. Murray to Wade, October 19, 1829. P. G. R.

Murray contended that "we are only the conservators of peace and mediators between the chiefs of those districts."

35. 29/263. Hawkins to Murray, October 23, 1829. P. G. R.

36. 80/196. Clerk to Fraser, November 16, 1834. P. G. R.

British Government.³⁷ But for some time no action was taken either by the Government or the collateral relations of the deceased. Mai Sahib Kaur, mother of Sangat Singh, and Regent during his minority, carried on the administration,³⁸ as directed by the Political Agent at Ambala, Clerk.³⁹

This reticence of the British Government made the heirless *Gaddi* the bone of contention between several claimants. Sangat Singh's nearest relations were three second cousins : Sarup Singh, Sukha Singh and Bhagwan Singh—the Sardars of Badrukhan and Bazidpur who had for long been separated from the Jind branch of the family.⁴⁰ The Raja of Nabha advanced his claim through Munshi Isar Singh, his Minister, as being the descendant of Tilok Singh, the grand-father of Gajpat Singh.⁴¹ But this mythical claim was not admitted. Then there were the widow claimants—three widows of Sangat Singh and two of his father.⁴² Another invalid claim was preferred by Rani Bagh Bhari, a widow of Partap Singh (son of Bhag Singh).⁴³ The Raja of Patiala, who was seemingly a supporter of Sarup Singh, also preferred a feeble claim.⁴⁴

The Governor-General declared that the descendants of Hami Singh (Nabha House) and Bhup Singh (the Bazidpur and Badrukhan House) had no claims whatever to the chiefship as they had been separately provided for.⁴⁵ The Political

37. The Phulkian chiefs had been subjects of the Mughal Emperors at least nominally and in theory, and the British Government, which assumed towards them precisely the same position which the Mughal Government had held, was entitled to the benefits of all escheats in return for protection. Moreover, in 1832, the Phulkian chiefs had refused to pay tribute to the British Government in exchange for the right of succession to heirless estate. (82/44. Clerk to Metcalfe, March 13, 1836. P. G. R.)

38. 80/106. Clerk to Fraser November 16, 1834. P. G. R.

39. On Murray's death in 1831, G. Clerk was appointed as the Political Agent at Ambala.

40. *For the genealogy of the Jind family* see Griffin *op. cit.*, p. 310.

41. 82/110. Clerk to Metcalfe, June 24, 1836. P. G. R.

42. 82/107. Clerk to Metcalfe, June 20, 1836. P. G. R.

43. 81/34. Clerk to Fraser, February 26, 1835. P. G. R.

44. 82/104. Clerk to Metcalfe, June 15, 1836. P. G. R.

45. 106/9. Fraser to Clerk, February 2, 1835. P. G. R.

Agent, however, maintained that the fact of Bhup Singh having set up a dynasty independent of the Jind chiefship, could not have invalidated the claims of his successor, Sarup Singh, on account of the traditions of that family.⁴⁶ The rights of the widows other than those of Raja Sangat Singh were preposterous, and could not be admitted.⁴⁷ The widows of the lately deceased Rajas had undoubtedly, according to Sikh Law, a valid claim to inherit. But they were all very young, the eldest being only twenty-three, and it was felt that it would be risky to entrust so important a principality to such hands.⁴⁸

The question before the Government was of a wider nature, viz., whether it was more expedient, in compensation for the expense incurred in protecting estates, to resume the Company's right of jurisdiction when chiefships lapsed, or to receive a fixed tribute, and leave a vacant chiefship to be occupied by an adopted child or by a collateral. Against the first alternative the arguments adduced were the remoteness of the estates, their poverty, their scattered position which would entail trouble and solicitude. Therefore a tribute scheme was considered more convenient.⁴⁹

If the right of collateral succession was admitted by Government, Sarup Singh had the best claim. He was the son of Karam Singh, elder son of Bhup Singh, and as such, had a preferential right to Sukha Singh and Bhagwan Singh, who were of the younger branch, the rule of primogeniture having been affirmed to prevail in Jind.⁵⁰ But it was felt that Sarup Singh should be

46. 82/44. Clerk to Metcalfe, March 23, 1836. P. G. R. Clerk suggested that Sarup Singh's "claim should not be resolved by the laws of inheritance applicable to ordinary property..... Should the distinction be lost sight of which hitherto has been deemed expedient to observe between rules of succession to private property among *Jats* and the regulation of Chiefships, it is not the British Government whose authority and resources would thereby become curtailed..... The universal decision of landed property, which would rapidly ensue would in a brief space of time, compel the supreme Government to undertake the entire management of these territories to the utter annihilation of all Sardaris or chiefships." *Ibid.*

47. Griffin, *Law of Inheritance to Chiefships*, p. 83.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

49. 106/91. Clerk to Metcalfe, March 23, 1836. P. G. R.

50. 82/180. Clerk to Metcalfe, November 30, 1836. P. G. R.

assigned only those places which belonged to Raja Gajpat Singh through whom he based his claim. The remaining portion of the Jind territory acquired after the death of Gajpat Singh belonged of right either to Maharaja Ranjit Singh or to the British Government. Which portions belonged to the Maharaja and which to the British Government was a question which took a very long time to decide, and the controversy continued from 1834 to the beginning of 1837, when the Government gave its final decision.

The Government adopted a just attitude, which was, that those of the Jind possessions which were undoubtedly granted by the Maharaja after the Treaty of 1809, should be handed over to him.⁵¹ Accordingly, the supremacy of the Maharaja was recognised over Halwara, Talwandi and parts of Mudki and Ghyaspura.⁵²

A rumour that the Government was going to resume the lapsed State of Jind, brought the Maharaja's *Vakil* to Wade at Ludhiana. Wade told him that there was no cause for alarm, and that the Government would take a "deliberate view of all the bearings of the subject before it decided."⁵³ The *Vakil* was also asked to supply a list of the places around Ludhiana which were granted by the Maharaja after 1809.⁵⁴ Wade had been informed by the Government that the question of the future management of Jind estate would be decided after it had been determined "what parts of it belonged to the Maharaja and what to the Honourable Company."⁵⁵

But the Maharaja seemed determined to take the fullest advantage of his friendship with the British Government. He wanted to know their intention regarding the *jagirs* granted by him before the Treaty of 1809 to the Jind family, and expressed a hope that the reply will be consistent with the friendship

51. 116/125 Macnaghten to Wade, June 15, 1836. P. G. R.

Wade was also asked to supply the Government with a list of such places.

52. 106/45. Clerk to Wade, August 17, 1835. P. G. R.

53. 141/76. Wade to Government, August 23, 1835. P. G. R.

54. *Ibid.*

55. 118/42. Macnaghten to Wade, September 14, 1835. P. G. R.

existing between them.⁵⁶ The British reply to this was that he should send a list of the places, and the grounds on which he based his claims on them.⁵⁷ But the Maharaja advanced from claim to claim, and now he made a novel demand. His first demand was for territories granted *after 1809*, then for those granted *before 1809*, and now for *the entire Jind territories*, ancestral as well as the granted ones.⁵⁸

A perusal of the Maharaja's letter leaves one convinced that deep down in his heart he believed that his claim was not very strong. That is why he refers so often to the friendship existing between the two States. After many professions of that friendship, he goes on to say, "I am reminded of the proverb that hearts mutually reflect the secrets of each other, therefore there appears no necessity to enter into a detail of my claims relative to Jind affair and inform you of the proofs of them".....(The hint was clear that he wished to draw on his friendship rather than on any legal claims.) "But out of caution and a due regard for the dignity of the two States it is proper that I should transmit my claims". But this seemed to him a secondary thing. He pinned his faith in the friendship, and he was, as he said, "convinced that whatever happened will be consistent with subsisting relations". His chief argument seems to be that "according to the customs of the country and the *Shastras*, when there are no grandsons, the inheritance descends to the nephews."⁵⁹

Even Wade was taken aback by the Maharaja's demand and wrote to the Government ".....novelty of it and flexibility with which the Maharaja has advanced first from a demand to that portion of territory granted after the Treaty and when that was attained to that which was granted before, and now to the whole, will scarcely escape the surprise of the Government."⁶⁰

Wade, after discussing the relation of Ranjit Singh with the

56. 141/85. Wade to Macnaghten, September 17, 18'5. P. G. R.

57. 118/49. Macnaghten to Wade, October 12, 1835. P. G. R.

58. 141/104. Wade to Government forwarding the Maharaja's letter, December 27, 1835. P.G.R.

59. *Ibid.*

60. 141/104. Wade to Government, December 27, 1835. P.G.R.

late Raja Sangat Singh,⁶¹ observed that the Treaty concluded with the former in 1809, gave him no claim on the ancestral possessions of the Sikh chiefs on the left bank of the Sutlej. It merely confirmed to him (1) his conquests before his last irruption; and (2) the services of those who held possessions, in *jugir*, from him on the British side of the river, without interfering with those chiefs who had sought and obtained the protection of the British Government. Wade's views were that as soon as the Sikh chiefs obtained British protection they were absolved from their dependence on the Ruler of Lahore.

"A maternal nephew," Wade wrote, "may succeed to an inheritance in virtue of his hereditary claim, but I am not aware of a single instance in which Ranjit Singh has recognised such a principle of succession in the case of lapsed estates of his feudatories." He further pointed out that the Maharaja was connected by descent with some other chiefs also, and if his claims were recognised in this case, might he not in future advance more claims on the strength of this precedent. He ended up by saying: "Whatever attention may, therefore, be due to the pretensions of the Maharaja founded on his connection with the Jind family according to the *Shastras*, it does not appear that a concession to them is required either by the terms of the Treaty established between the British Government and himself in 1809, or that it would be compatible with the rights acquired or the obligations contracted by the protection which we have extended to those States in consequence of that Treaty."⁶²

After these cogent arguments of Wade, whatever strength was left in the Maharaja's contention based on the *Shastras*, was destroyed by the reply from the Government to the above letter of Wade. It laid down that "the Hindu Law of inheritance does not certainly appear to be based upon any solid

61. "If Highness is the *nawassa* or maternal nephew not of the late Raja of Jind but of his grand-father, Raja Bhag Singh, whose mother was married to the Maharaja's father, and the affinity between him and Sangat Singh, the lately deceased Raja, appears, therefore, to be that of a second cousin."—

141/104. Wade to Government, December 27, 1835. P. G. R.

(For the genealogy of the Jind family, see Griffin *op. cit.*, p. 310)

62. 141/104. Wade to Government, December 27, 1835. P. G. R.

foundation, as the succession to principalities is not governed either in law or usage by the ordinary rules of inheritance which are applicable to the property of individuals." It further stated: "it does not appear certain that the Maharaja can claim the reversion of lands absolutely granted in free gift, or in other words, completely ceded without conditions, whether before or after the Treaty. On the left bank he cannot claim it as an escheat in virtue of his being Lord Paramount; nor is there any law or custom of which the Governor-General-in-Council is aware that would warrant the resumption of land by the donor—the donor being a private individual—on the death without heirs of the donee."

But at the same time the Maharaja was not to be displeased. Macnaghten wrote to Wade: "The Governor General-in-Council is nevertheless disposed to treat the claims which the Maharaja may advance with the most liberal consideration, regarding His Highness as an old friend, with whom we have never had any difference, and, therefore, entitled to the most cordial attention."⁶³

Wade now received a letter from the Government for the Maharaja informing him that one Sarup Singh had appeared as a claimant to the Jind territories, and that his claims were ordered to be investigated. But Wade did not forward that letter to Lahore forthwith as he, meanwhile, heard of the rebellion of the *Zamindars* of Ballawali, and thought that the knowledge of the British Government's sentiment with regard to Sarup Singh might encourage it.⁶⁴ The rebellion was, however, soon quelled, and the letter was transmitted.⁶⁵

Ranjit Singh realised fully well what the friendship of the British meant to him, and the prestige which he derived from it. When he learnt that a deputation of some cis-Sutlej States had gone to Calcutta, his *Vakil* at Ludhiana at once asked Wade if it would be successful. If there was any chance of the success of the deputation, then the Maharaja wished to be

63. 118/62. Macnaghten to Wade, February 1, 1836. P. G. R.

64. 142/15. Wade to Government, March 21, 1836. P. G. R.

65. 142/30. Wade to Government, May 2, 1836. A brief account of the rebellion follows this account of the Jind question.

informed beforehand, so that it might appear to have been sent in consultation with him, in order that he might preserve the good opinion of those who were connected with him by marriage. He also said that he had not taken any step so far, and that Rani Sahib Kaur had reproached him for not having used his influence with the British Government on her behalf. Wade, of course, knew nothing of the deputation, and appreciated the Lahore Darbar's attitude in not having taken any action so far.⁶⁶

Wade now come forward with his distinction of the chiefs *indigenous to the south side of the Sutlej* and those *indigenous to the Punjab*. His argument was: those who were taken under protection of the British in 1809, were indigenous to the south side of the Sutlej, and the integrity of their possessions, as they then stood, was naturally recognised by the Treaty. It was in acting on this view that the officers of Ranjit Singh, on the conclusion of the Treaty, "withdrew the connection from such places as had been conferred by their master on these Chiefs, and the officers of the British Government assumed the political control over them as over the ancestral possessions of their owners. On the other hand, with regard to the territory held from the Maharaja on the left bank of the river by Chiefs indigenous to the Punjab, his officers exercise a controlling authority over them independent of our officers." Wade, therefore, thought that if the treaty of 1809 was construed as not placing the chiefs indigenous to the left bank of the Sutlej exclusively under the British supremacy for their possessions on that side of the river, then it would be putting a construction on the Treaty in favour of His Highness. Places granted after 1809 were presumed to have been granted with the knowledge and consent of the British Government, and they did not "affect the absolute allegiance of the Chiefs on whom they were conferred to the British Government." "If the Protected Chiefs," wrote Wade, "are declared not to be at liberty to form tributary connections with the Sovereign of the Punjab after the Treaty the presumption seems to be that they were absolved from all such connection with him on the conclusion of that engagement. Otherwise cases might arise in which it would be

66. 142/30. Wade to Government, May 2, 1836. P. G. R.

impossible for them to discharge their duty to one party without compromising themselves with the other.”⁶⁷

Wade expressed his view-point with such clarity that in return he was asked by the Government to furnish a list of the chiefs whom he considered indigenous to the Punjab,⁶⁸ and ultimately when in January, 1837, the Government's decision was given, Wade's view seems to have prevailed to a great extent. The Government recognised Sarup Singh's claims to succeed to the possessions of his great-grand-father, Gajpat Singh, through whom he derived his title.⁶⁹ To him were to be assigned the tracts of the country which had belonged to Gajpat Singh, these being the *parganahs* of Jind (with the exceptions of nine villages lately annexed to Delhi territory), Sufidon, Assundh Salwan, Ballawali, Sumgrai, Bhowki, Samout and Mhelum.⁷⁰ The possessions granted by Ranjit Singh after the Treaty of 1809 were to be returned to him.⁷¹ The territory which lapsed to him consisted of Halwara, Talwandi and a moiety of Mudki and Chiaspura. Ludhiana and all other possessions acquired by the descendants of Gajpat Singh subsequent to the death of that Chief and before the year 1809, were to devolve as an

67. *Ibid.*

68. 118/79. Government to Wade, July 1, 1836 P. G. R.

69. 120/1. Macnaghten to Wade, January 16, 1837 P. G. R.

70. 83/25. Clerk to Metcalfe, June 28, 1837, P. G. R. *Vide* Appendix IV.

71. 120/1. Macnaghten to Wade, January 16, 1837. P. G. R.

Macnaghten desired that while communicating to Ranjit Singh the decision of the Governor General regarding the disposal of the Jind territories, Wade should apprise him that "His Lordship in Council has been actuated in forming it by a due regard to the interests of Ranjit Singh."

An unbiased examination of the entire case would show that the British handled Ranjit Singh rather leniently those days. After all, on what solid grounds did the Maharaja reclaim his grants made to the Jind chiefs either before 1809 or subsequent to it? The Treaty of 1809 had absolved all Sikh chiefs claiming British protection from their dependence upon the Ruler of Lahore. Sangat Singh's grand-father had received *en-Sutlej* territories from Ranjit Singh, not as grants on military tenure, but in the form of a share of spoils in recognition of services rendered by him to Ranjit Singh during the latter's expeditions on the south of the Sutlej. Moreover, even as a donor, on what authority of the Hindu Law could Ranjit Singh

(Continued on page 73)

cheat to the British Government * A subsistence allowance was stipulated for the widows of Sangat Singh which was to be paid in part by the English and in part by Sarup Singh ⁷²

This case illustrates as to how the prevalence of anomalous and conflicting rules and customs of succession in Sikh estates, encouraged many a pretender to hazard their shaky claims to a vacant 'Gaddi' It offered the Governor General an opportunity to propound a general principle regarding the question of succession in the Protected States After quoting from Murray's paper on the rules and customs of the Sikhs - "the rules of succession to landed property in the Sikh States are arbitrary and variously modified in accordance with the usage and interests and prejudices of different families, nor is it practicable to reduce the anomalous system to a fixed and leading principle" the Governor General laid down that, "... every consideration of justice,

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claim his grants from the descendants of the deceased donee ? During the period subsequent to 1801 the British Government had always shown itself decidedly opposed to grants being conferred by the Maharaja upon chiefs under its control on terms incompatible with its dependence upon it Hence the Maharaja had no legal right to claim those territories back whether granted before or after 1801 Still we find the Governor General saying that he would be favourably disposed to treat the claim which the Maharaja may advance with the most liberal consideration, regarding His Highness as an old friend, with whom we have never had any difference, and, therefore, entitled to most cordial attention "

The reason for this attitude of the British Government towards Maharaja Singh is not far to seek The sense of Russian manoeuvre was too strong in those days, and both the Whig Government in England and their representative in India, Lord Auckland were anxious to retain Ranjit Singh's friendship at any cost Auckland's subsequent conduct in plunging into a futile and ignominious war with Afghanistan, but not jeopardizing Anglo-Sikh friendship by pressing the Maharaja to evacuate Peshawar for Dost Mohammad, was in keeping with this general attitude

*The English acquired Ludhiana, Morinda, Chuhal, Bassia, 1/2 Mudki, Jandiala Dhillpurah and various other scattered villages Of the territories thus acquired the district of Ludhiana was the most important, yielding a revenue of about Rs 85 000, the remaining acquisitions together yielding a like amount - Griffin, *op cit*, p 380.

usage and policy seems to require that as regards the four principal Chiefships of Patiala, Jind, Kythai and Nabha, the rule ought to be that the estate should devolve entirely to the nearest male heir, according to the Hindu Law, and to the exclusion of females. With regard to other Sikh estates, the custom of the family must be ascertained in each instance by the best evidence procurable.⁷³

These general principles always influenced the determination of all subsequent disputes of a similar character.

The Ballawali Rebellion.

The *Zamindars* of Ballawali, situated near Bhatinda and about one hundred miles to the west of Ambala, had been notorious for their unruly character.⁷⁴ They had never paid their revenues to Jind officials. After Raja Sangat Singh's death they passed under the rule of the British and were called upon to pay revenue. This they considered an encroachment on their ancient privileges.⁷⁵ They rose in rebellion in March, 1836. It was thought that they were encouraged by hopes of support from Mai Sahib Kaur,⁷⁶ the Regent, whom the rebels must have known as feeling dissatisfied with the Government in connection with her claims on the Jind territories. Their leader was one Gulab Singh Gill. One night the rebels effected entrance into the fort through the apartments of Mai Sul Rai, the widow of Kanwar Partap Singh, the uncle of Raja Sangat Singh.⁷⁷ They rescued their followers from the *thana* lately established there by Clerk, obliged his assistant to quit it with the loss of his baggage, and seized his men present in the fort.⁷⁸ But they could not hold the fort for long. The Maharaja ordered his officials at Kot Kapura to take care that none of the *Zamindars* of that place nor the Akalis of Siri Mukatsarji were allowed to join the Ballawali insurgents, but that they should render all possible aid to the British officers in suppressing the rebellion.⁷⁹

73. 109/2. Metcalfe to Wade, February 14, 1837. P. G. R.

74. 142/15. Wade to Government, March 21, 1836. P. G. R.

75. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

76. 142/15. Wade to Government, March 21, 1836. P. G. R.

77. 142/21. Wade to Government, April 15, 1836. P. G. R.

78. 142/15. Wade to Government, March 21, 1836. P. G. R.

79. 142/19. Wade to Government, April 11, 1836. P. G. R.

Gulab Singh Gill, the leader, was killed and many of his followers were captured including their accomplice, Mai Sul Rai ⁸⁰ The insurrection was thus easily quelled.

80 142/15. Wade to Government, March 21, 1936. P. G. R. And
142/21. Wade to Government, April 15, 1936. P. G. R.

General, when the latter came to Simla in 1827.⁴ But he was advised by Dr. Murray and his own physicians not to undertake a long and arduous journey for the purpose.⁵ He then wished to send one of his sons, Kharak Singh or Sher Singh, but they happened to be engaged in distant expeditions.⁶ Finally, he deputed Dewan Moti Ram⁷ and Faqir Imam-ud-Din⁸ to lead a mission to Simla.⁹

The mission arrived at Ludhiana on April 6, 1827, having been met by Wade on the river Sutlej. He conducted it further to Simla where it was received with much distinction by Amherst. The envoys felt gratified in every way,¹⁰ and departed on their homeward journey on May 6.¹¹

The Governor-General, on his part, returned this compliment by deputing two British officers to the Maharaja's Court, Captain Wade being one of them¹² and Captain Pearson, an Aide-de-camp to the Governor-General, being the other. Mr. Surgeon Gerard went with them as medical officer.¹³ A troop of cavalry escorted them from Karnal and a company of infantry from Ludhiana.¹⁴

4. 95/86. Wade to Metcalfe, April 6, 1827. P. G. R.

5. 95/88. Wade to Stirling, April 10, 1827. P. G. R.

6. Wade to Stirling. Letter reproduced in Chopra, *The Punjab as a Sovereign State*, pp. 281—83.

7. Dewan Moti Ram, the eldest son of Dewan Mohkam Chand, served as Governor of Kashmir for seven years from 1819—1826. Details of his career during this period are described in Chopra, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

8. Imam-ud-Din, the brother of Faqir Aziz-ud-Din, remained for many years in charge of the fort of Gobindgarh in which the bulk of the Lahore treasures lay. Like his brother, he sometimes acted as a channel of communication between the English visitors and Ranjit Singh.—*Idem*, p. 179.

9. Wade to Stirling. Letter reproduced in Chopra, *op. cit.*, pp. 281—83.

10. 95/97. Wade to Metcalfe, May 9, 1827. P. G. R.

11. Wade to Metcalfe, August 1, 1827. Letter reproduced in Chopra, *op. cit.*, pp. 283—329.

12. Wade was selected for this job on the strong recommendation of Metcalfe as the fittest person on the frontier.—Wade, *A Narrative of the Services, Military and Political*, p. 67.

13. 115/28. Stirling to Wade, May 2, 1827. P. G. R.

14. *Ibid.* Enclosure, Stirling to Major-General Commanding the Sirhind Division.

Nevertheless, Ranjit Singh felt that he could not have the interview on the above-mentioned conditions. He wanted the Governor-General to pay him the first visit.⁴⁸ "This is a point", wrote Prinsep, to Wade, "quite impossible for His Lordship to concede and it may be said to be already settled by the two precedents of Lord Amherst's and the present Governor-General's arrival at Simla, on both which occasions the first deputation of compliment was sent by His Highness. His Lordship anticipates that a stand will not be made on this point in the face of these precedents, but if contrary to expectation His Highness should persist in requiring the first visit, the negotiation must at once be broken off."⁴⁹

Ranjit Singh conceded this point with some reluctance, but he persisted in his desire of receiving a formal return mission before the interview. The Governor-General was averse to doing this immediately before the meeting, for "it would have the appearance in the eyes of the world, of being sent to supplicate, or induce the Ruler of the Sikhs to come to the interview, whereas the rank and position of the Head of the British Government required that the honour of a personal conference with him should be sought."⁴⁹ Wade was, therefore, to argue that "when meetings are arranged between the Rulers of States, the functions of ambassadors and the intervention of representatives of any kind cease of necessity, and the mutual friendship that prevails is displayed at the interview. Missions are necessary when a personal meeting is impossible, and in such a case supply its place, but in a less perfect degree. An interview in person has been proposed in the present instance in lieu of one through third parties and representatives as before agreed to, on which account His Lordship considered the mission of representatives to be superseded, and with respect to the appearance of the neglect of this ceremony before the world, every body must see from the frequency of the missions deputed heretofore to His Highness as well as from the present arrival of Lt. Burnes, Mr. Leckie and yourself with presents from the King of England as well as from the Governor-General that the British Government

48. 115/89. Prinsep to Wade, July 4, 1831. F. G. R.

49. Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab*, p. 160.

has spared no observance to cultivate His Highness's friendship and promote his honour and exaltation."⁵⁰

It is clear from the Governor-General's conditions that the interview would be used to give out to the outside world that the Governor-General had the higher dignity. A shrewd diplomat like Ranjit Singh could not easily be brought round to agree to this. The task of Wade was thus one of extreme difficulty. The initiative in the whole business had been of the Governor-General, and yet Wade was to win Ranjit Singh over to conducting the interview in such a manner as if it had been arranged at the Maharaja's explicit request. Wade proved equal to his task, and had every term of the Governor-General agreed to by the Maharaja. Rupar was the place, and October 25 the date fixed for the interview. The Governor-General was of course much pleased at the prospect of a willing and personal meeting with the Sikh Ruler.⁵¹

The triumph of Wade was strikingly noteworthy. He had every justification in claiming that "had it not been for the personal influence which I was enabled to exert on the Maharaja, His Lordship's wish of holding an interview with him would, there is no doubt, have been disappointed, for when Ranjit Singh found that it could not take place on his own terms, he was disposed to break off the negotiations and would have done so, had I not used my endeavours to renew his desire for it, after he had been strongly advised against the measure by his Sardars. In their ignorance and inexperience of European manners and customs, they regarded such a meeting as humiliating to his dignity, and dangerous in its consequences to the independence of his country. He said that every one of his Sardars was opposed to it."⁵²

All the preliminaries having been settled by Wade in perfect conformity with Bentinck's views and wishes, preparations

50. 115/92. Prinsep to Wade, August 8, 1831. P. G. R.

51. 137/31. Wade to Prinsep, October 6, 1831. P. G. R.

52. Wade, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

In this connection Amar Nath (*Zafarnama-i-Ranjit Singh*, p. 205) says :

The Governor-General reached the place on October 22, and Ranjit Singh entered his camp on the opposite bank of the

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کہ اگر اس خواہودا، دربان لات، نوکر کو بیٹری، کو بیٹری، چکر شاہ
 انگلستان قرار دادئے..... بدس تقدیر اجلا ساسجیل
 صورت بے پا سرائی آئیں مہ طاب حاوہ گر نشو.....
 اگرچہ لات بوہم از وحسور، از شاہ انگلستان دسورے مہاربد۔ ا آئیں
 شاہ انگلستان آنکہ:— ہ، چلد از دست و زبانش بر آید حرفت را دشاہد
 ہر چہ ایجاب و احتراع سازد بقلم شاہ انگلستان موافق آید۔ لباً علیمہ
 منادی سرکار کو بیٹری حکم فدارند و از شاہ ظاہراً افسانہ نہداستہ—

The Sardars were opposed to the proposed meeting between the Governor-General and the Maharaja "as Lat Sahib was the servant of the Company and the Company was subordinate to the Sovereign of England, so it did not behove the exalted position of the Princely Ruler (Ranjit Singh) to meet the Governor-General on footing of equality."

The Maharaja, however, took the view that "though the Governor-General received his orders from the King of England yet according to the English law the Governor-General was authorised to do whatever he wished and whatever he did was approved by the King."

53. 115/95. Prinsep to Wade, September 12, 1831. P. G. R. Also
137/29. Wade to Prinsep, September 22, 1831. P. G. R.

54. 137/29. Wade to Prinsep, September 22, 1831. P. G. R.

55. 137/31. Wade to Prinsep, October 6, 1831. P. G. R.

56. 137/33. Wade to Prinsep, October 9, 1831. P. G. R.

57. Court, *op cit.*, pp. 72-73.

Sutlej on October 25, and the first meeting between the two took place on October 26. During the days that followed great pomp and ceremoniousness were displayed on both sides and numerous presents exchanged. During one of the several talks with the Governor-General Ranjit Singh sought for and obtained a written assurance of perpetual friendship.⁵⁸ The entire ceremony came to a close on the first day of November. Such was the pomp displayed at the meeting that the occasion has come to be styled as the Indian "Field of the Cloth of Gold."⁵⁹

Throughout the ceremonies, Wade's mediation imposed upon him a delicate and arduous task which he succeeded in accomplishing to the utmost satisfaction of both the parties.⁶⁰ Ranjit Singh wanted to "mark his sense of the part that Wade had acted in promoting the friendship of the two States" by conferring upon him a *jagir* of Rs. 15,000, but he declined it very politely,⁶¹ and yet the very fact of its having been offered was an eloquent tribute to Wade's great ability and charm as a diplomat and a negotiator.

Ranjit Singh returned to Lahore⁶² deeply impressed by British and confirmed in his views that their resources and organisation, particularly in the artillery branch, were superior to his own. Military observers in the British camp were confident that "should this upstart Maharaja and his swaggering soldiery ever try conclusions with the invincible Anglo-sepoy army, a march to Lahore would be a series of field-day operations."⁶³

An inquisitive and searching reference on the part of the Ranjit Singh to affairs of Sind gave a political tinge to the otherwise friendly meeting of the heads of the two Governments. Ranjit Singh's mind was not at ease about Sind on

58. Aitchison. *Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads*, Vol. I, p. 35.

59. For a detailed account of the meeting see Prinsep, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-167.

60. Wade, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

61. 137/35. Wade to Prinsep, November 15, 1831. P. G. R.

62. Wade accompanied the Maharaja up to Phagwara—Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, Part I, p. 103.

63. Thorburn, *The Punjab in Peace and War*, p. 15.
This view was demonstrably belied by the bloody encounters of the Sikh Wars.

which he had long cast a covetous eye. He tried at the meeting to sound the Governor-General as to his real intentions, and even hinted at his readiness to join in a combined attack on the Amirs. But the Governor-General would not divulge to his wily guest and ally, the tenor of propositions already on their way to the Amirs, confessedly, lest he should endeavour to thwart the peaceful negotiations shortly to be opened by Lieut. Col. Pottinger with the Amirs.⁶⁴

Politically, the immediate result of the Rupar meeting was the Governor-General's decision to forestall the Maharaja in Sind. By lulling the Sikh Ruler to sleep by false verbal assurances he stole a march upon him and brought Sind under the English sphere of influence. The resultant Anglo-Sindhian Treaty of 1832 naturally made Ranjit Singh apprehensive for a time, and though he did not raise his voice of protest aloud against the manner in which he had been hoodwinked by the Governor-General, he made no secret of his resentment to Wade.⁶⁵

All the same, the Rupar interview, to all outward appearance, reaffirmed the long-standing alliance, friendship and cordiality between the two States. From this date, Ranjit Singh began to express, more loudly than ever, his sentiments of the most cordial friendship towards the English,⁶⁶ and hencefor-

64. Cunningham *op. cit.*, p. 197.

The designs of Ranjit on Sind were displeasing to the English whose views with regard to Sind were becoming political as well commercial. The political object had some reference to the Russian designs, with Persia as the region threatened. The result was this political activity in the garb of commercial designs.

65. 138/3. Wade to Government, February 1, 1832. P. G. R.

Ranjit told Wade plainly that the commercial measures of the British hindered the attainment of his military measures.

66. In 1834, the Maharaja offered his aid to the British Government against Jodhpur where there was some trouble. The offer was declined, but it was considered as a proof of his good-will. (140/84. Wade to Macnaghten, October 15, 1834. P. G. R.)

After the assassination of Mr. Fraser at Delhi, the Maharaja wrote to suggest that the European functionaries should go about with a personal escort. (118/32. Wade to Macnaghten, April 18, 1835. P. G. R.)

ward the manner in which he received British visitors at his Court and the frank and unsuspecting tone of his communications in all political and military discussions grew more free and friendly.⁶⁷ It was this promotion of friendship which helped Wade in negotiations for opening the navigation of the rivers Indus and Sutlej even though the Maharaja was really suspicious of the whole project. At a subsequent date (January 1835) a treaty was concluded between the two Governments by which moderate tolls were established upon the Indus and the Sutlej, in conformity with the Treaty of 1832.⁶⁸

On that 'sapling of friendship' now shot out tender sprouts, discernible in the form of frequent complimentary *Kharitas* which passed between the two States. In February, 1835, Ranjit Singh sent a mission to Calcutta with presents for the King of England.⁶⁹ It was led by Sardar Gujjar Singh Majithia,⁷⁰ and was accorded a "kindly and flattering reception."⁷¹ In the beginning of 1837 the Maharaja invited the Governor-General (Lord Auckland), the Governor of Agra (Sir Charles Metcalfe) and the

67. Ranjit requested the British Government to supply him copies of the pay and revenue regulation of the British army with the purpose of placing his own pay and revenue system on a more efficient basis. His wish was complied with (141/66. Wade to Macnaghten, July 27, 1835. P. G. R.) Towards the close of 1836, Ranjit asked the British Government for a supply of muskets and pistols, and also for the exemption of the surcharge of 50 per cent. (107/40. Macnaghten to Wade, December 19, 1836. P. G. R.)

68. *Via* Chapter VI, *infra*.

69. The formal acknowledgment of the presents sent by the Maharaja for the King of England had not been received even so late as May, 1838. The Governor-General attributed the delay to the "unfortunate death of King William IV and the rapid succession of domestic events by which men's minds have been occupied." (122/2. Torrens to Macnaghten, May 15, 1838. P. G. R.)

70. It is interesting to learn that at Calcutta Gujjar Singh became infatuated with the charms of a European lady so much that the Maharaja learnt that he was prepared to become a *fakir* and desert his place in the mission. Ranjit was naturally anxious to prevent this, being desirous of preserving his own credit as well as that of the Sardar's family from the shame which such an act was likely to produce. 141/65. Wade to Macnaghten, July 20, 1835. P. G. R.)

71. 102/10. Wade to Chester, February 7, 1835. P. G. R.

Commander-in-Chief (Sir Henry Fane) to be present at the nuptials of his grandson, Nau Nihal Singh. The last one alone was able to attend and returned completely satisfied.⁷²

In 1838, as his last days were drawing near, the Sikh Ruler showed a keen desire to meet Lord Auckland. The latter, who, in the beginning seemed readily agreeable to the proposal, began to harbour doubts about Ranjit's "real desire and feeling in this matter."⁷³ An after-thought of some gain coming out of the meeting induced him, however, to agree to the proposal though it could not materialise immediately.⁷⁴ Their meeting ultimately took place on November 30, 1838, at Ferozepur,⁷⁵ where the British army was assembled prior to the invasion of Afghanistan.⁷⁶ Earlier, in May, a deputation having been sent by Ranjit Singh to escort a mission from Simla,⁷⁷ the Government resolved to send one in the persons of Macnaghten (Political Secretary to Government), Wade (Political Agent, Ludhiana), Osborne (Military Secretary to the Governor-General), M 'Gregor (A. D. C., to the Governor-General) and Dr. Drummond (Surgeon to the Governor-General) to "impress upon Ranjit's mind the satisfaction of the British Government with his past conduct," and to endeavour "to place our alliance with Ranjit on a more secure and decided footing than had hitherto been the case". This mission was successfully brought to a conclusion by Macnaghten's ability and the concord between the two States was more firmly renewed than ever.⁷⁸

72. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

73. Macnaghten wrote to Wade, "It is possible that the Maharaja may even not be cordially desirous of this meeting or that he may look to it as an opportunity for pressing all his pretensions in pertinacious and unaccommodating spirit."
(121/4. January 6, 1838. P. G. R.)

74. Macnaghten wrote to Wade, "His Lordship would be far from desiring the absence of the Maharaja from his capital, or from the army, if it were possible that advantage should be taken of such absence for the disturbance of peace or for aggression upon any part of his dominions." (*Ibid*)

75. Osborne, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

76. For an account of this meeting see Gordon, *The Sikhs*, pp. 109-110.

77. 121/52. Macnaghten to Wade, May 7, 1838. P. G. R.

78. Osborne, *op. cit.*, pp. iii-iv.

CHAPTER VI

THE NAVIGATION OF THE INDUS

The inception of the project of studying the possibilities of navigating the Indus may be traced back at least to some time during the second decade of the 19th century. It was in a sense the outcome of the Treaties of 1809 which had brought the British power into direct contact with the self-ruling principalities of northern and north-western India. These Treaties enabled the English to learn and appreciate the importance of such a project.

In 1819 William Moorcroft, of the Company's Stud Department, accompanied by G. Trebeck, the son of a Calcutta lawyer, undertook a journey to the countries beyond the Indus gathering much useful information for the British about the commerce and politics of these regions. His adventure gave further impetus to the idea of such a project. He wrote "the navigation of the Indus, although little known to Europeans, as it had not been attempted by them . . . is perfectly practicable for boats of considerable burden". The Company's servants including Wade soon began to entertain high hopes of capturing the markets of Central Asia by the Indus route, provided the navigable qualities of the river could be proved beyond any doubt. Sir John Malcolm minuted in the records of the Government in August 1830. "The navigation of the Indus important in every point of view, yet we have no information that can be depended upon this subject, except of about seventy miles from Tattah to Haidarabad. Of the present state of the Delta we have native accounts, and the only facts which can be deduced are that the different streams of the river below Tattah often change their channels, and that the sands of all are constantly shifting, but notwithstanding

1. *Travels in the Hindoostan Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab*, Vol II.
p. 338

these difficulties, boats of a small draft of water can always go up the principal of them. With regard to the Indus above Haidarabad there can be no doubt of its being, as it has been for more than two thousand years, navigable far up”² Again, wrote Wade : “The object of the Government is to open a regular commercial intercourse with the countries beyond the Indus, i.e., between India and Candhar and Cabul, the *entrepot* of trade with Herat and Bokhara.....when a mart at that place (Mithankot) comes to be established, we may expect to see a great part of the trade which passes through the Punjab directed into that channel to escape from the high exactions to which it is now liable.”³

Two other important political reasons determined the actual shaping of the scheme. In the first place, the Treaty of Turkomanchai, concluded in February, 1828, after the humiliating defeat of Persia by Russia, established the latter's ascendancy at the former's court and Russia extended her frontiers further eastward. It was said that Persia was “delivered and bound hand and foot to the court of St. Petersburg”. Persia certainly became a tool of the Russian policy which was calculated to threaten the internal security of the Indian Empire. “Not only in Khorassan itself, in Afghanistan and Toorkistan, but in the bazaars of Bombay, was the advance of the confederate armies of the two states into Khorassan, and thence upon Herat and India, generally discussed and believed.”⁴ This fear of ever-growing Russian influence was equally entertained by English statesmen in England and in India. The mission from Fatch Ali, the Persian Ruler, concerning the marriage of his daughter to the son of the Amir of Hyderabad was understood in terms of Russian efforts at aggrandizement. Wade observed : “If the negotiations for marriage should take effect, an alliance will be formed between Sindh and Persia which may

2. Quoted in Mohan Lal, *Life of Dost Mohd Khan*, Vol. II, p. 42.

3. 101/31. Wade to Mackeson. July 17, 1834. P. G. R.

It was generally believed that the Indus had been the highway of commerce between upper India and Central Asia, and had only fallen into disuse recently because of the unsettled conditions of those tracts.—115/2. Prinsep to Wade, December 19, 1831. P. G. R.

4. Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan*, Vol. I, pp. 151 56.

probably lead to an identification of interest between these two States, and Sindh may become, as Persia now is, subservient to the policy of Russia.”⁵ To counteract this growing menace, it was thought desirable that every intelligence should be collected regarding the frontier States of India, and the nature of defence offered by the Indus in particular. Further, the suspicion that Russia had a commercial influence in Bokhara and the adjoining Khanates indicated to the necessity of establishing similar influence by the British in Sind and Central Asia by opening the Indus to commerce. Wade emphatically expressed this necessity on behalf of his Government: “The Secret Committee of the Hon ble Court of Directors have expressed great anxiety to obtain the 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 Dominion both in Europe and in India.”⁶

Secondly, the English were daily growing apprehensive of Ranjit Singh’s designs on Sind. These had lately come to be revealed when the Sikh Ruler set forth to demand tribute from the Amirs—tribute which they had formerly paid to the Afghans—arguing that since he had acquired the major portion of the Afghan possessions in India, he had *ipso facto* succeeded to their rights and privileges as well.⁷ The English, therefore, felt that the conquest of Sind by the Sikhs would carry the frontiers of their kingdom to the very limits of the Arabian Sea from where the Sikh Ruler would establish contact with the outside world.⁸ The only effective way of checking or preventing this was, in Cunningham’s word, “to open the Indus to the navigation of the world,”⁹ and to effect commercial

5. 37/23. Wade to Prinsep, August 5, 1831. P. G. R.

6. 98/101. Wade to Pottinger, October 22, 1831. P. G. R.

7. 137/8. Wade to Government, May 18, 1831. P. G. R.

8. *Vide* Chapter VII, *infra*.

9. *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 198.

treaties with the Amirs. Such treaties would be tantamount to taking Sind under partial protection.

