

of the hills, he began to commit depredations in all directions, occasionally extending his incursions as far as the British territories on the Nerbudda. No country could be better adapted for the carrying on of a desultory warfare than the one he had chosen for his asylum, for the whole of it was a succession of mountains, ravines, rivers, and jungles. Some of the Arabs were pursued by Captain Sparkes with only 107 sepoys. Finding that they were far more numerous than they had been led to expect, that the Arabs and those with them formed a host of cavalry and infantry, Captain Sparkes took up the first position that presented itself. He maintained the post for some hours, until he had lost half his men and consumed nearly all his powder. He then displayed a white flag. The signal was disregarded; it is vain to hope for truce or quarter from such enemies as those; in such situations the brave man must make up his mind to die with his sword in his hand. Sparkes was shot dead in leading a charge, or in attempting to cut a way through the enemy, and every man of his detachment was literally cut to pieces by the Arabs, with the exception of nine, who had been left in the rear, in charge of the baggage. In the strong country east of Nagpoor, a powerful chief openly declared for the ex-rajah, and other jungle chiefs followed this example; but they were all reduced to obedience and punished by a detachment under Major Wilson. In the Bytool valley the Arabs levied contributions in the name of Apa Sahab, and butchered another party of our sepoys. The name of the ex-rajah of Nagpoor was waxing almost as terrible as that of Trimbukjee. An enormous reward (a lac of rupees in hand, and ten thousand rupees a year in land) was offered for his apprehension; and as no effects proceeded from the tempting offer, Lieutenant-Colonel Adams was detached against him in some force. At the close of the year, while Adams was establishing stations of cavalry and infantry round the country of Chyn Shah, that chief, with 2,000 or 3,000 of his Gonds, made a bold attempt to recover for Apa Sahab some of the forts in Nagpoor; but these attempts were frustrated, and both Chyn Shah and the fugitive rajah were obliged to seek refuge in the mountains. In the month of February, 1819, Colonel Adams entered the mountains from the Nerbudda valley, with three separate columns; and other divisions came up to co-operate with him. Upon this Apa Sahab fled to Aseerghur, the

killadar of which, Jeswunt Rao Lar, was his friend, or rather the irreconcilable enemy of the English. In the course of a very few days Aseerghur was invested by British and native troops; fresh divisions came up to join in the siege, and such an accumulation of ordnance took place as had not been witnessed in these Indian wars, except at the siege of Hatrass.

Aseerghur stands on a scarped hill, and is exceedingly strong by art as well as by nature: it then mounted a tremendous artillery, including some guns of enormous size. The general height of the position above the plain was 750 feet. The killadar knew that *we* had Scindiah's order for his surrender, but *he* had at the same time Scindiah's order to hold out to the utmost. He made two or three desperate sallies from the fortress, in one of which Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser was killed. The explosion of the magazine of one of our breaching batteries—a magazine containing 130 barrels of powder, destroyed an entire company of our sepoys, and created some confusion. But our fire was soon renewed and increased. On the 5th of April one of the angles of the upper fort was brought down, and with it came thundering and crushing over the face of the rock one of the enormous pieces of Indian ordnance. Our storming parties were ready to act under the eyes of General Doveton and Sir John Malcolm, when, on the 7th of April, Jeswunt Rao Lar, who had consumed nearly all his gunpowder, and lost his chief artillery officer, and who possibly feared the fate of the hanged killadar of Talmere, begged a parley, and agreed to surrender at discretion. A garrison of 1,200 men, chiefly Arab mercenaries, piled their arms before Sir John Malcolm's division. Few of the besieged had fallen, for the rock and the upper fort towered so high above our batteries that only shells could reach them with any effect. The total loss of the besiegers, Europeans and natives, was, in killed and wounded, 299 men, and, besides the brave Fraser who was killed, ten of our officers were wounded. The foul Mahratta rag was pulled down, and our union flag hoisted in its stead. The fortress, with a small surrounding tract of jungle, has been retained by the Company ever since.*

* Colonel Valentine Blacker, 'Memoir of the Operations of the British Army in India during the Mahratta War of 1817, 1818, and 1819. &c. &c.' Lieutenant Lake, Madras engineers, 'Journals of the Sieges of the Madras Army, &c. &c.' H. T. Prinsep.

It had always been considered a place of the greatest importance, as it commands one of the great passes of the Deckan into Hindustan. The possession of Aseerghur enabled the Company's troops to restrain the excesses of the Bheel tribes, who inhabited the neighbouring range of hills. The place was also advantageously situated as a depôt. It had been taken from the Mahrattas during the brilliant campaigns of Wellesley and Lake, but had been very unwisely restored to Scindiah.

On taking possession of the fortress, Sir John Malcolm confidently expected to find Apa Saheb in some part of it; but that ex-rajah had effected his escape either during the siege, or before the place was invested. Months passed before it could be known what he was doing, or whither he had gone. In the interim the Gonds were severely chastised: several of their chiefs were killed, and Chyn Shah himself was seized, deposed, and carried off prisoner to the Company's fortress at Chanda, where he died in 1820. Part of his territories were assumed by the Company, as the best means of protecting their country on the Nerbudda. Some few forts and positions were permanently occupied, and the Company's sepoy levied the pilgrim tax at the Mahadeo temple, and in the passes which lead to it. This tax or toll had formerly been divided among many Gond chiefs, who raised it or lowered it according to circumstances, or according to their own strength or relative weakness of the pilgrims; but a regular rate was now fixed, and the money collected was divided among the chiefs by the English collectors. Even in this poor, hungry, savage district, a rapid improvement followed the Company's occupation: the Gonds left off thieving, and took to honest labour. After many false reports had been spread about his whereabouts, accurate intelligence was received of Apa Saheb's having fled to Lahore, to seek refuge with Runjeet Sing. He had arrived in that country disguised as a fakir, or holy mendicant and stroller. The Sheikh chieftain would not receive him publicly at his durbar, lest such conduct should give offence to the English; but he ordered that a place of concealment, with the bare means of subsistence, should be furnished to the once powerful, but now dispossessed rajah of Nagpoor. In the meanwhile the governor-general had declared Apa Saheb dethroned, and had proclaimed, as his successor, the son of a daughter of the rajah Ragojee, who

died in 1816, and appointed the widow of Rajah Pursajee, whom Apa Saheb had murdered, to be regent for the minor. Every department of government was, however, placed under the direct control of British officers; and the whole country of Nagpoor, with its resources, was virtually annexed to the Company's dominions.

The capture of Aseerghur was the last operation of the Pindarree and Mahratta war; a war which had witnessed an unprecedented number of sieges, an unprecedented number and complexity of movements, and some of the most remarkable forced marches that were ever made in any country. The reserved division alone performed three sieges—those of Singhur, Belgaum, and Sholapoor. Lieutenant-Colonel Macdowall's detachment, and Lieutenant-Colonel Adams's division, reduced the peishwa's numerous and strong fortresses in Candeish: the most famed of these places were Radjeir, Trimbuk, Mallegaum, and Chanda. But THIRTY hill-fortresses, each of which might have defied the whole Anglo-Indian army, fell in the course of a few weeks. And all this was done with a very defective engineering department, and without a proper supply of men trained to siege duty. So deficient was the number even of our artillery officers, that there never were enough of them employed in the same siege to afford a relief. At the siege of Aseerghur, in particular, the officers of the Madras artillery actually lived in the batteries. This incessant service was so severe, that several of the officers died of sheer fatigue, or were worn out and invalided.*

In the first year of this Pindarree-Mahratta war, the army was assailed by a new and terrible enemy. This was the Indian cholera morbus, the virulence of which appears to have been increased by the crowded state of our camps. The disease first broke out at Jessore, the capital of a district in the southern quarter of Bengal, a populous and unhealthy city in the centre of the Delta of the Ganges, and near the pestiferous Sunderbunds. It began its ravages as the rainy season of 1817 set in, and cut off the majority of those whom it attacked. From Jessore it spread in all directions, showing, as it was thought, a pre-

* Edward Lake, lieutenant of Madras engineers, 'Journals of the Sieges of the Madras Army.' I refer the reader to this valuable work for a competent idea what was done with defective means. This is another book which ought to be in the hands of every young officer in India.

ference for the valleys of rivers.* Ascending the valley of the Ganges, it reached the camp of Brigadier-General Hardyman about the beginning of October; but the troops, being then encamped in a dry, healthy country, and being but few in number, suffered comparatively little. Continuing its course westward, it fell with extraordinary violence upon the army commanded by Lord Hastings in person, just after his lordship had concluded the treaty with Scindiah. This army, when first seized, was encamped in a low and unhealthy part of Bundelkund, on the banks of the river Sinde, a confluent of the Jumna, which has its source in the mountains of Malwa. The year was one of scarcity, and grain had been collected for the troops, through the camp-followers, with extreme difficulty, and of course of inferior quality. The water of the country, except where it could be obtained from running streams, was indifferent. The time of the year too was that at which the heat of the day is most strongly contrasted with the cold of the night. To all these extraordinary circumstances was superadded the very crowded state of the camp of so large an army. For about ten days that the disease raged with its greatest fury, the whole camp was an hospital. The mortality amounted to about a tenth of the whole number collected there.† Europeans and natives, soldiers and camp-followers, were alike affected; but the latter being generally worse clothed and fed than the fighting men, suffered in a greater

* James Copland, M.D., 'On Pestilential Cholera,' &c.

According to other accounts, the first appearance of the disease was not at Jessore, but at Nuddea and Kishnaghur. In June it was discovered at Mymensing, and in several villages along the course of the Brahmaputra; in July it appeared at Patna, and at Sunegong, a town on the banks of one of the branches of the Brahmaputra; and on the 19th of August it raged with destructive violence at Jessore.

On the 15th of September the disease, which had broken out at Calcutta, Dinapore, Chittagong, &c., reached from the mouths of the Ganges nearly as high as the confluence of the Jumna. Early in November it reached the Sinde, where it raged with greater violence than in any other part of India.

Frederick Corbyn, Esq., M.R.C.S.L., surgeon on the Bengal establishment, &c., 'Treatise on the Epidemic Cholera,' 1 vol. 8vo. Calcutta, 1832. James Jameson, assistant-surgeon, &c., 'Report on the Epidemic Cholera Morbus, Calcutta, 1820.'

† H. T. Prinsep. This gentleman adds,—“The narrator himself lost seven domestic servants and a moonshee in about four days, besides twelve others who were sick and unserviceable for a month, out of an establishment of fifty-three; and others of the staff were equal sufferers.”

proportion. Of the Europeans fewer were seized, but those who took the disease more frequently died, and usually within a few hours. The camp was abandoned, and the army continued for some days to move to the eastward, in the hope of finding relief in a better climate; but each day's march many dead and dying were abandoned, and many more fell down on the road,—so many that it was not possible to furnish the means for carrying them on, although the utmost possible provision had been made by the previous distribution of bullock-carts and elephants for the accommodation of the sick. Nothing was heard along the line of march but groans and shrieks and lamentations; even the healthy were broken in spirit and incapable of exertion; and, for the time, the efficiency of this fine army seemed to be entirely destroyed. Towards the end of November, when the army reached a healthy station at Ereeh, on the right bank of the Betwa river, the epidemic had visibly expended its violence.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AFTER the siege of Aseerghur, the armies of the three presidencies returned to their several stations and cantonments in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay; and the regions which had been crossed and recrossed, and traversed in all directions by immense hosts of combatants, by British and native troops, Peishwa Mahrattas, Holkar Mahrattas, Nag-poor Mahrattas, Pindarrees, Patana, Arabs, Gonds, and others, became quiet as a bay of the ocean after a storm; quieter and happier than they had been for many ages. In the territories assumed by the Company, or taken under its immediate protection, able men were left by the marquis of Hastings to improve this tranquillity, to establish permanently the reign of peace and law, and to better the condition of all the native inhabitants. For more than thirty preceding years, the province of Malwa, and the whole of Central India, had been oppressed, pillaged, and laid waste by the Pindarrees, by the Mahrattas of all tribes, by the Rajpoot princes, and by the Puars: these different powers acted sometimes in combination, but more frequently in opposition to one another: they were all equally cruel and rapacious in the moment of success and conquest, and about equally incapable of giving that stability to their conquests which would have afforded relief to the poor oppressed people, whose greatest calamity was the frequent change of masters. To Sir John Malcolm, who had assisted so potentially in subduing the sanguinary anarchists, and expelling the Pindarrees, was assigned the equally difficult duty of restoring order and repairing the frightful mischiefs which had been committed in so long a series of years. He was appointed by the marquis of Hastings to the military and political command of Malwa, which had perhaps suffered more than any other part of India. Hundreds upon hundreds of its villages were deserted and roofless; the ferocious tigers of the

jungles literally usurped the country, and fought with the returning inhabitants for their fields. In the state of Holkar alone, of 3,701 villages, only 2,038 were inhabited; 1,663 were "without lamp"—were wholly deserted. Under the wise rule established by Malcolm, more than two-thirds of these deserted villages were restored and repeopled before the end of 1820; and in less than five years from the time our army first occupied the country, Sir John could boast, with an honourable pride, and with perfect correctness, that Malwa and the rest of Central India were tranquil and contented, and rapidly advancing in population and prosperity. "It may be asserted that history affords few examples where a change in the political condition of a country has been attended with such an aggregate of increased happiness to its inhabitants, as that which was effected within four years in Central India; and it is pleasing to think that, with the exception of suppressing a few Bheel robbers,* peace was restored, and has hitherto been maintained, without one musket being fired." . . . † Accustomed to the extremities of military violence, the inhabitants of the country, on the English first entering, betrayed feelings of doubt and alarm. These were by some mistaken for dislike to our supremacy; but they arose only out of fear of insult or outrage, and they were speedily removed by the strict discipline preserved by our troops, whether stationary or marching. In a very short time, wherever troops or individuals moved, they were received with cordiality, as the friends and protectors of the people. To organize the country, honourable and intelligent British officers were sent into every part of it. "The result has been fortunate beyond anticipation. These agents, within their respective circles, have not only, by their direct intercourse with

* The Bheels, inhabiting the hilly countries, had all been robbers and cattle-lifters time out of mind. We believe they had never been known as anything else, since the Rajpoots first conquered their country and drove them to the hills, as the Sassenach drove the Gael. "The first measure I took for the reform of the Bheels," says Sir John Malcolm, "was to raise a small corps commanded by their own chiefs; and before they had been in the service one month, I placed them as a guard over treasure, which had a surprising effect, both in raising them in their own minds, and in those of the other parts of the community. I found an equally good impression was produced by my taking, for a period, as my constant attendants, some of the most desperate of the plundering chiefs west of the Chumbul."—'Memoir of Central India.'

† Id., id.

all classes, established great influence, but spread a knowledge of our character and intentions, which has increased respect and confidence; and they have in almost all cases succeeded, by the arbitration of differences, and the settlement of local disputes, *in preserving the peace of the country without troops*. The most exact observance of certain principles is required from these officers, and their line is very carefully and distinctly prescribed. The object has been to escape every interference with the internal administration of the country, beyond what the preservation of the public peace demanded."* In other parts of India the change was equally beneficial—the blessings derived from the conquest of the Mahrattas and the extirpation of the Pindarrees were equally apparent. As Bishop Heber was travelling through the country in 1824, he overheard a conversation among some villagers, who were comparing the present peaceable times with those in which "Ameer Khan and Bappoo Scindiah came up with their horsemen and spoiled all the land, and smote all the people, and burned the cities through Mewar and Marwar, till thou comest unto the salt wilderness." He also heard them say that corn had been gradually getting cheaper, and, notwithstanding a late unfavourable season, was still not so dear as it used to be in the years of trouble. The kind and warm-hearted prelate adds: "When such have been the effects of British supremacy, who will refuse to pray for the continuance of our empire?"†

"The war which had just terminated," says Malcolm, "was not an attack upon a state, or upon a body of men, but upon a system. It was order contending against anarchy. . . . The victory gained was slight, comparatively speaking, over armies, to what it was over mind. The universal distress, which a series of revolutions must ever generate, had gone its circle and reached all ranks and classes. The most barbarous of those who subsisted on plunder had found that a condition of continued uncertainty and alarm could not be one of enjoyment. . . . The desolated state of the country was favourable to the change, for it presented an ample field for the revival of industry in peaceful occupations; but the paramount influence which the results of the war gave to the British

* 'Memoir of Central India.'

† 'Indian Journal.' See also Sir John Malcolm's carefully drawn up 'Instructions to his Officers in Malwa.'

government over several of the native states, was the principal cause of that peace and prosperity which ensued. Our officers were enabled to give shape and direction to the efforts of these states, which became an example to others; and a tone of improvement was given to every province of Central India.”*

The inhabitants of the wild provinces subject to Scindiah started into prosperity as soon as his numerous, restless, and marauding army was broken up. All the districts which had been wrested from this chief by the Pindarrees were restored to him: the fortress of Aseerghur was nearly all he lost by the war. In the dominions of Holkar, where the anarchy and devastation had been greater, the change to good was the more striking. Our victory at Mahidpoor had scattered the overgrown army of this state; those battalions were never re-embodied, and 200 men to guard the palace were all the infantry left in the service of this Mahratta dynasty. A small park of artillery was retained, and 3,000 obedient cavalry sufficed for the police of the country. In less than four years the revenues of the state were nearly quadrupled; and the expenses of collection were brought down from forty to fifteen per cent. The increase of population was surprising. Within the short space of three years, Indore, in the province of Malwa, was changed from a desolate town into a populous and flourishing capital. New villages rose everywhere, and forests, long deemed impenetrable, were fast cleared, on account of the profits derivable from the timber required to rebuild villages, towns, and cities. The Grassias, the Sondwarrees, as well as the Gonds and Bheels, and other hereditary robbers, were rapidly suppressed. When the British armies first entered Central India, and even in 1818, the country along the banks of the Nerbudda, and in the Vindhya mountains, which stretch from the province of Behar to Guzarat, was not safe for even troops to pass; and till the end of the same year, when a British cantonment was established at Mhow, the banditti continued their depredations. From the territories of Bhopaul to those of Guzarat, along the right bank of the Nerbudda, and from Hindia to the country of Burwannee, on the left bank of that river, law and order, and a spirit of industry and improvement, were introduced and established.

* ‘Memoir of Central India.’

At Poonah, and generally in the dominions of the ex-peishwa, Bajee Rao, changes and reforms equally salutary were introduced, principally through the management of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, who had the genius of a true legislator, and all the generous sympathies of a philanthropist. By the conquest of the Poonah territory, the British dominion and possessions were extended along the western coast from the northern boundary of the small province of Goa to the mouths of the Taptee; and inland to the long-established western frontier of the nizam from the junction of the Wurda and Toombudra to the junction of the Poorna and Taptee. Such places in Khandesh belonging to the Holkar Mahrattas as fell within these bounds were ceded to the British by the treaty of Mundissoor, which Sir John Malcolm had concluded after the splendid victory at Mahidpoor. Some other territories south of the Saut-poorra range of hills were also yielded. By exchanges with the Guicowar, and by arrangements with some minor princes, a continuous, uninterrupted dominion was obtained from Bombay to Calcutta, and from Madras to Bombay. The former Mahratta war having been attended with the similar advantage of continuous dominion between Madras and Calcutta, the communication between the three presidencies might now be considered as complete.* Mr. Elphinstone continued as commissioner at Poonah until 1819, when he became governor of Bombay.† This elevation, however, did not deprive Poonah and the ceded districts in that direction of his valuable services, for those new possessions were wisely annexed to the Bombay presidency, to the territories of which they are adjacent. On quitting Poonah, Mr. Elphinstone addressed to the supreme government at Calcutta a comprehensive report on the affairs of that country, reciting what had been done, and what there remained to do; contrasting the present condition of the native inhabitants under the rule of the Company with their condition under

* Colonel Valentine Blacker.

† The office of governor of Bombay having become vacant by the resignation of Sir Evan Nepean, Mr. Canning, as president of the Board of Control, intimated to the Court of Directors his readiness to confirm the selection of one of those eminent servants of the Company who had so highly distinguished themselves. The Directors appreciated this mark of confidence, and made choice of the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, who was nominated governor of Bombay, in October, 1818.—Auber, 'Rise and Progress of the British Power in India.'



MAHABHARATA.

the peishwa, and in a most enlightened and most generous spirit urging the supreme government to persevere in the good work which had been begun.* This report is one of the many admirable state papers which ought to be diligently perused by every European servant of the Company, whether military or civil. No servant of that Company, no governor or governor-general, that had yet visited the shores of India, was so well qualified as Mr. Elphinstone to govern the natives, or so full of truly liberal and lofty principles of government. He went to India a stripling, and he never once quitted the country (except to go into Afghanistan) for the long space of thirty years, during the whole of which time he had been constantly and successfully employed, either in public business or in adding to his store of knowledge. Nor was there, we believe, in all that time a single individual that approached him, native or European, but was impressed with a sense of his ability, genius, humanity, generosity, and most manly honesty and urbanity.† May his shining example be kept constantly in view

* See 'Report on the Territories conquered from the Peishwa, by the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone.'

† In speaking of this distinguished and most amiable man, the warmth of my admiration and of my personal gratitude for benefits conferred upon myself and my eldest son (now an officer on the Bengal establishment) might possibly lead me too far. I again prefer repeating what was said of him by one very capable of estimating his merits and remarkable acquirements—BISHOP HEBER.

"I have enjoyed, in the unremitting kindness, the splendid hospitality, and agreeable conversation of Mr. Elphinstone, the greatest pleasure of the kind which I have ever enjoyed either in India or in Europe.

"Mr. Elphinstone is, in every respect, an extraordinary man, possessing great activity of body and mind, remarkable talent for and application to public business, a love of literature, and a degree of almost universal information, such as I have met with in no other person similarly situated, and manners and conversation of the most amiable and interesting character. While he has seen more of India and the adjoining countries than any man now living, and has been engaged in active political, and sometimes military, duties since the age of eighteen, he has found time not only to cultivate the languages of Hindustan and Persia, but to preserve and extend his acquaintance with the Greek and Latin classics, with the French and Italian, with all the elder and more distinguished English writers, and with the current and popular literature of the day, both in poetry, history, politics, and political economy. With these remarkable accomplishments, and notwithstanding a temperance amounting to rigid abstinence, he is fond of society; and it is a common subject of surprise with his friends at what hours of the day or night he finds time for the acquisition of knowledge. His policy, so far as India is concerned, appeared to me particularly wise and liberal; and he is evidently attached

by every intellectual Englishman in India ! Then the dissipation of cantonments and quarters will be corrected, and officers will cease to complain of the tedium of remote or solitary stations.

The marquis of Hastings no more made money in India than the Marquis Wellesley had done. The splendid appointments of the offices of governor-general and commander-in-chief he had spent in supporting their dignity, in contributing to the public service, or to the welfare of the natives, and in rewarding merit, wherever he found merit in straitened circumstances. As some acknowledgment for the glorious issue of the Pindarree and Mahratta war, the East-India Company voted his lordship £60,000 for the purchase of an estate. Before that war came to an end, he was gratified by a measure adopted by the home government, which flattered the feelings of the officers in our Indian army. Hitherto, officers holding the Company's commission had been excluded from most of the honours of the military profession. But the Prince Regent, in giving extension to the Order of the Bath, was pleased to direct that fifteen of the most distinguished officers of the said service might be raised to the dignity of knights commanders of the Bath, and that certain other officers of the Company should be eligible to be knights companions. The marquis of Hastings had the pleasure of investing, with his own hands, the veteran general David Ochterlony with the insignia of Knight Grand Cross of the Bath. The

to, and thinks well of, the country and its inhabitants. His public measures, in their general tendency, evince a steady wish to improve their present condition. No government in India pays so much attention to schools and public institutions for education. In none are the taxes lighter; and in the administration of justice to the natives in their own languages, in the establishment of panchaets, in the degrees in which he employs the natives in official situations, and the countenance and familiarity which he extends to all the natives of rank who approach him, he seems to have reduced to practice almost all the reforms which had struck me as most required in the systems of government pursued in those provinces of our eastern empire which I had previously visited. His popularity (though to such a feeling there may be individual exceptions) appears little less remarkable than his talents and acquirements; and I was struck by the remark I once heard, that 'all other public men had their enemies and their friends, their admirers and their aspersers, but that of Mr. Elphinstone everybody spoke highly.' Of his munificence—for his liberality amounts to this—I had heard much and knew some instances myself."—*Indian Journal*.

ceremony took place in camp, at Terwah, on the 20th of March, 1818. "Sir David Ochterlony," said the governor-general, "you have obliterated a distinction painful for the officers of the Honourable Company, and you have opened the doors for your brothers in arms to a reward, which their recent display of exalted spirit and invincible intrepidity prove could not be more deservedly extended to the officers of any army on earth."*

His lordship did not despatch so many embassies as Lord Minto had done, yet he sent a mission to Siam and Cochin-China, under Mr. John Crawford, formerly an assistant-surgeon on the Bengal establishment. And, like the preceding missions, if this one did no other good, it produced us some curious and good volumes of travels, and an addition to our knowledge of Asia.†

During this administration, other measures were carried into execution which were not so much to the taste of the governor-general. By our treaties of peace, concluded after the downfall of Bonaparte, our insular empire in India was nearly subverted. The magnificent island of Java was given back to the Dutch, and that power was put in possession of the keys both of the Straits of Malacca and the Straits of Sunda. But to remedy these evils, Sir Stamford Raffles improvised the remarkable settlement and colony of Singapore, on an island in the Straits of Malacca, in the direct route to China, within a week's sail of that country, close to Siam, and in the very seat of the Malayan empire. Under its able founder, in little more than three years, Singapore grew from nothing into a large and populous town, containing 10,000 inhabitants, of nearly all nations, and nearly all actively engaged in commercial pursuits. And since that time the population has been quadrupled, and Singapore

* 'Calcutta Government Gazette,' Ochterlony had merited the distinction by his brilliant conduct in the Nepal war, and by his very long and uninterrupted service in the country. He had at this time been considerably more than forty years in India, and had served under Colonel Pearce, Sir Eyre Coote, and the adventurous Popham.

† 'The Mission to Siam and Hué, the Capital of Cochin China, in the years 1821-2, from the Journal of the late George Finlayson, Esq., Surgeon and Naturalist to the Mission; with a Memoir of the Author, by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, Bart., F.R.S.' London, 1825. And Mr. Crawford's own account of the embassy, or, 'Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Courts of Siam and Cochin-China, exhibiting a View of the actual State of those Kingdoms,' London, 1828.

has become the London of southern Asia and the Indian Archipelago. All the nations that inhabit the surrounding countries resort to it with the produce of their agricultural and manufacturing industry, and take in exchange such goods as are not grown or produced in their own countries. A brighter nucleus of civilization was never formed in so brief a space of time.

If during the administration of the marquis of Hastings, rich islands were given up in the east of the Indian Ocean, in the west the conquest of one great island—the reduction of the whole of Ceylon—was completed; and although the anomaly of which the Marquis Wellesley had complained continued to exist, and although the king's governor of Ceylon was independent of the Company's governor-general of India, still the marquis of Hastings had contributed to the achievement by advice and by other assistance. Before the close of the preceding century, we had dispossessed the Dutch of all their maritime settlements in Ceylon. There was a part of the lowlands occupied by a perfectly savage race, called Vedas or Baddas, who lived by hunting, and there were other portions in which our occupancy was scarcely discernible; but, roughly, it may be estimated that the English territories, in the year 1800, covered about 12,000 square miles, in a broad belt, and that the dominions of the king of Kandy, included within this belt, covered a like number of square miles. Consequently, the island was pretty equally divided between the British government and the king of Kandy. A kingdom within a kingdom, a territory occupied by semi-barbarians, entirely surrounded by Europeans, and cut off from all external communication, could not possibly stand. The absorption of the Kandyan country into our dominion became an inevitable necessity, from the day we dispossessed the Dutch and occupied the coasts and the great belt between them and the hills.

The word "Kandy" means a hill or mountain, and the term "Kandyan country," in a physical sense, means highlands or a mountainous region. All the interior of the island is mountainous and very woody; and it was in the inaccessible nature of their country, and in their ingenious mode of defending it by wickets and stockades, that the Kandyans had been enabled to maintain their independence during the nearly three hundred years that different European nations had had a footing on the coasts. These

natural difficulties in the way of invasion were as great as ever; and now, the people more fierce and courageous than the majority of the natives of continental India, had learned to make efficient firelocks, and tolerably good gunpowder.

On the borders, quarrels, usually accompanied with bloodshed, were constantly occurring between our people and the Kandyans. The death of the king of Kandy gave rise to a disputed succession. Some of the adigars, or chiefs, courted the assistance of the English. But early in the year 1802, a new king being firmly established on the throne, the Kandyans made great preparations for war; every man capable of bearing arms was ordered to hold himself in readiness to take the field, and a party of coast merchants, subjects of the British government, who had been up the country to purchase areca nuts, were assaulted and plundered. The Hon. Frederick North, then governor of Ceylon, sent 3,000 men to occupy the mountain capital, and to place a more friendly king upon the throne. Major-General Macdowal and Colonel Barbut, who commanded the troops, penetrated the jungles, entered the town of Kandy, which was totally deserted by its inhabitants, and crowned the pretender in the palace with all the forms and ceremonies in use among the Kandyans, save and except the recognition of the adigars. But it was soon found that the king we had made had no party whatever in the country, and that the Kandyans were most cunning enemies. Every night some of our people were brought down by the fire of concealed and covered marksmen, or were butchered by fellows that crept through the jungles and pounced upon them like tigers. Some of our detachments were led by pretended friends into ambuscades, and then decimated. It was felt by the officers in command, and by Governor North, that we had embarked in a difficult enterprise, with very insufficient means. This was certain; but unsteady and disgraceful were the means adopted to extricate us from the difficulty! It was agreed that we should take back to the coast the man whom we had just crowned in Kandy, and that another adigar, who had partisans, should be invested with the supreme authority; that the new king should cede some territories to the English, and that a cessation of hostilities should immediately take place. On the faith of this treaty, made with a convicted and self-avowed traitor, General Macdowal quitted Kandy for the

coast, leaving behind him a garrison of 700 Malays and 300 Europeans. A number of sick and wounded were also left in this barbarous little capital. Starvation stared them all in the face, for no proper measures had been adopted to secure magazines and depôts of provisions. To complete the misfortunes of our soldiers at Kandy, the command devolved upon a Major Davie, an officer not only without military skill, but without common animal courage.

In less than three months the new king starved our troops out of Kandy. Most of our Malays deserted to the enemy; our sick and wounded, amounting to 120, or more, were tortured and butchered as they lay in the hospital incapable of resistance; instead of fighting his way through, Davie capitulated in the jungles, and every officer and soldier with him, except a corporal, who made a miraculous escape, were tortured, butchered, or beaten to death with heavy clubs. Davie's own worthless life was preserved, and he spent the remainder of it at Kandy, adopting the dress and habits of the natives.

Captain Madge, of the 19th regiment, who occupied a small fort, and who chose a different line of retreat, fought his way to Trincomalee with only a handful of men; and Ensign Grant, a very young officer, gallantly maintained a post, garrisoned by a few invalids, until he was relieved by a body of our troops from Colombo. Wherever care had been taken of the commissariat, and wherever common sense and common English courage were displayed, the Kandyans were foiled: whenever our officers were insane enough to trust to a treaty or a truce with them, torture and murder followed, and hardly a man escaped with life.

Elated by their successes, the Kandyans now became the invaders. In the months of August and September they poured down from their mountains, captured some of our forts, advanced to within fifteen miles of Colombo, the seat of government, carrying terror and devastation wherever they went. Fortunately reinforcements arrived both from the Cape of Good Hope and from the Bay of Bengal; and the Kandyans retreated to their mountains and almost impenetrable forests. But there seemed to be an evil spell upon the king-appointed governor of Ceylon and all the officers serving under him. Such measures were adopted as gave to conquests a disgrace as indelible as that of our recent defeats. It was absolutely necessary to clear our frontier,

to follow the fugitives into their own territories, and to strike some blow which should restore our character and revive the awe due to our arms; but it was resolved to make the war a war of retribution and revenge—a war of devastation—and this, though mentioned with cold indifference, if not with approbation, by a divine of the Church of England, a courtly historian, who seems to think that no government could do wrong which patronized him, was unnecessary, unwarrantable, atrocious. It was not by such means as these that the Clives, and the Hastingses, and the Wellesleys had built up our empire on the continent of India. The system was, however, carried out to a great extent. Detachments of British troops were sent into the Kandyan country for the avowed purpose of laying it waste wherever they penetrated. In the comparatively rich province of Saffragan one detachment of British soldiers was employed (we quote the words of a reverend historian) “in burning and destroying all the houses, stores, and gardens.”* We have the same authority for the fact that many other parts of the country were exposed to similar horrors. This chaplain and complaisant guest of the Honourable Mr. North really appears to be so insensible of the fundamental doctrine of his faith as to believe that the English were bound to retaliate upon the savage Kandyans for the unspeakable cruelties of which they had been guilty!

In the year 1804 war was again carried into the interior, and a small corps, under Captain Johnston, a brave and able officer, found no great difficulty in getting to the town of Kandy. But the government had gone to war without any fixed plan, and not being supported by more troops, or in any way aided, Johnston was obliged to fight his way back again. The brave captain reached Trincomalee in safety, but his retreat had cost him two British officers, fourteen British soldiers, seven Malays, fifty-four Bengal sepoy, and a still greater number of coolies, who had perished in the wilderness.†

A desultory warfare between the Kandyans and English continued for many months, and was conducted on both sides with great barbarity. Numerous villages were

* Cordiner.

† ‘Narrative of the Operations of a Detachment, in an Expedition to Kandy, in the Island of Ceylon, in the year 1804. By Capt. Johnston. London, 1810.’

burned, and large tracts of country reduced to desolation. Our soldiery, whether British or native, were infuriated by the treachery and cruelty which had been perpetrated at Kandy in 1803; and the government and the commanding officers, instead of exerting themselves, as they were bound to do, in restraining this fury, encouraged it, and expressly ordered the continuance of acts of vengeance.

In February, 1805, a general invasion of our territories by the Kandyans took place. Out of their own woods these people were but contemptible combatants. They were completely routed, and they retired from all the maritime provinces with great loss.

In the month of July, 1805, a man more fitted for the post, the Honourable Sir Thomas Maitland, assumed the government of Ceylon. Before Maitland arrived, jealousies and intrigues among the *adigars*, or chiefs, and insurrections among the people, had broken out in the kingdom of Kandy; and these continued, with little intermission, for the space of seven years.

During the long civil war in the interior, Sir Thomas Maitland diligently applied himself to improve the condition of our maritime possessions, and to undo the mischief which had been permitted to be done by his easy predecessor. Sir James Mackintosh, who visited Ceylon in 1810, says, "It is impossible for me to do justice to General Maitland's most excellent administration, which, I am convinced, never had an equal in India. By the cheerful decision of his character, and by his perfect knowledge of men, he has become universally popular amidst severe retrenchments. In an island where there was in one year a deficit of £700,000, he has reduced the expenses to the level of the revenue; and with his small army of 5,000 men, he has twice, in the same year, given effectual aid to the great government of Madras, which has an army of 70,000 men."* Instead of making premature attempts to conquer the whole of the island, Maitland left the Kandyans to their dissensions, and endeavoured to raise the value of the territories we possessed, and to constitute a system of government and laws suitable to the character and habits of the native populations. In these great objects he, and still more the Cingalese, were

* Diary in 'Memoirs of the Life of the Right Hon. Sir James Mackintosh, edited by his Son, Robert James Mackintosh, Esq.' &c.

indebted to the learning, the industry, the genius, and even the eccentricity of Mr. John D'Oyly, who was the only good Cingalese scholar in the Ceylon civil service, and who, with infinite labour, compiled a code of laws in the Cingalese language. The qualifications necessary to this arduous task had been acquired, by our otherwise accomplished scholar, partly in a life of seclusion, toil, and abstinence, and partly in a life spent among the natives of the country. And, in order to obtain a perfect familiarity with their language, laws, manners, and customs, D'Oyly had put on their dress, and had for years lived among them as one of themselves.*

In 1812, General Sir Robert Brownrigg succeeded Sir Thomas Maitland as governor. About the same period a horrible war in the interior was ended. It had broken out between the king of Kandy and his minister or lieutenant, the chief adigar. The minister, who had very nearly succeeded in getting the king assassinated, was betrayed, brought a prisoner to Kandy, and sentenced to die: he and his nephew were beheaded, and six inferior chiefs were hanged and impaled. Yet very shortly after, Ehey Lapola, another nephew of the unlucky chief adigar, was established in that office—the highest office in the state. For some time tranquillity was restored in the interior; but at the beginning of 1814 the king suspected Ehey Lapola of designs against his life and throne, and, as he was in a distant province, he sent an army against him. Being defeated in battle, Ehey Lapola fled to a British post, whence he was conveyed to Colombo. All the members of his family, whom he had left in the town of Kandy, had been thrown into prison, and now, from a mere spirit of vengeance, the king sentenced his wife and children, and his brother and his brother's wife, to death—the brother and male children to be beheaded, and the females, according to Kandyan usage, to be drowned. In addition to these executions, 117 of Ehey Lapola's partisans were impaled, or flogged, almost to death, and then despatched by the side of the quiet beautiful lake upon which the town of Kandy is situated.†

The widowed and childless Ehey Lapola was provided with a house in the neighbourhood of the fort of Colombo, and

* See letter from Sir James to Lady Mackintosh.

† Dr. Davy, 'An Account of the Interior of Ceylon,' &c. London, 1821.

was maintained at the expense of government. He was maddened by the thirst for vengeance—he could promise partisans and co-operation—he would agree to any terms that the English might propose, if they would only aid him in destroying the destroyers of his family. For some considerable time, however, General Brownrigg would not enter into his views, nor even admit him to an audience. While his excellency was expecting some hostile visitation from the troops of his Kandyan majesty for his having given shelter to a rebel chief, intelligence was received that ten native cloth-merchants, subjects of the British government, had been seized in the Kandyan country, had been sent up to the capital, and had there been frightfully mutilated, by having their noses and ears and their right arms cut off. This, the severest of the Kandyan secondary punishments, had been inflicted by order of the king. Seven of the poor cloth-merchants died on the spot; the remaining three reached Colombo in the state above described.

The dismal results of every former attempt to subjugate the Kandyan kingdom had rendered the invasion of the hilly country an unpopular service both with the army and with that class of the native labouring population who were usually pressed to accompany the troops as coolies. During the month of November, 1814, a detachment of troops was, however, organized at Colombo for service in the field, and placed under the immediate command of Major Hook. On the 11th of January, 1815, Major Hook crossed the boundary river, and began his march up the country. The Kandyans attempted to dispute the passage of the broad river Kalaneganga; but four or five discharges of a six-pounder dislodged them from their strong position, and they fled in confusion as our troops dashed across the river. A proclamation in the Cingalese language was now issued, setting forth the causes of hostilities, and declaring the object of the war to be—"for securing the permanent tranquillity of our settlements, and in vindication of the honour of the British name: for the deliverance of the Kandyan people from their oppressors; in fine, for the subversion of that Malabar dominion, which during three generations has tyrannized over the country."

Many of the adigars, really disgusted with the suspicious and sanguinary temper of their king, either assisted Major Hook or remained neutral. But what was of more importance was

this—seven other divisions were getting in motion from different parts of the coast, in order to co-operate with Hook and to concentrate round Kandy. There was scarcely any fighting. From the amount of the force employed, and from the superior manner in which our operations were now conducted, it was clear that his Kandyan majesty had not a chance. Our divisions were gradually closing round him with impenetrable hedges of bayonets. On the 2nd of February our second Colombo division got well up the country and encamped on some heights, where it was joined by General Brownrigg, and where it stayed for a few days to allow time for the other divisions to approach.

Intelligence being received that the king had left Kandy, our troops moved forward: on the 14th of February the second division, with General Brownrigg, took possession of the capital, which was found nearly deserted by the inhabitants. It was by this time ascertained that the fugitive king was still in the vicinity of the capital. No time was lost in adopting measures to secure his person, and in four or five days he was discovered in a lonely house, and made prisoner, with his aged mother, his four wives, his children, and a few adherents. He expected that he and all his party would be put to death, and would be treated as he had treated the family and adherents of Eheylapola; and when assured by Mr. D'Oyly that not a hair of his head would be touched, and that his family and servants would be treated with the greatest tenderness, he became a contented happy man.

The royal prisoners and their attendants were forthwith sent down to Colombo, in charge of Major Hook, and under a strong escort, which was not needed, as not a hand was raised for their rescue. They arrived at our little capital on the 6th of March, and were there lodged in a spacious and handsomely-furnished house. They all seemed to be delighted with their new residence. "As I am no longer permitted to be a king," said the fallen tyrant, "I am thankful for all this kindness." Before he arrived at Colombo, his dethronement, or the unequivocal right of conquest, was acknowledged by all his great chiefs. On the 2nd of March the British flag was hoisted over the palace at Kandy, and a royal salute was fired to announce that his majesty George III. was undisputed sovereign of the whole island of Ceylon.

The deposed king remained at Colombo until the 24th of

January, 1816. He declared that until he was made a prisoner by the English, he had never retired to rest without the dread of assassination. Fear produces cruelty, and cruelty excites fear. He never could trust any of his courtiers, and it is doubtful if any one of his chiefs deserved his confidence. He was passionate as well as suspicious. "Your English governors," said he to Major Hook, "have an advantage over us in Kandy: they have counsellors about them, who never allow them to do anything in a passion, and that is the reason you have so few executions; but, unfortunately for us, the offender is dead before our resentment has subsided." Some of his most sanguinary measures were ordered when he was drunk, he having become very liable to paroxysms of intemperance.*

On the 24th of January, 1816, he and all his relatives, dependants, and adherents, about one hundred individuals in all, were transported as state prisoners to the peninsula of India. At first they resided in Madras, but they were finally transferred to the fort of Vellore, where the family of Tippoo Suldaun had once resided. Nearly two years after their departure a most formidable insurrection broke out in various parts of the island. After a few encounters in the woods, it was completely suppressed by the governor, Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Brownrigg, but not until excesses and cruelties had been committed disgraceful to our national character.†

* From the great quantity of Hoffman's cherry-brandy bottles found in the palace of Kandy, it was inferred that he was very fond of that liquor.

† For these transactions, see 'Ceylon: a general Description of the Island and its Inhabitants; with an Historical Sketch of the Conquest of the Colony by the English.' By Henry Marshall, F.R.S.E. deputy-inspector general of army hospitals. Dr. Marshall was resident in Ceylon from 1808 till 1821.

For the improvements which have taken place in the magnificent island since our entire subjugation of it, see Lieutenant De Butt's 'Rambles in Ceylon.'

The best account of the interior of the country and of the native inhabitants, and one of the most interesting books that can be read, is 'An Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon, in the East Indies,' by Robert Knox. The old editions are very scarce, but there is a cheap modern edition, published by Constable. Knox, a mariner, was taken prisoner on the coast, and carried up the country in 1660. He escaped in a marvellous manner, after nineteen years of captivity among the Cingalese. He published his book the year after he arrived in England. It is an astonishing book, considering the poor captain's education and circumstances. The information is accurate as well as full. The style is charming: the adventures are quite as amusing as those of Robinson Crusoe.

CHAPTER XXXV.

UPON the resignation of the marquis of Hastings, Mr. Canning, who had presided some time over the Board of Control, was nominated by the Court of Directors to be governor-general of India. The resolution was unanimous, and was passed in the month of March, 1822. The melancholy death of the marquis of Londonderry, on the 12th of August following, led to some important changes in the ministry, and rendered it indispensable that the governor-general elect should remain in England. On the 18th of September, Mr. Canning was nominated secretary of state for foreign affairs; and he consequently resigned into the hands of the Court of Directors the high appointment which they had conferred upon him in so flattering a manner. Two candidates now presented themselves: the one, Earl Amherst, who had been employed some few years before in an embassy from England to China; the other, Lord William Bentinck, who had been governor of Madras. Earl Amherst was preferred, and that nobleman, proceeding to Calcutta, assumed the office of governor-general on the 1st of August, 1823. The marquis of Hastings had quitted Bengal in January, 1822, and between his departure and the arrival of Lord Amherst, Mr. Adams, senior member of the supreme council, had presided over the government of India.

The new governor-general had been but a very few months in his office ere he found himself under the necessity of entering into a new war with an entirely new enemy.

The Burmese, elated by some recent conquests which they had made, and being brought in more immediate contact with the British frontiers, began, towards the end of the year 1823, to make sundry attacks upon us. Without notice given, and without any attempt at negotiation, they claimed possession of Shapuree, a small muddy island in the province of Bengal, but close to the coast of Arracan,

which the Burmese then possessed. Making a sudden night attack, they drove away a small guard of British troops stationed on the island, killed several of them, and took forcible possession of the island. This, coming close upon other outrages, was not to be tolerated. Our government, however, resolved to consider the forcible occupation of Shapuree as the act of the local authorities of Arracan, and addressed a gentle declaration to the Burmese central government, recapitulating the past occurrences, and calling upon the court of Ava to disavow their officers in Arracan. The court of Ava, as might have been anticipated, considered this gentle declaration as a pusillanimous attempt to deprecate the resentment of the Burmese. They triumphantly appealed to the paper as a proof that the British government of India dreaded to enter upon a contest with them; and they intimated that unless their right to the island of Shapuree was distinctly admitted, the victorious lord of the White Elephant and the Golden Foot would invade the Company's dominions. In the meanwhile two companies of the 20th regiment landed on the disputed island, drove off the Burmese and stockaded themselves. And on the other side the commanding officer and some of the crew of the Company's cruiser *Sophia* were seized on the mainland and carried up the country.

Both sides now actively prepared for war, the Anglo-Indian troops on the frontier being, however, ordered to maintain a strict neutrality for the present.

More and more confirmed in their idea that we were afraid of them, from 4,000 to 5,000 Burmese and Asamese advanced from Asam into the province of Cachar, and began to stockade themselves at a post within five miles of the town of Sylhet, and only 226 miles from Calcutta. Major Newton, the officer commanding on the Sylhet frontier, concentrated his detachment and marched against the invaders. It was at daybreak on the 17th of January, 1824, that he came in sight of their stockade and of a village adjoining, of which they had taken possession. The Burmese in the village presently gave way, but those in the stockades made a resolute resistance, and were not driven out until they had lost about 100 men, and had killed six of our sepoys. They then fled to the hills. Shortly after this action, Mr. Scott, our commissioner, arrived at Sylhet, and from that point he advanced to Bhadrappoor, in order to maintain a more ready

communication with the Burmese authorities. On the 31st of January, Mr. Scott received a message from the Burmese general, who justified his advance into Cachar, and declared that he had orders to follow and apprehend certain persons wherever they might take refuge. In reply, this Burmese general, who held the chief command in Asam, was told that he must not disturb the frontiers of the Company, nor interfere in the affairs of its allies, and that the Burmese invaders must evacuate Cachar, or the forces of the British government would be compelled to advance both into Cachar and Asam. To this communication no answer was received.

It was clearly the object of the Burmese to procrastinate the negotiations until they had strengthened themselves in the advanced positions they had occupied. The rajah of Jynteeah, who had been imperiously summoned to the Burmese camp, and commanded to prostrate himself before the shadow of the Golden Foot, threw himself upon the British government for protection; and various native chiefs, whose territories lay between the frontiers of the Burmese empire and the frontiers of the British dominions, called loudly for English aid. Thus, the south-east frontier of Bengal, had in fact been kept in constant dread and danger of invasion for more than a year, while the adjoining and friendly territories had been exposed to the destructive inroads and the overbearing insolence of the Burmese and Asamese for many years.*

Major Newton did not follow the Burmese he had routed, but, after driving them from their stockade, he returned to Sylhet, and withdrew the whole of his force from Cachar. Almost as soon as the major was within his own frontier, the Burmese advanced again into the country from which he had driven them, and stockaded some stronger positions. They were joined by another considerable force, while another detachment, 2,000 strong, collected in their rear, as a reserve or column of support. Still advancing,

* Horace Hayman Wilson, Esq. (the distinguished Orientalist, professor of Sanscrit, Oxford, &c.), 'Documents illustrative of the Burmese War, with an Introductory Sketch of the Events of the War, and an Appendix. Calcutta, 1827.' Major Snodgrass, military secretary to the commander of the expedition to Ava, and assistant political agent in Ava, 'Narrative of the Burmese War, detailing the Operations of Major-General Sir Archibald Campbell's Army, from its landing at Rangoon, in May, 1824, to the Conclusion of a Treaty of Peace at Yaddaboo, in February, 1826. London, 1827.'

and stockading as they advanced, the main body of the Burmese pushed their stockades on the north bank of the river Surma, to within 1,000 yards of the British post at Bhadrappoor. Captain Johnstone, who commanded at that post, had but a very small force with him, yet he succeeded in dislodging the invaders from their unfinished works at the point of the bayonet, and in driving them beyond the Surma. This was on the 13th of February. On the following day Lieutenant-Colonel Bowen joined and took the command over Captain Johnstone, and instantly marched in pursuit of the retreating enemy. They were found stockading themselves in a strong position on the opposite bank of the Jelingha. As soon as our troops were over, and had fixed their bayonets, the Burmese cleared out of their stockade and fled to the hills. But there was another division of the army of the lord of the White Elephant, which had stockaded a much stronger position at Doodpatlee, where their front was covered by the Surma river, and their rear rested on steep hills. The exposed face of this intrenchment was defended by a deep ditch, about fourteen feet wide; a strong fence of bamboo spikes ran along the outer edge of the ditch, and the approach on the land side was through jungle and high grass. Lieutenant-Colonel Bowen, however, marched against this formidable stockade and attacked it. The Burmese remained passive till our troops advanced to the bamboo spikes, when they poured upon them a destructive and well-maintained fire, which completely checked their advance, although they kept their ground. When Lieutenant Armstrong had been killed and four other officers wounded, and about 150 of our sepoy killed or wounded, Bowen called off the attacking party, and retired to Jatrapoor, at a short distance. On the 27th of February, Colonel Innes joined the force at Jatrapoor, with four guns and a battalion of fresh troops, and assumed the command. But in the meanwhile the Burmese had retreated from their formidable position and retired into their own country, evacuating the whole of Cachar.

