

THE AMEERS OF SCINDE.

LETTER

TO

THE HON. THE COURT OF DIRECTORS
OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY,

FROM

THE RIGHT HON.

SIR HARFORD JONES BRYDGES, BART. D.C.L.

London :

SMITH, ELDER & CO., CORNHILL ;

JOHN WILSON, 18, CHARLES STREET, BERNERS STREET.

MDCCCXLIII.

Price One Shilling.

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“ He that acts unjustly
Is the worst rebel to himself; and tho' now
Ambition's trumpet, and the drum of power,
May drown the sound, yet conscience will one day
Speak loudly to him.”

HAVARD'S CHARLES I

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LETTER.

“For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.” Hosea, viii. 7.

Honorable Gentlemen,

If we consider where these words are to be found—if we consider by whom they were proclaimed, (a person, as we are taught to believe, inspired by God,) they really appear to me to be of very awful import; for that in our wanton and wicked attack on Scinde “we have sown the wind” few will doubt, and that when the harvest becomes ripe, we shall “*reap the whirlwind,*” we are forewarned by God through his prophet, all must allow. Before I go further, however, let me acknowledge my belief that this unjust and unprovoked seizure of our neighbours’ lands, goods and chattels, has been made against your better judgment, contrary to your wishes, against your interest, and that you fully agree with me the thing, considered in all its bearings and probable consequences, had much better have been left unattempted. Much, therefore, of that which will be stated in the following

pages is designed as addressed more to others than to you, Gentlemen.

You may remember, perhaps, the bad names we bestowed, during the revolutionary war with France, on several members of their Government, for the unjustifiable propensity they then displayed to a doctrine quaintly called by them the necessity of *arrondissement*. Verily the necessity of *arrondissement* in the hands of a French, and *expediency* in the hands of an Anglo-Indian diplomatist, are machines well deserving the name of *infernales*. At all events it would be decent in us, whenever we feel inclined to use abusive terms in speaking of certain acts of our neighbours across the water, to recollect

“ Mutato nomine,
“ De te fabula narratur.”

I have *redde* with attention and care, as you shall see by and bye, the papers on Scinde prepared for Parliament, and on your account I most sincerely rejoice not to find in them, as far as I have *redde*, one word from you that can be twisted, either as initiatory or approbatory, of the proceedings in that country. This is much to your credit, and if the fact be as I have stated, I think it might not be amiss if the Proprietors offered you their thanks for the wise part you have acted on the occasion.

From the brilliant days of Marquis Wellesley to the present, every succeeding Governor-General,

it appears to me, has, immediately after his appointment, adopted some particular scheme of his own for a war in India, by which he imagined it might be possible for him to obtain as much glory and honor as accrued to that eminent statesman in consequence of his well-arranged, well-timed, and most justifiable military proceedings against Tippoo Sultan. God knows some of these heroes, or would-be heroes, proved they knew but little of what they were about; some were on the point of miserably failing; and all spilt the blood of millions of their fellow-creatures, and spent and threw away sums of money of which it is frightful to make an exact numeration. I have been told, and indeed I have *redde*, that the gallant Byng (for a man who died as he did, may well be called gallant,) was shot, to infuse a greater *spirit of enterprise* into the naval officers of that day; it might, perhaps, be to our advantage, but certainly to that of the princes and natives of India, if now and then a Governor-General were made an example of, by way of infusing a spirit of *peace* and *œconomy* into his successors: and there may be persons who lean to thinking, that to do this with justice and effect, no better opportunity will ever offer than the present.

I have already told you I have *redde* these parliamentary papers with care and attention; I now add, I have *redde* them with surprise and disgust. With surprise at the unblushing manner in which some of the worst principles in morals

and government are asserted,—with disgust at the shuffling, mean, prevaricating manner in which scenes of plunder, rapine, and deposition are commenced and executed. When the noble lion stalks abroad for prey, he does it boldly ; the cruel tiger and the cunning cat alone crawl along the ground to effect their purpose, and torture their victims with the fascination of the eye before the fatal spring is made. Bear with me a little, and I will give you instances sufficient to convince you I speak nothing but truth.

I have now before me the account which it has been judged convenient by Her Majesty's Ministers and yourselves to lay before the Houses of Parliament of the late transactions in Scinde, as well as of the causes which led to them. Does this account contain the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth ? Whatever you may think, it behoves me to tell you the world already does not consider it in that light, for it has been publicly declared that the papers presented to these high authorities, regarding our former unjustifiable and foolish proceedings in Persia and Affghanistan, were shamefully garbled, and the world now suspects, and ever will suspect these to have been treated in the same manner. But take them for what you will, when properly weighed they do not amount to better than an *ex-parte* evidence, or in other words, an apology for the atrocious actions to which they relate.

I have never been one of those who in the Court of Proprietors canted much about religion, but I have ever been, thank God, one of those, firmly convinced there is a Court besides the high Court of Parliament and Court of Directors, “unto which all hearts be open, all desires known, and from which no secrets are hid,” and that it would be well for all of us, high and low, Christian and Mohammedan, Jew and Gentile, if this solemn and not-to-be-doubted truth were made a more apparent guide and rule of our actions. But before I submit to you such remarks as I purpose making on the papers themselves, permit me to call your serious attention to the following dicta, promulgated in their works by authors admitted to be of the first eminence,—the one a writer on the law of nations, the other a learned and beautiful expounder of the Law of God; and let me beg of you, as you favour me by perusing what I now write, never to lose sight of these dicta as being the true key of the sentiments I shall express:—

Mons. Vattel, b. iii., c. 3, speaking of war, says, “Vicious motives (for it) are those which have not for their object *the good of the state*, and which, instead of being drawn from that pure source, are suggested by the violence of the passions; such are the arrogant desire of command, the ostentation of power, the thirst of riches, avidity of conquest, hatred, and revenge.”

