Reply to a Pamphlet Entitled "India & Lord Ellenborough" (1845)

Zeta

REPLY

TO

A PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED

"INDIA & LORD ELLENBOROUGH."

By ZETA.

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REPLY,

&c. &c.

THE attention of the political world has latterly been excited to a degree somewhat unusual at this dull period of the year, by the appearance of a Whig pamphlet, with the taking title of "INDIA *and* LORD ELLENBOROUGH;" in which the conduct of the late Governor-General is handled with much bitterness, and, as is usual with the party from which this *brochure* emanates, with gross and palpable injustice.

Having formerly undertaken the defence of Lord Ellenborough in the columns of the *Morning Post* (at a time when I was the favored correspondent of that journal), I feel to a certain extent personally interested in the vindication of his Lordship's Indian policy; and I have therefore imposed upon myself the task of replying to the several arguments—good, bad, and indifferent—which are advanced by this new champion of the Whig faction. Under ordinary circum-

stances, I should have craved permission, as usual, to convey my sentiments to the world through the medium of the *Morning Herald;* but the question to be discussed is so complicated, and the arguments to be advanced so voluminous, that, had I adopted my customary channel of communication, I should have been compelled to solicit from the Editor an amount of space much larger than he could conveniently spare or I reasonably expect. Such being the case, I have resolved to charter a vessel of my own, and, in imitation of my Whig antagonist, to appear before the public in the character of a pamphleteer. I am free to confess, that I do not greatly admire this mode of publication. The age of political pamphlets has long passed away in company with full-bottomed wigs and three-cornered cocked hats. In former times, the political pamphleteer was a personage of immense importance;—Ministers stood in awe of him,—party leaders were guided and governed by him,—and the general public listened to his revelations with profound respect. This point is curiously illustrated in Hawkesworth's *Life of* DEAN SWIFT. "On the 27th of November, 1711," says the biographer, "just ten days before Parliament met, SWIFT published his pamphlet, entitled '*The Conduct of the Allies;*' and before the 28th of January, above eleven thousand were sold, seven editions having been printed

in England and three in Ireland. The Tory members, who spoke in both Houses, drew all their arguments from it; and the resolutions, which were printed in the Votes, and which would never have passed but for '*The Conduct of the Allies*,' were little more than quotations from it."* These were the glorious days of pamphleteering,—departed never to return! In this age of railway rapidity, the communication of knowledge must be regulated by the universal desire to "push along;" and hence the daily press has now become the great engine of political controversy,—superseding the old political pamphlet, just as the rattling railway carriage has superseded the old slow and steady stage coach. As I said before, I am no great admirer of the ancient mode of communicating with the public through the pages of a pamphlet; but, as the Whig writer has thought proper to adopt it, I have deemed it my best plan to follow in the same track.

The object which the assailants of the late Governor-General of India have in view by the publication of their contemptible pamphlet at this juncture, cannot for a moment be mistaken. The Earl of Ellenborough, having been recalled by the Court of Directors without the assignment of any specific ground of recall, and in defiance

* Some Account of the Life of Dr. Swift, p. 67.

of the repeated remonstrances of Her Majesty's Ministers, who are alone empowered to instruct the Governor-General of India, and who are responsible for his proceedings,—the Earl of Ellenborough, I say, has now returned to England,—prepared to meet his accusers face to face, and to defend the whole course of his Indian policy from the moment of his arrival at Calcutta in February, 1842, to the moment of his departure in June, 1844. Of this fact the Whigs are fully aware,—they know the Earl of Ellenborough too well to suppose for an instant that he will remain silent under the load of calumny which has been heaped upon him in his absence; and hence, fearful of the effect which will be produced by the Noble Earl's anticipated defence, they have hastily brought out their coarse and scandalous pamphlet, in order to prejudice the public mind against him. The Whigs were ever a mean set of pettifogging politicians; but this attempt to condemn a man unheard, is a specimen of meanness which is without a parallel even in the fruitful annals of Whig trickery.

A variety of ingenious conjectures have been hazarded respecting the authorship of the pamphlet, "India and Lord Ellenborough." By one party it is strenuously urged, that the author *must* be a member of the Court of Directors, because the said Directors cannot fail to see the necessity of furnishing the public with some ex-

planation of their abrupt and arbitrary measure of recall. Others again argue not less strenuously, that Lord Auckland has madly rushed into print,—jealous, as it is hinted, of the Conservative Governor-General who so triumphantly repaired the blunders of his Whig predecessor. By a third party, the pamphlet is attributed to Mr. T. B. Macaulay, merely because the right hon. gentleman has been in India, and on that account considers himself a very great authority in all discussions respecting Indian affairs. For my own part, I am not disposed to adopt either of these ingenious conjectures, but incline rather to the opinion of a fourth and more numerous class of persons, who insist that the author is neither more nor less than *a penny-a-liner* connected with "*the Times!*" The character of the Whig pamphlet is certainly such as to bear out this latter opinion; for it is a tedious wire-drawn long-winded affair, and in fact just the sort of trashy production which might be expected to emanate from the pen of one, who, being accustomed to scribble by measure, is thence naturally more anxious about the quantity than the quality of his composition.

The author of "India and Lord Ellenborough" has extended his remarks to the length of 123 closely-printed pages, of which the first 24 pages are devoted to a history of British India. The discovery of this fact excited in me a mingled

feeling of surprise and apprehension. I had invested *half-a-crown* in the purchase of this Whig pamphlet, and I began to tremble for the safety of my investment. Surely, I exclaimed, I have not been bamboozled into paying *two shillings and sixpence,* good and lawful coin, for a stale description of British India, filched from guide-books and gazetteers! The anticipation of such a dead take-in was truly dreadful; and yet what else could I reasonably anticipate from the writer's ominous exordium? I open the pamphlet in the expectation of beholding a smart attack upon Lord Ellenborough's Indian policy; and to my utter amazement I find myself involved in a tedious and twaddling description of our Indian possessions! "India," says this learned Theban at the outset of his remarks, "is no longer the land of enchantment and romance;—it has been transferred from the realms of fancy to that of fact;"—a piece of information for which we are bound to feel grateful, although we are cruelly left in the dark as to the precise period when the said "transfer from the realms of fancy to that of fact" was happily effected. In the second paragraph of his remarks, the writer intimates, that "opinions differ as to the extent of country properly comprehended under the name of India," and then proceeds to favour the world with his own opinion upon the subject,—adding, by way of augmenting the reader's stock of knowledge,

that "the soil and climate are peculiarly suited to the production of various commodities." At page 4, the writer startles his readers with the novel announcement, that "India gives to Great Britain a vast accession of political power;" and in the succeeding page, this tremendous quidnunc hazards a conjecture, that "were India lost," the possessors of East-India stock might possibly have to whistle for their dividends! Arriving at page 6 of this interesting publication, we there learn, that "politically, commercially, and financially, the safety of India is an object of paramount importance to Great Britain;" a piece of information which is quickly followed by another equally new and surprising, to wit, that "great empires have arisen from small beginnings!" After proceeding with this sort of twaddle through more than a dozen dreary pages, the Whig writer condescends at length to throw some light upon his motives in giving publicity to the pamphlet before us. He says, p. 24:

"It will be evident from the above sketch, that "the policy adopted by successive Parliaments, "from the year 1784 downwards, has been to "secure to the Court of Directors of the East "India Company a large and responsible share in "the Government of that country, and that to "that end very extensive powers have been re-"served to the Court. Among the most import-"ant of these is *the power of recall.*"

Here then we perceive the Whig writer's real object in assailing the Earl of Ellenborough, which is neither more nor less than to justify the abrupt recall of that Nobleman, in opposition to the urgent and repeated remonstrances of Her Majesty's Government. In furtherance of this object, and as a preliminary to his attack upon Lord Ellenborough, the writer devotes fourteen pages of his pamphlet to the needless task of proving what no one denies, namely, that "from the year 1784 downwards," the Court of Directors have possessed the power of recalling the Governor-General of India. The question at issue, and which the Directors have themselves placed at issue by their arbitrary removal of Lord Ellenborough, is, not the legal existence of the power of recall, but *the propriety of its continuance.* Is it fitting, is it just, is it consistent with common sense, that the Court of Directors, who are not responsible for the conduct of the Governor-General of India, should possess the power of recalling that officer in defiance of the wishes of the Ministers of the Crown, who are alone responsible for his conduct? This, I repeat, is the real question at issue; and with every feeling of respect for the Court of Directors, with every desire to give them full credit for prudence and sagacity, I must say, that, in my humble opinion, their possession of the power of recalling the Governor-General of India is an anomaly, which

ought to be got rid of as soon as possible. In the hands of the Directors, this power of recall is an *irresponsible* power, and, as such, it is utterly repugnant to the spirit of the British Constitution. The Whig writer argues, that the Court of Directors is *not* free from responsibility; but his argument upon this point amounts to mere assertion, unsupported by a shadow of proof. To whom are the Directors responsible? An answer to this question is fortunately furnished by the Whig writer himself. "If," he says, p. 37, "any quality were selected as peculiarly characteristic of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, it would be caution; for *every member of the Court has a pecuniary stake in India.*" This is unquestionably true; and herein consists the sole responsibility of the East India Director,—*he is responsible to his own breeches' pocket!* Upon the whole, after a careful and deliberate examination of the subject in all its bearings, I am strongly inclined to agree with Lord Brougham in thinking, that the possession of the power of recall, now for the first time exercised, invests the Court of Directors with "a most anomalous and extraordinary jurisdiction."

Having thus stated my opinion, briefly and plainly, upon the new and delicate question of diminishing the political power of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, I will now apply myself to the main object of my present

writing, namely, the vindication of Lord Ellenborough's policy and conduct during the brief term of his government. The Whig pamphleteer directs his attention to three leading points in the policy of the late Governor-General, which may be thus classed: 1. The operations in AFFGHANISTAN,—2. The conquest of SINDE,—3. The military brush under the walls of GWALIOR. "Affghanistan and Sinde," says the writer, "furnish the field upon which Lord Ellenborough's reputation is to be established, if established it can be. On his policy in minor matters there is not room to dwell, but his conduct in regard to the Mahratta state, subject to the House of Scindia, is too extraordinary to be altogether passed over." I accept the challenge here given;—I undertake to establish Lord Ellenborough's reputation as Governor-General of India, and utterly to demolish the whole fabric of calumnious charges, which has been so carefully prepared by the Whig pamphleteer.

And, first in point of time as also of importance, let us turn our attention to the operations in AFFGHANISTAN, subsequently to the arrival of Lord Ellenborough at Calcutta on the 28th February, 1842.

The bill of indictment, which the Whig writer has prepared under this head, is amazingly voluminous,—extending over forty pages of his pamphlet; but he who peruses these forty pages in

the expectation of finding either fair or rational argument, will perform as bootless a task as the fabled quidnunc, who hunted for a grain of wheat in a bushel of chaff! In the course of my political experience, I have had occasion to wade through divers dull and heavy controversial effusions; but I do not recollect ever to have met with so trashy an affair as that now under consideration. This remark applies generally to the whole of the pamphlet entitled "India and Lord Ellenborough," but more especially to that portion of it which has reference to the military movements in AFFGHANISTAN. Garbled extracts from official documents, ingeniously patched and dovetailed so as grossly to pervert their real meaning, —assertions, unsupported by a tittle of corroborative evidence, boldly advanced in one paragraph and disproved in the next,—petty quibbling and hair-splitting, which would disgrace a tenth-rate pleader in the Westminster Court of Requests,—coarse and unmeaning invectives against the late Governor-General, coupled with praises, equally unmeaning, of every other official personage, high and low, from Sir Jasper Nicolls, the Commander-in-Chief, down to Mr. Clerk, the Political Agent,—these are the leading characteristics of that portion of the Whig pamphlet which treats of Lord Ellenborough's Affghan policy. I had some idea, in the first instance, of quoting and replying to the writer's remarks paragraph by pa-

ragraph; but it would really be a sheer waste of time to attempt anything of the kind with such a mass of verbiage as that now before me. One might as well attempt to make a decent garment out of the ragged remnant of a mendicant's shirt! Under all circumstances, my best plan will be to give, in his own words, the substance of the writer's charge against the late Governor-General, and then proceed to refute it,—not by special pleading, not by a garbled and distorted representation of the progress of events,—but by a plain straightforward reference to notorious facts, and by the aid of official documents of unquestioned authenticity.