But before this time the great Burmese chief, the Maha Bandoola, then high in favour at the court of Ava, and the projector of a scheme for the conquest of Bengal, had collected a great army near the southern extremity of our frontier, and had marched into Arracan, provided with golden fetters, in which the governor-general of India was to

be led captive to Ava.* The lord of the Golden Foot laid claim to all the territories east of Moorshedabad, as having formerly belonged to the kingdom of Arracan, which he and his ancestors had conquered.† Exaggerated reports of the strength and ferocity of the Burmese troops carried alarm even to Calcutta; the peasants on our frontier fled in dismay from their villages, and every idle rumour was so industriously magnified by timid or designing people, that the native merchants of Calcutta were with difficulty persuaded to refrain from removing their families and property from under the very guns of Fort William.

As the two states might now be considered as actually at war, Lord Amherst declared war in form, and promulgated the grounds of our quarrel in a declaration addressed to the court of Ava and the different powers of India. Orders had been previously given for the equipment of a force of from 5,000 to 6,000 men at the presidencies of Calcutta and Madras. It had been wisely determined to act upon the offensive, and not to commence operations either on the barren mountains of Arracan, or in the pestilential jungles of Chittagong; but on the great river which leads through the heart of the Burmese empire (and is the highway of the trade of the country), where no attack was expected. The plan of the campaign, in short, was to ascend the Irrawaddy and to begin by capturing the city of Rangoon, the principal port and trading place of the Burmese empire. The two divisions, from Calcutta and Madras, were directed to assemble at Port Cornwallis, in the Great Andaman Island—an island occupied, as in the days of Marco Polo, by downright savages, if not cannibals—from which the combined forces, under the command of Major-General Sir Archibald Campbell, were to proceed to the Irrawaddy. Between the 12th and 17th of April, the Bengal division, consisting of the king's 13th and 38th regiments, and two companies of artillery, were embarked at Calcutta. They were detained for some days at the Great Andaman, waiting the arrival of the division from Madras. But by the 4th of May the greater part of the troops from Madras, consisting of his majesty's 41st regiment, a Company's European regiment, and seven battalions of native infantry, with artillery, gun-lascars, &c., reached the place of rendezvous ;

* Major Snodgrass.

† Deposition of Henry Gouger, Esq.

and on the following morning the united forces left the Andamans, under the protection of his majesty's ships *Liffy* and *Larne*, the former commanded by Commodore Grant, and the latter by Captain Marryat. The transports were also accompanied or followed by several of the Company's armed cruisers, and by the *Diana* steam-boat. In nearly all parts of the operations which were now about to begin, the land troops were greatly indebted to the co-operation of the navy, and to the services of the steam-vessel, the first which had ever floated in those waters.

Our ships anchored within the bar of the Rangoon river on the 10th.

On the very next morning the fleet proceeded up the river. A few harmless shots from the guardhouses on the banks were the only impediments offered to its progress. At twelve o'clock, the *Liffy* anchored close to the principal battery in Rangoon, the transports anchoring in succession in her rear. Having furled sails and beat to quarters, a pause of some minutes ensued, during which not a shot was fired. On our side humanity forbade that we should fire into an almost defenceless town, crowded with an inoffensive people; and the Burmese, on their part, were unwilling to begin the unequal contest. They stood for some time, inactive at their guns; but at length, being urged by the threats of their chiefs, they opened their feeble battery on our shipping. The frigate's fire soon silenced the battery and every gun on shore: the enemy fled from their works, and our troops, being landed, took quiet possession of a deserted town. Proclamations had been previously issued promising British protection to the inhabitants, and prompt and liberal payment for whatever the troops might want of them: but the Burmese governor had given orders for driving the whole of the inhabitants into the neighbouring jungles, where the men were to be organized into corps, and the women and children to be strictly guarded as pledges for the good conduct of their fathers, husbands, and brothers. And, with the population, nearly everything which the town contained had been removed into the inmost recesses of the jungle, or carried far up the river Irawaddi. As the people of Rangoon were very aquatic, and as the river was known to swarm with boats, our commanders had calculated upon finding more than a sufficient number of boats to carry the troops up the river to Ava, the capital; but not a boat was

to be found—everything had been removed that was at all likely to be of use to an invading army—oxen, horses, were no more to be found than boats—there was nothing left in the neighbourhood of Rangoon except a little paddy. In the too confident hope of finding all that they wanted in Rangoon, our troops had come unprovided with proper equipments for advancing either by land or by water; their supplies of provisions were scanty, from the same miscalculations; and they now found themselves cut off from all supplies except such as, in course of time, came by sea from Calcutta. To increase their embarrassment, the rainy monsoon was just setting in. Nothing remained but to take up a long residence in the miserable and filthy hovels of Rangoon, situated in the midst of swamps and paddy-fields. Everything in and about the place was in ruins, except the lofty Golden Dagon pagoda. There was no passing the swamps and inundated paddy-fields, or the thick jungle beyond them, which was intersected only by a few narrow footpaths, like the jungles and forests of Ceylon; and behind this screen the unseen enemy plied their work, raising their levies and gradually collecting them so as to form a cordon round our cantonments. “Hid from our view,” says the historian of this war, “on every side, in the darkness of a deep and, to regular bodies, an impenetrable forest, far beyond which the inhabitants and all the cattle of the Rangoon district had been driven, the Burmese chiefs carried on their operations and matured their future schemes with vigilance, secrecy, and activity. Neither rumour nor intelligence of what was passing within their posts ever reached us. Beyond the invisible line which circumscribed our position all was mystery or vague conjecture.”* A series, a perfect continuity of stockades was erected, and was pushed nearer and nearer to Rangoon. “Like the Nepaulese, the Birmans rarely met an enemy in the open field: their conquests had all been made through the system of stockades. Instructed and trained from their youth in the formation and defence of these works, they had attained to great skill and judgment in the use of them. By gradual approaches, and by carefully stockading all their positions as they advanced, their wars had for many years been an uninterrupted series of conquests; and at the time of our landing

* Major Snodgrass.

at Rangoon they had subdued and incorporated into their empire nearly all the petty states by which it was surrounded."

The long and gilded war-boats of the Burmese, and the skill and spirit of the Irawaddi boatmen, were not altogether unknown at Calcutta when our expedition was planned. Every town on the river, according to its size, was obliged to furnish a gilt or a common war-boat, and to man and keep it in constant readiness. These boats carried from forty to fifty men each, and the lord of the White Elephant and the Golden Foot could muster from 200 to 300 war-boats. In actual war these boatmen were about the most respectable part of his majesty's force.* At the royal mandate the Irawaddi above Rangoon was speedily covered with warriors from the towns upon its banks.

As their troops rapidly increased in numbers, the enemy that were making the cordon round Rangoon became more daring; and gradually approaching nearer and nearer, they commenced stockading themselves in the jungle within hearing of our advanced posts. On the morning of the 28th of May, when they had stockaded an advanced corps within little more than musket-shot distance from our picquets, Sir Archibald thought that it was time to punish their temerity. With four companies of Europeans, two field-pieces, and 400 sepoys he moved against the foremost stockade. The works being incomplete, the Burmese quitted it, and retired through the wood after firing a few shots. Sir Archibald and his column continued to advance through the wood by a winding and very narrow pathway, at every turn of which there was some breastwork or stockade. These works, however, were all hastily abandoned, the Burmese not having had time sufficient to finish them. After an advance of five miles, our troops, emerging from the jungles, suddenly entered a wide open field, intersected by a morass and rivulet, across which there was a long narrow bridge. Here the retreating enemy faced about, and attempted a formation, for the purpose of defending the passage of the bridge; but they soon gave way before the fire of our two field-pieces, and then continued their retreat towards other woods and jungles. At this juncture a terrible storm began; the rain fell in torrents, and our two field-pieces could be dragged no farther. Sir Archibald Campbell, however, determined to proceed, hoping by a very rapid advance to be

* Captain Cox's 'Journal,' as quoted by Major Snodgrass.

able to liberate the Rangoon women and children, being well assured that their release would be followed by the speedy desertion of their male relations, for whom they were held in pledge. Therefore, leaving the 400 sepoy to guard the guns, Sir Archibald pushed on rapidly with the four companies of British troops. After traversing another jungle he reached the edge of the extensive plain of Joazoang. In the midst of this plain, and at a short distance from each other, stood two villages, closely flanked by jungle on either hand. On approaching the villages, they observed that they were defended in front by two stockades, filled with men, who seemed confident in the strength of their position, and who shouted and cried "Lagee! lagee!"—(Come! come!) At the same time large bodies of the enemy were moving from the rear of the villages and forming by the side of the jungle. Leaving one company to keep this force in check, Sir Archibald, with the three other companies, made a dash at the stockades. The enemy within them commenced a heavy fire, to which, from the wet state of their muskets, our troops could at first make but little return. But the works were not above eight feet high, and our men, forcing their way over them, brought their bayonets to bear upon a crowded, dense, and confused living mass. The conflict was now short, but very sanguinary. The works had only very narrow ways of egress, and the foremost fugitives, getting wedged in them, blocked them up and prevented the flight of the rest. When they could run away, they ran; but the Burmese never gave and never expected quarter. Lowering their heads to a butting position, they blindly charged upon our soldiers' bayonets. They were killed in heaps, for our people had dried their muskets, and could now pour in volleys as well as use the bayonet. Few or none were spared, as from the barbarous and treacherous mode of warfare practised by the Burmese, death alone afforded safety.* During the attack upon

* "The experiment," adds Major Snodgrass, "was tried, but tried in vain. Humanity might prompt a British soldier to pass a fallen or vanquished foe; but when he found his forbearance repaid on all occasions by a shot, the instant that his back was turned, self-preservation soon taught him the necessity of other measures; and it consequently happened that our first encounters with the troops of Ava were sanguinary and revolting, especially to soldiers whom feeling and the customs of war alike taught to treat with kindness and forbearance those whom they had subdued."

the two stockades, the enemy in the plain, whose force was roughly estimated at from 4,000 to 5,000 men, made no movement in their defence; but as soon as they saw that our troops were in possession of the works, they set up a horrid yell and began to move towards the stockades. The single company which Sir Archibald had left on the plain sufficed to keep them in check; and as our other three companies rapidly moved out of the works and formed, the Burmese host wavered and fell back. The British then collected their killed and wounded and carried them from the field; and, as the day was drawing to its close, they marched back to quarters, slowly and without any molestation. The enemy left 300 dead in the stockades and adjacent fields, and many more were wounded. On our side Lieutenant Alexander Howard was killed, and Lieutenants Mitchell and O'Halloran were very severely wounded; two rank and file were killed, and about twenty were wounded. In going and returning, the enemy's advanced stockades were all destroyed.*

The sharp lesson they had received shook the confidence of the Burmese commanders in their troops and stockades. Hitherto, every effort to open communications with them had failed, but they now sent two deputies to the British general. These native chiefs conducted themselves with much ease and boldness, and with still more cunning and address. The senior, a stout old man, in a long scarlet robe, and with a red handkerchief tied round his head, then opened the subject of their mission with the question, "Why are you come here with your ships and soldiers?" The provocation they had given by invading our neighbours and dependants, by attacking our own territories, etc., were fully explained as being the causes of the war, and the nature and extent of the redress we demanded was plainly stated. In spite of all their address, their real object was discovered, and they indeed betrayed it themselves, when they refused to remove the barrier placed in the way of communication and reconciliation, and asked for a few days' delay. Sir Archibald Campbell gave them to 'understand, that no delay would be granted—that their post on the river would be attacked forthwith. The two chiefs stepped into their war-boats with an air of defiance; and the boat-

* Major Snodgrass. Sir Archibald Campbell's 'Despatch, in H. H. Wilson's Documents illustrative of the Burmese War,' &c.

men went off with great speed, rising on their short oars, and singing in chorus, "Oh, what a happy king have we!" *

The very next morning, the post on the river was attacked by our troops. It was at the village of Kemmendine, a war-boat station, only three miles above Rangoon. The enemy laboured incessantly, day and night, to strengthen this position: the ground behind the village, elevated and commanding, was surrounded by a thick forest in the rear; the heights had already been strongly stockaded and abbatished in front; and the approach on the land faces was rendered difficult by a thick jungle, while the swampy nature of the ground towards the Irawaddi strengthened the work on that side. But these defences were not tenable against two divisions of vessels which proceeded up the river to attack the stockade in that direction, and nearly 3,000 men, who marched to the attack by land, with four 18-pounders and four mortars. In a few minutes after the attack commenced, a great part of the extensive work was carried, and the enemy there stationed were driven into the jungle, leaving behind them 150 dead. At the rear gate of this stockade were found the gilt umbrella, sword, and spear of a Burmese commander of high rank; the umbrella, which chiefly denotes the rank, being shattered by a shower of our grape. The body of the chief himself was found a few yards farther in the jungle, and was recognized to be that of the stout and cunning old deputy who had visited our quarters the preceding day. This night—a night of storm and pitiless rain—was spent by our troops, under arms, under the dripping trees of the jungle or in the inundated rice-fields; but on the following morning, when they marched to storm the rest of the works, they found that they were entirely deserted, and that the Burmese had gone off in a panic to another stockaded post, a good many miles in the rear of Kemmendine.

For a time there seemed to be a general pause and terror on the side of the Burmese, who had now evacuated every stockade in the neighbourhood of Rangoon. Their recent losses made them keep at a safer distance from our lines, and our troops ceased to be annoyed by their nightly visits to their posts; but beyond these temporary advantages no favourable change took place, either in the present condi-

* Major Snodgrass. The boatmen wore broad Chinese hats. Their features were harsh, bold, and strongly marked.

tion or in the future prospects of our army. Not an inhabitant returned to his home; and so far from any desire of peace being manifested by the court of Ava, it was made evident that the war would be carried to the last extremity.

Other operations had taken place in the mean time in other directions. Two small forces, detached by Sir Archibald Campbell, had captured the islands of Cheduba and Negrais, the first lying off the coast of Arracan, and the second near one of the mouths of the Irawaddi river. The Maha Bandoola, the royal favourite who had planned the conquest of Bengal, and collected the large army in Arracan, had commenced offensive operations, and had crossed our frontier, with a number of gilt umbrellas, some days before Sir Archibald Campbell's armament reached Rangoon. With a force of from 6,000 to 8,000 men he surrounded a small British post, which made an honourable, but ineffectual resistance. Some of the officers and sepoys effected their escape, but others fell into the hands of the Burmese, who barbarously put all the English officers and most of the sepoys to death, only reserving a few of the latter to send as prisoners and trophies to the Golden Foot. The arrival of these captives at Ava tended to confirm the arrogant confidence of that court. But the progress of Bandoola's forces was very soon checked; they were beaten out of all their advanced stockades by a few hundred sepoys, and by the end of July, they were driven back into Arracan. In this short and desultory, but difficult war—for it was carried on with mere handfuls of sepoys, and in the midst of the rainy season—Colonel Shapland and Colonel Innes greatly distinguished themselves.

We return to Rangoon. Sir Archibald Campbell's forces were already much diminished by sickness and death, brought on by hard service during an inclement season, by defective provisions, and by the ordinary casualties of war.* But the opportune arrival of the 89th British regiment from

* Between the months of June, 1824, and the end of March, 1825, out of an average strength of 2,716 British troops, 1,311 perished, or very nearly one-half of the whole force of king's troops. Matters were not much mended in the following year. Almost the only fresh meat that could be procured was pork. Major (now lieutenant-colonel) Alexander M. Tulloch, 'Statistical Reports on the Sickness, Mortality, and Invaliding among Her Majesty's Troops, &c., prepared from the Records of the Army Medical Department and War-Office Returns. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, by command of Her Majesty.'

Madras, and of parts of the two detachments which had subdued the islands of Cheduba and Negrais, raised the effective strength just at the critical moment. By the end of June, the Burmese in this quarter appeared to have somewhat recovered from their dismay. Chiefs of the highest fame, who, until they came in contact with our troops, had always been victorious, were sent down the Irawaddi from Ava, and from Prome, with orders to slay or torture and mutilate every Burmese soldier that did not fight to the utmost, and one of the brightest of golden umbrellas, Sykya Wongee, minister of state, was appointed commander-in-chief, with positive commands from the Golden Foot to attack and drive the British at once into the sea. On the last day of June, all the woods in Sir Archibald's front again exhibited bustle and commotion; 8,000 men had crossed to the Rangoon side of the river; the jungles around all seemed animated; clouds of rising smoke marked the encampments of the different corps of the Burmese army in the forest; and their noisy preparations for attack formed a striking contrast to the still and quiet aspect of the British line.*

The Shoodagon, or Golden Dagon pagoda, was the key of the British position. This splendid edifice—in itself a fortress—is about two miles, or two miles and a half, from the town of Rangoon; in shape it resembles an inverted speaking-trumpet; it is 338 feet high, and is surmounted by a cap made of brass forty-five feet high: the whole is richly gilded. The base of this pagoda is a conical hill, flat at the top, and rising about seventy-five feet above the road. Here Sir Archibald Campbell placed a whole battalion of British troops. The two roads running from the pagoda to the town were occupied by our forces, native and European, the minor pagodas, bonze houses, and pilgrims' houses along those two roads affording good shelter to the troops against the inclemency of the season, and some shelter from the attack of an enemy, whose artillery was but light. Two detached posts completed our position—one at the village of Puzendown, about a mile below the town, where the Pegu and Rangoon rivers meet; the other at Kemmendine, about three miles above the town; this second post being chiefly intended to protect our shipping against the descent of the

* Snodgrass.

enemy's fire-rafts. On the morning of the 1st of July, the enemy issued in dense masses from the jungle to the right and front of the great pagoda. Detaching to their left a column, which succeeded in setting fire to part of the village of Puzendown, their main body came boldly up to within half a mile of Rangoon, and commenced a spirited attack upon part of our line. But two field-pieces, served with grape and shrapnel, presently checked their advance, and then a brilliant charge by the 43rd Madras native infantry put them all to flight. In a very few minutes not a man could be seen of the Burmese host, except the killed, nor could anything be heard of them except a wild screaming which proceeded from the depths of the forests and jungle.

Sykya Wongee was recalled to court and degraded, and a still higher minister of state, named Soomba Wongee, who had arrived with reinforcements, took the command, and commenced stockading his army in the most difficult and intricate part of the forest, at Kummeroot, about five miles from the great pagoda, intending, chiefly under cover of night, to carry on such a system of desultory warfare as would harass, and ultimately destroy, our sickly, worn-out soldiers. He also fortified a commanding point on the river above Kemmendine, in communication with his stockaded camp, hoping by this means not only to obstruct the navigation of the river, but also to construct and employ numerous fire-rafts. But this new commander-in-chief had scarcely finished his works ere he was driven from them with a terrible slaughter. On the 8th of July Sir Archibald Campbell embarked with one column for the attack of the position upon the river, and Brigadier-General MacBean, with a land column, marched upon the forest stockades at Kummeroot. The works on the river were found to be so formidable that it was judged necessary to employ breaching vessels; and a brig and three Company's cruisers, manned by seamen of his majesty's and the Company's navy, under the superintendence of Captain Marryat, soon opened a heavy cannonade, and silenced the enemy's guns. Our troops then pushed across the river in boats, entered the practicable breach which the firing of our seamen had made, and carried all those works with comparatively trifling loss. The Burmese suffered severely in killed, and many of them were drowned in trying to escape across the river. The operations of the land column, under MacBean, were equally successful.

It was unprovided with artillery ; but the storming parties, who escaladed stockade after stockade, consisted entirely of British troops. Here again the slaughter was dreadful. Soomba Wongee, and several chiefs of high rank, with 800 men, were killed within the stockades ; and the neighbouring jungles were filled with the unhappy creatures who were wounded, and left to die from want of food and care. Some of these poor Burmese were found by the English soldiers and brought into our hospitals ; but unfortunately none of them recovered. The monsoon rains were now at their height, the adjacent country was almost wholly under water, nothing was to be obtained from it, and the sickness of our troops increased to an alarming extent.

An expedition, consisting of his majesty's 89th regiment and the 7th Madras native infantry, under the command of Colonel Miles, was detached from Rangoon, with a considerable naval force, to subdue the maritime possessions of his majesty to the eastward, in the hope that their loss might induce him to sue for peace. The success of the expedition was complete : Tavoy surrendered. Mergui was taken by storm ; and the people all along the coast of Tenasserim gladly placed themselves under British protection.

Towards the end of July Sir Archibald Campbell attempted to release such of the inhabitants of Rangoon as were desirous of returning to their houses ; and by means of the sudden, unexpected, and to the natives inexplicable, movement of our steam-boat, a few families, who had been driven to the villages at the heads of the numerous creeks which branch off from the Rangoon river, were released from their guard, and joyfully took the opportunity of returning to their city. It was to the report of these people of the kind treatment they met with, our army was afterwards indebted for the return of the great body of the people, whose services and exertions contributed to the final success of the war. By degrees our foraging parties were enabled to take a wider range, the enemy were obliged to draw their resources from a more distant part of the country, and more of the people of Rangoon and the neighbourhood escaped from their guards, and returned to their homes.

The lord of the White Elephant now sent his two brothers, the prince of Tonghoo and the prince of Sarrawaddy, with a whole host of astrologers, and a corps of "Invulnerables," to join the army, and to direct the future operations of

the war. The astrologers were to fix the lucky moments for attacking: the Invulnerables had some points of resemblance to the Turkish Delhis; they were the desperadoes or madmen of the army, and their madness was kept up by enormous doses of opium. The corps of Invulnerables consisted of several thousand men, divided into classes; the most select band of all being called the King's Invulnerables. The prince of Tonghoo established his head-quarters at Pegu, and the prince of Sarrawaddy took post at Donoo-pew, upon the great river, about sixty miles from Rangoon.

In the beginning of August the prince of Sarrawaddy sent down a force to occupy a strong post at the mouth of the Pegu river, a few miles below Rangoon, giving his people strict orders to block the channel of the river in our rear, that not one of the "wild foreigners," or "captive strangers," might escape the punishment that was about to overtake them. Sir Archibald Campbell presently detached a small corps, under Brigadier Smelt, to dislodge Sarrawaddy's warriors. Our land troops were brought to a standstill, when within musket-shot of the place, by a deep and impassable creek; but a party of sailors from his majesty's ship *Larne*, under Captain Marryat, threw a bridge over the creek; and soon as the column of attack pushed forward, the enemy began to fly, leaving eight guns and a quantity of ammunition in their stockade. A strong pagoda, with a numerous garrison, and with cannons pointing down every approach, was next carried with equal facility. Other posts on the rivers and creeks were successively and successfully attacked. Such of the enemy as had had any experience of our way of fighting seldom stopped to fight in their stockades; but a new set of people from the interior made a good stand in a succession of stockades on one of the rivers, and cost us the loss of a good many brave men. These affairs of posts were very numerous.

At last the astrologers told the prince of Sarrawaddy that the stars had told them that the moment was come for a decisive action; and on the night of the 30th of August a body of the king's Invulnerables promised to attack and carry the great or Golden Dagon pagoda, in order that the princes, and the sages and pious men in their train, might celebrate the usual annual festival in that sacred place—a place now crowded, not with Bonzes, but with English grenadiers. And, true so far to their promise, the Invul-

nerables, at the hour of midnight, rushed in a compact body from the jungle under the pagoda, armed with swords and muskets. A small piquet, thrown out in our front, retired in slow and steady order, skirmishing with the Invulnerables until they reached the flight of steps leading from the road up to the pagoda. The moon was gone down, and the night was so dark that the Burmese could be distinguished only by a few glimmering lanterns in their front; but their noise and clamour, their threats and imprecations upon the impious strangers, if they did not immediately evacuate the sacred temple, proved their number to be very great. In a dense column they rolled along the narrow pathway leading to the northern gate of the pagoda, wherein all seemed as silent as the grave. But hark! the muskets crash, the cannons roar along the ramparts of the British post, drowning the tumult of the advancing column; and see!—see by the flash of our guns, the column reels back, the Invulnerables fall, mortally wounded, and the rest turn their backs on the holy place, and run with frantic speed for the covering of the jungle. Our grape-shot and our musketry broke the spell—those Invulnerables ventured no more near any of our posts. But a far more terrible enemy had gotten within our lines—the dysentery broke out among our troops, killing many of them, and reducing more to a most emaciated and feeble state. Scarcely three thousand duty soldiers were left to guard our lines. Floating hospitals were established at the mouth of the river; bread was now furnished in sufficient quantities, but nothing except change of season or of climate could restore the sufferers to health. Mergui and Tavoy, portions of our recent conquests on the sea-coast, were represented by the medical officers who visited them as admirable convalescent stations; and thither a number of our people were sent, and with the most beneficial result.*

As all kinds of gilt umbrellas had been rolled in the dust—as fire-eating chiefs, ministers of state, princes royal, had all failed—the Golden Foot determined to call down from the mountains of Arracan his prime favourite, the Maha Bandoola, who had promised to sack Calcutta, and to carry off the governor-general in golden chains. Bandoola obeyed the call, and led his reinforced army from the mountains

* Men who had for months continued in a most debilitated state at Rangoon rapidly recovered on arriving at Mergui, and were soon restored to their duty in full health and vigour.

of Arracan to the Irawaddi river. He began his march about the end of August, at a season of the year when none but Burmese could have kept the field for a week, much less have attempted to pass the unhealthy jungles and the pestilential marshes of the country. The distance, by the shortest route, was more than 200 English miles; but Bandoola, gathering fresh forces in the latter part of his long march, reached Donoopew before Sir Archibald Campbell knew that he had left Arracan.

Happily our troops, though wofully reduced in numbers, were now fast recovering their health and strength; and two fresh British regiments, some battalions of native infantry, a regiment of cavalry, a troop of horse-artillery, and a troop of rockets, arrived from Calcutta and Madras, together with admirable draught cattle of the true Mysore breed. Five hundred native boatmen came round from Chittagong, and were busily employed in preparing boats for river service.

Before relating the grand struggle and final catastrophe of the Maha Bandoola, we must turn to the south-east, and relate some spirited proceedings which took place in Siam. An inveterate enmity and an almost constant state of war had existed for many years between the Siamese and the Burmese. Being by far the more warlike people, the Burmese had defeated their neighbours in many bloody conflicts, and had conquered wide tracts of their country. The landing of the British at Rangoon seemed to open to the Siamese a favourable opportunity for vengeance and recovery of dominion; but that court regarded the vicinity of a British force with much jealousy and dread, and were indisposed to our alliance by our seizure of Mergui and Tavoy, which places, together with nearly the whole of the coast of Tenasserim, had once belonged to Siam. Moreover, the court of Ava set on foot negotiations with his Siamese majesty, making promises of friendship and restitution, and endeavouring to show that the British were equally the enemies of Siamese and Burmese, and that the two neighbouring peoples ought to unite their forces against the common enemy. It was imagined, and it was afterwards proved by abundant testimony, that the king of Siam firmly believed that the English must fail in conquering Ava, or in bringing its government to sue for terms; and it was thought that the situation of Bankok, his capital, open to an attack by our much-dreaded

shipping, alone prevented him from making common cause against us. What the king of Siam did, was to make friendly declarations to both parties, and to intimate to each of them that he was anxious for its success, and would soon join it. When, however, the Siamese began to collect a considerable army on his frontier, Sir Archibald Campbell thought it expedient to check-mate him. The city of Martaban, at the bottom of the gulf of that name, and about a hundred miles from Rangoon, was a frontier fortress of the Burmese, a dépôt of military stores, the place where the Burmese armies usually assembled in their wars with the Siamese, and from which they had made their annual irruptions into the territories of the king of Siam, to plunder the country, and to carry off the inhabitants as slaves. It was a place difficult of access, and of very considerable strength; but the inhabitants of the town and of the neighbouring districts, which had not long been annexed to the Burmese empire, detested their conquerors. On the 13th of October part of his majesty's 41st regiment, and a regiment of Madras light infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Godwin, sailed from Rangoon for Martaban. Owing to light and contrary winds, the little expedition did not reach its destination so soon as was expected; and thus, instead of taking the enemy by surprise, Colonel Godwin found them fully aware of his approach, and prepared to give him a warm reception. The Burmese governor had fortified every commanding eminence about the town, and its distance from the coast (from fifteen to twenty miles) offered many serious obstacles. By land, difficult forests, marshes, and inundated rice-fields presented themselves; by water, the intricate navigation of a shallow, winding, and little-known river presented almost equally serious impediments. It was, however, resolved to proceed by water, and after great toil and perseverance our lighter vessels were anchored nearly abreast of the town of Martaban. As the Burmese governor showed no disposition to come to terms, our guns opened, and an assault took place. The Burmese were soon driven with severe loss from the town and all their defences; and the inhabitants, being chiefly Taliens or Peguers, received the British troops with every appearance of satisfaction and joy. Having settled matters at Martaban, Colonel Godwin detached a party against another frontier fortress of the Burmese, and Yeh, situated between Martaban and Tavoy, fell into

our hands.* In all this part of the country the native population—the descendants of the subjects of the once powerful dynasty which ruled the ancient kingdom of Pegu, were eager to be released from the iron sceptre of Ava, and to be included among the subjects of the British. By the end of October the rains had entirely ceased at Rangoon, and, reinforced as he was, Sir Archibald Campbell was completing his preparations for the ascent of the Irawaddi, and for an attack upon Prome, when he learned that the Maha Bandoola had reached Donoopew with 60,000 fighting men, a considerable train of artillery, and a body of Cassay horse, the best cavalry of this part of Asia. Bandoola's musketeers were estimated at 35,000 men. Other numerous bodies were armed with gingals, which carried an iron ball of from six to twelve ounces, and were mounted on light carriages easily dragged about by two men; and great numbers were attached to the guns, which were transported on the backs of elephants. The rest of the host were armed with swords and spears, and all were well provided with implements for stockading and intrenching. Scattered through the army, there were also some more of the "Invulnerables" who had not yet tasted the sour grape of English guns, and who were amply provided with charms, spells, opium, bang, and betel-nut.

As Bandoola proclaimed on all sides his intention of going at the head of his invincible army, with horses and elephants, and all manner of warlike stores, to capture and destroy the English at Rangoon, it was deemed proper to wait for him there. This would save our troops much fatigue, and a great decisive battle might bring the court of Ava to reason.

As a great part of the country was still under water, the Burmese, for the most part, came down to the neighbourhood of Rangoon in boats. Our force was still but weak for the extensive line it was necessary to defend. But, to remedy this evil as far as possible, posts, consisting of redoubts and fortified pagodas, were speedily constructed, connecting the Great Golden Dagon Pagoda, by two distinct lines, with Rangoon and the river, and leaving a disposable force for moving to the support of any point that might require support. The post at Kemmendine was

* Snodgrass. H. H. Wilson, 'Documents illustrative of the Burmese War,' &c.

also strongly occupied, and was supported on the river by his majesty's sloop *Sophie*, Captain Ryves, a Company's cruiser, and a strong division of gun-boats.* On the 30th of November, Bandoola's great army assembled in and behind the dense forest which almost touches at one point the conical hill and the great pagoda; and his line, extending from the river above Kemmendine in a semicircular direction towards Puzendown, might be distinguished by a curved line of smoke rising above the trees. "During the ensuing night, the low, continued murmur and hum of voices proceeding from the enemy's encampment suddenly ceased, and were speedily succeeded by the distant but gradually approaching sounds of a multitude in slow and silent movement through the woods; and we soon became aware that the enemy's masses had approached to the very edge of the jungle, within musket-shot of the pagoda, apparently in readiness to rush from their cover to the assault at the break of day. . . . The day had scarcely dawned, on the 1st of December, when hostilities commenced with a heavy fire of musketry and cannon at Kemmendine, the reduction of that place being a preliminary to any general attack upon our line. The firing continued long and animated, and from our commanding situation at the great pagoda, though nearly two miles distant from the scene of action, we could distinctly hear the yells and shouts of the infuriated assailants, occasionally returned by the hearty cheer of the British seamen, as they poured in their heavy broadsides upon the resolute and persevering masses. The thick forest which separated us from the river, prevented our seeing distinctly what was going forward; and when the firing ceased, we remained for a short time in some anxiety, though in little doubt as to the result of the long and spirited assault. At length, however, the thick canopy of smoke which lowered over the fierce and sanguinary conflict gradually dissolving, we had the pleasure of seeing the masts of our vessels lying at their old station off the fort—a convincing proof that all had ended well on that side.

"In the course of the forenoon Burmese columns were observed on the west side of the river, marching across the

* "This post at Kemmendine was of great importance in preventing the enemy from attacking Rangoon by water by means of their war-boats, or launching from a convenient distance the formidable fire-rafts they had prepared for the destruction of our shipping."—Snodgrass.

plains of Dalla towards Rangoon. They were formed in five or six different divisions, and moved with great regularity, led by numerous chiefs on horseback—their gilt umbrellas glittering in the rays of the sun,—with a sufficiently formidable and imposing effect, at a distance that prevented our perceiving anything motley or mobbish, which might have been found in a closer inspection of these war-like legions.”*

Opposite Rangoon the leading column of five or six Burmese divisions commenced intrenching and throwing up batteries, while their main body were stockading in the jungle. In the course of the day several heavy columns issued from the forest, and successively took up their ground along a woody ridge, gently sloping towards Rangoon. Here they commenced operations with their intrenching tools, and with such activity and good will, that in the course of a couple of hours their whole line was covered, their flags and banners, which had been flying in profusion, all disappeared, and nothing was seen but a parapet of fresh-turned earth, gradually increasing in height. “The moving masses, which had so very lately attracted our anxious attention, had sunk into the ground; and by any one who had not witnessed the whole scene, the existence of these subterranean legions would not have been credited. The occasional movement of a chief with his gilt umbrella, from place to place, superintending the progress of their labour, was the only thing that now attracted notice. By a distant observer, the hills, covered with mounds of earth, would have been taken for anything rather than the approaches of an attacking army; but to us, who had watched the whole strange proceeding, it seemed the work of magic or enchantment.”† But, thus working like moles in the earth, the Burmese could no more see than they could be seen, and their men on watch must have been careless or fearful of exposing their heads and shoulders by looking too often over the mounds. In the afternoon Major Sale, with his majesty’s 13th regiment, and a regiment of Madras native infantry, moving rapidly forward upon the busily employed and two confident enemy, fell upon them before they were well aware of the visit, and drove the whole line from their earth-cover with considerable loss. Having

* Snodgrass.

† Ibid.

destroyed as many of their arms and tools as they could find, our detachment retired unmolested before the numerous bodies which were now forming on every side. "These Burmese trenches were found to be a succession of holes, capable of containing two men each, and excavated so as to afford shelter both from the weather and the fire of an enemy; even a shell lighting in the trench, could at most, kill but two men. As it is not the Burmese system to relieve their troops in making these approaches, each hole contained a sufficient supply of rice, water, and even fuel for its inmates; and under the excavated bank a bed of straw or brushwood was prepared, in which one man could sleep while his comrade watched. When one line of trench is completed, its occupiers, taking advantage of the night, push forward to where the second line is to be opened, their places being immediately taken up by fresh troops from the rear, and so on progressively."*

During the same busy day (the 1st of December), repeated attacks were made on Kemmendine, and were all repulsed by our troops or by the seamen of our little flotilla. But it was not until night that the Burmese made their last desperate effort to open their way down the river, and so get possession of the port of Rangoon. Our wearied soldiers had lain down to rest, when suddenly the heavens and the whole surrounding country, became brilliantly illuminated. The enemy had launched their fire-rafts into the stream with the first of the ebb tide, and had now applied the match to those huge masses of combustible materials, in the hope of driving the *Sophie* and our other vessels from their stations off Kemmendine; and as these fire-rafts came down, it was seen by the light of their flames, that they were followed by a vast fleet of war-boats, whose crews were ready to take advantage of the confusion which might ensue, if any of our vessels should be set on fire. And as the rafts floated rapidly down to Kemmendine with the ebbing tide, columns of attack moved once more by land against that well-defended post, with artillery, with gingals, and musketry. But the skill and intrepidity of British seamen proved more than a match for the numbers and devices of the Burmese; after gazing for a while at the red, and blue, and yellow, and green flames of the mighty fireworks,

* Snodgrass.

our sailors leaped into their boats, pushed off to meet the flaming rafts, grappled them with their grappling-irons, and conducted them past our shipping, or ran them ashore, to finish their short life of fire and flame upon the river-bank without injury to any one.* After this, it is hardly necessary to say that the attack on Kemmendine failed completely.

If the fire-rafts could have reached the harbour of Rangoon, which was now crowded with transports and country vessels of all kinds, the effect might have been very tragical. Kemmendine, where the river makes a sudden angle, was the only point from which the rafts could have been launched with effect. Fully aware of this, Bandoola ordered attack upon attack to be made, and for seven days no rest by night or by day was allowed to our troops or to our seamen there. But every effort of the enemy failed, nor were they more successful in any other part of their line of circumvallation. On the 5th of December, when the *matériel* and warlike stores of the Burmese left wing were brought forward from the jungle to their foremost intrenchment in front of Rangoon, and were fairly within our reach, Sir Archibald Campbell ordered a decisive attack to be made upon their army. Major Sale, with one column 800 strong, and a troop of British dragoons, who had only been landed the preceding day, was directed to fall upon their centre; and Major Walker, with 500 men, was sent to make a vigorous attack on their left wing. The operations of these two columns of troops were greatly facilitated by Captain Chada, of the navy, who proceeded up the creek to within gun-shot of the rear of the enemy's line, with the man-of-war boats and a part of the flotilla, and commenced a heavy

* "Upon examination, the Burmese fire-rafts were found to be ingeniously contrived and strongly constructed. They were made almost entirely of strong bamboos, firmly wrought together. Between every two or three rows of bamboos there was a line of earthen jars filled with petroleum, or earth-oil, and cotton: gunpowder and other inflammable ingredients were distributed in different parts of the floating infernal machine; and the almost inextinguishable fierceness of the flames proceeding from it could scarcely be conceived. Many of the rafts were considerably more than 100 feet long, and were divided into many pieces, attached to each other by means of long and flexible hinges. It was expected by the Burmese that when they caught upon the cable or bow of a ship, the force of the current would carry the ends of the raft quite round her, and envelope her in flames from the deck to her mast-head."—Major Snodgrass.

cannonade, which distracted the attention of the Burmese, and prevented their reinforcing in front. Our two columns broke through the intrenchments, and completely routed both the centre and the left with vigorous bayonet-charges; but Major Walker and a good many of his gallant comrades fell. The loss of the Burmese was appalling; they were driven from every part of their works into the jungle, leaving the ground behind them covered with dead and wounded, with all their guns, intrenching-tools, and a great number of small-arms. On the 6th of December, Bandoola was employed in rallying his defeated troops. On the 7th the Burmese made their last and grand attack on the great pagoda. Here they were beaten, driven back to their intrenchments, then driven into them, and forced back into the jungle by the British bayonet. Our troops at that post, worn out by seven days and nights of incessant fighting or watching, could not pursue the flying enemy, who left in the trenches a great number of dead—nearly all stout, tall, athletic fellows, who might almost have measured with English grenadiers. During these seven busy and fiery days, the Burmese, in addition to a prodigious loss of lives, had lost every gun they had, and the entire *matériel* of their army. The survivors were flying towards Donoopew; but they were stopped on their flight by some great and terrible chiefs, who had been sent down with numerous reinforcements, and they rallied at Kokeen, about four miles beyond the great pagoda. It is said that when Bandoola counted his forces, he found them reduced, from more than 60,000 fighting men, to less than 25,000. This favourite of the Golden Foot was allowed to retain the chief command; he immediately began to intrench and stockade himself at Kokeen, and employed incendiaries to burn the invaders out of Rangoon, and destroy all their stores, powder-magazines, &c. The latter attempt—which very nearly succeeded*—brought down a rapid attack upon his new position, and disgrace and ruin upon himself. On

* On the night of the 12th of December the cry of fire resounded through the town of Rangoon, and nearly the whole of that filthy wood and bamboo-built place seemed to be immediately in a blaze. The incendiaries had placed their matches in various parts of the town, and had set fire to them at the same moment. One half of the town was burned; but the flames were prevented from reaching our dépôt of stores and ammunition.

the 15th of December—three days after the midnight fire at Rangoon, 1,500 British troops and sepoy, unaided by artillery, under the command of Brigadier-General Willoughby Cotton, drove Bandoola and his mighty host from all their intrenchments and stockades at Kokeen, and strewed the position with dead and dying. Here ended the operations in front of Rangoon; the British troops returned in the evening to their cantonments, and the remnant of the Burmese army retreated upon Donoopew.

Sir Archibald Campbell resolved to advance up the country, at least as far as Prome, reducing Donoopew on his way, and to move in two separate columns, the one proceeding by water, the other by land. The land column was to proceed in as direct a line as it could, and to strike the main stream of the Irawaddi at Sarrawah, or at some other place above Donoopew and below Prome. The water column, carrying supplies for the whole army, was to ascend the Rangoon branch of the Great River, to get into the main channel below Donoopew, to dislodge the enemy from all their positions there, to clear the Irawaddi, and to give the hand to the land column at Sarrawah, or some place in that neighbourhood.

On the 11th of February, the British began to move. The land column, under the immediate command of Sir Archibald Campbell, consisted of 1,300 European infantry, 1,000 sepoy, two squadrons of dragoons, one troop of horse artillery, and one rocket troop; the marine or river column, under Brigadier-General Willoughby Cotton, counted 600 European infantry, one small battalion of sepoy, and a powerful train of artillery; and this column was embarked in a flotilla of sixty boats, commanded by Captain Alexander, of the navy, escorted by the boats of our men-of-war. The column marching by land, and the column proceeding by the river, were so to time their movements as to reach Sarrawah nearly at the same time. But Sir Archibald Campbell, for reasons which do not seem to be sufficiently explained, pushed on much faster than Brigadier-General Willoughby Cotton; and he continued to advance as if the river column, or the forces under Cotton, would be quite sufficient for the reduction of Donoopew, and could not possibly encounter either defeat or delay. A few wretched families of Rangoon were found wandering in the woods and looking like spectres, from starvation and misery; but, with the excep-

tion of these poor people, the country seemed to be left to the dominion of the tiger and wild hog. But Sir Archibald Campbell marched on his column until it reached Sarrawah, about thirty miles beyond Donoopew, on the main stream of the majestic Irawaddi, which is here from 700 to 800 yards broad. Here he halted for four days—the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th of March—expecting to cut off the enemy's retreat from Donoopew by water, and also to prevent their rallying higher up the river. Early on the morning of the 7th of March, Sir Archibald heard a heavy cannonade in the direction of Donoopew; he believed it to proceed from the marine division, and when the noise ceased, he felt convinced that the place had fallen. He halted, however, where he was, for the chance of hearing from Brigadier-General Willoughby Cotton, until the morning of the 9th, when, leaving a strong detachment at Sarrawah to prevent the enemy's retreat by water, he advanced twelve miles inland, through jungles and deserted and bare tracks of country. On the 10th, he advanced fourteen miles farther up the country, to a town of considerable extent upon the banks of the Great River. He found that the town was wholly deserted, and that here, as well as everywhere else, every article had been removed that could be of use to his army. "This," says the historian of the campaign, "only made him the more eager to reach Prome by rapid marches, lest that city, the promised quarters for the rainy season, should be equally stripped." Early on the following morning, the 11th of March, as the land column were about to resume their march, official intelligence was received that the marine column had failed in their attack upon Donoopew. The news is said to have been as unexpected as it was unpleasant; but it was not very astonishing that a column which did not much exceed 1,000 men should fail in reducing by a *coup-de-main* one of the strongest positions in the Burmese country, defended by at least 15,000 of the best Burmese troops. The whole mistake lay in Sir Archibald's dividing his forces, and attempting to reach Prome with one division, before making sure of the reduction of Donoopew, which the enemy had been strengthening for nearly a whole year. And yet it was made to appear that if Brigadier-General Willoughby Cotton had begun his attack in the right direction, his single column might have sufficed to drive Bandoola out of that formidable place. The works

at Donoopew consisted of three stockades, which rose one above the other, and the heavy batteries of which were all pointed to the river. Instead of passing the whole fortress and taking the enemy in flank, which would have rendered his guns almost useless, Cotton attacked the first part of the works he came to, or the extremity of the stockade that was lowest down the stream. After meeting with an obstinate resistance, he carried the first stockade; but on proceeding to the second, he received by far the severest check that the European troops met with during the whole war. No fewer than 150 of our men were killed and wounded; and the retreat was so precipitate that the wounded were not carried off, although it was well known they would all be put to a cruel death. The whole flotilla retreated ten miles down the river, being constantly assailed and tormented by the Burmese war-boats. The next day most of our killed and wounded men who had been left in the stockade were crucified and put upon rafts, which were sent floating down the river towards the flotilla.* This barbarity was the most revolting, as the wounded among the Burmese, taken prisoners in the first stockade, had been carefully dressed and attended to by our surgeons, and had been permitted to go whithersoever they pleased.

Upon receiving intelligence of this disaster, Sir Archibald Campbell, who had certainly gone on too heedlessly, or in too entire a confidence, felt that there was nothing to do but to retrace his steps, and to join Cotton as soon as possible. His land column depended entirely upon the flotilla for its supplies; and the flotilla being stopped, the navigation of the Irawaddi was so completely commanded by the enemy that not a canoe could get up the river or pass the works at Donoopew. At the time the commissariat of the land column had not two days' rations left. In a word, starvation stared us in the face; and the occupation

* Article on the Burmese war, and review of Major Snodgrass's volume, in 'Quarterly Review,' No. lxx.

The writer of this article appears either to have served in the Burmese war as an officer of his majesty's navy, or to have derived information from naval officers who were engaged in that war.

The commanding officer's own account of the operations at Donoopew is, however, entitled to consideration. See Despatch of Brigadier-General Willoughby Cotton, dated March 9th, 1825, in 'Documents illustrative of the Burmese War, &c.; compiled and edited by Horace Hayman Wilson, Calcutta, 1827.'

of Prome, however desirable, was not to be attempted under circumstances so eminently hazardous. On the other hand, it became every day more certain that Bandoola's army was the chief, if not the only force now left to oppose us ; and the natives evidently looked to that alone for checking our advance.* By the 13th Sir Archibald and his land column got back to Sarrawah. Here an obstacle of a most serious nature presented itself. To reach Donopew the broad and rapid Irawaddi must be crossed by an army with cavalry, artillery, and commissariat equipments, and unprovided with any means for such an undertaking, beyond a few small canoes which had been procured with much difficulty. Energy and perseverance, however, triumphed over every difficulty. In the course of the 13th the Madras infantry were carried over the river, and sent to occupy a position in advance. On the 14th rafts were constructed to carry over the artillery, stores, &c. ; and by labouring day and night, before the evening of the fifth day, every man, and every thing belonging to the division, had been safely landed on the right bank of the Irawaddi. It was, however, the 25th of March ere the land column arrived within gun-shot distance of Donopew. In order to spare the lives and limbs of his soldiers, Sir Archibald gave order not to attempt to carry the truly formidable place by a *coup-de-main*. It was, however, found to be much too extensive to admit of its being surrounded even by a chain of posts, by so small a force ; and consequently a position was taken up from which their stockade might be cannonaded. While our people were taking up this position, the enemy, wonderfully elated by his recent success, manned his works, and opened a fire from a great many guns. Numerous golden umbrellas glittered in the morning sun, denoting how many great men were assembled within the works, which extended for nearly a mile along the sloping bank of the river, the breadth varying, according to the nature of the ground, from 500 to 800 yards. The stockading was made of solid teak beams, from fifteen to seventeen feet high, driven firmly into the earth ; and behind this wooden wall the old brick ramparts of the place rose to a considerable height, and afforded a firm and elevated footing to the defendants.