The learned and lamented Dr. Channing, in his

Lecture on War, published in the fifth vol. of the American edition of his works, p. 135, says :—“ In like manner, though a Government be authorised in self-defence, it still contracts *the guilt of murder* if it proclaim war from policy, ambition, or revenge.”

I now enter on a brief examination of the papers laid before Parliament, by command of Her Majesty, giving an account of our proceedings and negotiations at Hyderabad and other places. I am not surprised to find the Ameers *in limine* exercising a wise reluctance to have anything to do with us if they could possibly have avoided it. The character of an individual in society precedes him, and accordingly as it is established, either as *good and honest*, or *knavish and brutal*, gains him admittance and respect, or condemns him to denial and contempt. In this general rule, the difference between an *individual* and an *aggregate*, that is, a nation, lies here; an acknowledged national character of uniformly pursuing and abiding by that which is *honest, fair, and just*, in all its dealings with other States, procures for such a nation, *honor, confidence and credence*; the contrary produces disgust, distrust, and hatred. Considering in what manner and light our national character has been developed to the poor Ameers, by the follies we have practised in Persia, and the iniquities we committed in Affghanistan, common sense might have told us those Princes would be shy and slow to place

confidence in our *honor*, or give *credence* to our well-known faithless professions, without an application of brutal force, and this it seems was predetermined to be introduced, *per fas et nefas*, into our negotiations with them. The object of our negotiations, was not *alliance*, *peace*, and *commerce*—it was for ends which impure spirits only conceive and undertake, and which purer ones would blush to be employed to execute. The true objects of our negotiations, as may be proved from the Parliamentary Papers themselves, were trickery, spoliation and plunder! I hope you, Gentlemen, can say

“Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.”

It is very singular that one of Her Majesty's present Ministers, Sir James Graham, should, in a speech delivered in Parliament, in the month of January, 1840, have given an admirable and spirited *precis* of our bello-bayonet diplomacy in India. “We commenced,” said he, “our connexion with India under pretence of trading and the semblance of commerce; scarcely a century had passed since the first English factory was established there. A single warehouse was first built—it was surrounded by a wall—we next added a ditch—armed some labourers and increased the number of Europeans, and then we began to *treat* with the native powers; having discovered their weakness

we seized Arcot, triumphed at Plassey, and what a Clive begun, the Wellesleys completed. Seringapatam was stormed, the Mysore was conquered, and the Mahrattas fell under our dominion. These successes terminated with the battle of Assaye, when India became ours. Nor was this all, the Hydaspes had been crossed—Candahar and Caboul had witnessed the march of British troops—and central Asia had trembled at our presence.”—*Annual Register*, 1840, p. 84.

With what disposition and intention Sir James Graham used these words in the House of Commons I must not pretend to say, but it is difficult to consider them such as designed to convey approbation or eulogy of our past conduct in India for either equity or justice; and therefore I think myself entitled to hope, whenever the investigation of the proceedings in Scinde comes before the representatives of the people, the late harsh and unjustifiable dealings with the poor Ameers will find a favorable and a powerful advocate in that Right Honorable Gentleman.

A very dear friend, recently returned from America, has made me a present of a book, not long ago published at New York, and at present perhaps not much either known or *redde* in England, namely, “The Despatches of Fernando Cortes to the Emperor Charles V.” The book professes to contain a translation of the original despatches as

they were sent to the Emperor; if so, and the anachronism were not apparent, there are many parts of them which might easily be mistaken for portions of those you have received from your late and present Governor-Generals of India. The same cant, the same hypocrisy, the same ruthless iniquity towards the wretched Montezuma and his Mexicans, as towards the deceived and plundered Princes of Hyderabad. According to this book, Cortes appears to me to have been the true protoplast of your Clives, Hastingses, and others, and latterly more particularly of your two last Governor-Generals. I pray you, Gentlemen, to send to your bookseller, and order him as soon as possible to procure the book for you, and when obtained to read it with care and attention. I can assure you, the time employed in the perusal will not be mis-spent. We have seen what the policy of the Spaniards and a succession of Corteses have produced in Mexico, and it is very possible if you proceed in your present path, something like it will sooner or later happen in India. I can say with truth, I have never consented, nor condescended to praise or applaud oppression and injustice, either because it has been committed by men with great titles, or because it has been successfully executed, or even because I myself benefited by that success. My conscience tells me there are rules of right and wrong delivered to us from so high a source, that to seek and pursue our own welfare is to obey the

former and to shun the latter—for myself, like Boileau,

“ Je ne puis rien nommer, si ce n’ est par son nom
J’ appelle un chat un chat, et rolet un fripon.”

At the time our principal injustice was committed against the Princes of Hyderabad, there were no less than six treaties subsisting between them and the East India Company. One might suppose these were diplomatic documents enough to lay down and define with tolerable precision the reciprocal duties and obligations of each of the high contracting States. It will be worth while hereafter to examine and state what some of these duties and obligations were; though, to our shame and eternal disgrace, these Princes, like the poor Rajah of Sattara, may say, as Horace Walpole is supposed to have said of his nick-nackeries and jim-cracks at Strawberry Hill, “*hæc novimus esse nihil.*”

In the year 1809, when England was under considerable alarm from a French embassy having been sent on the part of Buonaparte to Tæhran, and from the manner in which that embassy was proceeding, it was asked of the Ameers not to allow a French establishment in Scinde. This was not only readily granted, but provided against in the Fourth Article of a Treaty signed 21 August in that year.

Then follows the Treaty of the 9th November, 1820, consisting of Four Articles, which both by the simplicity of its language and moderation of its

provisions, proclaims the wisdom and honorable character of the person by whom on our part it was negotiated, namely, the late Honorable Jonathan Duncan, then Governor of Bombay.*

On the 4th April 1832, a Treaty consisting of four Articles, called a *Treaty of Peace*, was negotiated between the East India Company and the State of Khyrpoor, a Government dependant on Hyderabad. Two Articles of this Treaty merit extraction.