After stating, that "it must be admitted, in ordinary candour, that on the arrival of Lord Ellenborough in India, his situation was neither enviable nor easy," and furthermore, that "the earliest impressions and earliest declarations of his Lordship were such as became a British Governor-General;" the writer opens his attack upon Lord Ellenborough (p. 40), after the following fashion:—

"Thus much was well; but how did his Lord-
"ship fulfil the expectation which he had thus
"excited? He found that *considerable prepara-*
"*tions had been made for re-commencing opera-*
"*tions in Affghanistan,* and he proceeded to
"complete and to add to them. He left Calcutta
"and his Council, in order that he might be

" nearer to the seat of war, and give the weight
" of his personal influence and the advantage of
" his personal superintendence to the affairs in
" progress on the frontier. This seemed to indi-
" cate not only great energy, but great determi-
" nation of purpose; and those who observed
" the conduct of the Governor-General,—who
" knew the character of the officers and men at
" his disposal,—and who thought, moreover, of
" the great objects before him,—the military re-
" putation of Great Britain to be re-established,
" —the terror of its name to be restored,—treach-
" ery to be punished,—and its surviving victims,
" comprising women and children as well as men,
" to be rescued; those who felt the importance
" of these objects, and who witnessed or heard
" of the restless vivacity of the Governor-General,
" never doubted that all would be well,—never
" supposed for a moment, that any check would
" be put upon the ardour of the military com-
" manders,—that any obstacle would be inter-
" posed between their desire for action and the
" gratification of it; or that he, who had thought
" the prosecution of the war a matter of so much
" importance, as for the sake or aiding it, to
" separate himself from his Council and make a
" journey of several hundred miles, was prepared
" to acquiesce in so pitiful a termination of the
" labours of himself and his predecessor, as that
" of merely getting the troops in Affghanistan

" back again to India. Yet thus it was. Some " ill success befel the British cause,—Ghuznee " was surrendered to the enemy; General Eng- " land failed in his attempt to join General Nott " at Candahar; and further, a bad spirit was un- " derstood to prevail in a part of the force under " General Pollock. The new Governor-General, " it became apparent, in spite of his high pur- " posings, was not a man to encounter difficul- " ties or persevere under discouragements,—his " moral courage oozed away as he approached " the scene of action, and the 're-establishment " of our military reputation—the decisive blow " at the Affghans'—and the safety of our pri- " soners—were all cast to the winds. On the " 19th April, General Nott was ordered to destroy " Kelat-i-Ghilzie, to evacuate Candahar, and to " fall back to Quetta."

We have here, in his own words, the sum and substance of the Whig pamphleteer's charge against the late Governor-General of India, which amounts in effect to this,—that Lord Ellenborough enunciated his Indian policy with all the bluster of a bully, and carried it out with all the pusillanimity of a poltroon. In support of this monstrous charge, the writer flounders through a lengthy elaborate argument, which I do not hesitate to characterize as the most contemptible specimen of controversial imbecility that I ever remember to have met with,—being

frivolous in its character, atrociously unfair towards the nobleman against whom it is directed, utterly destitute of coherence and consistency, and in many parts so muddled and confused as to be altogether incomprehensible. As a sample of the manner in which the Whig writer conducts his case, let me beg the reader to refer, *en passant*, to page 44 of the pamphlet. "The burden of Lord Ellenborough's instructions," says the writer, "was *retire* — fall back — get towards India as fast as you can—leave the Affghans to themselves, and by consequence leave the British prisoners to be maltreated and murdered by those, whom our pusillanimity will thus relieve from the restraint hitherto imposed by their fears." This, we are told by the Whig pamphleteer, was "the unvarying tenor" of Lord Ellenborough's language,—"the burden of his instructions;" and yet we are informed by this same writer in the very same page of his pamphlet, that "on the 28th of April, the Noble Lord caused no less than three letters to be written to General Pollock,—one intimating his belief in the reports of the death of Shah Shoojah; a second giving permission to treat with a *de facto* government for the exchange of prisoners; and a third, the crowning letter of all, announcing that the aspect of affairs in Upper Affghanistan appeared to be such, that his Lordship could not but contemplate the possi-

bility of General Pollock having been led *to advance upon and occupy the city of Cabool!*" This is a specimen of our author's consistency. In the following page, the worthy gentleman (who, like *Iago*, is "nothing if not critical"), quarrels with the mode of expression which Lord Ellenborough adopted in alluding to the possibility of an advance to Cabool. "The Noble Lord," he says, "speaks of marching to Cabool as coolly 'as maids of thirteen do of puppy dogs!' At one time, to advance is treated almost as much beyond rational contemplation as a journey to the moon; at another, the march of an army from Jellalabad to Cabool is spoken of as lightly as a walk from London to Highgate." This passage will enable the reader to judge of the general style of remark which the Whig writer has thought proper to adopt in discussing the grave and important question of Lord Ellenborough's Indian policy. I give the passage merely as "a sample of the sack;"—the same sort of frivolous absurdity of argument is to be found in every page of the pamphlet.

To return, however, to the main charge of the Whig writer, as set forth in the paragraph which I have quoted above. If any person were to read this paragraph without possessing a previous knowledge of the facts of the case, he would naturally enough conclude, that Lord Ellenborough, having been suddenly sent out to India

to supersede Lord Auckland, for no other purpose than that of reversing his policy, had basely, treacherously, and with eager haste abandoned an advantageous position in Affghanistan, which had been gained by the superior wisdom and energy of his Whig predecessor, and for the future maintenance of which ample provision had been made by the aforesaid Whig functionary. "On his arrival at Calcutta," says the writer of the pamphlet, "Lord Ellenborough found that *considerable preparations had been made for recommencing operations in Affghanistan.*" Now, what are the real facts of the case? Instead of finding that "considerable preparations," or indeed any preparations at all, had been made for "re-commencing" the campaign in Affghanistan, Lord Ellenborough found, on arrival at Calcutta, on the 28th of February, 1842, that his Whig predecessor had resolved *to evacuate the country without delay*, and without making any effort, beyond that of a pecuniary negotiation with Akbar Khan, towards the release of the prisoners at Cabool. In a despatch, dated "Fort William, 2nd December, 1841," Lord Auckland thus wrote to Sir Jasper Nicolls, the Commander-in-Chief:—

"Your Excellency will have received full details of the important events, which appear to have placed our troops at Cabool and Jellalabad in a position of considerable difficulty. We have now to inform your Excellency, that *the only measure*, which we deem practicable and prudent to adopt at

present for the support of these troops, is to concentrate an effective brigade *at or near* PESHAWUR, by which a good front can be shewn towards the northern portion of Affghanistan, and a point of union and strength provided in case of emergency.

"Generally we would solicit your Excellency to exercise your discretion in regard to the details of these arrangements, and to give orders without reference to us,—bearing always in mind, that our present object is only to establish a point of support and demonstration at Peshawur, and NOT *to require the forcing at all hazards of the passes to Cabool.*"*

The reader will perceive from this extract, that, although Lord Auckland was constrained to acknowledge that our troops at Cabool and Jellalabad were in "a position of considerable difficulty," yet nevertheless "the only measure" which he deemed himself called upon to adopt, was, "to concentrate an effective brigade at or near Peshawur." Again, on the very next day, December 3rd, Lord Auckland, anxious only for a speedy retreat, reiterated his instructions to the Commander-in Chief. The following passages are worthy of notice :—

"Since addressing your Excellency yesterday, we have received an express from Mr. Clerk, of the 24th ultimo, containing information of the events at Cabool to the 9th, and at Jellalabad to the 15th ultimo.

"It would be vain to speculate upon the issue of the contest at Cabool; but in the extreme event of the military possession of that city, and the surrounding territory hav-

* Papers relating to Military Operations in Affghanistan, 1843, p. 33.

ing been entirely lost, *it is* NOT *our intention to direct new and extensive operations for the re-establishment of our supremacy throughout Affghanistan.*

"We can scarcely contemplate in such case, that there will be any circumstances or political objects of sufficient weight to induce us to desire to retain possession of the remainder of that country, and, unless such shall be obvious as arising from the course of events, we should wish our military and political officers *so to shape their proceedings as will best promote the end of retiring* WITH THE LEAST POSSIBLE DISCREDIT !!"*

The Whig pamphleteer tells us, that Lord Ellenborough "found that considerable preparations had been made for recommencing operations in Affghanistan." We learn, however, from the above passages in Lord Auckland's instructions to the Commander-in-Chief, that arrangements were made for the evacuation of Affghanistan *full three months before Lord Ellenborough's arrival in India*,—Lord Auckland's object being, *not* "to direct new operations for the re-establishment of our supremacy in Affghanistan," but in his own words,—and let those words never be forgotten!—"So to shape proceedings as best to promote the end of *retiring with the* LEAST POSSIBLE DISCREDIT!!" But it will perhaps be argued by his Lordship's friends and supporters, that this determination to retreat was formed before the murder of Sir William Macnaghten and the

* Papers, *page* 35.

subsequent disasters at Cabool. Very well. Let us afford to the Whig Governor-General all the benefit which can be derived from this argument, and, in order to do so, let us proceed to ascertain what measures of retaliation Lord Auckland adopted, when this murder and these disasters were made known to him.

The murder of Sir William Macnaghten, the British Envoy at Cabool, was announced to the Governor-General in a brief note from Major Pottinger, dated the 25th of December, 1841,—the Major stating at the same time, that the British troops were in a desperate condition at Cabool, and that a negotiation was in progress for their retirement from that place. On the 6th January, 1842, the troops marched from Cabool, "devoid of all provision for food, for shelter, or for safety; and thus, exposed to the attacks of enemies in the mountain defiles, and in the worst severity of a winter season, they became after two or three marches dispirited and disorganized, and were, as a military body, ultimately wholly destroyed or dispersed."* How did Lord Auckland act on the receipt of this melancholy intelligence? Did he make "considerable preparations" to retrieve the disasters of Cabool,—to re-establish our military reputation,—to punish the treacherous Affghans,—and to rescue his unhappy countrymen and

* Papers, *page* 103.

countrywomen from the hands of Akbar Khan? No such thing. Lord Auckland had decided upon retreating from Affghanistan *before* the murder of Sir William Macnaghten and the rout of the British troops at Cabool;—his Lordship was equally resolved upon a retreat *after* the occurrence of those disasters. The writer of the Whig pamphlet sneers at Lord Ellenborough on account of the frequency, with which he repeated his instructions for retirement to Generals Pollock and Nott; but we shall presently see, that Lord Auckland's instructions upon this point exhibit "damnable iteration."

On the 31st January, 1842, the Governor-General in Council transmitted to the Commander-in-Chief a letter of instruction, suggested by the calamitous course of events at Cabool; and the 7th paragraph of this letter runs as follows:—

"If Major-General Pollock can safely maintain the position of Jellalabad, he will, until otherwise ordered, continue to do so—and it will be highly desirable, that he should find an opportunity of asserting our military superiority in the open country in the Jellalabad neighbourhood. But Jellalabad is not a place, which the Governor-General desires to be kept at all hazards; and after succour shall have been given to Sir R. Sale's brigade there, and relief shall have been given to parties arriving from Cabool, the Governor-General in Council would wish Major-General Pollock *to arrange for withdrawal from it.**

* Papers, *page* 114.

