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Article - Sindh Controversy - Napier  
and Outram

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*"No man, who hath tasted learning, but will confess the many ways of profiting by those, who not contented with stale receipts, are able to manage and set forth new positions to the world: and were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long, as in that notion, they may yet serve to polish and brighten the armoury of truth: even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away."—MILTON.*

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- ART. VII.—1. *Correspondence relative to Sindh, 1838—1843. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1843.*
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WE are now in a position to enter on a full and final examination of the British conquest of Sindh. A sufficient length of time has elapsed, and we are far enough removed from the scene of the transaction, to enable us calmly and dispassionately to review the history of that much controverted measure; while the materials for our inquiry are both copious and authentic. There are now before us two volumes of official correspondence relative to Sindh, presented to Parliament; we have an eloquent defence of the conquest from the practised pen of the conqueror's brother; and we have a most minute commentary upon that defence, by an officer who possessed unequalled opportunities for acquiring a thorough knowledge of the country and its people, and whose name is an ample guarantee for the scrupulous accuracy of his statements. Reserving to the sequel the few observations we shall have to offer on the respective merits of these publications, we shall at once proceed, with the aid of the historical materials which they supply, to lay before our readers a brief narrative of the events which immediately led to the subjugation of Sindh, together with an examination of the justice and policy of the measure.

The valley of the lower Indus, which forms the scene of the transactions we are about to record, has of late years been rendered familiar to all our Indian readers. Bordered, like the kindred valley of the Nile, by a range of mountains on one side and by a desert on the other, it is traversed throughout its entire length by the classic river from which it takes its name. The country on both banks of the river, from near the point where it receives the waters of the Punjab to its junction with the sea, formed the territory of the Amirs or rulers of Sindh, and was divided into two principal shares—the Southern division forming the principality of Lower Sindh, and the Northern, that of Upper Sindh: leaving, towards the Kutch frontier, a third and inconsiderable division, that of

Mírpur, the affairs of which we will scarcely have occasion to notice.

At the period at which our narrative opens,—the early autumn of 1842—five Amírs held independent but associate rule at Hyderabad, the Capital of Lower Sindh; namely, Mír Nússír Khan, his two cousins Mírs Mír Mahommed Khan and Sobdar Khan, and his two nephews Mírs Shadad Khan and Hússen Ali. At Khyrpúr the seat of the Upper Sindh Government, the venerable Mír Rústum Khan was the acknowledged Rais, or supreme ruler; with whom were associated, as subordinate partners in the government, his two younger brothers Mírs Ali Morad and Mahommed Khan, and his Nephew Mír Nússír Khan. One Amír, Mír Sher Mahommed Khan, ruled the small principality of Mírpur.

Our political relations with the Amírs of Sindh, at that time, were those established by Lord Auckland's treaties of 1839, which, as our readers are aware, were forcibly imposed upon these Princes at the commencement of the first Afghan Campaign. In Lower Sindh, separate treaties, identical in their provisions, were concluded with each of the Hyderabad Amírs; which contained, among other less important particulars, the following stipulations;—First, the maintenance of a British Subsidiary force in lower Sindh, either at Tatta or at some other station west of the Indus, towards the cost of which an annual tribute of three lakhs of Rupees was to be paid in equal proportions by three\* of the Amírs—the fourth (Mír Sobdar Khan) being exempted on account of his early submission;—Secondly, the protection of their territories by the British Government against foreign aggression, and the arbitration of all complaints of aggression which the Amírs might make against each other;—Thirdly, non-interference by the British Government in the internal administration of the Amírs, or in any complaints made against them by their subjects;—Fourthly, the prohibition of all negotiation, on the part of the Amírs, with foreign states, unless with the sanction of the British Government;—Fifthly, the abolition of tolls on trading boats passing up or down the Indus;—Sixthly, the payment of the usual duties on merchandize landed from such boats for sale, with the exception of goods sold in a British Camp or cantonment.

In Upper Sindh one treaty only was considered necessary,

\* One of these shares was now divided between Mírs Shadad Khan and Hússen Ali, the sons and heirs of the deceased Mír Núr Mahommed, one of the original parties to the treaties.

which was exchanged with Mír Rústum Khan as the acknowledged "Chief of Khyrpúr." Its engagements were analogous to those concluded with the lower Sindh Amírs with the following differences;—First, no stipulation was made for the payment of a subsidy;—Secondly, there was no engagement for the permanent location of a British force: permission being only given "to occupy the fortress of Bukker as a depot for treasure and munitions in time of war;"—Thirdly, no stipulation was made for the abolition of river tolls: the Amírs merely promising "co-operation with the other powers" in any measures which might be thought necessary for extending and facilitating the commerce and navigation of the river Indus. Lastly, short "Agreements" were at the same time concluded with each of the other three Amírs of Upper Sindh, whereby the British Government engaged "never to covet one reah of the revenue of their shares of Sindh, nor to interfere in their internal management." The treaty entered into with the Amír of Mírúpúr, in the following year, was similar in its provisions to that of Lower Sindh, and included an engagement for the payment of a subsidy of Ra. 50,000 per annum, as the price of British protection.

It is unnecessary, for the purpose of our present inquiry, to examine either the justice or the policy which dictated these compulsory treaties. They formed a part (and, it may be, a necessary part) of that ill-advised and disastrous "Affghan policy," which forms the one disfiguring blot on Lord Auckland's otherwise beneficent administration: and it was only by the unconquerable firmness, and extraordinary personal influence, of the distinguished diplomatist\* who conducted the negotiations, that the Lower Sindh Amírs were induced to yield a tardy and reluctant assent to their harsh provisions, and thereby preserved, though but for a season, the sovereignty of their kingdom.

Having been thus reduced from independent Sovereigns to tributary allies of the British Government, it was not to be expected but that some degree of alienation and a distrust of our future measures would take possession of the minds of the Amírs. Whatever may have been the real state of their feelings, their acts, even during the disasters of 1842, evinced no appearance of hostility: for it is a remarkable fact, that, under the able management of Major (now Lieutenant Colonel) Outram, Sindh continued in a state of profound tranquillity; robberies were unknown; British subjects of all classes, unattended by a single armed attendant, traversed the country without danger or molestation; and carriage and supplies were

\* Major General Sir Henry Pottinger, Bart. G. C. B.

liberally furnished for the support of our armies in Southern Affghanistan.

Such was the condition of Sindh, and such were our relations with its rulers, when Major General Sir Charles Napier, then Commanding the Puna Division of the Bombay Army, was invested by Lord Ellenborough with the military and political control of Sindh and Belúchistan. The veteran soldier hastened to Sindh (we are told) with all the alacrity of a young warrior; and on the 9th September landed at Kurrachi. Before we accompany him on his diplomatic and military career it is desirable that we should first become acquainted with his character, and that of the political functionary whom he was about to supersede.

The name of Colonel Outram will ever be associated, in this Country, with some of the finest and noblest qualities of the soldier. His character exhibits a remarkable union of calm, steady, resolute valour, with a passion for daring and chivalrous enterprise, and an energy and determination of purpose which no danger or difficulty can daunt. These qualities, added to an open, ardent, generous disposition, and a quiet unassuming courtesy of demeanour, have deservedly rendered him the pride of the Bombay Army, and appear to have attracted, in a rare degree, the personal attachment and esteem of those who have served under his orders, or have been otherwise associated with him in pulic duty. But it were an unnecessary, though a pleasing task, to dwell upon these features of his character. The conqueror of Sindh himself has with a just discernment awarded to him the appropriate and expressive title of "*The Bayard of India*;" and twelve hundred British Officers of the Indian services have publicly recorded their admiration of his heroic achievements in India, Affghanistan, and Sindh.

Colonel Outram's experience of native character is extensive and varied. In common with the majority of officers who have known the natives long and well, who are conversant with their languages and customs, and who judge them by an Indian, and not by a British standard, he appears to have formed a generally favourable opinion of them. His intercourse with them seems to have been marked on all occasions by a considerate attention to their social usages and feelings: and his interest in their welfare is evinced by a desire to preserve and improve the more innocuous of their institutions, rather than precipitately to subvert them, in order to introduce the systems and usages of Europe in their place. Like all functionaries who have been guided by such principles

and feelings he has acquired in a high degree the confidence and good will of the people over whom he has been placed: and we need scarcely add, that the possession of such influence over the minds of the natives, particularly of those in high rank and station, is one of the most important qualifications which a British Diplomatist can possess; and is calculated, more than any measures of abstract wisdom, to reconcile the princes and people of India to our rule, and thereby to preserve the peace, and promote the best interests of the country.

Lest any of our readers should consider such political accomplishments as antiquated and worthless, we will supply a more practical test of Colonel Outram's diplomatic qualifications, and try them by the magnitude and importance of the services which he rendered to his Country, during the eventful year that immediately preceded his removal. At that memorable crisis, when disasters unparalleled in our history clouded the past, and gloomy apprehensions over-cast the future—when the storm of insurrection, which had burst with such fatal fury at Kabul, threatened to endanger the safety of our armies at Quetta and Kandahar—Lord Auckland, amid the general panic, turned to Colonel Outram with the assured confidence that he would hold his dangerous post with a firm and steady hand, and that, by his prompt and zealous assistance, he would enable the Government also to weather the storm.\* And the result shewed that the Governor General's confidence was neither exaggerated nor misplaced. Within the three preceding years, we had imposed a Subsidiary tribute and a Subsidiary force upon the Amirs of Sindh; we had stormed the capital and slaughtered the ruler of Belúchistan; and we had waged a sanguinary warfare upon the neighbouring mountain tribes. Yet—smarting though they were under these grievous injuries, and instigated by Affghan emissaries to raise the standard of insurrection in the common cause of Islam—such was Colonel Outram's wondrous activity, vigilance, and zeal, that he not only, with a small and detached military force, preserved tranquillity throughout these vast countries, which formed both the base and the line of our military communications with Kandahar; but he also furnished and forwarded, from these very countries, the carriage and supplies which enabled General Nott to accomplish his triumphant march to Kabul, and General England to retire in safety on the Indus. These were, in truth, services, which, to cite the words and the authority of the honorable

\* Outram's Commentary, 21.