“ Article 2. The two contracting parties mutually bind themselves, from generation to generation, never to *look with the eye of covetousness on the possessions of each other.*”

“ Article 3. *The British Government having requested the use of the river Indus and the roads of Scinde, for the merchants of Hindostan, &c. the Government of Kyrpore agrees to grant the same within its own boundaries, on whatever terms may be settled with the Government of Hyderabad, namely, Morad Ali Khan Talpoor.*”

The Treaty of the 20th April 1832, with Meer Ally Morad Khan of Hyderabad, contains a renewed insertion, Article 2, of the Treaty of the 4th April 1832, with the Governor of Khyrpoor, respecting *the Eye of Covetousness*, and an Article 3, which is well worth extracting at length, and runs thus :—

“ Article 3. The British Government *has requested a passage* for the merchants and traders of Hindostan by the

* There appears to be an error here as to the name of the negotiator on our part of this Treaty, the Hon. Jonathan Duncan having died in 1811. But in the papers delivered to Parliament, Mr. Duncan is stated as having been our negotiator, therefore either the negotiator or the year of negotiation must be incorrect—most probably the year. The Treaty being just such as I should suppose would have been the product of Mr. Duncan's sound understanding and excellent heart.

river and roads of Scinde, by which they may transport their goods from one country to another, and the said Government of Hyderabad hereby acquiesces in the said request, on the three following conditions:—

“ 1. *That no person shall bring any kind of military stores by the said river or roads.*

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

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

Under date 22nd April 1832, another Treaty, styled a Supplementary Treaty, was concluded between the Company and the Government of Hyderabad, containing three Articles, none of which are necessary to receive more notice than the mention of the date of the Treaty.

The next Treaty between the same parties is styled commercial, and appears to have been proclaimed at Calcutta on the 23rd December, 1834. It consists of 5 Articles, and professes to settle duties to be levied on goods passing on the Indus, and the measurement of boats, but by a provision contained in the declaratory proem—affixed to the Treaty—the Treaty very comically settles nothing as to duties, but leaves them completely in the hands of the Governor-General, *e. g.* “ and after the Officers of the British Government who are versed in the affairs of commerce” (and some other affairs too) “shall have examined the same statement, and should the statement seem to them to be fair and equitable and agreeable to cus-

tom, it will be brought into operation and confirmed: but should it appear too high, H. H. Meer Morad Ally Khan, on hearing from the British Government to this effect, through Colonel Pottinger, *will reduce the said duties.*" Confiding, simple-hearted Ameer! were you aware of the character of those with whom you had to deal when you made so generous a concession?

I have laid before you Treaties pompously entitled of *peace*, of *perpetual friendship*, and of *commerce*, and I now come to one consisting of two Articles, stated to have been concluded between Colonel Pottinger and their H. H. Meer Noor Mohammed Khan, Meer Nusseer Mohammed Nusseer Khan, on the 20th April 1838, and what is most extraordinary and very comical, stated also to have been ratified on that very day by the Governor-General *at Simla*, though some hundred miles distant from Hyderabad.

"Ratified by the G. G. at Simla, April 20th, 1838."—
Par. Pap. p. 5.

We have already seen an instance of the want of care and accuracy with which these Treaties are delivered to Parliament, when it was stated that the Treaty of the 9th November 1820 had been negotiated on our part by the late Governor Duncan, when that excellent man died in 1811!!*

* The date of the ratification of the preceding Treaty may also be a typographical error, but supposing the date to be correct, what is the inference? The negotiator must have had the ratification in his pocket, and have been ordered to take nothing less than what appears in the Treaty!

“Article 1. In consideration of the long friendship which has subsisted between the British Government and the Ameers of Scinde, the Governor-General engages to use his good offices to adjust the present differences which are understood to subsist between the Ameers of Scinde and Maharajah Runjeet Sing, so that peace and friendship may be established between the two States.

“Article 2. In order to secure and improve the relations of amity and peace, which so long have subsisted between the Scinde State and the British Government, it is agreed that an accredited minister shall reside at the Court of Hyderabad, and that the Ameers of Scinde shall also be at liberty to depute a Vakeel to reside at the Court of the British Government, and that the British Minister shall be empowered to change his ordinary place of residence as may from time to time seem expedient, and be attended by such an escort as may be deemed suitable by his Government.”

We have now come to No. 7 in the Papers delivered to Parliament of the Treaties between the Ameers of Scinde and the East India Company, and the perusal of them most assuredly causes a variety of reflections, such as:—that we see a portion of the decalogue carried into an article of one of them,* and we shortly afterwards see it broken and set at nought—we see perpetual friendship† stipulated between the Company and the Ameers, and we find it interpreted to mean as to them *submission* even to slavery—we see commerce‡ trumpeted forth and boasted of, but it means the *commerce of cannon balls, bombs, bullets and bayonets*, to be shot and used against those with whom we

Parliamentary Papers, Treaty No. 3, “Eye of Covetousness.” Tenth command, “Thou shalt not covet,” &c.

† Do. do. No. 2, “There shall be perpetual friendship,” &c.

‡ Do. do. No. 6, Commercial Treaty.

had but a little before concluded a solemn league of *perpetual friendship*—we see the USE of one of the most magnificent rivers in the world requested as a *concession*,* and that *request* and *concession* very shortly afterwards claimed as a *right* and *possession* on the ground of *expediency*!† and now comes the fifth act of this awful, eventful and most disgraceful drama, or rather tragedy—we see the poor Ameers robbed of their *principalities*, their *treasures plundered*, their *subjects massacred*, and *themselves, their wives and families consigned, as far as is in our power, to ignominy, ruin, beggary and exile!*

Gentlemen, are these things so? If they are, for your own honor, for your future peace of mind, for the sake of humanity, for the honor of your country, hasten, as far as lies in your power, to remedy them.