Again, on the 10th of February, the Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief:—

"The intelligence, received since the transmission to you of our despatches of the 31st ultimo, has convinced us, that, excepting under some very unforeseen change, no sufficient advantage would be derived from an attempt to retain possession of Jellalabad.

"The fate of the gallant garrison at that place will probably have been determined before the intimation of our opinion to the above effect can reach Major-General Pollock. But we would request your Excellency without delay to inform the Major-General, that the main inducement for the maintenance of a post at Jellalabad, namely, that of being a point of support to any of our troops escaping from Cabool, having now unhappily passed away, it is the object of the Government that *he should confine himself to measures for withdrawing the Jellalabad garrison in safety to Peshawur.*"*

On the same day, a copy of this dispatch was transmitted to Mr. Clerk, the Governor-General's Agent, who was instructed frankly to inform the Lahore Durbar, that a resolution had been formed by his Lordship in Council "*not* to attempt the prosecutions in advance of the Khyber Pass."† Between the date of this dispatch and the 15th of February, some communication appears to have been received from Mahomed Akbar Khan, relative to the prisoners detained at Cabool; but the Governor-General, writing to the Commander-in-Chief, "reserved" his remarks and instructions upon that matter, and desired his Excellency "expressly to instruct Major-General Pollock,

* Papers, *page* 120. † Papers, *page* 121.

to direct all his efforts and measures to the withdrawal of Sir Robert Sale's force from Jellalabad, *with the least possible delay.*"* On the 24th of February, a dispatch was addressed to Major-General Pollock himself, in which that officer was informed, that the Governor-General in Council did not contemplate "any great effort for the re-occupation of Affghanistan;" and a hint was thrown out (which sufficiently proved the miserable state of dejection to which Lord Auckland was reduced) that the Affghans might be induced to deal leniently with the British troops, if they were given to understand that the said troops were prepared to sneak out of the country. "On the other hand," observed his Lordship, "the knowledge that we do not intend to return as principals to Affghanistan, might disarm some of the opposition which would otherwise be made to our object of retiring."†

After all these reiterated instructions to withdraw the British troops, there is something marvellous in the cool effrontery of the Whig pamphleteer, when he gravely informs his readers, that Lord Ellenborough, on his arrival in India, "found that considerable preparations had been made for re-commencing operations in Affghanistan!" The real truth of the matter is, that Lord Auckland was utterly prostrated in spirit by the

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* Papers, *page* 141. † Papers, *page* 153.

disastrous failure of his aggressive policy, and resolved to prevent a repetition of such defeat and disgrace as had been incurred at Cabool, by an immediate evacuation of the Affghan territory. The language which the Noble Lord addressed to the Commander-in-Chief, is too plain to be misunderstood. "It is *not* our intention to direct new operations for the re-establishment of our supremacy throughout Affghanistan." And again: "His Excellency will instruct Major-General Pollock to direct all his efforts to *the withdrawal* of Sir R. Sale's force from Jellalabad to Peshawur." There can be no mistake here. From the 2nd of December, the date of Lord Auckland's first order to retire, to the 24th of February, the date of his last, the Noble Lord's mind was filled with cowardly apprehensions; and to his Lordship may be fairly applied the sneering remark, which the Whig pamphleteer has applied to Lord Ellenborough, —namely, that "the burden of his instructions was *retire*,—fall back,—get towards India as fast as you can,—leave the Affghans to themselves, and by consequence leave the British prisoners to be maltreated and murdered." Lord Auckland evidently had no care for the re-establishment of our military reputation,—no care for the safety of the unfortunate captives at Cabool; his sole object was to get himself out of the mess into which he had floundered, and with a view to effect this, he instructed his military and political

officers—"so to shape their proceedings as best to promote the end of retiring *with the least possible discredit!*"

The letter of instruction, bearing date February 24th, 1842, as quoted above, closed Lord Auckland's connexion with the military movements in Affghanistan. On the 28th of February 1842, Lord Ellenborough assumed the reins of government; and we have now to ascertain how far the Noble Earl is open to the charge of vacillation and cowardice, which has been so strenuously urged against him by the Whig press. In conducting this portion of my subject, I shall not follow in the track of the Whig pamphleteer,—I shall not resort to the shallow service of special pleading, nor shall I fill my pages with little bits of garbled extracts, cut and pared down and dove-tailed together to suit the purpose of the moment. Convinced that, in this instance as in all others, the envenomed shafts of malicious misrepresentation will be most effectually turned aside by a plain unvarnished statement of the truth, I shall proceed to rebut the charges which have been urged against Lord Ellenborough, by a simple reference to the contents of such official documents as are now before the public—touching occasionally, as I proceed, upon the absurd and frivolous remarks of the Whig pamphleteer. The intelligent reader will perceive, on a moment's reflection, that this is the best course of replica-

tion which I can possibly adopt, and indeed the only course which the circumstances of the case require. The question at issue is not one which calls for any elaborate argument,—it is not a question of opinion or of inference,—but a mere question of fact. We have seen that Lord Auckland, confounded by successive disasters, issued orders for an immediate and unconditional evacuation of the Affghan territory. Did Lord Ellenborough do the like? Did Lord Ellenborough ever contemplate, did he ever command, the withdrawal of our troops from Affghanistan *at a time when a forward movement was practicable*? I say—*no;* I say, and I will prove, that Lord Ellenborough's first thought was to remove the stain which had been cast upon our military reputation by the disastrous blunders of Lord Auckland, and that the Noble Earl only issued orders to retire after he had ascertained, on competent military authority, that it was impossible to advance.

In reviewing the Indian policy of Lord Ellenborough, as far as relates to the occupation of Affghanistan, we must bear in mind the actual position of affairs on his Lordship's arrival at the seat of government in February, 1842. On the 1st of October, 1838, Lord Auckland issued a Proclamation at Simla, explanatory of the assemblage of a British force for service across the Indus. "His Majesty Shah Shooja-

ool-Moolk," said the Governor-General in this Proclamation, "will enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious opposition by a British army; and the Governor-General confidently hopes, that the Shah will be speedily replaced on his throne by his own subjects and adherents." The Whig Governor-General's "confident hopes" were miserably disappointed. At the end of three years, Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk was again a fugitive, while the British army, which accompanied him to Cabool, was utterly annihilated,—none remaining out of a force of 10,000 men, exclusive of camp-followers, save and except a few prisoners, in the hands of the rebellious chief, Mahomed Akbar Khan. Such was the lamentable position of affairs on Lord Ellenborough's arrival at Calcutta,—such the legacy of disaster and disgrace, which was bequeathed to him by his Whig predecessor. How, then, did Lord Ellenborough proceed to act on assuming the reins of Government? Did he shrink back affrighted at the heavy responsibility imposed upon him? Did he, in imitation of Lord Auckland, propose to sneak out of Affghanistan like a beaten hound? Did he talk of "retiring with the least possible discredit,"—leaving the prisoners at Cabool to their fate, and the treacherous Affghans to exult unpunished? No such thing. On the 15th

March, 1842, the Earl of Ellenborough transmitted a dispatch to Sir Jasper Nicolls, the Commander-in-Chief, in exposition of his Lordship's views and wishes respecting the future movements of the British troops in Affghanistan. After stating, that the recent occurrences at Cabool had led to the conclusion, that "the continued possession of Affghanistan would be a source of weakness rather than of strength," and further, that "the conduct of Shah Shooja had not been such as to compel the British Government to peril its armies in his support," Lord Ellenborough proceeded as follows:—

"5. Whatever course we may hereafter take *must rest solely upon military considerations*, and have, in the first instance, regard to the safety of the detached bodies of our troops at Jellalabad, at Ghuznee, at Kelat-i-Ghilzie, and Candahar, to the security of our troops now in the field, and finally, *to the re-establishment of our military reputation by the infliction of some signal and decisive blow upon the Affghans* which may make it appear to them, to our own subjects and to our allies, that we have the power of inflicting punishment upon those who commit atrocities and violate their faith, and that we withdraw ultimately from Affghanistan, not from any deficiency of means to maintain our position, but because we are satisfied, that the King we have set up has not, as we were erroneously led to imagine, the support of the nation over which he has been placed.

"8. In war reputation is strength; but reputation is lost by the rash exposure of the most gallant troops under circumstances which render defeat more probable than victory. We would, therefore, strongly impress upon the Commanders of the forces employed in Affghanistan and Sinde the im-

portance of incurring no unnecessary risk, and of bringing their troops into action under circumstances, which may afford full scope to the superiority they derive from their discipline. At the same time, we are aware, that no great object can be accomplished without incurring some risk; and we should consider that the object of striking a decisive blow at the Affghans, more especially if such blow could be struck in combination with measures for the relief of Ghuznee,—a blow, which might re-establish our military character beyond the Indus,—would be one for which risk might be justifiably incurred, all due and possible precaution being taken to diminish such necessary risk, and to secure decisive success.

"9. The Commanders of the forces in Upper and Lower Affghanistan will, *in all the operations they may design*, bear in mind these general views and opinions of the Government of India. They will, in the first instance, endeavour *to relieve all the garrisons in Affghanistan*, which are now surrounded by the enemy. *The relief of these garrisons is a point deeply affecting the military character of the army*, and deeply interesting the feelings of their country; but to make a rash attempt to effect such relief, in any case, without a reasonable prospect of success, would be to afford no real aid to the brave men who are surrounded, and fruitlessly to sacrifice other good soldiers, whose preservation is equally dear to the Government they serve. *To effect the release of the prisoners taken at Cabool, is an object likewise deeply interesting in point of feeling and honour.* With reference to this object, and to that of the relief of Ghuznee, it may possibly become a question, in the event of Major-General Pollock's effecting a junction with Sir Robert Sale, whether the united force shall return to the country below the Khyber Pass, or take a forward position near Jellalabad, or *even advance to* CABOOL."*

* Papers, *page* 167-8.

It is impossible to peruse these passages in Lord Ellenborough's opening exposition of his Indian policy without admiring the singular combination of energy and prudence which is displayed therein. Sensible of the importance of re-establishing the military reputation of the British army, so lamentably lowered and degraded under Lord Auckland's miserable government, Lord Ellenborough expresses a strong desire "to inflict some signal and decisive blow upon the Affghans;" but, at the same time, sensible that the integrity of the British power in India would be affected by a second failure similar to that at Cabool, the Noble Earl strenuously insists, that no attempt must be made to punish the treacherous Affghans "without a reasonable prospect of success." Lord Ellenborough's dispatch to the Commander-in-Chief, from which the above passages are extracted, is a state paper of very remarkable merit,—so remarkable indeed as to draw an expression of reluctant approbation even from the Whig pamphleteer. "The earliest impressions," he says, at page 38, "and the earliest declarations of Lord Ellenborough were such as became a British Governor-General;—he arrived at Calcutta on the 28th of February, 1842, and on the 15th of March following, his Lordship addressed Sir Jasper Nicolls in language

well suited to the circumstances which surrounded him."*

Every one who reads Lord Ellenborough's famous dispatch of the 15th March, 1842,—every one who contemplates the "pluck," with which, in the face of the then recent and apparently overwhelming disasters at Cabool, the new Governor-General threatened to inflict "a striking and decisive blow upon the Affghans,"—will naturally enough expect to learn, that, when the proper moment arrived, his Lordship was prepared to carry his threat into vigorous execution. Not so,—that is to say, not so, according to the *dictum* of the Whig pamphleteer. This veracious historiographer assures us, that, after crowing so lustily, Lord Ellenborough turned dunghill at last! "The new Governor-General," he says, "in spite of his high purposings, was not a man to encounter difficulties, or persevere under discouragement,—his moral courage oozed away as he approached the scene of action; and the re-establishment of our military reputation,—the decisive blow at the Affghans,—and the safety of the prisoners—were all cast to the winds."† We shall presently see how far this charge of cowardice and vacillation is borne out by facts.