Mountstuart Elphinstone, "it would be difficult to parallel in the whole course of Indian diplomacy:" and they had just been brought to an honourable and successful termination, by the safe descent of General England's army beneath the passes, when their author was summarily, without warning and without reason assigned, removed by Lord Ellenborough from his high political appointment.\*

And what were the peculiar qualifications of the Officer selected to supersede a man who had, at so perilous a crisis, conferred such signal services on his country? On Sir Charles Napier's eminent military talents it were now superfluous to dwell. Long before his appearance in Sindh, his high reputation as a soldier had been inscribed on the page of history; the numerous scars with which he was furrowed attested his heroic valour on the sanguinary fields of Corunna and Busaco: and, though untried as a General, he soon proved himself worthy of a place in the first rank of British Commanders. With a military experience of half a century, he had, moreover, deeply studied the art of war:—strict and stern in discipline, but ever watchful of the interests and attentive to the wants of his men, he was peculiarly the soldier's friend. Though bending somewhat under the weight of threescore years and one, yet did he retain all the vigour and energy of youth, with a capacity for the endurance of fatigue which the youthful soldier might well have envied.

But, though unquestionably a brave and accomplished soldier, he was singularly deficient in the particular qualities required for the safe and beneficial exercise of political authority in India. He was not only ignorant of the language, the character, the customs, and the institutions of the natives; but he seemed to look upon such knowledge as unnecessary, if not prejudicial. He was, moreover, apparently imbued with strong prejudice against the princes of Sindh, and disposed to regard his Mission, as that of a Military Dictator appointed to overawe and control a "barbarous durbar," rather than that of a political agent deputed to maintain the relations of amity and friendship, subsisting between a protecting and a protected state. Disregarding, in short, the maxims of sound practical wisdom, so strenuously recommended, and so successfully practised, by

It is any thing but creditable to the Government that no honors should have been conferred on Colonel Outram and Mr. George Clerk for the important political services they rendered at that critical juncture; while analogous services performed on the same scene, four years before, by Sir Henry Pottinger and Sir Claude Wade were respectively rewarded, (and justly rewarded) by the honors of a Baronetage and Knighthood.

Munro, Malcolm, and Elphinstone, and by other distinguished statesmen of the same eminent school—Sir Charles soon betrayed a determination to open up a new political path for himself. The progress and results of this novel diplomacy we now proceed to examine.

Sir Charles Napier, as has been stated, landed at Kurrachi on the 9th September 1842, and on the 17th of the same month he started for Sukker. On his passage up the Indus he paid a visit to the Amírs of Lower Sindh at their fortified Capital of Hyderabad. The established courtesy, uniformly observed by the Indian Government towards the Native States, of formally announcing any change in the British Representative at their courts, does not seem to have been observed towards the Amírs on the present occasion: nor does Sir Charles Napier appear to have been furnished by the Governor General with any credentials of his appointment. Such an omission may be considered by the English reader to be of trifling import, but will be very differently viewed by those acquainted with the importance that native Princes attach to all these matters of etiquette. Notwithstanding the neglect, however, on the part of the Governor General, of the customary forms of courtesy, Sir Charles Napier was received by the Amírs of Hyderabad with every demonstration of respect due to his rank and station. Before leaving the capital, he addressed to them a letter regarding certain alleged infractions of the treaty, committed under their orders, or with their knowledge. These charges will pass under our review, when we examine those preferred against the Amírs of Upper Sindh: but we must not omit to notice the style and tone used by the British Commander in this his first communication with Princes, wielding the absolute power of sovereignty within their own territories. It is characterised by the Historian as an “austere, but timely and useful warning,” given in the prosecution of “a fair and just, but stern and unyielding policy.” We willingly pay Sir Charles the compliment of assuming that this extraordinary document, which will be found in the Parliamentary Papers (Page 358) was merely the first rough draft of the letter, and that in the process of translation it received a form and phraseology better suited to the station of the Princes to whom it was addressed. But, even under this favourable interpretation, there will remain much in the tone and tenor of the letter that is deserving of the strongest censure, and in complete opposition to the letter and spirit of Lord Ellenborough’s judicious circular instructions to his political agents, directing them “on all occasions to manifest the utmost personal consideration and respect to the

several Native Princes with whom they might communicate ; to attend to their personal wishes ; to consider themselves as much the representation of the *friendship*, as of the *power*, of the British Government ; and to be mindful that even the necessary acts of authority may be clothed with the veil of courtesy and regard." We shall find, as we proceed, that the whole tenor of the General's political administration in Sindh, of which this was the commencement, was an exact antithesis of these admirable maxims.

Sir Charles Napier, having addressed this arrogant and offensive letter to the rulers of Hyderabad, continued his journey up the Indus ; and, on the 5th October, arrived at Sukker, the head quarters of the British force then stationed in Upper Sindh. There, as the historian informs us, he "forthwith commenced a series of political and military operations, which reduced the Amírs to the choice of an honest policy or a terrible war."\* These operations, with their fatal results, it is now our duty to record.

On his first nomination to the military and political control of Sindh, the General had been officially informed, that if "the Amírs, or any one of them, should act hostilely, or evince hostile designs, against the British forces, it was the Governor General's fixed resolution never to forgive the breach of faith, and to exact a penalty which should be a warning to every chief in India." This communication, it will be observed, intimated the Governor General's determination to punish *future* hostility : but the following instructions, which awaited Sir Charles on his arrival at Sukker, shewed that his Lordship had modified his intentions, and was now determined to inflict retributive punishment for *past* offences, should the General, on inquiry, discover satisfactory grounds for such a procedure. "Should any Amír or Chief, with whom we have a treaty of alliance and friendship, *have* evinced hostile designs against us during the late events, which may have induced them to doubt the continuance of our power ; it is the present intention of the Governor General to inflict upon the treachery of such ally and friend so signal a punishment as shall effectually deter others from similar conduct : but the Governor General would not proceed in this course without the most complete and convincing evidence of guilt in the person accused. The Governor General relies entirely on your sense of justice, and is convinced that whatever reports you may make upon the subject, after full investigation, will be such as he may safely act upon."

The first political duty, therefore, which devolved upon Sir Charles, was to inquire into certain alleged breaches of treaty and hostile intrigues charged upon some of the Amírs, with the view of deducing from these past offences "a pretext" for remodeling the existing treaties, and inflicting a "signal punishment" upon their authors. And this brings us at once to the consideration of what proved to be the remote cause of the Sindh conquest. And as there has been much misapprehension and misstatement on this subject, it is necessary to trace the origin and history of the revised treaties, to the imposition of which, the General's investigation ultimately led.

In the early part of the year (1842) Major Outram appears to have come to the conclusion that our intended withdrawal from Affghanistan would render some change in our relations with the Amírs of Sindh very desirable, in order to remedy the errors of our Military position in that country; to define more clearly the commercial provisions of the existing treaties; and to ensure an adequate supply of fuel for the steamers composing the Indus flotilla. About the end of May of the same year he had received an intimation of Lord Ellenborough's wish to exchange the payment of tribute for "the continued occupation of Kurrachí and Sukker," including, the fortress of Bukker. He therefore only awaited a favourable opportunity for opening a negociation with the Sindh Government. In the meantime he received information from his assistants in Sindh, which gave him grounds for suspecting, that certain of the Amírs, taking advantage of our Affghan disasters, and instigated by Affghan emissaries, had engaged in some petty intrigues inimical to the British Government. They were considered by Major Outram to be in themselves puerile: nevertheless, he conceived that they evinced an unfriendly feeling on the part of the Amírs, and furnished good grounds for proposing, and would materially assist the negociation for, the required changes in the treaties, which, under other circumstances, would most probably be resisted.