“Discite justitiam moniti et non temnere divos.”

Now for a pretty good instance of the “cruel tiger and cunning cat” I formerly talked about; it is, in the grandiloquent proclamation to the Princes and Natives of India, issued by the Governor-General from Simla, and dated October 1st, 1842. In this there are the following passages:—

“Content with the limits nature appears to have assigned to its empire, the Government of India will devote all its

Parliamentary Papers, Treaty No. 4, Article third. “The British Government has requested a passage,” &c.

† Do. Vide page 10, Letters from the Secretary to the Governor-General of India, to the Resident in Scinde, Para. 18, “While the present exigency,” &c. The whole of this letter is worthy of the most careful perusal, particularly the next Paragraph, *where the Secretary talks of troops being in readiness to march from Bombay and Madras, in case the Ameers do not obey orders!*

efforts to the *establishment and maintenance of general peace*, to the *protection of the sovereigns, its allies*, and to the *prosperity and happiness of its own faithful subjects*.*

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

Reading this, can one forbear recollecting the false prophets spoken of in Jeremiah, chapter vi. ver. 14, who cried “Peace, peace, when there was no peace”? and might not the Ameers when this worthless stuff was translated to them have foolishly imagined it promised them *the peaceful possession* for some time at least of their territories and treasures and the security of their families and subjects?

But, alas! we see that, within the short space of a few months, the Ameers are practically and not very gently taught that this *accerrimus assertor Pacis* is a wolf in sheep’s clothing!

Within my remembrance there has been no greater tub thrown to the whale, than the commer-

* Now it may be as well to give a short specimen in what manner this flourishing promise of consulting the prosperity and the happiness of its own faithful subjects has been performed by your Governor-General and yourselves. If debt and taxes constitute the prosperity and happiness of faithful subjects, you have faithfully followed the example so long set you at home.

Your Governors-General, including Lord E., have profusely squandered, in useless and foolish war, more than TWENTY MILLIONS of money, and I am informed that you, gentlemen, have in the course of this year drawn upon and from India, in bills and goods, FOUR MILLIONS. This must very much increase the prosperity and happiness of your faithful subjects in India; but how long do you suppose these good but ill-governed people will bear being milked in this manner without kicking! Recollect “*Est modus in Rebus, sunt certi denique finis.*” What the *finis* may be to England if you go on as you have done lately, I very fearfully and unwillingly contemplate.

cial opening of the Indus. It was introduced by a grand flourish of trumpets from Sir Alexander Burnes, it was well puffed at Calcutta, and it was well laughed at by those who knew anything about the matter, amongst whom, if it does not offend, I will venture to reckon myself, because, for many years I traded to Cutch and Tatta, and indirectly to Hyderabad. But I can put before you evidence which, for its justness and sagacity, is more to be relied on than that of Sir Alexander Burnes, Sir Wm. Macnaughten or myself, the two first of whom I shrewdly suspect to have had *crotchets* in their heads, in which *commerce** was little concerned, since commerce, in my opinion, is always more indebted to, and receives greater assistance from, cool practical knowledge and experience, than from the crude and hasty speculations of diplomatic geniuses or military men.

Permit me therefore, with some confidence, to call your serious attention to the following opinion given to Sir Alexander Burnes by a very talented person, Charles Masson, Esq., as it appears in his most valuable work entitled "Various Journeys into Ballochistan and Affghanistan," published not long ago.†

The following is extracted from a letter, dated Hyderabad, in Scinde, from Burnes to Masson, dated 2nd February, 1837. "The *objects* of my journey are primarily *commercial* [so then you had other objects besides], and my political power ceases on leaving the Indus. *But we would ill discharge our duty to ourselves if we did not look to the left and right.*" Vol. iii. p. 430. I leave you to construe this—to me it speaks volumes.

† Vide p. 432, vol. iii. of a Narrative of Various Journeys in Ballochistan.

“ The great aim of Government is declared to be to open the Indus. Was it ever closed, or further closed than by its dangerous entrances and shallow depth of water? Another object was to open the countries beyond the Indus to commerce—were they ever closed? no such thing. They carried on an active and increasing trade with India, and afforded markets for immense quantities of British manufactured goods. The Governments of India and England were never amused with a greater fallacy than that of opening the Indus, as regarded commercial objects. The results of the policy *concealed* under this specious pretext, have been the introduction of troops into the countries on and beyond the Indus, of some half-dozen steamers on the stream itself, employed for *warlike objects not for those of trade*.* There is besides great absurdity in *commercial* treaties with the States of central Asia, simply because there is no occasion for them. From ancient and prescribed usage, moderate and fixed duties are levied, trade is properly free, no goods are prohibited, and the more commerce is carried on, the greater advantage to the State. Where, then, is the benefit of commercial Treaties?”

As you have probably studied political œconomy in Europe, gentlemen, it is not improbable I shall startle you when I assert that, in every part of Asia in which for thirty years I served you and my country, that is, in Arabia, in Persia and Turkey, I invariably found as the head of the State became wealthy, the commerce of that State rapidly improved and increased, and *vice versâ* languished.

Affghanistan and the Panjaub, including a residence in those countries from 1826 to 1838. I strongly recommend those who wish to obtain a correct knowledge of the follies and wickednesses we have for some time past been practising in those countries, or desire to form a just estimate of the true characters of the principal actors in the sad scenes, to read these volumes with the utmost care and attention. The fourth volume contains fine specimens how honest and valuable men may be treated by unworthy ones “dressed in a little brief authority.”

* Vide Treaty 20th of April, 1832, Art. iii. No. 1.