The opportunity for starting the exploration of the scheme came conveniently after 1828. A year earlier Amherst had received from the Sikh Chief some presents, including a shawl-tent, for the King of England, and the Governor General had carried them home on his retirement in 1828. It was then determined to send from England a return present, and "a very extraordinary selection was made, upon whose advice has not transpired. It was resolved to send Ranjit Singh, on the part of His Majesty, a team of cart-horses, four mares and one stallion, upon some conception that in his love for horses Ranjit Singh must be a breeder of the animal, and would be well pleased to have mares of large size to cross with the breeds of the Punjab."¹⁰ The transmission of this present was to be made a means of obtaining information in regard to the Indus and the facilities it might offer for navigation. Sir John Malcolm, the Governor of Bombay, received the horses and forwarded them to Cutch after adding the present of a carriage. Munshi Mohan Lal, a member of the mission which accompanied the presents to Lahore, explains the addition of the carriage thus: "He (Lt. Col. Pottinger, Resident in Cutch) suggested it might allay the fears of Sind Government if a large carriage was sent with the horses, since the size and bulk of it would render it obvious that the mission could then only proceed by water. This judicious proposal was immediately adopted by the Government." Further, "if the Murs of Sind, however, should happen to object to this measure, and should say that they will permit the horses to pass by land, Sir, Alexander Burnes was to reply that the carriage, by a long journey on an uneven and irregular road, will be worn out and reduced to pieces, and that, therefore, he must go by water."¹¹

10. Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in Punjab*, p. 153.

11. *Life of Amir Dost Mohd. Khan*, Vol. II, pp. 41-43.

It was not for the first time that the present of a carriage was being sent to the Sikh Ruler. Twenty years earlier Lord Minto had sent such a present by road (see p. 14, *supra*). But now it was thought that the carriage could only be transmitted by water.

Metcalf in a minute written in October, 1830, observed that

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This mission was put in charge of Lieut Alexander Burnes. He had been in the Quarter Master General's department, and was then Assistant to Lt Col Pottinger and in political charge of the Cutch district and of British relations with Sind. Burnes was judged to be qualified in every respect for the duty, and was instructed to obtain information about the depth of the water in the Indus, the direction and breadth of the stream, its facilities for steam navigation, the supply of the fuel on its banks, and the condition of the Princes and the people who possess the country on it."¹²

Malcolm thought that the most politic course would be to send the mission without previous notice or correspondence with the Amirs of Sind, thinking the necessity they would thus be under of deciding suddenly would be likely to contribute to the success of the expedition.¹³ But the propriety or even the expediency of such an action was doubtful because it would have certainly put the Amirs in an embarrassing situation. Such unbecoming tactics necessarily caused delay later in obtaining a passage up the river. Considering the subtleties contemplated by the British, the suspicions of the Amirs with regard to the former's real designs and the obstacles the latter placed in the progress of the mission were natural enough.

Pottinger sent an agent to Hyderabad to endeavour to overcome the repugnance shown by the Amirs to the passage of the Indus, but the latter gave evasive answers by stating that the way was difficult, that no boats were procurable, and the like.¹⁴ The argument of the bulky carriage was next put forward by Pottinger and was met by the Amirs through reference to the clause in their Treaty with the British that no European would

(Continued from page 94)

the scheme of surveying the Indus, under the pretence of conveying a present to Ranjit Singh, 'is a trick unworthy of our Government, which cannot fail, when detected, as most probably it will be, to excite the jealousy and indignation of the powers on which we play it' (*Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe*, edited by K. V. S., p. 211)

12. 115/11. Martin to Wade, January 11, 1831. P. G. R. And Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara*, Vol. III, pp. 4-5.
13. Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 154.
14. 98/115. Wade to Martin, March 11, 1831. P. G. R.

enter Sind. In fact, the Amirs' main objection came finally to be based on this ground.¹⁵ Prolonged negotiations followed, and at one stage Wade was informed by the Secretary to the Governor-General that "the Amirs of Sind have finally determined on refusing to allow Lt. Burnes to proceed up the Indus with the dray-horses for Maharaja Ranjit Singh" and that "they have further behaved with much incivility towards Burnes." Wade was enjoined to explain the *contretemps* to the Maharaja and to help the mission up the Indus. Wade, realising that the Amirs viewed the expedition with the utmost distrust and alarm, and as a precursor of the British army, met the situation adroitly through "a demonstration of His Highness' force, under General Ventura, from the neighbouring Sikh frontier of Dera Ghazi Khan, together with the personal expostulations of Ranjit Singh with the envoys of the Amirs of Sind, then present at his Court, induced, these Chiefs, as they afterwards avowed, to withdraw their opposition, and allow Burnes a free passage by the river through their territory."¹⁶ The reason for the Maharaja acting so readily on the behest of Wade was his eagerness to seize any opportunity for coercing the Amirs, particularly if that could be done in co-operation with the British, for he had "schemes of his own in that quarter."¹⁷

Burnes arrived at Bahawalpur in the first week of June, 1831, and received much attention and civility from Nawab Bahawal Khan, the Daudputra Chief. Burnes mentions that "Nawab Ghulam Kadir Khan who had been sent to receive the British mission, and who had travelled forty miles for their reception, declared that the mission shall pass through his country free of expenses. He has furnished indeed our whole party with necessary and even luxury of life since we entered his territory. His liberality has amounted to munificence and his hospitality quite exceeded all bounds...His munificence has not been coupled with a single request or wish on his part for any favour from the Government, which he says, since the time of Mr. Elphinstone, he considers the best and only friend of his country."¹⁸

15. 137/12. Wade to Government, May 25, 1831. P. G. R.

16. Wade, *A Narrative of the Services, Military and Political*, pp. 15-17.

17. 137/34. Wade to Government, October 19, 1831. P. G. R.

18. 115/25. Burnes to Martin, June 6, 1831. P. G. R.

Wade was allowed by the Governor-General, in compliance with the Maharaja's wish to be present, at Lahore at Burnes' arrival and during his stay there.¹⁹ Burnes reached the Sikh capital on July 18,²⁰ while Wade, accompanied by Dr. Murray had come three days earlier.²¹ Burnes' progress had been slowed since entering the Ravi owing to the tortuousness of that river.²² The Maharaja had sent a party to meet him at Syedwala, 25 kos away from Lahore.²³

On July 20 Burnes had his introductory visit to the Maharaja. The latter received him and the complementary letter and the presents²⁴ with marked distinction in an open hall situated in the old royal palace of Lahore, which was then his residence. The Maharaja felt greatly flattered by so distinguished a mark of honour from the King of a nation for whom he had high respect, and whose superiority he acknowledged in every respect.²⁵

Ranjit had several conversations with Burnes in which he dwelt vivaciously on the navigation of the Indus.²⁶ Thereafter, Burnes proceeded to Simla to submit to the Governor-General his observations.²⁷ Their gist was to the effect that the river Indus was "much better adapted to every purpose of commerce, and more navigable, and had a greater and more uniform depth and less opposing current than any of the rivers of India further east."²⁸ It was in pursuance of these observations and other political reasons which have already been

19. 115/88. Prinsep to Wade, June 30, 1831. P. G. R.

20. 137/21. Wade to Prinsep, July 21, 1831. P. G. R.

21. 98/100. Wade to Martin, July 21, 1831. P. G. R.

22. 137/20. Wade to Prinsep, July 6, 1831. P. G. R.

23. *Ibid.*

24. A word regarding the presents from His Majesty to the Maharaja. Thousands of horses were conveyed to and from India through the Punjab every year, and there was not a station in northern India where vehicles of various kinds were not kept. The mares were forthwith sent to graze, and the dray-horse was dressed up like an elephant and stationed in front of Ranjit's palace, where after a year he died.—Hugol, *Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab*, pp. 325-26.

25. 137/21. Wade to Prinsep, July 21, 1831. P. G. R.

26. *Ibid.*

27. 137/24. Wade to Prinsep, August 16, 1831. P. G. R.

28. 98/181. Wade to Pottinger, October 22, 1831. P. G. R.

stated, that the Governor-General made his decision to open the river Indus to navigation.

Accordingly, Pottinger was despatched promptly to negotiate with the Sind Amirs about the navigation of the lower Indus. Ranjit Singh was not told about this move. The basis of the negotiations with the Amirs was to be "to obtain guarantees against the levy of irregular duties or wanton obstruction of any kind to boats and merchandize; to offer a guarantee against loss of revenue to the Sind Government from the adoption of the scheme, and so to procure that the river Indus should become again the channel for extensive commerce and be frequented securely by the craft and vessels of all the adjoining districts and even of Europe."²⁹ The Amirs, however, were not to be coerced into the treaties, on the other hand, their consent was to be obtained, at first, by conciliatory methods. They were to be made to realize that their people would flourish by increased opportunities of trade and their States would derive extreme benefits, and that they would augment their revenues by increased duties on expanded commerce. In case, any Ruler persisted in refusing to agree to the scheme, Pottinger was to say that having control over only a part of the river, that particular Amir had no right to deprive all other states and people inhabiting on that river from an advantage which nature had given to them all. It was to be declared that such an act would be against the spirit of the international law, especially when the passage was going to be innocent and attended with no danger to the Province.³⁰

The Amirs, who already had looked upon Burnes' mission to Lahore with much doubt and suspicion, could hardly be expected to receive Pottinger with any marked degree of civility or hospitality. They tried to make all sorts of excuses and put all types of obstructions in the progress of negotiations. After long and protracted discussions, however, Pottinger did succeed in concluding two treaties, one with Rustam Khan, the Amir of Khyrpur, on April 4, 1832, and the other with Mir Murad Ali of

29. Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

30. 98/181. Government to Pottinger, October 22, 1831. P. G. R.
It may be noted that these instructions were issued to Pottinger just four days before the Rupal meeting.

Hyderabad sixteen days later. By these treaties the roads and the rivers of Sind were thrown open for trade to the merchants of India, provided that "(i) no person shall bring any description of military stores by the river Indus or roads; (ii) no armed vessels or boats shall come by the said river; and (iii) no English merchants shall be allowed to settle in Sind."³¹ These clauses indicate clearly the real basis of the distrustful attitude which the Amirs adopted, and the true nature of the fears which they felt regarding the projected "commercial" activities of the British. They knew that the *Kothis* or factories would soon become *Chaonis* or military cantonments, the commercial roads the roads for the transport of munition; and that the ships for merchandize would be used as men-of-war.³² Therefore, they naturally had such clauses inserted in the treaties, and the British could not possibly refuse to include them. The future was to show how true their apprehensions proved when each one of these clauses was violated without justification or scruple.

A supplement to the Treaty with Mir Murad Ali was signed on April 22, by which the final decision regarding the fixation of duties to be levied by the Government of Hyderabad on foreign goods passing through its country, was virtually placed in the hands of the British Government.³³

The project of navigation expanded further. The original scheme was merely to open the Indus from its mouth up to Mitha Kot, i.e., where the Sikh country began. But it was now

31. At this time Hyderabad was ruled by Mir Murad Ali, the only surviving brother of the 'char-yar'. Mir Rustam Khan ruled independently in Khyrpur, the capital of Upper Sind. Duplicate treaties were therefore necessary, one with Rustam and the other with Murad. For details see Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads*, Vol. VIII, pp. 318-321.

32. Gough and Innes aptly say: "that a mighty military power should view mere commerce as an end in itself, without ulterior designs of conquest, is a conception quite foreign to the oriental mind. The mere knowledge that the Indus was being, so to speak, officially investigated, aroused in the minds of the Punjab and other chiefs suspicions to which the whole history of the Honourable East India Company gave a good deal of colour"—*The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars*, p. 38.

33. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 321-22.

decided to have "the free navigation of the Sutlej in continuation of that of the lower Indus."³⁴ Accordingly, towards the end of 1831, Wade was deputed to explain to Ranjit Singh the object of Pottinger's mission and to remove from his 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 of commerce."³⁵ A *Kharita* from the Governor-General to the Maharaja, in which the objects of the scheme were given, was sent through Wade. The means of intercourse between His Highness's territories and those of the British Government by the route of the Indus were to be improved, and the rivers Indus and Sutlej were to be made a channel for commerce, thus making the Punjab as accessible to the merchants as if it were on sea-shore.³⁶

Ranjit Singh, on being informed of the proposed mission, displayed as great a sensitiveness as the Amirs had done, though for different reasons. To show that Wade was not welcome, the Maharaja deputed a Sardar of inferior rank than usual to receive him at Phillaur, when he crossed the Sutlej on January 13. Kishen Chand, His Highness's agent, enquired about the probable duration of Wade's visit saying that the Maharaja intended to proceed to the Derajat after he had taken leave. In other words, the Maharaja wanted Wade's visit to be as short as possible. Wade attributed this attitude to "a distrust of the objects of my journey, and a desire that his well known designs in respect of Shikarpoor should be proclaimed before I announce the nature of the communications with which I am charged."³⁷

In these circumstances it was with a mind full of misgivings that Wade reached Lahore on January 25, and delivered the *Kharita* to the Maharaja. Ranjit Singh was not satisfied with this communication, and remained full of doubts. He feared correctly that by contracting a commercial treaty with him the British wanted to check his expansion in the direction of Sind.

34. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

35. 115/102. Prinsep to Wade, December 19, 1831. P. G. R.

36. 115/102. Prinsep to Wade, December 19, 1831. P. G. R. Enclosing letter from the Governor-General to Ranjit Singh.

37. 138/2. Wade to Prinsep, January 13, 1832. P. G. R.

This, he thought, was in contravention of the Treaty of 1809 by which he could be checked on the left bank of the Sutlej only, and that limit, he believed, ended as soon as the Sutlej merged with the Indus.³⁸ He wrote about his apprehensions in a round about way to the Government, saying that he had no objection to the opening of the Indus to navigation provided nothing was done to disturb the Treaty of 1809.³⁹ Wade assured the Maharaja in most distinct terms that his Government had no political designs at all in that sphere, and had no idea whatever of interfering with the existing treaty. This put Ranjit's fears at rest to some extent. In this way Wade succeeded and secured his consent.⁴⁰ He returned to Ludhiana on March 12.⁴¹

Wade's task had been much more difficult and his achievement correspondingly greater than that of Pottinger. In the first place, the Maharaja was a much more able and shrewd diplomat than any of the Amirs, secondly, he could not easily be overawed with force, and thirdly, Wade's mission, coming so soon after the voyage of Burnes, had been viewed by the Sikh courtiers with the greatest distrust and jealousy.

The Government now proposed making arrangements for opening the Sutlej also to navigation. Letters to this effect were despatched both to Ranjit Singh and Bahawal Khan. The Nawab, much afraid of the Sikh Chief, considered it a boon to join hands with the British in any scheme, and readily consented, though he desired that the matter should be settled by a regular treaty as in the case of the Sind Amirs.⁴²

In September, Wade went to settle with the Maharaja and Bahawal Khan the preliminaries of the treaties for opening the Sutlej and the Indus to navigation. He was also instructed to proceed to Mithankot for the purpose of surveying the course of the former river.⁴³ In order to exalt Wade in the eyes of the

38. See Chapter VII, *infra*.

39. 138/1. Wade to Prinsep, February 3, 1832. P. G. R.

Enclosing Ranjit Singh's letter to the Governor-General.

40. 138/41. Wade to Prinsep, March 7, 1832. P. G. R.

41. 138/16. Wade to Prinsep, March 21, 1832. P. G. R.

42. 138/37. Wade to Macnaghten, August 7, 1832. P. G. R.

43. 116/23. Macnaghten to Wade, September 19, 1832. P. G. R.

Chiefs he was raised to the status of Political Agent.⁴⁴

Wade planned to go to Bahawalpur and from there to proceed to Lahore. But fearing that the Maharaja might take umbrage at this he changed the original plan,⁴⁵ and proceeded with unusual alacrity towards Pind Dadan Khan where the Maharaja agreed to see him. In the opinion of Wade Ranjit's object in wishing to see him at that place, which was a centre of salt trade, was to consult him as to the best mode of regulating the trade in that article.⁴⁶

Ranjit wished to know in detail the utility of the scheme and the advantages which would accrue from its execution. In answer to this, Wade referred to the old trade that was carried on through the Indus and observed, "What are the causes of the former prosperity and the latter decadence of the Punjab? Nothing but the elimination of trade from the rich land of the Punjab because of the prevailing chaos and state of insecurity after the dismemberment of the Kingdom of Kabul.....The output of the Kashmir has declined both in quality and quantity. Again, why has the entire trade centred in the hands of a few Marwaris? Because all the routes of trade with Amritsar, the commercial capital of the Punjab, are dangerous and infested with predatory tribes. A diversion from these unsafe routes to the more secure channels, as proposed by the British Government, would encourage the Punjab trade."⁴⁷ These "forceful arguments and redoubtable logic" of Wade convinced the Maharaja regarding the utility and need of opening the rivers Indus and Sutlej to navigation. Ranjit now only wanted to know about the duties to be levied on the Sutlej. Wade assured him that none could deny him the right to levy such duties, provided they were fair and equitable so as to promote the success of the scheme. As to the full details he would let the Maharaja know when the Tariff Report that was being prepared by Trevelyan was completed.⁴⁸

Not long afterwards, Wade received Trevelyan's Tariff Report

44. 116/21. Swinton to Wade, July 30, 1832. P. G. R.

45. 138/54. Wade to Macnaghten, October 15, 1832. P. G. R.

46. 99/53. Wade to Mackeson, October 25, 1832. P. G. R.

47. 138/60. Wade to Macnaghten, October 27, 1832. P.G.R.

48. *Ibid.*

which emphasised that a system of tariff was to be established only to check arbitrary exactions. To render the Indus a highway of commerce more attention was to be paid to the protection and encouragement of merchants than to profits. For effective functioning of the machinery it was necessary that the posts existing in the present system of collection be abolished pending a settlement by the Government. Trevelyan proposed that a duty of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on all articles which came under the description of cloth and metals, and 5 per cent on every thing else, would be fair. Further, it was natural that each Ruler would share the duty fixed upon for the whole of the trade of the Indus and the Sutlej in proportion to the length of the river in his dominions. It was also suggested that if the British share in the duties by virtue of its territorial right on the left bank of the Sutlej was not kept in the background, the Government would be regarded as an unauthorised intruder. Ferozepur was suggested as the station where the share of the feudatory chiefs, Ranjit Singh and Bahawal Khan should be collected, and a similar post for the Amirs was to be fixed at the mouth of the Indus. It was considered necessary that Wade should be posted at Ferozepur for superintendence and that the boats between the two stations should not be liable to detention.⁴⁹

After long drawn out arguments, Wade was successful in obtaining the Maharaja's consent to open the Indus and Sutlej to commercial navigation.⁵⁰ All that now remained was to negotiate a treaty on the model of the one signed by Pottinger with the Amirs of Sind. The treaty was ultimately signed at Lahore on December 26, 1832.⁵¹

The proposal of the transfer of Wade to Ferozepur caused

49. 116.39. Macnaghten to Wade, November 15, 1832. P.G.R. (Enclosing Trevelyan's Tariff Report).

50. Ranjit Singh made it quite clear to Wade that he had agreed to the scheme of opening the Indus to navigation though some of his Sardars were opposed to it on account of his good relations with the British,—128/75. Wade to Macnaghten, December 31, 1832. P. G. R.

51. For Treaty see Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 36—38. The Persian text of the original treaty is preserved in Punjab Government Record Office, Lahore.

anxiety to the Maharaja who feared that it might cause deterioration in his relations with the British. Therefore, he requested the Government to keep him at Ludhiana and allow him to continue in his former duties.⁵² The Government acceded to his request.⁵³

As a part of the course of the river Sutlej was through the territory of Bahawal Khan, it was necessary to secure his assent also to the arrangement. Wade, accordingly, left for Bhawalpur on January 5, 1833.⁵⁴

The Nawab sent a party of men under Nawab Ghulam Qadir to receive the Political Agent when he entered the Bahawalpur territory at Asofwala, but Wade, on his arrival there, was informed that the party would wait upon him the next day. Offended at this Wade replied that he had no time to wait for them as he wanted to see their master without any delay.⁵⁵ They had, therefore, to apologize to Wade.⁵⁶ On February 8, Wade reached Bindrawala Ghat, three miles from Bahawalpur. The next day he was conducted to the presence of the Nawab, who felt greatly embarrassed.⁵⁷ To add to the difficulties of Wade the Sind vakils at Bahawalpur came forward and began to dissuade the Nawab from having any intercourse with the foreigners.⁵⁸ Such efforts, however, proved abortive. With his charming manners Wade was in a short time able to persuade the Nawab to sign a commercial treaty on lines similar to those with Ranjit Singh.⁵⁹

Having concluded the treaty Wade pushed forward in order to complete the survey of the river and reached Mithankot on March 5.⁶⁰ Thence he turned back to Ludhiana and arrived there on April 12.⁶¹

52. 139/2. Wade to Macnaghten, January 23, 1833. P.G.R.

53. 117/1. Macnaghten to Wade, February 4, 1833. P.G.R.

54. 139/2. Wade to Macnaghten, January 29, 1833. P.G.R.

55. 139/10. Wade to Macnaghten, February 25, 1833. P.G.R.

56. *Ibid.*

57. 139/9. Wade to Macnaghten, February 14, 1833. P. G. R.

58. 139/10. Wade to Macnaghten, February 25, 1833. P.G.R.

59. *Ibid.*

60. 139/12. Wade to Macnaghten, March 7, 1833. P. G. R.

61. 99/84. Wade to Clerk, April 12, 1833. P. G. R. And
139/21. Wade to Macnaghten, April 12, 1833. P. G. R.

The treaties that Wade had negotiated with the Maharaja and the Nawab were agreed to by the Governor-General with certain insignificant modifications⁶² which were accepted by the parties concerned.⁶³ The Governor-General very much appreciated Wade's conduct in successfully negotiating them. His patience, his knowledge of eastern potentates' character and his becoming manners—all these had contributed to this highly creditable achievement.⁶⁴

With the signing of the treaties the first phase of the scheme was completed. Efforts were now made to make it a success. Wade planned to send an experimental cargo from Ludhiana to Mithankot to encourage the merchants to follow this route.⁶⁵ The mercantile community of Ludhiana and Amritsar readily joined with two boats at Harike Pattan.⁶⁶ Wade promised them immunity from taxes and secured similar concessions from the Amirs. This adventure, however, did not meet with much success because of the Amirs' jealousy towards the merchants in disposing of their cargo at Shikarpur.⁶⁷

All this was discouraging for the Government, but Wade who knew the character of the people on the Indus thought that this jealousy on the part of the Sind authorities was natural in the early stages, but would disappear eventually as was the case with Ranjit Singh a year and a half earlier.⁶⁸

By 1834 the British had examined the tables of duties sent by the Maharaja and the Nawab, and found that the scale of *ad valorem* duties on the different description of merchandise would not work well, as the people of these countries were inexperienced in the system of levying such duties.⁶⁹ So it was thought desirable to

62. 117/7. Macnaghten to Wade, April 23, 1833. P. G. R. Also

117/8. Macnaghten to Wade, April 30, 1833. P. G. R.

63. 106/17. Mackeson to Wade, July 14, 1833. P. G. R. And

130/55. Wade to Macnaghten, August 24, 1833. P. G. R.

64. 117/29. Macnaghten to Wade, September 13, 1833. P. G. R.

65. 130/2. Wade to Macnaghten January 19, 1833. P. G. R.

66. 130/24. Wade to Macnaghten, April 23, 1833. P. G. R.

67. 130/24. Wade to Macnaghten, April 23, 1833. P. G. R.

68. 130/46. Wade to Macnaghten, July 21, 1833. P. G. R.

69. Wade. *op. cit.*, p. 25.

substitute a fixed toll instead of levying duties. The revised scheme fixed the entire amount of toll from the sea to Rupar to be Rs. 570 per boat irrespective of its size, weight or value of the cargo, out of which a sum of Rs. 240 was to be given to the Amirs of Sind.⁷⁰ Ranjit Singh was to receive Rs. 155/4/8, Bahawal Khan Rs. 106/12/3, and the balance of Rs. 67/15/1 was to be given to the feudatory chiefs holding land on the left bank of the Sutlej.⁷¹ By this fixed toll the merchants were to pay a uniform rate of duty and this tariff was to be applicable only to goods which were in actual transit upon the line of the Indus and not on any other goods.⁷² To bring about the change, the consent of the parties concerned was deemed essential. Wade came again to negotiate with the Maharaja and the Nawab.

As it was anticipated that the modifications suggested would be repugnant to the Maharaja, Wade was urged to assure him that the proposed change had been devised to confer the greatest possible benefit on the parties to the scheme. He was directed to impress upon the Maharaja the disinterestedness of the Government which could be shown by the fact that it had lately declined to participate in the profits arising from the scheme.⁷³

When Wade sent a draft of the supplementary treaty, the Maharaja expressed a desire to exclude the feudatory chiefs from a share of the monetary benefit, which share he himself wanted to grab. He further wished to be a party to the scheme for a period of three years only as he expressed his fears that the revised scheme would diminish his revenues. But Wade prevailed upon him to waive his objections and on November 29, 1834, he signed the new treaty as originally presented to him.⁷⁴ This was ratified by the Governor-General on January 23, 1835.⁷⁵

70. 117/42. Macnaghten to Wade, June 9, 1834. P. G. R.

71. "No mention is made (in the Governor-General's letter of June 9, 1834) of the share of the feudatories of the Lahore and British Governments whose territories lie on the left bank of the Sutlej, whereas their right to share is fully recognized by the Governor-General's letter of November 15, 1832, as well as by the Trevelyan's Report to be Rs. 67/15/1".—140/70 Wade to Macnaghten, September 5, 1832. P. G. R.

72. 101/31. Wade to Macnaghten, July 17, 1834. P. G. R.

73. 117/42. Macnaghten to Wade, June 9, 1834. P. G. R.

74. For treaty see Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 39-40.

75. 118/4. Macnaghten to Wade, January 23, 1835. P. G. R.

The Nawab of Bahawalpur, though he signed the new treaty without a hitch, said that he was doing so only out of regard for the Government. He wrote to Wade: "My esteemed friend, although in the former treaty it was proposed to levy the duties on merchandise, and now, in contradiction to that, it is proposed that the duty should be levied on boats, nevertheless as submission and dependence on the British Government and preservation of friendly relations with yourself have always been my object. . . I have, therefore, signed . . . the supplementary treaty."⁷⁶ Wade answered Bahawal Khan's objection by saying that "a reference to the 6th article of the former treaty will show that the fixing of the principle (regarding duties) then proposed depended upon future deliberations. When, therefore, it was found after due consideration that that principle involved loss and distress to merchants and endless reclamations between the different Governments, it was changed to a toll on boats, and this change I cannot but consider favourable to your interests."⁷⁷

Wade had been urging upon his Government for some time the necessity of stationing British officers at some places on the line of the navigation. In the first place, several powers were concerned in the scheme, and from the enmity which existed between the Sindhians and Doodpotras on the one hand, and between them and the Sikhs on the other, it was feared that in the absence of a British agent it might tend to obstruct its progress. It might cause loss and annoyance to the merchants arising from the liability to frequent impediments and examinations.⁷⁸ Secondly, the Maharaja intended to convert Mithankot (on the line) into a mart for the produce of his province, and it was feared that in the absence of an impartial observer there, his interests might clash with those of the Sindhians and Doodpotras.⁷⁹ Thirdly, the British officers were necessary as the real object of the Government in inaugurating the scheme was political in the guise of commerce.⁸⁰ Fourthly, as the most

76. 100/65. Mackeson to Wade, August 11, 1834. P. G. R.
(Enclosing translation of a letter from Bahawal Khan).

77. 140/70. Wade to Macnaghten, September 5, 1834. P. G. R.

78. 101/31. Wade to Mackeson, July 17, 1834. P. G. R.

79. 140/70. Wade to Macnaghten, September 5, 1834. P. G. R.

80. 101/31. Wade to Macnaghten, July 17, 1834. P. G. R.

disturbed tract on the whole line from Ludhiana to the sea was below Mithankot particularly between that place and Shikarpur,⁸¹ it was felt that unless a British representative was present to see to the safety of this tract, the trade would completely rest on the mercy of the Amirs whose hostility to the scheme was well-known. Wade was convinced that unless British observers were appointed at key places half the objects of the scheme at least would be rendered nugatory. He recommended that Mithankot would be the most suitable place for the residence of one such officer whose duty would be to watch over the trade, regulate the amount which each state would be entitled to collect, and see that the cargoes corresponded with the bills of loading.⁸²

The Government appreciated the soundness of Wade's arguments and accepted his suggestions but to carry them out was not quite easy. The Amirs strongly objected to the stationing of a British agent in Sind. Wade was informed that "the Amir (of Hyderabad) was tormented hourly and momentarily by Mr. Dick,⁸³ who gave him headache daily and that that was an additional reason for refusing to allow another gentleman (*i.e.*, the English agent) to come to reside in Sind."⁸⁴ Their continued refusal led to much unpleasantness, and bitterness, and Pottinger, who had to negotiate with them, wrote to the Government: "Should the Hyderabad Amir refuse in however civil terms and on whatever pretence to ratify one of the treaties now in his possession, I hope that I shall be excused for saying that I look upon all further amicable negotiations to be utterly unprofitable..... The progress, moreover, of his intercourse with us, from the hour of his father's death has been unblushing tissue of chicanery and falsehood and is strongly corroborative of the character which I heard of him and recorded when in Sind, that is, 'that he had no tie save his fears',

81. 105/11. Mackeson to Wade, April 19, 1834. P. G. R.

82. 139/10. Wade to Mackeson, February 25, 1833. P. G. R.

"Mithankot.....as it was near that spot where the territories of the three powers, *viz.*, Lahore, Bahawalpur and Khyrpur came in contact with each other and united river of the Punjab joined the Indus." (*sic.*)

83. A European officer in the service of the Amir.

84. 105/75. Pottinger to Wade, October 14, 1834. P. G. R.

and they must be worked on before he will be brought to understand our power and rights We must change our requests to demands and support those demands by increasing the force in Cutch and blockading the ports of Sind till everything we wish for is fully acceded to.”⁸⁵

On receiving a letter from Pottinger, the Amir remarked : “Let the British Government resort to force if it likes. I have agreed to nothing. We are soldiers and we shall see the results.”⁸⁶ Therefore, the situation for the time being seemed critical and though the Amirs ultimately signed the revised treaty,⁸⁷ such remarks and such an attitude on the part of the parties concerned boded ill for the success of the scheme for which so much pains were being taken.

The arrangements as finally settled were that the lower part of the Indus and the whole of the Sutlej were thrown open to commercial navigation. A British agent was stationed at Mithankot on account of its proximity to that spot at which the territories of Sind, the Punjab and Bahawalpur coincided, and the united rivers of the Punjab joined the Indus. A total of Rs. 570 was fixed as the toll per boat from Rupar to the sea, irrespective of the size of the boat and the weight of the value of its cargo, out of which a sum of Rs. 240 was to go to the Amirs, Rs. 155/4/8 to the Maharaja, Rs. 106/12/3 to the Nawab and Rs. 67/15/1 to the feudatory chiefs on the banks of the Sutlej.⁸⁸ Lieut. Mackeson was posted as the “British Agent for the navigation of the Indus and Sutlej” at Mithankot,⁸⁹ and Syed Azimud Din Hussan was appointed the “British Native Agent” at the mouth of the Indus. Apart from collecting Rs. 240/- from each boat and paying the sum over to the Amirs,

85. 10/75. Pottinger to Wade, October 14, 1834. P. G. R. (Enclosing a copy of his letter to Government).

86. 10/78. Macnaghten to Wade, November 17, 1834. P. G. R.

87. When all means of achieving the end by friendliness and consent failed, the British acceded to modify the demand according to the wishes of the Amirs, and the appointment of a native agent instead of a British officer was agreed—106/12. Pottinger to Wade, February 15, 1835. P. G. R.

88. 101/31. Wade to Mackeson, July 17, 1834. P. G. R.

89. 102/8. Wade to Pottinger, February 5, 1835. P. G. R.

the British native agent had to perform other duties also. He was informed that "disputes will, of course, sometimes arise amongst the merchants and their servants and the boatmen, and coolies, and about the *bunders*..... It will be your duty to settle these..... and when the subjects of the Sind Government are parties in them you will do so in concert with the Amirs' officers, otherwise you will do it alone." Besides, he was warned not "to demand or receive or allow any other person to demand or receive a single rupee in the shape of a present under any pretence" Any infringement however slight of this rule was to subject him to instant dismissal.⁹⁰

Munshi Jeth Anund, British native agent at Hyderabad, was also to perform similar duties and the following additional instructions were issued to him: "You are to see that no one molests or stops the boats on any pretence from the time they quit the salt water *bunders* till they pass the Sind frontier and you are from time to time to obtain orders from all the Amirs who have territories on the bank of the river to their *thanedars* and other officers to protect the boats passing up and down and to allow no persons to make any demand however small from them.

"Should any boat either going up or coming down meet with an accident or be detained from any cause within Sind, you are to proceed yourself to the spot and render her every assistance in your power and to apply for the same to the Amirs and their officers whether within the Hyderabad or Khyrpur districts, in case in which you think it desirable.

"Should a boat be plundered or attacked, or her crew in any way misused during her progress, you are to hasten to the place and to call on the nearest officers of the Government in whose territories (Hyderabad or Khyrpur) the outrage may have occurred to aid you in taking the depositions of the boat people and in securing the accused."⁹¹

Could there be nobler intentions than these? Could the interests of the merchants have been guarded in a better way?

The rivers had been opened to navigation but the route

90. 106/12. Pottinger to Wade, February 15, 1835. P. G. R.

91. 106/12. Pottinger to Wade, February 15, 1835. P. G. R.

could not be made popular and the scheme worked in a sluggish and haphazard manner. In order to accelerate trade by the new route the Government adopted several measures. Burnes was sent on a mission to Kabul to make known to the merchants residing beyond the Indus the steps that had been taken to re-establish the trade formerly carried on by that river. Wade directed Mackeson to meet Burnes at Mithankot,⁹² and requested the Maharaja to send there one of his agents,⁹³ and also invited several merchants of Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan and Bahawalpur,⁹⁴ "for the purpose of devising a convenient point on the Indus for the establishment of an *entrepot* and annual fair like those of Leipsic and Novgorad."⁹⁵ Yet with all these elaborate plans and with the 'best will in the world' on the part of the promoters, the scheme commercially at any rate fizzled out. An intensive examination of the records reveals the defects inherent in the scheme, and other causes which led to its failure. The main defect was in the scheme itself. The revised system of tolls was pregnant with many shortcomings. It precluded the exportation of all the cheap and bulky raw products, such as grain especially gram and salt that could bring profit from the Bombay market. The toll on these commodities being the same as on costly articles, there was no inducement for the merchants to trade in them. They deceived the Government by building boats of larger size as all boats were subject to equal amount of toll. This reduced the income of the Governments considerably. In order to remedy this defect a supplementary treaty was signed with Ranjit Singh on May 19, 1839.⁹⁶ But that came too late. Much had happened by then to ensure the utter collapse of the project. Moreover, the Maharaja's death soon after, and the transfer of Wade from Ludhiana not much later, removed the only supporters of the scheme from the scene. Any hope of its success that remained also disappeared then and the scheme soon fell into abeyance.

92. 14/18. Wade to Macnaghten, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.

93. 14/72. Wade to Macnaghten, April 14, 1837. P. G. R.

94. 43/58. Wade to Macnaghten, May 7, 1837. P. G. R.

95. 142/18. Wade to Macnaghten, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.

96. 104/86. Clerk to Maddock, May 19, 1839. P. G. R.

For treaty see Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 45-46.

One large factor which contributes to the success of any such project is the reciprocal zeal and mutual co-operation of the parties concerned, and these were missing in this particular case. The English were the only party which took pains to make the scheme a success. But even their real objective had been the surveying of the Sind area, and thereby devising suitable methods for checking the expansionist ambitions of Ranjit Singh and also for counteracting the growing influence of Russia in Persia. So when the survey was done, Ranjit Singh was checked and the Russian menace began to be counteracted in different and more effective way in Afghanistan. they too lost much of their keenness. But even if they had sustained their interest the scheme could not have succeeded as other parties never took any genuine interest in it.

Bahawal Khan, as he himself said, had signed the treaty not because he himself wanted it, but just out of deference for the English. Ranjit Singh, too, was never completely without suspicions regarding the English designs in Sind. He all along felt that their commercial activities had abridged his political power.

The attitude which mattered most in this case was that of the Amirs of Sind. They had all along looked upon the project with the eye of fear and distrust and had tried to hinder its progress. They had striven to poison Ranjit Singh's ears, dissuade Bahawal Khan from signing the treaty, and had themselves made excuses to delay its execution. They had particularly resented the stationing of a British agent in Sind, and the situation, as we have seen, had indeed become critical when Pottinger had found it almost impossible to persuade them to agree to this move, and had even to threaten them with force. Naturally his domineering attitude was incompatible with a commercial treaty that was to be based on terms of equality. Even after the treaty had been signed the English were thinking of dictating terms to the Amirs. Pottinger wrote to Wade on August 30, 1835: "I have assumed as a matter of course our full right to *dictate* such terms as we conceive best suited to promote the traffic by the Indus, so long as such rules are no infringement of the terms of the treaties."⁹⁷ If such was to be the attitude of British officers,

97. 106/48. Pottinger to Wade, August 30, 1835. P. G. R.
(Enclosing a copy of his letter to the Government).

to follow the letter and not the spirit of the treaty, no wonder then that the Amirs always endeavoured to wreck the scheme.

At the initial stages boats were detained by the Amirs at the mouth of the Indus,⁹⁸ and the English had to threaten them with the subjection of the 'ports of Sind to a blockade, should they refuse to comply with the demand made by Col Pottinger for the immediate release of the boats.'⁹⁹ Yet the boats were detained for over two months at Bahawalpur waiting for the permission to enter Sind.¹⁰⁰ Even after entering Sind the merchants were maltreated and their boats were again detained at different places.¹⁰¹ What could possibly be the result of such molestations and detentions?

A treaty, and particularly a commercial one, where monetary interests are involved must be amicably and logically executed. It cannot be forced on an unwilling party without bringing failure in its train. The success of a project, where doubt and suspicion remain where hatred and fear linger on, and where one party has decided to dominate the other regardless of its interests, pride or position, is well nigh impossible.

If there was any man who was honestly and diligently interested in the whole project it was Wade, and he deserves praise for his persistence. No doubt he too had his exaggerated notions about the Indus trade but there is no denying the fact that once having decided upon his course he pursued it with his usual patience and thoroughness. He was given the job of 'cracking the hardest nut'—that of bringing round Ranjit Singh to agree to the treaty to which he was so averse in the beginning. But in spite of his great reluctance and misgiving Wade succeeded in convincing him with such a remarkable degree of success that he was the only partner who felt some interest in the scheme till the very end. The Governor General acknowledged Wade's efforts in successfully negotiating these treaties with the Rulers of Lahore and Bahawalpur.¹⁰² Again, even when Pottinger was despaired of

⁹⁸ 10-/50 Wade to Mackeson, August 17, 1835 P G R.

⁹⁹ *L.d.*

¹⁰⁰ 106/51 Mackeson to Wade, September 9, 1835 P G R.

¹⁰¹ 106/67 Mackeson to Wade, January 17, 1836 P G R.

¹⁰² 117/29 Government to Wade, September 13, 1833 P G R.

the success of the scheme and suggested to the Government that either it should altogether be abandoned or made independent of the Amirs,¹⁰³ it was Wade who urged the Governor-General to persevere in the project.¹⁰⁴

Finally, it may be remarked that though the scheme as such ended in smoke, it led to far reaching results. By the establishment of Mackeson's office at Mithankot, the British Government obtained "a commanding influence in the countries on the Indus, which proved of great use to us in opening and improving an intercourse with them, without which it is universally admitted that we could not have subsequently made those preparations in Upper Sind which ensured the peaceable progress of our expedition to Afghanistan."¹⁰⁵ Moreover, the scheme put an obstacle in the way of Ranjit Singh towards Sind which he could never surmount, besides affording the British an opportunity for making a complete survey of the country, which, in turn, helped its annexation in 1843.

103. 105/75. Pottinger to Wade, October 14, 1833. P. G. R.
(Enclosing a copy of his letter to the Government).

104. 149/69. Wade to Macnaghten, December 13, 1833. P. G. R.

105. Wade, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

CHAPTER VII

THE SIND TANGLE

The story of the contacts of the British and Ranjit Singh with Sind, and the diplomacy of the two powers in outbidding each other in the matter of extending their own exclusive influence or control over that country, will provide the theme of this chapter. It has two distinct phases, the first, relating to the development of the Company's and Ranjit Singh's connections with Sind until 1831, and the second, their mutual entanglement over this question in the subsequent period.

I. Sind Till 1831.

Sind was conquered by Akbar in 1591, and remained a province of the Mughal Empire till 1737, when the Kalhoras, a tribe of wandering mendicants, established themselves as its rulers. The Kalhoras were soon (1740) subjugated by Nadir Shah, who forced tribute from them. On his assassination in 1747, his authority passed to Ahmad Shah Abdali, the founder of the Durrani Empire, then to Taimur Shah and Zaman Shah, and still later to Shah Shuja in the beginning of the 19th century. Then the province was theoretically under the suzerainty of Afghanistan, but the Sindhian Chiefs often withheld the payment of the tribute.