In accordance with these views, he submitted to Government, on the 21st of June, a draft-treaty embodying the proposed changes. The following were its principal stipulations; \* 1st. The cession to the British Government, in perpetuity, of the City and Cantonment of Sukker (including the fortress of Bukker) and of the Town and harbour of Kurrachí; 2nd. Free transit for commerce between Kurrachí and Tatta on the Indus; 3rd. Permission to cut wood within a hundred yards

of each bank of the Indus; 4th. The total abrogation of river tolls: and 5th. In consideration of the above cessions the British Government engaged to release the Amírs from all pecuniary obligations whatever.\*

Such were the provisions of Major Outram's proposed treaty—a treaty which stipulated for territorial and other privileges of the estimated annual value of Rs. 3,16,500,† to be ceded by the Amírs to the British Government, in exchange for a total release from the future payment of tribute which (exclusive of arrears) amounted to Rs. 3,50,000 per annum.‡

The objects proposed to be attained by this new arrangement were in themselves of great importance to British interests; and the pecuniary price to be tendered for their purchase was just and liberal: but, in the absence of any pressing necessity for the change, it became matter of regret that the subject should have been mooted, at that particular juncture. The minds of the Amírs, who had on all occasions shewn themselves determinedly averse to any alteration in their relations with our Government, were at that time peculiarly distracted with apprehensions in regard to our future measures; in addition to which, Major Outram was himself at Quetta,—whither he had gone for the purpose of aiding General England's force, in its retreat upon the Indus—and was consequently deprived of the opportunity, by personal negotiation, of exerting his great influence over the Amírs, by which alone could any hope be entertained of reconciling their minds to the contemplated changes. Nor were the grounds assigned as the basis of negotiation of clear and unquestionable validity. The hostile intrigues, alleged against the Amírs, were considered by Major Outram at the time, neither important nor dangerous; while the evidence, in support of them, forwarded by

\* A negotiation had previously been entered into at the instance of Lord Auckland's Government, for the cession of the district of Shikarpúr: but Major Outram reported that this must be abandoned under Lord Ellenborough's contemplated occupation of Kurrachí, and the proposed river arrangements.

† Territorial Cessions .....	Rs. 1,06,500
Abolition of transit duties and river tolls .....	„ 10,000
Compensation for cutting wood .....	„ 2,00,000

Total Annual value ..... Rs. 3,16,500

‡ Annual tribute from the Amírs of Hyderabad .....	Rs. 3,00,000
Ditto ditto of Mírpúr .....	„ 50,000

Total Rupees ..... 3,50,000

This was exclusive of certain claims against Mír Nússír Khan of Khyrpúr, the heir of the late Mír Múbaruk Khan, consisting of about three years' tribute of Rs. 1,00,000 per annum, in addition to Rs. 7,00,000, claimed in behalf of the late Shah Shújá.

his assistants, and which he had not the means of testing, was any thing but conclusive of the guilt of the Amírs, even if it had been as unimpeachable as it subsequently proved to be worthless and false.

But, while we make these observations, we readily admit, that the treaty, as originally proposed by Major Outram, was framed in a spirit of perfect fairness towards both Governments; and there is every reason to believe, that had the negotiation for its settlement been committed to that officer, it would have been brought to an amicable and successful termination. Little could it have been foreseen, that a proposal to negotiate the equitable purchase of certain privileges by an equivalent remission of tribute, would be made the ground work—and even, in some quarters, the justification—of the oppressive and retributive penalties which were subsequently imposed upon these princes.

Lord Ellenborough, who had only a few weeks before signified his intention of continuing to hold military command of the Indus, seems now to have hesitated regarding the line of policy which it was desirable to follow. In acknowledging the receipt of the draft treaties, he stated that he “did not see the necessity for pressing a negotiation upon them (the Amírs) precipitately, and on the contrary would rather desire to leave their minds in tranquillity for the present;”<sup>\*</sup> and that it would be “a matter for future consideration whether any probable benefit to be ever derived from the treaties, could compensate for the annual expenditure which would be brought upon the Government of India by the maintenance of a large force at Sukker and Kurrachi.” Here, therefore, terminated the discussion regarding Major Outram’s Treaty, which was never presented to the Amírs.

On his return from Quetta to Sukker, three months afterwards, Major Outram was directed, before leaving Sindh, to lay before Sir Charles Napier, “the several acts, whereby the Amírs or Chiefs may have seemed to have departed from the terms or spirit of their engagements, and to have evinced hostility or unfriendliness towards the Government of India.” In obedience to these instructions, he submitted to the General, two “Returns of Complaints” preferred respectively against two of the Amírs of Upper Sindh, and against four of the Hyderabad Amírs, together with the documentary evidence in support of these charges. Having done this, he resigned into Sir Charles Napier’s hands the political powers which he

had wielded with so much credit to himself and with such signal benefit to the public service, and left Sindh on the 12th November; carrying with him the regrets of every Officer in the country.

We now resume the narrative of the proceedings of his successor.

Sir Charles lost no time in commencing the investigation of these charges, the establishment of which was to form the ground-work for the imposition of a new treaty; nor was he long in bringing it to a conclusion. In the course of twelve days after his arrival at Sukker, and a week before he had received the charges against the Amírs of Lower Sindh, he completed his report—that report which was to be Lord Ellenborough's guide in his Sindh policy, and to decide the fate of the Sovereign Princes of that country. We have perused this remarkable document with much pain. Passing by the sneering allusion to "Sticklers for abstract rights;" the undisguised admission that "we want only a pretext to coerce the Amírs;" the uncalled for remarks on the "barbarism of those Princes and their unfitness to govern a country;" the (too true) prophecy that "the more powerful government will at no distant period swallow up the weaker;" and the opinion that it would be better to come to this result at once, "if it could be done with honesty:"—setting aside these, and many similar unseemly doctrines, as well as the palpable inaccuracy of the statement, that under existing treaties we were authorized to maintain our camps permanently in upper Sindh, we proceed at once to examine the specific accusations, and the evidence by which they were verified.

The charges prepared against the Amírs are reducible to two heads.—First, Certain acts of constructive hostility attributed to Mír Rústum Khan, the chief Amír of Khyrpúr, and Mír Nussír Khan, the Senior Amír of Hyderabad; and Second, certain infractions of the existing treaties alleged against these two Amírs, as well as against Mír Nussír Khan of Khyrpúr, and Mírs Mír Mahommed Khan, Shahdad Khan, and Hússen Ali, of Hyderabad.

1. The first charge, under the first of these heads, alleged against Mír Rústum Khan, was a breach of treaty, of a hostile character, in having written a letter to the Maharajah Shír Singh of Lahore, the purport of which was to negotiate for the renewal of an alliance between that sovereign and certain of the Amírs of Upper and Lower Sindh. The letter, though intimating in vague and ambiguous language that the parties to the negotiation entertained unfriendly feelings towards the

British ( " that tribe " ) did not indicate any hostile designs against our Government, and seemed to have principally in view, an engagement to secure the succession of Mír Rústum's son to the chieftainship after *his own death*. It was intercepted by Agents of Mír Ali Morad, (Rústum's brother) who was inimical to Rústum, and a rival candidate for the Chieftaincy.

The authenticity of this intercepted letter rested exclusively on the supposed fact, that it bore Mír Rústum's seal, and was in the hand writing of His Highness' Minister. We need scarcely remind our readers that this species of judicial evidence is received with great distrust in this country. The forgery of letters and the fabrication of counterfeit seals are of very common occurrence, and had been recently and successfully exemplified in Sindh. Colonel Outram informs us\* (and the Amírs in their final conference at Hyderabad reminded that Officer of the fact) that in the preceding year, he had occasion to complain to the Amírs of frequent forgeries of his own seal, which, affixed to letters professed to be written by him, had so far imposed on their Highnesses as to procure grants of land for those who presented them; and in September of the same year several forged seals of the Amírs were found in the possession of a man apprehended in the Sukker bazar. These circumstances, combined with the fact that the parties through whose Agency the Letter was intercepted were hostile to Mír Rústum, and, as we shall afterwards find, were interested in embroiling him with the British Government, ought to have shewn the necessity of care and caution in pronouncing a final decision. Major Outram, having latterly entertained considerable doubts as to the authenticity of the Letter, forwarded it to Mr. George Clerk, the Envoy at Lahore, in the hope, that, from his official relation to the sovereign to whom it was addressed, he might be able to determine the question. That most eminent public officer, however, after retaining it six months in his possession, reported to Lord Ellenborough, that its " authenticity was still a matter of doubt to him as it had been to Major Outram in sending it."† But the doubts which were entertained by Major Outram and Mr. Clerk were very summarily disposed of, by the General's Political assistant. On the very day, the 23d November, on which he received back the Letter from Mr. Clerk, Sir Charles Napier wrote to Lord Ellenborough that Lieutenant Brown had assured him that there could not

\* Out. Com. 74.

† Sindh Parl. Pap. P. 478.



be the slightest doubt of its authenticity.\* And thus, on the simple assurance of an Officer, who neither spoke nor wrote the language in which it was written, and without any opportunity being given to the accused party to rebut the charge, was the authenticity of the Letter summarily decided. Nor was there the slightest attempt to prove that the seal, even if genuine, had been affixed with His Highness's sanction; while there were strong reasons for suspecting that it had been used without his knowledge. Mohun Lall informs us,† that, during the negotiation of the treaties of 1839, Mír Ali Morad surreptitiously obtained possession of Mír Rústum's seal, with the intention of using it for the furtherance of his own perfidious schemes; but was defeated in his object by the penetration of Sir Alexander Burnes. This fact, combined with our knowledge of Ali Morad's subsequent treachery, renders it by no means an improbable supposition that that "arch-intriguer," had now a second time possessed himself of his brother's seal, and that he was the real author of the secret letter which his own agents were instructed to intercept.

The second accusation preferred against Mír Rústum consisted in having, through his Minister Futteh Mahommed Ghorí, compassed the escape of a British prisoner. This charge appears to have been established against the minister: but there was no proof or even suspicion of the Amírs implication in the matter. The substantiation of such an offence would have justly warranted the British Government in requiring the punishment or banishment of the Minister by whom it was committed, but certainly never could be held to justify the forfeiture of Mír Rústum's territory.