Upwards of 150 guns and swivels were mounted on these

* Snodgrass.

works, and the garrison was protected from the shells of the besiegers by numerous traverses and excavations. A ditch of considerable breadth and depth surrounded the defences; and the passage of it was rendered the more difficult by spikes, great nails, holes, and other contrivances. Beyond the ditch several rows of strong railing were interposed; and in front of all, a formidable abbatia, thirty yards broad, extended round the works, except on the river face, where the Irawaddi presented a sufficient barrier. Regardless of the enemy's long shots, Sir Archibald Campbell encamped his division, and immediately commenced preparations for breaking ground. The camp being pitched, the heavy fire of the Burmese entirely ceased. But the sudden calm, the disappearance of the defendants from their ramparts, the occasional patrolling of their cavalry, and the long-continued observation of our line by a party of native chiefs posted on a lofty watch-tower, foreboded a very early interruption of this tranquillity. The soldiers regarded the momentary repose as seamen do the treacherous lull which precedes the increasing storm. The Burmese did not keep them long in suspense. The clock had struck ten, and the moon was fast approaching to the verge of the horizon, when sharp musketry, and the loud and wild war-cry of the enemy, roused the camp. In an instant every soldier's hand was on his musket, and in a minute every soldier was in his place. Our line was scarcely formed ere the enemy's intention became apparent: his columns were distinctly heard moving towards our right for the purpose of turning it; and at the same time he kept up a distant fire upon our left and centre, to encourage a belief that these were the selected points of attack. They reached and out-flanked our extreme right, but our two regiments rapidly changed front, and kneeling, to insure a better aim, kept up a rapid running fire, which instantly checked the advancing columns, and laid a good many of the Burmese prostrate. Having repeated their attempt two or three times more, they drew off and returned in silence to their irritated commander, Bandoola, who beat some of them soundly because they could not beat the British. The darkness of the night enabled them to carry off their killed and wounded. On our side, only two or three were killed, and about twenty wounded.

No communication had as yet been opened with Cotton

and his marine column; but, early on the morning of the 26th, a party of 100 European infantry and a few cavalry were sent to march round the enemy's works, in order to reach the flotilla at its station below Donopew, and there request the naval commander to move up and form a junction with Sir Archibald Campbell. Forcing their way through a thick jungle by the aid of three elephants, the detached party reached the flotilla without receiving or firing a shot. Before the evening of this day, his majesty's 47th regiment occupied an old pagoda which was about 300 yards from the outward defences of Donopew, and which seemed the most eligible point for breaking ground—an operation that commenced immediately.

At nine o'clock in the morning of the 27th our flotilla came in full sail up the river. This was no sooner observed by the Burmese than they sortied in great force, with infantry and cavalry, and with seventeen war elephants fully caparisoned. This attack was directed upon Sir Archibald Campbell's right. While it was coming on, and while our flotilla was coming up under the fire of the fort, Sir Archibald's cavalry, covered by his horse artillery, charged the elephants who led the van. The war elephants stood the charge with extraordinary steadiness; but the men on their backs were mostly shot, and no sooner did they feel themselves unrestrained by the hand of their drivers, than they turned their stunted tails to our dragoons, and walked back to the fort with the greatest composure. The flotilla, having passed the fort with trifling loss, anchored close on the left of Sir Archibald's column.* On the next day (the 28th) our working parties continued making approaches towards the place, and our steam-vessel (a source of amazement and superstitious alarm to the Burmese) and some light boats pushed up the river after the enemy's war-boats, and succeeded in capturing four gilded and five plain ones.

After these operations, three days were spent in constructing batteries and landing heavy ordnance. On the evening of the 31st, a Burmese came out of the fort to the English camp with a piece of dirty canvas, containing this laconic epistle from Bandoola:—"In war we find each other's force; the two countries are at war for nothing, and

* Major Snodgrass. Brigadier-General Sir Archibald Campbell's 'Despatch to George Swinton, Esq., Secretary to Government, Secret and Political Department, dated Donopew, April 2nd, 1825.'

we know not each other's minds!" The bearer being questioned, declared that he was only a common soldier, and knew nothing of the matter, but believed his chief wished to make peace. Early the next morning (the 1st of April) our mortar batteries and rockets began the work of destruction, and continued firing at intervals during the day and part of the succeeding night. The Burmese remained close under the protection of their works, making little, then less, and at last no return at all to our fire. This excited surprise, but on the next morning the mystery was explained. At daylight on the 2nd of April, two lascars, who had been prisoners in the fort, came running out, and informed our people, that the great Bandoola had been killed the day before, by one of our shells or rockets; that after his death was known, no entreaties of the other chiefs could prevail upon the Burmese to remain at their posts, and, in short, that the whole army had fled or dispersed during the dark hours of the night. The British line was in consequence put under arms, and the place was immediately taken possession of. Sufficient proof remained of the hurry and confusion of the flight; not a gun was removed, and even the very large depôt of grain which had been formed remained uninjured. Within the fort were found a number of wounded men. One poor fellow, who had both his legs shot off, related circumstantially his chief's death.

The grain found in Donoopew was sufficient for the consumption of our entire force for many months. Besides the ordnance mounted on the works, a considerable quantity was found concealed in a tank. Some more of the war-boats were taken, together with a vast number of other boats of an excellent description, and well suited for conveying troops up the Irawaddi. That magnificent river was now entirely under our command from its broad mouths on the ocean to the valley of Ava and Amarapoora, where it shallows and contracts and becomes unnavigable.

The confidence of the Burmese court, which was at the very highest point when the war commenced, had been for some time rapidly declining; but when the death of the great Bandoola and the flight of his army of Invincibles and Invulnerables became known in the city of Ava, almost the last spark of pride and presumption went out. It was confessed openly, and even before the Golden Face, that the

Burmese were inferior to our European troops, and could not withstand them; and that to break the lines of the British, or to arrest their advance in action, was an impossibility.*

Where the great Bandoola had failed, none could hope for success. The chiefs, knowing their double liability, or the double risk to which they were exposed, of being killed by the English in battle, and of having their heads taken off by the king if they failed in their attempts to drive the English back to the sea, were far from being anxious for the honour of the chief command; and the king knew not how to choose or whom to trust. A new chief was, however, invited to court, and forced to accept the chief command of the forces, and every nerve was strained to recruit the army and to restore its former self-confidence. At the same time, however, it was resolved to endeavour to amuse the English commanders, and delay their approach by pretending a readiness to treat with them.†

In the meanwhile, other successes had been gained by our arms, and Sir Archibald Campbell had resumed his advance upon Prome. Major Sale entered the Irawaddi by another of its mouths, called the Bassein River, and with a small detachment he cleared and destroyed several stockades, without meeting with any resistance. On the 3rd of March, Sale arrived at the town of Bassein, and found it abandoned and on fire, the governor of the district having retreated to Lamina, a town about six days' journey up the river.

* Deposition of Henry Gouger, Esq. They likened the British troops in action to a particular class of demons called Balu. They compared the rapidity of their movements to a whirlwind, and were astonished beyond measure at their skill in the use of artillery, shells, rockets, &c. By this time they also admired the forbearance and moderation of British soldiers after victory. Our mode of attacking them in their stockades at the point of the bayonet, and with a mere handful of men, struck them with consternation. "They stated, that when one of the assailants was killed, another immediately took his place; and that they were not to be discouraged from advancing even by wounds, so that it was in vain to contend with such an enemy. Their imaginations were so wrought upon that, to these particulars, they added many fabulous ones; such as that the Europeans continued to advance after their hands had been chopped off in scrambling over the stockades; that the arms and legs of the wounded were carefully picked up, and replaced by English surgeons, who were represented to be as skilful as the warriors were bold."—Deposition of the Rev. Dr. A. Judson, American Baptist missionary, taken at Rangoon by the English commissioners, after the close of the war.

† MS. by Henry Gouger, Esq.

Having occupied Bassein, the town was soon restored to a comparatively flourishing state, and the population gradually returned to it. A reconnaissance was made as far as Lamina, by 200 men of his majesty's 13th regiment, 100 native infantry, and seventy seamen, who proceeded up the river in boats, bivouacking at night on the banks. Sale with his party got close upon the heels of the retreating governor of Bassein, and was several times very near catching him. All the villages on the banks of the river were deserted, and most of them burned. Lamina, although a large town, was found completely abandoned, the flying governor having driven all the population into the interior. Sale could obtain hardly anything beyond a golden state-boat, and two war-canoes, and with this little prize he returned to Bassein, after an absence of fourteen days. He was shortly afterwards recalled to Rangoon, to reinforce Sir Archibald Campbell's main army, which had passed the point at which a diversion in the direction of Bassein was likely to be useful; but Sale left a small garrison in the town of Bassein, and that place continued to be occupied throughout the war.

On the 4th of April, two days after taking possession of Donoopew, our main army recommenced its march for Prome. By the 12th it was again on the left bank of the Irawaddi at Sarrawah; and on the 14th, it reached the spot from which it had retrograded just one month before. Passing over several abandoned camps and stockades, our troops, on the 19th reached Huddadoon, where the blue mountains of Arracan became for the first time distinctly visible. The landscape was beautiful, but the still smoking ashes of numerous villages cast a shade of sadness over the scene. In the evening a messenger came in from Prome, as the bearer of a pacific letter from the chiefs of the Burmese army, now collected at that city. The messenger seemed to be a silly old man, and probably he was not a Burmese, but some half-caste, who spoke some European language. He drank much too freely for a diplomatist, and when he rose to take his departure, he whispered in the general's ear, "They are frightened out of their senses! you may do what you please with them!" In reply to the letter which he had brought, Sir Archibald Campbell said that he would be very glad to conclude a proper peace, and that upon the arrival of the British army at Prome, every oppor-

tunity and facility in opening negotiations would be afforded to the Burmese. And then, instead of gratifying his correspondents by halting and allowing them time to improve their stockades and receive their reinforcements from Ava, Sir Archibald moved on Prome, being preceded by the steamboat, and the rest of our flotilla. On the 24th of April, when he reached a point whence the heights of Prome were visible, he received another letter from the Burmese authorities at Prome, who demanded that the city should not be occupied by the British troops. Sir Archibald responded, that the military occupation of Prome could not be dispensed with, but that he would be happy to meet deputies at any time and place next day. Long before daylight the next morning our column was again in motion, for no reliance was placed in the pacific assurances of the Burmese. At daylight, our troops were under the ridge of hills which covers Prome to the southward. Every hill was fortified to the very summit, and a more formidable position had seldom been encountered in the East. The stockades, however, were unoccupied, the enemy having evacuated every post, and set fire to the town. Our column, pushing on, found Prome in a blaze; but by great exertions, a considerable part of the town was saved from destruction.

On the 25th of April, when Sir Archibald Campbell took possession of Prome, without firing a musket, the rainy season was not far off. There was, however, time before it set in to send a small corps to clear the inland districts of Prome of the armed bands which overran the country, plundering and oppressing the inhabitants, and driving them with their cattle into the jungles. This lightly-equipped corps, under the command of Colonel Godwin, left Prome on the 5th of May.* The first two days' march to the north-eastward was over a rich and fertile country, abounding in rice-

* Professor Horace Hayman Wilson. 'Documents illustrative of the Burmese War.'

We learn from this curious and valuable collection of materials that Colonel Godwin's force consisted of 800 infantry and a troop of the governor-general's body-guard, with two field-pieces. Lord Amherst had sent a good part of his body-guard to the Irawaddi early in the war; and throughout these campaigns that brilliant corps attracted universal admiration by its activity and spirit.

See also, 'Two Years in Ava,' by an officer on the staff of the quarter-master-general's department.

grounds. But the fertility, the industry, the population of the Burmese territories are almost entirely confined to the great valley of the Irawaddi, to the banks of its various branches, and the Delta which lies between its mouths on the sea and Donoopew; as the column advanced into the interior, these signs of industry and population rapidly diminished, the country gradually assuming the character of a luxuriant wilderness, overgrown with lofty forests and brushwood jungles, with a few miserable villages scattered about at great distances from each other. The inhabitants of these remote places appear to have scarcely known that there was any war in their country until they saw this little column. The armies of the Golden Foot had certainly not been near them; for in almost every instance the villagers were found quietly occupying their huts, and gazing in wild amazement at the strange sight of white faces, red coats, field-artillery, etc. Although they seemed miserably poor and devoid of comforts, they were found to be a cheerful, a frank, and a kind-hearted people. They soon became familiar and even friendly with our soldiers, who paid them for whatever they furnished. The column continued to march to Tagoondine, at the foot of the Galadzet mountains. It had been intended to push the reconnaissance across those mountains as far as Tonghoo, a sequestered city, about which much had been said and very little known, except that it had once been the capital of an independent state, and that it was now the jagheer of one of his Burmese majesty's brothers. But the monsoon rains were now beginning to fall, and to swell the mountain-streams: the Galadzet chain was most steep and rugged, without roads, and with hideous-looking though pacific inhabitants; and beyond the mountains the country was for some distance said to be a desert and a dreary waste. Colonel Godwin therefore thought it expedient to turn his back upon Tonghoo, and to move to the north-eastward to the town of Meaday, about sixty miles above Prome, and, like Prome and all the other considerable towns, situated on the banks of the Irawaddi. On this march our column occasionally crossed the track by which corps of the Burmese army had retreated from Prome. "It was painful to witness the ruinous effects of their system of warfare. Even Russia, in her memorable resistance to the armies of Napoleon, did not offer to the invading host such a continued scene of desolation.

Neither man nor beast escaped the retiring column; and heaps of ashes, with groups of hungry, howling dogs, alone indicated where villages had been.* Meaday was found a blackened ruin, or a heap of ashes. Its old brick wall had been recently cleared and strengthened by breast-works and stockadings: but everything was burned, and every soul was gone, so that no intelligence could be obtained as to the enemy's movements. From Meaday our light column commenced its retrograde march upon Prome, following the road which runs close along the left bank of the Irawaddi. Colonel Graham and his men, with 500 head of cattle purchased from the villagers, arrived at Prome on the 24th of May, and almost immediately after their return, the persecuted and dislodged inhabitants of the town poured in from every quarter: some from the woods, bringing their families, their cattle, their waggons, and other property; and some escaped from the military escorts and disjointed corps of the king's fugitive army. Food and covering were given to the starving and naked; and those who had houses and property were secured in the possession of them. Our British soldiers assisted them in rebuilding their wooden houses, and their bamboo huts; and in a very short time Prome had risen from its ashes, a greater town than it had been before the war. As the people were punctually paid for whatever they brought, plentiful bazaars were soon established, and our soldiers lived in comfort and abundance, and unmolested ease; while the ill-conducted armies of the king of Ava, unpaid, unsupplied, and driven up the country, were left to the alternative of starvation or dispersion. The towns and districts in our rear followed the example of the provincial capital; and the banks of the Irawaddi below Prome were soon enlivened by the presence of a contented people. An excellent dépôt was soon formed at Prome, with supplies sufficient, not only for the rainy season, but for the long campaign which possibly might follow. The plains which our soldiers had traversed on their advance up the country without seeing a single bullock, were again covered with numerous herds; from every pathway of the deep and extensive forests, which cover far more than half of the country, droves of the finest oxen—the oxen of Pegu—now issued daily. The meuthagoes, or hereditary head-men of

* Snodgrass.

the districts and chief towns, tendered their allegiance, and were restored to their municipal functions by the British generals. A state of desolation and anarchy once more gave way to order and plenty ; and from Rangoon to Prome, from Bassein to Martaban, all classes of natives not only contributed their aid in collecting such supplies as the country afforded, but readily lent their services in facilitating the equipment and movement of military detachments.* The only anxiety which the people seemed to feel was, that the English would leave them, and give them back to their old masters.

During the season of rain and repose (it was no season of rest at Ava!) the king, encouraged by false reports, took vigorous measures for recruiting his armies, and for providing them with powder and weapons. Men were levied in all the upper parts of the country. Money, which had never been employed before for that purpose, was now freely spent in the enrolling of troops. Far away to the north and to the east, gold, and the orders of the Golden Face were sent. The tributary Shan tribes, whose country borders on China, were induced to put 15,000 men in march for Ava ; and by the end of September, the whole disposable force of his majesty was estimated at 60,000 or 70,000 men. By the beginning of October, the head-quarters of the Burmese army were again at Meaday ; and the breast-works and stockades, which Colonel Godwin and his light column had seen in ruin and in ashes, began to raise their heads again. To oppose to these forces, General Campbell had at Prome something less than 3,000 effective men ; but he was to be joined by 2,000 more by the time the campaign opened. His instructions from the governor-general bound him to neglect no opportunity of entering upon pacific negotiations ; he wrote a letter to the chiefs in command of the army assembling at Meaday, to offer them lenient terms of peace. Some time after this letter had been received, the chiefs sent a complimentary mission to Prome to speak many good words to the British general, and to state that the king and his ministers were equally desirous that a lasting peace should be concluded between the two great nations. Sir

* In the month of August Sir Archibald Campbell went down to Rangoon, and returned from that place to Prome in the steam-vessel the *Diana*, with as much ease and tranquillity as we go from London Bridge to Ramsgate and back again.

Archibald Campbell lost no time in sending two British officers to Meaday to offer an armistice, and to propose a meeting of commissioners from the two armies. The Burmese prime minister tried hard to delay the meeting. It was found necessary to allow a delay of nearly two weeks, the wongees protesting that they must wait until full powers arrived from their court. The kee wongee, or prime minister, agreed to be one of the commissioners, and it was finally settled that the meeting should take place at a spot midway between the two armies, and that each party should be escorted by 600 men—the rank of the kee wongee not permitting him to move with a smaller escort.

On the appointed day the meeting took place, Sir Archibald Campbell being accompanied by Commander Sir James Brisbane, commander of his majesty's naval forces in the Indian seas, who had come up to Prome to take the direction of the operations by water. The kee wongee was accompanied by another chief and minister, named Lamain Woon, and sundry other chiefs, arrayed in splendid state dresses, and wearing the gold chains which denote their rank. The first day was spent in an interchanging of ceremony and compliments. On the following day, Sir Archibald Campbell entered upon business by recapitulating the many unprovoked aggressions which had obliged the Indian government, after many vain endeavours to obtain redress by milder measures, to appeal to arms.

The wongees confessed that many aggressions had been committed on our frontiers; but they pretended that these deeds had not been authorized by the king or his government. They concluded by proposing that the armistice should be prolonged for twenty days beyond the 17th of October, the term fixed. Although our officers suspected that nothing was meant but to gain time in order to bring more troops down the valley of the Irawaddi, and erect more stockades, they agreed to this proposition.* Sir Archibald Campbell and Sir James Brisbane had scarcely reached Prome, on their return from these conferences, ere reports

* "Among ourselves," says Major Snodgrass, "many believed that the war was at an end, while others could not forget that we were dealing with a government proverbially false, and so completely influenced and guided by signs and omens, that an unusual grant from the white elephant was at all times sufficient to interrupt the most important affairs, and cause the most solemn engagements to be broken off."

poured in from all quarters of the irruption of predatory bands from the Burmese army within our line, and into the districts under our protection. And these bands, continuing their inroads, burned and plundered the country almost to the gates of Prome, and cut off some of the supplies for our army that were coming up the river from Rangoon.

The armistice was on the point of expiring, when the kee wongee sent the following laconic epistle to Sir Archibald : —“ If you wish for peace, you may go away ; but if you ask either money or territory, no friendship can exist between us. This is Burmese custom.” The ultimatum was accompanied by a general advance of the Burmese army upon Prome. They came on in three great divisions ; their total force was estimated at 60,000 men, besides which there was a reserve left at Melloone. Sir Archibald, after providing a garrison for Prome, could now bring into the field 5,000 men, of whom 3,000 were British. On the evening of the 15th of November the general sent Colonel McDowall with two brigades of Madras sepoy to dislodge the left division of the enemy, which was stockading itself at Wattygoon. McDowall got killed, four of his officers were wounded, and the sepoy commenced a rapid retreat, leaving nearly all their wounded behind them to the merciless fury of the Burmese. On the following day the enemy, with a great increase of confidence, began gradually to close round the English positions. In their left division 8,000 men were Shans from the country bordering upon China. These were expected to fight with more spirit than the men who had been previously engaged in the war. In addition to their chobwas and petty princes, the Shans were accompanied by three young and handsome women of high rank, who were believed to be endowed with the gift of prophecy and foreknowledge, and to possess the miraculous power of turning aside the death-dealing balls and bullets of the English. These Amazons, in strange warlike costume, were seen constantly riding among the Shan troops. For some days the enemy were allowed to gather and stockade ; but, on the 1st of December, all the three divisions were attacked simultaneously by Sir Archibald Campbell, Sir Willoughby Cotton, and Commodore Sir James Brisbane, who carried the flotilla up the river, and cannonaded the stockades in flank, while the land troops attacked them in front. Everywhere the Burmese and the Shans were defeated and dis-

lodged as soon as our troops got into the interior of their crowded works. The wongee who commanded the left division was slain; and a great many of the Shans, who did not understand the signs that were made to them to surrender and take quarter, were killed in a most desperate and most useless struggle within these stockades. One of the Shan Amazons received a fatal bullet in the breast. The moment her sex was recognized, our soldiers bore her from the scene of carnage to a cottage in the rear, where she soon expired. In the retreat, another of the Shan ladies was seen flying on horseback across a little river with the remnant of her people. Before she could gain the opposite bank of the river, one of our shrapnels exploded over her head, and she fell from her horse into the water. Whether she was killed or only frightened could not be ascertained, as she was immediately borne off by her attendants.

The mass of the retreating army rallied on the heights of Napadee, in front of a deep jungle, a few miles higher up the Irawaddi. This new position, in which they were attacked the very next day, was uncommonly strong. The nature of the country admitted of no approach to the main defences upon the hills, except in front, and there only by a narrow pathway. Nevertheless our storming column went on under a heavy fire, and finally succeeded in expelling the enemy at the point of the bayonet, and in driving them from hill to hill, until the whole of the position, nearly three miles in extent, was entirely in our possession. Our loss during the two days' fighting, on the part of the regiments of the line, was twenty-five killed and 100 wounded. During the attack on the heights, our flotilla, pushing rapidly past the works, succeeded in capturing all the boats and stores that had been brought down for the use of the Burmese army. That army was now in fact utterly broken up and ruined. Both banks of the Irawaddi were completely cleared, and nothing remained to check Sir Archibald Campbell's advance upon Melloone.*

On the 9th of December our first division, accompanied by head-quarters, began its march across a melancholy, deserted country, and through jungles and swamps overgrown with reeds and elephant-grass, fifteen feet high. The

* Snodgrass. Professor H. H. Wilson. Col. Alex. M. Tulloch.

King's 1st regiment, or "Royals," went by water, the other regiments of the line, in two divisions, by land. Two corps of sepoy were left to garrison Prome, in which a field hospital was established.

On the 12th the cholera broke out among the troops on march, and ere it could be checked it carried off a great many of the Madras sepoy, and rendered two British regiments almost unfit for duty.* The roads continued to be execrably bad, and the advance to be very slow. It was the 19th before the 1st division reached Meaday, where a scene of misery and death surrounded them. Within and among the stockades the ground was strewn with dead and dying Burmese lying promiscuously together, the victims of wounds, of disease, or of want. Several large gibbets stood about the stockade, each bearing the mouldering remains of three or four crucified Burmese, who had been thus barbarously put to death for having wandered from their posts in search of food, or for having followed the example of their chiefs in flying from the enemy. Beyond Meaday similar horrors presented themselves.

On the 26th of December, when the division had marched 140 miles from Prome, and was within ten miles of Melloone, a flag of truce was sent to Sir Archibald Campbell from the last-named place, with letters communicating the arrival of a high commissioner sent down from Ava with full powers to conclude a treaty of peace. On the 27th Sir Archibald encamped on the banks of the Irawaddi about four miles below Melloone, and was there joined by the flotilla. On the 28th he sent two officers to the Burmese chiefs, for the purpose of arranging an immediate meeting with the new negotiator. Our officers plainly saw that the Burmese chiefs wanted to procrastinate, and that the forces they had collected behind the stockades of Melloone were numerous, and were busily occupied in improving the defences of the place.

On the 29th Sir Archibald took up a position at Patanagoh, directly opposite to Melloone, and the flotilla anchored abreast of that town, and pointed its guns against the stockades. Upon this a chief put off in a war-boat to compliment the commander of the flotilla, and to assure him that the new and high delegate from Ava would gladly open negotiations on the 1st of January.

* Lieutenant Colonel Tulloch, 'Statistical Reports,' &c.

At the appointed day and hour the conferences were commenced, on board of a large boat moored in the middle of the Irawaddi between the two armies. After four meetings and long and wearisome discussions, the Burmese accepted the conditions which were offered, and a treaty of peace and amity was signed. Fifteen days were allowed for obtaining the ratification of the Golden Foot and the execution of preliminaries, such as the delivery of Mr. Henry Gouger and all other prisoners taken up the country, and the payment of the first instalment of the money indemnity.

During the quiet interval which ensued, the Burmese visited our camp by day in the most friendly manner, and by night they worked at their stockades.

On the 17th of January, the day preceding that upon which the ratified treaty was to be presented to Sir Archibald and his coadjutors, three officers of state visited the British camp, and declared that some unfortunate accident, of which they were entirely ignorant, must have delayed the arrival of the king's ratification, and the arrival of the prisoners and money. They offered to pay on the spot small instalments, and to give hostages for the payment of the rest of the money and the due execution of the other articles of the treaty, if Sir Archibald would only return to Prome. Having received a decided negative to this proposal and to another, they at last entreated for a delay of five or six days. This also was refused by Sir Archibald. On the next day, the 18th, three British officers proceeded to Melloone, to tell the wongees that they had broken their promises, and had rendered it impossible to trust them, and that after 12 o'clock that night hostilities would recommence. And at the midnight hour the British camp was on the alert; and by 10 o'clock the next morning twenty-eight pieces of artillery were in battery, and ready to open upon the enemy's defences. Two hours of heavy firing opened the way for our storming column (formed of the 13th and the 38th British regiments), which was carried across the river in boats, under the superintendence of Captain Chads, now senior naval officer, and which was headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Frith, Lieutenant-Colonel Sale having been badly wounded in the boats. In a very brief space of time the column entered by escalade, and established itself in the interior of the works. This almost finished the affair. From 10,000 to 15,000 armed men were driven away in a confused and helpless mass from the strongest works they had ever

erected. Our other brigades, cutting in upon the retreat, completed their discomfiture. The Burmese were driven with severe loss from all their stockades, and they left the whole of their artillery and military stores in our possession. Our 13th and 38th had only five men killed and twenty wounded. In the house of Prince Memiaboo, cash to the amount of 30,000 or 40,000 rupees was found; all his stud was likewise taken; and, what was considered of still more consequence, as affording undeniable proof of the perfidious conduct of the Burmese during the late negotiations, both the English and Burmese copies of the treaty were also found in the house, just in the same state as when signed and sealed at the meeting of the 3rd.

Prince Memiaboo and his beaten army continued to retreat upon Ava with all possible speed. Sir Archibald Campbell prepared to follow them up without delay.

On the 25th of January our people resumed their march over a barren country and bad roads. On the 31st headquarters were at Zaynangheoun. Here Sir Archibald was met by Doctor Price, one of the captive American missionaries (who had been seized at Ava with Mr. Gouger), and by Assistant-Surgeon Sandford, of the Royal regiment, who had been taken prisoner some months before. These gentlemen came on their parole of honour to return again to Ava. Doctor Price explained that they were despatched to express the sincere desire of his Burmese majesty for peace, and to bring back a statement of the terms that the English would grant him.

By this time the Golden Face was completely clouded with despair. Every hope and promise had failed; every day fixed upon by his star-gazers as a lucky day had turned out an unlucky day; and all his astrologers and soothsayers had proved themselves to be but cheats and liars. Sir Archibald assured the two envoys, that he was desirous of peace, and that his terms would vary very little from those which had been offered and accepted by the wongees at Melloone. He furnished them with a statement of his terms, and promised not to pass Pagahm-mew for twelve days. On the following morning, the 1st of February, 1826, the two delegates quitted the English camp to return to Ava, the American missionary being sanguine in his expectations of returning in a few days with cash, and a treaty of peace, duly signed by the king. Yet, in truth, his Burmese

majesty was still undecided, and in the course of two or three days, it became known in the British camp that he was displaying a determination to try the fortune of war once more ere he submitted. He was probably encouraged herein by a knowledge of the smallness of the force with which Sir Archibald Campbell was advancing upon his capital, and by intelligence received of the defeat of a weak British detachment before the strong stockade of Zitoung in Pegu, where the commanding officer, Colonel Conroy, and another officer were killed, and several wounded, and where the loss in men was very heavy for so small a force.

Sir Archibald Campbell continued his advance. On approaching Pagahm-mew, a town about one hundred miles above Melloone, he obtained positive information that a levy of 40,000 men had been ordered; that the Golden Foot had bestowed upon this new army the flattering appellation of "Retrievers of the King's Glory;" and that this army had been placed under the command of a savage warrior, styled Nee Woon-Breen, which has been variously translated as "Prince of Darkness," "King of Hell," and "Prince of the Setting Sun." Upon the 8th of February, when within a few days' march from Pagahm-mew, Sir Archibald ascertained that the Retrievers of the King's Glory and the Prince of Darkness were prepared to meet him under the walls of that city.

On the 9th the British column moved forward in order of attack, being much reduced by the absence of two brigades, and considerably under 2,000 fighting men. The advanced-guard was met in the jungle by strong bodies of skirmishers; and after maintaining a running fight for several miles, the column debouched into the open country, and there discovered the Burmese army, from 16,000 to 20,000 strong, drawn up in an inverted crescent, the wings of which threatened the little body of assailants on both their flanks. But Sir Archibald pushed boldly forward for their centre, threw the whole weight of his column upon that point, broke and shattered it in the twinkling of an eye, and left the unconnected wings severed from each other. The Retrievers of the King's Glory did not fight so well as those who had been accused of forfeiting his majesty's glory: they all fled as fast as their legs could carry them to a second line of redoubts and stockades, close under the

walls of Pagahm-mew; but the British column followed them so closely that they had little time for rallying in those works; and as soon as a few English bayonets got within the stockades, all the Burmese went off, screaming like a scared flock of wild-geese. Hundreds jumped into the river to escape their assailants, and perished in the water; and, with the exception of 2,000 or 3,000 men, the whole army dispersed upon the spot. The unfortunate Prince of Darkness, or King of Hell, or Prince of the Setting Sun, fled to Ava; and he had no sooner reached the court, when he was put to a cruel death by order of the king.* One immediate and very gratifying result of this victory was the liberation of the people of the country from the restraint under which they had been kept by the Burmese army. As soon as the action was over, they began to come into the British camp for protection, and many hundred boats, crowded with people, passed Pagahm-mew downwards, on their way to their native towns and villages. By this time Colonel Conroy's disaster in Pegu had been remedied and avenged by Colonel Pepper, who, with a stronger detachment, carried the strong stockade of Zitoung, scattered a force of 3,000 or 4,000, and killed 800 of them within the stockade alone.†

In order to refresh his troops after their late fatigues, Sir Archibald Campbell halted for a few days at Pagahm-mew. On the evening of the 13th of February, Mr. Price, the American missionary, and Mr. Sandford, now liberated, arrived in camp. The missionary, who had been selected as mediator, announced that our terms had been accepted and agreed to. But he neither brought the rest of the prisoners, nor the first instalment of the money payment. Mr. Price, however, explained that everything demanded was in readiness to be delivered, but that the king demurred about letting the cash out of his hands, from an idea that after its payment the English would still keep his country. His majesty was therefore anxious to know whether Sir Archibald could not be prevailed upon to accept of six lacs of rupees upon the spot, and to receive the other nineteen lacs of the first instalment on the return of the army to Prome. On the following morning, Mr. Price returned

* Snodgrass.

† Horace Hayman Wilson, 'Documents illustrative of the Burmese War,' &c.

to Ava, to acquaint the king that all the prisoners must be liberated, that the twenty-five lacs must be paid down, and that Sir Archibald Campbell was resuming his march upon Ava.

The army, continuing to advance, was met at Yandaboo, only forty-five miles from Ava, by Mr. Price and two Burmese ministers of state, accompanied by Mr. Henry Gouger, Mr. Judson, the American missionary, and his wife, who had gone up the country before the war to make some contract about timber, and all the rest of the prisoners, whether Europeans or sepoy. A sadder spectacle has seldom been presented by living human beings than that which was offered to the English camp by these liberated captives. They were covered with filthy rags; they were worn to skin and bone, and their haggard countenances, sunken, wandering eyes, told but too plainly the frightful story of their long suffering, their incessant alarms, and their apprehensions of a doom worse than death.

The sight exasperated our troops, and made them more eager than ever to advance upon the capital and take vengeance upon the tyrant and his savage court.

Mr. Price and the two wongees brought the stipulated sum of twenty-five lacs of rupees, and an authority under the sign manual to accept of and sign whatever terms the English might insist upon. On the 24th of February, the treaty of peace was for a second time settled and finally signed at Yandaboo, the Burmese government at the same time engaging to furnish boats for the conveyance of a great part of our force back to Rangoon. By this treaty it was agreed that there should be perpetual peace and friendship between the Honourable Company and his majesty the king of Ava—that the king of Ava should renounce all claims and abstain from all future interference with the principality of Assam and its dependencies, and also with the contiguous petty states of Cachar, Jynteea, and Munipoor—that his majesty should cede to the Company in perpetuity the conquered provinces of Arracan, including the four great divisions of Arracan, Ramree, Cheduba, and Sandoway—that the Arracan mountains should henceforward form the boundary between the two great nations on that side—that his majesty should also cede the conquered provinces of Yeh, Tavoy, and Mergui, and Tenas-

serim, with the islands and dependencies thereunto appertaining, taking the Saluen river as the line of demarcation on that frontier—that his majesty, as part indemnification for the expenses of the war, should pay the sum of one crore of rupees*—that henceforth accredited British ministers, with a body-guard of fifty men, should be allowed to reside at Ava, and that an accredited Burmese minister should be sent to reside at Calcutta; and that free trade should be allowed to British subjects in all the dominions of his majesty, who should abolish all exactions upon British ships entering his ports, &c—and that “the good and faithful ally of the British government, his majesty the king of Siam, having taken a part in the present war,” should “to the fullest extent, as far as regards his majesty and his subjects, be included in the above treaty.”

The money demanded as part indemnification was far too moderate a sum. The king was rich and given to hoarding, and both gold and silver bullion abounded in Ava. The court could easily have paid three or four times the amount, and in all probability it would have paid it rather than evacuate the capital, and burn it or abandon it to the English. A crore of sicca rupees, at par, were barely equivalent to £1,000,000 sterling. The war had cost us from £7,000,000 to £8,000,000. In other respects, the treaty was such as it should be. The cession of Arracan gave us an admirable mountain frontier, and amply provided for the freedom from Burmese interference with our Indian territories on that side. Our troublesome neighbours are now confined within their ancient boundaries by the lofty Arracan chain, and their court is not ignorant that we can now march a force across those mountains from our post at Aeng, appear on the Irawaddi in eight or ten days, and reach the city of Ava within a month. The possession of the Tenasserim provinces, and of the islands that lie off that coast, and off the coast of Arracan, gives increased security to our commercial navigation, opens the road to an inland commerce with the Siamese, Shans, and other

* Twenty-five lacs, or one-fourth of the sum total, were paid down when the treaty was signed. Upon the further payment of a similar sum at Rangoon, within one hundred days from the date of the treaty, our army was to evacuate the dominions of the king of Ava, leaving the remaining moiety of the sum total to be paid, by equal annual instalments, in two years.

distant people, places at our disposal teak-forests of enormous extent, and productive of the very best timber. Moreover, a variety of valuable raw produce is procurable, or may be raised from these new territories, to be replaced by the manufactures of India or Great Britain. The provinces of Cachar and Asam, though holding out less promising prospects to commerce, helped to form a well-defined and strong frontier, and in the approximation they afford to Thibet and China, our trade may possibly be extended, in process of time, in those directions.

Nor was there wanting the consolation that the condition and prospects of some millions of natives were improved by the results of our Burmese war. "These countries, distracted hitherto by incessant feuds, and overrun by hostile armies or by predatory bands, regions once animated by a happy and numerous population, had been converted into wide and unwholesome thickets, and had ceased, not only to be the haunts of man, but had become hostile to human life. Under their new masters, Asam, Cachar, Arracan, and the Tenasserim provinces will experience a tranquillity and security they have not known for ages, and must once more assume that character of plenty and prosperity which the latter wore when the Europeans first visited their coasts, and which tradition, and the remains of roads and towns still found in them, indicate were equally the enjoyment of all."*

The sufferings of our troops, during nearly the whole of the war, were excessively great. The loss by the sword was as nothing compared with the ravages of disease and the mortality caused by excessive fatigue. It was not often that a score of men fell in escalating and carrying even the strongest stockades; but they died by heaps on their marches through the pestilential jungles or in their unhealthy camp-stations. Throughout the campaigns, and all the way from Rangoon, every British soldier had to carry his knapsack, sixty rounds of ammunition, a blanket, and three days' provisions, together with his arms and accoutrements, under the scorching rays of a tropical sun. "Perhaps," adds an officer who served in the war, "there are few instances on record in the history of any nation, of a mere handful of men, with constitutions broken down by many months of previous disease and privation, forcing their way, in the face of such difficul-

* Professor Horace Hayman Wilson, 'Documents illustrative of the Burmese War,' &c.

ties, and through a wilderness hitherto untrodden by Europeans, to the distance of five hundred miles from the spot where they originally disembarked, and ultimately dictating a peace within three days' march of the enemy's capital."*

In the month of January, 1825, while the army of Sir Archibald Campbell was cooped up at Rangoon, General Morrison, with his majesty's 44th and 54th regiments, about 200 European artillery, and several regiments of native infantry and pioneers, who had all been assembled at Chittagong, near the north-west frontier of the Burmese empire, began his march from Chittagong with the view of taking possession of the whole province of Arracan, and then reaching the upper part of the Irawaddi, in the vicinity of the Burmese capital. This line of march upon Ava was very short and direct, compared with the course that Sir Archibald Campbell had taken, as the reader will perceive by looking at the map; and, with the exception of a few mountain-passes, which might have been cleared by proper manoeuvres and a liberal employment of shrapnels, the country between Chittagong and Ava was not of a very difficult nature. In fact there was a fine road—the only good road in the Burmese empire—which traversed the mountains of Arracan and ran nearly the whole way to the city of Ava. Although the road was annually frequented by native traders—many of whom were the Company's own subjects—who went and came between the Burmese capital and our frontiers, the existence of the route does not appear to have been known to those who planned the invasion. It was afterwards proved, practically, that an army with baggage, artillery, and all its *matériel*, might march from the upper part of the Irawaddi to Aeng, on our frontier, in less than twenty days, the distance being not much more than 200 English miles. And it appears scarcely doubtful, that if General Morrison had pushed quickly through Arracan, without halting to occupy the unhealthy part of the country, he would have cleared the mountain-passes, and have reached the upper part of the Irawaddi and the denuded capital, while all the forces of the empire were engaged or were concentrating in the lowest part of the river near Rangoon. General Morrison encountered none but the most contemptible opposition in his march from Chittagong to the town of Arracan, a distance

* Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander M. Tulloch, 'Statistical Reports on the Sickness, Mortality, and Invaliding among her Majesty's Troops,' &c.

of about 150 miles : but his means of transport or something else must have been defective, as it was the 1st of April before he arrived at Arracan, and took possession of that town with a very trifling loss. And here, in one of the most unhealthy places anywhere between the tropics, he halted to complete the occupation of the country—where there was hardly anything left to subdue. And here he put his troops in quarters for the season of rain. In the month of May, as the monsoon set in, fever began to appear, and it continued augmenting, both in prevalence and severity, till scarcely a man was left fit for duty. Even to the animal creation the climate seemed inimical ; scarcely a single indigenous quadruped of any description was met with during the stay of our troops ; and the cattle, horses, and elephants which accompanied the force, deteriorated daily after their arrival, and ultimately perished by hundreds. The mortality in the two British regiments, the unlucky 44th and 54th, was prodigious : together they did not average above 1,004 men, and 595, or three-fifths of the whole, perished at Arracan in the course of eight months : his entire force was reduced to a state of inefficiency, for the sepoy soldiers suffered quite as much as the British soldiers.

The practical proof about the road was given by Captain Ross, who, in March, 1826, when our army was returning homeward, marched with the 18th regiment of Madras infantry, 50 pioneers, and all the elephants of the army, from Yandaboo, on the Irawaddi, to Aeng, crossing the Arracan mountains by the excellent road, and finishing the march within nineteen days.*

After the war was over, and all our enormous expenses of movement had been incurred, great pains were taken to procure an accurate knowledge of the Burmese country, and of the best approaches to Ava, its capital ; and a mass of most valuable and correct information was obtained and published.† Better late than never. But, if some of these pains had been taken antecedently to the commencement of

* 'Two Years in Ava,' by an officer on the staff, &c. The author of this interesting volume accompanied Captain David Ross on this march, and gives an excellent account of the roads of the country, and of a remarkable people called Kieans, who inhabit the mountains, and are gentle and hospitable.

† See 'Appendix of Topographical and Statistical Notices to Professor Wilson's Documents Illustrative of the Burmese War.'

hostilities, some millions of pounds sterling and some thousands of human lives might possibly have been spared.

However managed, the Burmese war was a necessity. If our government had yielded to the demands of territory arrogantly demanded by the court of Ava, the Burmese and their stockades would soon have been established on the very threshold of Calcutta, and universal insurrection would have been invited in our empire. "From the king to the beggar they were all hot for a war with the English."* Nothing but beating could have brought them to reason.

In the autumn of 1824, when the arduous Burmese war was but beginning, an alarming mutiny broke out among some of our Bengal sepoy, who were under marching orders for Barrackpoor, whence they were to proceed to the Irawaddi. Although other Hindūs had gone willingly enough, and by sea, these sepoy, of the 47th native infantry, pretended that they should lose caste if they went by sea. It should appear that the men had, or thought they had, other grievances to complain of. In the month of October, when ordered to appear upon parade in marching order, they appeared without their knapsacks, and openly manifested their mutinous spirit. Their commanding officer, Colonel Cartwright, ordered the men back to their quarters, and hurried to consult General Dalzell. General Dalzell hastened down to Calcutta to consult the commander-in-chief. On his return, General Dalzell ordered a parade for the next day. The men appeared, but were more mutinous than ever. In the ensuing night the mutineers slept upon their arms, appointing guards, piquets, patrols, &c. This brought Sir Edward Paget up from Calcutta. Finding that the two other native regiments at Barrackpoor were suspected of being infected, Sir Edward called up two British regiments of the king's service (the 1st Royals and the 47th), a battery of light artillery, and part of the governor-general's body-guard. The mutinous native 47th fell in on the parade-ground, but refused to obey orders, and turned a deaf ear to the explanations and the promises of pardon that were offered to them. This left Sir Edward Paget nothing to do but to order a round of grape-shot to be fired at them. Almost at the first discharge the fellows broke, and fled in all directions,

* Deposition of John Laird, in Professor Wilson's 'Documents Illustrative of the War,' &c.

throwing away their arms and accoutrements. Only a few were killed, but a good many were taken prisoners, brought forthwith to trial by court-martial, and condemned to death. The number of executions was, however, but small, the far greater part of the mutineers having their sentence commuted to imprisonment and hard labour in irons. The regiment was disbanded, and its name erased from the list of the army. The mutiny spread no further.

In the early part of the year 1825, when but little progress had been made in the Burmese war, and when much exaggerated reports were circulating all through India of the difficulties, the checks, and reverses that Sir Archibald Campbell was encountering, the attention of Lord Amherst was demanded by certain proceedings at Bhurtpoor, which did not terminate without causing great excitement and some alarm. On the 26th of February (1825), the rajah of Bhurtpoor, the ally of the Company, died, leaving his son, Bulwunt Sing, a boy of tender years, to succeed him. Knowing that the succession to the musnud could not fail of being disputed, the deceased rajah, our ally, had implored the protection of General Sir David Ochterlony for his young son; and Sir David had acknowledged the boy's right to the musnud, and had pledged his word to support him. The rajah was scarcely cold when Doorjun Sal, cousin to Bulwunt Sing, having gained over part of the Bhurtpoor troops, murdered the uncle and guardian of the young rajah, and seized the person of the helpless boy. Sir David Ochterlony, who was at Delhi as commander of the forces and political resident, forthwith assembled troops and a battering-train, and put them in motion for Bhurtpoor, issuing at the same time a proclamation to the Jaut people of the Bhurtpoor country, in which he called upon them to rise in defence of their lawful rajah, and told them that the British troops were advancing to rescue Bulwunt Sing. Lord Amherst and the supreme council disapproved of all that Sir David Ochterlony had done, and sent him peremptory orders to recall the troops that were marching upon Bhurtpoor. Sir David was also commanded to withdraw his proclamation to the Jauts, and to tell them that an inquiry would be instituted by the British government into the transactions which had taken place in Bhurtpoor. It was clearly manifested that Lord Amherst and the council wished to avoid any final arrangement of the Bhurtpoor

question, and preferred putting up with temporary inconvenience to the rushing into a new campaign at an unpropitious season of the year, and at a time when so large a portion of the attention and resources of government were demanded by the war on the Irawaddi. The veteran Ochterlony was too brave a soldier to be startled by the strength of Bhurtpoor or by any other obstacle, and much too high-minded a man to undo what he had conscientiously done, or willingly to abandon the boy after promising his dying father that he would protect him. Sir David tendered his resignation, declaring that he should be guilty of falsehood if he acknowledged any conviction of having acted incorrectly or with impropriety. Lord Amherst accepted the tendered resignation. Sir David Ochterlony retired to Meerut, with a mortified and wounded spirit, and there he died very soon after. The conqueror of the Gorkhas, the man who remedied the blunders of others in the Nepaul war, the veteran who had served the Company for half a century, was honoured by the high functionaries of Calcutta with minute-guns and a complimentary general order.

Yet, after all, the Calcutta government were compelled to resort to the measures which Ochterlony had recommended, and to undertake the siege of Bhurtpoor before the war on the Irawaddi could be terminated. Doorjun Sal quarrelled with his own brother, who had hitherto acted in concert with him. This brother, after an unsuccessful attempt to make himself master of Bhurtpoor, raised an independent standard in the fortress of Deeg, subjected or plundered all the neighbouring country, and invited adventurers of all kinds to join and share his fortunes. Doorjun Sal's troops were defeated in a battle near Deeg; the Company's frontiers were thrown into a ferment. Many of the Company's subjects took up arms, some to join one, and some the other of the two contending brothers; anarchy was threatening to return to the regions from which she had been expelled by the marquis of Hastings' successful wars against the Mahrattas and the Pindarrees. And all the while the usurper was strengthening the always formidable fortress of Bhurtpoor, and the native princes most inimical to the English were inculcating the belief that that place could never be taken, and that the Jauts were destined to be the rallying-point of India.*

* Bhurtpoor was the only fortress and the Jauts the only people in

At last, however, the governor-general yielded to the arguments contained in an admirable state-paper drawn up by Sir Charles Metcalfe, and on the 18th of September, just two months and three days after the death of Sir David, determined to support the minor Bulwunt Sing. It was not, however, until the 10th of December, 1825, that the new commander-in-chief, General Lord Combermere, who had gained such high distinction under the duke of Wellington in the Peninsular war as Sir Stapleton Cotton, sat down before Bhurtpoor with an army of upwards of 20,000 men, and a field of more than a hundred pieces of artillery. The Jauts had cut the embankment of a lake, hoping to fill the broad and deep ditch, as they had done in 1805, at the time of Lord Lake's siege; but our troops arrived before much water had flowed into the ditch, and instantly made themselves masters of the embankment, and repaired the breach. On the next day, the 23rd of December, the besiegers, under a heavy fire of the garrison, completed their first parallel; and on the morning of the 24th two heavy batteries opened upon the town. Other batteries opened in quick succession, and during the rest of the month of December a vast quantity of powder and ball were thrown away. Scarcely a roof in the town was left uninjured, but neither cannon-shot nor shells could make any impression on a tough mud wall from fifty to sixty feet thick. On the evening of the 6th of January, our engineers began to do what they ought to have done a fortnight earlier—they commenced a mine in the scarp of the ditch on the northern face of the work. This mine was sprung before it was sufficiently advanced to have any material effect upon the wall. In making a second attempt, our miners were countermined by the garrison. The gallery of this mine was subsequently blown up, it being discovered that the enemy were keeping watch in it. A shot fired by the enemy set fire to one of our tumbrils, and 20,000 lbs. weight of gunpowder was blown up. On the 14th, another mine, under one of the bastions of Bhurtpoor, was exploded too precipitately, and thus did little more than make a great smoke and a loud noise.