In 1785 the Kalhoras had made room for another Baloch tribe known as the Talpurs under their leader Mir Fateh Ali Khan. The Mir and his three brothers, Ghulam Ali, Karam Ali and Murad Ali had established themselves at Hyderabad,¹ while their uncle, Sohrab Khan, and their cousin, Thorra Khan, had installed themselves at Khyrpur and Mirpur respectively, thus

1. The four brothers agreed to rule conjointly and from their cordial relations acquired the appellation *Chai Yār* (four friends) from their subjects.

breaking the Mughal province of Sind into three principalities of which Hyderabad was the biggest.²

The Mir died in 1802, leaving his territory to his three brothers who divided it. Ghulam Ali died in 1811, and Karam Ali and Murad Ali too in 1828 and 1834 respectively. After the death of the *Char-Yar*, their sons succeeded them and governed Hyderabad. Mir Rustam Khan, son of Sohrab Khan, ruled Khyrpur, and Shir Mohammad, grand-son of Thorra Khan, governed Mirpur till the annexation of the province by the British in 1843.³

In the first quarter of the 19th century the tottering Durrani Empire of Afghanistan coupled with quick changes in succession offered a rich territorial feast to its neighbouring rulers. The Amirs, who had acknowledged the overlordship of the Afghan rulers since 1747, and suffered many invasions on that account,⁴ became independent. In 1824, after the death of Mohammad Azim Khan, the Amirs took possession of Shikarpur by sheer trickery.⁵

By reason of its natural geographical position, Shikarpur had developed into a big commercial centre. Trade routes from Sind through Bolan Pass to Kalat and Afghanistan and also to the rich valley of Khorasan, Turkistan and Central Asia ran through it. Apart from its commercial value, Shikarpur was strategically important being connected by a direct route to Afghanistan.⁶ The acquisition of this town by the Amirs was an event

2. The English missions of 1808, 1809 and 1820 to Sind negotiated with the Rulers of Hyderabad who were considered the most important and most powerful.—Postans, *Personal Observations on Sind*, pp. 156 sqq., Burnes, *Narrative of a Visit to the Court of Sind*, pp. 20 sqq., and Atchulson, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol. VIII, pp. 291 sqq.
3. See *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V. p. 522.
4. There had been constant strife between Sind and Afghanistan during this period because the former ever plotted to cast off its allegiance, and the latter ever put forth its strength more closely to rivet the chains. (Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan*, Vol. I, p. 93).
5. Between 1747 when it fell into the hands of the Afghans and 1824 when the Amirs seized it, Shikarpur was ruled by Governors appointed by the Durrani monarchs (Burnes, *op. cit.*, p. 79).
6. 108/73. Report of Burnes on the commerce of Shikarpur and Upper Sind, May 6, 1837. P. G. R. Also 107/4. Mackeson to Wade, forwarding the Journal of Munshi Mohan Lal, April 26, 1836. P. G. R.

of some significance. Ranjit Singh realizing its importance had long cast covetous eyes on it, and continued doing so even against much diplomatic pressure of the British. To the Amirs, as we shall see later, Shikarpur proved to be an onerous responsibility which ultimately cost them their independence.

The British intercourse with Sind began as early as 1758, as usual, through the merchants. In that year the Company was gratified at securing a *parwana* which was granted to Mr. Sumption by Ghulam Shah Kalhora for establishing factories, stating that "bestowing of favours and continuing friendship with the English is desirable." The *parwana* contained exemptions from customs, and stated that only one and a half per cent duty would be paid on all purchases made by Mr. Sumption for export. It further said that "should Mr. Sumption either buy or build a house.....my people are to give him all the assistance they can so that it may cost him only a reasonable price."⁷ These concessions by themselves were not substantial, yet they provided scope for contacts, which, in turn, disclosed to the English the weak state of the Sindhi Government, and the possibilities of developing commerce through the Indus.

In 1761, Mr. Eaksine arrived at the Court of Sind as agent of the Company. He succeeded in securing a further *parwana* confirming the previous one, and evincing strong friendly disposition of the Sindhi Government towards the English. This is clear from the language: "that besides the English, no other Europeans shall either import or export goodsor come and go upon that account within the dominions of Sind."⁸ These commercial relations continued uninterrupted as long as Ghulam Shah Kalhora lived, but his son Sarfraz Khan distrusted the motives underlying the British trade, and began so to act as to compel the Company to withdraw their factories in 1775.

Toward the close of the eighteenth century Lord Wellesley made some effort to restore commercial relations with Sind with the ostensible object of furthering trade, but with the real aim of counteracting the designs of the French and particularly of Tippu Sultan who had styled himself as Companion of the Faith, and raised the cry of "Islam in danger" against the new

7. Aitchison *op cit.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 304-5.

8. *Idem*, pp. 308-9.

conquering *kafirs* (infidels). Accordingly, Mr. Nathan Crowe, of the Bombay Civil Service, was sent in 1798 to renew the commercial and political intercourse with the recently established power of the Talpurs. He succeeded in obtaining a favourable order containing several concessions issued under the seal of Mir Fatch Ali Khan,⁹ but the document remained a dead letter. The jealousy of the native traders and the intrigues of Tippu had already caused the British Agent to suffer humiliation and experience much trouble in his journey. This was followed by a fresh order from the Mir requiring him to quit the country within ten days. Crowe departed in 1800, thus sealing the fate of British influence in Sind for some time.¹⁰

The Treaty of Tilsit (1807) revived the danger of a Franco-Russian invasion through Asia Minor and Persia.¹¹ Spurred by the instinct of self-preservation, Lord Minto, as we have seen, embarked on a new Asiatic policy in the following year by sending different embassies to four foreign powers—Persia, Afghanistan, the Punjab and Sind. Captain David Seton was sent to Sind, and concluded an offensive and defensive treaty of seven articles with Ghulam Ali Talpur.¹² It is interesting to note, however, that the British Government shrank from ratifying the treaty for fear of being committed to too close a connection with the Sind Government.¹³

9. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 311.

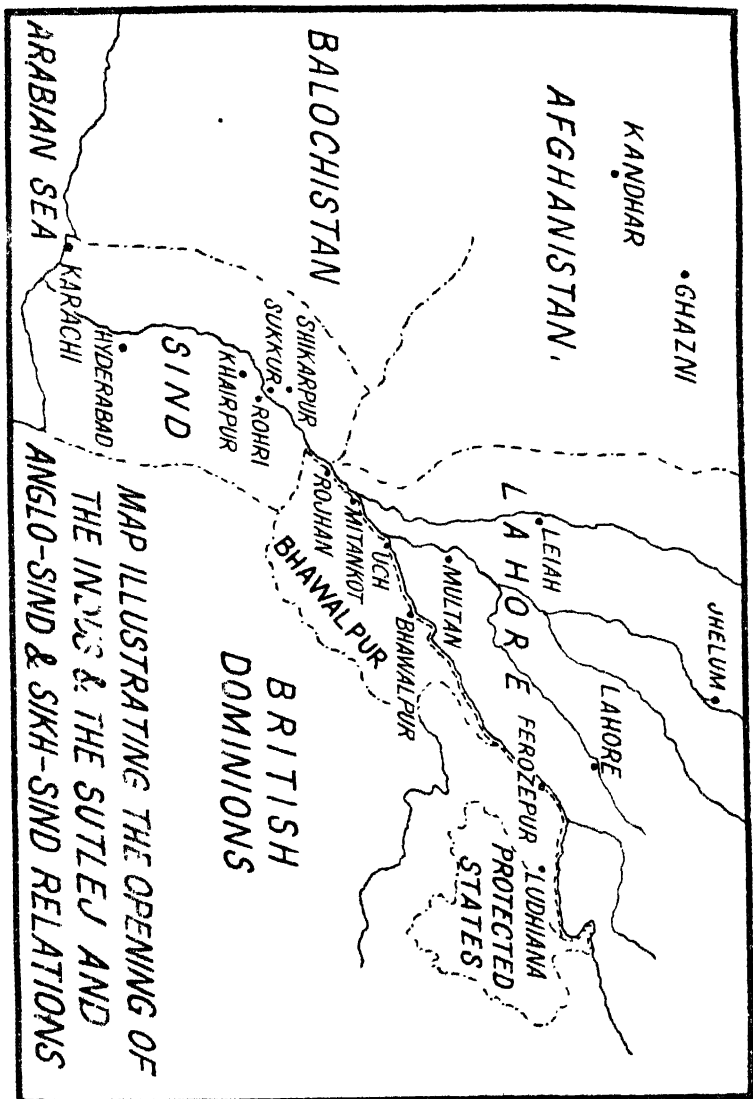
10. The most commonly accepted reason for this treatment on the part of the Mir was an order from Zaman Shah, the Afghan monarch. This reason was afterwards given by the Sind Government. But in the words of Postans it "may be traced to the result of Tippu's intrigues". (*op. cit.*, p. 290).

11. *Vide* pp. 4 *sqq.*, *supra*.

12. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 292-93 f. n.

13. The clause of the treaty to which exception was taken by the British Government was : "Article 2. When the assistance of troops is required by either of the parties, it shall be granted when asked". This clause had been included in the treaty by Seton without any authority from his Government.

The Amirs believed that this clause entitled them to British assistance to emancipate themselves from the yoke of Kabul, a stipulation to which the British Government would not be a party. It, therefore, did not ratify this agreement and recalled Seton. (Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 292-93, f. n., Kaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94. And 3/59. Seton to Secretary to Government, October 26, 1809. P. G. R.)



To ratify this mistake, Mr. Nicholas Hankey Smith was sent to negotiate another treaty with the Amirs which was concluded on August 22, 1809. It was a brief and simple stipulation of only four articles,¹⁴ and yet, in the context of subsequent development of Anglo-Sind relations, it may be judged to have sown the seeds of the English empire in Sind, of which the harvest was reaped by Sir Charles Napier thirty four years afterwards.

The Treaty of 1809 stood in good stead to the British for eleven years, when it was replaced by another which was concluded with Mīr Karam Ali and Murad Ali, the two surviving brothers of the *Char-Yar*.¹⁵

The Treaty of 1820 had four clauses also like that of 1809. The first two provided for eternal friendship and mutual intercourse through *nakils* between the two Governments. By the third the Amirs agreed "not to permit any European or American to settle in their dominions," and that "if any of the subjects of either of the two States should establish their residence in the dominion of the other and should conduct themselves in an orderly and peaceable manner.....they will be allowed to remain in that situation." By the fourth article the Amirs undertook to "restrain the depredations of the Khosas and other tribes and individuals within their limits and to prevent the occurrence of any inroad into the British dominions."¹⁶

Matters stood thus between the two Governments for another eleven years. Only two events of note occurred during this period, *viz.*, a visit of Dr. J. Burnes (brother of Sir Alexander Burnes), the Residency Surgeon, who was invited by the Amirs for medical assistance, and a demonstration of the British troops in Cutch in 1825 to awe the Amirs into maintaining their treaty

14. In terms "singularly brief and dry" the Amirs, *inter alia*, promised to prevent the "tribe of French" from settling in Sind. (Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 317).

15. In 1819 the British finally occupied Cutch, and the Anglo-Sind frontiers thus became contiguous. Disputes often arose regarding the predatory activities of the people on the common border. In order to end these frontier forays a fresh treaty was concluded on November 9, 1820.

16. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 318.

obligations lest they should take any undue advantage during the engagement of the British against Bharatpur and Burma.

Though the afore-mentioned treaties professed to have established friendly relations between the British and the Amirs, yet it must be borne in mind that the latter were not at all desirous of keeping to such relations. Ever since the final occupation of Cutch by the British in 1819, the Amirs had anxiously felt their proximity and apprehended the extension of their influence across their borders, and so the relations came to be viewed with suspicion and distrust by the Amirs, while the former lay low and unconcerned for some years.

As for Ranjit Singh, the first political event of any consequence concerning his relations with the Amirs occurred in 1809. The Amirs seemed anxious to have a defensive alliance with the rising Sikh Chief against the British, whereby "each state was to assist the other with troops in the event of its being attacked by the English."¹⁷ To effect this purpose messengers were sent to Ranjit Singh on September 29, 1809.¹⁸ But he was too far-sighted to encourage these advances and thereby risk hostilities with the English. He had already formed friendship with them at Amritsar earlier in the year, and any understanding with the Sind Rulers so soon after would have been inconsistent with it. Moreover, Ranjit had yet to conquer and absorb the formidable principality of Multan intervening between his kingdom and Sind.

After the conquest of Multan in 1818, Ranjit's appetite with regard to Sind was quickly sharpened. The Amirs also were alarmed as the capture of Multan was the signal to them to conciliate the goodwill of their potent neighbour."¹⁹ But it was not until 1823 that the Maharaja led an expedition in the direction of Sind, ostensibly to punish the Balochis who had attacked his troops near Multan, but in reality to invade and occupy Shikarpur.²⁰ The village of Buttee was reduced,

17. 3/59. Seton to Government, October 26, 1809. P. G. R.

18. *Ibid.*

19. Political Proceedings, No. 70, October 20, 1831, quoted in Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, p. 105.

20. 94/11. Wade to Elliott, August 7, 1823. P. G. R.

(Continued on page 122)

and the Maharaja did not press his demand, as for the moment his attention was diverted to more serious happenings.²⁸

To sum up the attitude of the English and the Sikhs towards Sind until this time, it may be said that the former had not yet felt politically interested in that region. Their treaties with the Amirs had so far been the direct outcome of European and Central Asian politics, and as soon as danger from beyond the north-west of India receded these fell into a virtual suspense, only to be renewed if similar situations ever recurred. Moreover, their attention was fully absorbed until 1826 in meeting other problems of political and military nature nearer to the vital centres of their Indian dominion. They, however, carefully watched the movements of the troops of Ranjit Singh right from 1823—the year of Wade's taking over charge of the Ludhiana Agency, but otherwise sustained a policy characterised by outward indifference.

The Maharaja, on the other hand, was very anxious to seize Shikarpur, which, apart from other considerations, would provide his kingdom an outlet to the sea.²⁹ He repeatedly talked of his claims against the city but never enforced them because of other and more insistent demands on his attention and resources. His designs became more pronounced after the disappearance of the danger from Syed Ahmad in 1831. But by then his friends and rivals, the English, were well into the field.

II. Sind After 1831.

With the year 1831 we enter upon a period of intense diplo-

28. There appeared on the Peshawar frontier a formidable foe in the person of the fanatic Syed Ahmad who occupied the Maharaja's whole attention till the former's death in 1831. 137/7. Wade to Prinsep May 17 1831. P. G. R. And 137/8. Wade to Metcalfe, May 18, 1831. P. G. R.

Though the Syed was finally defeated and killed, he had indirectly provided a respite to Sind for four years, and finally saved it from falling into the hands of the 'infidel Sikhs'. In 1831, when Ranjit Singh recovered from the shock, he found that the English were no longer mere silent spectators of the game.

29. Wade had written to the Government as early as September 11, 1823: "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". (94/18. P. G. R.)

matic activity which continued unabated for several years. Henceforth the respective policies and designs of the British and Ranjit Singh cease to follow two distinctly different courses but these freely react, at times are made to coincide, but more often collide with each other.

Ever since the limits put to his ambitions regarding the left bank of the Sutlej in 1809, the Maharaja had been consolidating his power in the north western direction. When he seriously thought of giving shape to his designs on Sind, he found that the British had cast off their indifference. It was either through intuition or because of certain vague rumours which had reached him early in 1831, that Ranjit Singh felt a definite change in the attitude of the British towards Sind. Burnes' mission of 1831, in spite of its friendly character, created misgivings in his mind, and he now seems to have made up his mind to know definitely the English views before making a serious attempt on Sind.³⁰

In May 1831, when Wade visited Ranjit Singh at Adina-nagar in connection with the Rupar interview,³¹ the latter mentioned how he had asked Ochterlony (while both drank together) about the desire of the British for extending its territory still further, but had got the reply: "No, the Company is satiated." He inquired of Wade whether the British attitude was still the same. Wade's reply was *in nubibus*.³²

While escorting the Maharaja to Rupar, Wade wrote at his persuasion to the Government from Amritsar that before any negotiations were started with Sind, it would be desirable to secure the Maharaja's co-operation as he exercised great influence at the Courts of the Amirs, and was desirous of acting in concert with the Government.³³

30. We have it on Jacquemont's testimony that Ranjit Singh while conversing with him in March 1831 made the following observation:

"What would be the good of my taking Tibet? It is rich countries that I want. Could I not take Sind, it is said to be very rich? But what would the British say?" (*The Punjab a Hundred Years Ago*, p. 30).

31. *Ide p.* 80, *supra*.

32. 137/13. Wade to Prinsep, May 25, 1831. P. G. R.

33. Wade wrote to Prinsep: "Considering the relations which exist between His Highness and the Amirs of Sind, I beg leave to suggest
(Continued on page 125)

Again, during the meeting at Rupar, the Maharaja plainly hinted of his own schemes by saying that the Amirs were very rich, that they had no efficient army, and that they could not be well-disposed towards the English, for had they not thrown impediments in the way of Burnes while proceeding up the Indus? He went even to the length of proposing a joint expedition against them.³⁴ Bentinck evaded giving a straight answer. He had already deputed Pottinger to Sind to negotiate with the Amirs a treaty for opening up the Indus to the commerce of Europe and India. He did not divulge the tenor of negotiations to the anxious Maharaja lest he should counteract them,³⁵ but merely kept reticent.³⁶ No wonder that the Maharaja returned from Rupar disappointed in the matter of Sind though well pleased in all other matters.

The truth is that Bentinck well knew that the navigation scheme would be viewed with disfavour by the Maharaja "inasmuch as he may think that it will connect our interests and power with those of Sind, and thus create an obstacle to his design of future aggression upon the Amirs, — a design which he frankly acknowledged to Lieut. Burnes."³⁷

Wade was, therefore, directed by Bentinck a little later to proceed to Lahore, and to remove from the Maharaja's mind "any suspicions that the British Government under the cloak of commercial objects was desirous of extending its influence."³⁸

(Continued from page 124)

that the great influence which the Maharaja can exert in the promotion of any political objects, which His Lordship may have to carry with those Chiefs, and the importance on that account of securing, before such negotiations be carried out into effect, the co-operation of an ally who has schemes of his own in that quarter, and whom, I believe, to be desirous of acting in concert with Government, is sufficiently of an advantageous nature".—137/34. October 19, 1831. P. G. R.

34. *Hughes, Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab*, p. 408.

35. *Cunningham, op. cit.*, pp. 196-97.

36. *Cunningham* aptly comments that "it would have better suited the character and position of the British Government had no concealment been attempted." (*Idem*).

37. 98/181. Prinsep to Pottinger, October 22, 1831. P. G. R.

38. 115/102. Prinsep to Wade, December 19, 1831. P. G. R.

To keep the Maharaja quiet and to secure his co-operation the Governor General declared exactly contrary to what was the real purpose of the Company's policy.

At the end of 1831 the Maharaja was in a great fix. He had completed his plans to attack Shikarpur but could not do so openly as that would lead to a rupture with the English which he least desired. So he abandoned his designs for the time being and waited for some suitable opportunity in the future.

We now come to a series of important incidents which apparently owed their origin to the commotion created by the Mazaris on the Sikh frontier beyond Multan.

The Mazaris were a tribe of free-booters which lived on the south-west of Mithankot at a distance of a few miles. Their principal stronghold and the residence of their Chief, Behram Khan, was Rojhan. They carried their incursions alike into Sind, Lahore and Bahawalpur territories.³⁹ Though they were nominally under the suzerainty of the Amirs yet as their territory was a sort of 'no man's land' between the Punjab and Sind, it was not possible for the Amirs to keep them under proper control. This provided the Maharaja with an excuse for advancing his designs on Shikarpur.⁴⁰

As the raids of the Mazaris had become frequent, and they had refused to pay the usual tribute to the Sikh Government, Dewan Sawan Mal, the Governor of Multan, sent on November 9, 1834, Sardar Hari Singh, the *thanadar* of Mithankot, to demand tribute from Behram Khan. The latter curtly refused to pay it.⁴¹ Sawan Mal thereupon marched in person against Behram who took to his heels and sought refuge in the territory of the Bugtis. Marching from Mithankot on January 28, 1835, the Dewan laid waste the country about Rojhan.⁴² The Mazaris had committed grievous outrages by setting fire to many houses. Mackeson requested the Dewan on his return to take more drastic steps to extirpate the Mazaris.⁴³ Sawan Mal

39. 106/27. Mackeson to Wade, May 14, 1835. P. G. R.

40. 141/84. Wade to Macnaghten, September 16, 1835. P. G. R.

41. 106/27. Mackeson to Wade, May 14, 1835. P. G. R.

42. *Ibid.*

43. *Ibid.*

sent a force to Amarkot when Behram was cornered and forced to submit. The Mazari Chief "presented the Dewan with a tribute of 60 camels, and 21 pairs of bullocks—the produce of the Nari district near Bhag which is famous for that kind of cattle—together with other presents, and formally signed and sealed his allegiance to the Lahore Government on the condition of an annual tribute."⁴⁴ There was, however, a fresh outbreak of trouble from the Mazaris in the ensuing year. About the middle of 1836, the Mazaris resumed their depredations on a larger and more organised scale, being led this time by an implacable fanatic, Nasur-ud-Din, who pretended to be a relative of Syed Amad.⁴⁵ The Maharaja, seeking an excuse for attacking Shikarpur, accused the Amirs of conniving at the acts of these free-booters. There was some truth in this charge, for the Amirs had given a tangible assistance to the Mazaris.⁴⁶ The Maharaja sent Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh to Multan with a view to creating alarm among the Sindhians.⁴⁷ The *kardars* of Mithankot and Multan were directed to rally their troops under the Kanwar's banner. A sum of Rs. 60,000 was placed at his disposal, and he was to co-operate with Dewan Sawan Mal in exterminating the Mazaris.⁴⁸ At the same time the Maharaja instructed Kanwar Kharak Singh, who had been sent to check the fresh aggressions of the Mazaris,⁴⁹ to despatch his officers in advance towards Shikarpur, so that the "honour of conquering Shikarpur might fall to his lot."⁵⁰ General Ventura too was sent at the head of five battalions to assist the Kanwar.⁵¹ Wade thought that the main reason of the Maharaja sending troops so expeditiously, despite the incle-

44. 141/19 Wade to Macnaghten May 27, 1835. P. G. R.
Sawan Mal made a report to Ranjit of the settlement that he had effected, and sought the Maharaja's permission for establishing a garrison at Rojhan, but his request was turned down—*Ibid.*
45. 142/29 Wade to Macnaghten, April 29, 1836. P. G. R.
46. 142/10. Wade to Macnaghten, October 5, 1836. P. G. R.
47. 142/12. Wade to Macnaghten, July 7, 1836. P. G. R.
48. *Ibid.*
49. 141/54. Wade to Macnaghten, August 2, 1836. P. G. R.
50. 142/58. Wade to Macnaghten, August 19, 1836. P. G. R.
51. *Ibid.*

mency of the weather, was to forestall Shah Shuja whom the Amirs had invited to Shikarpur.⁵²

Early in April, 1836, before the Khalsa army could reach Multan, the Mazaris raided Mithankot and returned with considerable booty. Sawan Mal with whatever force he had at his disposal engaged them in a skirmish which resulted in the death of Dost Ali Khan, the son of Behram Khan.⁵³ He next reduced Rojhan.⁵⁴ The Sikh troops made a detour towards Badauni whither Behram had retired⁵⁵ returning thence to Ken, another Mazari stronghold, which fell⁵⁶ after a stubborn resistance offered by its 'Sindhian garrison.'⁵⁷ The Maharaja demanded two lakhs of rupees for the evacuation of the fort.⁵⁸ This defeat broke the back of the Mazaris.

After having thus cleared the Mazari menace, Ranjit Singh turned his attention towards the Amirs whom he had, from the very beginning, accused of clandestine dealings with them. He demanded the cession of Shikarpur from their *vakils*.⁵⁹ A month later, he reiterated his demand for a tribute.⁶⁰ The *vakils* prevaricated by pleading that "the intercourse between the two

52. *Ibid.* Vide Chapter VIII, *infra*.

53. 107/7. Mackeson to Wade, August 4, 1836. P.G.R.

54. *Ibid.* and 142/59. Wade to Macnaghten, August 29, 1836. P.G.R.

55. 142/76. Wade to Macnaghten, October 15, 1836. P.G.R.

56. 107/25. Mackeson to Wade, October 23, 1836. P.G.R.

57. 107/19. Mackeson to Wade, October 10, 1836. P.G.R.

58. 142/102. Wade to Macnaghten, December 13, 1836. Enclosing Mackeson's letter of November 23, 1836. P.G.R.

59. 107/5. Pottinger to Wade, July 1, 1836. P.G.R.

60. *Akhtar-i-Ludhiana*, November 26, 1836. No. 100.

دیر خیبر پور شہیدہ ایم کے لالہ آسانند و محمد درویش والاٹی ناظمان سندھ
 کے بخشدست وائس لاہور دار سے باتتند ہو کلاں خود عودت کنند کہ سہاراچہ
 رعیت سنگہ بہادر وائس لاہور بہ بلدہ ہا ارشاد فرمود کہ باقیان خون مطلع
 روند کہ پانچ لاکھ روپیہ و پنجاہ اسب بطریق بدراے گذارند۔

(News from Khyrpur. It is learnt that Lala Asa Nand and Mohd. Darvesh, the *Vakils* of the Amirs of Sind at the Court of the Ruler of Lahore, have told their masters that Maharaja Ranjit Singh had asked them to inform their masters (the Amirs) to send five lakhs of rupees and fifty horses as tribute).

Stat. 3 had hitherto been confined to the interchange of presents only," and that no tribute had ever been paid by the Amirs to the Maharaja.⁶¹

The Sikh expeditions against the Mazaris and the ever increasing flow of reinforcements in the direction of Multan could not but excite the Amirs' apprehensions.⁶² As a measure of safeguard they despatched a *vakil* to Amir Dost Mohammad of Cabul, and also wrote to another Afghan chief, by way of Kohat, for help. At the same time they prepared themselves to answer force with force, being particularly goaded to this decision by the Sikhs' capturing the village of Rukhan,⁶³ belonging to the Chief of Khyrpur. They then withdrew their *vakils* from Lahore,⁶⁴ and mustered an army estimated at 10,000 horse and 45 pieces of artillery at Shikarpur. The Khalsa army under Sawan Mal and Sardar Mangal Singh, on the other hand, comprised seven to eight thousand foot, three to four thousand horse and four guns.⁶⁵ The Amirs felt confident that their military preparations would deter the Sikhs from aggressive action,⁶⁶ but when an open rupture seemed imminent⁶⁷ they seem to have lost heart. They inwardly wanted peace, as they fully knew the strength of the Sikh Force.⁶⁸ At this critical juncture they

61. 142/25. Wade to Macnaghten, August 19, 1836. P.G.R.

62. 107/25. Mackeson to Wade, October 23, 1836. P.G.R.

63. 104/28. Pottenger to Wade, October 29, 1836. P.G.R.

64. *Ibid*

65. 108/78. Mackeson to Wade, January 15, 1837. P.G.R.

66. 107/28. Pottenger to Wade, October 29, 1836. P.G.R.

Muttab Khan Biroli, the Chief of Kalat, and other Baloch tribes of the hills had made common cause with the Sindhians.

107/29. Mackeson to Wade November 7, 1836. P.G.R.

67. *Akbar-ul-Udhiana*, November 26, 1836. No. 100.

دقیقہ بہ برصہ قلیل مقابلہ فوج . لہذا لاہور کے سپاہ سالار بھیالہاں کے دواہی آمد

(It is certain that in a short time a clash would occur between the forces of Ranjit Singh and those of the Sindhians).

68. 107/29. Mackeson to Wade, November 7, 1836. P.G.R.

The Amirs sent their envoys to Dewan Sawan Mal "proposing that the Sikhs should confine themselves to Rojhan which was held by

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invoked the British mediation by sending a message to Pottinger to help them out of the difficulty,⁶⁹ and recalled the envoy they had lately sent to Kabul apparently with the object of conciliating the Sikh Ruler.⁷⁰

The British, too, did not relish these demonstrations on the part of the Maharaja on the borders of Sind, because they themselves were now interested in the political future of that country, partly for its own sake, and partly because it would provide, if need be, a convenient base for military action against the extension of Russian influence beyond the Perso-Afghan border. At any rate, they were determined to prevent the expansion of Ranjit Singh's authority over Sind. In their execution of this purpose, they had to take the delicate step of instructing Pottinger "to effect a closer union with the Amirs."⁷¹ This step, indeed, was fraught with peculiar dangers. The Sindhians were incapable of any serious resistance, and what was worse, were likely to acquiesce in any prompt action of the Sikhs. Again, the English move, might quite likely precipitate Sikh advance into the Sind territory and thus be the cause of provoking immediate conflict between Ranjit Singh and themselves. That would mean something for which Auckland was not prepared, for his intention was that the British influence in Sind should be gained "by the pursuit of commercial and peaceful objects alone."⁷²

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Behram Khan Mazari, and that Ken which was ten *kos* from Rojhan and Shah Wali which was four *kos* from Ken should be restored to the Amirs". The Dewan replied "that his business was with the limits of the Mazari territory, that to whatever place they extended he would keep possession of it, and demanded a *nazrana* of two lacs of rupees as the condition on which the Sikh force should be withdrawn". The Amirs would not agree to pay the *nazrana*.—107/35. Mackeson to Wade, November 23, 1836. P.G.R. Also 107/41. Mackeson to Wade, December 23, 1836. P.G.R.

69. 140/66. Wade to Macnaghten, September 13, 1836. P. G. R.

70. 107/29. Mackeson to Wade, November 7, 1836. P. G. R.

71. The letter of instructions to Pottinger is interesting as showing the real motives of Auckland's Government. The Amirs were to be told without reserve that the British Government was sensible of the dangerous position in which they stood, and that it was essential, "not to their interest only, but to their very existence", that the ties by which they were connected with the British Government should be strengthened.—107/16 Macnaghten to Wade, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.

72. *Ibid.*

By intervening for the protection of Sind, the Government expected to gain certain advantages. Auckland authorised Pottinger to promise the Government's mediation in all disputes between the Amirs, and the Lahore Government, but for making such intervention effective the Governor-General insisted that (a) a British agent should be stationed at Hyderabad, (b) all negotiations of the Sindhians with Lahore should in future be conducted solely through the medium of the British officers, and (c) a British force should be quartered temporarily in Sind at the Amirs' expense.⁷³

Pottinger reached Hyderabad on November 22, 1836, and was received with the "utmost kindness and respect" by the Amirs.⁷⁴ On November 30, he informed the Government that he had entered into a provisional agreement with Nur Mohammad, the Chief of Hyderabad, and sent a copy of the agreement for His Lordship's approval. By this engagement the Hyderabad Chief agreed to receive a British agent who would be the medium of communication between him and the Lahore Darbar. The Government was to protect the territory of the Amirs who agreed to withdraw their *vakils* from Lahore.⁷⁵

Nur Mohammad continued receiving guidance from Pottinger regarding relations between Sind and Lahore.⁷⁶ Rustum Khan of Khyber also expressed friendship to Pottinger whom he solicited for a similar treaty as with the Ruler of Hyderabad. He, too, was assured by the British Agent that he would be considered a party to whatever engagement would be concluded with the Ruler of Hyderabad.⁷⁷

Though quite willing to accept British protection against the Sikh monarch, yet it is clear from the records that the Amirs disliked the prospect of keeping the British Resident in their territory. Pottinger was, therefore, advised by Auckland to

73. 107/3. Marnaghten to Wade, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.

74. 107/1. Pottinger to Wade, November 25, 1836. P. G. R.

75. 107/1. Pottinger to Wade, November 30, 1836. P. G. R.

76. 108/1. Pottinger to Wade, February 14 1837. P. G. R.

77. 107/7. Pottinger to Wade, March 13, 1837. P. G. R.

78. In a private conference of the Amirs when Nur Mohammad tried to convince Subudar Khan to agree to the reception of an English agent

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make it clear to the Amirs that unless this point was conceded, the Government would not be able to exert its influence with the Maharaja for the abandonment of his designs.⁷⁹ When this and all other means failed to bring round the Amirs, they were threatened that the 'Lion of the Punjab' would be let loose, perhaps aided, to work his pleasure in Sind. Thus fear of war with the Sikhs and not any real liking for the British, procured the treaty of 1838.⁸⁰

This treaty concluded with the Hyderabad Amirs (Mir Nur Mohammad and Mir Nasir Khan) on April 20, consisted of two articles only. By the first the Governor General agreed 'to use his good offices to adjust the present differences between the Amirs of Sind and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, so that peace and friendship may be established between two States.' By the second it was agreed that an accredited British Minister shall reside at the court of Hyderabad and that the Amirs 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.⁸¹

Looked at from the British point of view, this treaty was an important diplomatic gain both over the Amirs and Ranjit Singh.

The Maharaja ever eager to further his designs on Sind, was equally anxious to know the British reactions to every step that he contemplated taking. On Kunwar Kharak Singh writing to him from Mithankot to allow him to proceed to Shikarpur, he forbade him to do so just then and asked him to wait.⁸² He wanted to sound the British. But the wisdom of

(Continued from page 131)

in Hyderabad as a return for British mediation between Sind and Lahore Governments: the latter remarked, 'I know you are giving away Sind to the *Feringees*.' (106/9) Pottinjer to Wade, May 12, 1837 P. G. R.)

79 119/60. Macnaghten to Wade, October 2, 1837 P. G. R.

80 Napier, *The Conquest of Scinde*, Part I, p. 48.

81 Aitchison, *Treaties Engagements and Sanads*, Vol VIII p. 328.

82 *Akhbar i Ludhiana* October 15, 1836 No. 94.

this delay was doubtful as the English attitude would further gain time to crystallise. Ranjit Singh, however, seemed to have been confident that the British would have no objection to his designs for he had planned to march towards Shikarpur personally.⁸³

In July 1836, before starting operations against the Mazaris, Ranjit Singh had made an indirect attempt to ascertain the Government's attitude by approaching Wade through his Agent, Lala Kishan Chand, for permission to bring fire-arms up the Indus, *i.e.*, through the heart of Sind. Wade apprised the Government that the purpose of the application was to ascertain whether they would insist on preserving the restriction which existed in the treaty with the Hyderabad Chief to the passage of fire arms by the Indus; or allow him to take his own measures to introduce them by that route—a reply which he would deem tantamount to a license to prosecute his designs on Shikarpur.⁸⁴

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عرض کرد کہ از نظر ندست کہ ہندہ سہہ عساکر - وچوہ - حود
مصلحت کوت متہین بمقام موضع جام پور فرو داسہ اگر اوسا - شود - عا - تسفیر
ہو کہ دہ - شقہ بعراہش صاحب کشت کہ بالاعیان بدستور بمقام حو - دایر
بہند بعد دہر - زوج بانصوب سامور کردہ حکم داسہ ہواہد شد -

(Kanwar Kharak Singh's letter was presented which said that he along with the troops he had was encamped at Jampur near Mithankot. If he was permitted he intended to march against Shikarpur. An order was sent in reply that he should stay at his place for the time being, and after Dussehra the armies would be despatched in that direction, and then the instructions would be sent.)

83. *Akht ul-Ludhuana*, October 22, 1836. No. 95

خبر لاہور - عرض دیوان سوان مل بملاحظہ کشت کہ ہندہ ہاتھ ل حضور
بتفاتی کرد کہ از سکہ شکر پور بہ نصرت ود خواہد آورد - و تو - بہ آہرہ
فرمانید

(As was from Lahore. Dewan Sawan Mal's letter was presented which said that His Highness need not come to that side personally, as he with Kanwar Kharak Singh will be able to bring Shikarpur under his control.)

84. 142/66. Wade to Macnaghten, September 13, 1836. P.G.R.

Wade was directed to inform the Maharaja that the Governor-General could not encourage any project which would virtually infringe the treaty relations between the British and Sind Governments, and that the 3rd Article of the Treaty of 1832 clearly prohibited the use of the Indus for the conveyance of military stores of any description.⁸⁵

Ranjit Singh sounded the English in another way also. He asked Wade for the services of a British doctor skilled in galvanic art and in making artificial teeth. Wade told the Government that the real object was to use the doctor for political purposes.⁸⁶ A doctor⁸⁷ was provided, but Wade was at the same time instructed that, in case the Maharaja proceeded on any expedition contrary to the expressed wishes and policy of the Government, all officers bearing commission from the Company were to be withdrawn from the Sikh Court.⁸⁸

Ranjit Singh had yet another device up his sleeves. He started negotiations with Shah Shuja. The Shah could possibly lay a claim to Shikarpur, and besides, the Amirs had recently made overtures to him. On the Shah's returning after his discomfiture at Kandhar,⁸⁹ Ranjit Singh offered to restore him to his lost throne, provided he in turn would relinquish all claims to Peshawar and Shikarpur. The Shah's hopes being revived he agreed to these terms.⁹⁰ But both Ranjit Singh and the Shah

85. 107/8. Macnaghten to Wade, August 2, 1836. P.G.R.

In 1836, the same Governor General without any qualm of conscience decided to inform the Amirs that the clause of the Treaty of 1832 which closed the Indus to the passage of war materials "most necessarily be suspended during the course of operations undertaken for the permanent establishment of security to all those who are parties to that Treaty." (Parl. Papers, Correspondence relative to Sind, 1838—1843, p. 10). *Vide* p. 99, *supra* and Chapter XI, *infra*.

86. Wade wrote to Macnaghten: "His Highness is desirous of employing him (the doctor) in the first instance on a campaign...He wishes to make a political use of him by showing to his fearful and simple-minded neighbours that he was sanctioned in his mediated expedition by the presence of British Officers."—142/60. August 30, 1836. P.G.R.

87. Dr. Driver lately in the service of the Begum Sombre.

88. 107/16. Macnaghten to Wade, September 26, 1836. P.G.R.

89. *Vide* Chapter VIII, *infra*.

90. 142/61. Wade to Government, September 5, 1836. P.G.R.

desired Wade to be a party, or at least a witness, to this stipulation—the Shah because he did not trust Ranjit Singh, and the latter because his claim to Shikarpur would be settled in his favour once and for all. Wade, however, saw through the game, and refused to sign the agreement.⁹¹ Further, the Shah was distinctly told that he would leave Ludhiana on pain of losing his asylum there and his maintenance allowance for ever.⁹²

On August 22, 1836, Wade received instructions to use his influence by way of friendly remonstrance with the Sikh Ruler to abandon hostile intentions against the Amirs' territories.⁹³ On September 26 he was further directed to use every means in his power "short of actual menace to keep His Highness at Lahore, and to prevent the further advance of his army."⁹⁴ Wade, if he considered it necessary, was to proceed to Lahore to discuss the matter with Ranjit Singh, and tell him frankly that the Governor-General could not but view with regret and disapprobation any hostile design on his part against Sind.⁹⁵ Wade was further instructed that if the Maharaja urged that he had received provocation from the Amirs, he was to be told that the Amirs had formally placed themselves under British protection, and that the Government was ready to interpose its "good offices for an equitable settlement of all matters of difference between the two States."⁹⁶

Thus the British policy towards Sind grew more concrete and definite in the last four or five years, and was now

91. *Ibid*

92. 107/1 Macnaghten to Wade, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.

93. 107/1 Macnaghten to Wade 22, 1836. P. G. R.

94. 107/1 Macnaghten to Wade, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.

Wade had on September 13, 1836, suggested that it would be beneficial if the Maharaja was made aware of the dissatisfaction with which the Governor-General in Council regarded the aggressive policy which he continued to follow towards his neighbours. Wade had expressed the opinion that it would awaken him to the line of policy which 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. (142/66. P.G.R.)

95. 107/8. Macnaghten to Wade, August 22, 1836. P. G. R.

96. 107/16. Macnaghten to Wade, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.

unmistakably expressed by Macnaghten : "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."⁹⁷ Again, the Government could not "view with indifference any disturbance of the existing relations of peace between the several states occupying the banks of that river."⁹⁸

Wade was empowered to explain to the Maharaja that the Government had no objection to the repression of the Mazaris, but what it highly prized was the maintenance of peace and tranquillity along the Indus route.⁹⁹ There is no doubt that Auckland also desired peace in the interests of commerce, for he rightly thought that the first effect of hostilities between Lahore and Sind Governments would be to postpone for a period the rendering of the Indus a channel of safe and extensive commerce. Wade was, therefore, to assure the Maharaja definitely that the Government wished to "scrupulously adhere to all its pledges of totally abstaining from interference in regard to his acknowledged dominions."¹⁰⁰

Before proceeding personally to Lahore Wade had written to the Maharaja to gauge the intensity of his reactions to the statement of the British policy with regard to Sind. He in reply put forward his claims on Shikarpur on the following grounds : First, he asserted the right of every sovereign state to protect its territory from aggression and to resent the conduct of any of its neighbours who might wantonly insult its dignity. Taking stand on this ground, he dwelt at length upon

97. *Ibid.*

Macnaghten also wrote to Pottinger in the same strain : "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"—*Ibid.*

98. *Ibid.*

99. *Ibid.*

100. Under this heading the instructions to Wade were : "It will be the spirit of your negotiations that the British Government thinks itself entitled to ask from His Highness that he will show to neighbouring States with which it is intimately connected, the same tenderness by which His Highness is well aware that it is itself uniformly guided in the conduct of its external relations."—107/10. Macnaghten to Wade, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.

the inroads of the Mazaris which had mainly been incited and aided by the officials of the Sind Government, and asked whether "after such glaring instances of aggression and plunder on the part of the Mazaris and others, was it not incumbent on him for the well-being of his country to punish these people?"¹⁰¹ Secondly, he argued that Shikarpur was a dependency of Peshawar, and, therefore, it belonged to him by right of conquest. Thirdly, he contended that in conformity with the Treaty (of 1809) subsisting between the two States his movements towards Shikarpur could not be restricted as it was situated "beyond the Sutlej."¹⁰²

These arguments provide ample testimony to Ranjit's diplomatic ability in spite of his illiteracy. The Government had necessarily to admit the losses which his subjects had suffered on account of Mazaris' depredations into his territory,¹⁰³ but it would not accept his title to Shikarpur as a dependency of Peshawar.¹⁰⁴ Further, the Government surprised Ranjit with

101. 142/70. Wade to Macnaghten, October 5, 1836, forwarding the Maharaja's reply.