The only solution I can give of this (to me) curious problem is, that either through the agency of Jews, Armenians, or Bannians, these rulers employed a very large portion of their accumulations in *commerce*, notwithstanding their Governments were purely despotic. The late acute Dean of Gloucester, Dr. Tucker, has, in pamphlets published during the first American War, proved past doubt there can be no project more silly than to pretend to increase the commerce of a country, and at the same time exercise against it every means of impoverishment and devastation.

From my own observation and experience, I could offer you instances, how much the public at different times have benefitted by such accumulations having been made by the rulers of Muscat, of Scinde, of Bushire and of the great vice-royalty of Bagdad;* and lastly, in my time, I might mention the kingdom of Persia, for H. M. Fath Ally Shah had *then* money always ready to be advanced on a very moderate interest (for that country), to merchants who traded to Constantinople, and

* The Pachalik of Bagdad, under Suliemaun Pacha, with whom I was appointed to reside, reached at that time from the mouth of the Shat al Arab, emptying itself into the Persian Gulf to the walls of Diarbekir. He had, under his Government, and of which he appointed the Governors, the following large cities, Bussora, on the Shat al Arab, Hillah, on the Euphrates, Kerkook, on the borders of Koordistan, Mousul, ancient Nineveh, Nisibin, Mardin, &c. He was guardian of the tombs at Nigef and Kerbelah. Turkish Courdistan was committed to his Government, and the great and powerful tribes of Montefik, Benicaled, Tye, and Chaub, were under his protection and paid him tribute in horses, camels, sheep, &c. Unquestionably he was then the most powerful Satrap in the Turkish empire.

through it to Venice, as well as to the eastward and northward of his kingdom. In Persia, this custom commenced under Shah Abbas the Great,* and more or less, according to the extent of the royal treasures, has continued ever since.†

* Vide Voyages de Pietro de la Valle, Sir John Chardin Niebuhur, &c.

† The following may serve to illustrate the opinion I have delivered. In the year 1798, when the French fleet was known to have sailed towards Egypt, having on board a very large military force, I was called before the great Lord Melville, Lord Spencer, Admiral Lord Duncan, the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the East India Company; and after that interview was appointed to reside at Bagdad, with a commission from his Majesty and the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, and with instructions to use every means to prevail on the Pacha to assist the Porte with money, and otherwise in its endeavours to defend Egypt against the invading French. The old Pacha was to the full as unwilling to receive me, as ever the Ameers could have been to receive a Stationary Resident from India at Hyderahad.

In passing through Constantinople, where circumstances compelled me to remain several days, I found the populace in an extreme state of excitement, from the very high price of that to them necessary article, coffee, in consequence of the usual supply through Egypt being stopped. I arrived at Bagdad early in September 1798, and there I found Coja Abdullah, the clever and intelligent Jew who formerly had resided at Bussora, and with whom I had then been engaged in several transactions of importance; and against whom in the year 1794 I had been deputed to Bagdad to complain to the Pacha of his conduct towards the factory at Bussora. Nevertheless, he and I had always privately continued on good terms. I now found him firmly fixed as the Pacha's *homme d'affaires*, and one of his ministers of finance. I soon communicated the state of things as to coffee at Constantinople to Coja Abdullah, intimating at the same time an opinion, that a *coup de commerce*, very advantageous to the Pacha, might be struck. Shortly after, I was desired to attend at the palace; my first reception there had been cool and sullen; this, my second, was warm and cordial. There were only the Pacha, myself and Coja Abdullah, present; and the last was instantly commissioned to purchase the whole stock of coffee, then on hand at Bagdad, amounting to upwards of 600 camel loads, at a price affording the merchants a liberal profit; and I was desired to inform our minister at the Porte, that such a supply would instantly depart, on camels, from Bagdad for the capital. In the meantime, a supply for the seraglio and the great officers of State, was despatched by Tatars and arrived within 17 days; and the camel consignment arrived just in time to render the departure of the Vizier for Egypt easy and pleasant, instead of what, before its arrival, it promised to be, riotous and rebellious. The coffee merchants gained 30 per cent., and on this the Pacha, as he sent

If there be any truth in the hypothesis I have advanced, let us reflect that Lords Auckland and Ellenborough have beggared, devastated, and plundered Affghanistan and Scinde; and that in the latter, a reported treasure of one million sterling has been scattered to the winds; and after this they talk of the immense advantage of the *commercial*

it as a remittance of *revenue*, clapped 50 more; so that this great consignment was highly useful to the Porte, to the Pacha, to the Merchants and to Coja Abdullah, who had very handsome brokerage. During the time the French remained in Egypt, the Pacha remitted to the assistance of the Vizier, *nearer a million* than half a million sterling. These remittances were four-fifths made in goods sent to be sold at Constantinople, and the proceeds transmitted in bills to the Vizier. This wonderfully benefitted the Bagdad merchants and the city. The reward I received for this (I hope I may be allowed to call it) important piece of service, was increase of credit with the Pacha, and many years after, as appears from the following letter from Berto Pisani, Esq., first dragoman at the Porte, to Mr. Stratford Canning, then British Minister there, a very flattering remembrance of it by the Sublime Porte.

Pera, August 20, 1811.

“ Sir,—I think it my duty to inform you that, on my arrival at the Porte this morning, the Reis Effendi sent for their official Dragoman, Prince Marousi, in a hurry, and deputed him with a message to H. H. the Caimachan, the purport of which I could not hear.

The Dragoman went up and soon after returned with an answer to the Reis Effendi, and an invitation to me to wait on H. H. Accordingly I waited on the Caimachan, conducted officially by the Dragoman of the Porte, when Ahmed Schiaker Pacha (the name of the present Caimachan) gave me the politest reception, inquired after your own, and Sir Harford Jones's health, and then in the name of his Imperial Majesty, the Grand Signor, charged me to deliver to Sir Harford a rich diamond snuff-box, (valued at £1,000) of which H. I. M. desires his acceptance as a public mark of his satisfaction of that minister's friendly conduct, during his late residence in Persia, as well as the services he had also rendered the Sublime Porte *on various occasions*.