The last charge under this head was preferred against Mír Nussir Khan of lower Sindh,—and consisted in his having authorised the writing of a Letter to Bibuk Búgty, the chief of the Búgty hill tribes, containing some general expressions of hostility towards the English ("some people") and calling upon him and his brother Belúchís to hold themselves in readiness. The authenticity of this Letter was unsupported by a tittle of evidence that could be considered as conclusive; and in this instance, as in the former, no opportunity was afforded the suspected Prince of disproving the charges.

The principal infractions of the treaty, constituting the *second* division of charges, consisted in the levy of river tolls on boats belonging to subjects of Sindh. These accusations affected

\* Sindh Parl. Pap. P. 427.

† Life of Dost Mahommed Khan, P. 78.

Mír's Nussír Khan, Mír Mahommed Khan, and Hússen Ali of Hyderabad, and Mír Rústum Khan of Khyrpúr, all of whom admitted the facts, but denied that they were in contravention of treaty. It was argued by the Hyderabad Amírs that the treaties exempted British and foreign boats from duty, but were not considered by them to interdict the levy of duties on their own subjects, over whom, under the 3rd Art. of the treaty, they possessed "absolute" jurisdiction: and that, in point of fact, they had levied these tolls from them without hindrance up to 1840. Lord Auckland's Government, however, decided against their construction of the engagement and the Amírs had recently issued perwannahs granting an entire exemption from tolls; upon which the Assistant Political Agent expressed a confident hope that the question would now be set at rest.

On the part of the Khyrpúr Amírs it was urged with great truth, that the treaties concluded with them contained no stipulation whatever for the abolition of tolls—the Amírs simply promising "co-operation with *the other powers* in any measure which may be thought necessary for extending or facilitating the commerce and navigation of the Indus." Now "the other powers," holding territory on the Indus, were the Maharajah of Lahore, the Nawab of Bhawulpúr, and the Amírs of Hyderabad; the arrangements with the two former "powers," permitted them to levy a small stated duty; while the latter, on account of their hostile opposition to the British Government, were compelled, without receiving any pecuniary or other equivalent, to abolish all tolls. On the general principles of equity and justice, therefore, the *friendly* Amírs of Khyrpúr, whose adherence to our cause had elicited the enthusiastic admiration of the negotiator of the Treaty,\* had a right to expect the terms which we concluded with the *friendly* "powers," of Lahore and Bhawulpúr, and not those which were imposed on the then *hostile* "powers" of Hyderabad, between whom and themselves a marked line of distinction had professedly been drawn throughout the whole of the negotiations. But apart from these grounds, there were special reasons for guiding the Government to the more favourable interpretation of the engagement: for, Sir Alexander Burnes

\* "With such adherence (says Sir Alexander Burnes) I feel quite at a loss to know how we can either ask money or any favor of this family. I have never doubted their disposition to cling to us: but in their weak state, I had not expected such promises in the day of trial." And in a marginal note to the Treaty the same officer observes: "I might have easily abolished the toll for ever: but this would be a hazardous step. The toll binds the Mír to protect property; the release from it would remove this duty from his shoulders."

had received specific instructions from Lord Auckland to put Khyrpúr on the same footing as Bhawulpúr, and with that view had been furnished with the Bhawulpúr treaty for his guidance.\* Finally, it has been considered an established maxim with the most eminent of our Indian statesmen, that “when any article of an engagement is doubtful, it should be invariably explained with more leaning to the expectations originally raised in the weaker, than to the interests of the stronger power.† Notwithstanding all these considerations, Lord Ellenborough decided, that the treaty must be construed as binding the Khyrpúr Amírs to acquiesce in the same arrangements as those subsequently imposed on “their kindred Amírs,” of Hyderabad; and he intimated that he should expect them to be observed with the same strictness as if they had been expressly inserted in the treaty. This opinion, pronounced by the paramount power, finally decided the prospective operation of the contested article: but that it was not intended to authorise the infliction of a penalty for duties previously levied under a different, and, we think, a more equitable, construction of the treaty, may be inferred from the fact, that a clause explanatory of the article in question was introduced into the revised Treaty.

It is unnecessary to notice the other trifling charges of breach of treaty, the more particularly as it was distinctly admitted by the Governor General,‡ that the right to make any demand, extending to the cession of territory, depended upon the truth of the three offences specified under the first head. The proposed treaty, writes Lord Ellenborough to Sir Charles Napier, “rests for its justification upon the assumption, that the Letters said to be addressed by Mír Rústum to the Maharajah Shir Singh and by Mír Nussír Khan to Bábúk Búgty, were really written by the chiefs respectively, and that the confidential minister of Mír Rústum did, as is alleged, contrive the escape of Syed Mahommed Shurríp,\*\*\* I know (he added) that you will satisfy yourself of the truth of these charges, before you exact the penalty of the offences they impute.”§

The final decision on these three important questions having been then remitted to Sir Charles, “on whose word, as the Historian truly states, the fate of Sindh now depended,”

\* Sindh Parl. Pap. P. 61.

† Sir John Malcolm's Institutions.

‡ Sindh Parl. Pap. P. No. 387, P. 437.

§ Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 389. P. 440.

he lost no time in pronouncing a verdict of guilt against the two Amírs, on each of the accusations.\* The Governor General, in confirming the decision, stated that, if Government were to wait in every case of suspected hostility until it obtained such proof as should be sufficient to convict the person suspected in a court of justice, it would in most cases expose itself at once to disgrace and disaster.† It may readily be conceded, that, in the investigation and settlement of international questions arising between a paramount state and its tributary allies, we cannot expect either the technical procedure or the scrupulous nicety of evidence of a Criminal Court: but we have clearly a right to require, that, in such an inquiry, the principles of substantial justice should not be violated. Every one who is practically conversant with the elements of judicial evidence will concur with us in opinion, that the *exparte* evidence of an intercepted letter, written in a language unknown to those who decided upon its authenticity, and intercepted by interested and hostile parties, was altogether insufficient, in the absence of any corroborative testimony, to establish the accusation preferred against these two princes.

Before we examine the exactions of the revised treaties, which Lord Ellenborough determined to impose as the punishment of these alleged offences, it will be necessary to inquire into the proceedings and position of the parties affected by them.

The condition of the Amírs at this period was a very painful one. Their minds were agitated and alarmed by the current rumors of our intention to impose new treaties upon them, if not to subjugate their country; they had seen the Bengal portion of General England's force detained at Sukker, instead of proceeding to their own provinces; the political agency, heretofore their sole medium of communication with the British Government, had been abolished; and an unknown Military Commander exercised arbitrary sway in the heart of their country. No official intimation of these changes had been vouchsafed to them; no reason had been assigned for the detention of the troops, although such detention was unauthorized by treaty: and instead of endeavouring to allay their fears by personal intercourse and friendly explanation—a duty which had been expressly enjoined by the Governor General—it seemed as if the General's object was to confirm

\* Sindh Parl. Pap. Nos. 409, 410, & 414.

† Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 415. I. 457.

and increase their apprehensions by an insulting arrogance of demeanour, and by an ostentatious display of Military strength. Surely under such suspicious and menacing demonstrations, it cannot be wondered at that the Amírs should have adopted some defensive measures for the protection of their interests.

If the British Government deemed it justifiable, after the abandonment of Affghanistan, to concentrate a large Army in the immediate neighbourhood of the Capital of Upper Sindh, at a time when, under the provisions of the treaty, we had no right to station a single soldier within the limits of that country, on what grounds of abstract justice, or under what clause of the existing treaties, can we dispute the right of the Upper Sindh Amírs to take the precautionary measure of assembling their armed dependants within the precincts of their Capital? Ours were the offensive, their's strictly defensive, measures. On the 6th November, Major Outram reported, in regard to the Khyrpúr Amírs that all their measures and preparations were defensive, and would lead to nothing offensive: and a week later his assistant at Hyderabad writes; "I cannot learn that the Amírs meditate collecting any troops in consequence of the large assemblage of British force at Sukker: but their Highnesses continue very uneasy on the subject, and impute any but friendly motives to it."

Lord Ellenborough's revised draft treaties bear date the 4th of November, and were received by Sir Charles Napier on the 12th of that month. On examining their provisions, we find that the following terms were common to the Hyderabad and the Khyrpúr treaties;

1. The relinquishment of all tribute payable by the Amírs to the British Government.

2. The introduction of a British currency throughout Sindh, and the relinquishment, by the Amírs, of the privilege of coining.

3. The right to cut wood within a hundred yards of both banks of the Indus.

- 4th. The cession in perpetuity to the Khan of Bharribpúr, of the rights and interests of the Amírs in the Districts of Subzulkote, and all the territory intervening between the present frontier of Bhawulpúr and the Town of Rorí.

The Khyrpúr Treaty stipulated in addition, for the cession to the British Government, of Sukker, Bukker and Rorí; while the Hyderabad treaty exacted in like manner the cession of Kurrachi and Tatta, with free transit between those places, and the cession to Mír Sobdar Khan of territory producing half a lakh of revenue, in consideration of his share of Kur-

rachí, "and as a reward for his good conduct." It was finally provided that a British Commissioner should apportion, by mutual exchanges, the cession of each Amír in lower Sindh, according to the amount of tribute payable by each; and in the event of the cessions falling short of the amount of tribute, lands yielding an annual revenue equivalent to the balance were to be appropriated to the indemnification of such Amírs of upper Sindh, other than Mírs Rústum and Nussír Khans, as were called upon to cede territory under these new arrangements.