Wade, commenting on this argument of the Maharaja of self-defence and retaliation, observed that it was convenient for Ranjit to have recourse to it, but it came with a bad grace from one to whom the mere love of conquest had always afforded a sufficient plea for violating the integrity of neighbouring States. (*Ibid.*)

102. *Ibid.*

Ranjit's contention, in short, was that by the terms of the Treaty of 1809 the British Government could *only* restrict his relations to the countries south of the Sutlej.

Macnaghten wrote to Wade: "It is not the first occasion in which Ranjit has assumed the barrier of that river (Sutlej) to extend to the north and to himself the liberty of pursuing whatever measures he pleased with the countries beyond it sometimes earnestly, sometimes in jest, inculcating the idea that such was a fair construction of the Treaty." (107/33. November 14, 1836. P. G. R.)

103. 142/70. Wade to Macnaghten, October 5, 1836. P. G. R.

104. Macnaghten wrote to Wade: "The title of Shikarpur as assumed by the Maharaja had no validity as a dependency on Peshawar... it may with equal justice be claimed by the King of Persia and the chiefs of Kabul as having been at different times in dependence upon their dominions... By the Treaty of 1809, it seems clear that the words "to the northward of the Sutlej" cannot be construed as conferring whatever may be to the westward of the Indus."—119/10. March 2, 1837. P. G. R.

the interpretation it inferred from the terms, "this side of the Sutlej." Wade was told to make it clear to the Maharaja that the Government, according to the Treaty, had no concern with countries north of the Sutlej, but for the countries to the west of that river, it had given no pledge¹⁰⁵ Hence if it interfered in his disputes with the Amirs, it was no violation of the letter and spirit of the Treaty.

Having failed by arguments to convince the adamant British of his claims on Shikarpur, Ranjit Singh next resorted to flattery, as is shown by a fable written by him to his Agent who repeated it to Wade thus : Some friends held a consultation privately at night on some business. Perchance the king of the country appeared at the spot in disguise. They asked him who he was and were told he was one of them. The king identified himself with them. They claimed that each was pre-eminent in his own vocation—one as master of a particular art, another of some other art, and so on. The king said that he could effect any purpose by a mere move of his head. In the morning the king, who knew the persons of the night's meeting, called them to his presence and interrogated them. One recognised the king and hoped that it was a good opportunity for realising the object of every one by an inclination of the king's head. The king graciously did what they wanted. After narrating this fable the Maharaja continued, "as the Captain is charged with the conduct of the relations of the two States and is the promoter of them, and the affair of Shikarpur is easy of attainment, were he to give his assent it might be accomplished at once."¹⁰⁶ But

105 Macnaghten wrote to Wade : "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 above 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 the Indus no mention was made... It is of great importance that this misconception on the part of His Highness be delicately but clearly pointed out to him."—107/33. November 14, 1836. P. G. R.

The above argument, though expressed with so much force and unambiguity, cannot bear a close scrutiny. It was just advanced, and was perhaps an afterthought.

106. 102/103. Wade to Macnaghten, December 15, 1836. P. G. R.

the recitation of the fable failed to yield the desired result.¹⁰⁷

Wade continued exerting his influence with the Maharaja who ultimately issued orders for cessation of hostilities, and requested that the Sindhian agent be asked to enter into a treaty with him,¹⁰⁸ and wanted the British to be a party to it.¹⁰⁹ This the Government had never desired. Wade was, therefore, instructed to proceed to Lahore and to discourage the Maharaja from entertaining any such notion.¹¹⁰ Wade reached Lahore on the Christmas eve, 1836.¹¹¹ The need for reconciling the Maharaja had by this time become all the more essential, for alarming news of Russian designs was reaching India.¹¹² He found the Maharaja most perturbed on account of the negotiations of Pottinger with the Amirs and the suspected designs of the Government in deputing Burnes to Kabul.¹¹³ He formed the opinion that Ranjit's unwillingness to give up his pretensions on Shikarpur and abandon all hostility towards Sind arose "both from a suspicion of our ultimate designs, and a loss of reputation if he agrees to do anything that may compromise the position he had assumed in that quarter."¹¹⁴ He had, therefore, to be very cautious in tackling the very delicate task of thwarting his ambitious designs on Shikarpur, and at the same time maintaining his friendship unimpaired. He strove with extreme caution to impress upon his mind the impropriety of going against the wishes of his powerful allies, and succeeded by slow degrees in persuading him to abandon his projects against

107. Wade wrote: "The Maharaja had ascribed to me a power of gratifying him which I really did not possess, that even if I did, it was not always the part of a true friend to yield indiscriminately to the inclinations of those who claimed the good offices of friendship, that as I could not satisfy my solicitude for his welfare by coinciding in opinion with him on the present occasion, it would be far from friendly on my part to encourage a step which might prove more injurious than beneficial to his interests." (*Ibid.*)

108. 142/81. Wade to Macnaghten, November 2, 1836. P. G. R.

109. 142/85. Wade to Macnaghten, November 3, 1836. P. G. R.

110. 107/33. Macnaghten to Wade, November 14, 1836. P. G. R.

111. 142/107. Wade to Macnaghten, December 27, 1836. P. G. R.

112. 119/1. Macnaghten to Wade, January 2, 1837. P. G. R.

113. 142/107. Wade to Macnaghten, December 27, 1836. P. G. R.

Vide Chapter X, *infra*.

114. 142/107. Wade to Macnaghten, December 27, 1836. P. G. R.

Shikarpur.¹¹⁵ Ranjit's courtiers fretted and fumed and still urged him not to yield, but he silenced them by asking what had become of the two hundred thousand spears of the Marathas.¹¹⁶

The Maharaja agreed to let his relations with the Amirs stand on their old footing. He wished to destroy the fort of Ken and continue to occupy Rojhan and the Mazari territory.¹¹⁷ But for the time being he recalled all his troops.¹¹⁸ Thus ended the first great crisis in the Anglo-Sikh relations since that of 1809.¹¹⁹ And yet the Maharaja hoped that some opportunity

115. It is interesting to note how gradually Ranjit came down from polite refusal to complete submission.

Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Vol. III., Part III. p. 345. 1st *Maghar*, 1893, Samat Bikarim (December 13, 1836), Ranjit inquires from Wade about the English attitude towards Shikarpur p. 354. 10th *Maghar*, 1893 (December 22, 1836), Ranjit disagrees with the English objections to his right to capture Shikarpur. p. 354. 10th *Maghar*, 1893 (December 22, 1836) Ranjit asks Wade to request the British Government not to interfere in the matter of Shikarpur, p. 359. 26th *Maghar*, 1893 (January 7, 1837), Ranjit submits:

سرکار دولتہدار فرمودند کہ آنچه رضا مند، صاحبان عالی
شان سے باشد از ہمہ سقیم و وجہ و معتمد است

(His Highness said that whatever was the will of the exalted Sahibs (the English) it was proper, prior and superior to everything else.)

116. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 211, and references there cited.
117. Wade to Government, January 3, 1837. Quoted in Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 210.
118. 145/22. Wade to Macnaghten, December 13, 1836. P. G. R.
119. The success with which Wade persuaded the Maharaja to abandon his designs on Sind is as remarkable as the Maharaja's sagacity in bending before his mighty friends.

might still arise in the future to annex Shikarpur to his dominions.¹²⁰

120. Sohan Lal records that in 1838 when Macnaghten and Wade went to Lahore to negotiate the Tripartite Treaty (*Vide* Chapter VI, *infra*), they hinted to the Maharaja that he might relinquish his claims on attention about Shikarpur finally because the British were determined to keep that area under their influence, that this agitated the mind of the Sikh Ruler who reminded them (through Kishan Chandel) of the Ruper meeting regarding which Sohan Lal records that when we enquired about Bannu, Tank and Shikarpur the Maharaja replied that when the treaty was mutually ratified, there was no need of making enquiries again and again, and he also added that the territory of Shikarpur belonged to the Princely Ruler (Ranjit Singh), and that he could establish his sway there, or exact *nazrana* from it, as he had full authority over it. Moreover, Shah Shuja had also recognised the Maharaja's control over Shikarpur by the Treaty of 1833 (*Vide* Chapter VIII, *infra*). The Maharaja also asserted that he had certain letters in his possession in which the English had clearly stated that they had nothing to do with the area to the west of the Sutlej. At this Faqir Aziz ud-din, the most talented of the Maharaja's advisers, urged him to acquiesce and not to press the matter. Thereupon Ranjit Singh told Osborne that he should tell Lord Auckland that he had agreed again to relinquish his claim over Shikarpur out of regard for the British Government. (*op cit*, Vol. III Part IV, p 531 *sqq*)

CHAPTER VIII

SHAH SHUJA'S BID FOR HIS THRONE

Beyond the north western borders of the Sikh dominion lay Afghanistan—a country bounded on the north and east by immense mountain ranges, and on the south and west by vast tracts of sandy desert. Occupying the north-eastern portion of the arid Iranian plateau with central Asian depression on the north, with most waterless deserts of Baluchistan on the south, with a gentle slope from north-east to the south-west, intersected by deep ravines and surrounded by steep mountains it possesses natural defences of a formidable character.¹

The history of Afghanistan had for a long time been one of political intrigue and dynastic revolution. Towards the end of the 18th century the Durrani Empire, founded by Ahmad Shah, had developed these maladies through the indolence of Timur Shah (1773—1793), the cruelty of Zaman Shah (1793—1800) and the incompetence of Mahmud Shah (1800—1803). By 1803, the sceptre had passed into the hands of Shah Shuja who too could not stem the rot.²

Even while the Elphinstone mission (1809) was still at Peshawar after concluding a treaty with Shah Shuja, news of the capture of Kandahar by the latter's brother, Mahmud Shah (whom Shah Shuja had supplanted earlier) came. Soon after Mahmud Shah defeated Shah Shuja at Neenla and expelled him from the kingdom.

This was followed by a prolonged civil war in Afghanistan, at first between the members of the Sadozai family, then between the Sadozais and the Barakzais who ultimately came into power, and parcelled out the country among themselves. Dost Mohd., the ablest of the Barakzais, thus came to possess both Kabul

1. Sykes, *A History of Afghanistan*, Vol. I, p. 1.

2. See Cambridge History of India, Vol. V. p-483 sqq.

and Ghazni, Kandhar came under Kohin Dil Khan and Peshawar under Sultan Mohd. The last named had to submit to a nominal suzerainty of Ranjit Singh.³ Only Herat remained in the hands of the Sadozai family under Mahmud Shah who however was succeeded by his son, Kamran.⁴

Shah Shuja, after his discomfiture at Neemla, was reduced to lead the life of a roving adventurer, seeking his fortune as a fugitive in the neighbouring country of Kashmir, and later at Lahore under the avaricious eye of his custodian, Ranjit Singh, till 1816, when he escaped from the clutches of the Sikh Ruler⁵ to find a more hospitable asylum in the English outpost at Ludhiana.⁶ Provided with an ample allowance of Rs. 50,000 per annum by the British,⁷ the Shah in his leisure hours indulged in his pleasant dreams of recovering his lost throne.

At the British outpost of Ludhiana he was not too unfavourably situated, being able to keep frequent correspondence with the northern countries, and maintain contacts with his real and pretended adherents. Besides, he could ingratiate

3. 144/44. Wade to Macnaghten forwarding Burnes' report. P. G. R.
4. With this exception the Sadozai dynasty founded by Almad Shah in 1747 fell in 1818. *Vide* Chapter IX, *infra*.
5. At Lahore the Shah was shamefully treated by Ranjit, who, to gain possession of the celebrated *Koh-i-Noor* harassed and starved him until he contrived to escape. (See Sykes, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 389).
6. Sir Alexander Burnes sketches the chequered career of Shah Shuja from 1809 to 1816, based on a little work written by the Shah himself which is not now traceable. He writes: "Few monarchs and few men have been subjected to greater reverses of fortune than Shuja-ul-Mulk, and we find our sympathies enlisted in his cause by a knowledge of his misfortunes"—Ferrier, *History of the Afghans*. Translated by Captain William Jesse, pp. 143-45.
7. The Shah wanted this stipend to be paid to his wife, Waffa Begum, rather than to himself. He also desired it to be styled as *Kharach-i-Zanana*, that is, herem expenses. The reason for it, as told by Mulla Shakoor, the confidential servant and preceptor of the Shah, to Lt. Murray was that the deposed monarch had, or imagined to have had, a strong party in his favour at Kabul. His intentions were to keep alive in that party the prospect of his speedy return. He wished to impress upon them that he had not arrived at Ludhiana to seek a continued asylum, or to remain there on a fixed pecuniary allowance, but that he had come there to induce the British to help him.—92/3. Murray to Ochterlony. November 10, 1816. P. G. R.

himself with Wade whom he converted into his staunch supporter.

During the Barakzai rebellion of 1818, after the death of Fateh Khan—a Nana Farnvis of the Afghan history—Shah Shuja found an opportunity of making a bid for his throne. He was invited by Muhammad Azim Khan of Kashmir to accompany him to Afghanistan. But his haughty and arrogant behaviour annoyed Azim Khan who deserted him. Shah Shuja was forced to fly towards Sind where he made futile attempts to raise an army. He returned to Ludhiana in 1821, but never gave up the idea of recapturing Khorassan.

In the middle of 1826, some communication passed between Ranjit Singh and Mahmud Hussain, the Shah's old servant, with a view to opening a correspondence and inviting the Shah to make another attempt to regain his throne with the Maharaja's help. Some three years earlier, Mahmud Hussain on his way from Peshawar to Ludhiana had been detained at Amritsar. From there he had written to the Shah about Ranjit Singh's views, viz., that he regretted his past unfriendly conduct, that he wanted to assist him in his enterprise and that should he be disposed to make another effort for regaining his country, the Maharaja would be happy to assist him to the utmost of his means.⁸ The Shah apprised Wade of this matter by sending him Mahmud Hussain's letter in original, and seeking his advice about the overtures of the Maharaja in whose sincerity he himself placed little reliance.

The reply given by Wade is noteworthy as reflecting the British policy towards the Shah for the next ten years. Declining to give any advice, Wade observed that the only reasons actuating the Government to grant him protection were hospitality and commiseration. Wade further remarked that no restraint would be imposed upon his inclinations either in quitting or in staying at Ludhiana, and that he should make his own decision. The Shah sent no reply to the Maharaja or to Mahmud, and a few days later, when Mahmud himself arrived in Ludhiana he at once informed Wade of it.

However anxious the Shah might have been to try his fortune by committing himself to Ranjit Singh, he did not like to

8. 95/20. Wade to Metcalfe, July 25, 1826. P. G. R.

relinquish the ease and safety of his asylum at Ludhiana. No consideration whatever could weigh, after the vicissitudes of fortune he had suffered, to make him sacrifice something definite for what was quite uncertain. He tried in several ways to extract Wade's opinion as to the course he should adopt. But the latter acted with circumspection, avoiding any expression that might tend to influence the Shah's personal judgment or raise hope in his mind which might never be realised.

Mahmud remained at Ludhiana even though the Maharaja, growing impatient about the Shah's reply, wrote to him about it. Shah Shuja was keen to secure the British mediation in any engagement into which he might enter with Ranjit Singh, but Wade gave a frank refusal.⁹

The question arises whether Ranjit's proposal was a trick for obtaining possession of Shah's person and making him subservient to his own plan of conquests, or was intended as a likely gesture to tempt the British to espouse the Shah's cause.

The divided and unruly condition of the Afghans had often been a source of anxiety to the Maharaja. Since he found that he himself should not attempt alone to subdue the countries across the Indus, he wanted the Afghans to be brought under the sway of one of their ex-princes of his own acceptance. This would enable him to consolidate his own position as well as secure the peace and tranquillity of his neighbouring districts. With the exception of Dera Ghazi Khan and its dependent districts which the Maharaja had assigned to the Nawab of Bahawalpur for an annual rent of six lakhs, he could be said to possess no territory beyond Attock. A present of a few horses was all that he had hitherto been able to obtain as tribute from Peshawar, and that too was seldom secured without negotiation. The part of the Punjab on the left bank of the Indus extending from the Attock fort to the bounds of Rawalpindi was occupied by the turbulent race of Eusefzais. These had never been completely subdued, had scarcely ever ceased attacking his troops and were a constant menace to him. Towards Dera Ismail Khan too, the Maharaja's authority was precarious. A trifling tribute accrued but only through the presence every year of a military force which actually collected it.

9. 93/29. Wade to Metcalfe, July 25, 1826. P. G. R.

Whatever the real motive behind Ranjit's proposal was, the British did not care to involve itself in it either directly or indirectly. Mahmud got no definite reply from the Shah who later, accompanied by a small retinue, went away on a pilgrimage to Sirhind and Panipat.¹⁰

To think that the Shah was disheartened at this indifferent attitude of the Government is to misjudge him. He sent a deputation to the Governor-General at Simla,¹¹ and received the following reply in July, 1827 : The Government could not afford assistance in any attempt which he might make to recover his lost dominions. This precluded them from involving themselves, either by guarantee or otherwise, in his negotiations. They, however, had no objection to an alliance between him and Ranjit Singh for the purpose of re-establishing him in his kingdom, or to any attempt which he might make on the invitation of Afghan chiefs without Ranjit Singh's aid, but in either case he must simultaneously relinquish their protection on a distinct understanding that they would not be under any obligation to renew it in the event of failure.¹² This reply deterred him for the time being.

In 1829, the Shah's hopes were revived by the favourable turn of affairs in Peshawar consequent upon Syed Ahunad's ascendancy. In March, he sent an agent to the Maharaja with the proposal that "if the Princely Ruler (the Maharaja) helped him in acquiring possession and sway over the countries of Peshawar and Kabul, one lakh of rupees and some swift-footed horses would be presented to him through the agency of the British."¹³ The Maharaja in order to amuse the ex-King listened to his overtures and sent him back rich presents.¹⁴ On June 1, the Shah informed the Government regarding his proposed alliance with the Ruler of Lahore having for its object his restoration to his throne.¹⁵ Meanwhile, Wade exerted his influence to enlist the

10. 95/35. Wade to Metcalfe, September 27, 1826. P.G.R.

11. 95/84. Wade to Kennedy, Principal Assistant, Sabathu. P.G.R.

12. 115/19. Lt. W. Hilson, Asstt., Delhi Residency, to Wade, July 7, 1827. P. G. R.

13. Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ul-Twarikh*, Vol. II, p. 338.

14. *Idem*, p. 339.

15. Political Consultation, June 12, 1829. No. 20. I. R. D.

Government's sympathies.¹⁶ But the Governor-General first on May 19,¹⁷ and then on June 12,¹⁸ repeated his warning. The matter was once again dropped.

In 1830, Shah Shuja sent complimentary presents to Ranjit.¹⁹ The real motive of Shah is shown by Ranjit Singh observing to the *Vakil* of Sultan Mohd. Khan, the Sardar of Peshawar, that the Shah had engaged to give him 105 horses, 2 Persian swords lakh of rupees and several jewels if he would place him in possession of Peshawar and Kabul.²⁰ But Wade thought that as the Shah had denied having made such proposals, it was a stratagem on the part of the Ruler of Lahore to frighten and deceive the Chiefs of Peshawar.²¹ Regarding Ranjit Singh's real attitude, Wade opined that he was just trying to amuse the Shah as he (Ranjit Singh) was well aware that the British had declined to interfere in his attempts to recover his throne. Ranjit Singh's moves, Wade argued could, therefore, be regarded as nothing else but a mere courteous profession of goodwill.²²

Whether Wade's remarks were merely an expression of his own wishful thinking, or whether in reality there was no design behind these negotiations just then, cannot be said with certainty. But one thing is definite, that towards the middle of 1831, the Shah was again writing to Ranjit Singh in the following strain : "Peshawar and other countries which are under the Maharaja's subjection belong to him. If His Highness will confer the crown of the remaining countries on me, the Maharaja's name will become famous throughout the world If His Highness will perform the friendly act required, and continue to treat me with liberality, my successors will recollect his deeds. Let the Maharaja, therefore, state his propositions, article by article."²³ To

16. 97/81, 97/87, 97/92, 97/97. Wade to Colebrooke, May 2, 3, 13 and 17, 1829. P. G. R.

17. 115/59. Colebrooke to Wade, May 19, 1829. P. G. R.

18. 115/62. Encl. Sterling to Colebrooke, June 12, 1829. P. G. R.

19. 98/88. Wade to Resident, Delhi, June 7, 1830. P. G. R.

20. 98/98. Wade to Hawkins, June, 21, 1830. P. G. R.

21. *Ibid.*

22. 98/120. Wade to Hawkins, September 29, 1830. P. G. R.

23. Wade to Prinsep, November 21, 1831. Encl. Translation of a note presented to Maharaja Ranjit Singh by Qazi Mohd. Hussain, Agent of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk. Letter No. 1 (Indian Papers, 1839, Extracts from Despatches relative to the expedition of Shah Shuja into Afghanistan in 1833-34).

conciliate the Maharaja further the Shah wrote that whatever had happened to him in the past he considered as proceeding from adverse fate and not from His Highness.²⁴ This undoubtedly shows that negotiations had been going on for some time.

Ranjit Singh in reply expressed his readiness to assist him to recover his throne if the latter would sign a treaty with the following terms : "1. that if proper, according to the Treaty of friendship established between the two Governments (the British and Sikh) let the Shah come with confidence to the Maharaja at either Amritsar or Lahore, and meet His Highness in the manner that they met at Rawalpindi, Kushab and Lahore ; that the Shah enter into a treaty with the Maharaja agreeably to his desire, ratifying it by his oath and seal, that no treachery be practised towards His Highness' troops, that when the Maharaja may move in the direction of Peshawar the Shah shall come to meet him ; 2. that the heir-apparent of the Shah shall always attend His Highness with a force, having also his family along with him, that he shall be treated with distinction, and expected to accompany the Maharaja in all his journeys ; 3. that the Shah shall disclaim, both for himself, his successors, and all the tribe of Suddeozai, every right and title to the countries which have been acquired by His Highness, his dependents, and tributaries of every kind, for instance, to the city of Peshawar with its territory and customs, Kohat, Hastnagar, Usafzai, Khyber, Kashmir, Multan, Mankera, Kalabagh, Bootchee, Serai, Tenouls, territories formed by Bhawalpur, the two Ketchees north of the Sutlej, Tank, Sengher, Gherang, Fort of Rohen, Gooldhere, Akora, territory of Khattak, the seat of Payandah Khan's family, Darband, Terbelah and Payendah Khan's place of abode 4. that the Maharaja's passion for horses is well known, and the Shah shall send him 102 horses of the finest description every year, 25 Persian mules, 11 Persian swords, and 200 maunds of fruit, consisting of grapes, besides some Persian silk cloaks, etc., etc., half the presents to be delivered at Nou Roz and half at Dusserah ; 5. that the Shah shall at once give three lakh of rupees worth jewels, such as those for which His Highness negotiated through Mian Lemedjoo, for the expenses of the army ; 6. that whenever the Maharaja may be in want of troops, the Shah shall send his

own army to him with one of his sons ; 7. that the friends and enemies of one shall be friends and enemies of the other ; 8. that when any of His Highness's people shall proceed to Kabul to purchase fruit or horses for the Maharaja, they shall be well treated, and allowed to pass through the country in safety ; 9. that should any European gentleman be coming from Persia with His Highness' sanction, or be proceeding to Ludhiana, they are according to the Treaty subsisting between the British and Sikh Governments, to be allowed to pass without molestation, and to be treated with respect ; 10. that the abomination of killing kine shall never exist in the territory of Kabul or in its armies, nay, let a proclamation be issued that no one shall commit the act ; 11. that the protals made of sandal, which have been carried away to Ghazni from the temple of Jugannaut (it should be Somnath) shall be delivered to the Maharaja when the Shah's Government is well established ; 12. that whatever property in money, jewels, or cannon, be taken from the Barakzais in Kabul, Peshawar and Jalulabad, shall be divided equally between His Highness and the Shah ; 13. that if the Shah's officers infringe any of the above-mentioned articles, the army of the Maharaja shall have liberty to correct them ; 14. that His Highness will send the Shah presents worthy of his acceptance consisting of the productions of Kashmir and Multan ; and 15. that should the Barakzais attend the Maharaja to Kabul, His Highness and the Shah shall agree to make a suitable provision for them." ²⁵ These terms, however, were too arbitrary and dictatorial, and appeared to the Shah, though prostrate with misfortune and failure, humiliating. ²⁶ Hence the negotiations fell through once again.

25. Wade to Prinsep, November 21, 1831. Letter No. 2 (Indian Papers, 1839 *ut supra*.) cf. Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, Part I, p. 70.

26. Shah Shuja's answer to some of the stipulations of the proposed treaty is worth quoting :

"Regarding the attendance of the Shazada (condition No. 2), it is improper because the world will consider him in the situation of an hostage..... If the Maharaja will take one of the Lords of the Court, it is well.

"Regarding a prohibition against the slaughter of kine (condition No. 10), let His Highness consider that notwithstanding the territory in which I am residing is that of the Sikhs, the British Government and the Maharaja being connected by the ties of amity, the practice

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In 1832, an unconfirmed report was current that Abbas Mirza of Persia was near Mero Shahjahan for helping Russia in subjugating Khiva. He was further believed to have brought Mero under his sway.⁷ It was admitted that with the aid of Russia, he was bent upon extending his father's dominions. This rumoured advance of the Persians gave an impetus to Shah Shuja to pursue his designs. Having failed to raise money on the pledge of his jewels, he looked up to the British for pecuniary assistance. He wished to exploit the fear which they were then supposed to entertain as regards the Russian advance. He wrote to them that the Persian Prince was bent upon capturing Herat, that his military strength was enough to crush Kaimin (the ruler of Herat) unless the Shah himself proceeded with reinforcements, and that Kaimin would, out of sheer desperation ally himself with Abbas if he failed to receive any help in time.⁸ And then it would be no wonder if Abbas advanced towards Afghanistan particularly when the negotiations for a matrimonial alliance between the Persians and the Sindhuans had been going on.⁹ The people of Afghanistan, Shah Shuja added, were tired of the tyrannous rule of Dost Mohd, and would help Abbas if the Shah did not reach there. He considered the occasion favourable for acquiring his lost kingdom.¹⁰ He was confident of saving Afghanistan from the Persian clutches,

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in question is permitted in the British encampments and camps. Is it just that it should be prohibited in Kabul and Peshawar, which are Muhammadan countries.

‘Regarding the demand for the portals of sandal at Ghazni (condition No. 11), a compliance with it is inadmissible in two ways firstly, a real friend is he who is interested in the good name of his friend. The Maharaja being my friend how can he find satisfaction in my eternal disgrace? To desire the disgrace of one's friend is not consistent with the dictates of wisdom. Secondly, there is tradition among all classes of people, that the forefathers of the Sikhs have said that their nation shall, in the attempt to bring away the portals of sandal, will advance to Ghazni, but having arrived there the foundation of their empire shall be overthrown.—Wade to Prinsep, November 21, 1831. Letter No. 4 (Indian Papers, 1839, *ut supra*.)

27. 138/12 Wade to Government, March 9, 1832 P. G. R.

28. 138/20, Wade to Government May 11, 1832 P. G. R.

29. 37/23 Wade to Prinsep, August 5, 1831 P. G. R. See pp 92-93, *supra*

30. 116/15 Macnaghten to Wade, October 19 1832 P. G. R.

if only he were able to procure the British help. In return, he promised to make the Afghans friendly towards the British interests, and make them enter into an alliance with the Government by receiving its agent in their country. He also applied for the loan of military officers to train his levies, and sought the continuance of his pension to his family after he had proceeded on his expedition.³¹

All this caused, it must be noted, a distinct change this time in the British approach towards Shah Shuja. They now looked upon his efforts to regain his throne with a benevolent, though, for the moment a neutral interest.

The attitude of the Amirs of Sind towards the Shah had always been sympathetic though they had personal motives of their own. In 1830, they, judging that Ranjit Singh would not let them retain Shikarpur, considered it politic to hand it over to the Shah. A year later, the impending arrival of the English Envoy for commercial negotiations caused much consternation to the Amirs, and they encouraged the tenders of their titular monarch still further.³² As they had no confidence in the good faith of the English either, they extended an invitation to the Shah for obtaining an ally for themselves by promising him material help in his projected invasion of Afghanistan.³³ They even proposed to conclude a treaty with him offering their assistance, if he would relinquish all claims to the sovereignty of Shikarpur and his supremacy over them. The Shah agreed to restore Shikarpur and to acknowledge their independence, if he succeeded.³⁴

At about the same time, some Afghan nobles of consequence offered their aid to the Shah if he led an expedition into Afghanistan. Successive revolutions and continued unsettled affairs, they informed him, had caused discontent among the Afghans who looked up to him to restore peace there. Mehrab Khan, the Chief of Baluchistan, also was deeply attached to the Shah's

31. 116/35. Macnaghten to Wade, October 19, 1832. P. G. R.

32. 137/27 Wade to Prinsep, September 9, 1831. P. G. R.

33. 108/23. Mackeson to Wade, October 12, 1831. P. G. R.

34. 116/29. Government to Wade, September 20, 1832. P. G. R.

cause.³⁵ Still the Shah wavered.³⁶

To return to Abbas of Persia. A report got currency that one of his sons was to marry a daughter of Kamran, but that when he sought a passage through his territory, Kamran opposed him with force.³⁷ Through his servant (Ibrahim), Kamran informed Wade that he was determined to oppose the impending Persian attack on Herat, and hinted that that was the first move in a projected big Russian plan of advance upon India. Ibrahim acquainted Wade that his master had deputed him to establish friendly relations with the Government.³⁸

These sensational reports had a sudden effect on the Shah. His indecision vanished. He decided on an expedition, and once again started negotiations with Ranjit Singh for help, offering in return the acquittance of Koh-i-noor and acknowledgment of Sikh sovereignty on the right bank of the Indus.³⁹

To this the Maharaja wished to know the precise reactions of the British, and, therefore, proposed that the British and Lahore Governments should have an understanding about the Shah's movements, that if he advanced, it should be with the consent of both, but that if he was to be prevented from advancing that also should be with their joint consent,⁴⁰ the Maharaja having no confidence in the Afghans.⁴¹ The Governor-General replied that, in view of the Company's neutrality, "this

35. 138/20. Wade to Macnaghten May 11, 1832. P. G. R.

Wade, discussing the reasons for those offers of help to the Shah, wrote: "In considering these matter, it ought to be remembered that oriental nations are not moved by the same springs of action which regulate those of European nations on such occasions. The former have a reverence for royalty, the name and authority of those who have ruled over them." (*Ibid*).

36. Wade wrote to Macnaghten: "Notwithstanding these demonstrations (of support) the Shah has not, in my opinion, come to the resolution of undertaking the expedition..."—138/50. September 15, 1832. P. G. R.

37. 138/34. Wade to Macnaghten, August 2, 1832. P. G. R.

38. 138/53. Wade to Macnaghten, October 11, 1832. P. G. R.

39. 138/68. Wade to Macnaghten, December 13, 1832. P. G. R.

40. Fraser to Macnaghten, February 21, 1833, Letter No. 22 (Indian Paper's 1839, *ut supra*).

41. Wade to Government, December 31, 1832, quoted in Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

Government though it did not feel justified in prohibiting the movement of the Shah, has indirectly refused to afford him the assistance which he has repeatedly solicited in aid of his undertaking, and consistently with this view of the question, the British Government could not enter into any negotiation, either with the view of encouraging, or preventing, the designs of Shah Shuja", but that the Maharaja was at liberty to adopt any measures for his own security.⁴²

The Maharaja then agreed to advance the Shah money but on the condition that he should divide Sind with him, which offer the ex-King declined on the plea that he was not in possession of that country, and that it did not become of him to make a division of what belonged to another.⁴³ Wade was right when he wrote that nothing would induce the Shah to have a divided interest in Sind with Itanjit Singh as that would alienate the Sindhians. Ranjit Singh next offered even to instal the Shah at Kabul, but he being sceptical refused such offers. Thus the negotiations once again fell through.

About this time, the Company received friendly proposals from Dost Mohd. Wade criticised these adversely as he was somewhat partial to the cause of the Shah. A favourable consideration of Dost Mohd.'s proposals, opined Wade, would naturally throw the project of helping the Shah to the throne of Kabul into the background. Further, he argued that in case of Shuja's success, any disposition which they might now show to cultivate an alliance with Dost Mohd. would be embarrassing to the Government, but should the Shah unfortunately fail in his project, it might be impolitic to repel altogether Dost's overtures, as that would deprive them of the means thus presented of acquiring an influence in Afghanistan, which they might not hereafter have an opportunity of securing.⁴⁴ While agreeing with Wade, the Governor-General pointed out that the British policy towards the parties in Afghanistan was one of perfect neutrality, but at the same time there could be no objection to their cultivating

42. Macnaghten to Wade, March 5, 1833. Encl. reply to Fraser. Letter Nos. 23 and 24. (Indian Papers, 1839, *ut supra*).

43. 139/17. Wade to Macnaghten, March 27, 1833. P. G. R. Also 139/19. Wade to Macnaghten, April 9, 1833. P. G. R.

44. 139/1. Wade to Macnaghten, January 17, 1833. P. G. R.

the most friendly understanding with them all.⁴⁵ Thus the Government, at this time, was following a "safe" policy in respect of Afghanistan, though in the end, as we shall see, it resulted in the disastrous consequences of the First Afghan War. The best course for them, under the circumstances, would have been to discourage Shah Shuja in attempting the recovery of Kabul and to welcome openly Dost Mohd.'s overtures for he had been able to hold his own for the last seventeen years. By doing so they would have nipped in the bud what is known as the Peshawar imbroglio.⁴⁶

In the meanwhile, the Shah had applied to the British for an advance of six months allowance.⁴⁷ As the British viewpoint had already changed, he was sanctioned Rs. 16,000, *i.e.*, about four months allowance, and no warning was given against his returning this time.⁴⁸ Bentinck even "suffered Shah to raise an army of invasion under the shadow of British flag",⁴⁹ though Wade was instructed to declare that the British policy was one of complete indifference towards the project.⁵⁰

To secure Ranjit's tacit consent and pecuniary aid, the Shah offered to relinquish (in writing) all his claims to the territory north of the Indus, then actually under the Sikh Ruler.⁵¹ But the latter considered the Shah's prospective restoration without his help fraught with adverse consequences, for the Afghans, once consolidated under him, would try to retrieve what had been lost to the Sikhs.⁵² Hence Ranjit did accept to

45. 117/5. Macnaghten to Wade, March 19, 1833. P. G. R.

46. *Ide Chapter IX, infra.*

47. 138/65. Wade to Macnaghten, November 11, 1832. P. G. R.

48. 116/44. Macnaghten to Wade, December, 13, 1832. P. G. R.

49. Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, p. 78, and reference there cited.

Durand (*The First Afghan War*, p. 18) says: "Such an act could not fail in the East of being construed into a material aid and effectual countenance of the Shah's designs."

50. Macnaghten to Wade, March 5, 1833. Letter No 24, (Indian Papers, 1839, *ut supra*).

51. 139/5. Wade to Government, February 5, 1833. P. G. R.

52. Apart from the object of strengthening his position on the right bank of the Indus in the event of Shah Shuja's success, Ranjit had another motive. He wanted to forestall any exclusive views that the British might have about Afghanistan. "From the journey of

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sign : treaty with Shah Shuja on March 12, 1833.⁵³ It was a modified version of the one proposed by him in 1831.⁵⁴ It finally became the basis of the Tripartite Treaty of 1838.

According to the terms of this Treaty of 1833, the ex-Amir recognised Ranjit Singh's sway on the right bank of the Indus over the Kabul territories he had already conquered. Regarding Shikarpur and the territory of Sind lying on the right bank of the Indus the Shah undertook to abide by whatever might be settled through Wade as right and proper.⁵⁵

The Shah left Ludhiana with only a small force but soon his strength increased, and by September, 1833, it swelled to 10,000 men.⁵⁶ He paid his troops liberally and regularly and took great pains in disciplining them.⁵⁷ His plan was to assemble them at Shikarpur, and to receive there whatever assistance the Amirs would render him. From that place he

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Lieut. Burnes into Afghanistan and his subsequent correspondence with the Chiefs that he hoped to renew intercourse with them, as also from the interest of the British in Afghan affairs, Ranjit surmised that the British were contemplating political relations with that country, and he wished to establish a claim for himself in an occupation of any steps that the British might take to secure that object - Political Proceedings, December 2, 1834, No. 60, quoted in Sinha, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

53. 14/12 Wade to Macnaghten, June 17 1834 P. G. R.

54. See pp. 148-49, *supra*.

55. Atchison *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol. I pp. 4-6, foot-note. Also Indian Papers, 1839, *ut supra*, pp. 31-32.

This treaty, although drawn up on March 12, 1833, was not ratified by Ranjit Singh till August of the same year. It was actually kept from the knowledge of Wade till June, 1834, when its provisions became for the present nugatory. Wade pointed out both to the Shah and Ranjit the impropriety of introducing his name without consulting the Government—110/47, Wade to Macnaghten, June 1 1834 P. G. R.

Ranjit Singh did not insist upon obtaining from Ghazni the sandal wood gates of Somnath, he did not even insist on the prohibition of the slaughter of kine in Afghanistan. The stipulation that the Shah's heir-apparent should always attend the Maharaja with a force was also waived. See pp. 149-50, foot-note 26 *supra*.

56. 105/20 Mackeson to Wade, September 4, 1833. P. G. R.

57. *Ib. id.*

hoped to march towards Kandhar where he expected his Afghan adherents to muster.⁵⁸

He set off to Shikarpur towards the end of 1833. The Amirs placed the city at his disposal provided he would not retain it for more than 54 days. They promised to pay him Rs. 50,000 on the condition that he would make no further demands after the conquest of Kabul.⁵⁹

But once the city was under the Shah both sides began to distrust each other. The Shah did not consider himself to be bound by any obligation or time limit regarding his stay at Shikarpur and is reported to have said : "I consider the country of Amirs as my own, and it is my intention to fortify myself here so that when I move on to Kandhar and am successful, so much the better. But if I should be unsuccessful I have this place to return and reside in as my own home."⁶⁰ When the Amirs heard this "they at last thought it better to break with him at once than to put their means into his hands for their own more assured destruction."⁶¹ At the same time, a *wakil* arrived from Kandhar to ascertain whether the Sindhians intended to join the Shah or whether in accordance with the long friendship subsisting between them and the Barakzai Sardars, they intended to unite with them in repelling him.⁶² The Amirs asked the *wakil* in private whether in the event of a struggle Kohin Dil Khan (Ruler of Kandhar) would fight the Shah, or accept him as the lawful sovereign. The *wakil* replied, "You are aware of the deadly feuds existing between the Sardars and the descendants of Timur Shah since the latter took the life of Fattah Khan ; besides the country of Khorasan is as necessary to the Barakzai Sardars as the country of Sind is to the Amirs, and as they (the Barakzais) have ruled it as kings for the last fifteen years they will not hesitate to defend their right by swords."⁶³

58. 138/53. Wade to Government, October 11, 1832. P. G. R. Also Sohan Lal, *op.cit.*, Vol. III, pt. II, p. 163.

59. 139/50. Intelligence from Bahawalpur, August 4, 1833. P. G. R.

60. 105/20. Extract of a letter from Shikarpur. P.G.R.

61. Wade to Government, August 25, 1833, quoted in Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 203.

62. 105/20. Extracts of a letter from Shikarpur. P. G. R.

63. *Ibid.*

The answer shook the Amirs. They were virtually between two fires, while the Shah's attitude steadily stiffened. He refused to evacuate Shikarpur. The matters came to a head, and fighting took place between him and the Sindhians⁶¹ The Shah, after success, firmly established himself at Shikarpur, and seized the whole territory dependent on it. This broke the back of the Amirs' resistance and they submitted. They begged that he "should give up Shikarpur to them 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."⁶² A treaty, accordingly, was signed with the Amirs which replenished the empty military chest of the Shah who next proceeded towards Kandhar with greatly enhanced prestige and with his soldiery in high spirits. His success now was thought to be a foregone conclusion.⁶³ The Amirs on their part lamented their discomfiture, more especially because their weakness became apparent to the foreigners (the British) who would act more boldly in the matter of the Indus trade project.⁶⁴ This episode undoubtedly illustrated the pusillanimity which formed so prominent a feature of the character of the Amirs. They, at first, tried

61. A severe battle was fought at a place seven kos from Shikarpur on January 9, 1834, in which the Amirs lost thirteen hundred and seventy horses and foot besides sixty other chiefs of Mir Rustam and the Hydrabad Amir, and loss on the Shah's side was also considerable.

(105/29. Mackeson to Wade, January 18, 1834. P. G. R.)

65. 105/33 Mackeson to Wade, March 12, 1834. P. G. R. Also 140/25. Wade to Government, April 1, 1834. P. G. R.

66. 105/39 Mackeson to Wade, April 10, 1834. P. G. R.

67. For this disaster the Amirs had none but themselves to blame, "it was on their invitation that Shah Shuja commenced his expedition and having invited and allowed him to remain in Shikarpur their best policy would have consisted in giving the sum of money that he at first demanded to enable him to move on Kandhar, by which the Amirs would have got rid, at a moderate price of a visitor whose continued presence and warlike preparations could not but be pregnant with danger to them."
(140/7. Wade to Macnaghten, February 1, 1834. P. G. R.)

to bully the Shah into quitting Shikarpur, but when he, knowing the people he was dealing with, showed firmness they made an abject submission.

The Shah left Shikarpur on his expedition against Kandhar on March 6, 1834. Leaving him on his marches we now turn to affairs in Afghanistan.