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* "India and Lord Ellenborough,' p. 38. † Pamphlet, p 41.

The writer of the Whig pamphlet states, with an exulting chuckle, that, on the 19th April, General Nott was ordered to evacuate Candahar and fall back to Quettah, and that, on the same day, the Governor-General addressed a letter to Sir Jasper Nicolls instructing him to order the return of General Pollock below the Khyber Pass as soon as he had relieved the garrison at Jellalabad; but this honest writer takes no notice of the events which occurred between the 15th of March, the date of Lord Ellenborough's first dispatch, and the 19th of April, the date of the instructions to retire,—leaving it to be supposed and wishing it to be supposed, that these instructions resulted solely from the Governor-General's vacillating disposition. Now, Lord Ellenborough distinctly stated in his dispatch of the 15th March already quoted, that "whatever course might hereafter be taken must rest solely upon *military considerations;*" and I think it will not be difficult to prove, that his Lordship's instructions of the 19th April, having reference to the withdrawal of the troops, *did* rest wholly and solely upon "military considerations."

The idea of the impossibility of marching to Cabool under the then existing circumstances was not one, which originated with Lord Ellenborough;—it was first urged by Sir Jasper Nicolls in a dispatch to Lord Auckland, dated

January 24th, 1842. The Commander-in-Chief writes therein to the following effect:—

"After I had dispatched my letter to your Lordship in Council, I had a second discussion with Mr. Clerk on the subject of holding our ground at Jellalabad, in view to retrieving our position at Cabool by advancing upon it, at the fit season, simultaneously from Candahar and Jellalabad. *I am greatly inclined to doubt, that we have, at present, either army or funds sufficient to renew this contest.* Money may perhaps be obtainable, but soldiers are not, without leaving India bare.

"Shortly before I left Calcutta, there were at least 33,000 men in our pay in Affghanistan and Sinde, including Shah Shooja's troops, but not the rabble attached to his person.

"How insufficient that number has been to awe the barbarous, and at first disunited, tribes of Affghanistan and Sinde, our numerous conflicts, our late reverses, and our heavy losses fully prove. I admit, that a blind confidence in persons around the late Envoy, &c., &c., have led to these reverses; but we must not overlook the effects of climate, the distance from our frontier, and the fanatical zeal of our opponents."*

There can be no mistake about the tendency of the opinion here deliberately expressed by the Commander-in-Chief. On the 24th of January, 1842, Sir Jasper Nicolls,—a tolerable authority on such a point,—was "strongly inclined to doubt" that we were then sufficiently strong either in "army or funds" to renew the contest in Affghanistan. That this inclination "to doubt" was not removed after a lapse of six weeks, is evident from the annexed passage in a letter addressed

* Papers, *page* 118.

by the Commander-in-Chief to Mr. Clerk on the 5th of March:—

"6. I agree with Major Outram, when he says, 'We have to pause for a season before commencing our advance against Cabool.' Undoubtedly, *it would require the greatest part of* 1842 *to re-equip General Nott's force,* which had but 262 camels and 148 bullocks, on the 1st of December, for 9,000 men without followers at Candahar."*

Again, on the 30th March, Sir Jasper Nicolls wrote to the Governor-General in Council:—

"5. If Major-General Pollock could have carried up stores of all descriptions and spare cattle for Sir R. Sale's force, I should have thought it practicable for these united bodies to have moved next month upon Cabool, to have left some marks of our power and displeasure there, and to have retired by Candahar. *The want of cattle and of followers is not, I fear, to be overcome.*"†

On the 22nd of March, Brigadier England, being in camp near Quetta, wrote to Mr. Maddock, Secretary with the Governor-General:—

"10. I cannot too strongly lament the paucity of troops with me, the slender means of carriage, and the especial deficiency of cavalry *both here and at Candahar;* for I should not doubt, if somewhat more formidably equipped in these respects, that our supremacy in these countries, and to the northward, would be at once placed in a true and rapid progress of re-establishment."‡

From these several extracts announcing a positive deficiency of moving power at every point from which it would have been advisable to direct a second attack upon the Affghan force,—at Jel-

* Papers, *p.* 176. † Papers, *p.* 197. ‡ Papers, *p.* 219.

lalabad, at Candahar, and at Quetta,—it is quite clear that, when Lord Ellenborough issued his first order for retirement across the Indus, of the 19th of April, his Lordship was convinced of the utter impossibility of a forward movement with any reasonable chance of success. If the slightest doubt upon the subject had remained in the mind of the Governor-General, it must have been effectually removed by the severe check which Brigadier England experienced on the 28th of March, in his attempt to advance beyond Quetta.* Under all the circumstances of the case, one course only, that is to say, one prudent course only, was left open to the Governor-General,—to withdraw the British troops as speedily as possible. A forward movement having been proved, on competent military authority, to be at that time altogether impracticable, it was clear, that no great object could be accomplished, but that, on the contrary, great danger would be incurred, by maintaining advanced positions, in which our soldiers, ill-provided with the means of defence, would have been subjected to the harassing attacks of an active and vigilant enemy. Hence arose the orders for retirement, addressed on the 19th of April to Generals Pollock and Nott,—the object of those instructions being, as Lord Ellenborough expressly stated in his dispatch of the same date to Sir Jasper Nicolls, to

* Papers, *page* 220.

enable those officers "to bring their respective corps into easy and certain communication with India."* It is not true, as the Whig pamphleteer asserts, in his eagerness to write down the late Governor-General, that "the re-establishment of our military reputation,—the decisive blow at the Affghans,—and the safety of the prisoners,—were all cast to the winds." The retrograde movement, ordered on the 19th of April, was merely a measure of temporary precaution; for in his dispatch to the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Ellenborough distinctly alluded to "new aggressive movements upon Affghanistan," and spoke of a probable change in "the line of operations."

Following in due order the course of events, we come now to a dispatch, dated 28th April, addressed by Mr. Maddock to Major-General Pollock. "The aspect of affairs in Upper Affghanistan," says Mr. Maddock, "appears to be such, according to the last advices received by the Governor-General, that his Lordship cannot but contemplate the possibility of your having been led, by the absence of serious opposition on the part of any army in the field, by the divisions amongst the Affghan chiefs, and by the natural desire you must, in common with every true soldier, have of displaying again the British flag in triumph upon the scene of our late disasters, *to advance upon and occupy the city of Cabool*"†

* Papers, *page* 225. † Papers, *page* 235.

And here we have another sample of the Whig writer's talent at misrepresentation. It must be evident to every one, who reads Mr. Maddock's dispatch of the 28th April with a desire to ascertain the truth, and not for the factious purpose of calumniating a political opponent,—it must be evident to every such person, I say, that the Governor-General merely *conjectured* that Major-General Pollock, exercising the discretionary powers entrusted to him, might have been induced, "by the altered aspect of affairs in Upper Affghanistan," to advance upon the city of Cabool; and the object of his Lordship's reference to this contingent possibility is clearly explained in the succeeding paragraph of Mr. Maddock's dispatch. "If that event shall have occurred," says Mr. Maddock, "you will understand, that it will in no respect vary the view which the Governor-General previously took of the policy now to be pursued." It is obvious from this passage, that the dispatch of the 28th April was intended solely to caution Major-General Pollock not to lose sight of the Governor-General's desire to withdraw the troops into a safe position at the earliest possible period; and yet the Whig pamphleteer attempts to distort it into a proof, that Lord Ellenborough, in defiance of his repeated instructions to the contrary, "hoped" that General Pollock was then *in full march to Cabool!* The reason for this gross

misrepresentation of the Noble Earl's palpable views and opinions becomes apparent in the succeeding page of the pamphlet, where the Whig writer vamps up a charge of *inconsistency* against the late Governor-General, because on the 4th of May—"within a week after he thought it *possible* that General Pollock had gone to Cabool,"* —his Lordship stated his expectation, that Major-General Pollock would have already decided upon withdrawing his troops within the Khyber Pass,—adding, "His Lordship is too strongly impressed with confidence in your judgement to apprehend that you will ever place the army under your command in a situation, in which, without adequate means of movement and supply, it could derive no benefit from its superior valour and discipline, and might be again subject to a disaster, which, if repeated, might be fatal to our power in India."† This passage in the dispatch of the 4th of May affords the Whig writer an opportunity of exercising his powers of sarcasm with magnificent effect. "Most just was this his Lordship's impression," he exclaims, "but *how is it to be reconciled with his former impression or supposition, something less than a week old?*"‡ How? Why easily enough, if this cunning Isaac will only take the trouble to refer to the fourth paragraph of the dispatch of the 4th

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*Pamphlet, *p.* 46. † Papers, *page* 241. ‡ Pamphlet, *p.* 47.

of May, in which reference is made to "recent accounts of the difficulty experienced in obtaining supplies at Jellalabad, and in bringing forward supplies from Peshawur." Between the 28th April, when Lord Ellenborough contemplated the "possibility" of an advance having been made upon Cabool, and the 4th May, when his Lordship expected that General Pollock had decided upon withdrawing within the Khyber Pass, a dispatch was received from that officer, in which the following passages occur :—

"I now beg to bring to the notice of the Government some points which are of a most serious nature, and go far to paralyze the movements of an army sent in this direction. The accompanying copy of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Parsons will shew, that the camels are hired to Jellalabad, and I regret to say, that nearly one-half never go beyond Peshawur, from which place they generally return, owing to the defection among the drivers, and the great want of carriage-cattle.

"The only alternative I have is to purchase the camels, but I fear the drivers will refuse to go. Captain Macgregor informs me he may probably get 50 camels, while I require at least 1500. My situation at the present moment is a difficult one; and *much as I deprecate any retrogade movement, such a step is by no means improbable, as I have not yet been able to get in supplies in sufficient quantities to warrant my remaining here.*"*

These passages require no comment;—they triumphantly exonerate the late Governor-

* Papers, *page* 238.

General from the charge of inconsistency. On the 28th of April, recent events induced Lord Ellenborough to contemplate "the possibility" of a movement upon Cabool; but after perusing the above passages in Major-General Pollock's dispatch of the 18th of April, his Lordship was "too strongly impressed with confidence in the judgement" of that officer to suppose, that he would *then* attempt any movement in advance.

I have already stated my opinion, that the question at issue is not one which calls for any elaborate argument,—that it is not a question of inference, but a plain and simple question of fact. Holding this opinion, I do not think it at all requisite to follow the Whig pamphleteer in the frequent excursions which he makes on his favourite hobby horse of quibbling and hair-splitting. From page 47 to page 57 of his pamphlet, the writer is occupied apparently,—I use the qualifying expression *apparently*, because, although I have thrice waded through these ten dreary pages, I cannot for the life of me discover his meaning,—the writer is occupied apparently in attempting to prove, that Lord Ellenborough issued contradictory orders to the generals in command of the British forces in Affghanistan, and that, in point of fact, the Noble Earl was so bewildered by the difficulties of his position as to be utterly incapable of pursuing a consistent line of action. Without stopping to

examine into the various twistings and turnings of the writer's argumentation upon this point, I shall steadily pursue the object, which I proposed at the outset of these remarks,—namely, that of proving by a reference to official documents, that the late Governor-General never ordered a retreat at a time when there existed the slightest possibility of advancing with any chance of success.