The Caimachan dismissed me with the same civility with which he admitted me into his presence at first; charging me with particular compliments to yourself and Sir Harford, to whom he wishes a good voyage.

I have the honor to be, with perfect truth and respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

(Signed) B. PISANI.

Stratford Canning, Esq. &c. &c. &c.

opening of the Indus—with whom and to whom? with and to the inhabitants of countries ruined to the ground. If this is not talking nonsense, tell me what is?

I have now, I think, pretty well done with Burnes's flourish of trumpets on the *commercial opening of the Indus*; and as the poor man has been taken from amongst us in so very sad a manner, I shall forbear to say that, which a regard to truth would otherwise compel me to say. As to the folly of Lords Auckland and Ellenborough in listening to such wild projects, one might laugh at them, had not the *commercial opening* of the Indus at the same time combined a concealed purpose of robbing the poor Ameers of their country, and even, if necessary to the completion of the plan, of reducing those Princes to beggary and exile, as well as massacring thousands of their unoffending and faithful subjects. I have already shown my talented friend, Mr. Masson's opinion of the *commercial opening of the Indus quoad commerce* to be a gross fallacy, and in this opinion, which I consider a sound one, I sincerely join, repeating the following just sentiments of Dr. Smollett:—

“ From thirst of rule what dire disasters flow!
 How flames that guilt ambition taught to glow!
 Wish gains on wish, desire surmounts desire,
 Hope fans the blaze, and envy feeds the fire;
 From crime to crime aspires the madd'ning soul,
 Nor laws, nor oaths, nor fear its rage controul,
 'Till Heaven at length awakes, supremely just,
 And levels all such tow'ring schemes in dust.”

The time has arrived, it appears to me, that a stop should be put to your Governor-General being permitted to run away to Simla from his council, which alone I conceive to be legally empowered to advise him. Surely you may always command amongst your civil servants, *in different parts of India*, men of sufficient talents, acquirements, and experience, to justify you in appointing them to that high station, and I must add men of sufficient honesty to prevent, if possible, your Governors-General entering on schemes prejudicial to your interest, and what is in the end of infinitely more importance, the INTEREST OF THE NATIVES OF INDIA ; or at least, by timely and well-drawn up protests to forewarn him of the danger of pursuing the advice of quacks and speculators. I would also humbly advise you to remodel, and that immediately, the places of residence for your great Officers of State. Appoint the palace at Agra for the residence of your Governor-General and the present Supreme Council, to be styled henceforward the *Council of India*, *quasi* as selected from your best servants at each of your Presidencies, one from Calcutta, one from Madras, one from Bombay. By this means, if a measure regarding the Bengal provinces is to be determined on, the Governor-General will find a Member qualified to give him sound advice, and so with the possessions on the coast of Coromandel and Malabar, &c. The Commander-in-Chief always to be the second Member of the Council of India.

Let the palace at Calcutta become the residence of the *Governor of Bengal*, the Boards of Trade, Revenue, &c. to remain there, and the heads of these Boards to become *ex officio* his council. If this hint should be thought worthy notice, any further detail from me is unnecessary.

Lord Ellenborough, at the commencement of his negotiations with the Ameers of Scinde, acknowledged them as *independent Princes*. We shall soon see the manner in which he considers it fitting to treat an independent prince. It is purely his own; for I will answer, on my own responsibility, he cannot find a prototype of, or authority for, his proceedings with the Hyderabad princes in any work of diplomacy or national law. It is completely *sui generis*. I proceed to a slight examination of his extraordinary demand of spoliating the Shikar gâh, or hunting preserves of these princes, on the banks of the Indus. I would however previously ask the favor of your opinion on a supposed case, which I will state, as nearly as I am able, to resemble that of Lord Ellenborough and the Scinde princes.

Suppose the king of France, whom at that time I believe to have been Phillipe I^{er}, had taken it into his head to send an envoy to William Rufus, asking for the use of the Southampton water skirting his favorite new forest, and that William, rather than quarrel with his powerful neighbour, and perhaps liege lord, acceded to the request; that

shortly after this had been granted, another envoy from Phillipe arrived at the court of Rufus, and stated that Phillipe had formed *a scheme* in conjunction with some French merchants and others, of establishing an annual fair at Rumsey in the forest, and that therefore he insisted his good friend Rufus should immediately dis-forest, and dismantle of trees, all that part of his beautiful and favorite hunting ground, or Shikar gâh, lying between Rumsey and Eling, at the head of the Southampton water, in order that the French merchants passing and re-passing to the fair at Rumsey might be accommodated with an easy and good road. The case thus supposed and stated is, *me judice*, sufficiently parallel to that of Lord Ellenborough and the unfortunate Ameers, to enable me to ask you, if you esteem a refusal on the part of Rufus would have formed an equitable *casus belli gerandi* between Phillipe and Rufus. There is however this difference, and, I admit, not an unimportant one; Rufus had, in case Phillipe attempted to carry his request into execution by force, the means of resistance, and perhaps also of making the Frenchman smart for the insult offered to him by the request. The poor Ameers had no resource but *submission*.