As early as June, 1832, news had reached Kabul of the Shah's intention to sally forth from Ludhiana,⁶⁸ and the people had risen in his favour, and several chiefs had thrown off their allegiance to Amir Dost Mohd.⁶⁹ The Amir who at that time laboured under certain difficulties was filled with anxiety. He had little money to raise the troops and bear the expenses of war.⁷⁰ Then there was no unanimity among the Barakzai brothers. To quote but one example, "He wrote to Sultan Mohammad Khan of Peshawar to join him to consult the means of meeting the threatened invasion of the Shah. Sultan Mohammad's reply was that he had often solicited his brother Dost Mohammad Khan to assist him in resisting the encroachments of the Sikhs, but he had always withheld his support and now he might extricate himself from his own difficulties in the best way that he could."⁷¹ As a matter of fact, Sultan Mohammad and his brothers at Peshawar looked to Ranjit Singh for refuge.⁷² Thus the Amir had at a time three to contend with—Shah Shuja, his own Peshawar brothers and the Sikhs. At the same time, he suspected that the Shah was moving under the sanction, if not with the support, of the British whose zealous friend, Nawab Jubbar Khan, lived in the city of Kabul itself.⁷³ Sardar Mehar Dil Khan was under this Nawab's influence, and Sultan Mohammad Khan and Rahim Dil Khan were ready to follow his lead.⁷⁴ In these circumstances, the Amir thought of humouring the British. On November 15, 1832, he told Mir Kiramat Ali, their news-writer at Kabul, that he wished with all his

68. Masson, *Narrative of Various Journeys*, Vol. III, p. 87.

69. 130/36. Wade to Macnaghten, June 9, 1833. P. G. R.

70. Masson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 88.

71. 139/15. Wade to Macnaghten, July 15, 1833. P. G. R.

72. *Ibid.*

73. 139/30. Wade to Macnaghten, December 12, 1832. P. G. R.

74. 140/6. Wade to Macnaghten, February 1, 1834. P. G. R.

heart to be on terms of friendship with them. If they required, he would attend at Ludhiana with four or five thousand men and serve them with all his might. He also wrote to Wade expressing his desire to form an alliance with the Government.⁷⁵ He invited the King of Bokhara and the Chief of Kunduz also to form a friendly alliance with him.⁷⁶

Leagued together for his ruin, his brothers were urging him towards the close of the year 1833 to march to Kandhar, to oppose Shah Shuja who had not yet left Shikarpur.⁷⁷ Dost Mohammad knew that their real purpose, in case he left Kabul, was to afford the Chiefs of Peshawar an opportunity of moving upon the city. Hence he decided not to go to Kandhar, but to strike first where it was most necessary. On December 31, 1833, he marched on Jallalabad and replaced his nephew, Mohammad Zaman Khan, the Chief of that place, by his favourite son, Mohammad Akbar Khan.⁷⁸ This created an open schism between Dost Mohammad and his brothers which was further widened by one of the brothers being killed in a skirmish. The Barakzai brothers had hitherto never shed the blood of any of their family but that tradition was now broken.⁷⁹ At any rate, the possession of Jallalabad was a serious set-back to his brothers' machinations. About this time, too, the Amir deprived the Sayeds of Koonor of their possessions. All this redounded to his unpopularity, it being universally suspected, that he intended depriving every proprietor of his estate.

On the other hand, the Shah made rapid marches to Kandhar. A party of troops from Shahzada Kamran approached for his help, so that the Sardars of Kandhar were alarmed by this two-sided invasion.⁸¹ Dost Mohammad, having heard of the Shah's progress, returned to Kabul. At his back, Haji Khan Kakar, ever ready to change sides, deserted him and joined Sultan

75. 139/30. Wade to Macnaghten, December 12, 1832. P. G. R.

76. 139/45. Wade to Macnaghten, July 26, 1833. P. G. R.

77. 140/27. Wade to Macnaghten, April 10, 1834. P. G. R.

78. 140/14. Wade to Macnaghten, March 5, 1834. P. G. R. Also

108/89. Burnes to Macnaghten, December 3, 1837. P. G. R.

79. 140/30. Wade to Macnaghten, April 23, 1833. P. G. R.

80. *Ibid.*

81. 140/27. Wade to Macnaghten, March 5, 1834. P. G. R.

Mohammad Khan.⁸² All was not smooth at Kabul either. Nawab Jabbar Khan, having formed a party for Dost's overthrow, was in communication with the Shah. He had also sounded Wade that in case the British sympathised with the Shah's venture, he, too, would completely fall in with him.⁸³ Dost Mohammad also enquired from Wade if Shah Shuja was being supported by the British. The Political Agent replied significantly enough that the Government had taken no part in the expedition, but that the Shah had its best wishes.⁸⁴

Kohin Dil Khan and other Sardars of Kandhar, having collected 81,000 horsemen, had advanced to the Pishin valley to confront the Shah on the way, but, finding themselves deserted by the bulk of their men, retreated to Kandhar.⁸⁵ Shah Shuja invested the place while the Kandhar Chiefs sent frantic messages to Dost Mohammad for help. On April 15, the latter had received the following letter from them: "Come as quickly as you can, if you cannot come yourself immediately, send one of your sons with one or two thousand *sawars*, for there is no delay in Shah Shuja's approach."⁸⁶ Summoning his troops from Jalalabad, the Amir asked the Peshawar brothers for assistance. At the same time, he assured the Kandhar Sardars that his son, Mohammad Akbar Khan, would leave Kabul with 2,000 *sawars* and four pieces of artillery for their help.⁸⁷ The Peshawar brothers, however, had neither the power nor the will to assist him.⁸⁸

Dost himself marched from Kabul on April 17,⁸⁹ and reaching Qila Azim Khan, situated about five *kos* from Kandhar,

82. *Ibid*

83. 140/36. Wade to Macnaghten, May 17, 1834. P. G. R.

84. Mohan Lal, *Life of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan*, Vol. 1, pp. 157-58. Also Ferrier, *op. cit.*, pp. 200-201.

It was an impolitic action on the part of Wade who certainly exceeded his powers in writing such a reply.

85. 140/32. Wade to Macnaghten, May 7, 1834. P. G. R.

86. 104/36. Wade to Macnaghten, May 17, 1834. P. G. R.

87. *Ibid*.

88. They had not the will, because they were jealous of him, not the power, because Ranjit Singh's pressure had made itself felt at Peshawar.

89. 140/36. Wade to Macnaghten, May 17, 1834. P. G. R.

halted to study the situation. Concluding that his safety lay in engaging his antagonist without delay,⁹⁰ he opened an attack on June 30, and was joined by the Kandharis the next morning. A severe action resulted in Shah Shuja's utter rout. As Dost Mohammad triumphantly put it, the Shah then became a wanderer in the wilderness of adversity.⁹¹

Shah Shuja intended to try his fortune once again with Kamran's help, and escaped towards Herat.⁹² Many men of influence there promised even to depose Kamran in his favour. While at Ladakh, the Persians invited him to Tehran with promises of help. But Kamran's help failed to come up to the Shah's expectation. Hence he had to return to Shikarpur, reaching there in January, 1835.⁹³ There he entered into an agreement with the Amirs, promising to abandon all claims to Shikarpur, and they bearing his expenses back to Ludhiana.⁹⁴

Looking into the circumstances of the Shah's discomfiture, it appears that, in spite of his known personal incapacity, the result was a surprise to all the parties. He himself ascribed it to the impetuosity of his disciplined Hindustani infantry which gave up their place of vantage in their anxiety to engage the enemy.⁹⁵ The fugitives who arrived at Ludhiana soon after,

90. 140/60. Wade to Macnaghten, July 25, 1831. P. G. R.

91. 140/51. Wade to Macnaghten, July 27, 1831. P. G. R.

92. 110/60. Wade to Macnaghten, July 25, 1831. P. G. R.

93. 111/11. Wade to Government, January, 12, 1835. P. G. R.

94. 106/13. Pottinger to Wade, February 25, 1836. P. G. R.

95. 140/86. Wade to Government, October 21, 1831, enclosing a letter from the Shah after his defeat. P. G. R.

In this connection the account of the battle given by Latif is interesting, according to which "it was the Shah himself who from his elephant ordered Mr. Campbell to 'Chapao', or rush forward to the attack. The latter remonstrated and represented that the circumstance required a bold stand and steady fighting, and that it was no time for breaking the ranks. The Shah, however, was headstrong, and rashly repeated the words 'Chapao! Chapao', but to the astonishment of all, with the same breath that he urged his troops forward, he gave the order to his *mahabat* to turn his elephant round, which having been done he fled panic-stricken".—*History of the Punjab*, p. 463.

The brute of the battle was borne by the two battalions of Hindustanis commanded by Campbell. Dost Mohd. was so pleased

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ascribed it to the defection of the Durrani zamindars who had earlier joined the Shah, and to the shortage of munitions.⁹⁶ The various contemporary accounts also show that "Shah Shuja yielded his antagonist a victory without suffering defeat. He seemed to have made up his mind to lose the battle before he commenced it,"⁹⁷ fleeing and leaving his equipage to his amazed victors. Be it as it may, one thing is certain, *viz.*, that the resourcefulness and spirit which he displayed at the commencement of his expedition deserted him in the hour of his trial, when a little intrepidity and self-possession would, in all probability, have secured him success.

(Continued from page 161)

with his gallantry and of his men that he employed him and other survivors in his own service—140/63. Wade to Macnaghten, August 13, 1834. P. G. R.

96. 140/73. Wade to Macnaghten, September 17, 1834. P. G. R.

But this seems to be no explanation as it is believed that the Shah had ample resources and that his army was well equipped.

97. 141/11. Wade to Government, January 12, 1835. P. G. R.

CHAPTER IX

RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN

In 1809 the tottering Durrani monarchy received a death blow at Neemla where Shah Shuja was defeated by the combined forces of Mahmud Shah and his able minister, Fateh Khan. After Shah Shuja's exit from Afghanistan, Fateh Khan set to the task of restoring peaceful conditions and governing the turbulent tribesmen in the name of his voluptuous master. The touch of his strong hand was soon felt for the Amirs of Sind and Baluchistan returned to his allegiance and even the unruly Hazara tribe was reduced to obedience.¹ Fateh Khan determined to crush the opposition from Kaimur which, though a part of the Afghan dominions since 1750 had, of late, ceased to acknowledge the authority of Kabul. Ata Mohammad Khan who had been appointed the Governor of the province by Shah Shuja, did not submit to the new Ruler.² But before Fateh Khan could act in this matter trouble arose in another quarter and needed his attention.

The British had set a limit to Ranjit Singh's penetration towards the east and the south the only direction left to his adventures being the north western region. By 1810 he had extended his dominions up to the banks of the Indus and by 1812 the year when Fateh Khan decided to lead an expedition to Kashmir. Ranjit's plans also matured against that valley. Jammu and the subordinate principalities south of Kashmir had already been reduced by the repeated Sikh encroachments. Thus the plans of Ranjit and the Kabul Wazir came into conflict. Both realised that if they ranged against each other, the prize of Kashmir could not be won by either of them. They, therefore, made a

1 See *A History of Afghanistan*, Vol. I, p. 359.

2 Karhavi Jal, *Ranjit Nama*, p. 284.

part for joint expedition,³ the Sikh Ruler promising to supply 10,000 Sikhs to the Afghan army in return for a promise of nine lakhs of rupees. This resulted in success in so far as the valley was reduced. But Fateh Khan then refused to pay the stipulated sum and thereby provided Ranjit Singh with an excuse to encroach upon other Afghan territory. In 1813, he succeeded in occupying Attock by intrigue and bribery.⁴ He thus secured the gateway through which the Afghan hordes often poured into the Punjab. It commanded the difficult country around and along the upper course of the river Indus. Fateh Khan fretted and fumed, and later, leaving his brother, Azim Khan, in charge of Kashmir, himself marched towards Attock and laid siege to it.⁵ The Sikh Ruler sent Mokham Chand for its relief. A fierce action was fought at Huzro on June 26, 1813, in which both sides lost heavily, but the Sikhs emerged victorious. This was the first real victory of the Sikhs over the Afghans and was of utmost significance as the power of the latter collapsed altogether on the eastern side of the Indus which Ranjit Singh consolidated under his own rule.⁶

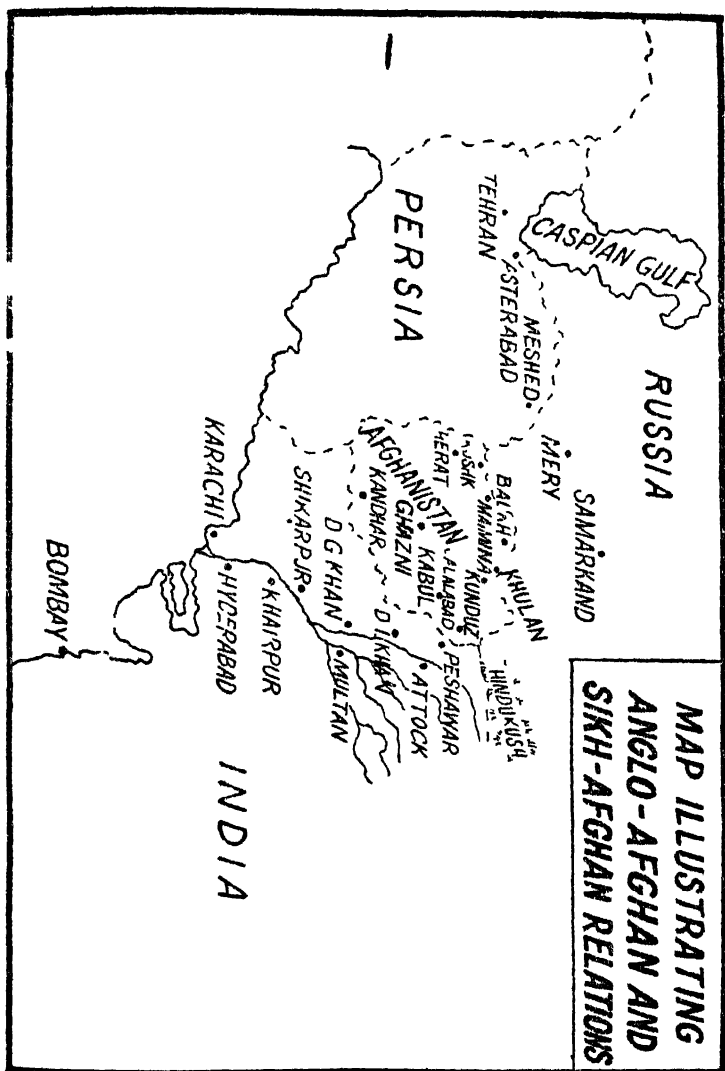
In 1818, the kingdom of Kabul relapsed into confusion. This happened as the result of the assassination of Fateh Khan at the hands of Prince Kamran, son of Mahmud Shah. Kamran, who had grown jealous of the minister's unbounded influence over his father, formed a conspiracy and seized the person of Fateh Khan at a banquet, blinded him and subsequently flayed him alive.⁷ Thus a masterful personality was removed from

3. According to Kanhaya Lal, (*op. cit.*, p. 283) the pact was made at the initiative of Fateh Khan. He says :—

وزیرے دتیم حان بلند اقتدار نہ بد پرشہ کبابش اختیار
سفیرے فرستاد نزدیک شاه بملزلہ دوست جست راه

(The Vazir, Fateh Khan, of lofty rank who wielded a great influence over the ruler of Kabul sent an envoy to the King (Ranjit Singh) thus finding a way into the pavilion of friendship).

4. Burnes. *Travels into Bokhara*, etc., Vol. II, pp. 301-3.
5. Kanhaya Lal, *op. cit.*, p. 297.
6. Burnes, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 303-4.
7. Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ul-Tvarikh*, Daftar II, p. 227.



Afghanistan. The atrocious outrage shocked everybody. The Barakzai brothers raised the standard of revolt, and were joined by the tribesmen in their thirst for vengeance. Mahmud precipitately fled to Herat.⁸ The Sadozai dynasty thus practically came to an end.

Taking advantage of this commotion in Kabul, Ranjit Singh conducted his first campaign on the right bank of the Indus, advanced to Peshawar and installed his old ally, Jahandad Khan, as its governor.⁹ According to Sohan Lal, Dost Mohammad expressed willingness to hold Peshawar as a dependency of Lahore, but the Maharaja did not agree. Soon after, Yar Mohammad and Dost Mohammad occupied the city, but Ranjit did not attempt any immediate measure of retaliation.¹⁰

The Maharaja next occupied Darband and Mankerah on the Indus border.¹¹ In 1821, he took possession of Dera Ismail Khan. His aim was to occupy the border towns before annexing Peshawar—a wise plan suggested to him by the French officers. In 1822, he possessed himself of Dera Ghazi Khan, and placed the Beloch inhabitants under the rule of Ventura and later of Sawan Mal. By 1825, he occupied Bannu, Tank and the Marwat region, and thus came to command one of the most direct roads to Kabul from where he could threaten its ruler. In November, Fakir Aziz-ud Din advanced to Peshawar and exacted tribute from Yar Mohd. Khan. This brought down from Kabul, Mohd. Azim Khan Barakzai, who was in power there at the time. The Sikh and the Afghan armies met at Naushera in March, 183¹² The Sikhs won the day, Kaye thinks, solely by means of bribery.¹³ Azim Khan took to his heels, but not until the desperate resistance of the

8. Burnes, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 307-8.

9. 144/69. Wade to Government, October 7, 1837. P. G. R.

The territory of Peshawar comprised, besides the city, some districts which were inhabited by tribes called the *Arabs*, who were hostile to the Sikhs. Its net annual revenue was a little less than five lakhs of rupees. (*Ibid.*)

10. *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 238-39.

11. 144/70. Wade's notes, pp. 291-304. P. G. R.

12. Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 301-4.

13. *History of the War in Afghanistan*, Vol. I, p. 117.

Afghans had caused consternation among the Sikhs.¹⁴ Like that of Huzro, this battle also proved of far reaching consequence. Whereas Huzro established the Sikh supremacy eastward of the Indus, the victory at Naushera extended it beyond the river to Peshawar.¹⁵

From 1823 to 1826, when Dost Mohd. became supreme in Kabul, the relations between the Sikhs and the Afghans saw no change. During this period, Ranjit watched intently the progress of British troops in Burma, while Dost Mohd. endeavoured to consolidate his authority at Kabul. Before the battle of Naushera, Peshawar was held jointly by Dost Mohd. and Yar Mohd. After this event the Maharaja entrusted the city solely to the latter, on a promise of sending 15 horses and other chief products of Peshawar annually. But this tribute was seldom forthcoming without military action. In fact, the Maharaja's hold over Peshawar remained nominal until its further subjugation and annexation in 1834. He viewed the distracted state of the Afghans as favourable to the consolidation of his own dominions, and promoted their dissensions by restoring Peshawar though twice conquered.¹⁶

In 1827, a serious danger to the Maharaja's authority over the trans-Indus area grew in the insurrection of the adventurer, Syed Ahmad, at Attock. Instigating the inhabitants to declare a religious war against the Sikhs,¹⁷ the Syed challenged the authority of Yar Mohd., and in 1830, even occupied Peshawar. It became necessary for the Maharaja to counter his growing influence, and he sent an army under Generals Hari Singh Nalwa and Ventura¹⁸ for the purpose. A regular and prolonged campaign had to be waged until his adherents were induced to desert him and he himself was slain in a smart engagement in 1831.¹⁹

14. 140/33. Wade to Macnaghten, May 10, 1834. P. G. R.

15. 108/88. Mackeson to Wade, November 16, 1837. pp. 441-42. P. G. R.

16. Wade to Metcalfe, August 1, 1827. (Quoted in Chopra, *The Punjab as a Sovereign State*, pp. 283-309).

17. 95/69. Wade to Metcalfe, March 3, 1827. P. G. R.

18. 98/14. Wade to Hawkins, September 13, 1830. P. G. R.

19. Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab*, pp. 145 sqq.

In spite of the French officers and the Sardars frequently urging the Maharaja after 1823 to take Peshawar under his direct administration, the latter refrained from taking this step until 1834, as he distrusted his ability to maintain his hold over that distant country and its fierce population between whom and the Sikhs there existed proverbial antagonism. An appeal from the Afghan ruler of Peshawar or Kabul, or a *fatwa*, (spiritual mandate from a priest), was sufficient to inflame the tribe into revolt or a *Jihad*.²⁰ The shrewd and politic Maharaja would, therefore, proceed warily in this matter, even though he must ultimately subjugate and hold Peshawar effectively. He did not choose to do so till he felt sure of his strength or ability.²¹ This was after 1834, when the fortunes of Durrani monarchy underwent a further change.

The disgrace of having submitted to the Sikhs at Naushera preyed upon the mind of Azim Khan, and he died broken hearted charging his son to wipe off the disgrace from his name by carrying fire and sword into the territories of "the infidels"²² But Habibullah Khan inherited none of his father's mettle, thus allowing a period of discord and anarchy to ensue.²³

It was now the turn of Dost Mohd. to seize power at Kabul, Ghazni and Jullalabad, together with the major portion of the vast treasures left by Azim Khan. Another of the Barakzai brothers, Sher Dil Khan, established an independent chiefship at Kandhar, while the three others, Sultan Mohd. Khan, Pir Mohd. Khan and Said Mohd. Khan, retained power as vassals of Ranjit Singh in Peshawar and the adjoining country. Herat was still held by Kamran, son of Mahmud Shah, and a direct descendant of Ahmad Shah Abdali.²⁴

This distracted state of the Durrani Empire induced Shah

20. 140/37. Wade to Macnaghten, May 19, 1834. P. G. R.

21. After the decisive battle of Noushera in March, 1823, Ranjit Singh returned to Lahore leaving Hari Singh Nalwa with 12,000 men to command on the frontiers from his headquarters at Haripur (Hazara). Beyond this show of authority, the Maharaja stayed his hands for the time being, and left the control of Peshawar with Sultan Yar Mohammad Khan and his brothers.

22. Burnes *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 315-16.

23. Kaye, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 119.

24. 111/44. Wade to Macnaghten, forwarding Burnes' report, P. G. R.

Shuja to form fresh plans for the recovery of his ancestral throne. As we saw in the last chapter, he was invited to Kabul where he met with a miserable failure.

Before embarking on his expedition, the Shah had entered into an alliance with Ranjit Singh. By one of its articles he had relinquished his right to whatever territory the Maharaja was in possession of on either bank of the Indus.²⁵ Ranjit Singh, on his part, grew apprehensive that Shah Shuja might set aside that alliance after his success against Dost Mohd.²⁶ In fact, the Shah himself is said to have remarked that "agreements are of no use, it is power that matters, that the document would remain in his pocket and he would certainly take back the Koh-i-noor from Ranjit Singh and wear it."²⁷

So the Maharaja resolved to forestall Shah Shuja in regard to Peshawar. The Maharaja was equally sceptical about the loyalty of the Barakzai brothers there. He concluded that the right course would be to seize Peshawar before the tributary Sardars, Sultan Mohd., Pir Mohd., and Syed Mohd., could tender their allegiance to the victor,²⁸ whether it would be Shah Shuja or Dost Mohd. Besides, Dost Mohd. then being involved with Shah Shuja in Kandhar, there was little likelihood of the Barakzai Sardars of Peshawar getting help from Kabul.

Accordingly, the Maharaja sent an army under the nominal command of his grandson, Kunwar Nau Nihal Singh, while the actual direction lay with Sardar Hari Singh and the French Generals Ventura and Court.²⁹ The Lahore army took up a

25. *Vide* p. 154, *Supra*.

26. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 204.

27. Amar Nath, *Zafarnama-i Ranjit Singh*, quoted in Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, p. 80.

28. Political Consultations, December 2, 1834, No. 68. Wado to Macnaghten January 17, 1834. I. R. D.

Peshawar was tributary of the Maharaja since 1823, and about this time was ruled by Sultan Mohammad Khan, Pir Mohammad Khan and Syed Mohammad Khar.

29. 140/33. Wado to Macnaghten, May 10, 1834. P. G. R.

Wado's account is corroborated by Sohan Lal who writes: "Nau Nihal Singh was made to leave for Peshawar (March 1, 1834) after
(Continued on page 170)

position at Chamkani early in April, 1834. The Barakzai Sardars, scenting danger, had already sent their families away to Michni, and were prepared to evacuate the town should it become necessary.³⁰ The excuse for the expedition was found in the delay in securing payment of the usual tribute by Sultan Mohammed.³¹ Now Ranjit Singh demanded an enhanced tribute or the entrance of his troops into Peshawar.³² Curiously enough, the plea urged for the increase of the tribute was the presence of Kunwar Nau Nihal Singh for the first time at the head of the army.³³

This demand was complied with, but Hari Singh Nalwa had definite instructions to seize the town. Accordingly, he sent word to Sultan Mohammed to leave Peshawar and retire to the garden of Ali Mardan Khan, as Prince Nau Nihal Singh desired to pay a visit to the city. The Barakzai Sardar, who already had sent his family away and was keeping his horses ready to be saddled at a moment's notice,³⁴ left the town, and fled to Sheikhan, a village at the foot of the hills on the Bara river. The Barakzais put up no defence and except, perhaps, for a little skirmishing with the party covering the retreat of Sultan Mohd. and Pir Mohd., the Sikhs had to do no fighting. They occupied Peshawar on May 6, 1834.³⁵ The Maharaja entrusted its administration to the Nalwa Sardar and the French officers.³⁶

(Continued from page 169)

the grant of a robe of honour, and pieces of jewels . . . he was instructed by the Sarkar to conduct the affairs of the place in consultation with Sardar Hari Singh and Ventura Sahib." *op. cit.*, Daftar III, Part II, p. 197. (This was the first command entrusted to the Prince, when he was 14 years of age.)

30. 140/37. Wade to Macnaghten, May 19, 1834. P. G. R.

31. Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Daftar III, Part II, p. 197.

32. 140/30. Wade to Macnaghten, April 23, 1834. P. G. R.

33. 140/37. Wade to Macnaghten, May 19, 1834. P. G. R.

34. Latif, quoting an eye witness, writes: "It was ridiculous, about twice or thrice a day, to see the servants (of the Barakzai Sardars) running out with the saddles on their heads and returning when they discovered that the alarm which had been given was a false one".—*History of the Punjab*, p. 468.

35. 140/33. Wade to Macnaghten, May 10, 1834. P. G. R. Also

140/38. Wade to Macnaghten, May 22, 1834. P. G. R.

36. 140/33. Wade to Macnaghten, May 10, 1834. P. G. R.

In order to know the British reaction, the Maharaja, resting his action on his treaty with Shah Shuja,¹⁷ informed Wade of his brilliant success. The British had no justification in protesting against this conquest, and yet Wade was allowed to offer congratulations only in his personal capacity, but was to add nothing on behalf of the Government.¹⁸

The news of the loss of Peshawar stung Dost Mohd. so badly that he flung his troops desperately against the Shah's forces. Shah Shuja was completely routed,¹⁹ and Dost's mortification at the loss of Peshawar was partially soothed. In the first flush of victory, he issued challenges to the Sikh Ruler in the most vaunting language²⁰ and called upon him to yield Peshawar in return for a tribute, or else he would march upon that city with a united force of all the Afghans, and retrieve the result that had been inflicted upon them by driving the Sikhs to the other bank of the Indus.²¹

7 110/38 Wade to Macnaghten May 22, 1834 P. G. R.

38 117/43 Government to Wade, June 27, 1834 P. G. R.

* See p. 161, *supra*.

9 110/46 Wade to Government June 15, 1834 P. G. R. Also

Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. III Part II p. 216.

40 Kanhaya Lal, *op. cit.*, p. 485.

نور پشاور سپہ بہا	مکر از راه لطیف و وحید سہا
رساید بدرگاہ نسا جہاں	کہ ہر سال اندراندہ سلطان خان
نمازد پہلواحتہ اہل ہوس	وگر از غضب القاسم بگوش
سوم خار تو صحن دلزار او	ہندم کمر بہر بہر بیکار او
کہ بجز دامن چار، نیدرد نہ	کنم جمع لسکرز اہل جہاں
قیامت نمودار ہر جا کدم	بہر چار سو فتنہ بر پا کدم

(If by way of favour, benevolence and generosity you (Ranjit Singh) will surrender Peshawar to us again, then we will send to the ruler of the world (Ranjit Singh) the tribute of Saman Khan (which he used to pay). If out of haughtiness the weak-wake Maharaja does not pay heed to my request I (Dost Mohd.) will dig up my leins for battle against you and be a thorn in the court yard of your rose garden. I will muster an army of the readers who know nothing except fighting unto death. I will create tumult on all sides and it will present a scene of resurrection everywhere.)

((continued on page 172))

Ranjit, Singh, however, was not the man to be cowed down by such threats. In a bold reply he wrote that "if the Barakzais flushed with their late victory over the Shah entertain any hostile designs against Peshawar, by the blessing of God, they would greatly repent of their presumption and witness such a battle as they have never yet seen."⁴¹

This reply was highly mortifying to the Amir, who, in turn responded on September 18, 1834, with a declaration of war. The Maharaja followed with an equally defiant rejoinder, warning Dost to prepare himself for a "warm reception" from the Sikhs, and reminding him of the fate of his elder brother.⁴²

Dost Mohammed made great preparation for measuring his strength with the Sikhs.⁴³ But his resources were too limited to admit of any large expansion of his forces. His ingenuity rose with the difficulty of his situation, and he planned to give to the struggle the character of a religious war or 'Jihad',⁴⁴ as that would muster the largest numbers under his banner. To prosecute a holy war the leader must be able to read the 'Khutba'

(Continued from page 171)

Dost Mohd. also wrote threateningly from Kandhar to Nau Nihal Singh at Peshawar: "Please God as soon as we have arranged the administration of affairs here, joined by all our brothers, and attended by our troops and artillery, scattering thunder, we shall proceed to Kabul and then settle such points with you as require explanation." (140/61. Wade to Macnaghten, July 27, 1834 P. G. R.)

41. 140/65. Wade to Government, August 17, 1834. P. G. R. Also Kanhaya Lal, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

میر سرکش را شکستیم ما عدد را به زنجیر بستیم ما
اگر در دست دواهد ز حرص و هوا ده گردید بدی فوج جنگ آزا
بپاید که ما هم بد اسروریم بهیدای بدشمن مقابل شوم

(Ranjit Singh's reply: We have broken the heads of the refractory chiefs and have often fettered the foes. If Dost (Mohd.), out of avarice and greed desires to give battle with the small force he has, let him come as we also proceed in the direction to face the enemy in the battlefield).

42. 140/81. Wade to Macnaghten, September 25, 1834. P. G. R.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Mohan Lal, *Life of Amir Dost Mohd. Khan*, Vol. I, p. 168.

and strike coin in his own name.⁴⁵ Accordingly, his counsellors urged him to proclaim himself a King. But this he would not do, partly because of the fear of the opposition of his brothers, and partly due to the lack of means for keeping up the title. Indeed, Sultan Mohammed was so jealous that he left Kabul at the mere mention of the assumption of royalty by Dost.⁴⁶

On the evening of December 4, 1834, Mir Vaiz, the chief Mulla of Kabul, proclaimed Dost 'Amir-ul-Mominin' (the leader of the Faithful) in the presence of chiefs and citizens.⁴⁷ The next day he assumed the proud title of "Ghazi", and struck coin bearing the inscription :

امیر دوست محمد دایم جنگ جهاد کوہ دستہ . نبرد سگہ - نصیرش حق باد

which means, 'Amir Dost Mohammed, having formed the resolution of fighting for his religion, has struck the coin. May God preserve him.'⁴⁸

Thus all preliminary conditions of carrying on 'Jihad' against the Sikhs were completed, and served their purpose so well that "a number of fanatics joined him."⁴⁹ His expense increased with the influx of *ghazis*, and he feared it might rise beyond his means in case they swelled to 1,00,000 men or

45. 141/6. Wade to Macnaghten, February 3, 1835. P. G. R.

46. Molan Lal *op cit*, Vol. I, p. 169

47. 141/6. Wade to Macnaghten, February 3, 1835. P. G. R.

Harlan's version is that at first the title was mere Amir, and 'Ul Mominin' was added afterwards, as "the title of Amir is simply political but as politics always forms a part of the religion of Mohammedans, the Prince's flatterers soon added to the semi-royal distinction 'Ul Mominin,' and he became, in colloquial acceptation, "Commander of the Faithful", as they euphoniously style the Khalfah or Chief of the Muhammadan world". (*A Memoir of India and Afghanistan*, p. 123).

48. 141/6. Wade to Macnaghten, February 3, 1835. P. G. R.

The coin of Kabul since the change of dynasty was struck in the name of *Sahib-i-Zaman*, that is the Ruler of the day.—Harlan : *op. cit.*, p. 123.

49. Political Consultations, May 18, 1835. No. 51. Wade to Government, April 30 1835. L. R. D.

more.⁵⁰ Indeed, the Amir's sources were extremely limited.⁵¹ He had to resort to the "good old rule" of the Afghan princes of imposing a rough and arbitrary levy.⁵² He extorted a loan of a lakh and a half of rupees from Shikarpur merchants at Kabul,⁵³ and ordered the Governors of the districts to grab money from other wealthy men. The country was thus made to look "an appalling picture of extortion and torture."⁵⁴ as the widespread spoliation included both the "infidels" and the Muslims alike. Sebaz Ali, the Suni merchant of Kabul, had to forfeit his life under torture, and Nazir Ullah had to run to Kunduz to escape confiscations.⁵⁵ All this enabled the Amir to build a treasure of 12 lakhs.⁵⁶

While collecting money in his own state in this manner he had applied to the neighbouring states for support in troops and money. But he received nothing but refusals and evasive replies.⁵⁷ Mohammad Murad Beg of Khunduz replied: "I take no interest in your affairs."⁵⁸ The Kandhar Chiefs whom he had recently delivered from Shah Shuja's menace said that they could lend him no support while the Shah was wandering in the vicinity of Kandhar and while Kamran's attitude was

50. Political Consultations, August 7, 1835. No. 36. Masson to Wade, (Encl.) April 30, 1835. I. R. D.

51. Political Consultations, May 18, 1835. No. 51. Wade to Government, April 30, 1835. I. R. D.

52. Kaye, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 133.

53. Political Consultations, May 18, 1835. No. 51. Wade to Government, April 30, 1835. I. R. D.

54. Mohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 171-72.

55. Political Consultations, May 18, 1835. No. 51. Wade to Government, April 30, 1835. I. R. D.

56. 141/6. Wade to Macnaghten, February 3, 1835. P. G. R.

There is some vagueness about this amount, as in his letter of April 28, 1835, Masson wrote to Wade that the amount of money raised by the Amir to meet his expenses was expected to be three lacs and a half only, one lakh in cash and two and a half lakhs in promises—141/39. Wade to Macnaghten, April 28, 1835. P. G. R. Enclosing Masson's report.

57. Pol. Cons., May 18, 1835, No. 52. Masson to Wade, February 20, 1835. I. R. D.

58. *Ibid.*

likewise threatening⁵⁹ The Amirs of Sind were also approached, and their reply was that "they were ready to pay the annual tribute for the country of Hyderabad as fixed by Fateh Khan on conditions that Amir Dost Mohammed Khan should send them an *ahad nama* (written promise), engaging that in the event of success he would be content with the amount of tribute as fixed by the Vazir, that he would respect the integrity of Sind, that in case of Sind being invaded he would furnish them with *koomak*."⁶⁰ Dost, however, had the wisdom to see that these demands were meant merely to amuse him. He had despatched letters to various chiefs of Bangash and Derajat and to the Khan of Bahawalpur. From these, of course, he had little to expect. The only chiefs who responded favourably were Mir Alam Khan of Bajore and Fateh Khan Yusufzai of Panjshir, the former hoping to be able to lead five to six thousand men, and the latter actually mustering 10,000 men, all eager for the fight.⁶¹

Before using the arms of the Faithful, however, the Amir tried to secure his objective through British intervention. On January 17, 1833, he had already proposed an alliance with the British at the time when Shah Shuja was making his preparations for advancing towards Kandhar.⁶² The British reply had been that "its policy towards the different chiefs contending in Afghanistan was one of perfect neutrality."⁶³ Now, when confronted with another foe Dost tried again to invoke their intervention. At the end of 1834, he wrote letters to Wade and the Governor General, complaining of the seizure of Peshawar by the Sikhs, declaring his resolution to wage a religious war against them and applying for the British support.⁶⁴

Nawab Jabbar Khan's son, Abdul Ghias Khan, who had been sent to Ludhiana ostensibly to receive the benefit of

59. *Ibid.*

60. *Ibid.*

61. *Ibid.*

62. 139/1. Wade to Macnaghten, January 17, 1833. P. G. R. See p. 1, 3 *supra*

63. 177/14 Macnaghten to Wade, March 19, 1833. P. G. R.

64. 141/1 Wade to Government, January 4, 1835. P. G. R.

English education, but in reality to serve as a means of communication with the Government, was made an intermediary for negotiation. The Amir tried to prejudice the British authorities against the Sikhs by urging that his nephew who was their guest had been ill-treated by the Sikhs on his way through the Punjab. It was alleged that the Sikhs designed to risk his life by giving him an unstable boat for crossing the Indus at Attock.⁶⁵ Mir Karamat Ali, the British news-writer at Kabul, also wrote in a tone which was considered objectionable. He exhorted the Government to reduce the Sikhs "to the position of dogs."⁶⁶ The Amir referred to the passage of the letter addressed to him by the Governor-General some time ago to the effect that "His Lordship would give him a proof of the interest which he took in his welfare when the necessity and occasion arose."⁶⁷ "I write this letter", wrote Dost Mohammad, "to remind His Lordship that the time has now arrived, should he come to our aid, he will make us from generation to generation the well wishers of the British Government." The shrewd Afghan did not miss the opportunity to play on the British fears of Russia. He reminded the Governor General that the

65. The Amir wrote to Wade: "On his (Abdul Ghias Khan's) arrival at Peshawar the authorities stationed there on the part of Ranjit Singh obliged him to wait on them at their camp, and when crossing the Indus provided him with a damaged boat so that his life might be risked. He passed, however, with only the loss of some of his horses and baggage, and a man who was drowned in the river. When he reached Lahore the Maharaja himself extorted three horses and took a *razinama* from him." But Wade's comments were that Abdul Ghias Khan made no mention of the alleged attempt and he (Wade) could not get reparation from Ranjit Singh for an act the intention of which he could not prove.—Political Cons. March 23, 1835. No. 25. Wade to Macnaghten, January 4, 1835. I R. D.

66. Karamat Ali seems to have involved himself in Afghan politics and was dismissed from his post. Masson was appointed in his place.—Wade to Macnaghten, March 19, 1835. P. G. R. Also 141/24. Wade to Macnaghten. March 20, 1835. P. G. R.

It was later on known that it was Karamat Ali who had fabricated the story of the rotten boat to Abdul Ghias Khan, otherwise why should the *chobdar* and other servant, of Nau Nihal Singh have crossed the river in the same boat? (141/26. Wade to Macnaghten, April 2, 1835. P. G. R.

67. Political Consultations, March 23, 1835. No. 25. Wade to Government, January 4, 1835. T. R. D.

Russians were approaching Afghanistan, and that the Persians were trying to conquer Herat and said that he was capable of rendering a great service by checking their progress which it was impossible for the Sikhs and the people of Hindustan to do, owing to the severity of the climate and the mountainous nature of the country.⁶⁸

This approaching danger from Russia, Wade was led to view with increased concern. The Shah of Persia was thoroughly Russian in views and the scheme of seizing Herat was hatching. Wade appreciated the critical and embarrassing situation of the Afghan ruler, and on the basis of information supplied to him by Masson, proposed that the Government should take advantage of the situation. It was, he wrote, a unique opportunity for the British to extend their influence in Afghanistan.⁶⁹

Wade, however, knew that the Maharaja would resent British intervention because he considered his sway over Peshawar a right gained by conquest. He, therefore, suggested that the Government should not intervene immediately to settle the question of Peshawar, though he felt at the same time that the Maharaja could not possibly object to an alliance between the Amir and the Government. And once such an alliance had been cemented with Dost Mohd., argued Wade, an attempt could be made to terminate the Sikh Afghan dispute without giving umbrage to either party.⁷⁰

Wade's fertile brain provided several reasons to convince the Maharaja that the conquest of Peshawar was futile for Sikh interests.⁷¹ He argued that the city had been conquered in the

68. *Ibid.* (Encl.)

69. Wade wrote to Macnaghten: "Assuming that it is the desire of the Government to establish a friendly connection with Afghanistan, the present is one of those opportunities of securing our object which we ought not to neglect. Whether adverting to the designs of Russia or the commercial advantages expected from the navigation of the Indus, the British Government had a direct interest in availing itself of the first opportunity that may be afforded whether by Shah Shuja, Barakzai or Ranjit Singh of extending our influence to that quarter."—141/9. February 13, 1835. P. G. R.

70. 140/96. Wade to Macnaghten, November 21, 1834. P. G. R.

71. Sohail Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 515.

hope that success would attend the Shah's arms, and that its annexation would silently be passed over, but his failure entailed troubles for Ranjit Singh. Again, the Maharaja's authority in the city was limited,⁷² and its possession by the Sikhs was regarded by the Afghans a threat to their national existence. Hence the Maharaja might escape anxiety and hostility attending its occupation. In the event of Dost Mohd.'s success, it could be anticipated that the Muhammedan subjects of the Maharaja would make common cause with the Amir and raise the standard of revolt there. Finally, the climate of the country did not suit the Sikhs and insubordination prevailing in the ranks might result in a disgrace.⁷³

The British influence in Afghanistan could be strengthened, observed Wade, by recognising Dost Mohd., as the only chief in Afghanistan. The British might, therefore, accede to Dost Mohd.'s wishes in so far as to declare the intention of deputing an officer to him, previously intimating this to Ranjit Singh and inviting him to become a party to his recognition. Thus a confederation would be formed for preventing the introduction of foreign influence in Afghanistan.⁷⁴ Such a mediation would not be offensive to the Maharaja because it would save his reputation with Dost Mohd., who was at Jallalabad inciting the neighbouring tribes to attack the Sikhs.⁷⁵

All that Wade strove for was such an understanding with the *de facto* sovereign of Afghanistan, be that Shah Shuja (in 1834 or 1838), or Dost Mohd., as would prevent the introduction of foreign influence in that country and predispose him to adopt British interests in case of remote contingencies, without in any way sacrificing the friendship of the Sikh Ruler, which the Political Agent considered of the utmost importance.