During the months of May and June, 1842, nothing occurred to alter Lord Ellenborough's determination, as expressed in his dispatch of the 19th April, to withdraw the British troops, as soon as possible, "into a position of safe and easy communication with India." This fact greatly excites the bile of the Whig pamphleteer. "From the close of March," he says, "or at all events from the commencement of April to the beginning of July, the instructions of the Governor-General were directed to one object,—that of facilitating the retirement of the armies in Affghanistan—with little regard to national honour, and with none to the safety of the prisoners detained by the enemy."* This is a most malicious untruth. In a letter to Major-General Pollock, dated 25th April, Mr. Maddock says, —"It is naturally a subject of anxious consideration in what manner it may be most expedient to

* Pamphlet, *page* 57.

endeavour to effect the restoration to their country of the prisoners now in the hands of the Affghans."* The subject was again referred to in a dispatch from the Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief, dated 14th May; and as late as the 21st June, a negotiation was in progress for the release of the Cabool prisoners.† As to the assertion, that Lord Ellenborough pressed the retirement of the troops "with little regard to the national honour," I affirm in reply, that there is scarcely a dispatch amongst the many, which were transmitted to the British commanders in Affghanistan, which does not express a hope, that some signal punishment will be inflicted upon the treacherous Affghans. Towards the latter end of May, 1842, it was ascertained, that circumstances would interfere to prevent the projected retirement of the troops until October; and Lord Ellenborough strongly recommended, that the intervening time should be devoted to the work of retribution. "It would undoubtedly be desirable," says Mr. Maddock on the 1st June in a dispatch to General Pollock, "that, before finally quitting Affghanistan, you should have an opportunity of striking a blow at the enemy; and since circumstances seem to compel you to remain there till October, the Governor-General *earnestly hopes*, that you may

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* Papers, *page* 233. † Papers, *page* 252.

be enabled to draw the enemy into a position, in which you may strike such a blow effectually."* Surely, this is not the language of a Governor-General who desired to act " with little regard to national honour !"

It will here probably be asked,—if Lord Ellenborough were so anxious to strike a blow at the Affghans and to rescue the prisoners at Cabool, why did his Lordship persist until the end of June in recommending a speedy and unconditional retirement of the whole of the troops then serving beyond the Indus? It will be an easy task to furnish a reply to this question. The reader will doubtless recollect Lord Ellenborough's declaration, in his first dispatch of the 15th March, that his future course "must rest solely upon *military considerations.*" I have already proved that Lord Ellenborough's order of the 19th April for the withdrawal of the troops was founded upon an assurance, which he had received from the military authorities, that an advance was impossible. Subsequently to the 19th of April, his Lordship was assured over and over again by the same authorities, that it was equally impossible to march upon Cabool either from Candahar or Jellalabad. On the 20th of April, Major-General Pollock wrote to Mr. Maddock :—

" I have already stated my views with regard to the Khyber

* Papers, *page* 297.

Pass. I have also shown, that from the system of supplying carriage-cattle, *I have not the means of moving*, and the country around cannot supply any wants. . . . . I have maturely considered the question of our advance by this road to Cabool; and *I confess I see too many difficulties to warrant our risking such a course.*"*

About the same time, Major-General Nott wrote from Candahar :—

"I want draught and baggage-cattle *to enable me to move;* but without money, in a country like this, I can neither purchase nor hire them. I have no cattle for moving even three regiments. Under these circumstances my difficulties are certainly very great."†

On the 27th April Sir Jasper Nicolls wrote from Simla to the Governor-General :—

"It is for General Pollock to decide upon the practicability of a forward movement, either upon Cabool or Gundamuck, and the withdrawal of the whole force to Peshawur. My great doubt is, that he can equip the force for a movement in advance, at such a distance from our resources, and under the rooted dislike and fear of the Affghans, entertained by every class of camp-followers. *If they move ill-equipped, the losses may be very heavy.*"‡

In the course of his dispatches, bearing date prior to the end of June, Major-General Pollock frequently referred to the utter impossibility, under the then existing circumstances, of either a retreat or an advance. On the 14th of May, he observed in a dispatch to Col. Luard, the Secretary of the Commander-in-Chief, "It is by no means certain that I shall have sufficient cattle to move, even

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* Papers, *p*, 253. † Papers, *p*. 247. ‡ Papers, *p*. 240.

when the reply from the Government may arrive; for I require upwards of 2000 camels."* On the 23rd May, he wrote to Mr. Maddock,—"I am STILL *without the means of moving*—I require many hundred camels;"† and again, as late as the 18th of June,—"I trust that, through Mr. Clerk's exertion, I shall *not long* be without the means of moving."‡

Now, I put it to any reasonable person to say, whether Lord Ellenborough would not have been deemed a madman, if he had ordered a march upon Cabool in the face of these repeated assurances, that a forward movement, or indeed any movement, was altogether impracticable. The desire of Major-General Pollock to march against Cabool had been too frequently expressed not to be a matter of notoriety; and yet even this eager commander was compelled to admit, that, after "having maturely considered the question of an advance by Jellalabad to Cabool, *he saw too many difficulties to warrant the risk of such a course.*"§ What would have been said of Lord

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* Papers, *p.* 288. † Papers, *p.* 301. ‡ Papers, *p.* 324.

§ I am here reminded by the way of a cock-and-bull story, which the Whig writer has vamped up, about the suppression of a dispatch from General Pollock, dated 13th May, in which he argues vehemently in favour of an advance, as soon as the means of moving could be obtained. It appears that this dispatch never reached its destination, and that the duplicate copy was not received at "the office" until the 11th of July

Ellenborough, if he had disregarded the opinion thus deliberately given by Major-General Pollock? How would his Lordship have stood with the Government, and the Legislature, and the Court of Directors, if he had compelled an advance to Cabool, and that advance had proved unsuccessful? Why, the very parties, who are now blaming the Governor-General for his caution, would then have been as vigorously employed in blaming his rashness! It may be argued indeed, that although Lord Ellenborough could not with prudence order an advance, his Lordship need not have ordered a retreat. I certainly cannot perceive the force of this argument. An advance being impossible, nothing was to be gained by keeping the troops in a position, in which they would be continually harassed by an active enemy, and probably cut off with all communication with India; whereas much was to be gained, and nothing lost, by their timely and well-ordered retirement to a secure position. In every point of view, therefore,

following. The whole matter is explained in a note from the Governor-General to the Secret Committee, dated May 9th, 1843. The Whig pamphleteer enters into a long rigmarole of remark, with a view of proving, that Lord Ellenborough told a deliberate lie to the Secret Committee, and that the dispatch of the 13th May, 1842, was *purposely suppressed;* but this worthy scribe has omitted to strengthen his case by explaining what possible motive Lord Ellenborough could have had for so disreputable a proceeding!

whether we look to the question of safety of the British troops or to the success of their future movements in Affghanistan, it is clear, that, as soon as all idea of a forward march was abandoned as impracticable, retirement became, in the words of the Governor-General, "the safest, and in the end, the most honorable course to pursue."*

Towards the close of June, affairs assumed a new, and, as regarded the re-establishment of our shattered military reputation, a more pleasing aspect. After nearly three months' inactivity at Jellalabad, Major-General Pollock at length found himself in a condition "to move;" and about the same period, Major-General Nott received such reinforcements as fitted him for an aggressive movement in advance. And what was now the policy of Lord Ellenborough? Did he persist in his original order for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the troops? Did he "cast to the winds," as the Whig pamphleteer has it, the re-establishment of our military reputation and the safety of the prisoners at Cabool? Did he, like poor Lord Auckland, talk of "retiring with the least possible discredit?" By no means. As soon as the Governor-General had ascertained, beyond all doubt, that the forces under Generals Pollock and Nott were furnished

* Papers, *page* 292.

with efficient means of moving in advance, his Lordship proceeded at once to redeem his early pledge of inflicting "a signal and decisive blow upon the Affghans." On the 4th of July, the Governor-General addressed two dispatches to Major-General Nott at Candahar, from the most important of which the following passages are extracted:—

"I have now reason to suppose, *for the first time*, that you have the means of moving a very large proportion of your army, with ample equipment for any service.

"Nothing has occurred to induce me to change my first opinion, that the measure, commanded by considerations of political and military prudence, is to bring back the armies now in Affghanistan at the earliest period at which their retirement can be effected, consistently with the health and efficiency of the troops, into positions wherein they may have easy and certain communication with India; and to this extent the instructions you have received remain unaltered. But the improved position of your army, with sufficient means of carriage for as large a force as it is necessary to move in Affghanistan, *induces me now to leave to your option the line by which you shall withdraw your troops from that country*."

The Governor-General next proceeds to point out the several considerations by which General Nott ought to be guided in forming his decision, —reminding him, that the operation of retiring at once by Quetta and Sukkur would admit of no doubt as to its success, whereas the success of a march upon Cabool would depend upon a variety

of difficult and perplexing contingencies. His Lordship then proceeds :—

"I do not undervalue the aid, which our Government in India would receive from the successful execution by your army of a march through Ghuznee and Cabool over the scenes of our late disasters. I know all the effect, which it would have upon the minds of our soldiers, of our allies, of our enemies in Asia, and of our countrymen, and of all foreign nations in Europe. *It is an object of just ambition,* which no one more than myself would rejoice to see effected; but I see that failure in the attempt is certain and irretrievable ruin; and I would endeavour to inspire you with the necessary caution, and make you feel, that, great as are the objects to be obtained by success, the risk is great also.

"You will not fail to disguise your intention of moving, and to acquaint Major-General Pollock with your plans, as soon as you have formed them. A copy of this letter will be forwarded to Major-General Pollock to-day; and he will be instructed, by a forward movement, to facilitate your advance."*

The reader will not fail to observe, that this dispatch is characterized by that rare combination of prudence and energy, which marked the whole course of Lord Ellenborough's Indian policy. The Governor-General describes the march to Cabool as "an object of just ambition;" but, turning a sorrowful thought upon the recent disasters at that place, he adds, "I see that failure in the attempt is certain and irretrievable ruin, and I would endeavour to inspire you with the necessary caution." I am quite sure, that ninety-nine persons out of every

* Papers, *page* 328.

hundred, who may chance to read Lord Ellenborough's dispatch of the 4th July, will highly applaud his Lordship's cautious and considerate policy; but, as a matter of course, it meets with bitter condemnation from the Whig pamphleteer. This worthy gentleman reminds me of the old Joe-Miller joke about the poor devil of a soldier under the discipline of the lash, who was vehemently dissatisfied whether the drummer struck high or low. Nothing, which Lord Ellenborough did to retrieve the disastrous effects of Lord Auckland's policy, meets the views of the Whig pamphleteer;—he is resolved to find fault, and he does find fault, with every measure, which the Noble Earl adopted and with every dispatch which the Noble Earl indited. The order of the 4th July to advance upon Cabool meets with the Whig writer's approbation; but he is hugely shocked at Lord Ellenborough's mode of issuing it. "So dishonest a paper," he says, "as the second letter, addressed on the 4th July, 1842, by Lord Ellenborough to General Nott, has rarely seen the light; but dishonesty is not its only characteristic,—it is *ungenerous* to a degree that could not have been expected in a man holding the office of Governor-General of India. *Lord Ellenborough casts from himself all responsibility, and throws it upon General Nott.*"* I have quoted this passage, merely for

* Pamphlet, *page* 75.

the sake of exhibiting the sort of wretched twaddle, with which the Whig pamphleteer encumbers his dreary pages. Perhaps, when next he writes for the information of the public, this gentleman will condescend to explain how a Governor-General of India, who happens to be a civil functionary and distant from the scene of action, is to superintend extensive military operations without fixing some share of responsibility upon the military officers under his command? If the writer require evidence to enable him to afford this explanation, I beg leave to refer him to Lord Auckland's dispatches *passim*,—more particularly to that of the 2nd December, 1841, to Sir Jasper Nicolls,* and that of the 10th February, 1842, to Major-General Nott.†

Little more remains to be said respecting the progress of our military operations in Affghanistan. The dispatch of the 4th July was followed by one, addressed on the 23rd of the same month to General Pollock, in which that officer was instructed so to arrange matters as to

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* "Generally we would solicit your Excellency to exercise your discretion in regard to details, and *to give orders without reference to us.*"

† "The Governor-General in Council thinks it right not to omit the chance of distinctly informing you, that you should act solely so as may best, *in your judgement*, secure the paramount object of the safety of the troops placed under your orders."

be able to co-operate with Major-General Nott in his contemplated movement towards the city of Cabool. "The object of the combined march of your army and Major-General Nott's upon Cabool," said the Governor-General, "will be to exhibit our strength where it suffered defeat; to inflict just, but not vindictive retribution upon the Affghans; and to recover the guns and colours, as well as the prisoners, lost by our army."* The manner in which these objects were attained is too well known, and too proudly and gratefully remembered by the country, to need any detailed description on my part. On the 6th September, Ghuznee was taken and destroyed by the Candahar division of the army under Major-General Nott;—on the 13th, Akbar Khan, at the head of 16,000 Affghans, was defeated by Major-General Pollock;—on the 16th, the city of Cabool was surrendered;—on the 21st, the whole of the prisoners were released;—and on the 12th October, the British troops commenced their homeward march,—the last detachment crossing the Sutlej on the 18th December, 1842.