Two more mines were driven into the same work, and

India that boasted they had never been subdued either by the Mogul emperors or the English.

"The Jauts," adds Bishop Heber, "are the finest people in bodily advantages and apparent martial spirit whom I have seen in India."

these being sprung on the 16th, so far succeeded that, with the aid of another day's battering, the breach was reported to be practicable. On the 17th a mighty mine was dug and crammed with powder under another angle of the works; and the following day was fixed for the storm. Early in the morning of the 18th our storming-parties established themselves in the advanced trenches. The left breach, or that which was already practicable, was to be mounted by the brigade of General Nicolls, headed by his majesty's 59th regiment; the breach on the right was to be mounted by General Reynell's brigade, headed by his majesty's 14th regiment: the explosion of the mine under the north-east bastion was to be the signal for the attack. With the single exception, we believe, of the tremendous explosion made, under the superintendence of General Pasley, for clearing the obstructions to the line of the Dover railway and opening the road to the Shakspeare Cliff, no mine can bear comparison with this mine under the north-east angle of Bhurtpoor. It is lamentable to add that the construction of this Bhurtpoor mine was far from being so perfect as the explosion it made was loud and sublime. At eight o'clock in the morning the match was applied to the train, and with terrific effect: the whole of the salient angle and part of the stone cavalier behind it were lifted into the air, which for some minutes, was as dark and black as the darkest night; all the garrison there were blown to the winds or buried under the ruins. The breach was made, and more than breach enough, but, owing to the defective construction of the mine, many of the ejected stones and masses of earth fell upon the head of our column of attack, killing a number of men and severely wounding three officers. The stones fell so thickly about Lord Combermere himself, that Brigadier-General Mac Combe was knocked down by his side, and two sepoys were killed on the spot, within a few feet of his lordship.

The troops, however, rushed on to the assault with admirable spirit and in good order, ascended the breaches, and cleared them in the teeth of a very determined opposition. On the left, where the ascent was steep and difficult, our grenadiers moved up slowly and resolutely, without stopping to draw a trigger in return for the volleys of round shot, grape, and musketry which were fired upon them. Within two hours all the ramparts and the command of the

gates of the citadel were in the possession of the besiegers, and early in the afternoon the citadel surrendered. Brigadier-General Sleigh, who commanded the cavalry, had taken excellent measures, outside, to prevent the escape of Doorjun Sal; and when that chief, with 160 chosen horse, attempted to force a passage, he was made prisoner by the 8th regiment of light horse. One of his wives and two of his sons were taken with him. They were all sent prisoners to Allahabad, to be supported by the Company. Our entire loss, during the siege and storming, amounted to 61 Europeans and 42 natives killed, and 288 Europeans and 183 natives wounded. The loss of the garrison was estimated at 4,000 men, mostly killed, and for the most part killed by the awful explosion of the last mine.

After the ammunition, arms, stores, &c. had been removed to places of safety, the principal bastions, curtains, and other important parts of the fortification, were blown into the air. It was left to the monsoon rains to complete the ruin of Bhurtpoor. Deeg, Biana, Kama, and all the other fortresses within the Bhurtpoor rajah's dominions, surrendered immediately, and were occupied by British garrisons; the inhabitants returned quietly to their homes, and the young rajah was reinstated under the protection of the British government. Lord Combermere broke up his camp on the 20th of February, and returned to Calcutta. Thanks were voted by parliament and by the Company; and the prize-money granted to the Company by the king was ordered by the Court of Directors to be distributed among the army.

The attention of all India was fixed on the siege of Bhurtpoor, on the issue of which, far more than on anything which might happen in the Burmese empire, the renown of the British arms and the permanency of the British empire in Asia were felt to depend. Our officers rejoiced at the opportunity offered for effacing the injurious impression which had been made by Lord Lake's failure; yet they admitted that, should our army fail again, few events would go so near to fulfil the shout of a mob which had been heard in the streets of Delhi a few months before:—"The rule of the Company is at an end!" All the surrounding principalities were in a ferment, and most of them would have been up in arms, if Lord Combermere had not succeeded or had not been rapid in his achievement. "Should he fail," wrote Bishop Heber, "it is unhappily but too

true, that all northern and western India, every man who owns a sword and can buy or steal a horse, from the Sutledge to the Nerbudda, will be up against us, less from disliking us than in the hope of booty. And, still more unfortunately, it is not easy to say where another army can be found to meet them, now that Bombay is fully occupied on the side of Scinde;* and the strength of British India is in Ava." But Lord Combermere's rapid triumph completely destroyed the prestige of the Jauts, overawed all the native chiefs, checked the disposition to revolt, and completely confirmed the supremacy of Britain over the whole of India. The fall of Bhurtpoor moreover carried dismay or discouragement to the court of Ava, and to many countries beyond the limits of India.

In the course of the following year Lord Amherst proceeded to the upper provinces. During his stay at Delhi, a final settlement took place of the relations in which the British government in India and the poor descendant of the Great Moguls stood towards each other. An end was now put to that prejudicial fiction—highly prejudicial to the English, and of no benefit to the king of Delhi or to any other party—that our governor-general was but the vassal of the Mogul Shah. Our sovereignty was now openly asserted, and an end was thus put to many causes of embarrassment and of false or anomalous positions. There was no lustre to be gained from borrowing the name or authority of so discredited a prince, and one so weak in intellect as the shah, who gladly resigned a shadowy suzerainty for the sake of a little more hard cash.

Having returned to Calcutta, Lord Amherst resigned the provisional government into the hands of W. B. Bayley, Esq., and embarked for England at the close of the month of March, 1827. His lordship, as well as the directors at home, had been sufficiently anxious for peace, yet nearly the whole of his administration had been occupied by wars. During a good part of this administration the army of India was kept up to the stupendous amount of an effective force of 274,000 men!

* The ameers of Scinde were again becoming very troublesome. During the Burmese war, and just before the siege of Bhurtpoor, they invaded Cutch, throwing everything into confusion there, and menacing the territories of the Guicowar and even the Bombay presidency.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE new governor-general was Lord William Bentinck, whose former Indian career, as governor of Madras, had not been a very fortunate one.

His lordship landed at Calcutta on the 4th of July, 1828, when Mr. Bayley's provisional authority ceased.

The Burmese and Bhurtpoor wars had added more than £13,000,000 sterling to the registered debt of India. Upon his lordship was, therefore, imposed the generally unpopular duty of carrying into effect measures of economy, retrenchment, and reduction. A system of economy was introduced into various departments of the government. Murmurs were heard from all sides—a dislike, which seemed to be almost universal, was expressed; but his lordship pleaded his imperative instructions and orders from home, and consoled himself with the conviction that he was doing his duty. Several governors-general had been instructed by the Court of Directors to abolish sundry allowances made to the army under the name of batta, half-batta, etc.; but for fourteen years and more they had all shrunk from the odium and perhaps the danger attendant on this abolition. But Lord William resolved to obey his orders, and most of these allowances were abolished almost as soon as his lordship reached Bengal, much more to the dissatisfaction of the army than to the real benefit of the Company. The rupees saved were not worth the good spirit which was sacrificed, and which some men think has not yet been perfectly recovered. The conduct of his lordship was disapproved by two of the members of the supreme council, by Sir Charles T. Metcalfe and W. B. Bayley, Esq., both men of ability and of great experience in India, and both of opinion that the Company and the British empire in India were not to be served or saved by means of petty savings. To Lord Combermere, the commander-in-chief, this and other changes

were so distasteful, that his lordship resigned and came home.

The chief command of our Anglo-Indian forces afterwards devolved upon Major-General Sir Edward Barnes, who had proved himself to be an admirable soldier in Spain, in the south of France, and on the field of Waterloo, and an enlightened and excellent governor in the island of Ceylon ; but, in 1833, when Sir Edward resigned, and when the government of Earl Grey seemed to be firmly established, Lord William Bentinck, who had been an unlucky general on the eastern coast of Spain, added the functions of commander-in-chief to those of governor-general.

His authority could not reach to the king's troops, but his lordship abolished flogging in the native part of the army, by a general order. This, however, he did not do until the very eve of his departure for Europe. Doubts are entertained, even by those who are no advocates for corporal punishment, and who reprobate the excess to which these punishments were once carried, whether the entire mass of the Indian army, European as well as native, has not been seriously injured by this regulation. The sepoy cares very little for confinement, or the other punishments which have been substituted for the lash ; and the British soldier feels himself doubly degraded by the lash, when he sees that, while he is exposed to it, the black soldier is not to be touched by it. The frequent acts of indiscipline which have broken out of late years among the sepoys, not without creating a painful alarm in England, as well as in India, have been in good part attributed to this reform of Lord William Bentinck.

From the time of Warren Hastings, every governor-general, in common with every man possessing an English heart in India, had deplored the revolting practices, the obscenity, and the cruelty inherent to the corrupted and corrupting religion of the Hindūs ; and if our men in authority had somewhat overrated the difficulty of abolishing these practices, and had approached them with a timid step, through the persuasion that any bolder attempt would lead to universal rebellion and carnage, still, in the course of half a century, various experiments had been tried, and a good deal had been done, by slow degrees, towards a wholesome reformation. Lord Teignmouth, who was deeply impressed with religious feelings, had done much ; and the Marquis Wellesley

who came after him—and *because* he did come after him—was enabled to do a good deal more. If very much had been attempted at once, the experiment would have failed. Lord William Bentinck could do more than the Marquis Wellesley had done, *because* he came a quarter of a century after that illustrious man. The marquis had put down the horrible annual sacrifices of human life which had been celebrated for many ages on Sagor Island; and he had laid down the principle that all such superstitious enormities were to be gradually and cautiously, yet resolutely checked.* The suttee (*sati*, from the Sanscrit *sat*, good) or the act of self-immolation by Hindū widows, is described by Greek writers of the age of Alexander the Great, and it was in all probability an ancient custom in their time. Diodorus relates an instance of a suttee which occurred in the army of Eumenes upwards of three hundred years before the Christian era; and he ascribes the zeal for this kind of self-sacrifice, in most instances, to the infamy which attached to those widows who refused to conform to the custom, or to burn themselves with the bodies of their deceased husbands. This is also the view taken of the custom by our missionaries; but Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone has observed, in the first volume of his admirable "History of India," that if the motive were one of so general an influence, the practice would scarcely be so rare.† In modern times, at least, it has been exceedingly rare. In Upper India, where the holiest of the cities of the Hindūs abound, the practice is by no means common. Bishop Heber found it common nowhere except in Bengal and some parts of Bahar. In the year 1821, during the administration of the marquis of Hastings, a bold blow was aimed at the custom, by arresting a man who had assisted at a suttee, and by trying him for murder before an

* Marquis Wellesley, 'Indian Despatches,' &c.

† On the curious subject of suttee, read Moor, 'Hindū Pantheon;' Bishop Heber, 'Indian Journal;' 'Penny Cyclopædia,' article Suttee; Arthur Steele, 'Summary of the Laws and Customs of Hindū Castes.' This last-named amiable and accomplished man returned from Bombay to Europe with his patron and friend Mr. Elphinstone in 1828. He was about returning to India when, in the summer of 1829, he paid a visit to some friends in Ireland, and got drowned while bathing in a little river, scarcely more than a brook. I knew him well, and still lament his loss. Young, active, enthusiastic in the pursuit of knowledge, and imbued with the soundest and best principles, he bade fair to be one of the foremost men in the Indian service—a service which requires eminent men as much as ever it did.

English court of justice. In 1826, during the administration of Lord Amherst, and nearly two years before Lord William Bentinck arrived at Calcutta, the evil practice was seriously circumscribed by legal enactments; the government declared the burning of a widow without the body of the deceased husband to be illegal; and all persons, whether relations or others, aiding or abetting in such an act, either before or after the death of the husband, were to be committed for trial at the circuit courts, and be made liable to the punishments inflicted for murder and homicide. Even before this time no woman was supposed to be burned without her own wish duly certified to a magistrate. And now the burning of a widow was declared to be illegal under various circumstances. In fact, only those suttees were to be considered lawful where the widow appeared in court and solicited permission in person from the magistrate. At the same time, all the property, real and personal, in actual possession of the deceased husband and widow who performed suttee (even though under the sanction of the proper authorities), was declared to be forfeited to government. Moreover, it was declared that no person should be eligible to any office or employment whatsoever under government, in whose family a suttee should take place from this time forward. All this legislation, which was quietly submitted to, and was productive of the desired effect, really left Lord William Bentinck very little to do, and rendered the execution of that little a safe and easy task. It is absolute nonsense, and something worse, to overlook everything that was done by his predecessors, and to attribute to his lordship the sole merit of putting down the suttees. On the 14th of December, 1829, Lord William Bentinck, as governor-general, and Lord Combermere, W. B. Bayley, Esq., and Sir Charles T. Metcalfe, as members of the supreme council of Calcutta, passed a regulation declaring the practice of suttee, or burning or burying alive the widows of Hindûs, with or without the bodies of their deceased husbands, to be abominable, illegal, and punishable by the criminal courts. We believe that between the year 1826, or the time when Lord Amherst's regulations were passed, and the end of 1829, hardly any suttees had been known to occur in Bengal.

Lord William Bentinck made the tour of the upper provinces. Quitting Simla in the month of October, 1831, his

lordship proceeded to the territories of the protected Seikhs, and halted at Roopur, a town situated on the banks of the Sutledge just where that river quits the mountains and enters the plains of Hindustan. Here he was met by that powerful Seikh ruler, Maharajah Runjeet Sing, the lord and lion of Lahore, who made professions of the warmest friendship, having then a fresh and lively recollection of the great English dray-horse and the other presents which Lieutenant Burnes had carried to him a short time before. The governor-general had seen this very adventurous and self-confident young officer (Burnes) during his recent stay at Simla, and this ill-omened meeting contributed not a little to those frightful catastrophes in Afghanistan with which the name of Burnes must be inseparably connected. Burnes had ascended the Indus from its mouth, between Cutch and Scinde, as far as Lahore, and, though he had ascertained that, for the extent of a thousand miles, from the sea to Runjeet Sing's capital, there might be an uninterrupted navigation, and that, by the agency of steam, that famed river might be made a valuable commercial highway—if the fierce ameers of Scinde, who exercised dominion or perpetuated an anarchy along its banks, could be reclaimed from their habits; and if the countries to which the Indus afforded access could speedily become (what they certainly had not been for many ages) the homes of a numerous, industrious, agricultural population, with wants to be supplied by European industry and ingenuity. The high-road of trade lay across the Indus, and not up the river. Lieutenant Burnes, however, proud of the novel voyage he had made, seemed to think that, merely by sending a few steamboats, or framing a treaty or two with the beggarly barbarians dwelling on the banks, a great and profitable trade might be created forthwith, and that, rather than lose this chance, the Indian government ought to incur almost any expense or risk. And, far beyond the Indus and the Punjab, or the regions watered by the five rivers, in the country of the pastoral and warlike Afghans, and farther still, in the wilds and deserts which lie between India and the Caspian Sea, Lieutenant Burnes had built up sundry little visions, besides the bright, innocent, and laudable one of making large additions to our geographical knowledge. His design, he says, received the most liberal encouragement from the governor-general, Lord William

Bentinck.* Encouraged and aided in various ways by his lordship, Burnes, with a small party, descended the Sutledge, crossed the Hyphasis near to the spot where Lord Lake had encamped, and where Alexander the Great was supposed to have halted, and then went on by the town of Peshawer, and the pass of Luta-Bund, to the city of Cabul, where Dost Mohamed Khan then reigned almost without a competitor. This Dost Mohamed, whom it was afterwards Burnes's destiny to assist in deposing, received him with much friendship and hospitality; and it was during his stay at Cabul, and his travels through the rest of Afghanistan, that our countryman contracted his very unsound notions as to the facility of managing the Afghans, and establishing intimate connections in their country. Continuing his journey, and traversing mountains, rivers, and deserts, and going through Balkh, Kurshee, Bokhara, Shurukhs, and Astrabad, Burnes safely reached Teheran, the capital of Persia; and as he and his small party had succeeded—by means of the friendly assistance of the different rulers of the countries through which they passed, and by attaching themselves to different caravans—in crossing the hungry deserts of Tartary, and in surmounting other obstacles, he concluded that a Russian, or Russo-Persian army, strong enough to contend with the British for the dominion of India, and with all the *matériel* of artillery, stores, etc., might overcome those difficulties likewise; and might, possibly, by moving in the direction opposite to that which he took, reach and go through the mountain-passes of Afghanistan, cross the Punjaub and the Sutledge, and deploy in the plains of Hindustan!

In conformity with the opinions expressed to him at Simla by Burnes, Lord William Bentinck despatched Colonel Pottinger to effect a treaty with the ameers of Scinde—another easily-to-be-managed set of men, according to our sanguine explorer of the Indus. These ameers, who were only a little less lawless and rapacious than the Pindarree chiefs of former days, gladly accepted the presents and promises that were offered them, and concluded with Pottinger certain agreements for allowing the Indus to be opened and navigated by our trading vessels, whose trade was to be found hereafter. Thus were we brought

* Lieutenant Alexander Burnes, F.R.S., &c. Preface to 'Travels in Bokhara,' &c., 3 vols. 8vo, London, 1834.

into correspondence and a sort of connection with the ameers of Scinde. The immediate consequence was a great jealousy and alarm on the part of that older ally, Runjeet Sing, the Lion of Lahore.

The only military achievement during the administration of Lord William was of a very insignificant character. The rajah of Coorg, a son of that faithful ally who had rendered most valuable services to the British during the siege of Seringapatam, was a monster in cruelty, and faithless to the last degree. He misgoverned his country, ground the faces of his subjects, established a complete reign of terror, and outrageously insulted the Company. After vain attempts at negotiation, a small armament was sent against him. On the 6th of April, 1834, the miserable little capital of Coorg surrendered to Brigadier Lindsay, and on the 10th the rajah delivered himself up. So extensive had been his murders, that not a member of the family, save himself, was left alive. His dewan, or chief minister, who was reported to have urged him on in his mad career, was found in the jungle, hanging by the neck on a tree. All the Coorg territories were assumed by the Company, and placed under direct British rule, conformably with a minute drawn up by Lord William at Bangalore.

His lordship, whose health was failing, resigned the governor-generalship, and quitted Calcutta for England, in March, 1835.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

It was very generally foreseen, even at the time of passing it, that the act of 1813, which made the first great inroad on the Company's exclusive commercial privileges, would be but the introduction to far more extensive changes in the Company's charter. From the year 1813 down to 1833, the advocates for free trade never rested, and there was a succession of enactments and regulations all subversive of the old monopoly. In 1820, committees of parliament were nominated to inquire into the foreign trade of the nation, and to deliberate on the means of extending it. Among other branches of trade, that with India and China claimed a large portion of the attention of these committees. In both houses of parliament, and in the country at large, the notion had long prevailed that the monopoly the East-India Company had of the trade of China was injurious to the interest of commerce in general. But many who entertained this notion felt, at the same time, that it would be difficult for any body of men, less organized and experienced than the Company, to carry on a trade with so strange a people as the Chinese, without being constantly involved in quarrels.

In May, 1820, Mr. Canning, then president of the Board of Control, pressed on the attention of the Court of Directors the expediency of establishing an entrepôt in the Eastern Archipelago, where British ships might take in tea for foreign Europe; and he pointed out the expediency of the Company's allotting a portion of their tonnage to China, to the free use of the British public. The Court of Directors alleged that, without the monopoly of the China trade, they could neither preserve their territories in India, nor pay their dividends in England. They declined being parties to any change in the China trade, and expressed a hope,

or rather a wish, that it might be left as regulated by the act of 1813. The committee of the Commons, in their report of July, 1821, stated that they could not concur in all the apprehensions entertained by the Company of the consequences of even a partial relaxation of their monopoly; but, at the same time, they acknowledged that the Chinese monopoly was of the utmost importance to the prosperity of the Company, and of all connected with it. It was, however, unavoidable that some concessions should be made to the loud demands of free trade and political economy; and in the course of the year 1821, British ships were permitted to carry on trade between all parts within the limits of the charter, and all ports, whether in Europe or elsewhere, belonging to countries in amity with Great Britain. The Company also consented to relinquish the restriction as to the tonnage of ships engaging in the India trade. From this time down to 1827, no legislative alterations were made; but the subjects of India and China trade were several times brought before parliament, and a warm discussion upon them was kept up by means of reviews, magazines, pamphlets, and newspapers. In May, 1827, shortly after Mr. Canning had been gazetted as first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Whitmore moved, in the Commons, for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the trade between Great Britain and the East. Mr. Whitmore did not hesitate to recommend the entire dissolution of the "China monopoly." Mr. Canning was to a great extent a free-trader; a large section of his present supporters were declared antagonists to monopolies and restrictions of all kinds; and Mr. Huskisson, his colonial secretary, was a leader and oracle of the free-traders and political economists; nevertheless, Mr. Whitmore's motion was opposed, on the ground that the proper time was approaching for reconsidering the whole of the Company's charter and system of trade. Mr. Canning died in the month of August; the Goderich administration fell to pieces in a very few months; Mr. Huskisson and his friends of the free-trade school resigned; and in January, 1828, the duke of Wellington became prime minister. In May, 1829, Mr. Huskisson presented a strong petition from the merchants of Liverpool, praying for the removal of all restrictions on

the trade with India and China. In the month of February, 1830, Lord Ellenborough moved for the appointment of a select committee of the House of Lords to inquire into the present state of the affairs of the East-India Company, and the trade between Great Britain, the East Indies, and China. His lordship said, that the Company had afforded all the aid in their power to increase the facilities given to the external and internal trade of India; that the most important questions for parliament now to decide were, 1st, Whether it would be possible to conduct the government of India, directly or indirectly, without the assistance of the Company? 2nd. Whether the assistance of the Company should be afforded in the manner in which it had hitherto been afforded, or in some other way? On the same day, Mr. Secretary Peel moved in the Commons for a committee for the same purpose, stating that he proposed its appointment with the plain and honest view of having a full and unreserved investigation of the affairs of the Company, and not for the purpose of ratifying any charter or engagement previously existing between the government and the Company. Committees were appointed by both houses. Their reports were unfavourable to the Company, whose evidence had been taken.

The death of George IV., on the 26th of June, 1830, led to the prorogation of parliament on the 23rd of July, and to its dissolution on the day following. The new parliament met on the 26th of October; on the 15th of November the ministry was broken up, and on the 22nd Earl Grey was gazetted as prime minister. The Right Honourable Charles Grant (now Lord Glenelg) succeeded Lord Ellenborough as head of the Board of Control. This gentleman and his family had been closely connected with the Company, and had owed much of their fortune and illustration to the Indian service; but these considerations did not prevent the newly-appointed president of the Board of Control from going along with his official colleagues. Mr. Grant, as president of the Board of Control, moved, on the 4th of February, 1831, for the re-appointment of the committee on East-India affairs. This committee, however, was scarcely appointed ere parliament was dissolved. The new parliament assembled on the 14th of June, and, losing no time, Mr. Grant, on the 28th, moved again for the renewal of the committee. This was readily voted.

In the course of the debate, ministers complained that the Company had not petitioned for a renewal of their charter. The Court of Directors deemed it the most prudent course to abstain from petitioning parliament, and to leave it to the Company's adversaries to make out their case first. The chairs, in a conference with the president of the Board of Control, on the 7th of July, urged the necessity of being put in possession of the views of his majesty's government at the earliest possible period. In the mean time the table of the House of Commons had been loaded with petitions, from merchants and others, against the renewal of the Company's charter upon its former terms. Mr. Langton, a merchant of Liverpool, decidedly impugned the general integrity of the Company's accounts. "This," adds an official of the Court of Directors, "was, in fact, the only remaining point; and had it been proved vulnerable, the public might have proposed their own terms, and have placed the Company at the entire mercy of parliament, without any apparent plea of justice to rest upon in support of the interests of the proprietors."* Mr. Langton failed in convincing the house that he had made out his case. The session terminated on the 20th of October. On the 27th of January, 1832, the president of the Board of Control, still the Right Honourable Charles Grant, moved for the re-appointment of the select committee.

A general committee on the affairs of the East-India Company being appointed, it was divided into six sub-committees:—1. Public; 2. Finance, accounts, and trade; 3. Revenue; 4. Judicial; 5. Military; 6. Political. Their labours terminated in August, 1832, when the several reports were all laid before the house, and ordered to be printed.†

On the whole, the reports were highly honourable to the Company. It was admitted that the whole system, which had united commerce with government, and allowed of the trade monopoly, had not been unattended with advantages;

* Peter Auber, 'Rise and Progress of the British Power in India.'

† These 'Reports' filled more than 8,000 pages of close print. These, with the matter previously given to parliament, made an aggregate of about 14,000 closely-printed folio pages!

The public reports touched upon the important subjects of local government, law, police, patronage, education—civil and military, education of natives, liberty of the press in India, settlement of Europeans in the country, &c.

that without that system our vast empire in the East could not have been created—could never have been enlarged, as it had been, during seasons of depression and disgrace, and bad or weak government at home; that the finances of India had derived advantage from their existing connections with the commerce of the Company, through the direct application of surplus commercial profits, and by the rates of exchange at which the Board of Control decided that the territorial advances from commerce in England should be repaid to commerce in India. But our empire in the East was formed, and seemed to be so firmly established as to defy every attack; and our free-traders and political economists, again forgetting that we must have the one to secure the other—that without our sovereignty the wealth and resources of India would be absorbed in a maelstrom of anarchy—were incessantly declaring that free trade with India and China was worth more than our empire.

No longer able to stand aloof, or to decline entering into negotiation about the charter with his majesty's government, the Court of Directors sent their chairman and deputy-chairman to confer with Earl Grey and Mr. Grant. This interview was followed up by a long correspondence, and an interchange of propositions and counter-propositions, which must be read in full in order to be understood. The grand change proposed by government was simply this—that the East-India Company should cease to trade, and devote its undivided attention to the arduous duties of governing, in conjunction with the Board of Control, our empire in the East. With respect to the competency of India to answer all just demands on her exchequer, Mr. Grant said that no rational doubt could exist. A revenue which had been steadily progressing during the last twenty years, which had now reached the annual amount of £22,000,000 sterling, and which promised still to increase; a territory almost unlimited in extent; a soil rich and fertile, and suited to every kind of produce; great resources not yet explored; a people, generally speaking, patient, laborious, improving, and evincing both the desire and capacity of further improvement; these, Mr. Grant thought, were sufficient pledges that our treasury in the East, under wise management, would be more than adequate to meet the current expenditure. The Court of Directors, after sundry murmurs, contended for a guarantee,

or some collateral security, for the payment of the dividends, and ultimately (if necessary) for the capital, to the holders of East-India shares. The duke of Wellington and Lord Ellenborough had told the chairman of the court, in 1830, that the proprietors had full security for their dividends and capital in the commercial assets, and in the fixed property in India, which might be deemed to appertain to the Company in its trading capacity. Now Mr. Grant assured the court that his majesty's government was willing and anxious to fortify the interests of the proprietors by a collateral security, in the shape of a sinking fund, formed by the investment of a portion of the commercial assets in the national stocks. Mr. Grant proposed, as a sufficient sum, £1,200,000.

Nevertheless the court asked for further explanations, and demanded that the sinking fund, or guarantee fund, should be at least £2,000,000 sterling. The Court of Directors could not give their assent to the plan of ministers without the sanction of the Court of Proprietors. Two or three years earlier such a sanction could scarcely have been hoped for, and the motion for it would have called together all the proprietors that were not bed-ridden or out of the country; but now, on the 3rd of May, 1833, it was decided in a general court, by 477 votes, against a minority of 52, that, provided the guarantee fund were raised to £2,000,000, and some other money conditions complied with, the plan of ministers should be accepted, and the Company cease to be a trading company.*

On the 27th of May Mr. Grant expressed the satisfaction with which his majesty's government had learned the termination of the appeal to the ballot in Leadenhall-street. He stated it to be the anxious wish of ministers to accommodate themselves, as far as possible, to the views and feelings of the Company, and he agreed to increase the guarantee fund to £2,000,000. Other minor points were yielded, as requested by the Court of Directors, or by the general court. The Court of Directors had conceived that the government, through the Board of Control, intended to claim and exercise a veto on the recall of governors-general,

* "The attendance in this general court was but thin, if we consider the magnitude of the question. 529 votes were scarcely a fourth part of the proprietors, and a little beyond a third part of the number who have attended to vote in favour of a candidate for the direction."—Auber.

&c., as exercised by the Court of Directors. On this point Mr. Grant said, "If the words have been inserted, in consequence of the hint thrown out in the memorandum that the board should have a veto on the recall of governors and military commanders in India, I must state that it is not the intention of his majesty's ministers to insist on that suggestion." Thus the power of recall was left undisturbed in the hands of the directors.

On the 13th of June Mr. Grant, in a committee of the whole house, brought before parliament the subject of the Company's charter, and explained the changes which were about to be made in it. The whole of the transaction was to be entirely free from the finances of this country. It was proposed to establish a fourth government in the western provinces of India; to extend considerably the powers of the governor-general; to appoint a supreme council of legislature, with power to make laws and draw up a code for India; to define the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court; to render the presidencies of Madras and Bombay still more subordinate to the governor-general, and to reduce the councils of those two presidencies. On the 29th of June a printed copy of the bill was submitted to the Court of Directors. That court concurred generally, but offered some particular objections. They complained that the bill "placed the whole control in the supreme government, thereby not only interfering with the control exercised by the home authorities, but investing the governor-general with a sway almost absolute, and rendering it scarcely possible always to select a fit person to be intrusted with authority of such magnitude."

The court thought that there was no necessity for incurring the charge of a fourth presidency; that the councils of Madras and Bombay ought not to be reduced; and that it would be very unwise to deprive the commanders-in-chief of the armies of those two presidencies of the seats in council which had been usually allotted to them. The court expressed their satisfaction that the bill reserved to them the necessary powers regarding the laws which the supreme council might enact affecting the natives, and likewise the provincial courts, which laws were also to be subject to the king's approbation.

On the 12th August the Court of Directors came to the resolution that they could not do otherwise than recom-

mend the proprietors to defer to the pleasure expressed by both houses of parliament, and to consent to place their right to trade for their own profit in abeyance, in order that they might continue to exercise the government of India for the further term of twenty years, upon the conditions and under the arrangements embodied in the bill.

On the 16th of August the proprietors assembled in a very thin general court, and resolved that the bill ought to be accepted. The bill was read a third time in the House of Lords on the evening of this same day, and on the 28th of August it became law, the royal assent being given to it by commission. The rapidity with which it was carried through parliament was thought as extraordinary as the change which it affected in the character of the Company was extensive.

The Court of Directors, whose number was continued at twenty-four, now ceased to be merchant-princes: giving up the trade of India and China to others, they retained only their governing faculties. The great mansion in Leadenhall-street is no longer a mart or place for buying and selling; hence many of its offices are deserted and closed, and something resembling the tranquillity of the cloisters prevails throughout the edifice; but it is still the spot where the stupendous machinery of the Indian government is regulated, and where administrative details are considered;—it is still the crown of the arch which supports a mighty system, and most, though not quite all, the keys are kept there which open one of the noblest and most extensive fields for the display of British energy, ability, and enterprise. Nor can we avoid feeling that it was a blessed chance which kept the patronage of India from being absorbed and monopolized by the ministers of the crown, and thereby made dependent upon mere parliamentary influences.

During the parliamentary debates on the bill, many tributes of admiration were paid to the past conduct of the honourable court and of the men the Company had trained and employed. Lord Ellenborough, who had devoted much of his time to the study of Indian affairs, applauded the achievements of the Company's servants both in peace and in war, and doubted whether there was anything in the new theory which would produce such men or such deeds. The duke of Wellington declared that, from what he saw

during his long residence in the country, and from what he had seen since in other countries, he believed that the government of India was one of the best and most purely administered governments that ever existed, and one which had provided most effectually for the happiness of the people over which it was placed. After saying that he would not follow the marquis of Lansdowne into the question whether a chartered company were or were not the best calculated to carry on the government or the trade of a great empire like India, the duke of Wellington added—"But whenever I hear a discussion like this, I recall to my memory what I have seen in that country. I recall to my memory the history of British India for the last fifty or sixty years. I remember its days of misfortune and its days of glory, and call to my mind the proud situation in which it now stands! I remember that the Indian government has conducted the affairs of—I will not pretend to say how many millions of people, for they have been variously calculated at seventy, eighty, ninety, and even a hundred millions, but certainly of an immense population—a population returning an annual revenue of £22,000,000 sterling; and that, notwithstanding all the wars in which that empire has been engaged, its debt at this moment amounts only to £40,000,000, being not more than two years' revenue. I do not say that such a debt is desirable, but I do contend that it is a delusion on the people of this country to tell them that it is a body unfit for government and unfit for trade which has administered the affairs of India with so much success for so many years!" After urging the necessity of supporting the power and influence of the Company, the duke said—"Depend upon it, my lords, that upon the basis of their authority rests the good government of India."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK was succeeded by Lord Auckland, a very amiable nobleman, but whose qualifications for the supreme post in the Indian government were not generally considered as being very obvious.

Accompanied by his sisters, Lord Auckland arrived at Calcutta towards the close of the year 1835.

His lordship appears to have immediately admitted into his entire confidence Captain Alexander Burnes, and those other stirring officers of the Company who were impatient for opportunities of distinguishing themselves as soldiers or diplomatists, or as both, and who (principally, we believe, through this anxiety) had been induced to believe that our Indian empire was threatened by Russian intrigues and by Persian and Afghan arms. These stirring men succeeded in impressing the too facile mind of the new governor-general with a deep sense of their local knowledge and political talent and foresight, and eventually in making his lordship believe with them, that the whole of our Indian empire was in a perilous condition, and that the black eagle of Russia, already perched on the Himalaya mountains, was looking down upon the Indus and upon all Hindustan with the confident hope of a carnage and confusion which would leave India her prey.

For many years after the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone's mission the Afghans ceased to be an object of alarm to our Anglo-Indians. Since the days of Zemaun Shah that people had never been able to cross the Indus. Instead of descending towards the south, they had been driven back considerably towards the north. They had proved themselves incapable of contending with Runjeet Sing and his allies; the enmity between them and Runjeet Sing was fierce and irreconcilable, and, without traversing the regions held by the Lion, the Afghans could not ap-

proach our frontier. The same state of constant war and anarchy which Mr. Elphinstone saw in Afghanistan had continued ever since, or rather, it had become much more than it was at the time of his visit. In fact, the Afghan monarchy had been dismembered and almost completely broken up. After the flight of the Shah Shujah, or Sujah, in 1809, the authority of the usurper Shah Mahmood was acknowledged in part of Afghanistan, the rest of the country submitting to the rule or misrule of divers chiefs or princes. After a brief alliance with Runjeet Sing, who helped him to recover Cashmere, Mahmood quarrelled with that potentate, and was defeated by him near the right bank of the Indus. After this disaster Mahmood, by means of treachery, obtained possession of Herat, one of the principal towns of Khorassan, the extensive regions of which had long been disputed by, and were now partially divided between the Persians and different tribes of the Afghan race. Mahmood repulsed an attack made upon Herat by the Persians, and succeeded in maintaining himself in that city. Whatever success had attended his arms or his policy was owing to his able vizier, Futteh Khan. In 1818 this vizier fell a victim to the jealousy of another chief and the ingratitude of Mahmood. His murder was the signal for the breaking up of the monarchy. Mahmood's brothers revolted against him, and his authority was soon confined to Herat and its dependencies. Cabul, Candahar, and Peshawer were held by different brothers of Mahmood, who soon fell out among themselves.

During this decay of the Dooranee monarchy, Runjeet Sing, Lion of Lahore, was rapidly improving the discipline of his army by means of European officers. The final downfall of Buonaparte in 1815 broke up the trade of war in Europe, and drove a considerable number of adventurers, Frenchmen and Italians, to the East, to Persia, and even into India. Some of these men found their way to Lahore, and under their care the troops of Runjeet Sing were trained. These circumstances would have made Runjeet Sing formidable to the Afghans, even if they had been united; but divided as those people were, the Lion became irresistible. He took Cashmere, Mooltan, Leia, Upper Scinde, and the nearest part of the Damaun, and reduced all the Afghan tribes south of Cashmere. After this, taking

advantage of a quarrel and war between the Dooranee prince of Cabul and his brother at Peshawer, and of an expedition which he enabled the expelled Shah Sujah, who had long been his guest, to make against Candahar, Runjeet Sing succeeded in conquering Peshawer himself, with all the level country which the Afghans had occupied between the mountains and the river Indus. The ameers of Scinde seized upon other territories which had belonged to the Dooranee monarchy; Balkh threw off its nominal dependence, and in other territories of vast extent and thin population which lie between India and Persia, and which had all obeyed Zemaun Shah, various chiefs and princes asserted their independence. Dost Mohamed, however, maintained himself at Cabul, and his brother or half-brother, after a sharp contest with the Shah Sujah, remained master of Candahar. Their brother Mahmood died, or was secretly murdered, at Herat, and was succeeded by his son Kamran, or Camraun, who appears to have made some fruitless attempts to recover from his uncle, Dost Mohamed, the dominion of Cabul. The unfortunate Shah Sujah, having failed in other expeditions and enterprises undertaken in concert with Runjeet Sing, was at one time perfidiously seized and barbarously treated by the ungenerous Lion of Lahore, whose main object was to extort from him the famous Afghan diamond called the Koh-i-noor.* He was delivered from his cruel captivity by the spirit and ability of his queen. After all these adventures, Shah Sujah again found a safe asylum beyond the river Sutledge, in the British cantonment of Loodiana, where another ex-king of Cabul, his own brother, the once great Zemaun Shah, who had been dethroned and blinded by Mahmood, had long been residing as a pensioner of the British. A liberal pension was granted to Sujah, and the two exiles and ex-kings appear to have lived lovingly together in the same cantonments, making moral reflections on the instability of Eastern thrones and the uncertainty of all human greatness.

Dost Mohamed Khan appears to have confirmed and

* Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, sketch of Afghanistan history, in appendix to 'Account of the Kingdom of Cabul,' &c.; new and revised edition, 1839. Alexander Burnes, 'Travels.' Lieutenant Conolly, 'Travels.'

enlarged his authority at Cabul about the year 1824. In 1834 he roused the whole Mahometan population for an attack on the Seikhs, for the propagation of the true faith, and for the recovery of Peshawer and the other Afghan dominions which had been lost. Runjeet Sing, who had then an army of 25,000 men, was determined not to let go his hold on the conquests he had made.* Until the month of April, 1835, nothing took place except some insignificant skirmishes; but, at the end of that month, Dost Mohamed joined his army. Runjeet Sing advanced to meet him, and drew up his Seikhs in battle array across the line of the advancing Afghans. Dost Mohamed, finding that several of his chiefs were in correspondence with the Lion of Lahore, and preparing to betray him, would not risk a battle. He retreated towards Cabul, and was followed for some distance up the Khyber Pass by Runjeet Sing's Seikhs. Upon his retreat, the Afghan sirdars, whose territories lay exposed, tendered their unconditional allegiance to Runjeet.† But other Afghan chiefs repaired to Cabul with their armed clans, and urged Dost Mohamed to make another forward movement.

Another Afghan army, 20,000 strong, assembled at Jellalabad. Descending the Khyber Pass with about half of this number, Dost Mohamed's eldest son, Afzul Bey, fell upon a Sikh army, about 5,000 strong, and completely defeated it, after an obstinate fight and a terrible slaughter.

This was in the month of June, 1836. But the victory of the Afghans was thrown away through the feuds and jealousies of the chieftains, and Runjeet Sing, instead of losing territory, soon began to make new conquests. Ever since he became master of Cabul, Dost Mohamed Khan had been constantly seeking for the friendship of the British government. But by the treaty made between Lord William Bentinck and Runjeet Sing at Roopur, in 1831, Runjeet was allowed to do what he pleased in the country beyond the Sutledge, and all notion of succouring the crazy and distracted Afghan monarchy was given up. On the 31st of May, 1836, Dost Mohamed addressed a letter of compli-

* Letter from Captain Waite, political resident at Loodiana.

† 'Outline of the Operations of the British Troops in Scinde and Afghanistan, betwixt November, 1838, and November, 1841; with Remarks on the Policy of the War;' by George Buist, LL.D., editor of the 'Bombay Times.'

ment to Lord Auckland, the newly-arrived governor-general. No answer was returned to this letter until the month of October. His lordship's letter, however, when it arrived, gave great satisfaction, as it stated that he intended to depute some gentlemen to the court of Cabul to discuss certain commercial topics with a view to mutual advantages, &c. It was not, however, until the 20th of September, 1837, that Captain A. Burnes reached Dost Mohamed's capital as envoy from the governor-general. In the meanwhile several fierce conflicts had taken place between the Afghans and the Seikhs; the success had been various, but the celebrated Seikh leader, Hurry Sing, had been defeated and slain in one of the battles. During the same interval Dost Mohamed had applied, not only to the Persians and to the Tartars, but also to the *Russians*, for aid and assistance. Burnes represented to the Cabul court that the object of his mission was purely commercial.* Dost Mohamed wanted arms and ammunition and artillery wherewith to fight the Seikhs, and not bales of manufactures. Nevertheless he received our envoy in a very flattering manner, and impressed him with the notion that he was the best ruler that Cabul could possibly have, and the best ally the English could find anywhere beyond the Sutledge. The khan assured Burnes that our Indian government might rely on his cordial co-operation in any measures which tended to promote our trade in Cabul, and through Afghanistan with Bokhara, Kurdistan, Khorassan, &c.—countries of sounding names and of great extent, but far too barbarous or thinly peopled, or anarchic, to promise any significant advantage to our commerce. Dost Mohamed complained that his hostilities with the Seikhs narrowed his resources, and compelled him to take up money from the merchants, and even to increase the duties on merchandize; but, at the same time, he displayed a very lively anxiety to get possession of Peshawer, which had been taken from one of his brothers by Runjeet Sing. The young shah of

* In his account of the mission, this unfortunate man says,—“The objects of government were to work out its policy of opening the river Indus to commerce, and establishing on its banks, and in the countries beyond it, such relations as should contribute to the desired end.”—‘Cabool: being a personal Narrative of a Journey to, and Residence in, that City, in the Years 1836, 7, and 8,’ by Lieut.-Col. Sir Alexander Burnes, C.B., &c. London, 1842.

Persia, who had succeeded his grandfather in October, 1834, had lost no time in responding to Dost Mohamed's desire for an alliance. The court of Teheran hoped that while Runjeet Sing and the Seikhs were pressing upon Afghanistan on one side, a Persian army, favoured still further by the dissensions of the Afghan rulers and chiefs, might easily make conquests on the other, recover Herat, and establish the dominion of the young shah at least over the whole of Khorassan and Candahar. Kamran, the Afghan ruler of Herat, on the death of the old shah of Persia in 1834, had made a predatory incursion into the Persian territories, in concert with Turcomans, Hazarees, and other robbers, and had captured some thousands of Persian subjects, for the purpose of selling them as slaves in Central Asia. Although this wholesale kidnapping was a very ancient practice, it certainly seemed, of itself, to justify the young shah in marching an army against Herat and the Afghan ruler Kamran. At the same time he was invited and pressed to the enterprise by most of the Afghan sirdars of Candahar, who had long been engaged in a blood-feud with Kamran, and who, for the gratification of their vengeance, were willing to bring their old enemies the Persians even into the heart of Afghanistan Proper. But when it was found, or rather suspected, by our mission at Teheran, that the young shah of Persia had been encouraged and promised pecuniary assistance by the Russians, great alarm was felt by our mission, and was by them communicated from Teheran to Downing-street. In short, our ministers at home and our diplomatists in Persia were suddenly excited by all that jealousy and dread of Russia which had been diffused through the greater part of our Indian government by Burnes and others.

In spite of all the remonstrances of our ambassador, the young shah, in July, 1837, put himself and an army of 40,000 men, with seventy pieces of artillery, on their march from Teheran to Herat. Although the route of the Persian army lay almost entirely through their own country, they were unable to reach Herat before the end of November, 1837, or about two months after Burnes's arrival at Cabul. Owing to their empty treasury, defective commissariat, and want of discipline, this Persian army frequently threatened to melt away before they had seen an enemy; and when they approached Herat, they were but a miserable and half-

starved rabble. After some further delays they commenced what has been complimentarily termed "the *Siege of Herat*." This miserable operation occupied them for more than nine months.

The ruler of Cabul at first considered the fall of Herat, and the advance of the Persians towards his own dominions, as inevitable; and in this belief, he was eager to secure a previous treaty with the conquerors.

When Dost Mohamed justified his negotiations with the Persians by pleading the necessity of making terms for himself beforehand, in case of the shah advancing to Candahar, Burnes told him that there was no fear of any movement, offered himself to serve with the troops of Candahar, and to assist the sirdar with money; and he suggested to our Indian government an advance of £30,000. But these proceedings were repudiated by Lord Auckland, who declared in a minute that he would not oppose the hostile advance of Persia either by arms or by money. His lordship must have known by this time that the Persians had no chance of making such advance, and that the operations contemplated by his government in the Persian Gulf, would make the young shah fly back towards his capital, even though he should have reduced Herat previously. Not being able to do more, Burnes despatched a member of his mission, Lieutenant Leech, to Candahar, to ascertain how matters stood in that quarter. The three brothers who ruled in that part of Afghanistan—Kohun Dil Khan, Rehem Dil Khan, and Meer Dil Khan—were at this time actually in treaty with the Persians, with a view to their assisting in the attack on Herat, and in the subjugation of Kamran and their own countrymen. Here English money was again offered; but the three chiefs, jealous of Burnes's connection with the ruler of Cabul, declined the offer, and stated that the intent of their negotiations had been to keep off Persia, to ruin Kamran, and make themselves masters of Herat. Like Dost Mohamed, these three khans had no settled line of policy: what they evidently wanted was to play off England against Russia and Persia, and these two powers against England. From this moment our English officers, who were dabbling in diplomacy, ought to have felt that no Afghan treaty could be worth the piece of paper or parchment on which it might be written. Such must have been the fact, even if the Afghan chiefs had entered into a treaty with good faith, as the

wild anarchic state of the country, with its blood-feuds and intrigues, rendered the power of every khan to the last degree precarious.*

After passing the winter of 1837-38 in Cabul, Captain Burnes, in the spring, prepared to depart. At this moment Dost Mohamed would very willingly have agreed to accept an English subsidy. But Burnes had no money to give him, and had been rather sharply censured for having offered any. Our envoy left Cabul on the 26th of April, 1838, carrying with him abundant professions of personal friendship and regard from Dost Mohamed, in whose hospitality he had frequently shared. The Dost was at this moment doubly disappointed, and more than ever perplexed, as no money came to him from Russia and Persia, and none from the English, and Kamran continued to be brilliantly successful in Herat.

After visiting Runjeet Sing, in the most friendly manner, and feasting with the French and Italian officers at Peshawer and Lahore, Captain Burnes, in the month of July, repaired to Simla to meet the governor-general, Lord Auckland, and to take a prominent part in a council of all our north-western frontier residents and diplomatists, whose previous differences of opinion as to the course to be pursued with regard to the Seikhs and Afghans had become notorious. At these conferences, held in the cool and pleasant recesses of the Himalaya, it was fully determined, in a fatal moment, by the governor-general,† that as Dost Mohamed could not be trusted, he ought to be dethroned; that the exiled king of Cabul, Shah Sujah, should be called from his easy retirement at Loodiana, and be sent, with an English army, to recover a throne which he had repeatedly proved himself to be incapable of keeping! Captain Burnes's

* 'Quarterly Review.'

† "A most unwise provision in the Charter Act permits the governor-general to act alone, and on his own responsibility, when absent from Calcutta. The commander-in-chief (Sir H. Fane) is known to have been hostile to the war, and the Hon. Messrs. Prinsep and Bird (*two other members of council*) were universally believed to be the same: three out of five."—Opinions as to the mode of restoring Shah Sujah, submitted by Burnes, as quoted by Doctor Buist; 'Outline of the Operations of the British Troops in Scinde and Afghanistan.'

But these opinions, which are dated in June, 1838, seem to differ in almost every particular from the opinions which this unfortunate man had offered to the governor-general only a few months before.

opinions seem to have varied according to times and circumstances, and the opinions of other men higher in office than himself. At one period he represented Shah Sujah as an imbecile prince, without a party in his own country; and at another period he represented his party as being so strong that the moving of a handful of our troops into Afghanistan would place him on the throne; at one time he represented Dost Mohamed as the best ally the governor-general could find; and, not long after, he describes Dost Mohamed as an irreconcilable enemy, whose factious spirit ought to be broken. He now declared that Shah Sujah had more friends in the country through which the Khyber Pass runs than in any other part of Afghanistan; that the distribution of a little money among the Khyberees would convert them all into warm friends of the English, and enable Shah Sujah to advance to Cabul in triumph and without bloodshed.