The imposition of these treaties proved the remote cause of the Sindh Revolution. The oppressive severity and injustice of their exactions will be at once understood, when it is stated that the pecuniary value of the confiscated territory and the other forfeited privileges, amounted to the sum of Rupees 10,40,500\* per annum; of which two thirds (being about one third of their entire revenues) fell upon the Amírs of Khyrpúr.—We have seen that the object of Major Outram's proposed treaty was, to commute, on equitable terms, the payment of tribute for the cession of territory, and to make the territorial possessions, thus acquired, available for securing the military command of the Indus and the efficient protection of its navigation. Lord Ellenborough's treaties on the other hand, in addition to these and other stipulations, had in view the infliction of a signal punishment upon the Amírs, and the grant of "a great reward to our most faithful friend and Ally," the Khan of Bhawalpúr.

Without stopping to discuss the expediency or otherwise, of retaining military possession of both banks of the Indus (after the withdrawal of our troops from Afghanistan) the impolicy of which had been so strongly denounced by Lord Ellenborough, in his celebrated Simla Manifesto only a month before, we will confine our present observations to the injustice and the folly of the proposed confiscation to Bharrib Khan. We have already expressed our conviction that the evidence adduced in support of the already hostile intrigues, upon the proof of

* Territorial cessions to the Nawab of Bhawalpúr.....	Rs. 6,40,000
Ditto Ditto to the British Government.....	„ 1,90,500
Free Transit from Kurrachee to the Indus at Tatta.....	„ 10,000
Right of cutting wood on the Banks of the Indus.....	„ 2,00,000
Compensation to Mír Sobdar Khan .....	„ 50,000

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10,90,500

DEDUCT.

Amount of tribute remitted.....	„ 3,50,000
Balance Rupees.....	„ 7,40,500

which the justification of the treaty was declaredly made to rest, was altogether insufficient to establish the accusation. But let us admit, for the sake of argument, that the authenticity of the secret correspondence had been satisfactorily proved, and there will still remain the important question whether the imputed offence justified the penalty inflicted. If it be admitted that nothing can warrant a Paramount state in sequestrating the territory of one of its allies excepting such acts, on the part of the latter, as placed it in the position of a public enemy, and imparted to the former, all the rights of war, no one, we think, will venture to assert that the intercepted Letters justified such a measure. They indicated, it is true, an unfriendly feeling towards the British, and they pointed to measures of defence—in the one case by a foreign alliance, and in the other by the collection of Troops—against our expected hostility: but there was not one hostile act either committed or apparently meditated. They were also in contravention of the existing treaties, which prohibited negotiation with other states and therefore furnished grounds for remonstrance, or even for precautionary measures of self defence, had any real danger been actually apprehended: but, in no point of view, could they be held to warrant either a public declaration of war, or a public confiscation of territory. Viewing their alleged offences in this light, we would next proceed to inquire whether such petty and childish intrigues, on the part of the Amírs, had placed them beyond the pale of mercy, or whether there were not some extenuating circumstances to plead, at least in mitigation of their punishment, if not for their entire forgiveness. On the part of the Amírs, it might have been urged that the British Government had itself contravened one of the most important provisions of the former treaties with these Princes, by transporting Troops and military stores up the Indus—that we had forced the existing treaties upon them, at the point of the bayonet, in pursuance of a policy the original grounds of which had just been publicly announced to be visionary and impolitic,\* and which we had now been compelled to abandon—that we had given an illiberal, and, as appears to us, an unjust interpretation to an ambiguous clause of the treaty with Mír Rústum, and compelled him to abolish all river tolls without any recompense for the pecuniary loss it entailed—that notwithstanding our solemn pledge to Mír Rústum that we would not “covet a dam or drain of his territories nor the fortress on this bank or that bank of the Indus,” the Governor

\* See Lord Ellenborough's Proclamation of the 1st October, 1842.

General had intimated his intention to retain possession of the fortress of Bukker and the Town of Sukker nearly five months before the inquiry into the charges against that Prince commenced—that we were at this very moment directly infringing our engagements with the same Prince, by retaining Bukker which we had especially engaged to restore after the Affghan Campaign, and by concentrating a large Army at Sukker when we had no Authority under the treaty to station any troops whatever in Upper Sindh\*—and finally, that the Governor General's Military Commander in Sindh was then meditating other and more flagrant violations of national justice and of public faith. It might have been further urged in behalf of these Princes, that they had not derived from these treaties any of the advantages political or commercial, which we had led them to expect—and that they had substantially befriended us at a time when even their passive friendship or neutrality would have been most injurious to our interests, and when their active hostility would have endangered the safety of our Armies, and perilled the whole of our Indian possessions. Under such a combination of aggravating circumstances on the one side, and of extenuating considerations on the other, we cannot but think, that if ever there was an occasion when complete forgiveness, would have been an act not merely of generosity but of justice, it assuredly was in the case we are now considering.

But if the declaration of an amnesty for all past offences, whether real or alleged, was deemed to be either impolitic or undeserved, surely no one will contend that either the demands of justice or consideration of sound policy required that the Amírs should be punished by such an arbitrary and indiscriminate spoliation of territory as the revised treaties contemplated. Was it not enough for the purposes of "just punishment," and for the efficient protection of British interests that we should exact the perpetual cession of Sukker, Bukker, Rorí, and Kurrachí, and occupy these stations with our troops at pleasure? Was there occasion to humiliate and oppress them still further by gratuitously and recklessly confiscating one third of the Upper Sindh territory, as if it had been a conquered province, for the purpose of conferring it on an obscure ally, whom the Governor General, for reasons only known to himself, delighted to honor and enrich, at the expense of other States?

\* "It will be remembered (writes Lord Auckland in December 1839) that we are under special engagement to restore Bukker to the Khyrpúr Amírs, and that we have no absolute right under treaty to station our troops within the Khyrpúr limits."



If the punishment denounced against Mír Rústum Khan of Khyrpúr and Mír Nussír Khan of Hyderabad was thus arbitrary, oppressive, and unjust, how inexpressibly flagrant was the injustice inflicted on the other Amírs, who had not even been accused of any participation in these puerile intrigues—on Mírs Mír Mahommed Khan and Shadad Khan of Hyderabad, against whom there were only some trivial charges of evasions of treaty, on the part of themselves or their officers—on Mír Nussír Khan of Khyrpúr, with whom we had not even the semblance of a written engagement—and on Mír Hússen Ali of Hyderabad, and Mírs Mahommed Khan and Ali Morad of Khyrpúr, against whom there was no sort of complaint.\* And yet these Princes, equally with the two former, were despoiled of their territories and sovereign rights, in defiance of every principle of honesty, justice, and good faith.

While we thus strongly reprobate this unrighteous act, it is just to Lord Ellenborough to record, that, at the time he directed its execution, he was obviously not aware of the full extent of the injustice he was committing. In the letter of instructions to Sir Charles Napier which accompanied the draft treaties, he expressly avowed his ignorance of the precise value, position, and ownership of the districts, which he had ordered to be confiscated: and, indeed, so vague and utterly erroneous was his information, that he made provision for the disposal of the *surplus tribute* to be surrendered by us *in excess* of the annual value of confiscated territory, when, in point of fact, the latter exceeded the former, as we have shewn, by upwards of seven lakhs of rupees. Seeing the grievous error which had been committed, Major Outram, on perusing the treaties when on the eve of leaving Sindh, (on the 12th November) strongly urged Sir Charles Napier to make a reference to the Governor-General, before tendering them to the Amírs; which, indeed, he was authorized to do by the discretionary instructions just referred to.† Notwithstanding the imperfect information avowedly possessed by Lord Ellenborough, and heedless of Major Outram's advice and of Mír Rústum's subsequent remonstrances, he delayed making the reference until the 30th of January—two months and a half after he received the treaties, and nearly two months after he had presented them to the Amírs. This fatal delay is the

\* Mír Sobdar Khan (of Hyderabad) "our friend" was alone exempted from these exactions.

† Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 386.

more deeply to be regretted, because on the day of its receipt, his Lordship intimated, that, while he wished all the territory which had been conquered from Bhawulkhan to be restored, his object in confiscating the country between the Bhawalpur frontier and Rorí was "to establish a communication between our territories on the Sutlej and Rorí through a friendly state, rather than to inflict any further punishment on the Amírs of Khyrpúr," and therefore, that, if Sir Charles was of opinion that the cessions originally demanded, pressed too heavily upon the Amírs, he was directed to submit any suggestion he might have to offer for its modification. These instructions, however, arrived too late; they came not until the battle of Mianí had sealed the fate of Sindh and its rulers.

The conduct of Sir Charles Napier in this matter, betrayed a most culpable neglect of duty, both towards his own Government and to the Princes of Sindh, and is deserving of the severest condemnation. But this constitutes only a part of his guilt in this painful transaction. Sir Charles, had assured the Governor General that *he himself* would present the treaty to the Amírs; and that he would "Spare no pains to convince them that neither injury nor injustice were meditated, and that by accepting the treaties they would become more rich (!) and more secure of power than they now were." Instead of pursuing this course, which a sense of duty no less than his promise so clearly prescribed, he deputed his assistant, neither to explain, to advise, nor even to negotiate, but to present the treaties and to admit of no remonstrance. They were tendered to the Amírs of Upper Sindh on the 4th, and to those of Lower Sindh on the 6th of December, accompanied by Letters from the Governor General as well as from Sir Charles to these Princes, and were verbally accepted on the 7th, by the deputies of both Provinces, who at the same time remonstrated against their injustice. The hostile attitude and menacing tone of the General had previously induced the Amírs of upper Sindh to adopt the precautionary measure of collecting some of their troops at their capital; but the perusal of the draft treaties, harsh and humiliating though they were, and the (fictitious) report made to them by their Vakíls that the General had now abandoned his intention of marching on their capital, and was about to send away the Bengal force, seems to have in some degree re-assured them; and, in the apparent hope of being able to procure by negotiation some remission of the terms, they began to disband their troops. • The General's hostile measures, however, soon led to their recall.