I have now traced the Earl of Ellenborough's Affghan policy from its commencement amidst disaster and disgrace, to its termination amidst the glory of victorious triumph. Having done

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* Papers, *page* 335.

this, I rest satisfied with the sufficiency of my reply, under this head, to the invectives of the Whig pamphleteer. I have not paused to discuss the writer's manifold attempts to quibble and to misrepresent,— deeming such attempts too shallow, and, in relation to the importance of the subject, too contemptible for serious notice. By the aid of a plain straightforward reference to official documents, I have proved that which I pledged myself to prove, namely, that Lord Ellenborough pursued steadily and perseveringly his great object of repairing the errors of his predecessor, in the first instance by insisting upon the retirement of the troops when he found an advance to be impracticable, and subsequently by ordering an advance as soon as the means of moving forward were obtained. Facts are stubborn things, and Lord Ellenborough's triumph in Affghanistan is "a great fact." Let it ever be borne in mind, that on the 3rd of December, 1841, the Whig Governor-General talked of "*retiring with the least possible discredit;*" and that on the 30th of September, 1842, the Conservative Governor-General proudly proclaimed, that *the British flag waved in triumph over the walls of Cabool!* Above all, let it never be forgotten, that the illustrious Duke of Wellington is "prepared to justify every order which Lord Ellenborough gave, and every movement which he adopted, from the first moment he took upon

himself the government of India.*"

We have now, in the second place, to consider the Whig writer's remarks upon the proceedings, which led to the conquest of SINDE by Sir Charles Napier, and its subsequent annexation to the possessions of the British Government in India.

The territory of Sinde is an extensive tract of country, occupying about 100,000 square miles between Hindostan and Beeloochistan, and situated on either bank of the Indus at the lower course of that river. The government of Sinde, —divided into three states, Hyderabad, Khyrpoor, and Meerpoor,—is, or rather was, a military despotism of the very worst description,—its rulers, called Ameers, being a set of savage and rapacious chieftains, notorious alike for the remorseless tyranny, with which they have ever oppressed their miserable subjects, and for the utter disregard of good faith, which they have at all times exhibited in their intercourse with neighbouring states. I shall presently shew, that the extreme measures, which the late Governor - General adopted and carried out by the aid of Sir Charles Napier and the army under his command, were forced upon his Lordship by the base treachery of the Ameers of Sinde,—treachery, not of recent date but of long standing, not resting upon mere suspicion, but proved beyond the

* Speech of the Duke of WELLINGTON, February 3, 1843.

possibility of doubt by evidence of unquestionable authenticity.

The remarks of the Whig pamphleteer upon the conquest of Sinde rest mainly upon a gross misrepresentation of facts. In conducting an argument, the *suppressio veri* is not less reprehensible than the *suggestio falsi;* and it is to the *suppressio veri* that the writer is indebted for even the very moderate amount of argumentative cogency which he has contrived to display. The writer opens his case by referring to the tripartite treaty of 1838, to which the British Government, Runjeet Singh, and Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk were parties, and in which all claims of the ruler of Cabool upon Sinde were commuted for an annual tribute to be paid by the Ameers. He says in continuation :—

"The conclusion of this treaty, and the mode "in which their interests were affected by it, "were communicated to the Ameers by the "British minister at Hyderabad, who was in- "structed also to announce the approach of the "army intended to reseat Shah Shoojah on the "throne of Cabool. A long course of diplomatic "proceedings, varied by sundry hostile acts on "the part of the British Government, too well "known to require detail here followed. These "ended in the conclusion of new Treaties, the "effect of which was to add the Ameers to the "number of princes, over whom the British Go-

" vernment held control by the tenure of a sub-
" sidiary alliance. Thus matters stood in February
" 1842, when Lord Ellenborough arrived to take
" the reins of government in India.*"

This slender paragraph is all in the shape of remark, which the Whig writer deems it necessary to devote to a series of negotiations and hostilities, which were spread over a space of four years, and the history of which occupies no less than 314 pages in the Parliamentary Blue Book relative to the affairs of Sinde! We shall shortly discover the reason of this most remarkable brevity. Our author goes on to say,—

" It is not offering his Lordship any injustice
" to state, that, almost from the period of his
" entering upon his official duties, he seems to
" have contemplated the reduction of Sinde to
" the condition of a British province, in name as
" well as in fact. On the 6th May, 1842, he
" writes to the political agent in that country
" thus: 'The Governor-General is *led to think*,
" that you *may* have seen reason to doubt the
" fidelity of some one or more of the Ameers of
" Sinde.' Accordingly, with reference to what
" his Lordship had been 'led to think' *might*
" have occurred, he transmitted a letter, to be ad-
" dressed to any one or more of the Ameers who
" might incur suspicion. This letter, which

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* Pamphlet, *page* 86.

" breathes gunpowder in every line, thus con-
" cludes: 'On the day on which you shall be
" faithless to the British Government, sovereignty
" will have passed from you;—your dominions
" will be given to others, and in your destitution,
" all India will see that the British Government
" will not pardon an injury received from one it
" believes to be its friend.' In the letter of in-
" structions to the political agent, this passage is
" referred to as 'no idle threat intended only to
" alarm, but a declaration of the Governor-
" General's fixed determination to punish, cost
" what it may, the first chief who may prove
" faithless, by the confiscation of his dominions.'

" Thus it is obvious that, even at this early pe-
" riod of his administration, Lord Ellenborough
" contemplated permanent territorial acquisition
" in Sinde."

We here perceive the reason why the important events, which occurred in Sinde between the years 1838 and 1842, are summarily dismissed in a brief paragraph of about a dozen lines. The writer's object is, clearly enough, to engender an opinion in the public mind, that the subjugation of Sinde was a dishonest proceeding: and with a view to effect this object, he endeavours to make it appear, that Lord Ellenborough purposely picked a quarrel with the Ameers, in order to furnish himself with a pretext for swindling them out of their dominions! The impression which

the author's narrative creates, and which he unquestionably desires it to create in the mind of the reader, is, that our dispute with Sinde *originated* with the Earl of Ellenborough, and that previously to his Lordship's arrival (his unfortunate arrival, as the patriotic Whigs term it) in India, there had existed a mutual feeling of confidence and friendship between the Sindian rulers and the British Government. That this is a gross misrepresentation of the facts of the case, may be proved by a reference to the "Correspondence relative to Sinde," which has been printed and published by authority of Parliament. From the month of July, 1838, to the close of his disastrous career, comprising a period of nearly four years, the Whig Governor-General, assisted by a numerous staff of Political Agents, was occupied in an unceasing endeavour to discover and to counteract the treacherous designs of the Ameers of Sinde; and we learn from the Parliamentary Blue Book, that the intrigues of the Ameers were not unfrequently so cleverly managed as to baffle the vigilance of Lord Auckland, whilst upon more than one occasion their hostility was so fierce and undisguised as to compel his Lordship to punish them by seizing a portion of their territories.

The Tripartite Treaty between the British Government, Runjeet Singh, and Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk, already referred to, was concluded on the 26th of June, 1838; and although the Ameers of

Sinde had long looked with aversion upon the supremacy of England in India, this Treaty appears for the first time to have converted passive dislike into active hostility. Nor is it at all surprising that such should have been the case. The Whig writer descants with much amusing pathos upon the little ceremony with which the worthy and fair-dealing rulers of Sinde were treated by Lord Ellenborough; but Lord Auckland seems to have been scarcely a whit more ceremonious than his successor. By the 16th Article of the Treaty of 1838, the sovereign of Cabool stipulated to surrender his claims upon the territory of Sinde on the payment of an annual tribute by its rulers,—the amount of which tribute was to be settled by the British Government without reference to the views and wishes of the Ameers, whose share in the transaction was confined to the by no means pleasant or popular task of payment! Furthermore, as the effort to seat Shah Shoojah on the throne of Cabool required the presence of a large military force in Affghanistan, Lord Auckland coolly informed the Ameers, that "the article in the Treaty with them, prohibitory of using the Indus for the conveyance of military stores, *must* be suspended,"*—that permission *must* be given for the troops of the Shah and his allies to pass through the territory of Sinde,—

* "Correspondence relative to Sinde," page 10.

and finally, that, with a view to this operation, Shikarpore and its dependencies *must* be occupied by a British force! Among the virtues of the Ameers, if they have any, patient submission is certainly not to be reckoned; and it was to be expected, as a matter of course, that they would kick at this cavalier treatment. Indeed Lord Auckland himself, though by no means a conjuror, appears to have entertained a suspicion of something of the sort; for, in his dispatch of the 26th July, 1838, he instructed the President in Sinde to "apprize the Ameers, that the disposition of the British Government towards them was extremely favourable, and that nothing would *distress* the Governor-General more than *an interruption of the good understanding* between his Government and their Highnesses."* The worthy Governor-General was destined to experience the "distress" of which he spoke, inasmuch as the "good understanding" with their Highnesses was vehemently endangered by the course of events. On the 13th August, Sir Henry Pottinger, then the Resident in Sinde, announced to the Government Secretary, on the information of the Native Agent, that the four Ameers of Hyderabad were intriguing with the King of Persia against British influence. In the 5th paragraph of his dispatch, the Resident states his intention

* "Correspondence relative to Sinde," page 9.

of demanding from the Ameers "a categorical declaration of their intentions;" and he then adds this very remarkable passage:—

"The important political events and arrangements, which are now pending, will do more than even my observations to open the eyes of any of the Ameers, who may be wavering between our alliance and that of Persia, to the precipice on which they stand; but I shall not fail to tell them distinctly, that *the day on which they connect themselves with any other Power will be the last of their independent authority if not of their rule*, for that we have the ready power *to* CRUSH *and* ANNIHILATE *them, and will not hesitate to call it into action*, should it appear requisite, however remotely, for either the safety or integrity of our empire or its frontiers."*

I have styled this a very remarkable passage; and doubtless it will be so considered by such of my readers as recollect the fuss which was made by the *Morning Chronicle* in January last about a certain letter, which Sir Henry Pottinger, then in China, was said to have written to a private friend. In this letter, the subjugation of Sinde was described as "the most unprincipled and disgraceful proceeding that had ever stained the annals of our empire in India." It has never been decided, as far as I am aware, whether Sir Henry Pottinger actually wrote to this effect, or whether the letter was a forgery, which I suspect; but if Sir Henry did so write, he must have greatly altered his sentiments since the period, when he threatened to "*crush* and *annihilate*" his

* Correspondence, *page* 11.

friends the Ameers! What Lord Auckland thought of the conduct of the Ameers at this crisis, and the mode in which he proposed to deal with them, may be gathered from the tenor of his subsequent dispatches. On the 6th September, 1838, the Secretary with the Governor-General wrote to the Resident in Sinde as follows:—

"The correspondence entered into by Noor Mahomed Khan with the Shah of Persia, his tender of allegiance to that Sovereign at a period when the hostility of the British Government to the Shah's designs had long been avowed and notorious, the hostility to British interests, which may be implied from his letter, and his duplicity in making at the same moment professions of submission to Persia and of close alliance with the British Government, may justly be held to have forfeited for him on the part of the Governor-General, all confidence and friendly consideration.