Some of you, Gentlemen, are as well acquainted as myself, with the mode of life, habits, prejudices, pursuits, pleasures and amusements of Asiatic princes; such will easily conceive the horror and disgust with which the Ameers must have received

a proposition, for not only invading the privacy (on which their value principally depended) of their favorite hunting grounds, but in fact for destroying and breaking them up altogether : to those of your Honorable body who have not the advantage of such knowledge, I know not how I can better convey an idea of what, on this occasion, must have been the feeling of these poor princes, than by asking you to suppose, that an act of Parliament had passed, authorizing certain *schemers* to cut a railroad or canal through the Duke of Devonshire's splendid conservatories, beautiful pleasure grounds and park at Chatsworth. The hunting grounds on the banks of the Indus were to the Scindian princes, what the elegancies at Chatsworth are to the Duke. The difference in the affair would be, that the first party *were independent princes* before the satrap who annoyed and insulted them was born, and his Grace *a subject*, bound to obey the laws of his country. It is probable therefore the Ameers would feel the loss of their pleasures and amusements more severely than the Duke would do his.

If the case I have just supposed had happened to the Duke of Devonshire, I am satisfied there are several of your body who would not only have participated in the regret His Grace would naturally have suffered, but have been willing, if it lay with you, to agree to any reparation that could have been made to the Duke, for the loss of things which afford him so much pleasure, and which in some

sort are appendages to his high station. On a mere case of suppositious grievance, if I imagine such feelings to arise in your minds, may I not hope, and even assure myself, that in the case of a real grievance, exceeding the suppositious one in the same proportion that the stream of the Indus exceeds in magnitude that of the little rivulet running under my window, may I not hope, I say, that your feelings will be roused in all their strength, and in the warmest manner, to vote such reparation as can now be made to the suffering Ameers ?

Particularly when I shew you, from evidence which can neither be denied nor disputed, that the insult and the injury exercised on the Ameers, in claiming to destroy their hunting preserves, was as wanton as it was unnecessary and profitless to you !

Gentlemen, read this admirable paragraph of a letter, dated 10th December, 1836, from Sir Henry Pottinger to the Secretary to the Government in India, which in my humble opinion, great as his services in China may have been, does him more real honor than the distinguished part he has acted in that country.

Para. 46.—“Of the great advantage of the measure pointed at in the 9th Article, my personal observation on all my trips to Scinde has fully satisfied me ; but should steam-vessels be introduced on the river, or even with the warehousing system, much of the necessity for removing the jungle will be done away. It was however as well to secure the permission, and the Ameers only required that their Shikargahs shall not be molested. This is so reasonable a request that I instantly acceded to it. In fact when I

recollected that perhaps the only perfectly happy part of their Highnesses' lives is passed in sporting excursions, in which they seem to be for the time relieved from the cares and annoyances of the capital, and to experience unalloyed enjoyment, I felt I had not only no right to ask them to make a sacrifice of the kind, but that it would have been wrong to do so; and besides this undeniable argument, I do not consider that the preserves would materially (*IF AT ALL*) prevent tracking were the trees that fall into, and now remain in the water, along the banks at those parts of the river, removed, *and for doing which, permission has been granted to us, though the people of the country are prohibited from touching them at their peril.* Indeed the Shikargahs are watched and prized with all the care and anxiety that *were ever* bestowed on royal forests in any part of Europe, and which still are shewn to game preserves in our own enlightened country. We must therefore bear all these facts in mind, before we can properly appreciate the Ameers' disposition to meet our wishes in this hitherto ill-understood *and apparently trifling point.*"

With this evidence on record before his eyes, can any man of common sense say Lord Ellenborough, in pushing the spoliation of the Shikar gah to a *sine qua non*, had any motive but one unworthy of himself and disgraceful to his country; namely, to prove whether the Ameers would tamely and quietly submit to a state of vassalage, or if they had still spirit and courage enough left to resist,—to thereby furnish himself with some sort of complaint as a *point d'appui*, on which to rest the horrible injustice and cruelty he was then *ordered* or *meditated* to commit against them. Now is your time, Gentlemen, to say, and I trust you are able to say, "Orders from us to ruin the Ameers, and dispossess them of their country, he had none." If this is asserted, it

must be followed in Parliament, to save the character of our country, by this solemn question, By, or from whom, were such orders given? If this meets with no avowal, the crime rests on your Governor-General, and for the honor of the nation, for the sake of humanity, shall he not be called to a rigid and strict account!! I am not personally known to Lord Ellenborough, therefore it is impossible I should be prejudiced either for or against him. I censure his public conduct apart from the individual. In his private character, he may be very amiable for what I know. Verres even had private friends in the Roman Senate!

God forbid that I should bring an accusation against Lord Ellenborough that cannot be fully substantiated from public documents delivered to Parliament.

I have already detained you longer than I intended, though I assure you the subject is by no means exhausted; however, there are a few points to be touched on, I cannot very well omit: namely, 1st, What is *called the treacherous attack on Major Outram*; 2ndly, *The little real value the possession of the Scinde Territory can be of to you*; and 3rdly, *Notes by Major Outram of his conference with the Ameers of Scinde*, the 8th and 9th of February, 1843.

On the first point I must beg to refer you to the 9th paragraph of the letter, which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, of the 11th July last, addressed

to Sir Robert Peel ; and that on this head, both by the law of nations, and every rule of *civilized* diplomacy, the fault of what occurred after receiving the late treaty, ratified, rested on the head of Major Outram, and not on that of the Ameers ; he alone can be, and ought to be, held responsible for it ; and this, if required, I shall be ready to prove.

On the 2nd point I will trouble you with the perusal of the few following words, sent to me by an excellent friend whose judgment I hold in great respect, whose knowledge of the countries to the westward of Bombay, is not inferior to that of any Gentleman in your direction ; and whose name I should be proud to mention had he given me permission to do so :—

“ It might easily be shewn that *it would not be*
 “ *advisable for us to possess the country (Scinde),*
 “ *even had it come to us in a legitimate way—THAT*
 “ IT NEVER CAN PAY ITS EXPENSES—*that its occupation*
 “ *involves us in interminable quarrels with a bold and*
 “ *restless people, who have little to lose and who*
 “ *are untameable**—*that it would at all times have*
 “ *been desirable to have had an independent native*
 “ *power between us and the Beloochees—*that by this
 “ accession of territory, we shall have to increase
 “ our army, whose ranks will be continually thinned
 “ by the extreme heat and malaria—that, in A
 “ COMMERCIAL POINT OF VIEW, NOTHING IS OBTAINED,
 “ for having established emporia for our merchandize

* And who are, besides, the most bigotted religious fanatics in the world.