But the Governor-General did not accept Wade's suggestion of sending an officer to Kabul. He was asked not to hold any particular correspondence with one of the contending parties which might give umbrage to the other. The suggestion of British mediation in the then state of affairs between the Sikhs

72. 144/80. Wade to Government, September 21, 1837. P. G. R.

73. *Ibid.*

74. 141/9. Wade to Macnaghten, February 13, 1835. P. C. R.

75. 141/25. Wade to Macnaghten, April 15, 1835. P. G. R.

and the Afghans was also rejected as it would inevitably lead to consequences of the most seriously embarrassing nature.⁷⁶

One might be allowed to offer a conjecture that if Wade's proposals were then accepted, the British might have secured permanently the goodwill of the Amir without losing that of 'the old and faithful ally', Ranjit Singh, for Dost Mohd. had not yet made the restoration of Peshawar to him a *sine qua non* (which he did later after his ignominious defeat at the hands of the Maharaja resulting in implacable enmity between the two nations) of a settlement with the British. Ground would thus have been prepared to encounter the "Russian Bear" with the help of Dost Mohd. and the futile First Afghan War might have been averted.

Wade was asked to communicate to Dost Mohd., in reply to his solicitations, that he should cast off all those false illusions which he might have entertained to the effect that the Government was at this back.⁷⁷ He was, however, not to discontinue negotiations but "to cultivate a friendly understanding with the Afghan Chief and people."⁷⁸ This was in keeping with the *de facto* policy pursued by the British at the time towards Afghanistan. Wade's replies to the Amir's letters were henceforth written in a vague language, so that he continued hoping all the time.⁷⁹

If Dost Mohd. was entreating the British for help, the clever Sikh monarch, too, was not at all idle in the game of diplomacy. To frighten the Barakzais, he used his trump card

76. 115/14. Maenaghten to Wade, April 20, 1835. P. G. R.

77. 115/14. Maenaghten to Wade, April 20, 1835. P. G. R.

78. 116/11. Maenaghten to Wade, March 23, 1835. P. G. R.

79. Wade wrote to the Amir: "His Lordship's letter expresses the sincere desire of the British nation to cultivate a close friendship with the Afghans and, in fact no question in which your nation and the exercise of mutual friendship are concerned is without its interest to him..., 'whomsoever seekth shall find'... You have every reason to confide in the profession made by my Government of its disposition to promote amicable relations between the two nations... It remains with you to give affect to them. You may rest assured that no exertions shall be wanting on my part in the promotion of this object..." (112/30. Wade to Government, June 7, 1835. P. G. R.)

by asking Shah Shuja, to send his agent to Lahore and directed his grandson, Nau Nihal Singh, to write to Dost Mohd. that if he would not desist from hostile designs, the Maharaja would send an expedition to place Shah Shuja on the Afghan throne.⁸⁰ Wade was right in thinking that the Maharaja was merely bluffing and using the Shah as a scare-crow to frighten the Barakzais, and as such it might have caused great uneasiness in the mind of Dost Mohd., and that was what Ranjit Singh wanted.⁸¹

Ranjit Singh hastened his military preparations. Dost's movements had greatly alarmed him and he had sent a force of about 25,000 strong towards Peshawar. In the middle of April, 1835, the two hostile forces stood arrayed against each other on their respective borders and their engagement seemed a matter of time.⁸² Both sides hesitated to take the offensive but with different motives. Dost Mohd. was awaiting a reply from the English; while Ranjit Singh made for delay, because he preferred to gain his end, if at all possible, through diplomacy "a sphere in which he was always at his best."⁸³ The latter deputed Harlan, the American adventurer in his service, and Fakir Aziz-ud-Din, apparently to negotiate with the Amir, but actually for bribing his Sardars. This proved a good stroke of policy by which Dost Mohd. was completely taken in. Apart from Ranjit Singh finding time to join his camp, Harlan and Aziz-ud-Din succeeded admirably in seducing Sultan Mohd.⁸⁴ who had found refuge with his brother, at Kabul at the time when Peshawar was occupied by Hari Singh eight months earlier. The Amir's design of seizing the envoys themselves was thwarted by Sultan Mohd. to whose care they had been committed.⁸⁵

80. 141/31. Wade to Macnaghten, April 17, 1835. P. G. R.

81. *Ibid.*

82. 141/25. Wade to Macnaghten, April 15, 1835. P.G.R.

83. 141/36. Wade to Macnaghten, April 25, 1835 P.G.R.

84. Cunningham *op. cit.*, p. 215.

"The ejected tributary", observes Cunningham, "listened the more readily to the Maharaja's proposition of a fat *jagir* as he apprehended that Dost Mohammad would retain Peshawar for himself, should Ranjit Singh be beaten".

85. A detailed account of this plot is given in Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 219 *sqq.*

In the meantime, Ranjit had despatched Gulab Singh and Avitabile towards Kohat, while Ventura had come to join the Maharaja at Attock. It was then that some detachments were pushed forward to surround Dost Mohd. from the remaining sides to bring his camp within the range of the Sikh artillery,⁸⁶ and to leave him no option but to fight or retreat into the tribal hills. The Amir and his men already depressed by Sultan Mohd.'s defection decided on the latter course on the night of May 11, 1835, taking along with them the whole of their force and baggage.⁸⁷ Thus was the great expedition, so promising at the outset, brought to an infelicitous close. The political intrigue of the Sikh Ruler causing treachery in the domestic circles of the Amir resulted in the breaking up overnight a vast concourse of the Afghans, which was being viewed by the Sikh rank and file with so much dismay.⁸⁸

Ranjit Singh gained a bloodless victory which greatly enhanced his prestige. Dost Mohd., on the other hand, was so shaken as to abandon temporarily his worldly ambition and immerse himself into the study of the Koran.⁸⁹ His flight without striking a blow humiliated him a great deal in the eyes of the Afghan chiefs, particularly when he had adopted the title of Amir-ul-Mominin. He lost much following as his conduct was looked upon as a national disgrace.⁹⁰

Sultan Mohd. and his brothers, Pir Mohd. and Syed Mohd., now entered into an engagement with the Maharaja whereby they relinquished all claims on Peshawar and agreed to pay him a tribute in return for the districts of Hashtnagar, Kohat and Nakko which the Maharaja granted them.⁹¹ They engaged

86. 111/44. Wade to Macnaghten, May 19, 1835. P. G. R.

87. *Ibid.*

88. The Amir ascribed his discomfiture to three causes :

- (a) His *ghazis* unaccustomed to the report of guns wavered when they heard the discharge from the Sikh artillery ;
- (b) His brothers betrayed him ; and
- (c) He had no money.

(Wade to Macnaghten, January 7, 1836. Political Consultations. Enclosing Dost Mohd.'s letter of October 31, 1835, I. R. D.

89. Sykes, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 397.

90. 141/20. Wade to Macnaghten, November 11, 1835. P. G. R.

91. 141/47. Wade to Macnaghten, May 23, 1835. P. G. R.

to ascertain Dost Mohd's future plans.⁹² Leaving Peshawar in the charge of Ventura with a large force the Maharaja returned to Lahore.⁹³

It took Dost Mohd. some time to overcome his remorse and to be up and doing again in organising his military and other resources. The Sikhs, on the other hand, employed this respite in strengthening their newly won position beyond the Indus. Towards the middle of 1836, they were completing a fortress at Shabkadar, which would give them command of one of the most practicable routes across the mountain ranges for transport of artillery from Peshawar to Jallabad. Soon after, the construction of another fort at Jamrud, at the very mouth of the Khyber Pass, was undertaken by General Hari Singh Nalwa, who had all along advocated a forward policy towards Kabul. It was a constant eyesore to the Afghans who were always on the look out to destroy it.

In the beginning of 1837, the year of Nau Nihal Singh's marriage, one Mr. East, previously in the Company's service, passed from Jamrud on his way to Jallalabad to see Mohd. Akbar Khan, the Amir's son. He saw the condition of the fort, and instigated this chief to attack Jamrud where the Sikh defences were weak yet awhile.⁹⁴ In April, Akbar Khan, gathering around his banner the distinguished Afghan elements from near Ali Masjid, made ready for attack. The actual quarrel was picked up by preventing the Sikhs from taking water from a stream near the fort.⁹⁵ It soon developed into the historic engagement of April 30, 1837.⁹⁶ The sanguinary fight which took place between the Sikhs and Afghans resulted in heavy casualties on both sides.⁹⁷ Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa, one of the greatest Sikh commanders,

92. 141/81. Wade to Macnaghten, September 2, 1837. P. G. R.

93. 141/47. Wade to Macnaghten, May 23, 1835. P. G. R.

94. 108/89. Mackeson to Wade, November 15, 1837. P. G. R.

95. Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, Part IV, p. 393.

96. 143/7. Wade to Macnaghten, May 18, 1837. P. G. R.

97. 143/7. Extracts from Lt. Wood's letter to Wade enclosed in the latter's despatch to Macnaghten, May 18, 1837. P.G.R.

The number of Sikhs killed and wounded was 6,000 out of a total of 12,000. The number of the Afghans killed and wounded amounted to 11,000 out of 32,000.

was fatally wounded,⁹⁸ an almost equal number of trophies in the form of guns and other sineqs of war fell into the hands of both parties, and yet it is clear from the records that victory lay with the Sikhs as their adversaries could not hold the field, but had to retire precipitately into the hills. The fort and its surroundings were left completely in Sikh hands.⁹⁹

This was the last battle which the Sikhs under Ranjit Singh were destined to fight with the Afghans. The Sikh rule was now firmly established throughout the Peshawar valley. The beginning had been made by the occupation of the Attock fort in 1813, and the annexation of the trans-Indus area was completed twenty years later. The frontier of the Sikh kingdom was pushed to the furthest limit up to the foot of the hills where it was inexorably fixed by this victory of 1837.

The relations between the Sikhs and Afghans after this date are interwoven with Anglo-Afghan and Anglo-Sikh relations, and will be studied in the following chapters in the new context, of which the culminating phase was the conclusion of the Tripartite Treaty of 1838.

95.

چو آگاه ز من قصه شد شهر یار ز قوط الم شد دانش به قرار
شد از دیده جان و دل اشکرینز بیاد هری سنگم اهل ستیز

Kanhaya Lal, *op. cit.*, p. 501.

[When the king (Ranjit Singh) became aware of this news, his mind became upset with the excess of grief. He shed tears from the eyes of soul and heart in the memory of Hari Singh, the veteran warrior.]

99* 143/7. Wade to Macnaghten, May 18, 1837. P. G. R. Also Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pt. IV, p. 400.

CHAPTER X

THE ANGLO-AFGHAN RELATIONS

Until 1834, as we have already seen, the policy pursued by the British Government towards the affairs in Afghanistan had been one of neutrality. Advances from Dost Mohd. for friendly alliance were declined, and no more interest was taken in Shah Shuja's enterprise of 1834 either than advancing him a third of his annual stipend. Nevertheless, a closer interest on the part of the British in the affairs of that region grew increasingly necessary after 1834. For Dost Mohd. too, the need of an understanding of some kind with them became imperative after the capture of Peshawar by the Sikhs. The loss of influence which he suffered, rankled deeply in his mind,¹ and he felt he could not rest contented until he retrieved that loss.² The recovery of Peshawar, in fact, became the primary end of his subsequent policy.³ Mistrusting his own strength at this juncture, he was turning his thoughts towards foreign aid and the British naturally appeared to be the one power towards whom he could reasonably turn.⁴ There existed several *contrecamps* in

1. 141/44. Wade to Macnaghten, May 10, 1835. P. G. R.

2. 141/1. Wade to Macnaghten, January 1, 1835. P. G. R.

3. In insisting upon the relinquishment of Peshawar by Panjit Singh, Dost Mohd. was giving expression to the most deliberate convictions and sentiments of his countrymen. Peshawar was the 'graveyard of their forefathers', hence a land of sacred memory. Its subjection to the Sikhs remained to them a symbol of national dishonour. The Sikh rule was a system of tyranny, *Bang* was prohibited, *Grants* was placed in Muslim mosques, cow was proclaimed a sacred animal and the soldiery indulged in disgraceful excesses. Their presence was a thorn in the hearts of the Afghans, and constantly reminded them of their humiliation at the hands of the *Kaffirs*. — Memorandum on the Political Power of the Sikhs beyond the Indus. (Parl. Papers, 1859. Correspondence of Sir Alexander Burnes with the Governor General of India during his mission to Kabul in 1837-38. Ungarbled edition.)

4. 119/22. McNeill to Macnaghten, January 2, 1837. P. G. R.

his way. among which the existence of "the old pretender" at Ludhiana, and the close friendly understanding between the English and Ranjit Singh were the foremost. His circumstances, however, warranted his attempting to surmount these obstacles, even though, as McNeill said, they must deter him from seeking British friendship. His earlier disappointment over his unfruitful effort to win such friendship had been keen, and it was further intensified when following the Sikh capture of Peshawar a series of letters which he addressed to Wade inviting British mediation invoked little response.⁵ Though he did not relinquish the pursuit of his objective of a British alliance, their aloofness constrained him in September, 1835, to pose that he was turning towards Persia.⁶

That this was a mere diplomatic feint was well understood in English circles. As McNeill pointed out, it would require an unaccountable credulity on Dost Mohd.'s part to suppose it possible for Persia to afford him protection from the Sikhs and "to believe that the Shah (of Persia) can sincerely desire" to strengthen his power.⁷ Therefore, Wade judged rightly that the underlying intention was to stimulate British jealousy which in turn might create a new interest in his affairs.⁸ At all events, in May, 1836, Dost Mohd. addressed a letter to Lord Auckland congratulating him on his assumption of the office of Governor-General, and soliciting his mediation in the Sikh-Afghan dispute.⁹

Auckland took up the reins of office at an 'inauspicious moment'. Like their predecessors a generation earlier, the English politicians of the day were nervous about the influence of a foreign power in Persia. This time it was not France but Russia, which was steadily gaining influence in Persia. Russia's land hunger had already brought her into conflict with Persia in 1811, and the uneven war between them had terminated in the Treaty of Gulistan (1813), "by which Persia ceded to Russia all

5. 142/46. Wade to Macnaghten, June 7, 1835. P. G. R.
6. 112/11. Masson's report of September 20, 1835, enclosed in Wade's despatch to Macnaghten of February 13, 1836. P. G. R.
7. 119/25. Macnaghten to Wade, June 12, 1837. P. G. R.
8. 145/50. Wade to Macnaghten, October 28, 1837. P. G. R.
9. 142/48. Wade to Macnaghten, May 16, 1836. P. G. R.

her acquisitions on the south of the Caucasus and agreed to maintain no naval force on the Caspian Sea.¹⁰ Persia after suffering this humiliation entered into a close alliance with the British by the Treaty of Tehran (1814). It committed the British to furnish Persia with men and money in case she was invaded by any European power.¹¹ From the Treaty of Gulistan up to the year 1826, when Dost Mohammad emerged as an all-powerful ruler of Kabul, there was at least outward observance of peace between Russia and Persia. But in 1826 hostilities again broke out between them. Canning, the British Foreign Secretary, not being in favour of helping Persia, put forward the excuse of her having been the aggressive party and allowed her to suffer a defeat. The result was the Treaty of Turkomanchai, signed in 1828, by which Persia ceded to Russia, the Khanates of Erivan and Nakhichevan, besides accepting her frontier line as dictated by Russia. The Persians now concluded that their interests would best be served by cultivating the friendship of the Russian Emperor whose main object was to use Persian resources overtly for furtherance of his own ends, without bringing himself into collision directly with other Powers. Conscious of its weakness Persia yielded to this influence, and, in due course, became inevitably a facile tool in Russian hands. Consequently during this period the English influence declined seriously at the Persian Court. It soon became apparent that the Persian encroachments upon the countries between her frontiers and India, instigated as they were by the Russian Government, were calculated to threaten the security of India.

In 1835, Palmerston sent Ellis as Ambassador to the court of Tehran, his mission being to "warn the Persian Government against allowing themselves to be pushed on to make war against Afghans."¹² Ellis's reports excited greater fears for he wrote "the Shah (Mohd. Shah) has very extensive schemes of conquest in the direction of Afghanistan, and, in common with all his subjects, conceives that the right of sovereignty over Herat and

10. Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan*. Vol I, p. 140.

11. *Idem*, pp. 144-45.

12. Palmerston to Ellis, July 25, 1835. Letter No. 10 (Indian Papers, 1839, Correspondence relating to Persia and Afghanistan).

Kandhar is as complete now as in the reign of the Suffavean dynasty.¹³ His next report was that the Shah would undertake expeditions in the spring against Herat, Kandhar and the Baluchis.¹⁴

In the beginning of 1836, it became fairly certain that the Shah of Persia was meditating an attack upon Herat.¹⁵ Ellis sounded a warning note and affirmed that Persia's progress to Herat was "tantamount to advancement of Russia to the very frontiers of our Indian Empire."¹⁶

At the time Herat was ruled by Mirza Kamran, the last of the Sadozais, who after having been ejected by the Barakzais from Kabul and Kandhar had maintained his precarious hold on the city.¹⁷ But his feuds with the Barakzais had never ended and both the families were always planning each other's destruction.¹⁸ If at all an excuse was needed by Mohd. Shah to attack Herat, it was furnished by Kamran's cruel and impolitic action in selling his Shiah subjects as slaves. The Shiah Emperor led his forces on Herat about the middle of 1836.¹⁹ though after proceeding some distance towards the city he postponed his move until next year.²⁰

Dost Mohd., as we have seen, had already leaned towards Persia and now Kohin Dil Khan, the Chief of Kandhar, who was constantly threatened by Kamran,²¹ also followed suit.

13. Ellis to Palmerston, November 13, 1835. Letter No. 11, (*Idem*).

14. Ellis to Palmerston, December 24, 1835. Letter No. 12. (*Idem*).

15. Ellis to Palmerston, January 15, 1836. Letter No. 15. (*Idem*).

16. Memorandum of Ellis. (*Ibid*).

Strategically situated in the west of Afghanistan, Herat has been with abundant justification known to be "the gate of Afghanistan", lying in the only flat and comfortable road across Central Asia to the Indian frontier, it has been with no less justification regarded as the first stage in an invasion of India. (Burnes to Macnaghten, October 20, 1837. Memorandum on the commercial views of Russia in Central Asia—Parliamentary Papers, 1859, *ut supra*).

17. Burnes to Macnaghten, February 7, 1838. "Memorandum on Herat" (Parliamentary Papers, 1859, *ut supra*).

18. Leach to Burnes, without date. "Notice on Kandhar" (*Idem*).

19. McNeil to Palmerston, September 12, 1836. Letter No. 31. (Indian Papers 1839, *ut supra*).

20. McNeil to Palmerston, December 12, 1836. Letter No. 32 (*Idem*).

21. • 142/14. Wade to Macnaghten, March 9, 1836. P. G. R.

Ellis reported that Kabul²² and Kandhar²³ were seeking Persian alliance. The Secret Committee getting alarmed at these reports sent a despatch on June 25, 1836, urging the Governor-General to endeavour to enter into commercial and political relations with Afghanistan, and to adopt "any other measures that may appear to you to be desirable in order to counteract Russian influence in that quarter."²⁴ Though in the form of a suggestion this despatch laid down the policy for Auckland clearly and squarely.

In 1834, the Persian King prepared to lead a new expedition. In June, McNeill declared his conviction of Russia's concurrence in the design to have been confirmed by "all the Persians with whom I have conversed, including the Prime Minister."²⁵ An urgent need had, therefore, arisen for the British to check this menace as best as it could. But Palmerston's representations to St. Petersburg²⁶ and McNeill's in Tehran²⁷ failed alike in checking the enterprise. Ghorian capitulated on November 30, 1837, and the Shah's army advanced to invest Herat. The study of large scale maps, assured by Nesselrode to be an infallible cure for "British nervousness and Russian Herattitude," was meanwhile a poor consolation for Palmerston. The course deemed necessary by the British Government to meet its responsibility had so far failed to realize its end.

We now turn to a different scene of parallel efforts which

22. Ellis to Palmerston, February 25, 1836. Letter No. 18. (Indian Papers, 1839, *ut supra*).
23. Ellis to Palmerston, April 11, 1836. Letter No. 19 (*Idem*).
21. Secret Committee to Governor-General, June 25, 1836. Quoted in Colvin, *John Russell Colvin*, pp. 86-88.
25. 119/47. McNeill to Palmerston, June 1, 1837. P. G. R. This important letter of McNeill establishing the truth of an assertion made in his despatch No. 18 of 1836, that the Russian Minister Plenipotentiary had urged the Shah to undertake a winter campaign against Herat, which fact was denied by Nesselrode, has not yet been published. Its omission from the Indian Papers, 1839, *ut supra* cannot be explained.
26. Palmerston to Earl of Durham, January 16, 1837. Letter No. 31 (Indian Papers, 1839, *ut supra*).
27. McNeill to Palmerston, February 24, 1837, enclosed in 119/26. Macnaghten to Wade, June 12, 1837. P. G. R.

during all these years was being enacted by the British authorities in India. Lord Bentinck in his time had gone so far as to appoint Kiram Ali and Masson as news-writers at Kabul.²⁸ Besides, he had left an important minute on the Russian menace. After admitting that the state of Afghanistan of that time presented no cause for alarm, he had pointed out the growing influence of Russia over Persia thus: "From the days of Peter the Great to the present time the views of Russia have been turned to the obtaining of the possession of that part of Central Asia which is watered by the Oxus and joins the eastern shores of the Caspian." He further wrote: "the line of operations of Russo-Persian army to advance upon Herat is short and easy. From that point, Russia may proclaim a crusade against India, in which she would be joined by all the warlike and restless tribes that formed the overwhelming force of Timur. The distance between Herat and Attock is 1,032 miles. The Afghan confederacy, even if cordially united, would have no means to resist the power of Russia and Persia. They probably would make a virtue of necessity and join the common cause, receiving in reward for their co-operation the promises of all the possessions that had been wrested from them by Ranjit Singh, and expecting also to reap no poor harvest from the plunder of India. But however, this may be, it will be sufficient to assume the possibility that a Russian force of 20,000 men fully equipped, accompanied with a body of 100,000 horse, may reach the shores of the Indus."²⁹ These were the views of Bentinck in 1835, when the only danger apprehended was the establishment of Russo-Persian influence in Afghanistan by forcible means and when the alliance between Persia and the Barakzais was a danger wholly unforeseen. Wade visualized the gravity of the situation if Herat fell, for then Persia could and would extend her influence over Kabul and Kandhar, thus aggravating the danger. But it could be warded off. Wade had an ingenious suggestion up his sleeves. "The British Government had in its power at any time by the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of Kabul in concert with Ranjit Singh, and the establishment which would ensure of a confederacy of the States on the

28. Mohan Lal, *Life of Amir Dost Mohd Khan*, Vol. I, p. 218.

29. Minute of Bentinck, March 13, 1835. Reproduced in Boulgor, *Lord William Bentinck*, pp. 174 sqq.,

Indus to counteract any designs inimical to its interests from westward."³⁰ He urged that the Maharaja had often expressed his readiness to join such a league, and the Amirs of Sind had already invited the Shah to try his fortune, which showed that they too would not be averse to his cause under the British auspices.³¹ Wade thus indicated the policy which was actually followed two years later, but the Governor-General, at this time, did not pay any serious attention to it and contended himself with merely obtaining full information about affairs beyond the Indus.

Ranjit Singh, meanwhile, was busy extending his dominions across the Indus. He occupied Tank and Bannu in the middle of the year, 1836³² and, a month later, Dera Ismail Khan,³³ thus completing the line of authority on its right bank.³⁴ Commenting on the capture of these places, Wade expressed a fear that "considering the turn which events have taken since the overtures of Dost Mohammad Khan inviting us to interfere in his quarrel with the Sikhs, should nothing occur to strengthen the present government of Kabul and the life of the Maharaja be prolonged another year, it will not surprise me to find, bold as the attempt may be regarded, that the Sikhs have reached Ghazni and fulfilled the prophecy of their law-giver in recovering the sandal portals which Mahmud (of Ghazni) despoiled from the temple of Som Nath."³⁵ Wade was averse to Sikh expansion towards Afghanistan, for he felt, that it was neither in the interest of Ranjit nor of his Government to provoke Dost Mohd. too much at the time when he was trying to form an alliance with his Western neighbours.

At Kabul, Dost Mohd. had grown impatient of the delay in

30. 142/36. Wade to Macnaghten, June 7, 1836. P. G. R.

31. 142/36. Wade to Macnaghten, June 7, 1836. P. G. R.

32. 142/42. Wade to Government, July 7, 1836. P. G. R.

33. *Ibid.*

The Maharaja's officers alleged that Sher Mohammad Khan, the tributary Chief of Dera Ismail Khan, was having treasonable correspondence with Shah Shuja, and that a letter from the former to the latter had fallen into their hands. Wade, however, considered this letter to be a forgery.

34. 142/46. Wade to Government, July 13, 1836. P. G. R.

35. 142/46. Wade to Government, July 13, 1836. P. G. R.

receiving a reply to his overtures to Auckland. He sent for Masson and complained that "the Government at Calcutta considered him unworthy of their notice, that he could not account for their neglect of him, that he had done all on his part to come to an understanding with them, but had received not the slightest encouragement from them, and that he had only one wish that the business be brought to a close."³⁶ Masson informed the Governor-General of Dost Mohd.'s impatience.

On August 22, 1836, the Governor-General, at long last, sent a reply to Dost Mohd. in which he declared interference in the internal concerns of other States to be against the practice of the Government, but apprised the Amir of his intention "to depute some gentleman to your court to discuss with you commercial topics, with a view to our mutual advantages."³⁷ This was just one more stone in an edifice whose foundation had been laid in 1832, when the scheme for opening the Indus to commerce was initiated by treaties with Sind and the Punjab. But the influences to which such a mission would from the start be subject appeared strong enough to transmute its alleged purpose into one definitely political. These were in essence -- the Russian spectre, Persia's Herat campaign, the Sikh-Afghan feud, and Dost Mohd.'s apparent leaning towards Persia and his repeated applications for British mediation.³⁸

36. 142/48 Wade to Macnaghten, July 19, 1836. P. G. R.

37. 107/10. Governor-General to Dost Mohd., August 22, 1836. Letter sent through Wade. P. G. R.

38. 107/13. Macnaghten to Wade, September 5, 1836. P. G. R.

Though Auckland was so anxious to emphasize the commercial nature of the mission, it becomes evident from subsequent events that his intention from the beginning was to make commerce a cover for politics.

Mohan Lal rightly says; "the disguised word for politics is commerce, and commerce is the only thing which expands the views and policy of territorial aggrandisement". (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 300-1)

Trotter observes regarding this mission: "The project of a commercial mission to a country which had no commerce worth mentioning, which was shut off from India by mountain-ranges guarded by war-like and plunder-loving tribes, was meant to cover some ulterior, though possibly, harmless design" (*The Earl of Auckland*, p. 37).

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Having decided on a mission to Dost Mohd. Auckland looked round for the proper man. Reputation won by Burnes by his recent travels into Bokhara recommended him. Whilst employed on a mission to Hyderabad, he received instructions to make his way up the Indus to Kabul and negotiate a commercial treaty with its ruler. He was at the same time to make careful observations on all interesting subjects. On his staff were to be Robert Leech, John Wood and P. B. Lord. Mohan Lal also was to place him self under his orders.³⁹ The Ludhiana Agent was urged "to explain particularly to Ranjit Singh that Burnes' mission is strictly of a commercial character and its object is to make known to the merchants residing beyond the Indus the measures which have been adopted with a view to the establishment of the trade formerly carried on by that river."⁴⁰

Burnes left Hyderabad on November 26, 1836. Leaving him on the way to Kabul we might examine how the Sikh Afghan relations were shaping after the battle of Jamrud. Enraged by the death of his general, Hari Singh Nalwa Ranjit Singh led a strong army towards Peshawar and carried fire and sword wherever he went. He crushed all insurrectionary elements

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Durand describes the nature of the mission. "Nominally commercial, the mission was in fact one of political discovery, and its real object was to sound the state of affairs in the countries to which it was deputed" (*The First Afghan War*, p. 31).

Burnes himself wrote "Various hints and letters, together with the chain of events now in progress, have served to convince me that a stirring time of political action has arrived" (*Mission, Narrative of Various Journeys in Baluchistan, Afghanistan, and the Punjab*, Vol. III pp. 134-37).

39. 167/13. Macnaghten to Wade, September 5, 1836. P. G. R.

The mission was given no authority to make replies in case specific political propositions were made to it, but simply forward them through Wade to the Government. The British though anxious to see peace established on the borders of their dominions did not want to commit themselves to any definite promises. The two Chiefs must come to a spontaneous agreement. They believed that the best means of resistance to aggression "lay in peace, independence, acknowledgment and respect of mutual rights, confined social compact and a sense of common interest between the Sikhs and the Afghans".—119/18. Macnaghten to Burnes May, 15, 1836. P. G. R.

40. Macnaghten to Wade, September 5, 1836. P. G. R.

mercilessly.⁴¹ He sent every soldier he could spare to Peshawar,⁴² and there was every possibility that provoked by the imprudent demonstrations of Dost Mohd., he might institute offensive operations, and although the Sikh position in Afghanistan was none too strong yet Ranjit Singh "may not be without the hope of bringing Kabul and ultimately perhaps Kandhar under his supremacy."⁴³ At the same time, there was the fear of the proposed expedition of Kamran against the Kandhar chiefs, who in turn were instigating the Shah of Persia to make an attack on Herat.⁴⁴

The Government was convinced that it was not conducive to its interests to have a state of hostilities on the frontiers of India, which compelled the Afghan chiefs "to place themselves in dependence on the court of Persia, and thus smooth the way for the advance of the arms and influence of that power into their country."⁴⁵ Wade was, therefore, instructed to inform Ranjit Singh that the Government could not view his bellicosity with indifference as long as there was any hope of affecting a reconciliation with the Amir.⁴⁶ Wade, accordingly brought home to the Maharaja the futility of holding Peshawar in the face of such vigorous opposition, and carrying on interminable wars against the Afghans.⁴⁷ He condemned the ill advice of his counsellors who were for continuance of hostilities, and who goaded him on to further conquests. He advised the Maharaja to abandon hostile designs against the Amir in the interests of

41. Kanhaya Lal, *Ranjit Nama*, p. 502,

همه مفسدان شر اندیز را کد بودند با شور شر بجا بجا
شهنشاه عالم که تیغ کرد بزود، زیشان برآورد کد

(All the evil-minded mischief mongers who were creating disturbances every where, the World Ruler (Ranjit Singh) put them to sword, reducing them to dust).

42. 143/69. Wade to Government, May 13, 1837. P. G. R.

43. 119/1. Macnaghten to Wade, May 15, 1837. P. G. R.

44. 119/22. Macnaghten to Wade, April 10, 1837. P. G. R.

45. 119/18. Macnaghten to Wade, May 15, 1837. P. G. R.

46. 107/10. Macnaghten to Wade, August 22, 1837. P. G. R.

47. Sohan Lal, *Unnat ul-Tawarikh*, Vol. III, Part IV, p. 443.

the well-being of the Sikh nation itself.⁴⁸ In justification of this he pointed out "that the sincerity of a true friend was tried by his candour which prompted him to speak the truth even when it might be disagreeable to his friend."⁴⁹

Wade had by now gained great influence over the Maharaja and the latter reposed implicit confidence in his counsels and considered him to be his sincere friend and "the medium of promoting friendship between the two States".⁵⁰ It was Wade's personal influence with the Maharaja, which, more than any other factor, checked further aggression on the Afghan territory. The Maharaja, on his persuasion, ordered Faqir Aziz-ud Din to write to Raja Dhan Singh and Jamadar Khushal Singh to address a letter on their own behalf to Dost Mohd. inviting him to depute an agent to the Sikh court to treat for peace.⁵¹ Hostilities were suspended in the meantime.⁵² Dost Mohd. withdrew the

(Continued from page 193)

دستورالہ کیپٹن صاحب مطاع عذاب-ساطع در آمدہ کہ سرکار والہ اقتدار
امدادات کثیر و مصارف خطر در سہم رساورد سے فرسائند و ہر سال افواج جدید
سے فرسند و سرکردگان عالم سان در باب در آمدنی اذ طرف لیت و لعل میں سازند
و در جب اقامت آن ملک را ختم دے بستند فہم الوافع فسق و ظلم آن ملک نہ
بکصد ہزار آدم سے سو-اس قدر فوج چہ ضرورت است-بہامع اقتدار و ثمرہ داد
آن وقت مرقوم درواہد سد نہ سرکار والہ را ازین احوال باخبر نسلی-خواہد گردید.

The letter of the Kaptan Sahib (Wade) was brought for the perusal of the Bright Presence (Ranjit Singh). It said that His Exalted Highness spends large sums and incurs great expenditure for expeditions to Peshawar. Every year fresh forces are sent. The noble chiefs hesitate from going in that direction and feel reluctant to settle down in that country. In fact, that country is menaced, and kept under control with a hundred thousand men. What is the need of so much army? His Majesty would realize the real benefit only when he is relieved of all this expense.)

48. 143/26. Wade to Macnaghten, July 9, 1837. P. G. R.

49. *Ibid.*

50. 144/22. August 23, 1837 (Notes from a conference between Wade and Ranjit's agent). P. G. R.

51. 141/18. Wade to Macnaghten, August 18, 1837. P. G. R.

52. 143/26. Wade to Macnaghten, July 9, 1837. P. G. R.

main body of his army to Kabul, leaving behind a garrison of 400 only in the frontier fort of Ali Masjid ⁵³

To Wade the Maharaja addressed a cordial letter and asked him to suggest the best mode of effecting a peace with the Afghans with "due deference to his honour and credit."⁵⁴ Wade, therefore, advised the Government to modify its attitude of strict non-intervention in face of such a letter from the Maharaja and the altered situation in Afghanistan. Dost Mohd, too, had already written letters to the Government in the same strain. All this induced a change in the policy of the Government which judged that the time had come when political interference would no longer be embarrassing, but on the contrary, highly advantageous to its interests.⁵⁵

Fresh instructions were, therefore, issued to Wade according to which he was desired to impress upon the Maharaja to moderate his demands upon Dost Mohd., at the same time assuring him that the Government entertained friendly feelings to both without being disposed to favour the unreasonable demands of either ⁵⁶ Should he find that "the delay of a reference was injurious and that the Maharaja was inclined to offer reasonable concession to Dost Mohd," he was authorised to communicate with Burnes who could then enter into negotiations with the Afghan Ruler.⁵⁷ He was to explain to the Maharaja that the Government wanted to see peace and tranquillity established everywhere.⁵⁸ He, however, was expected to exercise special care in not committing the Government by pledging its guarantee either directly or indirectly for the stability of any engagement that might be entered into by the contending parties.⁵⁹

Burnes was similarly instructed to impress upon Dost Mohd. a just sense of his critical position, and try to dissuade him

53. 100/84. Macnaghten to Wade, September 10, 1837. P.G.R.

54. 143/26 Wade to Macnaghten, July 9, 1837. P.G.R.

55. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 217.

56. 119/31. Macnaghten to Wade, July 31, 1837. P.G.R.

57. *Ibid*

58. 119/48. Macnaghten to Wade, May 15, 1837. P.G.R.

59. 119/40 Macnaghten to Wade, August 7, 1837. P.G.R.

from the assertion of all unreasonable pretensions.⁶⁰ The question of Peshawar seemed to offer some difficulty but the Government believed that some arrangement could be found for a compromise either by an enhanced subsidy to be paid by Dost or by some other similar means suitable to both parties.⁶¹ Again like Wade, Burnes was also to see that Dost Mohd. came to an agreement with Ranjit Singh without in any way committing the Government to "exercise of direct influence." He was further to observe the "general feeling towards the British Government and the Russian Government and to watch the influence of the supposed Russo-Persian alliance."⁶²

It was at this time that the Maharaja received a letter from Dost Mohd. asking for cessation of hostilities.⁶³ Ranjit replied that if he wanted a truce or treaty he should proceed in a proper manner and send agents with horses.⁶⁴ This reply was first forwarded to Wade for approval. Wade was greatly delighted and at once apprised Burnes of the new turn the matters had taken. As for the settlement regarding Peshawar, he wrote to Burnes that the question could be decided either by the two Chiefs coming to a spontaneous arrangement amongst themselves or by his (Wade's) exerting his influence with the Maharaja to restore the city to Sultan Mohd.⁶⁵ To impress upon the Maharaja the need for an amicable settlement, Wade informed him of the designs of Persia in Afghanistan of the readiness of the Barakzais to get Persian help against him.⁶⁶

Dost Mohd. anxiously awaited Burnes' arrival in his capital, for he believed that the British would be able to afford him much help in attaining his objects.⁶⁷ Burnes was also sure that if Wade could persuade the Maharaja to agree to his proposal he himself would be able to bring the Amir round, for then it

60. 119/37. Macnaghten to Burnes, July 31, 1837. P.G.R.

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*

63. Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, Part IV, p. 453.

64. 144/18. Wade to Burnes, August 17, 1837. P.G.R.

65. 144/18. Wade to Burnes, August 17, 1837. P.G.R.

66. 144/22. Wade to Macnaghten, August 23, 1837. P.G.R.

67. 144/9. Letter of Mohd. Akbar in Wade's despatch to Macnaghten. July 19, 1837. P.G.R.

would be a "voluntary sacrifice of what was by conquest and right the possession of the Lahore Chief."⁶⁸

One useful result of the suspension of hostilities on the part of the Maharaja was that Dost Mohd. withdrew all his troops from the Khyber Pass, stationing only a few at Jallalabad.⁶⁹ He instructed his son, Mohd Akbar, to receive an escort the British mission through the Pass.⁷⁰ But through a misunderstanding Mohd Akbar could not meet the mission and Burnes proceeded through the Pass unescorted but was helped by the Afandis inhabiting it.⁷¹ Before crossing the Khyber, he heard that an embassy from Bokhara had arrived at Kabul and another from Persia was on its way.⁷² This news caused some embarrassment to him, and aroused the Government to action.⁷³

Wade commented at length on the dangers to the Indian Empire arising from the presence of a Persian agent at Kabul, and urged upon the Government to instruct Burnes to inform the Amir that "the exertion of our good offices with the Sikh Government on his behalf depends on the relinquishment of his connections with all the powers westward."⁷⁴ Auckland accepted his suggestion and directed Burnes on September 11, that "he, instead of being merely the bearer of an invitation to the Amir of general friendship and for a cordial interference in

68 16/5/56 Burnes to Macnaghten, September 10, 1837 P.G.R.

69 14/12. Wade to Macnaghten, July 24, 1837 P.G.R.

70 144/26 Wade to Macnaghten, August 25 1837 P.G.R.

71 114/43 Burnes to Macnaghten, September 4, 1837 P.G.R.

72 135/28 Burnes to Macnaghten, August 1, 1837 P.G.R.

These missions were avowedly of a political nature, their efforts were to be directed to range the Chief of Afghanistan by the side of the Shah of Persia in his schemes of war and conquest.

73 It became obvious that, with war waging on its eastern frontier and intrigues rife on its western, the country of Afghanistan could not be in a fit state to welcome the British plans of trade and commerce. Trouble was everywhere sniffed in the air and, "in the existing state of excitement," as the Government itself admitted, it was impossible for Burnes to confine himself "to matters of a commercial nature"—Macnaghten to Burnes, September 11, 1837. (Parliamentary Papers 1839 *ut supra*)

74 144/28. Wade to Macnaghten, August 25, 1837. P.G.R.

matters of commerce, was to be looked upon as an arbiter of peace. But the indispensable condition of the British friendly intervention in the affairs of Dost Mohd. was to be cessation of any alliance with the Western powers.⁷⁵ Thus Burnes' mission, even before entering Kabul, ceased to be commercial. Commerce was no longer the primary object, but politics became the chief motive power of the ensuing negotiations. The Governor-General addressed Ranjit Singh also, apprising him of the change in the circumstances and inviting him to act in concert with the Government.⁷⁶

Burnes reached Kabul on September 20, 1837, before receiving the Governor-General's instructions of September 11.⁷⁷ The Amir received him most cordially and lodged him in the Bala Hisar. The next day Burnes delivered his credentials which the Amir received in a very flattering manner with many expressions of his high sense of honour which had been conferred upon him, and expressed his grateful satisfaction at the new means of contact with the British Government. Burnes displayed the presents brought for the Amir describing them as "some of the rarities of Europe." Though the Amir's dignity was ruffled by their paltry character, yet he diplomatically explained them away by observing: "You yourselves are the rarities, the sight of which best pleases me."⁷⁸

Three days later, Burnes had his first private interview with the Amir when he explained the views of his Government with regard to the opening of the Indus to commerce. "The British Government," he said, "had for some years past been thinking

75. 119/55. Macnaghten to Wade and Burnes, September 11, 1837 P. G. R.

76. 119/55. Auckland to Ranjit Singh, September 11, 1837. P. G. R.

77. 108/37. Burnes to Macnaghten, September 24, 1837. P. G. R.