Having crossed the Indus in hostile array, he, on the 8th,

publicly proclaimed the districts between Rorí and the Bhawulpúr frontier to be confiscated to the British Government from the first day of the ensuing year, and ordered that thenceforth "one cowree shall not be paid to the Kamdars of the Amírs." On the 18th he issued a second irritating proclamation, annexing these districts to the Nawab of Bhawulpúr, and prohibiting the Amírs, under threats of amercement, from collecting their revenues: and on the same day he sent the Bengal column to occupy the confiscated territory. The possessions, be it remarked, thus summarily and illegally seized, were the districts regarding which, he was, at the moment, withholding such official information, as in all probability would have induced the Governor General to modify his orders for their sequestration: and these districts were now seized on the plea of a treaty which was still unratified and which remained so for nearly two months afterwards. Well might the chronicler of the conquest affirm; that "the sword was now raised, and the negociation became an armed parley."\*

While he was thus forcibly appropriating the territory of Mír Rústum, which he had been authorized only to negotiate for, by treaty, he on the 12th thus abruptly addressed that Amír, "I must have your acceptance of the treaty immediately—yea or nay." And again in the same arrogant strain; "The Governor-General has occupied both sides of your Highness' river, because he has considered both sides of your Highness' argument. But I cannot go into the argument,—I am not Governor-General; I am only one of his Commanders. The Governor-General has given to you his reasons, and to me his orders; they shall be obeyed."† We will venture to state, that the annals of Indian diplomacy do not present a picture of more overbearing haughtiness than this. To have treated a conquered enemy in this manner, would have been deemed an act of barbarous inhumanity: but to address such language to a sovereign Prince, with whom we were at peace, argued a scandalous dereliction of public duty. Well might the venerable Rústum say; "You have issued a proclamation, that, in accordance with the new treaty, my country, from Rorí to the boundary of Subzulkote shall be considered as belonging to the British Government from the 1st January. As yet I have not entered into a treaty to this effect: \*\*\* moreover be it known that I have distributed the districts above alluded to among my kindred and chiefs of Belúchistan." Such was the series of unjust and oppressive acts

\* Napier's Conquest, P. 156.

† Suppl. Sindh Pap. No. 8.

which proved the remote occasion of the Sindh Conquest; its proximate cause is now to be noticed.

Mír Rústum Khan, the Rais or Prince Paramount of Upper Sindh, the spoliation of whose territory has just been described, was now above eighty years of age. The succession to the sovereignty after his death was claimed on the ground of prescriptive usage, by his younger brother Mír Ali Morad; while Rústum, on the other hand, claimed the right of bequeathing the turban (or crown) to his eldest son Mahommed Hússen, and even of placing it on his head during his own life.

Of these two rival candidates, the ablest and the most unprincipled was Ali Morad, whose guilty intrigues were so soon to involve his kindred and country in ruin. His first object was to obtain from the British Government an acknowledgment of his title to the succession, and a promise of support, if necessary, in establishing his claim after Rústum's death: and this object being attained, he meditated the extortion of the turban, if practicable, during his brother's life. In furtherance of these objects, he persuaded Mír Rústum and the Khyrpúr Amírs to invest him with full powers as their representative to conduct all communications with Sir Charles Napier, and on the 23rd of November he succeeded in obtaining a personal interview with the General. At this memorable conference—memorable from the disastrous consequences to which it ultimately led,—Sir Charles having decided, on what ground is not stated, that Ali Morad had "the right" to the turban after the death of Mír Rústum, promised, on the part of the Governor General, to protect him in that right, provided "he continued to act loyally towards the British Government." He further assured him that Mír Rústum would not be permitted by the Governor General to invest his son with the dignity in question during his own life; because, he said, "it would be against the treaty for any one Amír to defraud another of his right."\* Without presuming to decide, in the absence of any recorded data, whether the abstract right to the turban rested exclusively with Ali Morad, as was authoritatively announced by Sir Charles; or whether the claims on that ground were equally balanced between the two candidates, as had previously been decided by Major Outram,† we are clearly of opinion, that, under the existing treaty, which acknowledged the supremacy of Rústum and his absolute control within his own territories, we should have had no grounds for interference had Rústum carried into effect his

\* Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 413, P. 45.

† Outram's Commentary, P. 104.

intention of investing his son with the turban during his life; although, in the event of a disputed succession after his death, its settlement might have rested with the British Government.

While Sir Charles thus guaranteed to Ali Morad the eventual succession to the sovereignty of Upper Sindh on Rústum's death, he indiscreetly, though perhaps unconsciously, intimated that the turban would be preserved to Rústum during his life "*unless he forfeited the protection*" of the *Governor General*: an intimation which Ali Morad appears to have determined to turn to his personal advantage, even before he left the General's presence: for he at once indirectly accused Mir Rústum of hostility, by stating that he (Ali Morad) and Mir Sobdar Khan of Hyderabad were "the only friends of the English," and by proposing that they two should make a secret treaty to stand by each other. It seems passing strange that such a proposition coming from a Chief who had expressly solicited the interview as the accredited deputy of Rústum, should not have excited any suspicion of his perfidy in the mind of the General.

Having thus attained, and more than attained, the secret object of his visit, this bold and unscrupulous Prince hastened to compass the immediate deposition or compulsory abdication of his brother: and Sir Charles appears to have heartily seconded him in his guilty ambition. "The next step, (writes the General\*) after giving Ali Morad a promise of the succession to the turban after Mir Rústum's death, was to *secure him the exercise of its power now, even during his brother's life.*"\* How this was accomplished, is now to be shewn.

At the very time when a British General was confiscating Mir Rústum's territory, and a perfidious brother was secretly meditating his deposition, domestic troubles had befallen "the good old man." On the 18th December—the day on which the General threatened to march on his capital and proclaimed his districts to be confiscated to the Khan of Bhawalpúr—he sent a secret message to the General, to the effect that he was in the hands of his family and could not act as his feelings of friendship for the English nation prompted him to do, and that if the General would receive him he would escape and come to his camp.† Surely under such an appeal it would have been an act of friendship and humanity peculiarly befitting, if not absolutely incumbent upon, the British General, whose duty it was "to represent the friendship as well as the power" of his Government, to have promptly responded to so

\* Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 445, P. 463.

† Supp. Sindh Pap. No. 15.

reasonable a request. But setting all such feelings aside, a just regard to political consideration should have dictated a ready compliance; for, if it really was the wish of the General to secure an amicable settlement of the treaties, no better opportunity for effecting this object could have been desired than this spontaneous offer, on the part of the Amír, to place himself under British protection. And, be it remembered, that the request emanated from the Sovereign Prince of the Province, at whose court he was the delegated British representative, and within whose territories he had resided for two months and a half, but with whom he had not yet had an interview.\* To have invited the aged Amír to his camp would most probably have effected the settlement of the treaties and secured the peace of the country, as it would have unmasked the character of Mír Ali Morad; and it was, therefore, a duty which Sir Charles owed both to that Chief and to his own Government. But we shall shew how different was the course of policy which he followed. "The idea struck me at once (he writes to the Governor General two days afterwards,) that Rústum might go to Ali Morad, who might induce him, as a family arrangement, to resign the turban to him:" and accordingly in pursuance of this "idea," he sent a secret Letter through Ali Morad to Rústum, recommending him to take refuge in his brother's fortress, trust himself to his care, and be guided by his advice. Bewildered and alarmed by the hostile proceedings of the General and by the dissensions within his own family, he fell into the snare, and on the 19th fled to Dejí-ka-kote. Having thus "thrown himself into his brother's power," by the General's advice, he was placed under restraint, deprived of his seals, and compelled on the following day to resign the turban to Ali Morad.† The great object of his policy having been successfully accomplished, Sir Charles thus laconically and exultingly reports its results; "This (the transfer of the turban) I was so fortunate to succeed in, by persuading Mír Rústum to place himself in Ali Morad's hands. This burst upon his family and followers like a bombshell."‡

Although the General was not acquainted, at the time, with the precise circumstances under which the turban had been fraudulently extorted from Mír Rústum, he, from the first, sur-

\* Mír Rústum had solicited an interview with Sir Charles on a previous occasion, but postponed it on the plea of sickness, though in reality he was dissuaded from it by his intriguing brother. He repeated his request, but was refused.

† Sindh Parl. Pap. P. 593.

‡ Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 445, P. 463.

mised that Ali Morad had "bullied his brother into making it over to him:" and now his suspicions as to the honesty of the proceedings were increased by the fact that a determination was obviously manifested in some quarter to prevent his having personal access to Rústum. This he resolved to counteract; and on the 27th he intimated to Ali Morad his intention of visiting Rústum on the following day. But before the morning's sun had risen, the aged Prince had fled in dismay to the desert.