“at Karachee, Shikarpore, and one or two other
 “places higher up the Indus ; we must leave the
 “dissemination of our goods to the native merchants,
 “as we have been accustomed to do in Turkey,
 “Persia, and Arabia—and *it is not by creating in the*
 “*population of central Asia, feelings of hatred and*
 “*distrust, we can incline them to more extensive*
 “*commercial relations.*”

The opinion delivered above, appears to me a very good specimen of sound practical wisdom.

3rd. On Major Outram’s conference with the Ameers of Scinde, on the 8th and 9th February, 1843, I must trouble you with rather a short extract, taken from the papers delivered to Parliament, page 502.

“ Present :

“ **AMEERS OF LOWER SCINDE**—Meer Nusseer Khan and Sons, Meer Mohammed Khan (Meer Sobdar Khan and Ally Hossein were visited separately).

“ **AMEERS OF UPPER SCINDE**—Meer Rostum Khan and Sons, Meer Nusseer Khan and Meer Mohammed Khan.

“ The following is the purport of the discussion which followed, and which was prolonged upwards of three hours by a repetition of *the same arguments*.

“ I then inquired of their Highnesses if they were prepared to subscribe the new treaties lately tendered them.

“ *Ameers of Hyderabad*—Producing the former treaties, and Meer Nusseer Khan, especially pointing

to one dated April 1838, and signed by Lord Auckland, which pledged never to covet any portion of that Ameer's territory, or one reah (one farthing) of his property. 'Why is it that you now make new demands? Four years have only passed since your Sirkar (*i. e.* Government) thus pledged nothing more should be required of us.'

"*Commissioner Outram*—(*More solito*, vide Rajah of Sattara). 'Those treaties have been broken by your acts. The British Government is compelled* to require these new stipulations.'

"*Ameers*.—We deny that we have infringed one iota of the existing treaties—in what have we done so?

"*Commissioner*.—Particulars were delivered to your Highnesses in the letter from Sir C. Napier, presented by Lieut. Stanley with the draft of the new treaty."—Vide Parliamentary Papers, notes of Major Outram *in extens.o.*

Now, Gentlemen, let me call your most serious consideration to a point well deserving of it; that is, how you stand with most of the States of Asia for a reputation of good faith and *honest* observance of the treaties you have concluded with them. I write it with reluctance—but with truth; there is not one of them which cannot, and does not, accuse

* Potius. The poor Ameers *were compelled to accept them*. I presume you have *redite* of Brennus's compendious and effectual mode of expounding treaties by casting his sword into the Balance and exclaiming, "*Væ victis!*" You have here before you a lovely specimen of this sort of argument; but that which was natural to a rude Gaul, in *ab. urbe con.* 364, becomes damnably if imitated by a polished English gentleman in the nineteenth century!!

you of wickedly and wantonly infringing treaties with them, whenever you conceived it was your interest to do so ; and that you had force enough to compel that State, to which you professed friendship, to submit to your injustice ; you approached each in their turns with the olive branch in your hands, and when they had given you the right hand of friendship, you then drew forth the dagger from beneath the robe of hypocrisy, and stabbed them to heart !

In *Arabia*, turn to the business of *Aden*.

In *Persia*, turn to treaties concluded, abrogated, renewed, reconstructed, and always construed as best suited your advantage ; and lastly, the country, in time of peaceful intercourse with the Shah, invaded on the most frivolous pretence !!!

Affghanistan, invaded, plundered, and ruined, on no better ground than *an unfounded* and unjustifiable *suspicion of an intention to injure us*.

In *India*, engagements concluded with the *Rajah of Sattara*, violated in a shameful manner, the *Rajah deposed* after a *mock trial*, composed of men who evidently possessed neither *common sense*, *common political honesty*, nor a common knowledge of the commonest principles, of either the law, the common law of nations, or of those by which justice is administered in their own country.

And lastly, at which humanity recoils : the poor *Amcers of Scinde*, though apparently guarded with seven *worthless treaties*, are plundered, ruined,

exiled, imprisoned like felons, and their wives and families consigned to beggary, and as far as lies in your power to disgrace!!!

Unless your Governor-General can prove, which for your sakes, Gentlemen, I trust he may not be able to do, that he was *jussus confundere fœdera*, the wickedness of the act will lie at his door; he will, in such case, hereafter have to account for it before God! But he ought in the mean time to be called on to account for it before men!* In my humble station I agree with the great Roman Orator,

“Iniquissimam Pacem justissimo bello antefero.”—CICERO.

I have the honor again to subscribe myself,

Gentlemen,

Your old and faithful Servant,

HARFORD JONES BRYDGES.

BOULTIBROOKE, 27th October, 1843.

P. S. From intelligence brought by the last Indian mail, it seems not unlikely you will soon have on your hands fresh war to the eastward—where will all this end?

H. J. B.

* I have already mentioned Mexico. I request your attention to the following passage in an elaborate and beautiful Work, “*The Conquest of Mexico*,” which has just appeared from the pen of Mr. Prescott.

“The Governors of these Territories, having entire control over the fortunes of their subjects, enjoyed an authority far more despotic than that of the Sovereign himself. They were generally men of rank and personal consideration; the distance from the mother-country withdrew their conduct from searching scrutiny, and when that did occur they usually had interest and means of corruption at command sufficient to shield them from punishment.”—*Conquest of Mexico*, vol. 1, p. 216.