78. *Ibid.*

These presents consisted of pins, needles, scissors, pen-knives, silk handkerchiefs, toys, watches, musical snuff boxes etc., for the Zanana and a pair of pistols for the Amir himself. These formed a glaring contrast with the costly gifts which had been showered on Shah Shuja by Elphinstone. Harlan says that the Amir threw them aside and exclaimed with a pish! "Behold! I have feasted and honoured this *Feringee* to the extent of six thousand rupees, and have now a lot of pins and needles and sundry petty toys to show for my folly"—*Memor of India and Afghanistan*, p. 130.

of the promotion of trade by that river : for this purpose it had entered into treaties with the powers on its banks, and his mission was intended to secure the Amir's active co-operation in a scheme, which could not but lead to the commercial prosperity of his subjects."

The Amir unhesitatingly promised his full co-operation but complained that his war with the Sikhs on account of their occupation of Peshawar was a constant pre-occupation, it crippled his resources, it dissipated his finances, and that while it lasted he could not give to the commercial objects of the British all the attention and co-operation which he otherwise would. Burnes urged him to reflect on the uselessness of contending with the powerful Maharaja, and advised him to seek for such an adjustment of differences as would preserve his honour and that of his countrymen. The Amir assented and asked Burnes' advice. He replied that his Government had sent him to Kabul for commercial and not for political purposes, but still he would do what he could for the peaceful adjustment of both, if Dost would acquaint him with all his sentiments and demands. At this the Amir said that the Government had saved Shikarpur from the aggression of the Sikhs. Could not similar motives induce them to interfere in the affairs of Peshawar ? Burnes replied that Shikarpur was the possession of the Amirs of Sind, while Peshawar was an undoubted conquest of the Sikhs made by the sword and preserved by it, and to interfere in that would be a violation of justice and the integrity of Ranjit Singh's dominions.⁷⁹

At a subsequent interview on October 4, Dost Mohd., anxiously desired to see his difference with the Sikhs terminated, and said that if advised, he would even send his son to Lahore to ask the Maharaja's forgiveness for what had passed, and if he (Ranjit Singh) would agree to give up Peshawar, he would be prepared to hold it as a tributary to Lahore, and send the requisite present of horses, rice, etc.,⁸⁰ Burnes, on the strength of the letter from the Governor-General of September 11, 1837, where such an arrangement was envisaged, asked whether it would be equally advantageous to the Amir's reputation if

79. 108/39. Burnes to Wade, October, 5, 1837. P. G. R.

80. 144/49. Wade to Macnaghten, November 7, 1837. P. G. R.

Peshawar was restored to his brother, Sultan Mohd. To this the Amir replied that it was all the same for him whether Peshawar was under Sultan Mohd. or Ranjit Singh, as the former had been to him both a treacherous friend and a bitter enemy. Moreover, that could mean that the Maharaja had withdrawn from the countries westward of the Indus.⁸¹

In addition to a verbatim account of what transpired at the various interviews with Dost Mohd., Burnes sent to his Government a report giving the history of Kabul, dealing at length with the power and character of Dost Mohd's rule, and the chances which Shah Shuja had there. He also reviewed the uncertain position of the Punjab after the death of Ranjit Singh, and concluded by suggesting that the Government should bring about an adjustment of differences between the Amir and the Sikhs, and help the former with money etc., to exclude the Persian and the Russian influence from Afghanistan, and to place the resources of Kabul and Kandhar in one hand.⁸²

As Burnes' communications passed through Wade, the latter freely commented upon them. He invariably invalidated Burnes' opinions by contradicting his facts by making bold counter-assertions, and suggesting all kinds of plausible arrangements which greatly influenced the Governor-General. The proposal of Dost, wrote Wade, showed his desire to recover Peshawar with a view to aggrandise himself at the expense of his brothers. To Ranjit it would mean that he would have to forsake that part of the Barakzai family which had been attacked to him without getting any substantial benefit in return. Besides, Ranjit might think, continued Wade, that it would be more safe for him to place Peshawar in the hands of a weak ruler like Sultan Mohd. instead of resigning it to an already powerful chief like Dost Mohd., who thereby would become a great menace to Sikh dominions. Wade did not send Dost Mohd.'s proposals to the Maharaja. He further argued that such negotiations could only be advantageous to the British interests if they did not involve a weakness of the Sikh Government on the side of Peshawar, which might expose the

81. 108/39. Burnes to Wade, October 1, 1837. P. G. R.

82. 108/39. Burnes to Macnaghten, December 3, 1837. P. G. R.

Punjab, more than ever, to the invasion of the Afghans. He thought that the augmentation of Dost Mohd.'s power resulting from his re-occupation of Peshawar would be less compatible with British interests than the preservation of the existing subdivided state of authority in Afghanistan. He further reasoned that with the accommodation of Dost's differences with the Sikhs, Sultan Mohd. and his brothers would be reduced to his authority, and feeling that the British were on his side, he would first of all reduce Kandhar. This would make him the enemy of all Barakzais who, if they found themselves incapable of resisting his encroachments either by their own means or those of the Sikhs, would look either to Persia or Herat. This would revive those military enterprises which the British were trying to counteract. Wade, therefore, advised Auckland to be on his guard against an undue use being made of British connection with Dost Mohd., because there was every chance that in rescuing the Amir from an impending danger, there might arise a state of affairs more pregnant than ever with mischief to the peace and tranquillity of Afghanistan. In short, Wade's definite opinion was that an alliance with the Sikhs was much better than one with Dost Mohd., who had very high ambitions, and wanted to bring his brothers under his own sovereignty.⁸³

Wade disagreed with Burnes' proposal to give pecuniary aid to Dost to ward off the Russian danger. Burnes' view was that the power of Dost in Afghanistan was unchallengeable, whereas Wade asserted that Shah Shuja too had many adherents there, and that though the Barakzais had usurped the greater portion of the power of the Suddozais yet the latter family still maintained itself in Herat and had a strong hold on the prejudice, if not on the affection, of a large portion of the Durranis. Moreover, the elevation of Dost could not be palatable to Ranjit as well, and so it was better to leave things as they were. If at all the consolidation of the Afghans became a measure of indispensable necessity to the establishment of peace on the frontiers of the Indus, the selection of Shah Shuja in preference to Dost Mohd. was bound to be more popular with

the Maharaja as it would only be in fulfilment of the pact which he himself had formerly made with the Shah.⁸⁴

Wade also disagreed with Burnes regarding his views about the Kandhar chiefs. He said that those chiefs who were very jealous of the power of their brother at Kabul must have been offended at the exclusive nature of the intercourse that Burnes was holding with Dost Mohd.⁸⁵ He had earlier impressed upon the Government that those chiefs considered themselves a separate entity under their eldest brother, Kohin Dil Khan, and ought to be treated as such.⁸⁶ He further emphasised that the British interests lay in strengthening and preserving the existing division of power in Afghanistan and not in destroying it.⁸⁷

Auckland came to adopt Wade's view that the division of power among the several chiefs of Afghanistan was conducive to the interests of British India.⁸⁸ He definitely announced that the British policy was to preserve unimpaired the existing state of affairs in Central Asia and to refrain from doing anything which might give to any chief undue preponderance over others.⁸⁹ Thus we see that Auckland was following the suggestions of Wade to the very letter. He, too, like Wade was thinking of the balance of power among the different independent States in and around Afghanistan.

In order to translate this policy into practice, however, it was necessary to safeguard the peace of Kandhar and Herat by not allowing the Persian and indirectly the Russian designs to fructify in that quarter. So Auckland, agreeing with Wade's view that the preservation of the integrity of Herat was an object of first magnitude,⁹⁰ cautioned McNeill to be very careful about Kandhar's relations with Persia.⁹¹ With this object in view, Burnes was also authorised to proceed to Kandhar should he consider it necessary.⁹²

84. *Ibid.*

85. 145/24. Wade to Macnaghten, January 7, 1838. P. G. R.

86. 144/45. Wade to Macnaghten, October 8, 1837. P. G. R.

87. 145/16. Wade to Macnaghten, December 21, 1837. P. G. R.

88. 119/69. Macnaghten to Wade, November 13, 1837. P. G. R.

89. 119/72. Macnaghten to Wade, November 25, 1837. P. G. R.

90. 119/69. Macnaghten to Wade, November 13, 1837. P. G. R.

91. *Ibid.* and 119/84. Macnaghten to Wade, December 11, 1837. P. G. R.

92. 119/84. Macnaghten to Wade, December 11, 1837. P. G. R.

In the meantime, a Persian *elchi*, who had been received with *chlat* at Kandhar,⁹³ set out from there towards Kabul, but was recalled by the Kandhar chiefs who wanted to form an alliance with Persia independently of Kabul. The *elchi* returned to Kandhar and thence to Persia.⁹⁴

In November, 1837, Burnes urged his Government to decide upon the extent to which it would go in its offers of money, recognition and protection to detach the Afghan chiefs from a Persian alliance.⁹⁵ He, it seems, did not consider this either possible or difficult, for the Kandhar Sardars had accepted his friendly promises in return for compliance with the wishes of the Amir and himself. He justified his action by urging the view that "there is no step calculated to defeat the designs of Persia, if she moves eastward but to array Kabul and Kandhar against her."⁹⁶ For this undoubted step in the right direction Burnes was called over the coals and instructed to repudiate his promises to Kandhar. The Government re-affirmed its policy of recognising existing divisions as decidedly most beneficial to its interests and "the strict avoidance of positive engagements to assist resistance to invasion from the west by arms or subsidies."⁹⁷

Thus the British policy at the very end of 1837 was to maintain the existing balance of power in Afghanistan, to assure Dost Mohd. that he would gain from the friendship of the British a similar boon of safety from the attacks of the Sikhs as he would from Russia or Persia or any other power,⁹⁸ and to dissuade him to have any pretensions to supremacy over the chiefs of Kandhar.⁹⁹

On December 20 a notable and almost unexpected event occurred which was to prove a potent force in the subsequent

93. 108/34. Burnes to Macnaghten, September 9, 1837. P. G. R.

94. 108/48. Wade to Macnaghten, October 31, 1837. P. G. R.

95. 108/56. Burnes to Macnaghten, November 19, 1837. P. G. R.

96. 108/60. Burnes to Macnaghten, December 22, 1837. P. G. R.

97. 121/1. Macnaghten to Wade, January 1, 1838. P. G. R.

98. *Ibid*

99. 119/21. Macnaghten to Wade, December 27, 1837. P. G. R.

In fact the British policy at this time was nothing but the different suggestions of Wade translated into practice.

shaping of the issue. A Russian agent, Captain Vickovich,¹⁰⁰ announced himself at Kabul, bearing letters to the Amir from the Czar, the Shah of the Persia and the Russian Ambassador at the Court of Tehran.¹⁰¹ Before receiving him the Amir went to Burnes with a letter from his son conveying that a Russian Agent was on his way to Kabul. He sought Burnes' counsel as to whether he should receive him or not. He told the British Envoy that "he wished to have nothing to do with any other power than the British and that he would order the Russian Agent to be turned out, detained on the road or act in any way Burnes desired him."¹⁰² Burnes' reply was that according to the laws of nations, the Amir could not refuse to receive an accredited agent of any power with whom he was at peace, but he had in his power to show his feeling on the occasion by making a full disclosure to the British Government of the errand on which the individual had come." The Amir most readily assented.¹⁰³ But the arrival of the Russian agent completely overpowered Burnes. Masson, who was at the place, says that the English Envoy bound his head with towels and handkerchiefs and took to a smelling bottle.¹⁰⁴

On regaining his equilibrium, Burnes pressed on his Government the absolute necessity of an immediate settlement of the Sikh-Afghan feud. He wrote: "M. Vickovich informed Dost Mohd. that the Russian Government had desired him to state its sincere sympathy with the difficulties under which he laboured, that it would afford it great pleasure to assist him in repelling the attacks of Ranjit Singh on his dominions, and that it was ready to furnish him with a sum of money for the purpose and

100. He was a native of Poland and a Lieutenant in the Russian Army.—108/65. Burnes to Macnaghten, December 22, 1837. P. G. R.

101. 108/66. Burnes to Macnaghten, December 22, 1837. P. G. R.

According to Kaye, Vickovich had been sent to Kabul, probably as a counter-stroke to Burnes' mission, for as the Russian Minister observed, with some justification, that England had no monopoly of intrigue in Central Asia—*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 297.

102. 108/64. Burnes to Macnaghten, December 20 1837. P. G. R.

103. *Ibid.*

104. *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 463.

Such disconcertment must have increased Dost Mohd.'s determination to profit by English fears and thereby obtain his own terms.

to continue its supply, expecting in return the Amir's good offices."¹⁰⁵ These terms were definitely much more tempting than anything which the British had offered to the Amir. In face of these strong demonstrations on the part of Russia to interest herself in the affairs of Afghanistan, Burnes added: "it will not, I feel satisfied, be presumptuous to state my most deliberate conviction that more vigorous proceedings than have hitherto been exhibited are necessary to counteract Russian or Persian intrigue in this quarter For the last six or seven years I have had my attention directed to these countries and I profess myself to be one of those who do believe that Russia entertains designs of extending her influence towards India." After making these remarks Burnes sounded a strong note of warning, saying: "It is a true maxim that prevention is better than cure, and now we have both in our hands. We might certainly wish to delay a little longer before acting but it is now in our power by the extended and immediate exercise of already established influence to counteract every design injurious to us."¹⁰⁶ He believed that "it was not surely asking too much of Ranjit Singh to act with promptitude in the adjustment of a matter which, while it hangs over, brings intrigues to our door, and if not checked, may bring enemies instead of messengers."¹⁰⁷ He felt convinced that Dost Mohd.'s position was not hazardous, though the Government considered it so, and that he had nothing to fear from the Sikhs.¹⁰⁸ He strongly urged upon the Government to offer pecuniary grants to the Amir for the defence of his territory and the consolidation and extension of his power.¹⁰⁹

Burnes further reported after a week: "Russia has come forward with offers, which are certainly substantial; Persia has been lavish in her promises, and Bokhara and other States have not been backward. Yet, in all that has passed or is daily transpiring, the Chief of Kabul declares that he prefers the sympathy and friendly offers of the British to all these offers,

105. 108/65. Burnes to Macnaghten, December 22, 1837. P. G. R.

106. 108/56. Burnes to Macnaghten, December 22, 1837. P.G.R.

107. (Parl. Papers, 1850, *ut supra*.) Burnes to Macnaghten, December 23 1837.

108. *Ibid*.

109. *Ibid*.

however alluring they may seem, from Persia or from the Emperor.”¹¹⁰

To Wade, strangely enough, the arrival of the Russian agent meant nothing, for on January 13, 1838, he wrote to the Government : “Instead of regarding the arrival of the Russian envoy as a motive for departing from the policy which the Government has already laid down, it ought, I think, to be a strong additional reason for us to adhere to its principles.” “Any mark of deviation,” he emphasised, “would convince the Amir that we are alarmed at his means of doing some serious injury, while in reality he possesses no such power.” “It is not by yielding to the ambitious views of Dost Mohd.” he argued, “that we are likely to keep off the invasion of his country or to counteract Russian and Persian intrigue, but by keeping him and the other powers of Afghanistan in a just sense of their position.” He was equally averse to the grant of subsidies to Dost Mohd. because such aid “would be viewed with strong feelings of jealousy and distrust, not merely by the Sikhs, but the other chiefs of Afghanistan and those of contiguous states.” If the suggestions of Burnes were accepted, he thought “it would directly tend to the subversion of that divided State of authority among the Afghans, which, there can be no doubt, is the best suited to our present policy.” He stressed that Dost Mohd. should be brought “to a just estimate of his situation, and that it would be as imprudent as unnecessary to purchase his separation from the alliance which he has been courting with such avidity with Russia and Persia by any other price than our mediation to settle his dispute with the Sikhs.” Regarding the choice for alliance to be made between the Sikhs and the Amirs of Sind on one side, and the Afghans on the other, he observed : “Few persons will I presume be found to place on alliance with the Afghans on an equality with that of the Sikhs and the Amirs of Sind, situated as we are with reference to these powers, and, unless, therefore, Captain Burnes can show some sure and certain advantage from the British Government becoming a party to a change in the political condition of the Ruler of Kabul, which while it tends to increase his power would

110. 108/68. Burnes to Government, December 30, 1837. P. G. R.

diminish our means of restraining him and disturb the well-being of our relations east of the Indus, it would be impolite to expose the safety of our present system to the hazard of an experiment"¹¹¹

The Government accepted Wade's views *in toto*, and, incorporating all his suggestions, addressed a de-patch to Burnes on January 20, 1838. It laid down 'His Lordship attaches little immediate importance to this mission of the Russian Agent, although he will bring all the circumstances connected with it to the notice of the Home authorities—but if he be not already gone from Kabul you will suggest to the Amīr that he be dismissed with courtesy. His mission should be assumed to have been as represented entirely for commercial object'¹¹² and no notice need be taken of the messages with which he may profess to have been charged'. It indicated that there was no need to consolidate Dost Mohd's power, "as the existing division of authority in Afghanistan was decidedly the most beneficial for the British interests." It stated categorically that Dost Mohd must give up all hopes of personally obtaining Peshawar and was to be told to effect a settlement with Ranjit Singh. Nevertheless British "good offices" were being employed on his behalf and it was claimed 'that the Maharaja had acceded to the Government's desire for the cessation of strife and promotion of tranquillity'. To encourage him to hope for more than this would be to deceive him. Further, if he was eager to receive this boon of peace he was expected to abjure all connections with Western powers. Should he not, Burnes was to make him understand distinctly that his mission would be compelled to retire and that he would be deprived of the Government's influence with Ranjit Singh in his favour.¹¹³

111 145/20 Wade to Macnaghten, January 13, 1837 P. G. R.

112 Palmerston in a note to be presented by the British Ambassador to Nesselrode detailed the activities of Russian Agents in Persia and Afghanistan, and pointed out that they were contrary to the assurances given to Great Britain earlier. Nesselrode in reply stated that the mission of Vickovich was purely commercial and that it did not contain the smallest design hostile to the English Government nor the least idea of injuring the tranquillity of the British possessions in India—Sykes, *History of Afghanistan*, Vol. I, pp. 404-5.

113 121/3, Macnaghten to Burnes, January 20, 1838. P. G. R.

The ground upon which this lofty stand was taken was built upon stray letters to Ranjit Singh in which the Governor-General had served him with bloodless homilies on the blessings of peace in general as a rule of State-craft. His replies "faithfully enumerated the advantages of peace, and uniformly watered the blest garden of friendship in which roses had been effortlessly blooming for the past thirty years or so."¹¹⁴

But the worst of it was that not a word had yet been said on the possible nature of the Peshawar settlement, and while the thread of friendship was being thus rudely severed by the shears of uncertainty Burnes was left in no doubt as to the actual extent of these "good offices."

The Envoy informed the Amir that "in the opinion of the Governor-General the Maharaja would not be disposed to surrender Peshawar on the terms proposed," though he might consent to vest its government in Sultan Mohd.¹¹⁵ This certainly did not suit the Amir, who had many a time suffered from the intrigue of his brother.¹¹⁶ Sultan Mohd., the Amir said, was a devoted servant of the Maharaja; Peshawar under him, he apprehended, would become a rallying point of his enemies, and a hot-bed of conspiracies directed to his ruin.¹¹⁷ He, therefore, could not be thankful to the British Government for exercise of its 'good offices,' which in reality would be only a "ratification of the mistakes of the Maharaja". "Or Ranjit's power," he added, "to invade me in Kabul, I have little fear, of his power to injure me if he reinstates Sultan Mohd in the government of that city, I have great apprehensions."¹¹⁸

At this point it appeared as if the negotiations were at an end, but Nawab Jabbar Khan, who was also present, suggested that "since the Afghan nation could not afford to lose the sympathy which had been exhibited by the British Government,"

114. 143/12. Wadd to Burnes, June 3, 1837. P. G. R.

115. Burnes to Macnaghten, January 26, 1838. (Parl. Papers, 1859, *ut supra*).

116. At this interview the Amir revealed to Burnes a fresh intrigue of Sultan Mohd. who had recently written a letter to Shah Shuja offering him his help against him (the Amir) and promising to secure that of the Sardars of Kandhar. How could he "place a snake in his bosom"?

117. Burnes to Macnaghten, January 26, 1838. (Parl. Papers, 1859, *ut supra*).

118. *Ibid.*

the district of Peshawar might be divided between the Amir and Sultan Mohd., Ranjit Singh receiving equally at their hands a fixed tribute.¹¹⁹ With good logic he pointed out the manifest advantages of such a scheme: it would be acceptable to the Maharaja who would get the oft-desired tribute from the Amir; it would remove his apprehensions, as his friend and underlying, Sultan Mohd., would still hold half the territory, and it would win for the British the gratitude of the Afghans, who would be freed from the intolerant Sikh tyranny. On January 26, 1838, this fresh proposal agreed to by the Amir and recommended by Burnes, was submitted for the Governor-General's consideration.¹²⁰

To Wade this proposal did not appear unreasonable. Commenting on the relevant despatch of Burnes, he observed that "though the Maharaja's opinionremains to be disclosed, I am ready with the sanction of the Governor-General to communicate the proposition now made to Ranjit Singh and to support by every argument that I can use the expediency of its acceptance by him, provided also that His Lordship desires no other security than the verbal assurances given by the Amir of Kabul of his relinquishment of all connection with the powers to the westward, and sees no occasion to await the issue of the instruction lately sent to Captain Burnes in consequence of the arrival of the Russian envoy in Kabul"¹²¹ He pointed out that "any desire that may be manifested by us to direct the settlement of their (the Sikhs') quarrel with Dost Mohd. Khan in a manner that may not be consonant with the judgment of their ruler may make His Highness impatient of our control and render the loss of cordiality with him from our interference in the dispute far more detrimental to us than the same result could possibly prove from the disappointed expectations of the Ruler of Kabul in the assistance preferred to him by our

119. Jabbar Khan proposed this compromise on the basis of a treaty which had once been entered into by Ranjit Singh with the Amir and his deceased brother, Yar Mohd. Khan.

120. Burnes to Macnaghten, January 26, 1838. (Parl. Papers, 1859, *ut supra*).

121. Secret and Separate Consultation, October 17, 1838 No. 68. Wade to Macnaghten, March 3, 1838. (Captain Wade's Letters to the Government of India in the Secret and Separate Department, January to June, 1838. P. G. R.).

Government." He reminded the Governor-General that "it is the maxim of our Government that our wish to benefit the Afghans must be subservient to the obligations of our relations with the Sikhs and we shall do well never to lose sight of that principle, or we incur the risk of finding ourselves in an equivocal position more prejudicial to our interests than the sacrifice of alliances at best but experimental with the weak princes of Afghanistan."¹²²

No attempt, it appears, was made to bring about a settlement of the Peshawar question on the basis of the above proposal,¹²³ and Burnes was informed that "the relinquishment of Peshawar upon any terms must depend upon the pleasure of the Maharaja whose right to that possession appears to be admitted even by the Amir and cannot be questioned."¹⁻⁴ He was instructed to bring home to Dost Mohd. that he should rest satisfied with an arrangement which would leave him in the enjoyment of his existing possessions "under the assurance of the continued exercise of our good offices for his security from further attack, the Sikhs remaining, as at present, in the immediate occupation and management of the Peshawar territory."¹²⁵

Dost Mohd. now lost all patience and declared that he could not wait longer than "the feast of Nauroz" (about the vernal equinox) for an adjustment regarding Peshawar.¹²⁶ He laid before Burnes the terms upon which he could accept a British alliance—a promise to protect Kabul and Kandhar from Persia, the cession of Peshawar by Ranjit Singh, or the protection of immigrants supposing it to be restored to Sultan Mohd. —but the Envoy refused to agree to any one of them and recapitulated what was to be expected of him. He was to receive no agents from, nor hold any correspondence with the West; dismiss Vickovitch; respect the independence of Kandhar and Peshawar, and surrender personal claims to the latter, admitting the right of Ranjit Singh to dispose of it as he wished.

122. Political Consultations, No. 68, Wade to Macnaghten, March 3, 1838. I. R. D.

123. Kayel, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 201.

124. 121/21. Macnaghten to Wade, March 7, 1838. P. G. R.

125. *Ibid.*

126. Burnes to Macnaghten, March 13, 1838. (Parl. Papers, 1859, *ut supra*).

The British Government would then consider itself free to interpose its good offices to remove the causes of difference between the Sikhs and Afghans. Burnes, whose hands were empty, declined to commit these terms to writing, preferring a settlement "hereafter."¹²⁷

The Amir who had been hoping for ever so much from the British was sorely disappointed and turned for aid to other powers.¹²⁸ His indignation was most justified, and his remarks most apt, when he declared that while the British expected him to desist from all intercourse with Persia, Russia and Turkistan, they did not even offer any security against the consequences of detaching him from those powers.¹²⁹ Having despaired of any hope of help from them, he opened an intercourse in person with Vickovitch (hitherto he had been received by the Amir in a scurvy and discouraging manner"). On April 21, 1838, he sent for him publicly and after parading him through the streets of Kabul received him with a great degree of respect.¹³⁰

As for Burnes, he felt that to remain there any longer fettered the Amir and discredited the British Government.¹³¹ As he could not shift his ground, and the attention paid by the

127. *Ibid.*

128. According to Mohan Lal, who accompanied Burnes to Kabul, the Amir was guilty of double crossing the English. All the time while he was negotiating with them he was corresponding with the Shah of Persia and also with the Czar. He had sought the Shah's help against the Sikhs and the Czar's alliance of the type he (the Czar) already had with the Shah (*op cit.*, Vol I, p 190). Again, soon after Vickovitch's arrival Dost wrote to Count Simonich, the Russian Ambassador in Persia as follows: "I thank you very much for the offer you made me to arrange my affairs. I expect much more from your Government and my hopes have been increased. Though the distance between us is great, it does not prevent an approach in heart" and so on (*Idem*, p 326).

One does not know how far Mohan Lal is correct but even if he be right in what he says, such letters, according to Sykes (*op cit.*, Vol I, p 104), merely represented the customary policy of the ruler of Persia, Bukhara and Afghanistan and might be termed a policy of "fecklers".

129. 121/20. Burnes to Macnaghten, March 7, 1838. P. G. R.

130. Burnes to Macnaghten, April 25, 1838. Letter No 24, (Indian Papers, 1839, Correspondence relating to Afghanistan)

131. Burnes to Macnaghten, March 13, 1838. Letter No 21 (*Idem*)

Amir to Vickovitch continued to be augmented, he left Kabul on April 25, 1838,¹³² smuggling his Government's discredited toy of "good offices" over the frontier in a huff.¹³³

The failure of Burnes' mission and the Government's inability to accommodate Dost Mohd. were mainly occasioned by two chief considerations: in the first place, the British were not prepared to enter into any definite engagement which might prove embarrassing to them in the long run; secondly, their whole attitude towards Afghanistan and its rulers was underlined by their determination to maintain unimpaired the existing relations of friendship with the "old and faithful ally" at Lahore. The English mediation in the Sikh-Mazari dispute in 1836 had imposed a limit on Ranjit Singh's ambitions towards Sind. It had, therefore, become a nice point whether the British could either in propriety or even in expediency check his ambitions in the direction of Afghanistan also. The diplomatic reticence on this question had already hardened into a convention not to interfere in his Afghan policy. One buffer in hand being decidedly more secure than the desire for two, the Government's policy, as Wade put it, was to preserve its relations with Afghanistan in subservience to "the obligations of our relations with the Sikhs."¹³⁴ Therefore, its interposition in the present dispute on the Sikh side could hardly extend beyond a formal representation in favour of peace in general. And to Ranjit Singh, Auckland voiced his "earnest desire for the maintenance of tranquillity, not in British India alone, but among all the neighbouring nations,"¹³⁵ without in the least pretending to interfere in his Afghan policy. Organically Peshawar belonged to the Punjab rather than to Afghanistan, and while the Maharaja held

132. Secret and Separate Consultation October 3, 1838. No. 75. Burnes to Macnaghten, April 25, 1838 (Abstract). (Captain Wade's letters, *ut supra*).

133. Thus ends the story of a British mission to Afghanistan, which embarked upon its voyage under purely commercial auspices, was, in an unfortunate hour, carried away from its course by a terrific gale into the stormy sea of politics. There it foundered on the rocks on the intricate question of Peshawar.

134. Secret and Separate Consultation, October 17, 1838. No. 68. Wade to Macnaghten, March 3, 1838. (Captain Wade's letters, *ut supra*).

135. 119/23. Macnaghten to Wade, June 5, 1837. P. G. R. Also 119/37. Macnaghten to Wade, July 31, 1837. P. G. R.

the province by the unquestioned right of conquest, its continued possession was fitfully calculated to provide a sop to Sikh racial pride. It is, therefore, improbable that the Sikh Ruler would have agreed to part with it under any circumstances, least of all to the Afghans. Indeed, as Wade said, he would have regarded even its restoration to Sultan Mohammed as a sacrifice of his interests¹³⁶ Thus the Government could not possibly have succeeded in bringing the two Rulers to a settlement, for their interests in Peshawar were well-nigh irreconcilable.

The Amir's *volte-face* in favour of the Perso-Russian party was, in the circumstances, natural. This party became in the ascendant at Kabul in no time as it held out lavish promises for fulfilling every purpose of the Amir. After the fall of Herat, a portion of the Persian army, or in lieu thereof a grant of money, was to furnish him with means to expel the Sikhs from Peshawar—a compact for which Vickovitch undertook to obtain the seal of Russian guarantee. Meanwhile, missions were to be sent from both Kabul and Kandhar to wait upon the Shah, whose orders Dost Mohd. would in future obey¹³⁷

At the climax of this new situation, it became more manifest than ever before that the responsibility most prominent in the eyes of the British Government, of securing India from the danger of Russian invasion, must be met by means altogether different from those projected earlier.

136. Secret and Separate Consultation, October 17, 1838. No. 68. Wade to Macnaghten, March 3, 1838. (Captain Wade's letters, *ut supra*).

137. Burnes to Macnaghten, April 30, 1838. (Parl. Papers, 1838, *ut supra*).

CHAPTER XI

THE TRIPARTITE TREATY

An important Minute written by the Governor-General on May 12, 1838, reviewed the practical implications of the failure of Burnes' mission and the aggravated menace from the west. -- 'Direct aid to Herat,' wrote Auckland, "was impracticable, and assistance in arms and money to the present chiefs of Afghanistan would probably be employed against the Sikhs rather than the Persians, and would result in the destruction of cordiality with the Maharaja." The policy of contracting independent alliances with the Afghan chiefs had already evoked the Government's unmistakable censure and Burnes' promises to Kandhar had been cancelled. Re-opening parleys with the Amir himself, in view of the Government's former uncompromising attitude, would inevitably impair its prestige. Hence the only two courses apparently left to the Government were either to leave things as they were, or to venture upon some other bold action with a view to "sweeping away the protagonists of turmoil in Afghanistan, and substituting in their place a single ruler bound closely to its interests."

The Minute emphasized the importance of acting in the closest harmony with Ranjit Singh. Should Herat stand out, it added, the Maharaja might venture to aid Shuja in regaining his throne, alone or in concert with the British. But its fall would enable Persian and Russian influence "to take up a threatening attitude towards our Indian possessions", in a manner "injurious in intention and effect to ourselves, which we are warranted in repelling by all means in our power". Auckland, in that event, considered his choice of policy limited to one of the three following courses of action : (1) to confine defensive measure to the line of the Indus ; (2) to aid the existing chiefships ; and (3) to "act in the closest harmony with Maharaja Ranjit Singh in organising resistance to Persia

in the east of Afghanistan". A plan "which is decidedly the most deserving of attention" was to jointly support Shah Shuja. Though there were "difficulties of a secondary, though not of inconsiderable kind" in co-operating with the Sikhs, nevertheless it was of the greatest importance to act in concert with them. Either of the first two were at this stage deemed impracticable, and the third, it was thought, was most expedient irrespective of whether Herat fell or not. It would of course be undertaken under conditions that would conciliate Ranjit Singh, and at the same time bind the restored monarch to British interests. Success in a cause which was believed to 'have many partisans in Afghanistan' would be ensured by "our active sanction and support." The Government would then 'permit or encourage the advance of Ranjit Singh's armies upon Kabul under counsel and restriction and (as subsidiary to his advance) organize an expedition headed by Shah Shuja-ul-Mulkh" to re-establish his sovereignty in the eastern division of Afghanistan'.¹ Official touch was thus given to the birth of the Tripartite Treaty policy.

At Ludhiana, as we have seen, Wade had a constant opportunity of establishing a close association with Shah Shuja. In 1826, he was apprised of Ranjit's advances to the Shah by the latter for the purpose of securing British mediation and cognizance in any engagement he might form with that Ruler.² Likewise, he was well acquainted with the Treaty of March 12, 1833, between the two. Thus the possibilities of their acting in union, and the emergence of the western menace had suggested an idea to Wade which he duly laid before the Government as early as June 1836. Should a more direct interest in Afghan affairs be demanded, wrote Wade, he could only repeat an opinion that he had already expressed, namely, that British Government has in its power at any time by the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of Kabul in concert with Ranjit Singh to counteract any designs inimical to its interests from the westward."³

By January 1, 1838, Wade had made out a convincing case

1. 122/1. Macnaghten to Wade, October 18, 1838. Enclosure. P.G.R.

2. 95/29. Wade to Metcalfe, July 25, 1826. P. G. R.

3. 142/36. Wade to Macnaghten, July 7, 1836. P. G. R. See p. 198, *supra*.

for the policy of supporting Shah Shuja.⁴ He referred to reports formerly submitted by Masson and McNeill in which they considered that the Suddozai family, of which Shuja was a member, retained a strong hold on the affections of "a large portion" of the Afghans. The Shah's failure in 1834 was, according to Masson, "most sincerely lamented" since all classes desired his restoration. Success in the venture would have been assured by the simple presence of a British officer, not necessarily as an ally, but merely as a reporter of proceedings. Wade felt that to assist the Barakzais would be to force their rule upon an unwilling people, while for the opinion that "Dost Mohd. is not to be trusted" he had the authority of Masson and some of the Amir's own countrymen. By their dissensions the Barakzais had come to be considered as "pests to the country", and Shah Shuja under the auspices of the Government "would not even encounter opposition." Should the consolidation of Afghanistan be at present considered necessary, Wade favoured the plan of supporting Shuja under his pact with Ranjit Singh of 1833. Least violence would thereby be done to the interests concerned and success would not be difficult to achieve for he had it on the same authority that during the intensity of feeling caused by the recent Sikh-Afghan warfare Shih Shuja might have made himself master of Kabul in two months. In his opinion, however, the championship of Shuja could only be justified, or demanded of the Government, in the event of the capitulation of Herat to Persia.⁵ This crisis appeared more imminent than ever, and since by April 30 events at Kabul had hurried to a *dénouement*, Burnes urged "a prompt, active and decided counteraction" of Dost Mohammed.⁶ These ideas had so well taken root in the Simla Council that the cautious Auckland embodied Wade's proposals *mutatis mutandis* in his Minute of May 12. This Minute, it is important to remember, did not envisage the possibility of the Government's direct military participation. The British would appear as a partner in the scheme only to "permit or to encourage the advance of Ranjit Singh's armies",

4. 145/21. Wade to Macnaghten, January 1, 1838. P. G. R.

5. 115/21. Wade to Macnaghten, January 1, 1838. P. G. R.

6. Burnes to Macnaghten, April 30, 1838. (Parl. Papers, 1859, Correspondence of Sir Alexander Burnes with the Governor-General of India during his mission to Kabul in 1837-83. Ungarbled edition).

and to "organise" Shuja's expedition. More at this stage was not contemplated. The plan as projected *prima facie* had much to recommend it : Ranjit Singh's friendship far from being lost would probably be strengthened; a friendly ruler would replace an enemy in India's most threatened rampart ; and the end which the Government sought in its Afghan policy would be achieved with little expense and no actual military effort. Deviation from this plan towards loading the dice with 20,000 of its own troops was a later, though very much inevitable development, and was the prelude to the disastrous Afghan War.

Auckland's depatch of May 22, 1838, solicited the views of the Secret Committee on the Afghan question and warned them that "the emergency of affairs may compel me to act" without waiting for any such intimation. In anticipation of such emergency "I have deemed it expedient to put matters in train by previous negotiation, in order to render whatever measures of direct interference I may be obliged to adopt as effective as possible."⁷ Indeed, matters were "put in train" by Macnaghten, who accompanied by Wade, Osborne, M'Gregor and Drummond left for Lahore on a mission that was originally intended to be of a complimentary nature.⁸ But in view of the "important intelligence recently received from Captain Burnes"⁹ political discussion was expected to be raised. Instructions were, therefore, given to the Envoy embodying the principles of the Minute of May 12. On May 30, Macnaghten arrived at Adinanagar where the Maharaja was in camp, and where the actual negotiations that led to the Tripartite Treaty were almost immediately entered into. Wade was present with Macnaghten at all the meetings held with Ranjit Singh and his officers. The Envoy bore with him the Governor-General's instructions written by Torrens on May 15, with his usual magniloquence. Two plans were to be laid before His Highness : (1) that the British recognize the treaty concluded between Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja on March 12, 1833, and

7. Governor General to Secret Committee, May 22, 1838. No. 1 (Indian Papers, 1839, Correspondence relating to Afghanistan).

8. 122/2. Torrens to Macnaghten. May 15, 1838. P. G. R.

9. It was not yet known in Simla that Burnes had left Kabul.

that acting on this new basis while the Sikhs "advanced cautiously" on Kabul accompanied by British agents, a demonstration would be made at Shikarpur by an occupying division of the British army with Shah Shuja in their company. Thence the Shah would proceed to Kabul by way of Kandhar supported by his own troops, levied on financial assistance being advanced to him by the Government. British officers would be lent to drill and officer such troops and also to establish a connection between the two branches of the expedition; and (2) His Highness may "take his own course without reference to us."

Primarily on the ground of its being more acceptable to the Sikhs "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." But should the Maharaja "cheerfully give his approbation and concurrence to the first described course of proceeding" Macnaghten was authorized to act in reference to it. Overwhelming benefits, it was to be stressed, would accrue to Ranjit Singh by its acceptance—a friendly power would replace an enemy in Afghanistan; the fruits of his 1833 treaty would be guaranteed and the Government would mediate his customary claim upon Sind. In the prevailing circumstances it was claimed there was an identity of interest between the two powers. Should Ranjit Singh, therefore, approve of this convention the Governor-General would be prepared to enter into a general defensive alliance with him against all enemies from the North-west. Auckland would then ratify the treaty "unless circumstances should intermediately have occurred to induce His Lordship to alter his views as to its expediency." This done, "a temporary occupation of Shikarpur would be directed as soon as preparations and the season permitted."¹⁰

At Macnaghten's first interview with Ranjit Singh on June 3, he attentively considered the Envoy's recital of the first plan and interposed spontaneously, without even wishing to hear the second, "that to act in concert with the British Government must be the course best for his own advantage." When it was suggested that the British would become a party to the 1833 Treaty, the Maharaja declared that "this would be adding sugar

to milk." To the plan of a joint movement by way of Kandhar and Peshawar he "yielded a most cheerful and ready assent." Macnaghten then opportunely dwelt upon the benefits that would thus accrue to him "Though the Government held moderate aims—limited to opposing aggression, extending commerce, and cultivating the friendship of such allies as His Highness," the Envoy made it clear that in case events occurred in the north-west bearing a threat of aggression to their dominions the need might arise for a further though temporary use of British troops along the Indus¹¹

So far there did not appear to be more than the normal difficulties of delay arising in the way of Ranjit Singh's formal assent. But subsequently his rather sudden break up of the camp at Adinanagar¹² and his departure of Lahore on June 4, was strongly reminiscent of 1809 tactics marking his disinclination to adhere to the proposed alliance. A number of questions had arisen that might have urged this action—the relinquishment of the Maharaja's claim to Jallalabad, because Macnaghten wished to include that place in Shah Shuja's future kingdom; the article about Shikarpur; and 'that about a reception of a Resident at his court,' besides a few other minor points¹³

The Envoy thereupon employed a refinement of coercion pointing out that the way was after all open for Ranjit Singh to act independently of the British.¹⁴ As a result, agreement was reached on all but the Jallalabad and Shikarpur questions,¹⁵ and Macnaghten had "strong hopes" of the Maharaja's accession to the terms offered.¹⁶ Auckland, however, intimated to the Envoy that except in the event of receiving "a definite communication" from him he would prefer to await information from either Persia or England "which may enable him, with more surety

11. 122/19. Macnaghten to Torrens, June 3, 1838. P. G. R.

12. 122/20. Macnaghten to Torrens, June 4, 1838. P. G. R.

13. 122/19. Macnaghten to Torrens, June 3, 1838. P. G. R.

14. 122/24. Macnaghten to Torrens, June 8, 1838. P. G. R.

15. Fakir Aziz ud Din said in a picturesque language "that if one object is yielded another should be obtained—that is if S is taken away J should be granted (alluding to Shikarpur and Jallalabad)".—122/24. Macnaghten to Torrens, June 8, 1838. P. G. R.