Two months before Burnes met the governor-general at Simla, a mission, consisting of Mr. Mac Naghten, the Hon. Captain Osborne, and others, had been sent to Lahore, to cement our perpetual friendship with Runjeet Sing and the Seikhs, to draw up with Runjeet a new treaty, in which Shah Sujah should be included, and to pave the way for the easy advance of a British army through the Seikh country to Cabul. This mission—in whose deliberations Burnes had shared—had so far succeeded in its object, that a tripartite treaty had been settled and ratified, in which the dethroned, poor, and helpless shah of Cabul was included with the governor-general of British India and the powerful ruler of Lahore and of all the Punjaub.

Our warlike preparations, or what Burnes calls “the ulterior measures,” which “could only be matured at Simla,” went on the while (the governor-general and his numerous party enjoying the interval among the cool hills and green woods, and refreshing waters); but it was not until the 1st of October that his lordship issued his famous Simla proclamation. At this moment, if the governor-general did not know that the siege of Herat—the first alleged great cause of our inquietude—had been raised, and the reduced Persian army forced into a disgraceful and ruinous retreat, he might at least have known that the young shah had no chance of success, and that the British expedition sent to the Persian Gulf could not fail in its proposed object. Persia had derived nothing but disaster and shame from her

rashly-undertaken expedition, and pusillanimous and ill-conducted siege. Lieutenant Eldred Pottinger, who threw himself into the place, directed the defence. The ignorant besiegers could scarcely preserve so much as a blockade; they knew nothing about regular approaches, and in all their attempts to storm they were beaten back. In one assault, the shah lost 1,800 men in killed and wounded, and altogether his casualties exceeded 3,000. He was as remote from his object in September, 1838, as in November, 1837, when he first came in sight of Herat. His army was short of provisions, and without clothing or pay; and rather than have continued through another winter before a fortress which had so repeatedly defeated them, the Persians would in all likelihood have dispersed of themselves, in spite of all their shah could do to retain them.*

Our expedition from Bombay landed at Karrack, in the Persian Gulf, in the middle of June, when Mac Naghten and Burnes were preparing for the Afghanistan war by negotiating with Runjeet Sing at Lahore. The possession of Karrack, an island belonging to Persia, and in the centre of the shah's dominions, showed him how completely those dominions were within our grasp, and must have proved to him that we could disembark any force we pleased at Bushire within a fortnight of its quitting Bombay, and possess ourselves of some of the chief towns of Persia before the people at large could be made aware that hostilities were intended. It had been pointed out by a foreign writer, that if all the powers of the Russian empire were exerted in equipping an army for the invasion of India, and if their mighty army, overcoming obstacles that were scarcely to be overcome by any army of any size, reached the western borders of Beloochistan in safety, with its complete *matériel*, a descent by the British on Bushire would put us in possession of all the communications of that army, compel Persia at her peril to act against it, and place the rear of that army and the line of its advance and relief completely at our mercy.† The descent on Karrack gave practical proof of the soundness of this speculation. Moreover, it had been shown pretty clearly, that for Russia to send an army as

* Buist, 'Outline of the Operations of the British Troops in Scinde and Afghanistan.'

† 'The British Empire in the East,' by Count Bjornstjerna, translated by H. Evans Lloyd. London, 1840.

far as the eastern border of Persia was *impossible*, and our own experience has now convinced the most sceptical that were the Russians *there*, the mountain tribes, without our intervention, would cut off their supplies, destroy their cattle, and seize their baggage. We could any day cut an expedition from the westward to pieces, by landing a force at Bushire, where the coast country, with our commanding fleets and uninterrupted supplies, would furnish a base of operations from which Europe and Asia united together could not drive us. From the moment that our troops landed on his island of Karrack, the eyes of the Persian shah were turned more anxiously in that direction than upon the siege of Herat; and, at the end of September, when he gave up that siege altogether, and put his diminished and rabble army in motion for a retreat into the heart of his own country, he declared that he did so in consequence of the presence of our armament, and that if Karrack had not been seized by us, Herat would have been taken by him.

Well! Herat was safe—that key to the British dominions in India could not be given by Persia to Russia, for Persia could not get it. All the dispositions for a grand campaign beyond the Indus and in the heart of Afghanistan were made (badly enough, no doubt!), and marching orders were given; but it appears that when Lord Auckland received official intelligence of the retreat of the Persians from Herat, not a single regiment had yet begun to march. But this intelligence had no apparent effect on the counsels and conduct of men who had made up their minds for war, and who could not rest until the British flag should be carried over the snowy mountains and through the deep defiles of Afghanistan.

In the month of October, 1838, when Lord Auckland issued his warlike proclamation at Simla, the army of India was raised to 203,000 men. Sir Henry Fane was at this time commander-in-chief of all India. He disapproved both of the principles of policy and of the arrangement of the details of the expedition; and viewed with alarm the prospect of having our armies so far removed from our own frontier. Sir Henry was besides in indifferent health when the first campaign was announced.* As a foretaste of what

* Colonel Fane, the son of Sir Henry Fane, said afterwards,—“ I am prepared to prove that the military head in India and second member of council of that country, did oppose, or perhaps rather, point out to the

might be expected from him, Runjeet Sing, in despite of the recent treaty which had been drawn up at Lahore by Mac Naghten and Burnes, refused to allow our troops to cross the Punjaub. Our principal rendezvous was therefore appointed to be Shikarpoor, in Scinde; and thence our line of advance was to be by the Bolan Pass, Quettah, and Candahar. At the beginning of December, and not before, the force on the Bengal side was ready to proceed without delay to Scinde. It was 9,500 strong. A reserve division was stationed at Ferozepoor, under Major-General Duncan, which was 4,250 strong. Runjeet Sing had engaged to maintain an army of observation of 15,000 men. The Seikh contingent, about 6,000 strong, was placed under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Wade, and was to move on Cabul by the eastern passes. A Bombay column, 5,500 strong, under Sir John Keane, landed at Vikkur, on one of the mouths of the river Indus, and advanced into Scinde. The ameeers of Scinde had faithfully promised to provide supplies and the means of conveyance for our armies; but, on arriving at Kurrachee, about fifty miles from Vikkur, Sir John Keane found that they had provided nothing but jealousy, hatred, and enmity, and that the mass of the Scinde population were eager to attack his column. As soon as the Bengal column reached Ferozepoor, an out-station on the banks of the Sutledge, about fifty miles from Lahore, Sir Henry Fane, whose health was growing worse, resigned the command. Thus at starting, and before the main body got beyond our frontier, our army was left without a commander-in-chief. Lord Auckland had nominated Sir John Keane to the direction of the whole force, and instructed him to send his own orders to Sir Willoughby Cotton, who, as senior officer, had succeeded to the command of the Bengal column, as a temporary measure, until its junction with the Bombay troops. This also gave the temporary command of a division to Major-General Nott, and of a brigade to Colonel Dennie. We can trace, even at this moment, some of the jealousies and heartburnings, which helped to destroy the discipline of the whole army.

governor-general, the extreme danger of this wild and unmeasured expedition. . . . He insured Lord Auckland the success which did at first appear to attend us, but warned him that to maintain large bodies of troops in countries so distant, and which scarce produced food sufficient for the scanty population, was next to impossible."—Letter published in the 'Times' of 5th June, 1842.

Sir John Keane and his Bombay column, after numerous difficulties and delays, advanced towards Tatta, on the 24th of December. Here the climate was very trying, both for the European and native troops; the days were excessively hot, the nights very cold. The granaries had all been plundered by the Beloochees, and, as it was discovered, by the sanction of the ameers. When the Shah Sujah's contingent of 6,000 men (bad troops, and paid entirely by us) moved down parallel to the line of Sir John Keane's advance, and occupied Larkhana, and the Bengal column moved upon their right, the Beloochees retreated and disbanded themselves, and then the ameers, seeing Hyderabad, their capital, open to attack, made a new agreement with Sir John Keane, and fulfilled some few of its conditions. Sir Alexander Burnes (he had been made Knight Commander of the Bath and lieutenant-colonel for his previous services on the Indus, in Afghanistan, etc., and, perhaps, in part for his ample contribution to the unlucky project now in process of execution) had been employed to collect at Shikarpoor camels for the use of the whole army. The governor-general had calculated that 45,000 camels might be obtained; and he had informed Sir John Keane that this number should be fairly and proportionately distributed among the Bengal troops, the Bombay troops, and Shah Sujah's contingent. But Burnes could never collect 20,000 camels at Shikarpoor, and the Bengal column, which had just arrived, took it for granted that all the camels were for them; and thought it extremely hard that Sir John Keane should order any to be appropriated either by the Bombay troops or by the shah's contingent. There were clearly not camels enough for all, and Colonel Dennie and other officers of the Bengal army, who had always been accustomed to assert a superiority over the officers of the other presidencies, thought it hard that their troops should be left behind for want of the means of transport, and that camels should be given up for the raw levies of Shah Sujah, who were almost sure to run away from the first enemy they met. But the governor-general's instructions were very positive—Shah Sujah's contingent must be sent on entire, if possible—and accordingly camels were sent after them. This produced fresh murmurs and heartburnings.

The cholera morbus broke out among the reserved force of 3,000 men at Kurrachee, and carried off a great many of

them. Colonel Thomas Powell, of the 40th regiment, an old and experienced peninsular officer, died of this dreadful disease. Everywhere disasters and forebodings of calamity thickened, and ought to have warned men—who seemed heedless of the warning—to check their advance and retrace their steps. There was no dependence to be placed either upon the Scinde ameers or upon Runjeet Sing—there was little security for our communications and supplies, and the means that were adopted for the obtaining of some such security were inadequate to the end, were slovenly, unsystematic, and unworthy of British officers at this time of day. The Bengal army, the Bombay army, Shah Sujah's rabble, and the other contingent forces went on, each in its own way, and with little or no attention to the progress of all the rest; and nearly every division was accompanied by an amazing number of camp-followers, who could not shift for themselves in the countries beyond the Indus. On the 20th of February, 1839, when Sir Willoughby Cotton commenced his march towards the Bolan Pass with the Bengal army, he was attended by about 80,000 camp-followers, who were all to be fed from the commissariat. Crossing a broad and dreary desert, this Bengal column reached Dadur, at the foot of the mountains of Western Afghanistan, on the 6th of March. Here supplies began to run short, so that the non-combatants of the column were put on half-rations before entering the mountain country. Yet they had scarcely left the territories of professing friends and allies, and had performed no more than one-half of the journey to Cabul. The Bombay column was at this time nine marches, or nearly 100 miles, behind. Close by Dadur is the mouth of the Bolan Pass—a terrible chasm nearly seventy miles long, tortuous, deep, and flanked by lofty rocks. This portion of the country is inhabited by the poorest and wildest of the Afghan tribes. Fortunately they offered no opposition to the passage of our troops until they were on the point of quitting the defile, when some skirmishing took place and a few of our people were wounded. But the excessive barrenness and steepness of this line of march caused the destruction of a vast number of horses and camels. On the 26th of March, Sir Willoughby Cotton reached Quettah, a town situated in a fertile valley, and containing a population of 5,000 or 6,000 souls. Here supplies and other good things were expected, but none were found. The place belonged to the khan of Khelat, or

Meerab Khan, with whom Burnes had negotiated a sort of treaty before our columns were put in motion. Burnes was now sent again to Khelat, to endeavour to reason the khan into terms, or into the fulfilment of the treaty which he had concluded with him. The khan, like most of the Afghan chiefs, seemed to entertain a morbid dread of Shah Sujah, whom the English were restoring to his throne; and Burnes could not induce him to make a short journey from Khelat to visit Shah Sujah. After a good deal of shuffling and evasion, which ought to have convinced Burnes that the treaty would be worth nothing, the khan of Khelat agreed to receive a subsidy of £15,000 a year during the continuance of our army in Afghanistan; and to supply provisions, carriage, and escorts to the extent of his ability (but these were to be separately paid for). While they were discussing this precious treaty, the khan of Khelat told Burnes that Dost Mohamed Khan, the ruler of Cabul, whom Lord Auckland had determined to dethrone, was a man of resource and ability, and that though we might put him down and thrust Shah Sujah in his place, we could never win over the Afghan nation.* The khan used these words:—"You have brought an army into the country, but how do you propose to take it back again?"† This was the very expression which fell from the duke of Wellington when the intimation of our advance into Afghanistan was made in parliament.

Sir John Keane brought up the Bengal column, and established his head-quarters at Quettah, on the 4th of April. So scarce and dear had grain already become, that his camp-followers greedily devoured the fried skins of sheep, coagulated blood, roots, or whatever else they could procure. With a march of 150 miles before them to Candahar; they were obliged to push on, upon half-rations for the men, and without provision for the cattle. All communications between the front and rear divisions, even now 100 miles apart from each other, were completely cut off by the fierce tribes in the pass. The camp-followers were brought down to quarter-rations, or "famine allowance," as one of our officers calls

* Letter from Sir Alexander Burnes to government, as quoted by Buist.

† Dr. Atkinson, superintending surgeon of the Bengal division, 'Expedition into Afghanistan,' &c. Major Hough, 'March and Operations of the Army of the Indus.'

it. On the first march towards Candahar, sixty of our artillery horses were shot to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy—no more food for them being procurable. In the course of the week 116 cavalry horses died, and between the 6th of April and the middle of June this arm of the service was nearly disabled for want of food! Nine hundred camels had died since the column commenced their advance. The robbers of the pass were incessantly harassing our soldiers and pouncing down from their rocks and hills upon the baggage. Savage and unwise orders were carried into execution by our harassed and exasperated troops; they pursued, and not unfrequently overtook the marauders; and whenever these Afghans were captured, they were shot or hanged—*no quarter being on any occasion given them*. It was thus that our people prepared for their own destruction in the mountain passes—for their bloody exodus from Afghanistan! On the 26th of April the head-quarters of the army reached Candahar, the Bengal column having marched 1,000 miles since quitting Ferozepoor.

The Bombay column had so far gained on the advance as to be in the Kojuk Pass, only sixty miles behind, when the head-quarters of the grand army arrived under the walls of Candahar. It had endured terrible fatigues and still more terrible privations, and was reduced to 3,600 men before it came to the desert. It had been intended that it should move by the Gundava Pass and Khelat; but the road had not been previously examined, and when the column came to this pass, it was reported to be impracticable. Nothing, therefore, was to be done but to march the column through the Bolan Pass, in the already impoverished track of the leading division. The khan of Khelat proved his steady adherence to the treaty he had concluded with Burnes, by writing to the hill chiefs—"What is the use of treaties and arrangements? All child's play! There is no relief but in death! No cure but in the destruction of the English. Their heads, bodies, and goods must be sacrificed. Strengthen the pass. Call on all the tribes to harass and destroy!" On the 12th of April, this Bombay column entered the Bolan Pass: the thermometer was at 110°, but above the pass there had recently been a heavy snow-storm, and the cold on those heights (5,000 feet above the level of the plain) was excessive and destructive, if not to the life to the energy of our sepoys. In the pass the column was annoyed by the stench of dead

camels and of multitudes of unburied bodies of the enemy, which marked in horrible characters the line of the advance of our first division. Numerous executions swelled the number of the Afghan dead, for the army of Bombay, like the army of Bengal, gave no quarter to the hill people! Many of our camels loaded with grain were killed, and the greater part of the camel-drivers began to desert. Although General Nott had been left behind at Quettah to keep open the communications, all our letter-bags were seized and rifled, so that from the end of March to the beginning of August, when our troops reached Cabul, the safe arrival of a single packet could never be depended on. As the Bombay column reached the height above the pass, the men were attacked by dysentery. Making rapid marches, they, however, reached Candahar on the 4th of May, and there found the Bengal troops. Colonel Dennie, who had been left behind with the reserve stores and carriages, and with some of the shah's raw contingents, and the 31st and 42nd Bengal native infantry, by means of some extraordinary marches, released Captain Stockley, of the Bombay commissariat, who, on his way to Dadur with cattle, grain, and stores, had been surrounded and shut up in a small fort by the Beloochees; saved Captain Anderson, who was commanding two newly-raised troops of the shah's horse-artillery, with tumbrils, and ammunition filling fifty carriages, etc.; fought his way nobly through the Bolan Pass, and reached Candahar; but many of his men had been killed and wounded, and many had died of apoplexy, or had gone mad from the excess of heat.

The army now assembled at Candahar, exclusive of the shah's contingent, amounted to 10,400 fighting men. The camp-followers had dwindled away, through death and sickness, and the dread of the Bolan Pass, but they still amounted to nearly 29,000 men. The shah's contingent, which was entirely paid, and also officered, by our Indian government, mustered about 13,000 men—but we could not call them fighting men. Sir John Keane strongly condemned the uniting of such a force as this to the two well-appointed armies of Bengal and Bombay. It appears that this was done in the vain hope of giving plausibility to the fiction that Shah Sujah was entering his dominions surrounded by *his own* troops—when, in fact, it was too notorious to escape exposure, that he had not a single subject or Afghan among

them; his sham army being made up of camp-followers from the Company's military stations.*

Candahar contained a population of from 60,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. On the approach of our imposing force, the three brother sirdars, who had held the city for about twelve years, fled with their families and some two hundred followers to Ghirisk, a small fortress, eighty miles distant. They were pursued by Brigadier Sale, in the month of June, and they then continued their flight without interruption to Meshid, in Persia. Hajji Khan and some other of the chiefs had deserted to us, but only to desert from us and betray us at the first opportunity. Populous as was the city of Candahar, neither money for bills upon India nor a sufficient supply of provisions could be procured for the army. By the 1st of July the whole army had quitted Candahar, and was in full march upon Ghuznee, the soldiers still continuing on half, and the camp-followers on quarter, rations. The distance from Candahar to Ghuznee is about 230 miles; but on the 21st of July the army halted under the walls of Ghuznee, its wide-spread baggage covering an area of sixteen square miles. The works of Ghuznee were found to be far stronger than Sir John Keane had been led to expect. The four heavy guns of our battering-train had been left behind at Candahar, in the belief that they would not be wanted. The result of a reconnaissance was a report to the commander-in-chief, that, if he decided upon an immediate attack on Ghuznee, the only feasible mode of proceeding, and the only one which held out a prospect of success, was to make a dash at the Cabul gateway (all the other gates had been built up), and blow the gate open by powder-bags.† Sir John Keane resolved to take this advice, and the artillery were ordered to make the necessary preparations. On the following day, the 22nd of July, some of the Afghan tribes collected in great force on some neighbouring hills; but being encountered by Captain Outram, with only 150 infantry and matchlock-men, they were beaten and put to flight: thirty or forty of them were killed and wounded, and thirty-eight were made prisoners. According to Sir Alexander Burnes, who, as well as Mr. Mac Naghten, was con-

* Letter of Colonel Dennie, addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel Mac Donald, military secretary to Sir John Keane, as quoted by Buist.

† Report and Memoranda, by Captains Thomson and Peat, of the engineers.

stantly with Shah Sujah, as soon as the thirty-eight prisoners were brought into his majesty's presence and questioned about their rebellion and treason, they said that they would glory in taking his majesty's life; that he was an infidel and had brought an army of infidels into the country, and that they would take his life whenever they could; and one of them, suiting the action to the word, plunged a dagger into the breast of one of the shah's attendants, upon which the king gave orders that they should all be beheaded. There is no doubt at all that thirty-six of these thirty-eight captives were immediately put to death, and that, too, in the presence of at least one British officer.*

Between this night of murders and the following morning the Cabul gate of Ghuznee was blown up by 300 lbs. of powder, in twelve sand-bags, with a hose seventy-two feet long. If this operation had failed (and it never could have succeeded if the Afghans had possessed any military science), Sir John Keane must have retreated to Candahar, and thence by the terrible Bolan Pass towards our own frontiers.

As soon as the gate was blown open, our storming party rushed in and commenced a fierce hand-to-hand conflict with

* Letter from Sir William Mac Naghten to Sir Alexander Burnes, on the subject of the destruction of the thirty-six prisoners who were put to death at Ghuznee in the presence of Major Mac Sherry, on the evening of the 22nd of July, 1839, as quoted by Buist.

Among other startling things, this historian of the Afghan war quotes the following passage from Mac Naghten's letter, which was written about a year after the event. "Towards evening, a report was brought to me that the king's people had taken several prisoners, and that his majesty had determined upon the execution of them all. On the impulse of the moment, I suggested that a selection should be made of the offenders for execution, and immediately consulted Lieutenant-General Sir John Keane, through Sir Alexander Burnes, who was in his excellency's camp; and his opinion was that 'the most summary example should be made of such dastardly ruffians.' In the meanwhile, I had received several messages from his majesty, expressing his determination to put the prisoners to death, as the only safe and proper course to be adopted in the exigency of our situation. I replied, that his majesty was supreme; but that I would, at least, strongly recommend him, if he thought a severe example necessary, to liberate some of the prisoners, in order that the retribution which had overtaken their comrades might be made known to the whole of these fanatic offenders. My recommendation was not concurred in by his majesty, to the extent that I could have wished; of thirty-eight prisoners, two only were released—the one on the ground of his being a Syud (*a Mussulman saint, or holy man, or Emir*), and the other because he begged his life. The remainder, who obstinately persisted in exasperating his majesty, were executed."—Buist.

the Afghans. The fighting was long and desperate. Brigadier Sale, who commanded the supporting column, received a severe wound on the face from a sabre; when closing with his antagonist, both lost their footing, and rolled over together. In this extremity the brigadier recognized Captain Kershaw, of the 13th light infantry, who at that moment came up, and having made his situation known to him, he was speedily relieved by the captain passing his sword through the body of the frantic Afghan, who, however, would not let go his hold until Sale cleft his skull from the crown to the eyebrows.

When the town was carried entirely, the strong fortress remained, and was expected to make a still more desperate resistance; but about five o'clock, A.M., or little more than three hours after the gate had been blown open, the British colours waved from the battlements of the citadel. Hyder Khan (one of the sons of Dost Mohamed), the governor, surrendered himself in the course of the morning, and was placed under the care of Sir Alexander Burnes, who had so recently figured at Cabul as the friend and guest of his father. Meer Khan, the eldest, and commonly known as "the fighting son" of Dost Mohamed, had come close upon our camp early in the morning, with 5,000 cavalry. He heard the firing, and only waited for daylight to discover how matters stood in the fortress. The dawn showed him the British flag on the ramparts; and he forthwith fled towards Cabul, leaving all his elephants and baggage behind him to be captured by our troops, or by the shah's contingent, who were as quick in plundering as they were slow in fighting.

In the assault, about 170 of our people were wounded, but only seventeen killed: about 1,000 Afghans were slain, about 1,600 were taken prisoners, and the number of the wounded was estimated as nearly equal to that of the captives. To talk of the "genius and skill" with which the plan of the attack was conceived, is to be guilty of rhodomontade and nonsense; but the conduct of our soldiers, during the storm, and, still more, after the storm had succeeded, was rare, and in the highest degree admirable. No city taken by assault ever suffered so little as Ghuznee, and no men ever conducted themselves, under similar circumstances, so temperately and moderately as its captors.

With the close of the fighting, all violence ceased, and

not one female was exposed to insult or injury.* The fall of Ghuznee opened the way to Cabul, and opened more roads than one. Colonel (now Sir Claude Martin) Wade had assembled near Peshawer 1,000 of the Seikh contingent, and more than 4,000 of the shah's levies. With this force he was to move upon Cabul, by Jellalabad. Wade forced his way through the Khyber Pass, the enemy flying from a fort which was considered as the key of that pass. Jellalabad was defended by Mohamed Akbar Khan, second son of Dost Mohamed, and afterwards famous for the vengeance he took upon the invaders. This chief had 2,500 men and fourteen guns; but on the fall of Ghuznee he was hastily recalled for the defence of Cabul. This at once opened the way for Colonel Wade's forces through the rest of the passes, and placed Jellalabad in our hands. Wade was so close upon Akbar Khan that he compelled him to abandon all his artillery and camp equipage, which, together with horses, bullocks, and 7,000 rounds of ball-cartridges, fell into our hands.

On the 30th of July Sir John Keane, with the main army, marched from Ghuznee to Cabul. He crossed the ridge of a mountain, said to be 9,000 feet above the level of the sea, and went through another deep and narrow defile without encountering any resistance. As Sir John Keane drew nigh, Dost Mohamed quitted his throne and his capital, and fled with 600 horsemen to seek a refuge in the wide country beyond the Oxus.

But nearly at the same time that this news was received at our head-quarters, Sir John Keane learned the death of Runjeet Sing, the Lion of Lahore, an event which materially and injuriously affected the triple alliance. Detaching a very inadequate party of cavalry in pursuit of the fugitive king, Sir John Keane and Shah Sujah marched leisurely on to Cabul, under the walls of which they encamped on the evening of the 6th of August. On the afternoon of the next day, Shah Sujah, Sir John Keane, the general officers of the army, Burnes, Mac Naghten, and other officers of the

* Buist. This writer adds — "It may not be superfluous to add, that long before this, the commissariat store of intoxicating liquor had been exhausted, and Sir J. Keane commanded a temperance army. To the want of liquor is ascribed by the medical men the unprecedented celerity with which the injuries of our wounded were healed."

mission, or of the staff, made a pompous and triumphant entrance into the capital. The people were respectful and orderly, but cold; the chiefs were absent; there was no enthusiasm.

Some of these vainglorious Englishmen, not satisfied with riding in triumph, had put it into the restored shah's head to create an order of knighthood, and to confer the first badges upon themselves!

While this foolery was in progress at Cabul, the Afghans were murdering every British officer or soldier that they could surprise outside of the camp.*

Considering the work as done, Sir John Keane hurried back to India, and from thence to England, to be raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Keane of Ghuznee and Cappaquin (with a pension of £2,000 a year), and to receive the thanks of parliament. The shouts of triumph and applause were, however, mingled with the expression of many doubts, and some severe criticism. Lord Ellenborough declared the war to have been a folly, and said it remained to be seen whether it might not prove a crime. Lord Auckland, as governor-general, also received his meed of approval: he was raised in the peerage to the rank of an earl.

The Bombay column quitted Cabul on the 18th of September, the Bengal troops remained for nearly a month longer, but by the 20th of October, all the forces, returning for the present to India, had left Shah Sujah's capital. The cold was severe in the mountain-passes, thick ice was found upon the roads, the bodies of dead camels and horses lay frozen all around, and, without having to encounter any enemy, our retiring columns suffered very severely.

Seldom have troops been left in a more uncertain or more hazardous predicament than the army which was left to secure Shah Sujah on his throne. In the month of January there was a fall of snow nearly five feet deep. The poor sepoy suffered cruelly, and even the British soldiers, who were only indifferently provided with clothes and blankets, shivered on those mountains and table-lands. The Afghans remained inactive until the return of spring; but then the Ghilzies and other powerful tribes began to unite their cavalry, and to attack our outposts. At the same time the people dwelling on the hills and in the glens, not only re-

* Dr. Kennedy, 'Campaign of the Army of the Indus.'

refused to pay any taxes or tribute to Shah Sujah, but also refused to sell provisions to our commissariat. As the ice and snow melted, and left the roads and mountain-paths passable, a fierce war of posts commenced. This warfare alone would have worn out our army. As the summer advanced it assumed a bolder character. Dost Mohamed, after a narrow escape from being betrayed and murdered by the king, or ruler, of Bokhara, received assistance in his extremity from the khan of Kokan, on the Persian border; and in company with one of his sons, Afzul Khan, he proceeded to Afghanistan, to stir up the country to undertake a holy war for the expulsion of the unbelieving English. Some native Afghan troops, which Shah Sujah had raised, began to desert to the Dost, who had collected a great number of Usbeg Tartars. As the expelled ruler advanced upon Cabul, several severe actions were fought, in which our fine artillery practice and our grape and shrapnel gave us the victory, and inflicted terrible losses on the enemy. At last, driven from post to post, Dost Mohamed made up his mind to surrender to Sir William Mac Naghten, or to Sir Alexander Burnes, who were both left at Cabul, the first as ambassador or envoy. On the evening of the 3rd of November, 1840, as Mac Naghten was returning from his evening ride, and was within a few yards of his own residence in the Balla Hissar, or citadel of Cabul, a solitary horseman galloped up to him, and told him that Dost Mohamed had arrived, and sought his protection. The words were scarcely said ere the chief himself appeared; and, alighting from his horse, he presented his sword to the envoy. The Dost had quitted the field of battle* late the preceding evening, and had ridden straight into Cabul, a distance of sixty miles. On the 12th of November Dost Mohamed was sent off for India under a strong escort. He waited at Peshawer till joined by his family, which consisted of nearly 700 persons, of whom about one half were females. Fourteen of his sons surrendered, Akbar Khan alone holding out against us to the end. The Dost was allowed to visit Calcutta, where the governor-general received him with much respect and courtesy. Three lacs

* The chief's last battle—the battle of Purwan Durrah—in which some of our sepoy regiments had behaved like downright cowards, and in which Dr. Lord, one of our numerous political agents in the country, Lieutenant Broadfoot, and Cornet Crispin were killed and cut to pieces.

of rupees, or about £80,000 a year, were allotted to him; and he took up his residence at Mussooree, on our north-west frontier, where he remained till 1843.

The surrender of Dost Mohamed, and the activity of our moveable columns under General Sale, Colonel Dennie, and other active and intelligent officers, brought the country all round Cabul to a tranquil state. But the calm was deceptive; it was but a lull in the storm; and although this was clearly seen and frankly stated by many of our officers, our infatuated envoy would not see it, and would not take warning.

Before the Bombay column cleared out of the country the celebrated fortress of Khelat was stormed and taken, and Meerab Khan, who had paid so little respect to the treaty which Burnes had concluded with him, and several other Beloochee chiefs, were slain. This was a brilliant operation, which will bear comparison with any exploit our troops ever performed in India.

While comparative tranquillity reigned in and around Cabul, insurrections broke out among the fierce tribes that inhabit the country to the east of the Bolan Pass. At the same time some of the ameeers of Scinde called their followers to the field, united their bands, and threatened all our communications between Afghanistan and our own provinces. Several serious disasters were sustained by our troops, and more and more enemies collected.

In May, 1841, Major Pottinger prognosticated the coming storm, representing to the envoy the insufficiency of our military force in some quarters, and the badness of their cantonments in nearly all places. The major was looked upon as an alarmist. About the end of September the roads near Cabul swarmed with predatory bands, and three Ghilzie chiefs of note quitted Cabul, after plundering a rich caravan, and took up a strong position in the defile of Khoord Cabul, only ten miles from the capital. At the same time intelligence was received that Dost Mohamed's ablest and fiercest son, Akbar Khan, was collecting troops in various parts of the country. General Sale cleared the pass of Khoord Cabul, but not without hard fighting and considerable loss.*

* After restoring Shah Sujah to his throne, an agreement was entered into with the Ghilzie chiefs, that a certain sum of money should be paid to them yearly out of the Cabul treasury, if they would keep the Khoord Cabul Pass open, and offer no molestation to our troops on their passag.

This was in the month of October, and all through this month our officers were insulted in their cantonments at Cabul, and many attempts were made to assassinate them.

On the 2nd of November, at an early hour, intelligence was brought to cantonments that a popular outbreak had taken place in the city, and that a general attack had been made on the houses of all British officers residing at Cabul. The envoy Mac Naghten was in the cantonments, but Burnes was in the city. At about 8 A.M., a hurried note was received from Burnes, who stated that the minds of the people had been excited by some evil reports, but expressing a hope that he should succeed in quelling the commotion. An hour after this, it was reported in the cantonment that Burnes had been murdered, and that Captain Johnson's treasury had been plundered.

Flames were now seen to issue from that part of the city where they dwelt, and an incessant report of fire-arms seemed to roll through the town from end to end. It was soon ascertained, that the rabble who first commenced the attack did not exceed 300 men, and that with Sir Alexander were massacred his brother, Lieutenant Burnes, Lieutenant W. Broadfoot, and every man, woman, and child found on the premises.* Our generals and superior officers, were all so thunderstruck as to be incapable of adopting more than the most puerile of defensive measures. Coward as he was, Shah Sujah sent out one of his own sons, with a number of his immediate Afghan retainers and two guns, to restore order; but no support was rendered by our troops.

between Cabul and Jellalabad. Little dependence could be placed on such a bargain; but it is said that the bargain was first broken by us or by our ally, Shah Sujah, and that this provoking circumstance contributed in a great measure to the disasters which followed.

* 'The Military Operations at Cabul, &c., with a Journal of Imprisonment in Afghanistan,' by Lieutenant Vincent Eyre, of the Bengal artillery, late deputy-commissariat of ordnance at Cabul.

Speaking charitably of his errors, and making no allusion to a very current report of gross and provoking misconduct, Lieutenant Eyre says—"No man, surely, in a highly responsible public situation—especially in such a one as that held by the late Sir Alexander Burnes—ought ever to indulge in a state of blind security, or to neglect salutary warnings, however small. It is indisputable that such warnings had been given to him, especially by a respectable Afghan named Taj Mahomed, who, on the very previous night, went in person to Sir A. Burnes to put him on his guard, but returned disgusted by the incredulity with which his assertions were received."

Sir William Mac Naghten said that the storm would soon blow over of itself. Every minute that was lost in inaction raised the numbers and the audacity of the insurgents. The chief command of our astounded and bewildered army (bewildered much more by the inactivity and stupor of their leaders than by the proceedings of the Afghans) was at this time held by Major-General Elphinstone, a most amiable and at one time a gallant officer, but who had been suffering a long and painful illness, which, affecting his nerves, had worn out his mind as much as his body. He was utterly incapable of acting in this sudden emergency with the promptitude and vigour necessary for the preservation of his troops, and the officers next in command under him seem to have been—without the same physical and unavoidable causes—as incapable as himself, and to have shrunk from all responsibility. The cantonment occupied by the army for so many months was as bad as bad could be, and the magazine of provisions was placed in the most exposed and least defensible part of it, detached from our works of strength. All the calamities which befel our ill-starred force might be traced more or less to the defects of our position; and whether we look to its situation or to its construction, this cantonment at Cabul must ever be spoken of as a disgrace to our military skill and judgment.*

On the 3rd of November, the day after the outbreak, 3,000 Ghilzies rushed through the Khoord Cabul Pass towards the capital, and other numerous bands began to collect on the hills. We cannot, and we need not, narrate what followed: the fearful story, with all its horrible and humiliating details, is fresh in the memory of every Englishman. Our commanding officers continued in their imbecility until our troops were infected with downright cowardice: not merely the shivering half-starved sepoys, but our British-born soldiers cowered before a barbarous and stupid enemy whom they had so often beaten. Discipline disappeared; but never had discipline been put to a severer test! The brave soldier may be expected to bear everything except the self-evident imbecility and fatuity of his commanding officers. On the 4th of November, our people ran away from the commissa-

* Lieutenant Vincent Eyre. "The cantonment had a low rampart and a narrow ditch; its form was a parallelogram; it had round flanking bastions at each corner, but every one of these bastions was commanded by some fort or hill."

riat fort, and left all our stores, clothing, and provisions to the enemy, except two days' supply of provisions in cantonments. On the 5th an attack was made to recover possession of the commissariat fort; but our officers again behaved like fools and our men like cowards, and the enemy remained in possession of the rich prize they had obtained. The object of the enemy was to starve the army out of its cantonment; and to this end the chiefs exerted all their influence to prevent our troops being supplied from any of the neighbouring forts. On the 9th, General Elphinstone's weak state of health rendered the presence of a coadjutor absolutely necessary to relieve him from the command of the garrison; and Brigadier Shelton, the second in command, was, at the earnest request of Sir W. Mac Naghten, summoned in from the Balla Hissar, in the hope that he would rouse the sinking confidence of the troops. Shelton was scarcely in the cantonment ere a quarrel or a wide difference of opinion arose between him and Mac Naghten. The brigadier had from the first despaired of being able to hold out the winter at Cabul, and strenuously advocated an immediate retreat to Jellalabad.

On the 13th, Shelton made a tolerably spirited and successful sally upon some of the Afghan tribes, that were now occupying all the hills which surrounded and commanded our cantonment, the said cantonment being a piece of low swampy ground; but the Afghans soon returned, and continued to annoy our troops with their unceasing fire of musketry. Major Pottinger, badly wounded, his assistant, Mr. Haughton, who had lost a hand, and had been gashed on the neck, a sepoy of our Gorkha regiment, a moonshee, and another native, arrived on the 15th, from a position at Charikar; and these were all that were left out of 100 men who had occupied the said post; all the rest, men and officers, had been butchered by the Afghans.

How provisions had been obtained we know not,* but our army was still motionless in its cantonment on the 22nd of November, when the terrible Akbar Khan arrived in Cabul, with some hundreds of well-mounted warriors. His arrival was immediately followed by the defection of several chiefs, who had hitherto professed great friendship

* It appears that for some time provisions were obtained from the contiguous village of Beymaroo, the proprietor of which was largely bribed by our envoy.

to the English. On the 23rd, Shelton sallied again in force, in order to clear the way for our foraging parties, and was driven back with severe loss, after having committed in this one miserably disastrous affair, no fewer than *six* capital military errors. By this time our troops had lost all confidence in their officers; and they were starving with hunger as well as with cold. On the 26th, a letter was received by Mac Naghten from Osman Khan, who proposed that the British should quietly evacuate the country, and leave the Afghans to govern it according to their own rules, and with a king of their own choice. General Elphinstone eagerly caught at this overture for retreating. On the 27th, two deputies from the Afghan chiefs came into our cantonment to propose the terms. These were, that we should deliver up Shah Sujah and all his family, lay down our arms, and make an unconditional surrender. Mac Naghten replied, "that the terms were too dishonourable to be entertained for a moment." "Well," said the deputies, "we shall meet again in battle!" "We shall, at all events, meet at the day of judgment!" replied our doomed envoy.

On the 8th of December, Mac Naghten, in a public letter, requested the general to state whether the only alternative left was not to negotiate for our safe retreat out of the country, on the most favourable terms possible?—the desponding, dying Elphinstone, gave a fatal response in the affirmative. On the 11th of December, Mac Naghten, accompanied by Captains Lawrence, Mackenzie, and Trevor, went out to meet certain great khans and heads of tribes. Among these chiefs were some who had betrayed Dost Mohamed and who had now betrayed Shah Sujah. The terrible Akbar Khan, who had never submitted to the English, was there; and he sternly negatived every proposition that our envoy advanced, demanding little short of an unconditional surrender. During this conference in the open plain, a bullet whistled over the head of Sir William Mac Naghten; but his hour was not yet come. At last it was agreed, that the British should evacuate Afghanistan; that they should be permitted to return unmolested to India, and supplies of every description be afforded them on their road thither; that Dost Mohamed Khan and his family should be allowed to return to their country; that Shah Sujah and his family should have the option of

remaining at Cabul, or proceeding with the British troops, that means of transport for the conveyance of our baggage, stores, etc., should be furnished; that no British force should ever again be sent into Afghanistan, unless called for by the Afghan government; that *perpetual friendship* should be established between the two nations, on the sure foundation of mutual *good offices*, etc.

On the 14th of December was commenced the most disastrous and appalling retreat that had ever been recorded in authentic history. Making allowance for the difference of numbers, the retreat of the French from Moscow was less dreadful than this. In both cases, snow and ice, and nakedness and famine, slew more than the sword. On the 20th of December, Sir William Mac Naghten had an interview with the chiefs, who now demanded that a portion of our guns and ammunition should be given up, and that Brigadier Shelton should be put into their hands as a hostage. Lieutenant Sturt, in whom the English spirit had not become extinct, proposed to the general to break off the treaty and march forthwith to Jellalabad, where Sale was stoutly maintaining himself. But the general called a council of war,—and a council of war never fights. On the 22nd of December, as our troops were preparing to follow the van division, Akbar Khan sent to invite our envoy to another conference. On the following day Mac Naghten went to the place appointed, presented Akbar with a beautiful Arab horse, and was barbarously murdered under the eyes of that khan and of other chiefs. It is even said that Akbar himself did the foul deed, shooting his victim through the body with a richly-mounted pistol which Mac Naghten had sent him only a few hours before. The body was hacked to pieces by the armed fanatics, who carried the head into the city, and triumphantly exhibited it to Captain Conolly, one of the prisoners who had been taken. Not an arm was raised to avenge Mac Naghten's fate—nothing could reanimate our troops, or the wretched men who commanded them. All went on as if, with one accord, to complete their disgrace and seal their doom—all except a few English hearts, who murmured and remonstrated, but who had not moral courage sufficient to incur the heavy and awful responsibility of putting their commanding officers under arrest, appealing to the troops, and assuming the command themselves. There were more

councils of war called, to end in more vacillating and madness; it was agreed to leave behind all our guns except six; to give up all our treasure; to give up married men, with their wives and families, as hostages; to pay Osman Khan, and some other treacherous villains, five lacs of rupees, in bills drawn upon India, but negotiated on the spot by a merchant of Cashmere and some Hindū bankers; the said Osman Khan engaging to escort the whole army in safety to Peshawer. In vain did Major Pottinger raise his manly voice against this useless debasement (and never were English soldiers so debased before as to buy a way out of an enemy's country!)—the rest of the officers composing the council declared, one and all, that the bargain must be struck. And, accordingly, the bills were given, and English ladies were delivered over as hostages, if not at this moment, a little later.

On the 6th of January, 1842, our head-quarters and the rest of our army cleared out of the cantonments at Cabul, to march in the depth of winter through a country of perhaps unparalleled difficulty. The strength of our whole force was at this time estimated at about 4,500 fighting men; the camp-followers, at a moderate computation, amounted to about 12,000 men, women, and children. At the moment the rear-guard cleared out of the cantonments, the Afghans began to plunder the baggage, and to follow and fire upon our soldiers; and these operations can scarcely be said to have ceased until there was nothing left to plunder or to kill. We will not follow this demoralized and degraded army through the horrors of the passes of Khoord Cabul, Tezeen, and Gundamuck. General Elphinstone, almost at the point of death, gave himself up to one of the khans. The ladies and wounded were given up; Dr. Brydon, who escaped by a miracle, was the only officer that reached the garrison of Jellalabad in safety, and a mere handful of sepoy and camp-followers entered the fortress, which Sale had held, in spite of General Elphinstone's orders to him to evacuate. Counting camp-followers, women, and children, more than 26,000 human beings had perished on the retreat. A few hundreds—mostly native Indians—had been carried away captive, to be made slaves, or to be kept for the sake of ransoms.

Our *protégé* Shah Sujah, though abandoned and left to his own resources, was not only able to maintain himself in

the Balla Hissar, but also to acquire friends and allies. The Afghan chiefs, ever divided by jealousies, factions, and feuds, began to intrigue against one another as soon as the English were gone, and some of these sent secret assistance, whilst others sent openly to the shah in the citadel.

In the city of Candahar General Nott gallantly maintained himself; and, instead of waiting for the enemy behind the mud wall and ditch of the place, he sallied, on the 12th of January, with five and a half regiments of infantry, 1,000 horse, and sixteen pieces of artillery, attacked the enemy, about 5,000 strong, who were in a formidable position, and completely defeated and routed them. Ghuznee, famed for its gate, and the powder-bags that had blown it open, was held by Colonel Palmer, with one native regiment and some artillery. The veteran Sale added to his well-earned reputation by his defence of Jellalabad, on the retention of which nearly everything now depended.* The Afghans were completely balked in their plans by our refusal to vacate the place.

Finding that Sale would not yield to threatening messages, Akbar Khan sent an army against him. By the 22nd of January the place was surrounded by about 8,000 or 9,000 men, including 2,500 good cavalry. It was commanded for some time by Akbar Khan himself.† Fortunately Sale had provisions enough for three or four months, and his foraging parties were so well conducted that they gathered grass for their horses and cattle in spite of the enemy, who neither knew how to blockade, nor how to besiege a place. The courage of the garrison was further kept up by intelligence that a force under Colonel Wild was about to attempt marching to the relief of Jellalabad, and that General Pollock, with a fresh army from India, was crossing the Punjaub. Colonel Wild could not get through the terrible Khyber Pass, either by force of arms or by force of money; but Pollock kept steadily advancing.‡ A long time must, how-

* Soon after clearing the Khoord Cabul Pass, on the 12th of October, he had fought on, for eighteen days, as far as Gundamuck, and had reached Jellalabad on the 12th of November, when Generals Elphinstone and Shelton, through their indecision, were sacrificing the army in the Cabul cantonments.

† MS. of a young officer of the Bengal establishment.

‡ All the hopes of our people at Jellalabad were fixed upon General Pollock; and every one there seems to have believed that he would retrieve the disgraces he had suffered.

"The address of General Pollock to his troops," says one who was

ever elapse before Pollock could complete a march of 500 or 600 miles, and in the interim Sale and his garrison must trust to their own resources, to their own artillery, muskets, and bayonets, and their own stout hearts. As the siege or blockade commenced, the old mud walls of Jellalabad were rent by a tremendous earthquake. All the parapets which Sale had built up with so much labour were shaken down, several of his bastions were injured, a considerable breach was made in the rampart of a curtain in the Peshawer face, the Cabul gate of the town was reduced to a shapeless mass of ruins, and about one-third of the town itself was demolished. Other shocks of the earthquake came in rapid succession. In the MS. journal of an intelligent young officer, which is now before us, we see, for some time, two or three earthquakes noted nearly every day or night. General Sale himself says, in one of his despatches, that the city was kept in constant alarm, and that in little more than one month there were 100 distinct shocks. Some of these were very violent. The Afghans, however, never had sufficient confidence to attempt a real assault on the crazy old place, and Sale frequently sent out small detachments, which marched through and through the ill-connected Afghan lines.

Nott still held out in Candahar, and was ready, on receiving some supplies and reinforcements, to co-operate with Pollock and Sale in an advance upon Cabul.* The brave

with Sale, and was at the moment looking with eager eyes for the relief, "has excited the praise and admiration of every one who has read it. Here we all hope to see better days and better doings than we have witnessed under our former commanding officers."—MS. Journal of a Young Officer. The date of the entry is the 14th of April.

* "It is on record," says Nott, "that I informed the Indian government that I could hold the country (Candahar and Lower Afghanistan) for any time; it is on record that I informed Lord Auckland, as far back as December, 1841, that I could, with permission, re-occupy Cabul with the force under my command: there was nothing to prevent it but the unaccountable panic which prevailed at the seat of government."—Letter from General Nott to General J. R. Lumley, adjutant-general of the army; dated Lucknow, 4th April, 1843.

The Indian government, however, continued to despond. In a letter from the governor-general in council to the secret committee at home, dated February the 19th, 1842 (nine days before the arrival of Lord Ellenborough at Calcutta), it is written:—"On the 31st of January we expressly informed Major-General Pollock that Jellalabad was not a place which we desired to retain at all hazards, and that, after securing Sir R. Sale's brigade there, and giving every practicable relief to parties

men were all eager to retrieve the honour of our arms, and to rescue the English ladies and all the other prisoners from the hands of the barbarians. General Sale had a wife and daughter in captivity; it may, therefore, be conceived with what feeling he heard that the Indian government he was bound to obey, intended to recall all our forces, to evacuate every part of Afghanistan, and to trust to negotiations and money for the liberation of the prisoners, leaving our disgrace unremedied—our *prestige* destroyed. It is now no secret that an order to this effect was issued by Lord Auckland, who had been dragged into the war by the vanity and presumption of rash men, and who was now listening to the counsels of desponding and timid men. In the mean time, the government which had procured the appointment of his lordship had been displaced, and succeeded (on the 30th of August, 1841), by the second administration of Sir Robert Peel. It was impossible that Lord Auckland should long retain his place: Lord Ellenborough, who had been president of the Board of Control, and who strongly denounced the impolicy of the war, was appointed, on the 23rd of December, 1841, to succeed him.

from Cabul, we would wish him, rather than run extreme risks at Jelalabad, to arrange for withdrawal from it, and the assemblage of all his force at or near Peshawar."—This letter is signed—'Auckland—W. W. Bird—W. Casement.'—H. T. Prinsep.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH arrived in India on the 28th of February, 1842. His earliest attention was demanded by the state of affairs on the Indus, where the ameers of Scinde continued in a doubtful attitude, and by our troops and captives in Afghanistan. Those captives were putting up earnest, but at times almost hopeless, prayers for their liberation—a liberation which even the women of the party seemed to have thought was not to be obtained by negotiation and ransom, but by hard fighting.