The intelligence of Rústum's flight, viewed in connection with the extraordinary transactions of which it was the consummation, could not fail to stagger the General, and to augment his former well-grounded suspicions. Accordingly, in reporting the matter to the Governor General, he attributed it either to the aged Prince's dread of his (the General's) making him a prisoner—a dread, he adds, which had all along haunted him,—or to his having been frightened into the foolish step by Ali Morad, who, in order "to make his possession of the turban more decisive," might have told him that he (the General) intended to seize him.\* The accuracy of his conjectures was amply confirmed by the receipt of a communication, written on the following day, from Mir Rústum himself, disavowing the validity of the cession of the turban, as having been extorted from him, and stating that he had been induced to flee into the desert, and to avoid a meeting with the General, in consequence of the representation of Ali Morad that he (the General) wished to make him a prisoner. Rústum further intimates in his Letter, that he had sent ambassadors to the General to explain every thing, and concludes by expressing a hope that his case may be examined "by the scales of justice and kindness," and that he may receive his rights according to the treaty. The correctness of his statement was a week afterwards confirmed by the deputies just referred to, in presence of Ali Morad's own minister, as well as of Major Outram and Captain Brown.†

With such an array of circumstances and facts, all affording the strongest presumption that Ali Morad had fraudulently extorted his brother's birthright, and that, in the accomplishment of his wicked purpose, he had dared to stain the British name by imputing meditated treachery to the British representative,—it was the bounden duty of that officer to lose not an instant in instituting a full and searching inquiry into the whole circumstances of the transaction. An inquiry was due to the Sovereign Ally, whose rights we had guaranteed—it was due to the

\* Sindh Parl. Pap. No. 446,

† Outram's Commentary, p. 126.

personal character of the General himself—and it was, above all, due to the vindication of the faith and honor of the Government whom he represented. We grieve to record that no investigation whatever was made, either then or at any subsequent period, though thus imperatively required for the credit of the British name, and repeatedly and urgently solicited by the Amírs both of Upper and Lower Sindh. On the contrary, on the very day (the 1st of January) on which he received from Rústum the confirmation of his own previous suspicions, the General, with incredible inconsistency and in violation of every consideration of political prudence and moral justice, issued an arrogant and offensive Proclamation, addressed to the Amírs and people of Sindh, in which he gives a short but inaccurate outline of what had occurred; asserts that Mír Rústum, by his flight, had insulted and defied the Governor General; and declares his intention to “protect the chief Amír Ali Morad in his right, as the justly constituted Chief of the Talpúr family.”\* On the following day he addressed a letter of similar purport to Rústum,—charging him with misrepresentation, subterfuge, and double dealing; and concluding with these words, “I no longer consider you to be the chief of the Talpúrs, nor will I treat with you as such, nor with those who consider you to be Rais.†

Ali Morad having been thus formally proclaimed as the justly constituted Rais of Upper Sindh, the General, without waiting for instructions from the Governor General, did not hesitate to pledge the British Government to grant to the usurper all lands said to appertain to the Turban, without knowing or inquiring what those lands were. Supported by the General, Ali Morad appropriated territory at his pleasure, and resumed, on the plea of the Turban, lands which had passed into the possession of feudatory chiefs: thereby creating general disaffection and alarm.

The aggregate annual value of the territory left to the Amírs of Upper Sindh, under the exactions of Lord Ellenborough's yet unratified treaties, was only Rs. 14,29,000: of this amount Ali Morad's share was Rs. 4,45,500, leaving to the other Amírs Rs. 9,83,500. Now Sir Charles had not only pledged to Ali Morad, in virtue of his usurpation of the

\* Suppl. Sindh Pap. P. 6.

† Suppl. Sindh Pap. No. 17. We have deemed it to be quite unnecessary to enter into an examination of the discordant and contradictory statements to be found in the different versions given by Sir Charles Napier of this very discreditable transaction; but refer our readers to the fifth chapter of Colonel Outram's Commentary, where they will find the whole subject of the compulsory abdication of the Turban analyzed and exposed with much minuteness and ability.



Turban, one-fourth of the aggregate revenues of Upper Sindh, but had moreover stipulated that this fourth should be deducted, not from the aggregate revenues of the Province (Ali Morad's own revenues included) but from the revenues of the other Amírs. Thus these unfortunate Princes were called upon to pay, not the fourth of their own possessions, viz. Rs. 2,40,000, but a fourth of the entire revenues of the Province, or Rupees 3,57,250 :—which, added to the sum of Rs. 1,50,000 to be paid to Ali Morad as an indemnity for his possessions confiscated to Bhawul Khan, swelled the total exactions made by the usurper to Rs. 5,07,250 :—leaving a balance of little more than six lakhs of Rupees for the support of no less than eighteen Amírs, with their families, dependants, and feudatory Chiefs, who had up to that period enjoyed an annual revenue of Rs. 17,44,000.

In the mean time, while these startling events were in progress, Major Outram, who was on the eve of embarking for England, was recalled to act as a British Commissioner, under Sir Charles Napier, for settling the details of the Ellenborough treaties. That officer, disregarding all personal considerations, promptly repaired to Sindh, to act as a subordinate in the countries where he had so recently held supreme political control. He accepted the situation in the hope that he might yet be enabled to save the ill-fated princes of that devoted country : but their doom was fixed, and he was unable to avert it. What Sir Alexander Burnes was in Affghanistan under Sir William Macnaghten, Major Outram was in Sindh under Sir Charles Napier. Both were powerless for good : and both must have appeared in the eyes of the Princes and people of the country as countenancing and approving a system of policy which was utterly at variance with their known characters and with their former opinions. This is painfully exemplified in the final conferences, when the Amírs pour forth their remonstrances and complaints against the cruelties and injustice which they had suffered, and the Commissioner, in consequence of the instructions he had received, has not the power of holding out the slightest hope that their grievances would even be inquired into. We are, however, anticipating the regular course of our narrative.

Major Outram joined the General's Camp at Dejt-ka-kote, the fortified residence of Ali Morad, on the 4th of January (1843)—three days after the proclamation of that Prince as the supreme ruler of Upper Sindh. He used every effort to check the General in the course on which he had so unfortunately entered. He pointed out the palpable treachery and extortion by which Ali Morad had possessed himself of the turban ; his unwarrantable and indiscriminate resumption of

lands alleged to appertain to the Rais-ship; the consequent injury and injustice it would entail on the other subordinate Princes and Chiefs; and the general disaffection, if not insurrection, it would create throughout Sindh. But the warning was disregarded: the General, deaf alike to the voice of reason, to the calls of justice, and to the solemn obligations of treaty, pursued his impetuous career. Having, without any declaration of war, marched in hostile array upon the capital of Upper Sindh, with whose chief we were at peace, and at whose hands we had received such signal benefits; having taken Military possession of an extensive tract of country on the plea of a yet unratified treaty; having unauthorizably lent the sanction of the British name to the usurpation of the turban by a crafty and unprincipled chief, under circumstances—to which, he himself had been a party—that involved the strongest suspicions of treachery and violence; and having sanctioned his indiscriminate appropriation of lands on the pretext of their appertaining to that turban, which he had usurped;—the General proceeded, in the name of the usurper, to seize and make over to him all the fortresses in Upper Sindh. One of the first of the strongholds invaded was Emaunghur, the name of which must be familiar to all our readers.

Emaunghur, let it be observed, was the private property of Ali Morad's nephew, Mír Mahommed Khan, a chief against whom no charge of "hostility or unfriendliness," had even been preferred, and whose possessions were guaranteed to him, by a separate agreement, under the treaties of 1839. The sole object which the General seems to have first had in view, when he determined on capturing this "Sindhian Gibraltar" as he terms it, was the moral effect likely to be produced by so daring an achievement: and we find him writing to the Governor-General on the 27th December: "I have made up my mind, that though war has not been declared (nor is it necessary to declare it) I will at once march upon Emaunghur, and prove to the whole Talpúr family of both Khyrpúr and Hyderabad, that neither their deserts nor their negotiations can protect them from the British troops." But as this might be considered, and justly considered, an unwarrantable invasion of private rights, he some days after bethought himself of calling in question Mír Mahommed's title to the fort, and here, as on former occasions, we are again startled by the General's contradictory statements. In one place, we find him describing it as "belonging to Mír Mahommed Khan, but becoming the property of Ali Morad by his election to be

chief.\* But if the fort appertained, as of right, to the turban, why was it not in possession of Mír Rústum who wore the turban? In another place he states that "*it was* Ali Morad's, but he gave it to one of his relatives (Mír Mahommed Khan) three years ago." If it did really belong, at some antecedent period, to Ali Morad—which we merely assume for the sake of argument—we would ask, how came he, not only to be the proprietor of it, but to alienate it to another chief, while Rústum wore the turban, to which Sir Charles had just told us it of right belonged. Again, on a third occasion, he shifts his ground of defence, and rests the justification of its seizure on the allegation that the owner was "in rebellion" against Ali Morad. But it is painful to dwell on such contradictions. Nothing but an inward conviction of the injustice of the measure could have drawn forth such a defence.