16. 122/32. Macnaghten to Torrens, June 20, 1838. P. G. R.

than at present, to direct his course.”¹⁷ In a step of the contemplated magnitude his anxiety to cover responsibility with Home sanction was very natural.¹⁸

Settlement on both issues was soon reached, and Auckland received the “definite communication” that he had been waiting for. Shah Shuja’s claims to Shikarpur and the territories of Sind generally were to be arbitrated for a sum to be fixed in the future, but certainly at not less than twenty lacs. Out of this Ranjit Singh was to receive fifteen lacs, which would altogether release the Sindhians from his claims upon them.¹⁹ Mackeson, who on July 22, was deputed to confer with the Maharaja on the Jallalabad question, told him that the possibility might occur of the Government being compelled “in self-defence to take our own measures to ward off approaching danger and use our own troops to restore Shah Shuja to his throne.”²⁰ On this

17. Governor-General to Secret Committee, August 13, 1838. No. 2. (Indian Papers, *ut supra*).

18. Colvin (*John Russell Colvin*, pp. 109-112) says: Macnaghten pressed for leave to tell Ranjit that “with or without the co-operation of the Maharaja the Government of India will set up Shah Shuja”. Auckland, however, in “the obscure responsibility of the Indian Government in regard to Persian and European politics” desired “at least to see my way more clearly than I do at the present before I take the plunge to which you would urge me.” The Envoy was told that “to arrest the Persian advance by our own troops and by the support of Shah Shuja are measures not which we are disposed to carry out at all hazards, but which we may be compelled to”, should unforeseen emergencies arise. But, when all cause for hesitation is removed “I shall be with you for promptitude of action, and perhaps for greater promptitude of action than you may be.” (Auckland to Macnaghten, June 10).

All that is very illuminating. It indicates that the Governor-General was induced to adopt this policy almost against his will, and illustrates with what difficulty he restrained his Secretary from committing the Government to measures that were later unhappily adopted. The thin end of the wedge was working a cleavage in the British action being limited to a non-active participation in the expedition, and for this Macnaghten was largely responsible. One is led to infer that any move towards direct military participation would find him at its head.

19. Governor-General to Secret Committee, August 13, 1838. No. 2. (Indian Papers, *ut supra*).

20. 122/33. Mackeson’s Memorandum Enclosure. Macnaghten to Torrens, June 23, 1838. P. G. R.

he immediately yielded his assent and himself suggested that an annual tribute of two lacs would adequately compensate him for the relinquishment of his claims to Jallalabad. Macnaghten, who did not consider the demand unreasonable, and who realized the urgent need of preserving the Sikh Ruler's friendship, determined to accept it, but he regarded its payment as tribute as a nice point which he proposed "to put on such a footing as to be consistent with the dignity of the Shah." It was, therefore, suggested that Ranjit might maintain at Peshawar a body of 5,000 Mohammedan troops* for Shuja's aid, and "the annual subsidy of two lacs might be taken in the light of exchange for such aid that might at any time be required."²¹ When the Maharaja was at length brought to agree to this article, he declared "that every point of difference between himself and the British Government was for ever removed, and that he would be prepared with confidence and cordiality to take the part which he had all along been desirous of taking in concurrence and co-operation with the British Government."²² These terms upon which the Maharaja was now wholly agreed were embodied in four articles forming a supplement to the original treaty which Macnaghten submitted for the Governor-General's approval and ratification. The Envoy then left Lahore (July 13) for Ludhiana to obtain the Shah's assent to the draft, arriving there two days later.

The Shah was assured that, saving Shikarpur and the territories on the right bank of the Indus reserved in the Treaty for Ranjit Singh, he might consolidate his dominions to their proper limits; that his sovereignty would be unfettered; that the Government would not permit him to be in distress for money, and that on his reinstatement he might retain British officers to discipline his forces. He was brought finally to agree to the payment of two lacs to Ranjit Singh on the conditions proposed.²³ Within two days, the Shah fell in with the terms

* Hindus and Sikhs were to be excluded to prevent the Afghans from declaring a religious war.

21. Governor-General to Secret Committee, August 13, 1838. No. 2. (Indian Papers, *ut supra*).

22. 122/33. Macnaghten to Torrens, June 23, 1838. P. G. R.

23. Governor-General to Secret Committee, August 13, 1838. No. 2 (Indian Papers, *ut supra*).

negotiated at Lahore, and then turned his attention to measures calculated to realize practically his long-cherished hopes. He was anxious to commence operations promptly, and was painfully surprised at early winter being announced as the time appointed for the commencement of the expedition. Despite the British assurances with regard to the supply of money and officers to discipline his forces, he wished to rely mainly on his own resources and strength because it would enhance his estimation in the eyes of his future subjects.²⁴

Thus was concluded the Tripartite Treaty on the basis of the stipulations negotiated on March 12, 1833, and the four supplementary articles discussed recently. It was rectified by the Governor-General on July 25, 1838.²⁵ Ranjit Singh, the British Government and Shah Shuja, the three signatories, bound themselves to support one of them, the Shah, in his effort to regain the throne of Kabul. The Shah was to use his own levies numbering about 7,000, and the Maharaja was to advance 5,000 troops by way of Peshawar.²⁶ In extent of active participation the British Government was the "sleeping partner" in the venture. It had stipulated nothing more in the Treaty than money for the Shah, British officers for his army and agents for accompanying the expedition.

After the unfruitful return of Burnes, it was the most expedient course to adopt, and one which he himself admitted was "not what was best, but what was best under the circumstances which a series of blunders had produced."²⁷ Indeed, the recent

24. *Ibid.*

25. Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Vol. I, pp. 41-44.

Kanhaya Lal (*Ranjit-Nama*, pp. 507-508) gives the terms in Persian verse as follows :

مگر کرد شرط آید که چمن آن ز ماں	شود فتح کامل به فوج گراں
به ملک پشاور سرور کار خویش	بناورد گنج شاه فرخنده کیش
هم از ملکان و هم تیره جات	شود به غرض شاه والد صفات
نمودند حکم شهنشاه قبول	که بود افروز دم فیه جائے عدول

26. Governor-General to Secret Committee, August 13, 1838. No. 2. (*Indian Papers, ut supra*).

27. Burnes to Macnaghten, June 2, 1838. (*Parl. Papers, 1859, ut supra*).

extension of Russia's sphere of influence in the vicinity of Herat had created an imperative need for re-defining the British relations with Afghanistan. The three protective buffers that had been erected in 1809 had been reduced to two, at first by the relapse of Afghanistan into its perennial tradition of internecine conflict, down at least to 1826, and later by the loss of the Persian breastworks to Russia in 1828. The new British problem in the thirties was of creating and maintaining, respectively, the twin buffers of Afghanistan and the Punjab. Behind the deceptive play of apparent forces this was the dominant issue. Its solution was determined finally in the project of placing Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul in place of Dost Mohd. As to the friendship of Ranjit Singh and the reliance on the Punjab, that came to be judged as the cornerstone or the pivot upon which was to rest the additional buffer of Afghanistan. The first being constant, the second must be reconciled to the first, not the first to the second.²⁸

While the Government had not committed itself to promises of any direct military help, hints had occasionally been thrown out during the negotiations at Lahore of the likelihood of its employing its own troops along the Indus, or even on the expedition itself, should events on the North-west take a more serious turn.²⁹ Wode early awakened to the dangers of the situation and the necessity for precautionary measures. In a brilliant dispatch he acquainted the Government with the dangers they were thus courting. Persia, he wrote, was evidently prepared to risk a rupture with them than retrace her recent step, as she could ill-afford to evoke the hostility of her formidable European neighbour. She herself could never have gathered enough courage to ignore the threats of the British Government. In reality Russia goaded her into rejecting the

28. The basic problem, therefore, which faced the Government was to reconcile Dost Mohd. with the Maharaja—to make their alliance with it compatible with the relations which must exist between them as neighbours. The failure to accommodate their differences, without compromising the British friendship with Ranjit Singh, demanded the substitution in the Amir's place of one who would enable this all important friendship to be preserved. Clearly Shuja was such a chief.

29. See p. 219, *supra*.

British offer of mediation. While the Government, he argued, wholly trusting to the success of their diplomatic efforts had been neglecting military preparations, Persia was trying to defer the zero hour until her military strength had reached a pitch as would enable her to 'throw off the mask of friendship towards them. The Russian troops had been posted at Khiva from which position they could more easily advance to the help of the Persian troops engaged in the siege of Herat. It would, however, be many weeks before the British troops could reach Herat from the banks of the Indus. If Shah Shuja were to proceed *via* Shikarpur an attempt might be made by the Persians to force the issue and storm Herat. From that place they could easily attack and capture Kandhar. If instead of the feeble Sardars, the Persians were to block the way to Kabul, the Shah would have to encounter a much more serious opposition. Again, the Russian troops moving to help Dost Mohd. against the Sikhs could easily reach the Khyber valley. There they could inflict a defeat on the Sikhs. In that case the Government would be placed in an unenviable position. On the one hand, they had declared to protect the Afghans against the foreigners, and, on the other hand, they might be called upon, by the desire to protect their own interests, to support the Sikhs in maintaining their possessions. This would render the plea of disinterestedness as mere farce and would make the Government very unpopular among the Afghans. With the whole Afghan nation turned hostile to him, the restoration of the Shah would be difficult to achieve. Wade, therefore, urged that the Government should hold in reserve a force of 15,000 men along the Indus ready 'for every contingency'. He thought that it should even be prepared to resist directly by its own means the advance of the Persians aided by the Russians, as it also might find it necessary to directly support the cause of Shah Shuja.³⁰ Such irrefutable arguments could not fail to impress the Governor-General who made up his mind to send a strong British auxiliary force with the Shah in addition to the liberal advances in money which were made to enable him to pay his disciplined troops.³¹

30. 146/3. Wade to Macnaghten. July 8, 1838. P. G. R.

31. 121/103. Macnaghten to Wade, September 13, 1838. P. G. R.

On August 13, 1838, the Home Government was informed, that the Governor-General had determined "to give the direct and powerful assistance of the British Government to the enterprise of Shah Shuja, in a degree which was not in the first instance contemplated by me from a conviction, confirmed in a most decided manner by every opinion of authority on the subject, that the measure could not be trusted mainly to the support of the Sikh Ruler and his army, without imminent hazard of failure, and of serious detriment to the reputation of the British name among the Afghan people."³² A total of 27,000 men was employed, of whom 21,500 were actually brought into action beyond the Indus under Sir John Keane.³³ Such was the "direct and powerful assistance" which the British Government was to render Shah Shuja in excess of both its intentions and obligations. Auckland had decided to "go the whole hog."

As the territories of the Amirs of Sind lay in-between the British frontiers and Afghanistan, Pottinger was sent to them to obtain their concurrence to the enterprise.³⁴ But, as usual, the Amirs proved contumacious, and began to evade the real issue. The Government became convinced of the unfriendly disposition entertained towards them by the principal Amir. At a critical juncture like the present one no opposition could be brooked. It seemed ridiculous that a petty chief whose very existence depended on the continuation of British favour should hinder the execution of its plan. Pottinger was, therefore, instructed to call the Bombay Force if he did not show a more conciliatory attitude. In that case he was to be excluded from all share in the government of Sind, and some other member of the Talpur family, more cordially disposed towards the British, was to be elevated to the dignity of the principal Amir.³⁵

In reality it was not necessary to go to such extremes. Whatever feelings the Amirs might have entertained towards the British, they were not prepared to offer any opposition to

32. Governor-General to Secret Committee, August 13, 1838. No. 2 (Indian Paper *ut supra*).

33. *Ibid.*

34. 146/21. Wade to Macnaghten, August 17, 1838. P. G. R.

35. 121/125. Macnaghten to Wade, October 4, 1838. P. G. R.

them. They were not capable of opposing the Shah either, particularly with the might of the Empire at his back. No wonder then that the Amirs gave way³⁶ literally and figuratively. They had, moreover, to acquiesce in the occupation of Shikarpur, and in the temporary suspension of that clause in their Treaty 1832 which had closed the Indus to the passage of war materials.³⁷ A new treaty was concluded with the Amirs which virtually brought them into subordinate alliance with the Paramount Power.³⁸

Apprehending that any distortion of facts, fabricated deliberately to prejudice Shah Shuja's cause, might create an unfavourable opinion among the Afghan public, it was found expedient to issue a declaration in his name which was to contain a statement of the aims and objects of the allies. To convince the Afghans about the justice of the Shah's cause, the copies of this declaration were circulated in Afghanistan through some secret agency. It declared that the Shah was going to regain his rightful heritage which for some years had been under "a slave of the Durrani Empire." It stated that the Persians were trying to destroy a "scion of the Durrani Dynasty," and that Dost Mohd. had entered into a treaty with them. Dost was described as a ruler, cruel and oppressive. It asserted that the Shah was actuated by his love for his co-religionists whom he wished to protect from the heretics. It then referred to the promises made by Elphinstone to the Shah in 1809 to help him against the Persians. These promises the British Government were then fulfilling. "We have discovered," the declaration pointed out, "that the wish and desire of the English is to see everyone established in his rights and tyranny and injustice banished from the earth. When the desired act is established, the British Government will not in any way interfere with the Afghans."³⁹

The Governor-General himself issued from Simla a Manifesto of the causes which had mainly influenced the Government to

36. 146/98. Wade to Macnaghten, November 4, 1838. P. G. R.

37. Governor-General to Secret Committee, March 13, 1839. (Parl. Papers, 1859, *ut supra*, pp. 303—314).

38. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 334-36.

39. 121/104. Macnaghten to Wade, September 13, 1838. P. G. R.

espouse Shah Shuja's cause. The Government, it ran, were interested in extending the benefits of the Indus navigation scheme to the Afghan traders. They had sent Burnes to the *de facto* Chief of Kabul to invite his co-operation in that matter. As Dost had in the meanwhile attacked the Sikh forces and as Ranjit Singh was sure to avenge this unprovoked aggression, Burnes was invested with diplomatic power. The Sikh-Afghan disputes would have led to ceaseless warfare in the very regions where, for commercial reasons, the Government wanted peace. To avert this calamity their mediation had been offered. But by then the Government came to know of the Persian intrigues, having for their purpose the extension of her influence to the very banks of the Indus. The Government could not possibly accept the unreasonable pretensions of Dost as they considered them to be inconsistent with their policy of playing a fair game with Ranjit Singh. The Amir undisguisedly gave encouragement to the Persian designs, and even threatened to call in foreign aid against the Sikhs. Hence Burnes was recalled. It became evident to the Governor-General that as long as Dost occupied the throne of Kabul, tranquillity could not be established on the Indian frontiers, which logically meant the defeat of the commercial policy of the Government. On the other hand, the Persians had been besieging Herat and the besieged were bravely defending their city. To arrest the rapid progress of the Persian arms it had been decided to send assistance to the Chief of Herat. As the disunited Barakzais could not co-operate with the Government for the defence of India, the attention of the Governor-General had been drawn to Shah Shuja, who had willingly promised to offer a united resistance to external enemies when he was reinstated. The Manifesto laid down: "This (campaign) will promote commerce, gain us our due dignity in Central Asia, restore tranquillity on the most important frontier of India and raise a lasting barrier against hostile intrigue and encroachment."⁴⁰

21,500 men and a sum of money of corresponding magnitude, in Winston Churchill's phrase, were now being offered as "hostages to fortune." But the British Government had not irretrievably burnt the bridges they had so far crossed, and indeed

events occurred that afforded them an excellent opportunity for retracting their steps and preventing the despatch of the expedition.

The Afghan policy of the British Government had been occasioned by the western menace and was the inevitable penumbra of the shadow that had fallen across the North-western frontier. In August, 1838, when it appeared that the influence of Persia and Russia had pervaded all Afghanistan except Herat, it was incontestably true, as McNeill said, that no measures could be more unequivocally measures of self-defence than those which the Government were called upon to adopt.⁴¹ From this fact alone did they derive their sanction, and the submergence of such influence after September 9, was to deny them further *raison d'être*.

To induce the Persian Ruler to raise the siege of Herat, Wade had on March 7, suggested a naval demonstration in the Persian Gulf.⁴² Such advice did not pass unheeded, and on June 19, an expedition, bitterly described by the Shah as 387 "rotten Hindus," landed at Karrach (thirty miles north-west of Bushire), on the shores of the Gulf. The Shah thereupon agreed to make amends and apologize for the ill-treatment suffered by McNeill's couriers at his hands, and in consequence of the demands presented by the British on August 17, he raised the siege on September 9, and marched back towards Tehran.⁴³ The Russian menace subsided correspondingly, and a golden opportunity was offered to the authors of the Tripartite scheme to abandon it altogether, or withhold the expedition, or at least to review the whole situation. Indeed, before his ratification of the then projected treaty the Governor General had clearly indicated the possibility of events occurring that would induce him to alter his views as to its expediency.⁴⁴ This reservation could have

41. McNeill to Palmerston, August 2, 1838, Letter No. 93. (Indian Papers, 1839, Correspondence relating to Persia and Afghanistan).

42. Secret and Separate Consultation, August 2, 1838. (Captain Wade's letters to the Government of India in the Secret and Separate Department, January to July, 1838).

43. Stoddart to Macnaghten, September 10, 1838. Quoted in Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan*, Vol. 1, p. 383.

44. 122/2. Torrens to Macnaghten, May 15, 1838. P. G. R.

been pleaded at this stage for revising the alliance without disgrace or injury to British good faith, for caution would have appealed to so prudent a ruler as Ranjit Singh and a pacification of Shuja could have been suitably devised. The way had been unexpectedly cleared for the Government to realize the end of its policy by means other than war. The Home Despatch of October 24, suggested a renewed attempt to detach the Amir from his western allies,⁴⁵ and the door to reconciliation had not yet been completely barred.

Disregarding the opportunity for such politic re-consideration, however, the Governor General on November 8, declared his intention "to prosecute with vigour the measures which have been announced, with a view to the substitution of a friendly for a hostile power in the eastern provinces of Afghanistan and to the establishment of a permanent barrier against schemes of aggression upon our north-west frontier."⁴⁶ The seal was thus unequivocally affixed to a plan that was to develop into the First Afghan War. This decision to persist indicates that the Government had confused the ends of its policy and gives the *promenade militaire* more the appearance of a grand enterprise vaguely to restore Shah Shuja than to effectively counter the Russian menace.

45. Secret Committee to Governor-General, October 24, 1838, para 19, (Colvin, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-27).

46. Orders by the Rt. Hon'ble the Governor-General of India, Secret Department, November 8, 1838. (Reproduced in full in Kaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 383-84).

CHAPTER XII

RETROSPECT

"I am happy," wrote Seton to Metcalfe on December 4, 1808, "to find you are on the way to meet Polyphemus... and long most impatiently for the result of your communication to him."¹ In the following April, the Resident's hopes came much near fulfilment, and his anxiety was turned into glee, when Metcalfe succeeded in bringing the youthful and intrepid Maharaja round to his own purpose, even through the manoeuvre of Ochterlony's detachment. Afterwards, when instigated by his turbulent Sardars, the high-spirited Maharaja felt keenly the check imposed on his ambition by the presence of the British on the border of his kingdom, and we often find him pursuing towards them a 'Jack-in-the box' policy right upto the beginning of the twenties, though he always took care not to offend them to the extent of causing an actual rupture.

By 1823 the Anglo-Sikh relations had progressed to an important stage. Ranjit Singh was no longer a minor chief who could be bullied or intimidated by the English, but by virtue of his extensive conquests had become a powerful potentate. He was, therefore, to be treated with adroit skill and diplomacy. Wade fully rose to the occasion and succeeded eminently in cultivating and fostering steadfast friendliness with the Sikh Ruler. Ranjit Singh soon became "the best of neighbours in the peace time," though representing a potentially dangerous ally on an occasion or two.² With the passage of time, however, the Maharaja came to repose such implicit faith in Wade that even while the British inaugurated and unfolded in stages their 'policy of encirclement' against his kingdom, the Political

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1. Quoted in Thompson, *The Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, p. 90.
 2. The most notable occasion was the first Burmese War (1824-26), when the English had to keep a vigilant eye on the Sikh Ruler.

Agent was able to keep him in safe gear by means of diplomatic manœuvrings.

Wade became a *persona grata* with Ranjit Singh to the extent of enjoying his unqualified trust. The Maharaja learnt to value his counsel highly. Wade's correspondence shows that this was due partly to an understanding on his part of the varying moods of the Sikh Ruler and the workings of his mind.

He eagerly strove to meet the Maharaja's personal wishes as far as possible and to provide all amenities to the visitors from the Lahore Court. For the convenience of the latter he constructed a *barahdari* at Ludhiana.³ In 1832, he supplied the Sikh Ruler with rare prescriptions for distilling wine.⁴ While at Lahore, Wade visited religious places and contributed money to the Sikh shrines.⁵ In 1837, he secured for Ranjit Singh the services of the British Commander-in Chief for instituting the new "Order of Merit."⁶ As a channel of communication between the Maharaja and the Government, he represented the former's point of view with complete exactitude, sincerity and zeal.

He scrupulously avoided giving the slightest provocation to the Maharaja. As for example, he never showed eagerness for the refugees who escaped from beyond the Sutlej. In 1825, he refused to meet Sardar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia when the latter fled from his country.⁷ In 1828, he tried his utmost in co-operation with the Maharaja's local Agent to awaken Hari Singh Kang to the need of conciliating his master.⁸ He composed the differences arising out of the depredations committed by the Bahawalpurians in the Maharaja's territory, first in 1829 and then in 1833.⁹ He often reminded Bahawal Khan of his two-fold obligations, *i.e.*, both to the Maharaja and to the British, and exhorted him never to give offence to the former.¹⁰

3. 115/90. Prinsep to Wade, July 25, 1831. P. G. R.

4. 138/54. Wade to Macnaghten, October 15, 1832. P. G. R.

5. 137/6. Wade to Prinsep, May 15, 1831. P. G. R.

6. 119/13. Macnaghten to Wade, April 24, 1837. P. G. R.

7. 94/118. Wade to Metcalfe, December 29, 1825. P. G. R.

8. 93/3. Wade to Colebrooke, January 5, 1828. P. G. R.

9. 97/108. Wade to Colebrooke, July 17, 1829. P. G. R. Also 105/15. Mackeson to Wade, June 12, 1833. P. G. R.

10. 97/108. Wade to Colebrooke, July 17, 1829. P. G. R.

Ranjit Singh's expeditions against the refractory Sodhis and the Singhpurias were considered by Wade, contrary to Murray's views, as no infringement of the Treaty of 1809, and he held that the Maharaja's cis-Sutlej detachment was quite small and that it was absolutely necessary for protecting holy places against Akali incursions. Unlike Murray again, Wade regarded the Sodhis as a turbulent sect.¹¹ This solicitude of Wade for the welfare of the Sikh kingdom joined to his own personal qualities and attainments grew into a peculiar fascination with the Lahore Ruler. The Political Agent's successful career as a soldier persuaded him to value his suggestions in regard to military matters. Then, Wade being conversant with the spoken Punjabi¹² and Persian,¹³ this eliminated the chances of misunderstanding arising from incorrect versions of interpreters, and enabled both to appreciate correctly each other's viewpoints. Again, the ease with which Wade moved at the Sikh Court during his visits, joined the drinking parties, admired the dancing girls and enjoyed the excitement of hunting, ingratiated him with the Sikh Ruler.¹⁴

Wade proved to be a diplomat of a high order as is strikingly evidenced by the general attitude of suavity and forbearance which he uniformly sustained towards the Sikhs. The discrepancy in his own political views and those of his colleagues and superiors, like Murray, did not deter him from following his own honourable path of acting without prejudice to the Maharaja's interests. He was even gratuitously jibed at for engaging in "friendly evolutions" with Ranjit Singh, and had to fight hard against Murray for sustaining some of the Maharaja's claims. He remained averse to any premeditated plans of undermining the position of the Sikh monarch, or clipping his territory for the Company's benefit. In fact, he often pleaded with his own Government to honour the Maharaja's legitimate rights, and suffered the Resident's admonitions against such advocacy with extreme coolness.¹⁵ He felt that the officers of

11. 97/149. Wade to Fraser, September 19, 1829. P. G. R.

12. Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, pp. 342-43.

13. *Akhbarat-i-Sikhan*, Vol. I, Chet 12, 1896. B. E.

14. Wade to Metcalfe, August 1, 1827. (Quoted in Chopra, *The Punjab as Sovereign State*, pp. 283-329).

15. 98/33. Wade to Hawkins, February 27, 1830. P. G. R.

the Government were bound to preserve the integrity of the Maharaja's territory as much as that of any other independent state.¹⁶ His own practice accorded with this principle, and he repeatedly impressed upon the Government the desirability of putting an end to the continuous litigation of the cis-Sutlej States.¹⁷

Wade could accurately weigh the pros and cons of the moves on the chess board of Anglo-Sikh diplomacy. He was not one of those subordinate authorities immersed in details and local affairs, who are liable to be biased by views which promise immediate advantage. He belonged to that school of far-sighted English statesmen who held the view that the friendship with the Maharaja was essential for the stability of British rule itself.¹⁸

If Wade was discharging his duties honestly to win the goodwill of the Maharaja, the latter was no less ardent in vindicating his regards for the former. His sincerity and honesty of purpose had won Wade the heart of Ranjit Singh who regarded him as *Farzand-i-Dilband*¹⁹ (a worthy friend), and as "the medium of promoting friendship between the two States."²⁰ He had gained the confidence of the Sikh Ruler to such an extent that

16. 97/180. Wade to Hawkins, October 14, 1829. P. G. R.

17. 97/180. Wade to Hawkins, October 13, 1829. P. G. R.

18. Wade himself defined the policy which always guided him in his relations with the Maharaja: "I used my best endeavours to follow the example of Lord Metcalfe in balancing the interests of the two States, and identifying their policy, as paramount to every other object. In India, it is essential to the proper care and preservation of our system of alliances, that the British Agent should be regarded as a friend of the chiefs among whom he resides, rather than as a mere instrument for conveying the instructions or enforcing. Our rigid rule is not congenial to the policy of their foreign masters, with their national habits, and a softening agency may wisely be exercised to inspire the confidence of our Indian allies, without losing sight of the views and interests of our country."—Wade, *A Narrative of the Services, Military and Political* p. 19.

19. Sohan Lal, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, Part II, p. 220. Sohan Lal says at another place: "Kaptan Sahib is an old and sincere benefactor of the Princely Ruler and he has the greatest regard for him." *Ibid* p. 235.

20. 141/21. Notes from a conference between Wade and Ranjit Singh's Agent. August 23, 1837. P. G. R.

he was permitted to visit the Punjab freely at a time when it was rigidly closed to British officers.²¹

The Maharaja, although he had direct access to the Government through his Agent at Delhi, desired that Wade should be put in charge of the Lahore dependencies.²² He entrusted to him not only the collection of revenues from his cis Sutlej territories but also part of the judicial and administrative work. Thus the territories which he would not yield, even under threat of force, came in effect under British control like any other protected State,²³ and Ranjit Singh did it out of regard for Wade's friendship. Wade thus became a factotum of both the States and wrote to the Government that "the Maharaja has honoured me with a share of his confidence to which I can lay no pretensions. I cannot be insensible to the proof he has given of it in wishing the affairs of his territory on the left bank of the Sutlej in their relation to the Protected States, to be administered by me and it is a mark of distinction on which I trust, I may be allowed to congratulate myself without reproach, but, however gratifying and important it may be to my vanity, I beg to assure you that it can only serve to make me additionally desirous of meriting the good opinion and approbation of my own Government, by continually reflecting that my public obligations to both consist in disinterested and impartial discharge of my duty."²⁴

The proposal of the Government to transfer Wade to Ferozepore to superintend trade, when the negotiations with regard to the navigation of the Sutlej and the Indus had been successfully carried out,²⁵ was not liked by the Maharaja as he had no wish to part company with the Political Agent who had so deeply impressed him by his sincerity of purpose and other qualities. The Government had, therefore, to yield to Ranjit Singh's repeated requests for Wade's retention at Ludhiana.²⁶

All through his long tenure of office at Ludhiana, Wade

21. *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. XX, s. v. Wade, p. 412.

22. 95/47. Wade to Metcalfe, December 3, 1826. P. G. R.

23. Jacquemont, *The Punjab a Hundred Years Ago*, p. 20.

24. 97/6. Wade to Colebrooke, January 1, 1829. P. G. R.

25. 139/2. Wade to Macnaghten, January 29, 1833. P. G. R.

26. 117/1. Macnaghten to Wade, February 4, 1833 P. G. R.

impressed upon the Maharaja the need for peace, and the latter often invited him to take counsel on urgent problems.²⁷ In July, 1837, he sought his advice on the best mode of effecting peace with the Afghans with due deference to his "honour and credit."²⁸ At the same time, Ranjit Singh wrote to the Governor-General: "Praise is due to God that implicit confidence is placed in Captain Wade. He has always been and will remain a sincere and zealous promoter of the intimate relations which subsist agreeably to long established treaty between the two Governments."²⁹

On William Bentinck realizing the Political Agent's influence with the Maharaja, he put him in entire charge of diplomatic relations with him. In that capacity he had several particularly difficult duties to perform. The first was in regard to the meeting of the Maharaja and the Governor-General. No doubt both wanted to meet, but each wanted the other to take the initiative and made it a point of prestige. Besides, the Sikh Ruler still had his doubts about crossing the boundaries of his State and trusting himself to the British. Wade handled the situation adroitly and at last succeeded in persuading Ranjit Singh to agree to the Governor-General's conditions of meeting, and the two met with all *empressment* at Rupar. The Maharaja wished to confer upon Wade a *jagir* in recognition of his service, in this connection but he declined the offer.³⁰

Then followed the scheme for the opening of the Indus to navigation. Ranjit Singh was typical of oriental potentates in his disregard of the interests of commerce. It was a matter of mere vanity with him to be the possessor of some British goods, and his desire to see a steam-boat on the Indus was actuated by curiosity. The British did not have entirely philanthropic

27. 97/27. Wade to Colebrooke, February 18, 1829. P. G. R. Also

97/38 Wade to Colebrooke, March 3, 1829. P. G. R.

28. 143/26. Wade to Macnaghton, July 9, 1837. P. G. R.

29. 144/23. Ranjit Singh to Auckland, July 24, 1837. P. G. R.

30. Wade wrote to Prinsep: "...I declined, observing that any services that I might have performed in that respect had their reward from the Government which I served. The intended *jagir* was the district of Mahl, south of the Sutlej, and valued at Rs. 15,000 a year."—137/35. November 16, 1831. P.G.R.

intentions either in opening the Indus to navigation. A political scheme was disguised in a commercial garb, and it was a tough job to make the Sikh Jat comprehend it without arousing his suspicion, and to create sufficient interest in him to offer active support for its execution. It speaks volumes for Wade's skill and negotiating capacity that Ranjit Singh agreed to sign the commercial treaties without being able to sense the political motives of the British.³¹

In 1836, the British policy towards Sind changed radically. Ranjit Singh had in the mean time set his mind on Shikarpur, and the Mazari filibusters provided him with a *casus belli*. The Government advised Wade to employ all means, "short of actual menace", to dissuade the Maharaja from advancing towards Shikarpur, and authorized him even to declare that Sind was under British protection.³² Wade's full confidence in his persuasive warnings to succeed in deterring the Maharaja from pursuing his designs upon Sind was amply justified by the results.³³ Ranjit Singh sent orders to his officers that the Sindhians should suffer no injury at the hands of the Sikhs.³⁴ When, therefore, the Maharaja acquiesced in what the Government wished, Wade felt that it was neither fair nor wise to press for the relinquishment of what he had already conquered.³⁵ To Wade it seemed that for the time being it was more than sufficient to wring a pledge from the Maharaja not to proceed further,³⁶ because he knew that the latter would not withdraw his troops from the conquered territory.³⁷ Though he had been given great latitude "in tendering a suitable and effective

31. The Sikh Ruler's only worry was that the peaceful schemes of the British would hinder his designs upon Sind. Wade explained to him the friendly nature of the attitude and intentions of the British and their desire to encourage his commerce and to fill his treasury with custom duties. The Maharaja was quite satisfied with his *clairvoyance*.—138/60. Wade to Macnaghten, October 27, 1832. P.G.R.
32. 107/16. Macnaghten to Wade, September 26, 1836. P. G. R.
33. 142/70. Wade to Macnaghten, October 5, 1836. P. G. R.
34. 142/84. Wade to Macnaghten, November 2, 1836. P. G. R.
35. 142/70. Wade to Macnaghten, October 5, 1836. P. G. R.
36. 142/84. Wade to Macnaghten, November 2, 1836. P. G. R.
37. 142/107. Wade to Macnaghten, December 27, 1836. P. G. R.

remonstrance to the Maharaja", he proceeded prudently, and by his peaceful exertions attained for the Government what it would have been obliged to win by costly and dangerous military action. By drawing a very colourful and attractive picture of the general advantages of British friendship and support, Wade skilfully dissuaded Ranjit Singh from his pet scheme of the conquest of Sind.³⁸

Wade influenced the British policy towards Afghanistan considerably. While the Russian bugbear constantly haunted the British, it was he who suggested in 1836 the replacement of Dost Mohd. by Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul as the most feasible and advantageous counter-measure against the Russian moves.³⁹ It is evident from his correspondence that he underrated the strength of the Barakzai family which, he held erroneously, had no hold over the Afghans. In his opinion he had been obviously influenced by Shah Shuja who persuaded him to believe that a large section of his countrymen was in his favour.⁴⁰

Wade regarded the annexation of Peshawar in 1834 as an egregious political blunder on the part of the Sikhs,⁴¹ and prophesied that it would lead to endless hostilities between them and the Afghans. This proved true by subsequent events.⁴² In pursuance of the British policy to see peaceful relations established between Dost Mohd. and Ranjit Singh, Wade, after the battle of Jamrud, made a remonstrance to Maharaja. In a very suitable language he told him that he had been surrounded by evil counsellors, that to sacrifice a man like the Nalwa Sardar was to depreciate his own strength, and finally that it would displease the British, if he gave loose reins to his lieutenants at Peshawar to engage Dost Mohd in battle. He propitiated the Maharaja in the end by saying that "the sincerity of a true friend was tried by his candour which prompted him to speak the truth even when it might not be agreeable to his

38. 142/72. Wade to Macnaghten, October 10, 1836. P. G. R.

39. 142/36. Wade to Macnaghten, June 7, 1836. P. G. R.

40. 145/21. Wade to Macnaghten, January 1, 1838. P. G. R.

41. 144/80. Wade to Macnaghten, September 21, 1837. P. G. R.

42. What happened between the years 1835 and 1837 on the Peshawar frontier has been sketched in Chapter IX.

friend."⁴³ As a result of this remonstrance, the Maharaja suspended hostilities against Dost Mohd. and he openly declared that he had declined to march to Kabul out of deference to Wade's opinions and against the insistent pleadings of Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh and other Sardars to proceed at once.⁴⁴

Wade, however, was not in favour of putting any pressure on the Maharaja to relinquish Peshawar to Dost Mohd. as he was apprehensive that any further demand might lead to an unfortunate war with him. The Sikh Ruler was already confined to the north of the river Sutlej, he had been restrained from advancing towards Sind in 1886, and if arrested in his course of expansion to the North-west, he might even take up arms against the British. The character of the Maharaja was well-known to Wade who declared that the former never contemplated the cession of Peshawar to any of the Barakzais.⁴⁵ It was this irreconcilability of the conflicting interests of Ranjit Singh and Dost Mohd. and the desire to remove friction between the Punjab and Afghanistan that made Wade advocate the policy of the Tripartite Treaty. He contrived by all possible means to prove that Dost Mohd. was a common enemy, and Shah Shuja a common friend, and that the restoration of the latter was a panacea for all the ills of the North-west frontier. Lord Auckland completely identified himself with his views.

The complete success of the Political Agent's diplomatic dealings with the Maharaja was repeatedly acknowledged officially in letters from the Governor General under whom he served to the Court of Directors, and in the replies received from the latter.⁴⁶ Bentinek openly avowed that the enthusiastic reception accorded to Burnes at Lahore was all due to his influence and proper handling of the situation.⁴⁷ Auckland amply recognized his services in averting a serious crisis in Sind.⁴⁸ He accepted Wade as one of his chief advisers on the

43. 143/26. Wade to Macnaghten, July 9, 1837, P. G. R.

44. *Ibid.*

45. Secret and Separate Consultations, October 17, 1838. No. 68. Wade to Macnaghten, March 3, 1838.

46. *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. XX, s.v. Wade. p. 412.

47. 115/97. Prinsep to Wade, October 10, 1831. P. G. R.

48. 119/69. Macnaghten to Wade, November 13, 1837. P. G. R.

North-western policy. In 1837, he got a little apprehensive when Ranjit Singh was negotiating an alliance with Nepal, but Wade reassured the Governor-General with the following sane and shrewd observations: "Ranjit Singh has hitherto derived nothing but advantage from his Alliance with us. While we have been engaged in consolidating our power in Hindustan, he has been extending his conquests throughout the Punjab and across the Indus, and as we are now beginning to prescribe limit to his power, which cannot be supposed he will regard with complacency, he is now more likely to encourage than withdraw from alliances which may hold out to him a hope of creating a balance of power."⁴⁹ The Maharaja knew the limits of his power, and in the interests of the security of his dynasty he would not disturb his friendly relations with the British. He manifestly betrayed his feelings on this point when he said: "I might perhaps drive the British (or the Ungrecz Bahadur, as he styled them) as far as Allighur, but I should be driven back across the Sutlej and out of my kingdom."⁵⁰

Herein lies Ranjit Singh's greatness as a statesman. Unlike Hyder Ali or Tipu Sultan, he knew the depth of the English power and the comparative limitations of his own resources, and the futility of measuring swords with the English. All through his life, therefore, he remained anxious to be on friendly terms with that power. It was not timidity, but a true realization of the whole situation, which led him to accept the Treaty of Amritsar (1809) and so forfeit for ever his right of expansion in the cis Sutlej area, or later, in 1827, to suffer the British refusal to admit his claim to Ferozepur, or to forgo the enforcement of his demands upon the Amirs of Sind in 1836, or to become an unwilling ally to the Tripartite Treaty of 1838. It was the recognition of the logic of hard facts and of the necessity of putting on as good a face as possible over an unpleasant reality.⁵¹ The British officers must have chuckled in their sleeves when towards the close of 1836, Ranjit Singh asked

49. Political Proceedings, October 20, 1837. No. 61. Quoted in Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, p. 60.

50. M'Gregor, *The History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 35.

51. *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Centenary Volume, p. 174.

Auckland for a supply of muskets and pistols from the Delhi magazine.⁵²

The Governors General were equally anxious to show to the world that the British were united by close friendship to the Lahore Darbar. Without exception they would receive with distinction all the presents sent, and invitations extended, by the Maharaja. If Lord Bentinck was often seen praying to the Almighty to "keep the garden of friendship blooming and strengthen the roots of the tree of mutual regard,"⁵³ Lord Auckland warned his subordinates that "in consideration of all these questions, you will bear in mind that the Sikhs are always our first friends and steadfast allies."⁵⁴ If Ranjit Singh was afraid of their superiority in the field and kept up neighbourly relations with the British on that account, the latter were equally keen to maintain a faithful ally on their North-west frontier owing to their Russophobia. Thus the mutual regard of the two States was sustained through equally weighty considerations on either side.

On June 27, 1839, the Maharaja disappeared from the stage of history. Nine months later, Wade quitted the Land of the Five Rivers. Thus both their friends, i.e., Ranjit Singh and Wade, left the Sikhs almost abruptly to political disintegration and ultimate extinction. If the Sikhs needed the leadership of the one to control their affairs in their own land, they certainly would have benefited from the experience of the other in the continuation of a peaceful adjustment of their policies in the years to come. But Fate willed otherwise.

52. Macnaghten wrote to Wade in this connection: "The long and uninterrupted amity which has subsisted between the two Governments.....entitle him (Ranjit Singh) to every consideration and His Highness's wishes in the present occasion will, therefore, be complied with."—107/40. December 19, 1836. P. G. R.

53. Macnaghten to Wade, May 6, 1832. P. G. R.

54. Quoted in *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, Vol. II, p. 205.

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Kabul.

Amir Dost Mohd. Khan Barakzai. 1826—39.

Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk Soddozai.* 1839—42.

Kandhar.

Kohin Dil Khan and his brothers.

Herat.

Shah Kamran.

Persia.

Fateh Ali Shah.

Mohd. Shah.

Governors General of Bengal :

Lord Wellesley. (1798—1805).

Lord Cornwallis. (July 1805—October 1805).

Sir George Barlow. (October 1805—1807).

Lord Minto. (1807—1813).

Marquis of Hastings. (1813—23).

John Adam. (Acting). 1823 (January to July).

Lord Amherst. (1823—1828.)

Lord William Bentinck. (1828—1834).

Governors General of India :

Lord William Bentinck, (1834—35).

Lord Metcalfe (Acting). 1835.

Lord Auckland. (1836—42).

Chief Secretaries to the Government of India :

G. W. Swinton.

H. T. Prinsep.

Shah Shuja lived at Ludhiana as a pensioner of the British Government between 1816 and 1838.

Secretaries to the Government of India :

W. H. Macnaghten.	Secretary.
H. Torrens.	Deputy Secretary.
H. T. Maddock.	Secretary.
J. R. Colvin.	Private Secretary to the Governor-General.

Residents at Delhi :

C. T. Metcalfe.
 E. Colebrooke.
 W. Fraser.
 Hawkins.

Ambala Agency :

- (a) Deputy Superintendent of Hill and Sikh Affairs :
 Capt. W. Murray. 1823—27.
 (b) Political Agents :
 Captain Murray, 1827—31.
 G. R. Clerk, 1831—40.

Ludhiana Agency :

- (a) Assistant to the Agent to the Governor-General :
 N.W.P., Delhi.
 C M Wade, 1823—27.
 (b) Political Assistant :
 C.M. Wade, 1827—32.
 (c) Political Agent :
 C.M. Wade, 1832—40.

Captain Alexander Burnes led the commercial Mission to Lahore (1831) and to Kabul (1837).

British Resident at Teheran : Ellis.

British Agent in Persia : J. McNeil.

Russian Agent at Kabul : Capt. Vickovitch.

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