"You will endeavour to take a just measure of the political state of affairs in the country; and if, as seems certain, the Meer Sobdar has continued faithful to his engagement although the other Ameers may have been parties to the treacherous and hostile proceedings of Noor Mahomed Khan, you will consider whether that chief may not be placed at the head of its administration, under such circumstances as shall secure in the country the ascendancy of British influence.

"It seems open to you to decide upon proclaiming, as soon as a force from Bombay may enable you to do so with effect, that an act of hostility and bad faith having been committed toward the British Government, *the share in the Government of Sinde, which has been held by the guilty party, shall be transferred to the more faithful members of his family;* and it may be thought right to accompany this transfer with a condition, that as a security for the future, a British subsidiary force shall be maintained in Sinde."

Again on the 20th September, the Secretary

with the Governor-General was instructed to impress upon the Resident in Sinde the absolute necessity of adopting a rigorous policy towards the treacherous Ameers. Lord Auckland was evidently becoming alarmed;—he saw a crisis approaching, and, to use the facetious language of the Whig pamphleteer, his dispatches "breathed gunpowder" in every line. "It is hardly necessary to remind you," wrote the Government Secretary, "that in this important crisis, *we cannot permit our enemies to occupy the seat of power;*—the interests at stake are too great to admit of hesitation; and they, who display an unwillingness to aid us in the just and necessary undertaking in which we are engaged, *must be displaced*, and give way to others on whose friendship we can implicitly rely."* On the 5th of October, Lord Auckland, being then at Simla engaged in the unhappy Cabool business, again urged upon the Resident in Sinde the absolute necessity of dealing sharply with the Ameers. "In the present crisis,"—thus wrote the Secretary with the Governor-General,—"no opposition to the arrangements in progress can be tolerated; and if after your arrival at Hyderabad, a friendly disposition shall not be manifested by the Ameers, his Lordship will be glad to learn, that you have called for the advance of the Bombay army, and that you have entered into a provisional arrange-

* Correspondence, *page* 22.

ment with Meer Sobdar or some other member of the family, who may be disposed to enter cordially into our views, *to the exclusion of those Ameers from all share in the government of the country, who have shewn an unwillingness to co-operate heartily with us.*"*

It would be a tedious task to travel through the whole course of events, having reference to our relations with Sinde, which occurred between the month of October, 1838, and the close of Lord Auckland's Indian career. Nor is it at all necessary that I should do so. I have already said quite sufficient to prove, that our dispute with the Ameers *did not originate* with Lord Ellenborough, but that, on the contrary, it owes its existence to the disastrous policy of his Whig predecessor. After perusing the above extracts from official documents, the reader will doubtless agree with me, that the Whig pamphleteer has been guilty of a gross and scandalous deception in concealing the real position of affairs in Sinde antecedently to the commencement of Lord Ellenborough's administration.

It is at all times a dry and laborious task to wade through a mass of Parliamentary Papers; but any person, who may have courage to peruse the whole of the Blue Book relative to Sinde, will derive considerable amusement from the

* Correspondence, page 27.

ludicrous alternation of craft and violence which its pages exhibit. At one time the Ameers are patted on the back,—at another they are unceremoniously kicked;—now Lord Auckland presents them with a treaty,—*hey presto*, and it is changed into a bayonet; here a Political Resident shakes his head with significant solemnity;—there a Moonshee strokes his beard and swears to the truth of a deliberate falsehood;—anon, a Cossid rushes on the stage in breathless haste, charged with mysterious news from the Native Agent at Hyderabad;—presently there is a hitch in the diplomatic machinery, and forthwith fighting becomes the order of the day,—reports of commissioners give place to reports of artillery,—forts are blown up and citadels are knocked down,—while Sindians and Sepoys, Beloochees and British, march and counter-march in glorious confusion! Altogether, this Blue Book presents *a melange* of blarney and blows, which is in the highest degree amusing.

It is in the natural course of things, that negotiations, which are continually interrupted by acts of hostility, should fail in arriving at a successful issue; and so in truth it fell out with Lord Auckland's diplomatic intercourse with the ruler of Sinde. The strong feeling of dislike and suspicion which was engendered by his Lordship's questionable proceedings in 1838, gradually gained strength and ripened into ma-

turity. Alternately cajoled by the Governor-General and bullied by his Political Agents, the Ameers still evinced no cordial desire to cultivate the friendship of the British Government. I will do Lord Auckland the justice to say, that he spared no exertion in the hope of removing the hostile feelings, which his own foolish and inconsiderate policy had originally excited. Amicable arrangements were proposed from time to time,—treaties, swearing eternal friendship, were prepared at a vast expense of ingenuity,—the diplomatic art of wheedling was exercised with wonderful skill and most praiseworthy perseverance; but Lord Auckland at length discovered, that he might as reasonably hope to wash the Œthiop white, as effectually to check the double-dealing of the Ameers of Sinde. It was in truth a mere repetition of the labour of Sisyphus, which the Noble Lord had undertaken; for at the end of four years,—after a laborious essay of alternate cajolery and bluster,—his Lordship was still overwhelmed with evidence of Sindian duplicity. "We are fortunately becoming stronger at Sukkur and Shikarpore daily," wrote Major Outram, the Political Agent, on the 10th January, 1842, "or *there is no knowing how far the Ameers might be excited by the disastrous accounts from Cabool,* when the truth can no longer be disguised."* And again on the 21st of January, Major Outram

* Correspondence, *page* 307.

wrote to the Governor-General, "The accompanying letter from Lieutenant Postans shews, that the childish Meer Nusseen Khan of Hyderabad is *again intriguing* with Sawun Mull, Governor of Mooltan;"* and on the 22nd of February the same officer remarked, "I shall have intrigues of some of the more restless Ameers to expose hereafter."† Thus it will be perceived, that the establishment of mutual confidence and friendship between the British Government and the rulers of Sinde was just as problematical at the opening of 1842 as it was in the month of October, 1838.

Such then was the position of affairs in Sinde at the period of Lord Ellenborough's arrival to assume the reins of Government in India. The Noble Earl's first care was necessarily to provide a remedy for the calamitous blunders of his Whig predecessor in Affghanistan; but with that energetic spirit, which has ever characterized his Lordship's public conduct, he soon found time to come to a decision as to the precise sort of treatment which the Ameers of Sinde were entitled to receive at his hands. Two courses were open for Lord Ellenborough's adoption;—he might continue to negociate, as Lord Auckland had negociated, with no earthly chance of bringing his labours to a successful issue,—or he might resolve

* Correspondence, *p.* 309, † Correspondence, *p.* 315.

that, after so many instances of duplicity on the part of the Ameers, the next instance of the kind should be followed by a marked display of the power and just severity of the British Government. The Earl of Ellenborough chose this latter course; and, in order that there might be no mistake as to his intentions, his Lordship enclosed to the Resident in Sinde the draft of a letter, to be delivered, according to circumstances, to such of the Ameers as were suspected of designs hostile to the British Government,—declaring at the same time his "fixed determination to punish the first chief, who should prove faithless, by the confiscation of his dominions."* The Noble Lord's language in his letter of caution to the Ameers was too plain to be misunderstood. "On the day on which you shall be faithless to the British Government," said his Lordship, "sovereignty will have passed from you; your dominions will be given to others; and, in your destitution, all India will see, that the British Government will not pardon an injury received from one it believes to be its friend."† For certain reasons, this letter was not ultimately delivered to either of the Ameers by the British Resident. I have quoted it, merely as indicating Lord Ellenborough's resolution to put an end at once to that system of gross double-dealing, which

* Correspondence, *p.* 315. † *Ibid.*

had been so long practised by the rulers of Sinde toward the British Government.

That Lord Ellenborough, to use his own expression, uttered "no idle threat," when he declared his intention of punishing the first chief who should prove faithless, has been sufficiently proved by the subsequent course of events. The Noble Lord's letter of caution bears date on the 6th May, 1842,—in less than ten months from that date, the sovereignty of the Ameers had passed from them, and Sinde was added to the territorial possessions of Great Britain in India. Lulled into fancied security by the weak and vacillating policy of Lord Auckland, the misguided rulers of Sinde despised Lord Ellenborough's friendly caution;—they persevered in their desperate system of double-dealing;—they continued to profess the warmest friendship at a time when they were known to be carrying on secret intrigues with neighbouring states;—they perpetrated divers offences, some of a trifling nature and others serious and flagrant, but all alike evincing a determined hostility to British influence;—and finally these unruly chieftains set the seal to their degradation and ruin by attacking the British Residency at Hyderabad only two days after they had signed a new Treaty of alliance with the British Government! These manifold offences were not charged against the rulers of Sinde on mere suspicion,—they were

not seriously entertained until they had been proved by evidence of unquestioned authenticity, —nor were they admitted as affording a ground for the punishment of the Ameers until all the circumstances connected with them had been submitted to a patient and an impartial investigation by the British authorities.

It is scarcely necessary for me to observe, that the official documents, upon which an opinion is to be formed respecting Lord Ellenborough's conduct in this matter, are exceedingly voluminous, —extending altogether to no less than 657 pages of letter-press. In order to enable myself to judge fairly between the late Governor-General and the Court of Directors, I have travelled through the whole of the "Correspondence relative to Sinde,"—a task of no slight labour, but one for which I am amply rewarded by the gratification which I have experienced in discovering therein a complete justification of Lord Ellenborough's Sindian policy. After his strong declaration of the 6th of May, he was compelled to inflict his threatened punishment upon the Ameers after receiving full proof of their continued treachery ;—had he neglected to do so, the character of the British Government in India would have been seriously compromised, and he himself would have become the laughing-stock of the whole world.

The writer of the Whig pamphlet, who is

always great at a quibble and rich in petty criticisms, insists that the treachery of the Ameers had no share whatever in determining Lord Ellenborough's policy towards them, but that his Lordship from the very first contemplated the reduction of Sinde to the condition of a British province, in name as well as in fact. In support of this hypothesis, the writer quotes Lord Ellenborough's dispatch of the 6th May, 1842, (already referred to) to the Resident in Sinde. "The Governor-General," says the dispatch, "is *led to think* that you *may* have seen reason to doubt the fidelity of some one or more of the Ameers of Sinde." The *italics* are those of the pamphleteer, who considers that the words of the Governor-General denote a foregone conclusion. For once, the pamphleteer is right. The dispatch of the 6th May did denote a foregone conclusion in the mind of Lord Ellenborough,—a conclusion necessarily produced by the history of Lord Auckland's laboured negotiations during the previous three years. Having before him the mass of official "Correspondence" relative to the events of 1838—41, how was it possible for Lord Ellenborough to refrain from thinking, that the Resident in Sinde *might* "see reason to doubt the fidelity of the Ameers?" The Whig writer insinuates, that the passage just quoted from the dispatch of the 6th May was intended for what, in theatrical phraseology, is denomi-

nated a "prompt" to the Political Agent in Sinde to induce him so to frame his reports as to afford a plausible pretext for the Governor-General's designs of territorial aggrandizement. This insinuation, however, is most absurd and unfounded. Lord Ellenborough had no occasion to "prompt" the Resident in Sinde, because that officer of his own accord had frequently transmitted, and was still frequently transmitting, vehement complaints of the treacherous duplicity of the Sindian chieftains. And it was solely in consequence of these complaints, forwarded in the first instance to his predecessor and subsequently to himself, that his Lordship was "led to think" that the Resident *might* have seen reason to doubt the fidelity of the Ameers. If the reader will refer to the official "Correspondence," he will find that Lord Ellenborough, so far from *prompting* the Resident in Sinde to make statements hostile to the Ameers, actually discouraged and disregarded such statements on some occasions. In a dispatch to the Governor-General, bearing date 21st June, 1842, Major Outram submitted the grounds on which he proposed to require "new arrangements" from the Ameers of Sinde,—arising out of the recent exposure of their "inimical intrigues."* In reply to this dispatch, the Secretary with the Governor-

* Correspondence, *page* 341.