In quitting India, Lord Auckland had left the country in confusion and dismay. Some new failures and disasters contributed to depress the spirits of Lord Ellenborough and his council. Ghuznee was recaptured by the Afghans: the poor sepoy left there were all frost-bitten and rendered spiritless and unfit for service; provisions were not to be obtained; relief was despaired of; and on the 6th of March Colonel Palmer evacuated the place, in pursuance of a capitulation with some of the Afghan chiefs. The diminished force had scarcely marched out of the citadel ere it was attacked by the savage, fanatic Ghazees. On one spot an English officer, his wife, their servants, and thirty sepoy were massacred. Native women and children, and sepoy as helpless as they—their powder being all consumed—were butchered by the Ghazee knives, or were knocked down in heaps by discharges of artillery. Colonel Palmer was put to the torture; and then he and his nine surviving British officers were thrown into a small and filthy dungeon. Nearly at the same time, General England, who was taking stores and reinforcements to Candahar, came upon the enemy in an unexpected position, and met with a reverse; and this, though trifling in its consequences, and easy to be repaired, contributed to renew the panic of the Indian government.

General Pollock was ordered to be ready to retreat, and Nott received orders to retreat simultaneously with him.

But for the courage and decision of Sale and that first-rate Indian officer, General Nott, there would have been a renewal of retreat long before this time. When other men were absolutely craven-hearted, Nott was full of resolution and of hope. When the whole extent of our disasters at Cabul and in the passes became known to him at Candahar, he wrote to Lord Auckland beseeching him not to be disheartened for a moment, and cheerfully undertaking to march from Candahar to Cabul, as soon as the roads should be passable. During six months he had reiterated his advice and his offers; in spite of repeated orders to retreat, he still maintained that there was no honour, or even safety, in any course but the bold one. He was indignant at the panic which prevailed at Calcutta and almost everywhere else. He exclaimed: "Stupid blunders caused disasters at Cabul—is that a reason for the despair of a mighty empire? I do greatly wonder at such deep folly."

At a later period the veteran wrote: "Had I not remained sternly determined, there would have been no advance on Ghuznee and Cabul, and we should have left Afghanistan in disgrace, being laughed at by the whole world, and all India would have been up in arms. I was obliged more than once to save their honour and their lives in spite of themselves. My sepoys always acted nobly, and I could have done anything with them. . . . But when among our own countrymen all was panic and infatuation, from Lord Auckland down to the drum-boy, what could have been expected but disaster and disgrace? When I endeavoured to uphold the honour of my country, and to save it from disgrace, I was told—mark this: it is on official record—I was told: 'Your conduct has been injudicious, and shows that you are unfit for any command.'"*

But very soon after his arrival in India, Lord Ellenborough learned to appreciate Nott, and his lordship was the first in power that ever did so.

In a happy moment the governor-general in council pronounced the word "Forward;" and from that moment the future began to brighten—our disgraces to be remedied.

* Extracts from Sir W. Nott's papers, as published in the "Quarterly Review," No. clvi. October, 1846.

We speak not of vengeance for the past : this was not a war of retaliation and revenge ; it was a war of retrieval—a war of liberation.

In the meanwhile Sale had continued to hold out manfully behind the shattered walls of Jellalabad. His sorties had been still more frequent and successful, costing Akbar Khan a great loss in killed and wounded. On the morning of the 7th of April, Sale defeated the khan in the open field, took two Afghan standards, four of the guns which had been lost by our Cabul army, and nearly all Akbar's ordnance, stores, tents, &c. Next to Sale himself the heroes of this day were Lieutenant-Colonel Dennie, Colonel Monteith, Captains Broadfoot, Fenwick, Pattison, Oldfield, and Havelock, and Lieutenant Mayne. Unhappily, the gallant Dennie was killed. But notwithstanding this victory, the situation of the brigade was still very precarious, for their provisions were almost all consumed.

At last, on the 16th of April, General Pollock and his force arrived at Jellalabad under a joyful salute of seventeen guns.* Pollock had soundly beaten the Afghans in the Khyber Pass, and above it ; and before he reached Jellalabad the beleaguering army of Akbar Khan was dissolved.

As soon as it was known that General Pollock intended to advance, the people of Cabul began to desert that city in great numbers. Many of the khans, either struck away for their own mountains, or agreed that some one or two of the English prisoners should be released in order to open friendly negotiations with the victorious general. Just at this crisis Major-General Elphinstone breathed his last,—“ a happy release for him,” says a fellow-prisoner, “ from suffering of mind and body.”†

But the forward movement upon Cabul had not yet been determined upon by Lord Ellenborough, and after that determination was come to, much time was required for collecting supplies of provisions and means of transport. Thus, after his junction with Sale, Pollock halted more than four months at Jellalabad, during which time the troops were much afflicted by dysentery and other sicknesses, arising

* “ General Pollock,” says our young officer, “ is very much liked in camp, as being up to his work, and not caring how the men *dress*, so long as they *fight*.”—MS. Journal.

† Lieutenant Vincent Eyre, ‘ Journal of Imprisonment in Afghanistan,’ &c.

chiefly from bad and scanty food, inadequate clothing, and the want of tents.

By this time several of the Afghan chiefs were waging ferocious war upon one another in the neighbourhood of Cabul. The Shah Sujah was treacherously assassinated by one Sujah Dowlah, "a handsome, quiet-looking man," who now endeavoured to persuade the English prisoners that the shah had played us false, and that he had performed a praiseworthy act in slaying him. But, by degrees, many of these chiefs became wonderfully anxious to prove that they had always been the friends of the English, and that it was the late shah who made the insurrection in Cabul, and called upon the mountain tribes to destroy our army on its retreat through the passes.* Shah Sujah's youngest son, Futtu Jung, was proclaimed king by one party; while the Barukzies formed another party, and opposed him. The civil or clan warfare was now carried into the very heart of the city of Cabul; and Futtu Jung, who hoped to retain the treasure, if not the throne of his father the murdered shah, was closely besieged in the Balla Hissar. On the 6th of June a mine was sprung under one of the towers of the Balla Hissar; but the storming party was driven back with loss. On the following day, however, Futtu Jung, finding his people disinclined to support him any longer, made terms with Akbar Khan and the other chiefs; giving up a tower in the Balla Hissar to each of them, and retaining for himself possession of the royal residence. By this strange compact the citadel of Cabul was now divided between four rival tribes, the Dooranees, the Barukzies, the Ghilzies, and the Kuzzilbashs.

* Strange as it may appear, it is positively asserted by various parties, that Shah Sujah promoted the insurrection in the city, from feelings of personal enmity to Burnes.

"Captain Conolly had obtained convincing proof that Shah Sujah originated the rebellion with a view to get rid of Burnes, whom he detested, and of several chiefs, whom he hoped to see fall a sacrifice to our vengeance; little anticipating the ruinous result to himself and to us. Poor Burnes had made but few friends among the chiefs, who now never mention his name but in terms of the bitterest hatred and scorn. The king considered him as a personal enemy, and dreaded his probable succession to the post of envoy on the departure of Sir W. Mac Naghten."—Eyre.

See also a despatch from Lord Ellenborough to General Sir Jasper Nicholls. His lordship is, however, of opinion that Shah Sujah rather adopted than originated the insurrection against our troops.

Four days before the explosion of the mine, news was brought to Cabul that General Nott had gained a great victory under the walls of Candahar, and had killed 2,000 of the Afghans.

About the middle of July, Generals Pollock and Nott received positive instructions to make the grand forward movement to advance on Cabul, as soon as they could get ready. On the 15th of August Nott left Candahar, and put himself in motion for Ghuznee, with the entire conviction that "one thousand sepoy, *properly managed*, will always beat ten thousand Afghans." He was at the head of about 7,000 men. Generals Pollock and Sale marched from Jellalabad on the 20th of August. Akbar Khan declared, with an expression of savage determination in his countenance, that so surely as our army advanced, he would take all his English prisoners into Toorkistan, and make presents of the ladies to different chiefs of that wild country. Sultan Jan started to meet Nott before he should reach Ghuznee; he fancied he was going to certain victory, but he sustained a complete and bloody defeat. After an "illustrious march," Nott reached Ghuznee: he found that place deserted; there was not a man, a woman, nor child in it. The Afghans had all fled from the town, after fighting among themselves, and unroofing and destroying the houses for the sake of the timber. "I ordered the fortifications and citadel of Ghuznee to be destroyed," said Nott. "It had been the scene of treachery, mutilation, torture, starvation, and cruel murder to our unresisting countrymen."*

General Pollock was equally successful in his advance, and both armies were satisfactorily convinced that our soldiers, both native and European, only required competent commanders to be invincible. There was some hard fighting at the Jugdulluk Pass and at Tezeen; but our loss was inconsiderable, and our columns pressed forward until they reached the capital.

The Afghans expected that Nott and Pollock would be at Cabul early in September. On the 25th of August Akbar Khan kept his threat by hurrying off his prisoners towards Toorkistan. Let us follow their steps. On the 3rd of September the unhappy party reached Bameean, every indignity having been heaped upon them by the way.

* Letter to Major-General J. R. Lumley, adjutant-general of the army, dated Lucknow, April 4th, 1843.

There they were halted under an old fort, until fresh orders should be received from the terrible Akbar. On the 11th, the khan who had charge of them, and who was "a man that would do anything for money," signed an agreement with five English officers, who promised to give him 20,000 rupees, and to insure him 1,000 rupees per month. The khan then hoisted the flag of defiance on the walls of the fort, telling the prisoners that they had no longer anything to fear—that they should not be carried into Toorkistan. Akbar's orders to him had been to hurry them on their journey, and to butcher all the sick, and all those for whom there was no conveyance. Several neighbouring chiefs, knowing how matters were going on at Cabul, and hoping to obtain some English money, came over to the fort, and tendered their allegiance to Major Pottinger. Some two or three of them swore on the Koran to be faithful to the major and his companions; who resolved, in case Akbar should send troops against them, to hold out until the arrival of assistance, even though they should be reduced to eat the rats and mice, of which they had a grand stock in the old fort.*

On the 15th of September a letter was received at the fort, stating that all Cabul had risen against Akbar; that our army was close at hand; that Akbar had fled to the Toba mountains; and that other chiefs, who dreaded alike the vengeance of the English soldiers and the fury of the people of Cabul, had gone off in various directions, with only a few followers. Upon this Major Pottinger, no longer a prisoner, but acting as a viceroy, and making grants of land and assigning revenues to the hill chiefs, to keep those barbarians in good humour, determined to quit the old fort, and return with the whole party along the road to Cabul. Attended by a number of chiefs, they set out from the fort on the 16th, hoping to meet some English troops on the road, yet at the same time fearing that they might encounter some formidable band of Akbar's desperate and vindictive people. As they encamped for the first evening they received a letter, stating that Pollock's force, after fighting from midday to midnight, had eventually forced the Khoord Cabul Pass, and had charged the enemy as far as the hills on the north side of the city of Cabul; that Nott had attacked and pursued them in another direction; that the

* Lady Sale, 'Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan.'

Kuzzilbashes and adherents of the late Shah Sujah had made themselves completely masters of the city; and that Akbar Khan, Sultan Jan, Ahmed Khan, and other hostile khans, who had all been defeated, were nowhere to be heard of. This was pleasant news; but at the same time our returning prisoners were alarmed by the report that 2,000 horse were following them up to recapture them, and to carry them into the deserts beyond the Oxus. However their last fears were soon removed: at two o'clock in the morning of the 17th they were roused from their slumber by the arrival of a horseman with a letter from Sir Richmond Shakespear, who was coming with 600 Kuzzilbashes to meet them. The party set off early, and at midday reached some deserted forts at the foot of a mountain-pass. They were sitting under the walls of one of these forts, sheltering themselves from the sun, when, at three o'clock, Sir Richmond arrived, and was received with heartfelt pleasure. "Nor," says one of the party, "could even the most thoughtless among us fail to recognize and acknowledge, in all that had befallen us, the distinguishing grace and protecting providence of a forbearing and merciful God. We now, for the first time, learned that General Pollock had reached Cabul on the 15th, where one of his first acts had been to hasten the departure of the Kuzzilbashes to our aid, by a donation of 10,000 rupees."* But the party had still a long march and a difficult country between them and Cabul, and were not without their apprehensions that Akbar might make some desperate effort to recover his lost prey. Sir R. Shakespear forwarded an earnest request to General Pollock that more troops might instantly be sent out to their support, as the pass of Suffed Khak, through which they must march, was reported to be occupied by a band of marauders. At the same time it was determined that the party should move forward by forced marches, for which every facility was afforded by the Kuzzilbash chiefs, supplying them with fresh horses. On the 20th they met an English officer, who gave them the welcome intelligence that General Sale's brigade was only a few miles distant on the road to meet them.

"All doubt was now at an end; we were once more under the safeguard of British troops. General Sale was there in person; and his happiness at regaining his long-

* Lieutenant Eyre, 'Journal.'

lost wife and daughter may be imagined.”* It was a glorious rescue; but, alas! that the number rescued should be so small. Major-General Shelton, of her majesty's 44th foot, stands at the head of the list. The total number of all who were released and recovered by Nott and Pollock's brilliant advance to Cabul, and by Sale's forward movement from that place, was only 122. Of this number nine were ladies, and three the wives of non-commissioned officers or privates; there were twenty-two children and thirty-four officers, and the rest, with the exception of two or three regimental clerks, were British non-commissioned officers or privates. On the 21st the happy party marched with Sale's brigade to Killa-Kazee, a village close to Cabul. At 2 P.M. on the same day they started for General Pollock's camp, on the plain east of Cabul. Near the tomb of the Emperor Baber they passed General Nott's camp. Thence their road lay through the city: the streets were almost empty, and an awful silence prevailed. They went by the spot where Burnes's house had stood; the house was now a heap of rubbish, and its pretty garden a desolate waste. The party entered General Pollock's camp at sunset. Again the artillery uttered its boisterous notes of welcome, and old friends crowded around with hearty congratulations. For the present their cup of joy was full. But when the first rapture was over, rest and reflection, and the scenes which surrounded them, must have brought to their recollection the thousands that had perished, and the many friends whose bones lay bleaching on the mountain-tops or in the dreadful passes.

Some of the first sad occupations of our troops on reaching Cabul had been to collect the bones of their slaughtered countrymen and fellow-soldiers, and to give them interment. In some places the skeletons lay in heaps. They were nearly all headless, the Afghans having carried off most of the skulls as trophies. Horrible, agonizing efforts were made by some of our officers and men to recognize, in shattered bones and skulls, the mortal remains of some dear friend and comrade. On the spot where her majesty's 44th regiment had made their last stand, more than 200 skeletons were found lying close together.†

Victory now accompanied the British standard wherever

* Eyre.

† MS. 'Journal of a Young Officer.'

it was raised. One of the most confident predictions of those who had pleaded for the continuance of the Company's commercial charter and monopoly of the China trade had been verified; from the moment that that trade had been thrown open, there had been nothing but dissension and confusion at Canton, and the quarrel that ensued had led to war and to the invasion of the Celestial Empire by a British fleet and army. The victories obtained in the rivers and on the plains of China were rapidly rumoured throughout India, and produced a salutary impression among the mountains of Afghanistan. They warned all our enemies that our enterprise, our strength, and resources were undiminished. On the 21st of September, Lord Ellenborough, being then at Simla, in the Himalaya mountains, issued an encouraging proclamation, in which he stated that he had that very day received the reports of three victories: one, obtained on the 30th of August, by Major-General Nott, over 12,000 Afghans, thirty-eight miles to the south-west of Ghuznee; one, on the 8th of September, by Major-General Pollock, over the troops of Mohamed Akbar Khan and the Ghilzie chiefs at Jugdulluk; and one, on the 16th of June, by the expedition on the coast of China, within the mouth of the river Yang-tse-Kiang.

We had, however, had quite enough of Afghan connections and interferences; there was no longer a man that could be deluded by a vision like that of Burnes. On the 1st of October, Lord Ellenborough issued a proclamation from Simla, the spot where Lord Auckland had declared the war, stating that the disasters in Afghanistan having been avenged upon every scene of past misfortune, the British army would be withdrawn to the Sutledge. And, on the 12th of October, after destroying the fortifications, the Grand Bazaar, two mosques, and other buildings at Cabul, the British troops evacuated it, and marched off in three divisions for Jellalabad, where they arrived in the course of the 22nd and the two following days.

From Jellalabad they continued their long march to Ferozepoor, where, as Lord Ellenborough expressed it, they were "within our native boundaries." The governor-general was at Ferozepoor to receive and welcome them. Reviews, dinners, and balls ensued. In proposing the health of General Sale and the brave garrison of Jellalabad, Lord Ellenborough said, that it was they who had saved the name and fame of the British empire in India. At a grand

review on the 31st of December, 24,000 soldiers and 102 guns were mustered on this one spot.*

The sword was now sheathed ; but not for a long season. The ameers of Scinde had behaved treacherously towards us while our troops were engaged and while suffering their unspeakable disasters in Afghanistan. After our second return from Cabul, being deluded as to the circumstances under which we had retired, these proud chiefs, instead of showing a disposition to abide by their treaty and court our friendship, assumed a defiant, hostile attitude. They conceived that we had been much weakened, if not beaten.†

Our Indian government, under Lord Auckland, discovered that the ameers had leagued themselves with the Seikh chief of Mooltan, and with other powerful leaders, and that they were gradually forming an extensive combination against us. Lord Ellenborough preferred breaking their strength now to waiting for a future collision, when they might choose their own time, and possibly take us by surprise.

On his lordship's first arrival in the East, our Indian empire was indisputably in danger, and it was the new governor-general's mission to put it in a situation of security ; to rebuke the pride and insolence of the barbarians who had been victorious, and of the barbarians who hoped to be so. The obligation of security was a necessity, paramount to all other considerations. As this was not to be obtained by treaty—as events had been allowed to come to that pass that our treaties were laughed at—there remained nothing but the *ultima ratio*, a stern recourse to arms.

"The Scindian war," says its historian, "was no isolated event. It was the tail of the Afghan storm." It was not entered upon precipitately. The governor-general sent a warning letter to the ameers ; and it was not until four months after sending the letter that he gave the following instructions to Sir Charles Napier : "Should any ameer or chief, with whom we have a treaty of alliance and friendship, have evinced hostile designs against us, during the late

* MS. 'Journal of a Young Officer.' Lady Sale's and Lieutenant Eyre's Journals. Another work on this part of our Indian History, which may be read with advantage, is 'Diary of a March through Afghanistan and Scinde,' by the Rev. J. N. Allen. Some excellent notions of the scenery and architecture may be obtained from 'Views in Afghanistan, &c., from Sketches taken during the Campaign,' by Sir Keith A. Jackson, Bart.

† Letters of Lord Ellenborough, in 'Correspondence relative to Scinde.' Presented to both houses of parliament by command of her majesty, 1843.

events, which may have induced them to doubt the continuance of our power, it is the present intention of the governor-general to inflict upon the treachery of such ally and friend so signal a punishment as shall effectually deter others from similar conduct; but the governor-general would not proceed in this course without the most complete and convincing evidence of guilt in the person accused."

When all were found guilty, the punishment must reach all. The ameers, faithless abroad, were tyrannical at home; they had not the affection of the people to rely upon. Theirs was indeed "a government hated by its subjects, despotic, hostile alike to the interests of the English and of its own people; a government of low intrigue, and so constituted that it must in a few years have fallen to pieces by the vice of its construction."*

The required proofs of the treachery and hostility of the ameers were soon obtained, though by a most rigid process. The evidence which convinced Sir Charles Napier would have convinced any jury of sensible men—would have brought down sentence of guilty, not only in any court in Europe, but in any oriental court. When war was imminent, Sir Charles, like an experienced soldier, applied himself to the organization and discipline of his troops, who were for the most part inexperienced. He drew them out frequently and accustomed them to move in masses; he introduced several improvements; he exhorted them to a subordination of which too many of them had been allowed to lose sight, and recommended a quiet and considerate conduct towards the people of Scinde.

The fighting veteran was in no hurry to begin: "Nothing," he wrote to the governor-general, "is lost by delay. We cannot be too cautious in securing firm moral ground on which to rest the defence of whatever events may arise. The ameers grow weaker, delay exhausts their treasury, and then they cheat their soldiers, who, of course, leave them. This is also the season of fever on the banks of the Indus. Were hostilities to commence now, I should lose many men, and have a large hospital."

He was most careful of the health of his people, feeling that this was one of the most important duties of every commander-in-chief. "To move on Hyderabad," he continued, "I must go by the river or by the desert. To supply the sick by the last would be difficult, if not impos-

* Parliamentary Paper. Letter to Lord Ellenborough.

sible : to go by the river would augment the hospital. The Indus is falling, and when it is at the lowest, the fevers will cease. Meanwhile I have a sickly camp, and I should have regretted if the ameers had called me out before : now they are welcome." He was too wise to trust to so uncertain and interrupted a navigation as that of the Indus—he saw that the line of war, like that of commerce, was rather across the river, than up it or down it. "If I am forced to take the field," said he, "I will cross the Indus, and march upon Hyderabad by land ; for there are objections to dropping down the river. The water is low ; boats go with difficulty when lightly laden ; I cannot float more than a thousand men with guns and stores, and the vessels would even then be overladen, and ground perhaps for days on the mud within reach of matchlocks. Nothing can be gained by rapidity." But when a forward movement became immediately necessary, Sir Charles made it with the rapidity of lightning. This aged and often-wounded soldier moved with all the alacrity of youth.

In February, 1843, he wrote to Major Outram, who was still negotiating : "This delay will not do. The governor-general's orders to disperse the armed bands belonging to the ameers of Upper Scinde are positive. I have now no time to lose ; my own troops must soon disperse, from the heat ; I will not lose the cold weather."

The Indus was now crossed, and Sir Charles Napier threw himself between the northern and southern ameers. The forces of the Hyderabad ameers made a ferocious attack on the British residency outside their city. On moving away from the bank of the Indus, Sir Charles found that a great force of the enemy was gathering in his rear, while the rest kept their post at Meeanee, in his front. But he had read the duke of Wellington's observations on Colonel Monson's disastrous retreat before the Mahrattas, and he had drawn from it this conclusion—never to give way before barbarians. He said, "Let there be sixty or a hundred thousand, I will fight." He therefore rapidly advanced ; and on the 17th of February was fought the great battle of Meeanee. Our army was now reduced to 2,600 of all arms, including officers, fit for duty in the field. The enemy's positions were formidable : they had a natural ravine in their front ; they had more than 30,000 infantry, with fifteen guns, supported by 5,000 cavalry. Their wings rested on large woods or hunting-grounds, which extended on each side of the

plain in front for a considerable way, so as to flank the British lines on both sides when it should advance. These woods were very dense; yet Sir Charles Napier and his little force fell impetuously upon the enemy by the front. The fighting was terrible, and as hard as fighting could be. The dead level of the plain was swept by the Beloochee cannon and matchlocks; and when our troops got close up, after the ravine was crossed, our men had to ascend a high sloping bank. "The Beloochees, having their matchlocks laid ready in rest along the summit, waited until the assailants were within fifteen yards ere their volley was discharged; the rapid pace of the British, and the steepness of the slope deceived their aim, and the result was not considerable; the next moment the 22nd were on the top of the bank, thinking to bear down all before them, but they staggered back in amazement at the forest of swords waving in their front. Thick as standing corn, and gorgeous as a field of flowers, stood the Beloochees in their many-coloured garments and turbans; they filled the broad deep bed of the ravine, they clustered on both banks, and covered the plain beyond. Guarding their heads with their large dark shields, they shook their sharp swords, beaming in the sun, their shouts rolling like a peal of thunder, as with frantic gestures they dashed forward, with demoniac strength and ferocity, full against the front of the 22nd. But with shouts as loud, and shrieks as wild and fierce as theirs, and hearts as big and arms as strong, the Irish soldiers met them with the queen of weapons—the musket, and sent their foremost masses rolling back in blood. Now the Beloochees closed their dense masses, and again the shouts of the rolling fire of musketry, and the dreadful rush of their swordsmen, were heard and seen along the whole line; and such a fight ensued as has seldom been known or told of in the records of war. These wild warriors continually advanced, sword and shield in hand, striving in all the fierceness of their valour to break into the opposing ranks; no fire of small-arms, no thrust of bayonets, no sweeping discharges of grape from the guns, which were planted in one fearful mass on the right, could drive the gallant soldiers back; they gave their breasts to be shot, they leaped upon the guns by twenties at a time: their dead went down the steep slope by hundreds: but the gaps in their masses were continually filled up from the rear; the

survivors of the front rank still pressed forward with unabated fury, and the bayonet and the sword clashed in full and frequent conflict."*

When nearly all the European officers had been killed or wounded, and when the sepoys, wanting leaders, had several times slowly receded, a charge made on the enemy's right by our entire, but small, body of horse, under the command of Colonel Pattle, gave to Sir Charles all the glory of victory. They had kept their ground for more than three hours, but now the Beloochees began to retreat in heavy masses, still keeping well together with their broad shields slung over their backs, and their heads half-turned towards their pursuers.

"The victors followed closely, pouring in volley after volley, until tired of slaughtering; yet those stern, implacable warriors preserved their habitual swinging stride, and would not quicken it to a run, though death was at their heels."†

Never had more personal courage been displayed by our officers and men. The greater part of the battle was a hand-to-hand fight. "The noble soldier Pennefather," as Sir Charles Napier called him, fell on the top of the bank, to appearance mortally wounded; and his place was instantly taken by Major Pool. Major Teesdale, animating his sepoys, rode desperately over the ridge into the midst of the Beloochees, and was instantly killed by shot and sabre. Major Jackson followed the heroic example of Teesdale, and met the same fate. Two brave havildars kept close to them in advance of their regiment, and like their leaders, they were also killed, after they had slain several of the fiercest of the enemy. Lieutenant M'Murdoch, of the general's staff, rode, like Teesdale and Jackson, into the very heart of the Beloochee mass; his horse was killed under him, yet he rose instantly, and meeting Jehan Mohabad, one of the most warlike of the chiefs, slew him in the midst of his clan. Then, while engaged with several in front, one came behind and struck at him, but a serjeant of the 22nd, killed this enemy so instantly, that his blow fell harmless. M'Murdoch turned and did the same service for his preserver, cleaving the head of a Beloochee, who was aiming at his back. Captain Jacob and Lieutenant Fitzgerald performed similar exploits.

* Major-General W. F. P. Napier, 'Conquest of Scinde,' &c.

† Major-General W. F. P. Napier.

Six European officers and sixty serjeants and **privates** were killed, and fourteen officers and about 200 men wounded. As the sepoy grenadiers had been but slightly engaged, this loss was nearly a sixth part of our fighting force. The loss of the Beloochees was enormous; a careful computation gave it as 6,000; 1,000 bodies were heaped in the ravine alone.

On the following morning, at the break of day, Sir Charles Napier sent to tell the ameers that he would immediately storm Hyderabad, if they did not surrender. Six of these sovereign princes presently entered his camp on horseback, and offered themselves as prisoners. They yielded their fortress, and laid their rich swords and other arms at the British general's feet. "Their misfortunes," said Sir Charles, "were of their own creation, but, as they were great, I gave them back their swords." The ameers were cowards, but the conqueror, both in his public despatches and in his private letters, gave full honour and praise to the brave Beloochees. A few words must be said of the merits of the ameers as rulers and sovereigns. They governed by the sword, and by no other law. The Beloochees were their troops; the poor Scindians and Hindūs their subjects and victims. Any Beloochee might kill a Scindian or Hindū with impunity. There was no security of property to the industrious part of the community. Money was extorted from Hindū and other merchants by torture and mutilation, even as it was drawn from the poor Jews in England by King John. The ameers also restricted commerce, and hated the presence of strangers, who might draw unfavourable comparisons between their rule and that of neighbouring princes and powers. With a teeming soil, and a people willing to work, they had turned Scinde into the most wretched, poverty-stricken country in all Asia. In order to form their shikargahs or hunting-grounds, they had laid waste, in less than sixty years, a fourth part of the most fertile land of Scinde. The process of William the Conqueror, in forming the New Forest in Hampshire, was gentle and diminutive, compared with their proceedings along the banks of the Indus. The only trade they really encouraged was that trade in human beings which all Christendom has reprobated; the ameers dealt largely in the slave-trade, and so did all their feudal chiefs, both as importers and exporters. Infanticide was systematized among

them; the ameers and sirdars killed all their illegitimate children, and very commonly their female legitimate children, when they thought they had too many girls in their family.

It took Sir Charles Napier another victory, that of Dubba, near Hyderabad, gained on the 24th of March, 1843, to annihilate the power of the ameers. That victory gained, he had to organize the country and clear it of the bands of robbers and murderers who infested it. But some of these bands, in the south of the Delta, were very numerous and very bold, and were not to be overtaken but by the most rapid movements, nor subdued and scattered without more hard fighting. Deriah Khan, chief of the Jackranees, Toork Ali, and other robber chiefs, were severally as formidable as Doondiah Waugh, the King of the Two Worlds, who had given General Wellesley so much trouble after the fall of Seringapatam.

Immediately after the battle of Meeanee, the governor-general, in a proclamation dated from the palace of Agra, on the 5th of March, 1843, announced that Scinde had become part of our eastern dominions; and on the 18th of March, he appointed Major-General Sir Charles Napier, K.C.B., governor of the province he had conquered; directing in this second proclamation that all the acts of parliament for the abolition of slavery, and for the suppression of the slave-trade, should have full force and effect in every part of Scinde; that the navigation of the Indus should be free to all nations; and that all duties of transit in every part of Scinde should be immediately and totally abolished.

The Beloochees, whose occupation was gone, kept sullenly aloof; but their sword was broken, and it was not apprehended that they could soon wield it again. The Scindian population everywhere expressed their satisfaction at the change of masters.

It was the duke of Wellington who moved in the House of Lords the vote of thanks to Lord Ellenborough, and the officers and men who had finished with honour the Afghan war, which Lord Auckland had left in a dishonoured and seemingly hopeless condition. His grace, in his own concise manner, showed the state of the country shortly before the outbreak of the insurrection in Cabul, and detailed the unfortunate operations subsequently to that outbreak—the loss of the commissariat fort, the continued attacks on the cantonments, and the effects of harassing duty and insuffi-

cient food upon the spirits and health of the garrison. "It must always happen," said the Great Captain, "that soldiers badly fed become unhealthy, and lose their spirits and their energy. The natural result of such a condition of the army was the breaking up of general subordination and obedience to orders. In fact, the discipline of the army was gone; the animals were famishing as well as the men; the soldiers were in almost a state of mutiny, and the followers of the army were in a condition of complete disorder. Never were men in a worse state than those men were in, before, and for more than a month after, the attack upon Burnes's house."

The duke highly commended the prompt decision of Lord Ellenborough, the wisdom of his instructions, and the gallant execution of them by General Nott and other officers. General Nott had succeeded in rescuing many British subjects from captivity and slavery. From the period, said his grace, at which the governor-general landed in India and gave his first orders, more was done to remedy the misfortunes which had taken place than the most sanguine minds could have anticipated.

This eulogium, pronounced in our highest assembly by the greatest man of his age, ought to compensate the noble subject of it for the detraction which was for a brief space of time levelled against him.

The conquest of Scinde did not terminate the warlike operations of Lord Ellenborough's most active and brilliant administration. The Mahrattas of Gwalior had long been giving us great trouble, and required a vigilant and expensive attention on the part of the Indian government. On the decease of the late Maharajah Junkojee Rao Scindia, the British government acknowledged as his successor the Maharajah Tyajee Rao Scindia, who was nearest in blood to the late maharajah, and whose widow was approved by the chiefs. The widow was appointed regent during the minority of the new maharajah, but she very wisely transferred the dignity to Mama Sahib, with the concurrence of the chiefs. The British government communicated to the durbar of Gwalior its entire approval of this arrangement; and the British resident, in the presence of the assembled chiefs, explained to the regent that he was recognized as the responsible head of the state; and as such would receive the support of the British government. Yet, after

a short time," the regent, Mama Sahib, was violently compelled to quit the Gwalior state, in despite of the remonstrances of the British resident. Men inimical to our government, and to the tranquillity of India, were thrust into office by the widow of the late maharajah. Our resident was instructed to withdraw from Gwalior. The Dada Khan Walla, though opposed by many of the chiefs, virtually usurped the sovereign authority in the Gwalior state; which the British government was bound to maintain in the house of Scindia. The British government demanded that this Dada should be expelled, and delivered up to their charge, as a necessary preliminary to the re-establishment of the customary relations with Gwalior. After a long delay, the widow and her faction yielded this point; but, presently making a return to intrigue and cabal, the widow set up men who were still more turbulent. The country was rent to pieces by insurrections, plots, wide-spreading conspiracies, and assassinations. The British government could neither permit the existence of an unfriendly government in Gwalior, nor that those territories should be without a government capable of coercing its own subjects, and of maintaining everywhere the relations of good neighbourhood with the subjects of the British government and its allies.

By the 25th of December, the British army had entered the country, not as an enemy, but as a friend to the maharajah. The governor-general stated, by proclamation, that he had no object but that of restoring good government and tranquillity; and he warned the evil advisers of the perverse widow, that they would be held responsible for any resistance which might be offered to the measures deemed necessary for the maharajah's just authority, and for the security of his person and rights.*

- Lord Ellenborough had accompanied the troops, who were under the command of Sir Hugh Gough. These troops had moved from Agra early in December, and had crossed the Chumbul river on the 23rd of that month. At the same time another division, under Major-General Grey, advanced upon Gwalior from Bundelkund. On the 29th of December the main division crossed the Kohuree river. They found the Mahratta forces drawn up in

* Lord Ellenborough's proclamation, dated Camp Hingona, Dec. 25th, 1843.

front of the village of Maharajpoor, in a very strong position, which they had carefully intrenched. The British and native troops were about 14,000 strong, with forty pieces of artillery; the Mahrattas mustered 18,000 men, including 3,000 cavalry with 100 guns. The action commenced by the gallant advance of Major-General Littler's column upon the enemy in front. The Mahrattas received the shock without flinching, their guns doing severe execution as our attacking column advanced. But the British soldiers rushed on. Her majesty's 39th foot, well supported by the 56th native infantry, soon drove the enemy from their guns, bayoneting the gunners at their posts. The Mahrattas rallied in the village; and here the most sanguinary conflict ensued; the Gwalior troops, after discharging their matchlocks, fought sword in hand with the most determined courage. But General Valiant's brigade took Maharajpoor in reverse; twenty-eight guns were captured at once, and after they had fought with frantic desperation, the Mahrattas being beaten at all points, and having lost their guns, and from 3,000 to 4,000 men in killed and wounded, dispersed and fled. But the loss on our side was very severe: we had 106 killed, 684 wounded, and seven missing, seven officers were either killed on the field, or subsequently died of their wounds. Her majesty's 40th regiment lost two successive commanding officers, Major Stopford and Captain Coddington, who fell at the very muzzles of the Mahratta guns.*

On the same day another brilliant victory was obtained. On the 28th of December, when Major-General Grey and his column moved from Bundelkund, and reached Punniar, about twelve miles from Gwalior, they found that a separate force was in that vicinity to stop their progress upon the capital. On the morrow morning from 10,000 to 12,000 Mahrattas showed themselves in a formidable position on some heights near a fortified village. They were presently attacked, and driven from height to height by Major-General Grey's troops, who forgot the fatigues of their long march so soon as the fighting began.

The consequence of these two victories was the prompt submission of the durbar to Lord Ellenborough's demands, and the unopposed entrance of the British into the capital. Colonel Stubbs was appointed governor of the fort of

* Sir Hugh Gough's despatch.

Gwalior, which commands the city; the Mahratta troops were disbanded, and British troops—several regiments of infantry and two of cavalry—were to be maintained in the country at the cost of the Gwalior government. That government was also to pay forthwith the expenses of the campaign. On the 4th of January, 1844—so magically rapid were these operations—the governor-general, writing in the Gwalior residency, announced that this war was finished. He deeply lamented the severe loss in killed and wounded; but this loss had been sustained in a great and necessary service, and the victories of Maharajpore and Punniar, while they shed new glory upon the British army, had restored the authority of the young prince, and had given new security to the British empire in India. In the same proclamation Lord Ellenborough cordially congratulated the commander-in-chief, Sir Hugh Gough, upon his able combinations, by which two victories had been obtained on the same day, and the two wings of the army, proceeding from different points, had been united under the walls of Gwalior.

These stormy events were followed by a perfect calm. Peace, internal and external, was favourable to the finances of the country, which had, of course, suffered a severe drain ever since the commencement of the Afghan war. There was every prospect that the finances would soon improve.

Lord Ellenborough's popularity with the army was universal and immense; but he was regarded with very different feelings by many in the civil service, and particularly by that class of men whom General Nott designated as "busy politicals." Unfortunately, disagreements or misunderstandings arose between the governor-general and the Court of Directors at home, and that court, having by their charter the power so to do, recalled his lordship towards the end of April, 1844, without the consent and much against the wishes of her majesty's government. Lord Brougham observed in the House of Peers, that it was inconceivable how such an anomalous law should be allowed to continue in force; that it was incomprehensible how the Board of Control—part and parcel of the imperial government—should have the power of controlling every other act of the Court of Directors in their administration of Indian affairs, and yet that the most important of all acts—that upon which the safety of our Indian empire might depend—the con-

tinuance or the removal of the governor-general, should be left solely to the Court of Directors.

Yet, so stood the Company's charter, and the recall remained as legal and good. The displeasure of the duke of Wellington, the discontentment of many at home, and of the entire army in India, were moderated by the immediate appointment of the excellent Sir Henry Hardinge, the most fitting person to fill the high station so suddenly vacated.

At a farewell entertainment given to him by the military at Calcutta, Lord Ellenborough said, "The only regret I feel at leaving India is, that of being separated from the army. The most agreeable, the most interesting period of my life, has been that which I have passed here in cantonments and in camps."*

* For some interesting information and sound judgment on Lord Ellenborough's Indian Administration, see 'Recollections of Four Years' Service in the East with Her Majesty's 40th Regiment,' by Captain J. Bladen Neill.

CHAPTER XL.

LITTLE need be said of the previous services, military and political, or of the character of a personage so universally known and esteemed as Sir Henry Hardinge. Like Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Scinde, Sir Henry had fought heroically at Coruña and in many other memorable battles. He was at Sir John Moore's side when that brave but ill-fated officer received his death-wound: dismounting, he raised Moore from the ground, and tried in vain to stop the effusion of blood with his sash, and with tears in his eyes he helped his beloved general to the rear. He was as gentle-hearted as he was brave; he was a Christian hero. There was nowhere a better soldier nor a truer man. A candid political opponent had described his temper as warm but generous, kindling at the least imputation, but never "allowing the sun to go down upon his wrath." Other adversaries had represented him as "really a kindly and generous man, warm in friendship, placable and scrupulous in hostility; plain, sincere, straightforward, just, and considerate;" and they gave him credit for "understanding what he undertakes, and undertaking nothing but what he understands." The estimate made by his political and his personal friends of his noble character and eminent abilities was of course much higher. In parliament and in office he had obtained many boons, and various improved, liberal regulations for the British soldier; and he had justly earned the title of "The Soldier's Friend." In civil matters his reputation stood equally high: both in England and in Ireland he had proved himself an excellent man of business, an administrator, and a statesman.*

It was summer, but the tremendous heat of the Red

* 'Lord Hardinge's Administration.' An able article in the 'Calcutta Review,' written by a distinguished officer, who has been long in India, and is still serving in that country.

Sea, at that season, did not prevent Sir Henry from minutely inspecting the works in progress at Aden (where the Company had found it expedient to make a military settlement), and drawing up a memorandum in correction of the errors of the Bombay engineers, and in proof of the uselessness of the extravagant expenditure then going on upon the rock. Subsequently, in India, full information was called for, and the governor-general recorded, in another very able paper, that works to an extent sufficient for 1,200 men in peace, and 1,500 in war, with proportionate artillery, would make good the post against all probable comers. It is in similar adaptations of ways and means that the officers in every department of the government of India have found Lord Hardinge's strength to lie; his practical intellect sees and seizes at once upon the strong and weak points of a question; and, above all, a military fallacy stands no chance with him. The Aden papers have generally transpired, and are justly considered as among the very ablest that have emanated from Lord Hardinge's pen.*

Sir Henry reached Calcutta on the 23rd of July, 1844, and was received as he merited. He entered heart and soul into the pacific policy which had been strongly recommended to him by the Court of Directors; and into every means of advancing the prosperity, education, and enlightenment of the people of India. He attended the Hindū college and the Mahometan college in Calcutta; he distributed the prizes, he encouraged the pupils, and honoured the professors. His unaffected but stirring language convinced every one of the ardent sincerity of the speaker. Without falling into the somewhat common error of attempting to do too much at once and interfering too much, he paid all possible attention to the welfare of the natives, and to the improvement of their physical as well as moral condition. He considerably reduced the price of foreign salt, which was a government monopoly. This measure was regarded by many as a bold one, since it was expected to reduce the revenue to the extent of twelve lacs of rupees; and this, too, at a time of great pecuniary pressure, at the close of a five years' war, and the opening of a new administration. But the governor-general conceived that there was as much of wisdom as of mercy in all such reductions of

* Calcutta Review.

duties ; for that by them smuggling would be starved, and the revenue ultimately augmented.

He at once recommended the construction of railroads in different parts of India, and showed that the valuable products of nature were, in a great measure, deprived of a profitable market by the want of cheap and expeditious means of transport. He called the attention of the natives who were best educated to the exciting and wondrous facts of steam, and the magic power conferred on man by the discovery of the electro-magnetic telegraph.

He endeavoured as much as possible to put an end to the jealousy and rancour which had been so mischievously excited between the military in general and the civil servants of the Company. Well versed in military finance, the boons which he conferred, with the sanction of the Court of Directors, upon the European as well as the native portion of the army, were many and substantial. On his recommendation an increase to the establishment of European officers in the Company's army was sanctioned, and their eligibility for the honour of aide-de-camp to her majesty had been granted whilst he was secretary at war. To promote the comfort of the European soldier in quarters, he, as head of the government, was ever ready. In the field he ordered that the soldier should be relieved from the expense of transporting his baggage.

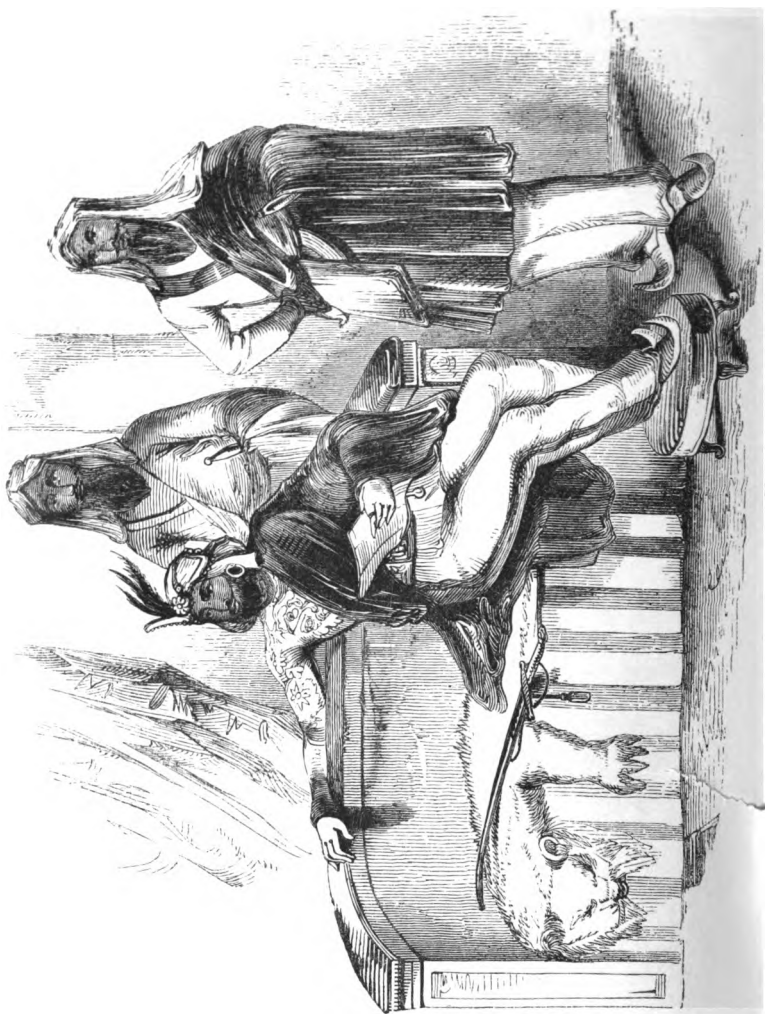
For the native soldier he granted an increase of pension for wounds; he also gave him an allowance to defray the expense of building his hut on the change of quarters. He facilitated the pleas of native soldiers in courts of justice, and placed the troops serving in Scinde and Arracan upon the same footing, and thereby removed the cause of much discontent, which had shown itself in regiments ordered to serve in Scinde.

Although he was ever anxious to do justice to the claims of the native army, he did not neglect its discipline. He re-imposed the power of inflicting corporal punishment, which power, although it had never been legally abolished, had, by an order of Lord William Bentinck, been in abeyance since 1835, though the European soldier was still subject to this punishment. This act, perhaps, required more courage than any other in Lord Hardinge's long and arduous public career. Other governors-general had acknowledged the inexpediency of Lord William Bentinck's order, but had

shrunk from the responsibility of revoking it; and, although all military men lamented the increase of insubordination, and advocated, with very few exceptions, the repeal of Lord William's order, the adjutant-general of Bengal was one of the few who were of opinion that the re-introduction of corporal punishment would not create a mutiny. It was under these circumstances that Sir H. Hardinge cancelled Lord William Bentinck's order. The returns of the armies of the three presidencies prove, that the punishment is now so rarely enforced, as to be almost a dead letter; while at the same time the discipline of the army is sustained, insubordination suppressed, and the number of soldiers sentenced to labour in irons, which had during the ten years that Lord William's order was in force, amounted to 10,000, is materially diminished.

Sir Henry Hardinge would have worn "peace" as his badge and motto; yet he had been only a few months in the country when he found that he could no more be at peace than Lord Ellenborough had been. The web which we have woven over Hindustan is so extensive, and reaches into so many angles and corners, that it is a work of the greatest difficulty to watch and protect every part of it; yet no part can be touched without making the whole tremble in the breeze. The chances of hostilities are thus multitudinous. The chairman of the Court of Directors, in the act of recommending the most pacific policy, had told the governor-general that our dependants and allies must be protected; that the native states which still retained independence must be covered by the shield of British protection; that the supremacy of our power must be maintained by force of arms. Sir Henry Hardinge was therefore under the solemn obligation of girding on the sword whenever it should become necessary. Shame, impeachment, utter ruin, would fall upon any governor-general of India who failed so to do. But, in the present case, the hostile attack was threatened and soon made, not upon an ally, a protected state, or an independent state, but upon the territory of the Company itself—not upon an angle or corner of the complicated, wide-spreading web, but upon its heart and centre.

Ever since the death of Runjeet Singh, the Lion of Lahore, the Sikhs, the country, and people, had been going through a succession of political convulsions and paroxysms.



The reign of order and law had altogether ceased, as at Gwalior. Crimes, assassinations, wholesale massacres, had been almost daily events in different parts of the Punjaub. These convulsions could not but affect all the neighbouring countries; and, however disorganized, the Sikhs were excessively powerful in the possession of a numerous, well-disciplined army, a tremendous artillery, excellent artillery-men, and skilful European officers.

The Lion of Lahore died on the 30th of June, 1839. His immediate successor was his eldest son, Khurruk Singh, who possessed none of his father's qualifications for rule. His first act was very unpopular; he removed the vizier or prime minister of his father, Dhyān Singh—a man of experience and moderation—and raised a favourite of his own to that high appointment. The dismissed vizier lost his habitual moderation; he entered the durbar, and slew the new prime minister before his master's eyes. The treasurer and some others shared the same fate. After these tragedies Khurruk Singh shut himself up among his women, rarely appearing in durbar. His intellect, never strong, became impaired, and the management of public affairs fell into the hands of his son Nounahal Singh, who had always shown an antipathy to the British. After the mere semblance of a reign which lasted little more than twelve months, Khurruk Singh was reported to have died of a broken heart. Nounahal Singh, the favourite of the Sikhs, and the darling grandson of the old lion, Runjeet Singh, would have been called to the musnud—for he resembled the Lion in features and disposition; he was popular with the army, being brave, and having been a soldier from his boyhood; and he was believed, also, to possess the qualities of caution, discretion, and forethought—but, whether by accident or design we know not, Nounahal Singh, on returning from his father's funeral, was killed by a stone falling on his head from one of the gateways of Lahore. Dhyān Singh called up to Lahore Sheer Singh, who had been treated as a prince of the blood, although he had never been acknowledged by Runjeet Singh as his real son. Sheer Singh was to succeed to the musnud; and he, too, was extremely popular with the army. But the mother of the late Nounahal Singh was determined to frustrate the intention of the formidable vizier. And this woman, being aided by some of the most powerful sirdars in the Punjaub, soon expelled Sheer Singh

from Lahore. Then Dhyān Singh, the ex-vizier, to whom she refused employment, set himself to overthrow her government, persuading the sirdars and soldiers that it was shameful to submit to the rule of a female, and that they must have a man of energy and talent to govern them, and keep together the conquests which the Lion of Lahore had made. Sheer Singh was presently recalled from his retirement. The ranee, or mother of Nounihal Singh, ordered the gates of Lahore to be shut; but the gatekeepers joined the standard of Sheer Singh; and General Ventura, one of the skilful Frenchmen who had disciplined the Punjaub army, acknowledged him as king. The widow was left helpless and nearly deserted; and in 1841, Sheer Singh was seated on the throne of Lahore. He intrusted the management of affairs to Dhyān Singh, Runjeet's favourite vizier; and he gave himself up solely to hunting and drinking, and other pleasures and debaucheries. He became a complete drunkard. The vizier was speedily dissatisfied with the prince he had elevated to the musnud. Intriguers and plotters stepped in between the prince and the minister. In a fit of drunkenness, Sheer Singh, the maharajah, put his signature to an order for the execution of Dhyān Singh, the grand vizier; and the vizier being duly warned of this proceeding, signed a death-warrant for the maharajah. The sober man was quicker than the drunken one: Sheer Singh was shot in the heart by an English rifle, and had only time to exclaim, "What have you done, villain?" His head was separated from his body, and joyfully exhibited to the revolutionists. Pertaub Singh, the son of the murdered maharajah, was despatched by another assassin while he was at his prayers. But the assassins could not agree with the vizier, Dhyān Singh, who had signed Sheer Singh's death-warrant, and so they shot him in the back, and he fell dead also. The report of the vizier's death quickly spread through the city of Lahore, and Misr Lal Singh, who afterwards made himself conspicuous in the war with the British, was despatched to bring into the fort Heera Singh, son of the murdered vizier. This young rajah knew that the death of Sheer Singh had been determined on, but he little suspected that his own father would so soon share the same fate. He had purposely absented himself from the palace that morning, and had gone to the house of General Avitabile, another of the European officers who had formed the Punjaub army and artil-

lery; and he was there found haranguing the troops, and telling them not to mind the death of the maharajah. Upon learning his father's death, Heera Singh ascended to the terrace or flat roof of Avitabile's house, and was for a short time very disconsolate, and very much terrified. He then despatched a message to the several sirdars who were in Lahore, requesting their immediate attendance. The chiefs soon arrived, when the young rajah unbuckled his sword, laid it before them, and bared his neck. "The sword," said he, "has this day deprived my father of life. I am left alone and fatherless, and I now throw myself upon your protection. Kill me, or give me your support!" This appeal had the desired effect. Heera Singh next addressed the common soldiers, promising every man of them an advance of three rupees a month if they would obey him. The soldiers received the proposition with loud cheers. In the mean time Ajeet Singh, whose followers had assassinated the maharajah, and who had, with his own hand, shot the vizier Dhyani Singh, had caused Dhuleep Singh to be proclaimed maharajah, and himself vizier, by beat of drum. But the son of the slain vizier put himself rapidly in motion; and both Ventura and Avitabile espoused his cause, and backed him with their well-served guns. During the night of this same bloody day, Heera Singh reached the Delhi gate of Lahore, followed by the sirdars and numerous troops. The gate, apparently, was blown open by the artillery, and then commenced a street fight in which heavy guns were used on both sides, and a great slaughter committed. But on the following morning victory declared for Heera Singh; Leena Singh, who had murdered at his prayers the son of the late maharajah, was mortally wounded; Ajeet Singh, who had shot the late vizier, being driven out of the fort, was attempting to escape over a wall by means of a rope, when he was clutched by a soldier. He took off his golden bracelets and threw them at the man, imploring him to spare his life; but the soldier cut off his head and hurried with it, as with the most acceptable of presents, to Heera Singh. The sight of the ghastly head of his father's murderer only quickened the rage of the young rajah. Every man that could not escape out of the fort and out of the city was butchered. The city was given up to plunder. The ranee's house was ransacked. The merchants in the city and the helpless shopkeepers fled, leaving everything to the infu-

riated Sikhs, who committed all kinds of outrages, cutting off the noses of the poor women in the streets. Horrible cruelties were perpetrated upon the connections and adherents of Ajeet Singh. Heera Singh set up no claim to the throne of Lahore; so soon as the fighting was over, he went and kissed the young Maharajah Dhuleep Singh's feet, in token of submission; but Heera Singh became vizier or prime minister, as his murdered father had been before him.* This settlement was effected in 1843, while the British were in the field against Gwalior. It is confidently asserted that the Sikhs at this period intended to invade the British territories, and were only warned therefrom by the signal overthrow of the Marhattas on the fields of Maharajpore and Punniar, whereby the British army serving in the Gwalior territory was set at liberty to resist aggression from the north-west. Heera Singh, as grand vizier, found very great difficulty in keeping the soldiers steady to his interests, for the treasury was exhausted, and the troops expected a continuance of the guerdons which he had promised in his extreme peril. To keep matters quiet, he murdered his own uncle, a powerful sirdar, and a favourite with the army. He was murdered himself shortly afterwards, together with his cunning Hindu pundit or tutor.

The young Maharajah Dhuleep Singh was not much above four years old. He was chosen because there was no other lineal descendant of the great Runjeet left alive, if we except the children of Sheer Singh, whose eldest son, Pertaub Singh, had been murdered on the same morning as his father. On the death of Heera Singh, the mother of the young maharajah appointed her brother Juwaheer Singh to the office of vizier. But the soldiers, not liking his rule, murdered Juwaheer before the eyes of the infant maharajah and his mother! Ghoolab Singh, the brother of Dhyan Singh, old Runjeet's ex-vizier, refused to take upon himself the perilous office of vizier, which now seemed sure to lead to a bloody grave, except upon conditions which were not acceded to. The country, therefore, remained without a vizier, without a government! The "Punches" of the army became, in reality, the masters and mis-rulers of the Punjab, and everything was decided by their passions, caprices, or sup-

* 'History of the Sikhs, containing an Account of the War between the Sikhs and the British in 1845-6,' by W. L. Macgregor, M.D., surgeon to the Hon. Company's 1st European light infantry.

posed personal interests. These "Punches" were not such pleasant humorists as our street drolls, or as the London Charivari Punch, or as the great Neapolitan Policinella, the prince, if not the father, of all Punches. They had no drollery in them; they were seldom seen to smile; and of late they had been as rarely seen without the red hand. They had been accustomed, under Runjeet Singh, to invasions and conquests, and to the profits derivable therefrom. They were elated by many years of success; they formed an immense force numerically; they possessed what seemed inexhaustible military stores; they knew themselves to be strong of arm and steady in battle; and they had confidence in the military skill and science of their French and Italian commanders. They wanted employment, and they fancied they could best seek it beyond the Sutledge, within the Company's territories. The maharajah was in the nursery; his mother and guardian was helpless; and even the more prudent and pacific of the sirdars were whirled along by the war torrent, for the will of the soldiery, the dictation of the Punches, was not to be resisted without the risk of being murdered. An army was therefore ordered to assemble by the very individual—the widowed mother of the maharajah—whose wishes were against the armament, and the sirdars were obliged to join it. The very cautious Ghoolab Singh, who had refused the post of vizier, and who was surrounded by a very strong and devoted party of his own, did, indeed, venture to demand the reason of the Sikhs breaking treaty with the British. He asked them what cause of offence the British had given them? To these questions no satisfactory reply could be given. Ghoolab Singh anticipated that the Sikhs must fail in their daring invasions, and retired from Lahore; but instead of openly opposing their views, which would have drawn an attack upon himself, he promised his support, agreed to send up supplies to Lahore, and even promised to join the Khalsa troops. Even could Ghoolab Singh have believed that the Sikhs would be successful, it was evidently his interest to await the result of the struggle, knowing well, as he did, that, whatever result might follow, his position would be a safe one. "If, as he really thought, the Sikh army would be destroyed by their powerful opponent, then he could safely step in as a mediator between the British and the Sikhs, and while obtaining the credit of restoring peace, he

would insure independence for himself. The rajah had a difficult part to play, and the repeated demands of the Sikh army that he would join it, obliged him to leave Jummoo, and proceed to Lahore; but he had determined to keep clear of the struggle until the onset should show how he was to act.

"Had Ghoolab Singh succeeded Juwaheer Singh as prime minister, he would have used his best endeavours to prevent a collision between the Sikhs and the British; but he did not forget that a brother and nephew who had held that responsible post had both fallen victims to the sword, and a similar fate might befall him. From every consideration, therefore, the rajah believed that a rupture with the British would most effectually accomplish his ambitious views; and he was resolved to act with great caution, and avoid mixing himself up in the quarrel. Even when he reached Lahore, after the war had begun, and he was requested by the ranee and the Panches of the army to join the latter, he availed himself of the excuse of wishing to act independently at the head of his own troops in any work she might assign to him."*

All that was passing at Lahore could not be unknown to Sir Henry Hardinge; but as his predecessor had been censured for precipitancy, the present governor-general was determined not to bring out his array until the last moment, or until the moment when there could be no possible mistake as to the intentions of the lawless soldiery, whose will was the only law in the country beyond the Sutledge.

He, however, was by no means satisfied with the state of preparation, to meet and repel an invasion from the Sikhs, which he found on his arrival in India; and before he had been three months in the country he had several large corps marching from the farthest confines of the Bengal presidency towards the north-west frontier, but so quietly was every post reinforced that even in our provinces the operations passed unnoticed; and when the war did break out, the governor-general was censured by the uninformed for being unprepared.

The following table of the force on the frontier, as Sir H. Hardinge found it on his arrival in India, in July, 1844,

* Dr. Macgregor's 'History of the Sikhs.'

and when the war broke out in December, 1845, is a complete refutation of the charge of want of preparation :—

		Men.	Guns.
At Ferozpoor	{ July, 1844,	4,596	— 12
	{ December, 1845,	10,472	— 24
At Loodiana	{ July, 1844,	3,030	— 12
	{ December, 1845,	7,235	— 12
At Umballa	{ July, 1844,	4,113	— 24
	{ December, 1845,	12,972	— 32

The force at the hill stations was the same at both periods, 1,800 men. Thus, in the first line from Umballa to the Sutledge, about 150 miles, there were, when Sir H. Hardinge landed in India, only 13,539 men and 48 guns. When the war broke out, there were 32,479 men and 68 guns. Increase, 18,940 men and 20 guns! The force at Meerut had also been augmented from 5,873 men and 18 guns, to 9,844 men and 26 guns; which force, being 250 miles to the rear, was not considered available to repel invasion, but as a support to that in advance of Umballa. The force in the first line also comprised seven regiments of European infantry out of the eleven at that time serving within the Bengal presidency. The battle of Ferozshuhr took place eight days after the Sikhs crossed the Sutledge; and if, out of the 32,479 at, and north of Umballa, in December, 1845, 17,727 rank and file only could be brought into action after a junction with the Loodiana and Ferozpoor forces, what sort of an army could have been brought into the field had Sir H. Hardinge left the force on the frontier as he found it, consisting as it did of 13,538 men?

On the 2nd of December, 1845, Sir Henry arrived at Umballa. From this point we may take up his own words, as contained in a despatch to the Secret Committee at the India-House :—

“ I had moved with my camp on the 6th of December from Umballa towards Loodiana, peaceably making my progress by the route I had announced, with the intention of visiting the Sikh protected states, according to the usual custom of my predecessors. In common with the most experienced officers of the Indian government, I was not of opinion that the Sikh army would cross the Sutledge with its infantry and artillery. I considered it probable that some act of aggression would be committed by parties of plunderers, for the purpose of compelling the British government

to interfere, to which course the Sikh chiefs knew I was most averse; but I concurred with the commander-in-chief, and the chief secretary to the government, as well as my political agent, Major Broadfoot, that offensive operations, on a large scale, would not be resorted to. Exclusive of the political reasons which induced me to carry my forbearance as far as it was possible, I was confident, from the opinions given by the commander-in-chief and Major-General Sir John Littler, in command of the forces at Ferozpoor, that that post would resist any attack from the Sikh army as long as its provisions lasted; and that I could at any time relieve it, under the ordinary circumstances of an Asiatic army making an irruption into our territories, provided it had not the means of laying siege to the fort and the entrenched camp. Up to this period no act of aggression had been committed by the Sikh army. The Lahore government had as good a right to reinforce their bank of the river Sutledge, as we had to reinforce our posts on that river. The Sikh army had, in 1843 and 1844, moved down upon the river from Lahore, and after remaining there encamped a few weeks, had returned to the capital. These reasons, and, above all, my extreme anxiety to avoid hostilities, induced me not to make any hasty movement with our army, which, when the two armies came into each other's presence, might bring about a collision. The army had, however, been ordered to be in readiness to move at the shortest notice; and on the 7th and 8th of December, when I heard from Lahore that preparations were making on a large scale for artillery, stores, and all the munitions of war, I wrote to the commander-in-chief, directing his excellency, on the 11th to move up the force from Umballa, from Meerut, and some other stations in the rear. Up to this time no infantry or artillery had been reported to have left Lahore, nor had a single Sikh soldier crossed the Sutledge. Nevertheless, I considered it prudent no longer to delay the forward movement of our troops, having given to the Lahore government the most ample time for a reply to our remonstrance. On the 9th, at night, Captain Nicholson, the assistant political agent at Ferozpoor, reported that a portion of the Sikh army had approached within three miles of the river. On the other hand, the information received by Major Broadfoot on that day from Lahore, was not of a character to make it probable that any Sikh movement on

a large scale was meditated. On the 10th no intelligence was received from Lahore confirmatory of Captain Nicholson's report, and the usual opinion continued to prevail that the Sikh army would not cross the Sutledge. The troops, however, moved on the 10th, 11th, and 12th, in pursuance of the orders given on the 7th and 8th; and the whole of the forces destined to move up to the Sutledge were in full march on the 12th. I did not consider the force moving up from Umballa to be sufficient to force its way to relieve Ferozpoor, if a large Sikh army, with a numerous and well-served park of artillery, should attempt to intercept it in its approach to Ferozpoor, as, in such case, it could with difficulty receive any aid from that garrison. Being some days' march in advance of the commander-in-chief, I rode over to Loodiana; and having inspected the fort, the cantonments, and the troops, it appeared to me most advisable that the whole of this force should be moved up with the Umballa force, restricting the defence of Loodiana to the fort, which could be securely garrisoned by the more infirm soldiers of the regiments at that post, unless attacked by heavy artillery, which was a very improbable contingency. The risk to be incurred of leaving the town and the cantonments liable to be plundered was maturely considered, and I had no hesitation in incurring that risk to insure the strength and sufficiency of the force which might separately be brought into action with the whole of the Sikh army. I therefore ordered Brigadier Wheeler to be prepared to march at the shortest notice. The Umballa force, in march, was 7,500 men and thirty-six guns; the Loodiana force amounted to 5,000 men and twelve guns.

"The commander-in-chief concurred in these views; and this fine body of men, by a rapid march on Busseean, an important point, where the roads leading from Umballa and Kurnaul meet, formed the advanced column of the army, and secured the supplies which had been laid in at Busseean. Up to the morning of the 12th, the information from Lahore had not materially varied; but by the reports received on that day, the general aspect of affairs appeared more warlike. Still no Sikh aggression had been committed, and no artillery had moved down to the river.

"On the 13th, I first received precise information that the Sikh army had crossed the Sutledge, and was concentrating in great force on the left bank of the river."

On that same day, the 13th, Sir Henry issued the following proclamation :—

“The British government has ever been on terms of friendship with that of the Punjaub.

“In the year 1809, a treaty of amity and concord was concluded between the British government and the late Maharajah Runjeet Singh, the conditions of which have always been faithfully observed by the British government, and were scrupulously fulfilled by the late maharajah.

“The same friendly relations have been maintained with the successors of Maharajah Runjeet Singh by the British government up to the present time.

“Since the death of the late Maharajah Sheer Singh, the disorganized state of the Lahore government has made it incumbent on the governor-general in council to adopt precautionary measures for the protection of the British frontier; the nature of these measures, and the cause of their adoption, were at the time fully explained to the Lahore durbar.

“Notwithstanding the disorganized state of the Lahore government during the last two years, and many most unfriendly proceedings on the part of the durbar, the governor-general in council has continued to evince his desire to maintain the relations of amity and concord which had so long existed between the two states, for the mutual interests and happiness of both. He has shown on every occasion the utmost forbearance, from consideration to the helpless state of the infant Maharajah Dhuleep Singh, whom the British government had recognized as the successor to the late Maharajah Sheer Singh.

“The governor-general in council sincerely desired to see a strong Sikh government re-established in the Punjaub, able to control its army and to protect its subjects. He had not, up to the present moment, abandoned the hope of seeing that important object effected by the patriotic efforts of the Sikhs and people of that country.

“The Sikh army recently marched from Lahore towards the British frontier, as it was alleged by the orders of the durbar, for the purpose of invading the British territory.

“The governor-general's agent, by the direction of the governor-general, demanded an explanation of this movement, and no reply being returned within a reasonable time, the demand was repeated. The governor-general, unwilling

to believe in the hostile intentions of the Sikh government, to which no provocation had been given, refrained from taking any measures which might have a tendency to embarrass the government of the maharajah, or to induce collision between the two states.

“When no reply was given to the repeated demand for explanation, and while active military preparations were continued at Lahore, the governor-general considered it necessary to order the advance of troops towards the frontier, to reinforce the frontier posts.

“The Sikh army has now, without a shadow of provocation, invaded the British territories.

“The governor-general must therefore take measures for effectually protecting the British provinces, for vindicating the authority of the British government, and for punishing the violators of treaties and the disturbers of public peace.

“The governor-general hereby declares the possessions of Maharajah Dhuleep Singh, on the left, or British banks of the Sutledge, confiscated and annexed to the British territories.

“The governor-general will respect the existing rights of all jagheerdars, zemindars, and tenants in the said possessions, who, by the course they now pursue, evince their fidelity to the British government.

“The governor-general hereby calls upon all the chiefs and sirdars in the protected territories to co-operate cordially with the British government for the punishment of the common enemy, and for the maintenance of order in these states. Those of the chiefs who show alacrity and fidelity in the discharge of this duty, which they owe to the protecting power, will find their interests promoted thereby; and those who take a contrary course will be treated as enemies to the British government, and will be punished accordingly.

“The inhabitants of all the territories on the left bank of the Sutledge are hereby directed to abide peaceably in their respective villages, where they will receive efficient protection by the British government. All parties of men found in armed bands, who can give no satisfactory account of their proceedings, will be treated as disturbers of the public peace.

“All subjects of the British government, and those who possess estates on both sides of the river Sutledge, who, by their faithful adherence to the British government may be

liable to sustain loss, shall be indemnified and secured in all their just rights and privileges.

"On the other hand, all subjects of the British government who shall continue in the service of the Lahore state, and who disobey this proclamation by not immediately returning to their allegiance, will be liable to have their property on this side of the Sutledge confiscated, and declared to be aliens and enemies of the British government."

The distance between the head-quarters of the British army at Umballa and Ferozpoor, was three times as great as that between Ferozpoor and Lahore, the former being 150 miles, the latter only fifty miles. Sir Henry Hardinge in the despatch already quoted, has explained his reasons for not ordering the Umballa force to take the field, sooner than it did; he, however, had ordered, so early as the 20th November, that the force should be held in readiness to move, and it actually did march on the 11th of December, before the Sikh army had commenced crossing the Sutledge, which it did about six or seven miles from Ferozpoor on the 12th December, but the passage of the artillery was not completed till the 16th December. As the art of war consists in concentrating the greatest number of men at the right place at the right time, the crisis when the Sikhs did cross, demanded the utmost exertion on the part of the governor-general and commander-in-chief; and the celerity with which the troops moved towards Ferozpoor, was most admirable.

The governor-general, as stated in his despatch, being between Umballa and Loodiana, on the 13th of December, when the news arrived of the Sikhs having crossed, he ordered Brigadier Wheeler to march with 4,500 men, and twenty-one guns, early on the 14th from Loodiana to Busseean, which place had been filled with provisions, by arrangements made through Major Broadfoot with the native chiefs, and upon which provisions the British army depended in its advance to Ferozpoor. By the afternoon of the 14th, Brigadier Wheeler was in front of Busseean. The main column under the commander-in-chief from Umballa, did not reach Busseean until the 16th. Had it not been for the force under Brigadier Wheeler, the cavalry of the Sikhs having crossed on the 12th, they might have marched the 13th and 14th, and have reached Busseean the evening of the 14th. Had the provisions in Busseean been destroyed, the

advance of the main column on Ferozpoor would have been delayed at least a week or ten days, during which time the 10,472 men at Ferozpoor would have to withstand the whole of the Sikh army, and the safety of that post might have been compromised; as it was, the Sikhs had not completed the passage of their heavy guns until the 16th, and by the 17th the advance of the force under the commander-in-chief began to tell upon them, for on the 17th the main body, consisting according to the Sikh accounts of 25,000 regulars and eighty-eight guns, under Lal Singh, took possession of the wells around the village of Ferozshuhr, whilst Tej Singh with 23,000 men and sixty-seven guns remained opposite to Ferozpoor.

The only road by which an army can march from Busseean to Ferozpoor (on account of the scarcity of water) passes through Moodkee, and is about twenty miles, Ferozshuhr being mid-way.

The Sikhs commenced on the 17th December to throw up intrenchments around the wells at Ferozshuhr, in order to stop the advance of the column under the commander-in-chief, knowing that the commander-in-chief must carry these works before he could relieve Ferozpoor.

By one o'clock on the 18th, the governor-general and commander-in-chief reached Moodkee, from which village a few Sikh cavalry retired, as the British column advanced; the troops had just taken up their encamping-ground, and were commencing to cook, after a fatiguing march of twenty-two miles, when news was brought by one of the scouts, to Major Broadfoot, the political agent, that the enemy was only three miles distant. The Sikh account is, that not knowing the strength of the column under the commander-in-chief, and thinking it was only the advance-guard of the British army, 12,000 of them, chiefly cavalry, and twenty-two guns, under the command of Lal Singh, left the camp at Ferozshuhr early on the 18th, and had taken up their position before the arrival of the British army at Moodkee. This must have been the case, for when the British troops halted at Moodkee, there was no indication of any large body of men moving in the neighbourhood, and a force of 12,000 men, especially cavalry, could not move in that country without raising a column of dust, which would be seen at the distance of miles.

The alarm being sounded, the British troops hastily got

under arms and moved to their positions; Sir Hugh Gough says:—"I immediately pushed forward the horse-artillery and cavalry, directing the infantry, accompanied by the field batteries, to move forward in support. We had not proceeded beyond two miles when we found the enemy in position.

"To resist their attack, and to cover the formation of the infantry, I advanced the cavalry, under Brigadiers White, Gough, and Mactier, rapidly to the front, in columns of squadrons, and occupied the plain. They were speedily followed by the five troops of horse-artillery under Brigadier Brooke, who took up a forward position, having the cavalry then on his flanks.

"The country is a dead flat, covered at short intervals with a low, but in some places thick jhow jungle, and dotted with sandy hillocks. The enemy screened their infantry and artillery behind this jungle and such undulations as the ground afforded; and, whilst our twelve battalions formed from echelon of brigade into line, opened a very severe cannonade upon our advancing troops, which was vigorously replied to by the battery of horse-artillery under Brigadier Brooke, which was soon joined by the two light field batteries. The rapid and well-directed fire of our artillery appeared soon to paralyze that of the enemy; and, as it was necessary to complete our infantry dispositions without advancing the artillery too near to the jungle, I directed the cavalry under Brigadiers White and Gough to make a flank movement on the enemy's left, with a view of threatening and turning that flank, if possible. With praiseworthy gallantry, the 3rd light dragoons, with the second brigade of cavalry, consisting of the body-guard and 5th light cavalry, with a portion of the 4th lancers, turned the left of the Sikh army, and, sweeping along the whole rear of its infantry and guns, silenced for a time the latter, and put their numerous cavalry to flight. Whilst this movement was taking place on the enemy's left, I directed the remainder of the 4th lancers, the 9th irregular cavalry under Brigadier Mactier, with a light field battery, to threaten their right.

"This manœuvre was also successful. Had not the infantry and guns of the enemy been screened by the jungle, these brilliant charges of the cavalry would have been productive of greater effect.

"When the infantry advanced to the attack, Brigadier Brooke rapidly pushed on his horse-artillery close to the jungle, and the cannonade was resumed on both sides. The infantry, under Major-Generals Sir Harry Smith, Gilbert, and Sir John M'Caskill, attacked in echelon of lines the enemy's infantry, almost invisible amongst wood and the approaching darkness of night. The opposition of the enemy was such as might have been expected from troops who had everything at stake, and who had long vaunted of being irresistible. Their ample and extended line, from their great superiority of numbers, far outflanked ours; but this was counteracted by the flank movements of our cavalry. The attack of the infantry now commenced, and the roll of fire from this powerful arm soon convinced the Sikh army that they had met with a foe they little expected; and their whole force was driven from position after position with great slaughter, and the loss of seventeen pieces of artillery, some of them of heavy calibre; our infantry using that never-failing weapon, the bayonet, whenever the enemy stood. Night only saved them from worse disaster, for this stout conflict was maintained during an hour and a half of dim starlight, amidst a cloud of dust from the sandy plain, which yet more obscured every object."

The British force engaged consisted of 3,850 Europeans and 8,500 natives, making a total of 12,350 rank and file, and forty-two guns. Sixteen officers were killed and 200 men. Forty-eight officers wounded and 609 men, of whom 153 died subsequently of their wounds, or were disabled. Amongst those who fell was the hero of Jellalabad, Sir Robert Sale; he had his left thigh shattered by grape-shot, and the wound proved mortal. Had there been more daylight, the rout of the enemy would have been more complete; as it was, seventeen of their guns out of twenty were captured, and their loss in killed and wounded was very severe. Lal Singh, the commander, was among the wounded, and narrowly escaped being taken prisoner.

The Sikhs fled rapidly to their camp at Ferozshuhr, and the British troops returned to theirs at Moodkee about midnight.

On the 19th of December, two heavy guns reached Moodkee, escorted by her majesty's 29th, the 1st European light infantry, and two regiments of native infantry.*

* The 11th and 41st.

Every possible care had been taken of these troops in their rapid advance by the governor-general and commander-in-chief. Elephants were despatched to Churruk, seven-and-twenty miles from Moodkee, to carry those who might be unable to walk. When near Moodkee, and almost overcome by fatigue and the terrible desert thirst, water was distributed to them, which had been brought out on elephants from head-quarters. Being thus refreshed, the men marched vigorously into Moodkee, where the governor-general's band welcomed them with a joyous burst of music. This reinforcement did not reach camp till nine or ten o'clock at night, and it was determined, in order to give them rest, that the army should halt on the 20th. During this halt of two days the wounded and sick were cared for, and secured in the mud fort at Moodkee. It was now that Sir H. Hardinge magnanimously offered his services to Sir Hugh Gough. He was appointed second in command of the army, and all officers were directed to obey any orders emanating from him, which they were not bound to do so long as he (although the head of the government) exercised only a civil authority.

Expresses were sent to Sir John Littler at Ferozpoor, apprising him of the victory at Moodkee, and directing him on the 21st to march with as large a force as he could, and effect a junction with the army under the commander-in-chief. Arrangements were also made for leaving the wounded and the baggage at Moodkee when the army marched, a regiment and a half being told off to protect them. This decision was a wise one. Had the British army on the night of the 21st been embarrassed with a column of baggage, great would have been the suffering of the wounded, and great would have been the plunder, by our own camp-followers, of the baggage. Whereas the fort at Moodkee, defended by a regiment and a half, was safe for a time against the enemy's cavalry and loose plunderers, which alone could penetrate the rear of our army. Early on the morning of the 21st Sir John Littler, leaving 5,000 men to hold his position and watch Tej Singh, moved off quietly by his right, with 5,500 men and twenty-one guns, to join the commander-in-chief. The force from Moodkee marched at three o'clock in the morning in two open columns of companies, left in front; the army had therefore only to wheel into line to be in position. The

march for the head-quarter column was a distressing one, on account of the heat and dust and the scarcity of water, but was of no great length, certainly not more than twelve miles; and the columns arrived opposite the Sikh camp at half-past eleven, A.M. The junction with the force from Ferozpoor was effected at a few minutes before one near the village of Misriwala. Skirmishers were then thrown forward, and some considerable time elapsed before the attack was made.

The whole country is a dead flat, and studded with trees and jungle, except in the immediate neighbourhood of the villages. What with dust and trees the movements of troops became very difficult to direct.

The British force now concentrated comprised 5,674 Europeans and 12,053 natives, making a total of 17,727 rank and file, and sixty-five guns. According to the Sikhs' account, their force at Ferozshuhr consisted of 25,000 regular troops and eighty-eight guns, exclusive of the Jazedarees and irregular soldiers, making their force in camp upwards of 35,000. Besides this force Tej Singh, with 23,000 regulars and sixty-seven guns, was only ten miles distant. Had it been possible for the commander-in-chief to have delayed the attack on the Sikh camp till the next day, which it was not, on account of the want of water, it would not have been expedient to have done so; the British force would not have been augmented by one man, whilst Tej Singh, who was opposite Ferozpoor, only ten miles distant, would have been able to bring 23,000 additional regular troops and sixty-seven guns to the assistance of the enemy.

The Sikh intrenchment was in the form of a parallelogram, of about a mile in length, and half a mile in breadth, including within its area the strong village of Ferozshuhr, the shorter sides looking towards the Sutledge and Moodkee, and the long one towards Ferozpoor and the open country.* But the Sikhs were fully prepared to place their guns in position on whatever side the attack should be made. They were thoroughly acquainted with the country; and knowing by what roads their enemy could advance, they readily prepared for their reception. Thus it mattered not much whether our approach was made on the

* The Commander-in-Chief's Despatch.

longer or shorter side, though the preparations on the side fronting Ferozpoor showed that it was considered by the Sikhs as the proper front of their position.

"The ground in front, like that at Moodkee, was jungle; the three divisions of the British, under the command of Major-General Gilbert, Sir John Littler, and Brigadier Wallace, were placed in line, with the whole of their artillery in their centre, except three troops of horse-artillery, one on either flank, and one in support. The reserve was under Sir Harry Smith, and with the cavalry formed the second line."* The artillery were ordered to the front, and after a reasonable time had been allowed for the mortar practice, which it was speedily seen would never silence Lal Singh's guns, our artillery opened their fire to ascertain the position of the batteries, and the Sikhs then responded. Our artillery then made a nearer advance, protected by the whole of our infantry. When several hundred yards nearer, our guns were unlimbered, and several rounds of shot fired; this was repeated until they approached within three hundred yards of the batteries. Then, seeing that these Sikh guns could not be silenced, the infantry advanced amidst a murderous shower of shot and grape, and captured them with matchless gallantry.†

In the advance, General Littler's division, marching direct on the village, edged away to the left, and caused an opening in the line between its right and Brigadier Wallace's division. Littler's division, led with the greatest valour by its general, when close up to the enemy's batteries, which fired volleys of grape, was compelled to retire; the left brigade of the reserve, under Sir Harry Smith, was ordered forward to fill up the opening, and advanced on the village with great energy. Wallace's and Gilbert's divisions forming the right and centre, were completely successful, but when all the batteries of the Sikhs seemed to be within our grasp, the night set in (and there is no twilight in India), the dry forage in the camp was on fire, the loose powder exploded in all directions, and it was impossible under these circumstances to retain the occupation of the enemy's batteries, which had been so gallantly won. All military order and discipline must have been lost, and the troops were directed to form about 150 yards from the enemy's

* The Commander-in-Chief's Despatch.

† Ibid.

camp, lying down in contiguous columns at quarter-distance. Sir Harry Smith's division pushed on to the village and maintained itself there till about 10 o'clock at night, when, not knowing the position of the troops on his right, he retired. Sir John Littler's division having advanced against the strongest part of the work, suffered severely, especially her majesty's 62nd regiment, having seventeen officers killed and wounded, out of twenty-three. Having done everything that men could do, they were obliged to retire.

Just before dark, the gallant 3rd dragoons, who were on the extreme right, were ordered to charge; never for a moment considering the propriety of such an order, which was given by a staff-officer, now no more, they dashed headlong into the Sikh camp, carrying terror into the Sikh ranks, but at the same time losing ten officers and 120 valuable men out of about 400.

About twelve o'clock at night, the Sikhs, finding that Sir Harry Smith had been forced to retire from the village, and that their batteries were not occupied, brought some guns to bear upon our column, the fire from which was very destructive. The governor-general mounted his horse and called to the 80th regiment, which was at the head of the column, "My lads, we shall have no sleep until we take those guns." The regiment deployed immediately, advanced, supported by the 1st Bengal Europeans, and drove a large body of Sikhs from three guns, which they spiked. The regiment then retired and took up its position again at the head of the column as steadily as if on a parade, much to the admiration of the governor-general and commander-in-chief, the former of whom exclaimed, as they passed him, "Plucky dogs, plucky dogs,—we cannot fail to win with such men as these." For the rest of the night our column was left comparatively unmolested, but it cannot be denied, that its position was one of danger—great danger. Darkness had covered our ranks while the scarcely thinned foe, driven from his foremost intrenchments, had still a formidable artillery remaining intact; and where were our battalions? Both Sir John Littler and Sir Harry Smith had been compelled to retire, and in the darkness the direction was not known to the governor-general or commander-in-chief. They were left, with not more than 8,000 men, within 150 yards of an enemy's camp, whose strength they had no means of ascertaining. It could not be known whether

Tej Singh, had during the action or during the night, marched up to reinforce Lal Singh. The noisy tramping of men, the fire of musketry and artillery, was continued by the Sikhs during the night, and in the morning the expectation most probable was, that the British army would have to encounter the whole concentrated force of the enemy.

In this state of things, the commander-in-chief and the governor-general determined to hold their ground, to wait patiently till the morning dawned, then to attack the enemy's batteries, if they still held them, by taking them in reverse, to make one united effort by a simultaneous attack, to beat them, or to die honourably in the field. The gallant commander-in-chief, kind-hearted, heroically brave, quite agreed with the governor-general. If ever confidence was inspired to troops by the conduct of their leaders, it was by Sir Henry Hardinge and Sir Hugh Gough on that occasion. They knew that the struggle would be severe, but cheered all around them with the certainty of success. The whole of Sir Henry Hardinge's personal staff having been put *hors de combat*, except his son Captain A. Hardinge, who, however, had had his horse killed under him, Captain West of the commander-in-chief's staff officiated as his aide-de-camp.

By daylight the British troops had deployed into line, and all arrangements for renewing the attack being made, the commander-in-chief put himself in front of the right of the line; Sir Henry Hardinge did the same on the left, and keeping thirty yards in front of the line to prevent the troops from firing, they advanced against the Sikh batteries; the troops being told not to fire, or they would kill the governor-general.

The commander-in-chief also led the right in front of his men, and the line advanced at a steady pace scarcely firing a shot. The opposition was slight, most of the guns being taken in reverse, and wheeling round past the village of Ferozshuhr, the British line swept down the whole left and rear of the enemy's position, halting when they had cleared the works at the opposite extremity. The two chiefs now rode down the line, and the regimental colours dropped, and saluted the governor-general, and the men cheered as they passed. The two chiefs must at that moment have felt a proud satisfaction and some recompense for the previous hours of anxiety, but these feelings were of short duration, for we had scarcely secured the enemy's guns,

seventy-four in number, before Tej Singh appeared in view, showing the policy of making the attack at the earliest moment that returning light enabled the commander-in-chief to do so.

Littler's and Smith's divisions had now rejoined the commander-in-chief and the enemy was daunted by his defeat,—the beaten force retiring on their countrymen coming up, brought dismay into their ranks. Within a mile and a half of their captured camp they halted, fired several hundred rounds from their zumbooruks, or camel-swivels, and after several demonstrations and a distant cannonade, withdrew about three o'clock.

The first roll of the tide of invasion had now been resisted, and the beaten enemy scarcely halted until he had placed the Sutledge between him and his victorious opponent.

The commander-in-chief was too weak in cavalry to follow up the enemy, having had at the commencement of the action only 2,600, and some by this time had gone into Ferozpoor, and those who remained on the field having been nearly forty-eight hours without food or water, were completely exhausted.

The artillery also had consumed a very large proportion of their round shot, in the attack of the enemy, under these circumstances men and horses being completely worn out, it was most judicious to be satisfied with the great victory gained, and forcing Tej Singh to retire on the Sutledge. Such hard-contested fields cannot be gained without loss; ours amongst the Europeans was severe, having 488 killed, and 1,103 wounded. The total loss was 694 killed and 1,721 wounded, of whom 595 died subsequently, or were disabled. Every exertion was now made to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded, and by noon on the 23rd, they were all in quarters at Ferozpoor, and quilts and cots were furnished in abundance. In fact, it was almost incredible how the commissariat and executive departments could supply so much comfort in such a short space of time. The wounded owe much to the unwearied efforts of Captain W. B. Thomson and Lieutenant Goodwyn (who responded to every call), for their comparatively snug condition on the 23rd and 24th, and it was a gratifying sight to the governor-general, when he visited them, to find so much comfort where he anticipated so little. He generously gave strict orders, that everything required should be supplied, and without the usual formality of an indent.

Sir Henry Hardinge visited all the wounded men and officers, and had a cheerful word for all. If a poor man had lost an arm, the governor-general consoled him by pointing to his own empty sleeve, and assuring him he would soon be all right. If a soldier had had a leg shot away or shattered, he reminded him that one of his sons, who was with him, and who went into battle at his side, had long had only one foot. The men were delighted at the urbanity and kindness shown towards them by the governor of India, and for a time forgot their own sufferings in the admiration which his kindness elicited.* Sir Henry visited the poor sufferers again and again, and watched over their welfare with a solicitude that could not have been surpassed if they had been his own children. During the terrible night he had spent in the Sikh camp, he had shared the privations of the soldiers, and had suffered pangs unknown to them, for the fate of his whole army, the fate perhaps of all India, was hanging on a thread. The commander-in-chief, Sir Hugh Gough, whose arduous military duties did not allow him to visit the wounded until some days later, did everything in his power to cheer the men, praising their undaunted bravery in one of the hardest battles ever fought in India. He spoke to all and listened to all, and did his utmost to gratify their every wish.

Major Somerset, military secretary to the governor-general, on the morning of the 22nd, was borne to the rear mortally wounded, "while conducting himself with the hereditary courage of his race."† Major Broadfoot, political agent, also fell; "he was brave as he was able in every branch of the political and military service."‡ Major Broadfoot was the last of three brave brothers, who held appointments in the Company's army and fell in battle. Captain P. Nicholson, assistant political agent from Ferozpoor, was also killed in the action of the 21st. With the exception of Captain Mills, who took the command of a troop of horse-artillery, all the political agents were either killed or wounded in this fierce struggle. Among the other truly distinguished officers who perished were Colonel Wallace, Captain Thomas Box, "a soldier every inch of him," Captain D'Arcy Todd, Major Baldwin, a peninsular officer, and Lieutenants Pollard and Bernard. Pollard had been wounded at Moodkee; but no persuasion could prevent his

* Dr. Macgregor's 'History of the Sikhs,' &c.

† Sir Henry Hardinge's Despatch.

‡ Ibid.

again joining his gallant regiment, her majesty's 31st. Among those who shared the dangers of this battle were Prince Waldemar of Prussia, and his staff, Counts Grueben and Oriolo, and Dr. Hoffmeister; the last officer was unfortunately killed by a grape-shot. Prince Waldemar left the field on the morning of the 22nd, at the request of the governor-general, who was unwilling that a foreign prince should be further subjected to the risk of losing his life. The issue of the battle was not then decided; but fortunately the prince returned to Ferozepoor, and had the satisfaction of knowing, that though the British had a fierce foe to contend with, victory had decided for them.*

Fine phrases would be thrown away upon conduct and heroism such as were displayed at Ferozepoor. The plain professional despatches of Sir Henry Hardinge and Sir Hugh Gough form the best eulogium. All behaved nobly. Unfortunately, in the hurry of the moment, Sir John Littler, in his despatch, used the words "panic-struck" as applicable to her majesty's 62nd regiment, and attributed some irresolution on the part of the native regiments in his division to the example of the 62nd. The charges were groundless. Before the 62nd fell back, it had seven officers killed and ten wounded, seventy-six rank and file killed and 154 wounded. The regiment was numerically weak; its loss was greater than that of any other European regiment present. Both the governor-general and commander-in-chief did all they could to remove the injurious impression; and at home, in the House of Lords, the duke of Wellington stood manfully forward to vindicate the fame of the heroic band, and apply balm to their wounded pride.

Great pains were taken by the Sikh army to conceal from the durbar the extent of their discomfiture; but much anxiety and irresolution were believed to prevail at Lahore.† They believed that our army would follow up its advantages by crossing the river immediately and marching on the capital; but this was a movement not to be thought of without a powerful battering train, more European troops, and especially more cavalry. It was now wisely resolved to wait for the battering train, moving upwards with the 16th lancers, the 9th lancers, and her majesty's 10th and 53rd regiments of foot, which, with the 43rd and 59th regiments

* Dr. Macgregor.

† Note from the Governor-General to the Secret Committee of the East-India Company, dated January 1, 1846.

of native infantry, had composed the Meerut force under Sir John Grey.

Upon this seeming indecision of the British, the Sikhs resolved to make another effort to maintain their position on the left bank of the Sutledge; and for this purpose, they began to construct a new bridge of boats, not very far from the spot where they crossed the river after having been driven from Ferozshuhr. Our army of the Sutledge was stationed somewhat from the river, and no opposition was offered by them. The bridge of boats was soon constructed, and a *tête-de-pont* thrown up in front of it with much military skill, in a position very favourable to defence. The opposite banks were high, and the river, where the bridge was laid, made a slight curve inwards; so as to throw the opposite banks sufficiently forward to afford protection to both flanks of the advanced position from heavy artillery placed in battery. Above the bridge, and not far from it, was a good ford, which facilitated the communication with the forces on the opposite bank. Advantage had also been taken of the paucity of our troops at Loodiana, to effect a passage for a force of about 10,000 men of all arms, in the neighbourhood of that town. No attack was made either on the town or cantonment of Loodiana; the object of this force appeared to be rather to intrench itself near the place at which it crossed, in order to obstruct our progress and to cut off the passage of supplies *en route* to Ferozpoor, and to intercept the communication between the posts. As soon as the Meerut force joined the commander-in-chief's camp, immediate measures were taken to reinforce the Loodiana post and the station at Busseean; some native infantry, some light cavalry, and some guns, were sent thither, and the sick, the women, and the children were removed thence to Umballa. Meanwhile, Sir Harry Smith had been detached to reduce Dhurmokote, and keep open the communication for supplies and ammunition from our rear. Sir Harry was now reinforced, and having soon with him 7,000 men and twenty-four guns, it was confidently believed that he could at one and the same time relieve Loodiana and protect the whole of our rear. Dhurmokote was evacuated at Sir Harry's approach. In marching from Jugraon to Loodiana, Sir Harry lost a good deal of his baggage, and sustained some heavy fusilades, which he did not wait to return. His troops were much harassed when he reached Loodiana. His pre-

sence put an end to the consternation which was becoming general in that part of the country. The Sirdar Runjoor Singh had strongly intrenched himself at Aliwal, about eight miles to the westward of Loodiana; he had 15,000 men and fifty-six guns, and, on the evening of the 26th of January, he received a reinforcement of twelve guns and 4,000 regular troops. Sir Harry Smith most gallantly attacked the Sikhs on the 28th of January, with not more than 10,000 men in all. The right of the Sikh force rested on Bundree, and their left on Aliwal, they had advanced a short distance from their intrenched camp and cannonaded the British for half an hour, until our brave fellows stormed the village of Aliwal—the key of their position. The whole of the British line then began to advance. Her majesty's 16th lancers charged in the most gallant style, but the Sikhs lay down on the ground, and the lancers could not well reach them, while they either fired their muskets at the 16th, or cut desperately at men and horses with their keen swords. This distinguished cavalry regiment had upwards of 100 men killed and wounded. The great mass of Sikh infantry could be broken only by our artillery. One Sikh cannon after another was captured. So ably were the orders of attack conducted, each column and line arriving at its point of attack to the very moment, that the enemy were soon driven headlong back over the river; and all the Sikh guns were captured or destroyed. Only one gun was carried by the Sikhs to the opposite bank, and there it was spiked by Lieutenant Holmes, of the irregular cavalry, and Gunner Scott, of the horse-artillery, who forded the river in pursuit. The victory was complete, and the confusion among the Sikhs great. Camp carriages, munitions of war, all things that Runjoor Singh had brought with him, were captured. These were indeed "glorious operations;" this was indeed a "complete and decisive victory."* It cost us in all 151 killed and 413 wounded.

There was now for a short time a perfect lull in the campaign. The Sikhs at Sobroan went on strengthening their position, and adding to their guns on their *tête-de-pont*; and Sir Hugh Gough waited for his artillery and reinforcements. From the 14th of January till the beginning of

* Despatches of the Governor-General, Sir Harry Smith, and Sir Hugh Gough. Macgregor's 'History of the Sikhs.'

February, the enemy were industriously employed in building their defences, under the direction, it is said, of a Spanish engineer. The army under Sir Charles Napier, which had been assembled at Sukkur, by order of the governor-general, consisting of 16,000 men, was moving up the left bank of the Sutledge, towards Ferozpoor, and would have proved, had the war lasted, a most valuable reinforcement to the army of the Sutledge. It had by this time reached Bhaulpoor opposite Mooltan, and as the nawab of that place had intimated to the British government his intention of remaining neuter and of taking no part in the war, the governor-general feeling that the blow must be struck and the contest decided at Lahore, requested Sir Charles Napier to come on with his staff in advance of his army, and to join him without delay, being desirous of having the assistance of that distinguished officer in the pending struggle. Sir Charles Napier did not, unfortunately, arrive in time to participate in the glories of Sobraon, but came up with the army at Lahore.

On the 9th of February, the heavy guns from Delhi reached the commander-in-chief's camp; on the 8th, Sir Harry Smith had rejoined head-quarters from Aliwal.

After the battle of Ferozshuhr, the governor-general had taken up his quarters at Ferozpoor, occasionally riding to the commander-in-chief's camp, which was now twenty-four miles distant from Ferozpoor, to confer with his excellency. In one of these rides, the governor-general's horse fell, and so severely contused the governor-general's thigh that he was obliged to be taken in his carriage to the field on the morning of the 10th.

The enemy's works were very strong, and although on the first intelligence of the battle of Aliwal, and at sight of the numerous bodies which floated from the neighbourhood of that battle-field down to the bridge of boats at Sobraon, the Sikhs seemed much shaken and disheartened, they now appeared to be as confident as ever of being able to defy us in their intrenched position, and to prevent our passage of the river. The soldiers were chiefly those who had been trained by the French and Italian officers. They had strong walls, only to be surmounted by scaling-ladders, which afforded a secure protection for triple lines of musketry. In all they were 34,000 men, with seventy pieces of artillery; their position was united by a good bridge to a reserve of 20,000.

on the opposite bank, on which was a considerable camp and some artillery commanding and flanking the field-works on the side of the British.*

The force under Sir Hugh Gough consisted of 6,533 Europeans and 9,691 natives, making a total of 16,224 rank and file, and ninety-nine guns. Sir Hugh ordered this force to march at half-past three o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, the 10th of February, when his men would be fresh, and there would be a certainty of many hours of daylight. To pass another night like that which had been spent within the enemy's camp at Ferozshuhr, was by all means to be avoided. The troops began to move out of camp at the very moment appointed, and they marched in silence to their destination. Sir Hugh was now much stronger in cavalry, and very strong in artillery. He at once put his battering and disposable artillery in position in an extended semicircle, embracing within its fire the works of the Sikhs. It had been intended that the cannonade should have commenced at daybreak, but so heavy a mist hung over the plain and river, that it became necessary to wait. It was half-past six before the whole of our artillery fire was developed. "Nothing could be conceived grander than the effect of the batteries when they opened, as the cannonade passed along from the Sutledge to Little Sobraon, in one continued roar of guns and mortars; while, ever and anon, the rocket, like a spirit of fire, winged its rapid flight high above the batteries in its progress towards the Sikh intrenchment. Well might the commander-in-chief call the opening of the cannonade 'most spirited and well directed.' The Sikh guns responded with shot and shells, but neither appeared to do much execution; the latter were seen bursting in mid-air ere they reached the British batteries; while some of the shot passed over Rhodawala, and struck the ground in front of General Gilbert's division. It now became a grand artillery concert, and the infantry divisions and brigades looked on with a certain degree of interest, somewhat allied, however, to vexation, lest the artillery should have the whole work to themselves! The commander-in-chief, however, was determined to give full play to an arm which he did not possess to an efficient extent in other hard-fought battles. It was reported, that the guns were to play

* Commander-in-Chief's Despatch.

for four hours at least ; but there is some reason to believe, that the rapid firing had nearly exhausted the ammunition before half that time had elapsed ; and it was once more to be proved, that the British infantry were not to remain mute spectators of a battle. 'Notwithstanding,' wrote the commander-in-chief, 'the formidable calibre of our guns, mortars, and howitzers, and the admirable way in which they were served, and aided by a rocket battery, it would have been visionary to expect that they could have silenced the fire of seventy pieces, behind well-constructed batteries of earth, planks, and fascines, or dislodge troops, covered either by redoubt or epaulments, or within a treble line of trenches.' "•

Compared with Ferozshuhr, the works at Sobraon were regular fortifications, in the construction of which no labour had been spared. The utmost ingenuity of the Sikhs and their European advisers had been exerted to render this, their last stronghold, impregnable. A French officer is said to have assured Tej Singh that it was utterly impossible for the British to make good their entrance. The British were now about to try with the musket and the bayonet. "At nine o'clock, Brigadier Stacey's brigade, supported on either flank by Captains Horford's and Fordyce's batteries, and Lieutenant-Colonel Lane's troop of horse-artillery, moved to the attack in admirable order. The infantry and guns aided each other correlatively. The former marched steadily on in line, which they halted only to correct when necessary ; the latter took up successive positions at the gallop, until at length they were within three hundred yards of the heavy batteries of the Sikhs. But notwithstanding the regularity and coolness, and the scientific character of this assault, which Brigadier Wilkinson well supported, so hot was the fire of cannon, musketry, and zumbooruks,† kept up by the Khalsa troops, that it seemed for some moments impossible that the intrenchment could be won under it."‡ There was a temporary check or pause, "but soon persevering gallantry triumphed, and the whole army had the satisfaction to see the gallant Brigadier Stacey's soldiers driving the Sikhs in confusion before them within the area of their encampment."§ Every im-

* Dr. Macgregor's 'History of the Sikhs.'