General was instructed to inform Major Outram that his Lordship did not see any necessity for pressing a negociation precipitately upon the Ameers; and, on the contrary, would rather desire to leave their minds, for the present, in tranquillity."* This, I should say, was scarcely the language of a Governor-General greedily anxious to seize upon the territory of Sinde.

In a subsequent page the Whig pamphleteer charges Lord Ellenborough with dishonesty, on the ground that his Lordship proposed to rob one Ameer for the benefit of another. "The Governor-General," he says, p. 92, "is very anxious to get a portion of the property of the Ameers of Sinde to give away to a third party, because that party deserved well of the British Government;" and he adds with virtuous indignation,—"This is the morality of a British Governor-General who flourished in India in the year 1842!" Now, there is a similar proposal to cut and carve the property of the Ameers to be found in the dispatches of the great and good Lord Auckland. "It seems open to you," said the Noble Lord on the 6th September, 1838, writing to the Resident in Sinde, "to decide upon proclaiming, that, an act of hostility and bad faith having been committed towards the British Government, *the share in the Government of Sinde, which has been held by the guilty party, shall*

* Correspondence, *p.* 348.

be transferred to the more faithful members of the family."* And this,—to use the Whig writer's sarcastic mode of expression,—" this is the morality of a Governor-General who flourished in India in the year" 1838! It is a saying almost as old as the hills, that " one man may steal a horse while another may not look over a hedge." In a like spirit of Irish justice, the Whig party condemn the late Governor-General for proposing a transfer of territory in 1842, which his predecessor, their own Governor-General, threatened in 1838,—although Lord Ellenborough's proposal was founded, which that of Lord Auckland notoriously was not, upon a four-years' experience of the treacherous duplicity of the Sindian rulers.

After floundering through about thirty pages of foggy argumentation respecting the proceedings in Sinde, the Whig pamphleteer suddenly pulls up short at page 107, and makes the strange discovery, that " it is useless to discuss the conduct of the Governor-General." I applaud this discovery;—it certainly is useless to discuss the conduct of the Governor-General after the fashion, in which it has been discussed by the Whig pamphleteer. " Facts," he says, " speak for themselves." This, though somewhat stale, is an undoubted truth; and I am happy to say, that, as regards the con-

* Correspondence, *p.* 17.

quest of Sinde, " facts" speak not only for themselves but for Lord Ellenborough also. That the deposition of the Sindian rulers was an extreme measure, that it was a painful measure, cannot be denied; but it is equally undeniable, that the Governor-General had no alternative. Looking at all the circumstances of the case;—looking to the previous conduct of the Ameers from 1838 downwards, their treachery, their violence, their deliberate mendacity, and their frequent and stubborn resistance to our just demands;—above all, looking to the necessity of maintaining the influence of the British Government in India by promptly punishing all who dare to league either openly or covertly against it;—looking, I say, at all these circumstances, it is impossible to arrive at any other conclusion than that the subjugation of Sinde was an unavoidable measure of state policy,—justified, as I maintain, by the base treachery of the Ameers, but at all events justified by that law of nature which implants in the hearts alike of nations and individuals the instinct of *self-preservation.*

We come now to a consideration of the third and last division of our subject, namely, the interference of Lord Ellenborough in the affairs of the Mahratta state and the consequent triumph of British valour in the plain before GWALIOR.

My observations under this head will be few; indeed they will exhibit a brevity almost as

remarkable as that of the Whig pamphleteer respecting the history of Sinde during Lord Auckland's government, although my brevity will arise from a very different cause. Unlike the Whig pamphleteer, I desire to conceal nothing, —I have nothing to conceal; and if I say little about the matter, it is solely because there is little to be said. The Whig writer affirms, that Lord Ellenborough's proceedings in regard to the Mahratta state are "too extraordinary to be passed over;" but I have as yet failed to discover in what their "extraordinary" character is supposed to consist. The affair itself,—I mean the Gwalior negotiation—was altogether one of minor importance; and the poverty of the pamphleteer's argument against the late Governor-General is sufficiently exposed, when he thrusts so trifling a matter into the van of the battle.

The State of Gwalior, which forms the subject of our present enquiry, consists of several scattered territories in Hindostan, bound together by no common feeling amongst the inhabitants, but coerced into submission by an army of mercenaries in the pay of the head of the family of Scindia. The rulers of the State of Gwalior have long been the allies of Great Britain,—three several Treaties of amity and peace having been concluded between the British Government and Sindia, in 1803, 1804, and 1805. On the 7th of February, the Maharajah Junkojee Rao Scindia

died, and was succeeded by Jyagee Rao Scindia, the nearest in blood to the deceased chief. As the new Maharajah was a mere child, being then only eight years of age, it was deemed requisite to appoint a regency, and Mama Sahib was nominated Regent with the entire approval of the British Government. In a short time, however, intrigues were set on foot against the existing order of things,—Mama Sahib was forcibly expelled,—and the Dada Khasgee Walla seized upon the supreme power in the State of Gwalior. It would be a needless waste of time and trouble to enter into a minute detail of the progress of events in this petty province;—suffice it to say, therefore, that the British Resident soon reported that Khasgee Walla had perpetrated various acts insulting and injurious to the British Government, and that he was violently coercing the young Maharajah and the chiefs attached to the cause of his Highness. On receipt of this intelligence, Lord Ellenborough determined to adopt active measures of interference,—founding his determination upon the Treaty of Boorhampoor, 1804, by which the British Government bound itself at all times to provide a force, on requisition from the head of the House of Scindia, to overawe and chastise rebels or exciters of disturbance in his Highness's territories, and to reduce to obedience all offenders against his Highness's authority. The result is well known. On

the 29th of December, 1843, the British army achieved a brilliant victory over the forces of the rebel chief, who was seized and imprisoned,—the authority of the Maharajah was re-established,—arrangements were made for the future government of Gwalior,—and a new Treaty of alliance and mutual defence was concluded between the British Government and Scindia. The objects of the expedition having been thus accomplished, the British troops immediately retired.

Such, briefly and plainly stated, is the history of Lord Ellenborough's proceedings in regard to the Mahratta State; and, as far as I can perceive, they certainly present nothing to warrant the Whig writer in describing them as "too extraordinary to be passed over." Those who have studied the annals of British power in India, know well enough, that our interference with the internal disputes of neighbouring states is by no means "extraordinary;"—the great puzzle is to point out an occasion of dispute in which we have *not* interfered! On the other hand, there is nothing "extraordinary" in the victorious march of a British army; neither is there anything "extraordinary" in the successful result of an expedition designed for the advancement of British influence in India;—although, by the bye, under Lord Auckland's auspices, we were familiarized with results of a very different description.

Upon the whole, then, I can see no reason

whatever for the vehement outcry, which the Whig speakers and writers have raised against Lord Ellenborough's policy in relation to the State of Gwalior. I am aware, indeed, that the ground upon which the Noble Earl rested his measure of interference, is objected to as untenable,—seeing that the Treaty of Boorhampoor is cancelled, *because it is not mentioned in the Treaty of* 1805. The merit of originating this objection belongs to Mr. T. B. Macaulay, who, as I have before stated, is supposed by some persons to be the author of the Whig pamphlet. The Treaty of 1805 recognizes the Treaty of 1803; but it makes no mention of the Treaty of 1804,—*therefore the said Treaty is defunct!!* Such is the argument of the Whig speakers and writers upon this point; and a more preposterous absurdity has never been advanced since the days of Anacharsis Clootz. Treaties, like all other legal instruments, are binding and continue in force unless formally and specially cancelled; and as the Treaty of Boorhampoor is not formally cancelled in the Treaty of 1805, it is valid at the present moment. Such being the case, Lord Ellenborough's expedition to Gwalior was not only a brilliant military exploit, but it was also a just and honorable performance of a sacred duty on the part of the British Government.

I have now fully, and, I hope I may be allowed to say, fairly discussed the several points of Lord

Ellenborough's Indian policy, which are brought into prominent notice by the Whig pamphleteer. In performing my task, I have not hesitated to pass over many of the writer's remarks, some of which are too absurd and frivolous to merit serious notice, and others again too obscure and unintelligible to admit of any notice at all. I may safely assert, however, that I have met the real question at issue boldly and candidly—giving to every important objection which has been urged against the conduct of the late Governor-General of India, a patient consideration, and supporting my view of each disputed point by such an array of documentary evidence, as cannot fail to remove the injurious effects, if any, of the Whig publication before us.

I cannot flatter myself that the foregoing remarks have afforded much amusement to the reader; but I venture to hope, that they have at least proved instructive, by furnishing him with accurate information respecting those passages in Lord Ellenborough's Indian career, which are condemned by the writers of the Whig party. A political pamphlet is never a very lively affair; —it becomes less so, when, as in the present instance, its pages are necessarily loaded with dry matter of detail. On this account, it is a source of regret to me, that my extensive quotations were unavoidable. I might have remained satisfied, indeed, with a mere unsupported denial of

the Whig writer's mere unsupported assertions; but I have preferred rather to strengthen my case by frequent and extensive extracts from the Parliamentary Papers,—holding a decided opinion, that, in a discussion of this kind, it is better to produce too much evidence than too little.

Every statesman, who occupies a high position in the political world, must expect to be abused and misrepresented;—it is the penalty of political greatness. The Earl of Ellenborough, however, has been required to sustain more than his fair share of this penalty. As soon as the Noble Lord's appointment to the head of the Indian Government was announced, the hounds of the Whig press opened upon him in full cry; and from that moment until this present writing, his Lordship has been pursued with a degree of bitter and relentless rancour, which I firmly believe to be wholly unparalleled in the annals of political animosity. The cause of the existence of this most rancorous feeling is palpable enough. The Earl of Ellenborough went out to India for the avowed purpose of repairing the disasters in Affghanistan; and this fact drew down upon his Lordship the deadly wrath of the whole Whig faction, whose members were smarting under the disgrace inflicted upon them by the miserable failure of their own unhappy Governor-General. Had his Lordship's policy proved as disastrous as that of Lord Auckland, the Whigs would doubt-

less have greeted him cordially,—looking upon him almost as one of themselves. Lord Ellenborough, however, disappointed the Whig party, —he triumphed in Affghanistan; and from that moment he lost all chance of forgiveness at their hands. Resolved, if possible, to hunt down the Conservative Governor-General who had presumed to succeed where a Whig Governor-General had failed, the speakers and writers of the Whig party made the Earl of Ellenborough a mark for every species of calumnious misrepresentation, which baffled malice could suggest. Every official measure, which the Noble Earl adopted was eagerly scrutinized by his slanderous assailants;—nothing which he did was either too great or too little to escape their eager animosity; —he was equally abused and ridiculed, whether he ordered a retreat or an advance, whether he made a speech or mounted an elephant, whether he penned a proclamation or took tiffin with the military staff at Calcutta!!

As a matter of course, no public man can feel pleased at being continually exposed to a battery of abuse; but the Earl of Ellenborough is well able to sustain the weight of vituperation, which has been heaped upon him. The career of the late Governor-General was short, indeed, but it was brilliant; and his acts,—glorious in their results both to England and to himself,— will live in the grateful remembrance of his

fellow-countrymen long after the slanders of the Whig faction are forgotten. True, the Noble Earl has been suddenly and somewhat unceremoniously recalled by cautious John Company ; but the Ministers of the Crown, who are alone responsible for his acts, cordially approve of the whole of his Indian policy, and, by their advice, the Queen has conferred upon his Lordship the dignity of an Earldom. Thus honoured by his Sovereign, supported by Ministers, and secure of the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen, the late Governor-General of India can afford to laugh at and to despise the slanderous invectives of the Whig press.

ZETA.

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