† Guns mounted on camels, and carrying a pound shot.

‡ The Commander-in-Chief's Despatches. § Ibid.

pediment was cleared, the intrenchments were passed, and our matchless infantry stood erect and compact within the Sikh camp. "Her Majesty's 10th, 53rd, and 80th regiments, with the 33rd, 43rd, 59th, and 63rd native infantry, moving at a firm and steady pace, never fired a shot till they had passed the barriers opposed to them—a *forbearance much to be commended, and most worthy of constant imitation, to which may be attributed the success of their first effort, and the small loss they sustained.* This attack was crowned with all the success it deserved, and, led by its gallant commander, Major-General Sir Robert Dick, obtained the admiration of the army, which witnessed its disciplined valour. When checked by the formidable obstacles and superior numbers to which the attacking division was opposed, the second division, under Major-General Gilbert, afforded the most opportune assistance by rapidly advancing to the attack of the enemy's batteries, entering their fortified position after a severe struggle, and sweeping through the interior of the camp. This division inflicted a very severe loss on the retreating enemy."* "We happened to be with a portion of Gilbert's division," says Doctor M'Gregor, "when the order arrived from the governor-general, and the troops immediately advanced. Onward they went; but, if intended to support Stacey on the right of the enemy's position, they missed the object, for they unfortunately came in front of the centre and strongest portion of the encampment, unsupported either by artillery or cavalry. Her Majesty's 29th and the 1st European light infantry, with undaunted bravery rushed forward, crossed a dry nullah, and found themselves exposed to one of the hottest fires of musketry that can possibly be imagined; and what rendered it still more galling was, that the Sikhs were themselves concealed behind high walls, over which the European soldiers could not climb. To remain under such a fire without the power of returning it with any effect would have been madness—the men would have been annihilated. Thrice did her Majesty's 29th regiment charge the works, and thrice were they obliged to retire, each time followed by the Sikhs, who spared none, and cut to pieces the wounded. Similar was the fate of the 1st European light infantry, who, in retiring,

* General order by the Governor-General of India, dated Camp, Kessoor, February 14th, 1846.

had their ranks thinned by musketry, and their wounded men and officers cut up by the savage Sikhs. To the latter, the nullah presented an admirable defence, for the slope was towards them, while the Europeans on the high bank were completely exposed. At length the second division, which at Ferozshuhr had driven the Sikhs before them, capturing their guns at the point of the bayonet, and entering their encampment, were led to the right of the intrenchment at Sobraon.* This second division was emulated by the first division under Sir Harry Smith, which dashed against the enemy's left. Yet was it not until some of the 3rd dragoons, under Major-General Sir Joseph Thackwell, had moved forward and ridden through the openings of the intrenchments in single file, and reformed as they passed them; and galloped over and cut down the obstinate defenders of batteries and field-works; and the weight of three entire divisions of infantry, with every field artillery gun which could be sent to their aid;—it was not until all this had been cast into the scale, that victory finally declared for the British. The fire of the Sikhs slackened, then ceased nearly altogether; and the victors, pressing them on every side, swept them in masses over the bridge of boats, and into the Sutledge, which a sudden rise of seven inches had rendered scarcely fordable. In their efforts to reach the right bank through the deepened water, they suffered a terrible carnage from our horse-artillery. Hundreds fell under this cannonade; hundreds upon hundreds were drowned in attempting the perilous passage. This awful slaughter would have excited compassion, had they not, in the earlier part of the action, sullied their bravery by slaughtering and mangling every wounded soldier whom the fortune of war left at their mercy. "The enemy's shattered forces," says the governor-general, "were driven into the river, with a loss which far exceeded that which the most experienced officers had ever witnessed. Thus terminated, in the brief space of two hours, this most remarkable conflict, in which the military combinations of the commander-in-chief were fully and ably carried into effect. The enemy's select regiments of regular infantry have been dispersed, and a large proportion destroyed, with the loss, since the campaign began, of 220 pieces of artillery taken in action."†

* 'History of the Sikhs.'

† General order.

Within the intrenchments above sixty-seven guns were captured, together with upwards of 200 camel-swivels and numerous standards. Before the hour of noon this great battle was over. It might, indeed, be well termed a glorious fight, and complete in its results. The battles of Moodkee, Ferozshuhr, and Aliwal, had weakened the power of the Sikhs, but the battle of Sobraon had completely broken it. It was, of course, bought at a dear price. Her Majesty's 29th regiment alone exhibited a loss in killed and wounded of thirteen officers, eight serjeants, and 157 rank and file. The loss of the 1st European light infantry was still heavier. Her Majesty's 31st, which had fought most nobly at Moodkee, Ferozshuhr, and Aliwal, had seven officers and 147 rank and file killed and wounded at Sobraon. Her Majesty's 50th, or Queen's Own, had twelve officers and 227 rank and file killed and wounded. Her Majesty's 10th foot lost three officers, three serjeants, and 127 rank and file. These regiments suffered the most; but other regiments suffered severely. The total loss was 320 killed, 2,063 wounded. The brave Sir Robert Dick, who led the attack on the intrenchments, received a mortal wound after he had entered them; "thus fell, most gloriously, at the moment of victory, this veteran officer, displaying the same energy and intrepidity as when, thirty-five years ago in Spain, he was the distinguished leader of the 42nd Highlanders." Brigadier Charles Cyril Taylor, who commanded the third brigade of the second division, also fell. Brigadier MacLaren was borne off the field mortally wounded, while leading the fourth brigade of the centre division against the strongest part of the intrenchments. When put into his bed, he said he *must* cross the Sutledge with the gallant European light infantry, even though he were carried in a dooly. Major-General Gilbert was slightly wounded; and the gallant veteran Colonel Ryan, of the 50th, was severely wounded.

Fearful had been the loss of the Sikhs. Five days after the action, and when the walls of the intrenchment had been nearly levelled with the ground, the sand-bank in the middle of the river was completely covered with their dead bodies, and the ground within their encampment thickly strewed with carcases of men and horses. With the permission of the commander-in-chief, Sir Hugh Gough, they returned to carry off their dead; but the task was found

too irksome, and many hundreds, not swept away by the river, were left as food for the jackal, the wild dog, and the vulture.

Scarcely was the action over when the governor-general despatched his military secretary, Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, with the tidings of victory to Sir John Grey, who was stationed half-way between Ferozpoor and Sobraon with two regiments of cavalry, three of infantry, and a field battery. Having directed Sir John Grey to move with his force immediately to the ghaut opposite Ferozpoor, the military secretary proceeded to Ferozpoor, which he reached in an hour and twenty minutes, the distance from the field of action being twenty-four miles. He carried orders to Sir John Littler (who had been warned the day before to be ready) to march with every available man to the ghaut, and before daylight the next morning six regiments of native infantry and six guns had, by means of six country boats, crossed the Sutledge, at a point nearer to the capital than where the debris of the Sikh army was stationed. On the following day the bridge of boats was nearly completed by the able and indefatigable Major Abbott, of the engineers. Had the British then followed up the Sikhs, they might have made their way without resistance to Lahore, and have there renewed the conflict; but such was not the intention of our commanders, and the capital of the Punjaub was destined to be occupied by the British without any repetition of the life-consuming struggles which had occurred on the left bank of the Sutledge. If pressed, they would have fought hard in their despair; but the vaunted power of the Sikhs was in reality destroyed. Sham Singh, Dhubal Singh, Hera Singh, Kishen Singh, Mobaruck Ali, Newaz Khan, all their bravest sirdars and leaders, had perished. The discomfited warriors who survived, being left to themselves, began to disperse. Our army quietly crossed the river, and took undisputed possession of Kussoor, which in former times had twice defied the power of Runjeet Singh. On the 14th of February the governor-general announced by proclamation, dated from Kussoor, that the British army had crossed the Sutledge, and entered the Punjaub, "in accordance with the intentions expressed in the proclamation of the 13th December last, as having been forced upon him for the purpose of 'effectually protecting the British provinces

and vindicating the authority of the British government, and punishing the violators of treaties and the disturbers of the public peace.' " Military operations against the government and army of the Lahore state had not been undertaken by the government of India from any desire of territorial aggrandizement.

The ranee, or mother of the maharajah, forthwith sent emissaries to the governor-general; and Ghoolab Singh, whose wily policy we have explained, and who was now determined to carry it through, at whatever sacrifice, on the part of the Sikhs, became the mediator between the fallen state of Lahore and our victorious army. He proceeded with all expedition towards Kussoor, to endeavour, if possible, to arrest the progress of our troops; but his intentions and hopes were frustrated, for the governor-general indignantly refused to enter into any separate compact with him, or to listen to any arrangement which would prevent him from sealing any treaty that might be made under the walls of Lahore. Having failed in preventing the advance of the British, Ghoolab Singh changed his tactics, and determined on bringing the young maharajah, Dhuleep Singh, into the governor-general's camp. The parties met at Lulleana. Out of respect for the late Runjeet Singh, and the tender years of his grandson, Sir Henry Hardinge, after Dhuleep Singh had made his submission, treated him with high honours, and with the utmost kindness. He repeated to the prince his earnest wish that a wise and tranquil government should exist in the Punjab under the descendants of the late Runjeet, who had preserved a strict alliance with the British for a period of thirty years.

The heads of a treaty were soon sketched and agreed to. The government of Lahore was to pay, as an indemnity for the expense of the war, a crore and a half of rupees, or about one million five hundred thousand pounds sterling.* All the guns we had taken were to be retained, and all those which the Sikhs had ever pointed against the British were to be given up. The troops and their turbulent leaders were to be disbanded for ever.

Thus ended the first Punjab war. The British army at Lahore amounted only to 24,115 men of all arms, of which

* The Jullundur doab, the district between the Beas and Sutledge, was confiscated and proclaimed British territory.

4,424 only were European infantry, and with the exception of 1,466 in progress from Scinde, there was not another effective European infantry soldier within 1,000 miles of Lahore. With such a force annexation of the Punjaub was impossible. The campaign had lasted sixty days. It cost, including the donation of a year's batta to the troops, about two millions sterling, the Lahore durbar and Ghoolab Singh paid an indemnity of a million and a half, and the revenue of the territory which the British government confiscated amounted, after all expenses, to about half a million annually. In a pecuniary point of view, therefore, this was the cheapest war that was ever waged, as well as the shortest. The Sikh army was reduced from 100,000 men and 370 field guns, to about 30,000 and fifty field guns, 256 of their best guns having been captured by the British army. The most lucrative part of their territory, the Jullundur, had been confiscated to the British, and their hill states given to Ghoolab Singh, curtailing the Sikhs of more than one-third of their territory and nearly one-third of their resources. In this state, the treaty having been signed on the 8th of March, the governor-general would have left them; but a few days before the British army was to march, the chief sirdars waited on the governor-general, and requested him to leave a garrison at Lahore, to protect them from their own lawless countrymen; at the same time stating, that if he did not do so, they would retire with the British army. The governor-general, feeling that it was the duty of the paramount power of India, as well as an act of humanity, to assist them in the reconstruction of a government, consented to garrison Lahore for one year, and Sir J. Littler was left with 10,000 men, not without many forebodings on the part of the military men of high rank, that a second Cabul disaster was sure to be the fate of this garrison. So convinced, however, the governor-general appears to have been that it was his duty to comply with the request of the sirdars, that, notwithstanding these forebodings, he consented.

At the expiration of the year the council of sirdars for the administration of the government again came forward and solicited the governor-general to allow the British garrison to continue the occupation of Lahore, which led to the treaty of Bhyrowal.

Our army had advanced to Kanwa Kutchwa on the 19th of February, the governor-general having first issued (from

Lullecana on the 18th) to the chiefs, merchants, traders, ryots, and other inhabitants of Lahore and Umritsir, a proclamation, assuring them that the maharajah and durbar had acquiesced in all the terms proposed to them, as a means of re-establishing friendly relations; that they, the chiefs, merchants, traders, peasants, &c., had nothing to fear from the British army; and that they might, in all confidence, pursue their ordinary occupations. On the morning of the 20th, the whole army marched to Lahore—a distance of fourteen miles—and encamped on the parade-ground, about two and a half miles from the city gate; and, in the afternoon of that same day, the young maharajah, Dhuleep Singh, was restored to the palace of the rulers of Lahore, in charge of the chief secretary of our government, escorted by British officers and troops in their best attire. On alighting from his elephant, a salute of twenty-one guns was fired by the horse-artillery. The secretary of government, and the officers, took leave of the maharajah at the palace gate, and then returned to the camp. On the 22nd, in fulfilment of one of Sir Henry Hardinge's conditions, Sir Hugh Gough, with a brigade, took formal and peaceful possession of the Padshahee-Musjid and Huzooree-Bagh, which formed part of the citadel of Lahore. Supplies of all sorts were willingly brought to this brigade as well as to the camp; and the observance of a strict discipline by all our troops entirely removed the apprehensions and doubts of the people.*

On the 8th of March, the following treaty was signed in the state-tent of the governor-general:—

“ARTICLE I.—There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the British government on the one part, and Maharajah Dhuleep Singh, his heirs and successors, on the other.

“ARTICLE II.—The maharajah of Lahore renounces for himself, his heirs and successors, all claim to, or connection with, the territories lying to the south of the river Sutledge, and engages never to have any concern with those territories or the inhabitants thereof.

“ARTICLE III.—The maharajah cedes to the Honourable Company, in perpetual sovereignty, all his forts, territories, and rights, in the Doab, or country, hill and plain, situated between the rivers Beas and Sutledge.

“ARTICLE IV.—The British government having demanded from the Lahore state, as indemnification for the expenses of the war, in addition to the cession of territory described in Article III., payment of one and a half crore of rupees; and the Lahore government, being unable to pay the whole of this sum at this time, ought to give security satisfactory to the British government for its eventual payment, the maharajah cedes to

* Despatches of the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief.

the Honourable Company, in perpetual sovereignty, as equivalent for one crore of rupees, all his forts, territories, rights, and interests, in the hill countries which are situated between the rivers Beas and Indus, including the provinces of Cashmere and Hazarah.

"ARTICLE V.—The maharajah will pay to the British government the sum of fifty lakhs of rupees on or before the ratification of this treaty.

"ARTICLE VI.—The maharajah engages to disband the mutinous troops of the Lahore army, taking from them their arms; and his highness agrees to re-organize the regular or Aeen regiments of infantry, upon the system, and according to the regulations, as to pay and allowances, observed in the time of the late Maharajah Runjeet Singh. The maharajah further engages to pay up allowances to the soldiers that are discharged, under provisions of this article.

"ARTICLE VII.—The regular army of the Lahore state shall henceforth be limited to twenty-five battalions of infantry, consisting of 800 bayonets each, with 12,000 cavalry; this number at no time to be exceeded, without the concurrence of the British government; and should it be necessary at any time, for any special cause, that this force should be increased, the cause shall be fully explained to the British government; and when the especial necessity shall have passed, the regular troops shall be again reduced to the standard specified in the former clause of this article.

"ARTICLE VIII.—The maharajah will surrender to the British government all the guns, thirty-six in number, which have been pointed against the British troops, and which, having been placed on the right bank of the river Sutledge, were not captured at the battle of Sohraon.

"ARTICLE IX.—The control of the rivers Beas and Sutledge, with the continuations of the latter river, commonly called the Garrah and Punjnd, to the confluence of the Indus, at Mithunkote, and the control of the Indus from Mithunkote to the borders of Beloochistan, shall, in respect to tolls and ferries, rest with the British government. The provisions of this article shall not interfere with the passage of boats belonging to the Lahore government, on the said rivers, for the purposes of traffic, or the conveyance of passengers up and down their course. Regarding the ferries between the two countries respectively, at the several ghauts of the said river, it is agreed, that the British government, after defraying all the expenses of management and establishments, shall account to the Lahore government for one-half of the net profits of the ferry collections. The provisions of this article have no reference to the ferries on that part of the river Sutledge which forms the boundary of Buhawalpore and Lahore respectively.

"ARTICLE X.—If the British government should, at any time, desire to pass troops through the territories of his highness the maharajah for the protection of the British territories, or those of their allies, the British troops shall, on such special occasions, due notice being given, be allowed to pass through the Lahore territories. In such case the officers of the Lahore state will afford facilities in providing supplies and boats for the passage of the rivers; and the British government will pay the full price of all such provisions and boats, and will make fair compensation for all private property that may be endangered. The British government will, moreover, observe all due consideration to the religious feelings of the inhabitants of those tracts through which the army may pass.

"ARTICLE XI.—The maharajah engages never to take or retain in his service any British subject, nor the subject of any European or American state, without the consent of the British government.

"ARTICLE XII.—In consideration of the services rendered by Rajah Ghoolab Singh, of Jummoo, to the Lahore state, towards procuring the restoration of the relations of amity between the Lahore and British governments, the maharajah hereby agrees to recognize the independent sovereignty of Rajah Ghoolab Singh in such territories and districts in the hills as may be made over to the said Rajah Ghoolab Singh by separate agreement between himself and the British government, with the dependencies thereof which may have been in the rajah's possession since the time of the late Maharajah Khurruk Singh; and the British government, in consideration of the good conduct of Rajah Ghoolab Singh, also agrees to recognize his independence in such territories, and to admit him to the privileges of a separate treaty with the British government.

"ARTICLE XIII.—In the event of any dispute or difference arising between the Lahore state and Rajah Ghoolab Singh, the same shall be referred to the arbitration of the British government, and by its decision the maharajah engages to abide.

"ARTICLE XIV.—The limits of the Lahore territories shall not be at any time changed, without the concurrence of the British government.

"ARTICLE XV.—The British government will not exercise any interference in the internal administration of the Lahore states, but in all cases or questions which may be referred to the British government, the governor-general will give the aid of his advice and good offices for the furtherance of the interests of the Lahore government.

"ARTICLE XVI.—The subjects of either state shall, on visiting the territories of the other, be on the footing of the subjects of the most favoured nation."

The terrible Akbar Khan has gone to his account, having been poisoned by some of his own people; others of those murderous Afghan chiefs have fallen in battle, or under the dagger of the assassin. Fierce destructive wars still rage, both in Lower and in Upper Afghanistan, but scarcely a faint echo of them reaches the Indus.

Viscount Hardinge (his wise government and his noble exploits had gained him the peerage), while encouraging by his example the observance of the Christian religion, not only discountenanced interference with the rites of the natives, but also prohibited government officials from involving themselves directly in schemes of conversion. By all legitimate means, and without interfering with the labour of the missionary, he encouraged general education and the enlightenment of the native mind:—the rest he wisely left to God and to his appointed time. In October, 1846, he issued a notification prohibiting Sunday labour among the Christians of India. This will be a salutary check to many who, having little to do during the week, from mere listless-

ness and carelessness, were in the habit of desecrating the Sabbath, or permitting it to be desecrated by their subordinates. The Mussulman and the Hindū, who worship after their own fashion, and who scrupulously observe their own holy days, will have now some evidence that the Christian respects the faith he professes. No effort was left untried by his lordship to put down the crimes of infanticide, suttee, and man-stealing. Happily, in the territories of protected chiefs, in central or northern India, several native princes voluntarily came forward and expressed their earnest desire to put an end to these ancient and venerated atrocities. The writer, a distinguished officer, from whom I quote, here adds:—"Attention thus excited towards suttee, infanticide, and child-stealing, very slight efforts on the part of the government and its officials will surely tend to eradicate the crimes throughout the limits of Hindustan. Some few Hindūs may pervert or disregard their own Shasters; but the more sacred and authoritative of these writings in no way sanction suttee. We never heard a Hindū pretend to prove that they did, and not many months since a good Brahmin emphatically told the writer of these remarks, that in prohibiting infanticide, we had compensated for permitting the crime of cow-killing. Be it remembered that the majority of Hindūs consider a cow's life more sacred than that of a man!" *

Among the very many able, energetic, and humane officers and administrators, who aided his lordship in carrying out these noble measures, I believe not one was more distinguished than my friend Captain Samuel Chartres Macpherson, of the Madras army, whose labours among the cruel Khonds of Goomsur and Boad—pursued, at first, under every discouragement, at the expense of health, and well nigh to the extinction of life—ought never to be overlooked by any writer on British India. In the regions which came under Captain Macpherson's control, the most horrible of human sacrifices prevailed, and to an extent which appears scarcely credible, though thoroughly well attested by the best evidence, and the concurrent testimony of numerous witnesses. The victims were tortured, and subjected to long and excruciating agonies before they were slain. Children or young people were preferred if they could be kidnapped, pur-

* The article in 'Calcutta Review,' previously quoted.

chased, or obtained in any other way; but, in many cases, full-grown men and women, and old people, were immolated — after torture. As many as twenty-five full-grown persons have been sacrificed by the Khonds at a single religious festival. A caterer for these impious rites has been known to deliver up his own two daughters, for want of purchased offerings; and in some of the Khond districts, those who could not procure other victims, have given up their old and helpless fathers and mothers to the excruciating torture and the most horrible of deaths. By the persevering efforts, the prudent, cautious, patient, and wise measures of Captain Macpherson, under Lord Hardinge and his immediate successor, these revolting rites, if not entirely abolished, were vastly diminished, both in Goomsur and in Boad.*

Under Lord Hardinge's administration, innumerable checks and impediments were removed, and trade was rendered perfectly free throughout British India. Nay, more than this, in almost every native state the worst restrictions were taken off. The octroi or town-duties, not only of such places as Loodiana and Umballa, but of Surat — where they yielded eleven lacs of rupees per annum — were released, to the infinite benefit of trade and of town-dwelling people. During the forty-two months of the noble lord's most noble administration, it is difficult to say, whether he more shone as a warrior and military administrator, or as a civil administrator and statesman.

Possessed of a fine natural taste and a love of the arts, and having with him in his eldest son an accomplished and enthusiastic amateur artist,† his lordship encouraged the preservation and repair of the magnificent works of Oriental architecture, which too many of his predecessors had entirely neglected and had left to the destruction of time, or of barbarous hands. Through his good taste and unsparing liberality, the exquisite Taj Mahal, and the fort and the palace at Agra, were judiciously repaired. He gave every possible encouragement to the Archaeological Society of Delhi, instituted chiefly for the purpose of exploring the numerous ruins and antiquities of India. He sanctioned and pro-

* Capt. Macpherson's account in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. London, 1842. The article on Lord Hardinge's administration, and three other articles, in the 'Calcutta Review.'

† The Honourable Charles Hardinge.

moted the scheme of Mr. Thomason for forming a College of Instruction of Civil Engineers at Rurki. Much of India had been already accurately surveyed; but, as sanctioned by this high-minded and large-hearted governor-general, the grand trigonometrical survey is now extending its operations into Cashmere, and along the banks of the Indus.

By nothing was his lordship more distinguished than by his equanimity, his amenity, his facility in soothing animosities (which are too apt to run high in the hot climate of India), and his tact in the management of men's minds. He may be said to have been on excellent terms with almost every individual with whom he had to transact business. Although he expected every man under him to do his duty, and to do it thoroughly, his disapprobation of neglect or slowness was always expressed in so kindly a manner, that it could seldom give offence. His friendship and patronage were bestowed upon none but men of high merit. Nothing but merit had influence with him. Littler, Currie, Elliot, the three Lawrences, Thoresby, Wheeler, Mackeson, Edwardes, MacGregor, and a host of others, obtained his protection, and have proved how well they merited it.*

The year 1847 was one of uninterrupted tranquillity in British India, with one insignificant exception in Scinde. In the Punjaub, in consequence of the intrigues of the ranee to overthrow the regency, it was found expedient to remove that princess, under a military escort, to the fort of Shaikpoor, distant about twenty-five miles from Lahore.

Lord Hardinge's resignation and departure for England were universally regarded as a calamity. But during his stay of forty-two months, he had conferred inestimable benefits on the country. It was one of his ablest officers who said of him,—“ We bid adieu to his lordship with every hearty good wish. He found India threatened by invasion, and almost bankrupt. He has, in all senses, righted the vessel, restored confidence to our ranks, to our allies, and our dependants; replenished the public purse, tranquilized the frontier, and brought peace and security to the long-distracted Punjaub. He has already been rewarded; but a viscounty and a pension is a small portion of his recompense. His best reward is in the conviction of

* ‘ Calcutta Review,’ and private information.

his own noble heart—that he has honestly and bravely done his duty; that he leaves behind him more than a hundred millions whom he has largely blessed, by enlightened and just measures; and that returning to his native land, he is regretted by those he leaves behind, and warmly welcomed by men of every shade of opinion, as the pacific warrior, the happy statesman; the man, who, in reality, brought peace to Asia.” *

* ‘ Calcutta Review.’

CHAPTER XLI.

THE successor to the governor-generalship was the amiable, accomplished, and able earl of Dalhousie. At the parting dinner given to his lordship by the Court of Directors, the premier of England, addressing him, expressed his conviction "that he would show, as his immediate predecessor, Viscount Hardinge, had shown, that resolution in administering justice, that forbearance towards all neighbouring and foreign powers, that attention to the arts of peace, and that sedulous care for the improvement of the internal condition of India, which are compatible with the utmost spirit, the utmost courage, in repelling any aggression that may be made; meeting and conquering those who choose to constitute themselves the foes of the British empire in India."

The earl of Dalhousie took his departure for Calcutta in the month of November.

His reception in India was most flattering, for the sweet odour of a good name and of an unblemished reputation had preceded him. He indeed possessed many qualities in common with his immediate predecessor. He was as anxious (and he could not be more so) for the preservation of peace as was Lord Hardinge on his arrival in India; yet he soon found himself involved in war. We were once more challenged to the contest by a fierce and brave foe, whom we thought we had effectually subdued. At Mooltan, the capital of a district lying between the left bank of the Indus and the right bank of the Sutledge, it was found necessary or expedient to substitute Sirdar Khan Singh as governor for Moolraj, who was believed to have shown intentions hostile to the durbar of Lahore and to the British government. It was believed that Moolraj accepted the liberal conditions offered to him, and fully acquiesced in this arrangement; but when Mr. Vans Agnew, a Bengal

civil servant and assistant to the resident at Lahore, and Lieutenant Anderson, of the Bombay fusiliers, proceeded to Mooltan to complete the arrangement (on the 17th of April), they found discontent and turbulence; and on the following day both these gentlemen were attacked and desperately wounded. They retired with their weak escort to a small fort outside the town, being accompanied by Sirdar Khan Singh. A fire was opened upon this place of refuge from Mooltan, but owing to the distance, the guns did little mischief. Three days afterwards the Mooltan troops came out and attacked the fort; the Sikh garrison within immediately opened the gates, and let in the assailants, and both Mr. Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson were barbarously murdered.

So soon as intelligence of these events reached Lahore, a body of 3,000 Sikhs, horse and foot, was ordered to march to Mooltan under the command of Rajah Sheer Singh. It fortunately happened that at this juncture Lieutenant Edwardes was engaged upon the Indus with a very small force, settling the country and collecting the land-tax. On learning the affair at Mooltan, he re-crossed the river into the Deerajat, whence he wrote to the khan of Bhawalpoor to make a demonstration in order to prevent Moolraj from executing any design against him (Lieutenant Edwardes), or against Colonel Cortlandt, who commanded the exposed garrison of Dhera Ismael Khan. The friendly chief instantly prepared to act. A party of 300 horse had been left by Edwardes east of the Indus, to complete the collection of the revenue at the town of Leiah, where they were attacked on the 18th of May by a body of Mooltan horse with ten light field guns. Being completely defeated, the Mooltan cavalry fled, and left all their guns behind them.

Meanwhile Colonel Cortlandt, with his force of about 4,000 men, quitted Dhera Ismael Khan, and proceeded to the southward by the base of the mountains. Being joined on his march by a Beloochee chief with a hundred of his clan, he reduced the fortress of Sunghur, a place to the west of the Indus, the garrison of which retreated upon Mooltan.

Lieutenant Edwardes having effected a junction with Colonel Cortlandt, a second engagement took place on the 20th of May, when the enemy were defeated with great

slaughter and with loss of artillery. A considerable portion of the forces serving under Cortlandt and Edwardes were Sikhs; yet none of them showed any disposition to fraternize with the rebels, and all behaved steadily and bravely in battle.*

On the 10th and 11th of June Lieutenant Edwardes and Colonel Cortlandt re-crossed the Indus to effect a junction with our ally the khan of Bhawalpoor. To prevent this measure, Moolraj passed the Chenab on the 14th, leaving a strong detachment on the other bank, which marched to Khan-ghur, but crossed the following day, in consequence of the rapid advance of our force under Lieutenant Edwardes. On the 16th, Edwardes, who had only cavalry with him, was joined by the artillery and infantry under Colonel Cortlandt, and their camp was formed about a mile from the Chenab, the enemy being encamped on the opposite bank. In the mean time the Bhawalpoor troops had arrived within twelve miles of the Mooltanese, and Edwardes, being unable to procure boats wherewith to cross the river, retired to Gungawallah, opposite to which place the Bhawalpoor force was encamping. During the night about 3,000 of his new levies joined the khan's camp. Early on the 18th of June, Edwardes crossed the Chenab with his infantry, leaving the horse and guns to follow; and he was attacked by the Mooltan troops before Cortlandt had time to join him with his guns. The action, which commenced shortly after sunrise, lasted full nine hours. At a very critical moment two of Cortlandt's regiments came up with six guns. After an obstinate conflict, the enemy gave way and fled, leaving behind them six pieces of artillery, and all their baggage and stores.

Moolraj now fell back upon Mooltan, and was closely followed by the British and their allies, who were importantly reinforced on the 28th of June by a body of troops under the command of Sheikh Imaum-ood-deen. This brought up our number of fighting men to about 18,000, and put an end to the danger in which we had really been at the first surprisal and outbreak.

On the 1st of July our columns fell upon Moolraj, who

* Edwardes described our forces as—"this brave, but heterogeneous army, composed of every race that peoples the Soolimanee range and Deerajat."—See his letter to the resident at Lahore, in the *Punjab Blue-Book*.

had intrenched his army behind a strong breast-work at a village near the town of Mooltan; and, after an engagement of six hours' duration, the insurgents were defeated and driven in disorder back into the town.

Too weak in *matériel* to undertake the siege of such a fortress as Mooltan, Edwardes encamped his troops in the vicinity of the place, and kept a close watch upon the enemy, until, on the 18th of August, General Whish arrived from Lahore, with her Majesty's 10th regiment, a troop of horse-artillery, the 7th irregular horse, and the 8th and 52nd native infantry. He assumed the command of the besieging forces, and was on the following day joined by a column from Ferozpoor, consisting of her Majesty's 32nd foot, a battering train of thirty heavy guns, a troop of horse-artillery, the 11th regular and the 11th irregular cavalry, and the 49th, 51st, and 72nd native infantry. By means of this addition, the force assembled round the walls of Mooltan amounted to about 28,000 men, of whom 6,000 were British.

But troubles now broke out in another quarter. Early in September the Sikh troops in the Hazarah country mutinied, and made an attempt to seize the fortress of Attock. Major (now Sir Henry) Lawrence, the assistant at Peshawur, acting with great promptitude and energy, despatched Lieutenant Nicholson with a detachment to take possession of the fort, and this, by means of a forced march, Nicholson was enabled to do. But, in order that this active officer might be in a condition to hold his ground at Attock, and that Captain Abbott, our political agent in the Hazarah district, might do the same there, Major Lawrence was obliged to weaken Peshawur, by sending out reinforcements. In the beginning of November, on the approach of Chuttur Singh, who had headed the revolt in the Hazarah country, Major Lawrence was under the necessity of flying from Peshawur. Accompanied by Mrs. Lawrence and Lieutenant Borrie, he retired to Kohat, and there sought the protection of Mohammed Khan. The party, however, were soon given up as prisoners to Chuttur Singh, who treated them with kindness. On the 13th of December, Lawrence was carried to the camp of our ally Sheer Singh, with the view that, in case of necessity, he might be employed in negotiating a peace with the British.

General Whish fixed on the 12th of September as the day on which to make a general attack upon the outworks of

the fortress of Mooltan. A party of the enemy had strongly intrenched themselves in a garden and village near the walls, and a body of our heterogeneous troops, under the command of Brigadier Harvey, marched at daybreak against this post, which, after a severe struggle and much loss on our side, was carried. On the following day the Mooltanese sallied, and made a desperate attack on Edwardes's camp; but they were repulsed, and our troops carried another important outwork.

But at this critical juncture a blow was given to our faith in the fidelity of the Sikhs, who had pretended to be most friendly to us; Sheer Singh went over to the enemy with his 5,000 men! In consequence of this defection, the siege was raised on the 15th of September, and the army was withdrawn to a position several miles distant from Mooltan. It now became tolerably evident that we had no true friends among the Sikhs, and that a new and general war must ensue with that fierce soldiery, who were, in reality, an armed democracy, electing and deposing their own chiefs, and obeying none who did not give them promise and assurance of high pay, victory, or plunder.

A large force was soon assembled at Ferozpoor, under the immediate orders of Lord Gough, the commander-in-chief. On the 9th of October, Sheer Singh quitted Mooltan to join Chuttur Singh, and on the 21st of October these two Sikh forces really effected their junction in the neighbourhood of Wuzeerabad. Between them, the two chiefs had very soon 30,000 men in hand; and they were evidently determined to try the issue of another great struggle for supremacy in the Punjaub. Reinforcements were rapidly sent up to the British from the Bombay army.

About the middle of November our army was assembled at Saharun, and Lord Gough joined there on the 21st of that month. Sheer Singh and the rest of our enemies had stationed themselves at Ramnuggur (in front of which flows the Chenab river, having in its mid-channel a small island), with some 4,000 men and a battery of six guns, and a protecting grove of trees.

At two o'clock in the morning of the 22nd, orders were issued for a strong force of cavalry and infantry to parade forthwith, silently and in marching order, in front of the camp. The troops moved forward in darkness to Ramnuggur, and, passing that place, marched towards the left bank

of the river, when the strength and situation of the enemy were quite apparent. Our horse-artillery pushed on through deep sand, opening their fire upon the enemy; but they soon found that their six-pounders were ill-matched against the heavy metal of the Sikhs; and, finally, they were compelled to retire, leaving behind them one gun and two ammunition-waggons.

The enemy now passed over a large body of cavalry, under cover of their guns. Orders were given to our 14th dragoons, led by Colonel Havelock, and to our 5th light cavalry, to attack this formidable body of Sikh horse, and follow them up to their batteries. The men obeyed with alacrity, and the Sikhs retreated before their charge; but the ground had not been well surveyed, and in descending the bank of a nullah, where they were exposed to a murderous fire, our people suffered great loss. Returning, however, they re-formed and charged a second time. The Sikh guns now played upon these brave horsemen with destructive effect, and Colonel Havelock fell during the second charge. Colonel King then again formed the men, and a third time they were led to the attack. At this juncture General Cureton rode up with orders from the commander-in-chief that they should retire; but he had scarcely uttered the words before he was struck by two matchlock-balls, and fell dead by the nullah. Nearly at the same time Captain Fitzgerald was mortally wounded. At length these two cavalry regiments were withdrawn.

After a variety of manœuvres, in which Sheer Singh and his officers were thought to have displayed considerable ability as tacticians, the whole Sikh army abandoned their position at Ramnuggur, and marched upon the Jhelum.

By the 21st of December General Whish, who was renewing the siege of Mooltan, was joined by a strong body of Bombay troops. Our force before that place now amounted to 32,000 men, of whom 15,000 were British. We had also 150 pieces of artillery. By the 27th, the enemy were driven out of the suburbs, and we were enabled to take up a position within 400 yards of the walls. By the 29th, so close had the besiegers arrived to the city walls, that their heavy guns were breaching them at a distance of no more than eighty yards. On the morning of the 30th the principal magazine in the fort blew up with a terrific explosion; for in it was contained nearly all the ammunition which Moolraj

had been five years in collecting. All his principal houses, temples, &c., as well as about 800 men, were blown up with it; yet the walls and battlements of the fort were not much injured, and the chieftain did not appear to be disheartened by the catastrophe. An officer present says, "He kindly sent us word next day, that he had still enough powder and shot to hold out the siege for twelve months, and that we were to do our worst, as he would hold out as long as a stone of his fort would stand. When we sent in to summon the fort to surrender, he very coolly rammed the letter down his longest gun, and fired it at us."*

During the night of the 30th, a breach was made by the Delhi gate of the city, and next day another was effected at the Bohur gate. Our cannonade was sustained almost without intermission. On the 31st the Sikhs made a sortie, and fell upon the division under Edwardes and Lieutenant Lake, but they were driven back with great loss. On the 2nd of January the town was stormed and taken by a column of the Bombay army and a Bengal column, the first colours being planted in Mooltan by a serjeant-major of the Company's fusiliers. The citadel, however, still held out, and therein Moolraj had shut himself up with a very considerable force. Against this formidable work regular parallels of approach were made, and mines were sunk, while the walls were incessantly hammered by cannon-shot and shells. On the 18th the counterscarp was blown into the ditch by the explosion of three mines. On the 19th the sap had reached the crest of the glacis, and by the 21st two practicable breaches were made, and orders were issued to the troops to hold themselves in readiness for storming the fort on the morrow morning. But when that morning came, and the British columns were formed for the assault, the chief surrendered at discretion. Moolraj came out mounted on a beautiful Arab steed magnificently caparisoned. He was taken to the general's tent, where he gave up his sword, which is said to have been returned to him. He was placed under a strong guard in a fine country residence, at some distance from the town of Mooltan, a favourite abode of his late father, who had built it. As his partisans in the country were very numerous and much devoted to him,

* Annual Register, 1848-1849.

it was not considered safe to leave him there long; and when our army marched up the line of the Chenab to turn off as they approached the road leading to Lahore for the camp of the governor-general, he was conducted with it.*

At the commencement of the year 1849 the commander-in-chief, now Lord Gough, intrenched himself on the upper Chenab, near to some strong positions occupied by Sheer Singh and his Sikhs, who had also intrenched themselves.

On the 10th of January his lordship learned that the fortress of Attock, which had been long and gallantly defended by Major Herbert, had fallen; and that the Sikhs in his front were receiving reinforcements. He therefore determined to lose no time in attempting the complete overthrow of the Sikh army; and at daylight on the morning of the 12th, he put his columns in motion for Dingee. Again the ground in his front had not been sufficiently reconnoitred, and apparently no feelers had been put out. Towards evening he found the enemy drawn out in battle array ready to receive him. As the day was nearly spent, and as his troops were wearied with their march, his lordship contemplated deferring the combat until the morrow; but the Sikhs advanced some horse-artillery, and opened a fire on his skirmishers in front; and this fire being silenced by a few rounds from his heavy guns, these, in turn, were answered by nearly the whole of the enemy's artillery, which was close up and in position, although hitherto concealed by thick jungle. It should appear from his lordship's own despatch, that he was not at all aware of that proximity until the Sikh fire opened upon him. Except by acting as Lord Hardinge had done at Ferozshuhr, Gough could not now avoid the battle. I come now upon the debatable ground upon which I have (in my preface) declared that I would not tread. There has not yet been time nor a sufficient collection of materials to settle the heated controversy about the affair of Chillianwallah; the principal actors on the scene are still living among us, and I shrink from giving offence to the feelings of brave men; and, whatever may have been the errors committed (supposing there may have been *some*), there has seldom been a display of more heroic courage on the part of superior British officers.

* 'Annals of India for the Year 1848, by George Buist, LL.D., F.R.S., L. & E., F.G.S., &c.' Bombay, 1849.

The British troops remained masters of the field, but their loss was very heavy; twenty-six European officers and 731 men killed; sixty-six officers and 1,446 men wounded. Five stand of colours and four of our guns fell into the hands of the enemy; and, aided by the darkness of the night, the Sikhs recovered and were enabled to remove the greater part of the guns which we had taken from them during the sanguinary struggle. Moreover, many of our wounded were abandoned on the field, or in the jungle, and were massacred, together with most of our prisoners.

The carnage of the battle of Chillianwallah, which was even more terrible on their side than on ours, did not break the spirit of these hard-fighting Sikhs, who were now supported by a body of 1,500 Afghan horse, under Akram Khan, a son of Dost Mohamed Khan. "For the first time," says the noble governor-general, "Sikhs and Afghans were banded together against the British power. It was an occasion which demanded the putting forth of all the means at our disposal, and so conspicuous a manifestation of the superiority of our armies, as should appal each enemy and dissolve at once their compact, by fatal proof of its futility." *

This conspicuous manifestation was given on the 21st of February, near the town of Goojerat, where the enemy were posted with 60,000 men and fifty-nine guns. Lord Gough commenced the action with his artillery, and after a sustained cannonade of three hours, compelled the Sikhs and Afghans to retire from the positions they had maintained with resolute hardihood. The subsequent advance of the whole British line soon drove them back from every point; and, retreat being converted into rout, they fled in the utmost disorder, "their ranks broken, their positions carried; their guns, ammunition, camp-equipage, and baggage captured; their flying masses driven before the victorious pursuers from mid-day to dusk, receiving most severe punishment in their flight." †

Our loss in killed and wounded was comparatively very small. The noble governor-general said that this action of Goojerat "must ever be regarded as one of the most memo-

* Letter from the Governor-General to the Secret Committee, in the Punjab Blue Book, 1847-1849.

† Despatch of Lord Gough, in Punjab Blue Book.

nable in the annals of British warfare in India; memorable alike from the greatness of the occasion, and from the brilliant and decisive issue of the encounter."

In a few days, Sheer Singh, Chuttur Singh, and the other chief sirdars, came into Lord Gough's camp and surrendered, and all the Sikh officers and soldiers delivered up their arms. The Afghans fled for their own country, and were hotly pursued by Sir Walter Gilbert, who recovered Attock, crossed the Indus, and drove the enemy towards the Khyber Pass and Cabul.

The immediate consequence of this war was the annexation of the entire Punjaub to the British empire in India.

Moolraj, the ex-ruler of Mooltan, was put upon his trial for the murder of Mr. Vans Agnew and Lieut. Anderson, and had sentence of death passed upon him. This, however, was afterwards commuted into imprisonment for life.

With these recent and most important events I conclude this historical summary and my present narrative.

The government of the earl—now marquis of Dalhousie—has been illustrated, like that of Viscount Hardinge, by great attention to civil affairs, distinguished administrative ability, and an incessant care for the good of the native populations. Under it several reforms, commenced by his predecessor, have been completed; and the efforts made to check the worst excesses of Hindü idolatry, and to suppress human sacrifices, have been pursued with a calm and noble perseverance.

I shall have done some good if I draw attention, among general readers, to a vast and most important subject, which has been too much neglected, notwithstanding the undeniable fact that nearly every Englishman has an immediate interest in our Indian empire. Too many readers have been deterred by the bulk and number of the books written about India, and by the too frequently prolix style of our Anglo-Indian writers. But, as materials, these very books, or many of them, are truly excellent, having been written by men who were themselves actors in the scenes and events they describe, or who passed their lives in the country. To the excellence and authenticity of these materials is to be added the interest of a course of events full of the most startling, exciting, and romantic interest, and of the most varied character. One of the best interests of all, or that which arises out of our nationality, is assuredly not

wanting: the way in which our empire has been acquired, enlarged, and maintained, — making allowance for every fault, blunder, or even crime, — reflects the highest honour on the determination, the policy, and the valour of Englishmen; and never, since the days of Clive, down to those of Hardinge, and Gough, and Napier, has a more brilliant valour been displayed in any part of the world by British troops, than in our Indian empire, and the countries which border upon it. Let it never be forgotten, that when our national greatness and our reputation seemed to be on the decline in Europe, and the glory of our arms was obscured in the West, that reputation and glory, through the genius of Warren Hastings, and the ability and courage of the officers he employed, shone forth, bright as the morning sun, in the East. And let it ever be remembered, that India is the school which has produced some of our most eminent men, and which principally helped to form the great captain and statesman of the age, the thrice illustrious WELLINGTON.

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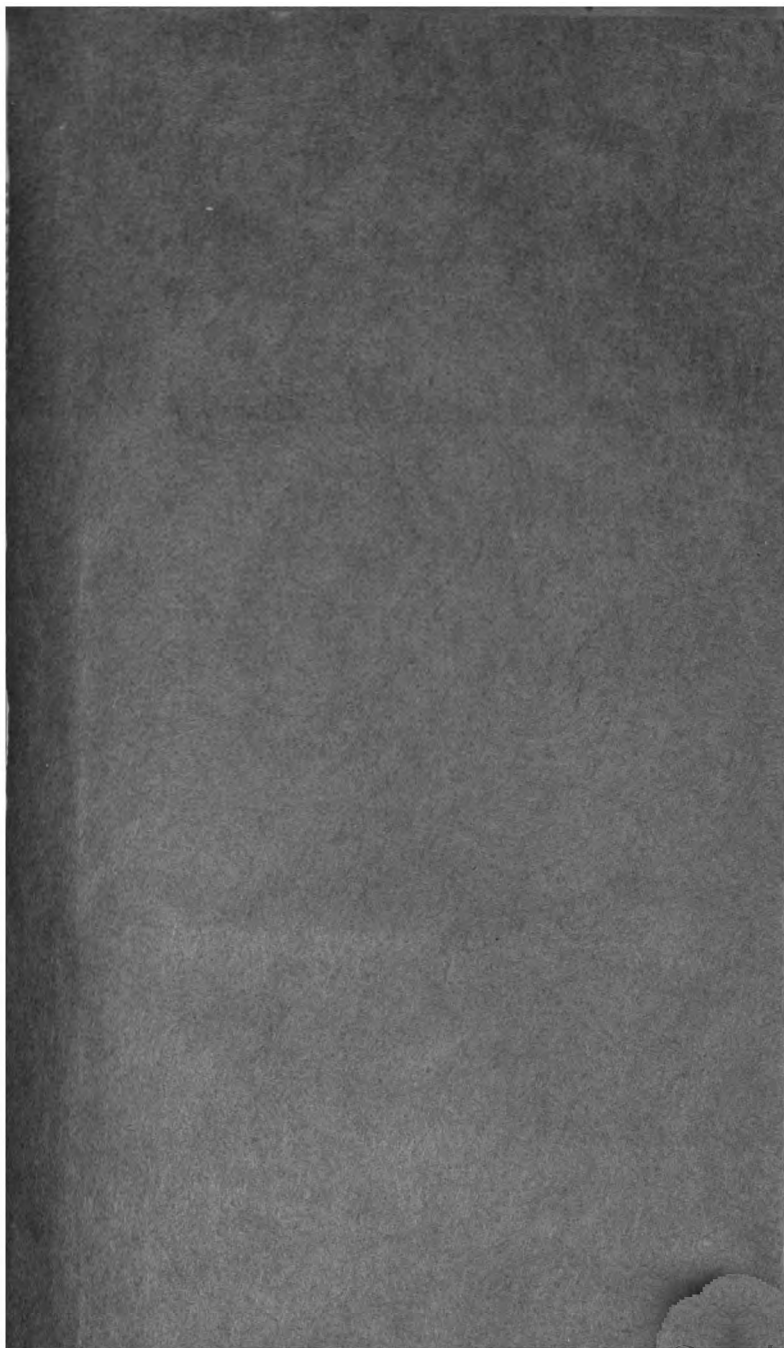
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