Sir Charles marched on Emaunghur with a light detachment on the night of the 5th of January; saw no enemy on his route; and on his arrival at his destination found the fort deserted. Before setting out on this expedition he had intimated to the Governor General his intention of sending word to the Amírs in Emaunghur that he would neither plunder nor slay them if they made no resistance. These chiefs, however, apparently distrusting the General's good faith, abandoned the fort: and the latter, in breach of his solemn promise, destroyed and plundered it, after having obtained with difficulty the consent, (not of "the owner," but) of Ali Morad. Before quitting this subject, we must prominently notice, that, while Sir Charles affects to have taken possession of this fortress in support of the authority of Ali Morad, we find that he had resolved on placing all the forts in the hands of his puppet, even before he had usurped the turban. "I will place their forts (he wrote before Rústum's abdication) in the hands of Ali Morad, nominally in those of Mír Rústum."†

Having accomplished this unprovoked inroad into the heart of the territory of an allied Prince, and having completed the spoliation and destruction of the fortress, in direct violation of the treaty, and of his own plighted word, the General retraced his steps towards the Indus. He, at the same time, deputed his Commissioner Major Outram to Khyrpúr to meet the Amírs of Upper and Lower Sindh, with a view to the arrangement of the intricate details of Lord Ellenborough's treaties.

In a circular letter, addressed to them by the General, the several Amírs were directed to attend at Khyrpúr, either personally or by Vakils, adding, that, if any one of them failed to furnish his deputy with full powers, he would not only exclude him from the meeting but would "enter the territories of such Amír with the Troops under his orders, and take possession of them in the name of the British Government." Notwithstanding this threatening Letter, none of the Khyrpúr Amírs made their appearance within the stipulated period. Having been distinctly informed that no alteration could be made in Sir Charles's arrangements with Ali Morad,—whose usurpation of the Turban, with all its attendant territorial exactions, was to be considered a closed question,\*—Mír Rústum proceeded in the direction of Hyderabad to join his fugitive relations.

Finding it impossible to avert the ruin which was befalling the Amírs of Upper Sindh, Major Outram asked the General for permission to proceed to Hyderabad without delay, in the hope of reaching that capital in time to prevent its princes from giving aid or refuge to their fugitive kinsmen, and also of being enabled, by their means, to procure the submission of the latter. The General's reply, acceding to his application, was intercepted, it is believed, by Ali Morad's Minister, and never reached Major Outram. Two days after this, Vakíls, bearing the seals of the Amírs of Hyderabad, arrived at Sir Charles's head-quarters, with full authority to affix them to the treaties. Instead of procuring the signature of the Vakíls to their unconditional acceptance (leaving the details for future adjustment) he injudiciously desired the deputies to return to Hyderabad to meet Major Outram on the 6th of February. This was certainly an unfortunate decision: but, with a still more lamentable want of judgment and of consistency, he, in a letter to the Hyderabad Amírs apprizing them of what he had done, expressed a hope that the Khyrpúr Amírs would also proceed to Hyderabad to meet his commissioner, adding, "if they do not, I will treat them as enemies:"—thereby advising and directing the adoption of the very measure which Major Outram so much deprecated, and the prevention of which was the main object of his proposed visit to Hyderabad.

\* Notwithstanding the obviously imperfect information under which Lord Ellenborough drew up the draft treaties, and the discretionary power which he gave the General to refer all doubtful points, the latter persisted to the last in carrying out these oppressive exactions to the uttermost: "Whether such arrangement," he writes to Major Outram, "leaves the former (the opposed Amírs) one rupee or one million, does not, in my view of the case, come within our competence to consider."

The interception of the General's Letter and other unavoidable causes prevented Major Outram's departure from Sukker till the 4th of February: and on reaching Hyderabad on the 8th, he found that Mír Rústum, acting in obedience to the General's orders, had arrived there four days before him. Thus Sir Charles Napier had completely embroiled the Amírs of Hyderabad in the misfortunes of their cousins of Khyrpúr, and had succeeded most effectually in frustrating the very object for which his Commissioner had been deputed to Lower Sindh:—a result which the Hyderabad Chiefs themselves had all along dreaded, and had heretofore prevented, and to which they attributed all their subsequent misfortunes.

Having entered so much at length into the remote and proximate causes that led to the subjugation of Sindh, it will be unnecessary to dwell upon the memorable occurrences which marked its final accomplishment. In the conferences which Major Outram held at Hyderabad with the Amírs of both Provinces, they solemnly denied the truth of the charges on which the new treaties were imposed, and complained that they had never been allowed an opportunity of disproving them. The great subject of earnest and repeated remonstrance, however, was the unjust extortion of the turban from Mír Rústum. That chief re-iterated his previous allegations, that, in conformity with the General's express directions, he had sought refuge with Ali Morad, who placed him under restraint, made use of his seals, and compelled him first to resign his birthright, and then fly from Dejí-ka-kote on the General's approach. Although they strongly protested against the harshness and injustice of the exactions of the revised treaties, all the Amírs agreed to sign them, upon condition that Mír Rústum should be restored to his hereditary rights.

Finding that the Commissioner was unauthorized to give them any assurance, or even to hold out any hope, of Rústum's restoration, they then endeavoured to exact a promise, that an *inquiry* should be instituted, and that in the event of their substantiating the truth of what they had alleged against Ali Morad, the turban should be restored to Rústum, and the lands which had been wrested from his kindred and feudatories on the plea of belonging to the turban, should be given back to them; or, should this request not be complied with, they entreated that they themselves might be allowed to settle their dispute with Ali Morad without British interference. They urged a promise of inquiry, not only as an act of justice to Rústum, but also as the only means of allaying the excitement of the Belúchís; who had been flocking into the capital

during that day and the preceding night, and who had refused to disperse until Rústum's wrongs should be redressed.\* Major Outram's instructions, however, were peremptory and left him no discretionary power: he could only promise to forward to the General any representation they might have to make on the subject; and in the meanwhile urged upon them an immediate compliance with the terms of the treaties.

At length, on the evening of the 12th, the Amírs formally affixed their seals to the draft treaties in open durbar. On their way back to the Residency, Major Outram and his companions were followed by a dense crowd of Belúchis, who were only prevented from attacking them by "a strong escort of horse sent for their protection by the Amírs, under some of their most influential Chiefs." On the following day the Amírs sent a deputation to Major Outram to intimate, that, after his departure from the Durbar on the preceding evening, all the Belúchi Sirdars had assembled, and learning that, notwithstanding the acceptance of the treaties, the commissioner had given no pledge whatever for the redress of Rústum's grievances, they took an oath on the Koran to oppose the British troops, and not to sheath the sword until that chief and his brethren had obtained their rights. The Amírs further stated, that they had lost all control over their feudatories, and that they could not be answerable for their acts, unless some assurance were received that the rights of Rústum would be restored. On that and the following day, they forwarded repeated verbal and written messages to Major Outram, to the same purport,—entreating him, should he not be empowered to grant the required assurance, to leave the Residency, as they could not restrain their exasperated followers. Notwithstanding these warnings he determined to remain at his post, at all risk, lest his departure should precipitate hostilities.

While these events were in progress, Sir Charles Napier was marching with his small army upon Hyderabad. He had intended and pledged himself, as late as the 12th, to halt and embark the troops for Kurrachí, as soon as he received the Amírs' acceptance of the treaties: but, ere it arrived, he was within two or three days' march of the capital, and had obtained information that the Belúchis were assembling in large numbers in the town and neighbourhood of Hyderabad. Under these circumstances, which had been brought about by his own acts, the safety of his army and other military considerations

\* The Belúchis were further exasperated at the moment by the intelligence of the seizure of Hyat Khan, a Muri and Sindhian Chief.

determined him, instead of halting as he had promised, to continue his march. The news of this determination was brought to the Amirs by the camel rider who had conveyed Major Outram's dispatch announcing the acceptance of the treaties.

War was now inevitable; and both parties appear to have arrived at this conclusion at the same time. At 9 A. M., on the 15th, Sir Charles wrote to Major Outram, "I am in full march on Hyderabad, and will make no peace with the Amirs. I will attack them instantly, whenever I come up with their troops." At the very hour, when the British General thus formally *declared* war—for he had practically been carrying on warlike operations for two months—hostilities were commenced by the Amirs' Troops in their attack on the British Residency, the heroic defence of which by Major Outram, with his small honorary escort under the command of Captain Conway, against eight thousand Belúchis, formed, perhaps, the most extraordinary achievement of that brief but memorable campaign. Then followed, in rapid succession, the brilliant victory of Miani, won by the gallantry of our troops and by the military genius and intrepid valor of their General, against the united forces of Upper and Lower Sindh—the surrender of the Amirs and the capitulation of Hyderabad—the hard-fought battle of Dubba, in which our troops defeated the Army of Mír Sher Mahommed of Mírpúr, who escaped after the battle—the public notification of the annexation of Sindh to the British dominions,—and, finally, the captivity and exile of all the Amirs. It does not fall within our present purpose to give a detailed narrative of these transactions: but there are a few points connected with them which require special notice.

The first of these relates to the attack on the Residency. That measure was characterized by Lord Ellenborough, in his notification of the 5th March, as "a treacherous attack upon a representative of the British Government," and as a "hostile aggression prepared by those who were in the act of signing a Treaty:" the character thus affixed to this hostile measure being based upon Sir Charles Napier's official report that the Amirs signed the treaty on the night of the 14th, and that they attacked the Residency on the following morning. On this we would remark, 1st. That the treaty was signed on the 12th, and not on the 14th, as erroneously reported by the General; 2d. That during the two days and three nights which intervened between the execution of the treaty and the commencement of hostilities, the Amirs, as has been shewn, sent repeated messages, verbal, and written, to Major Outram,

urging his departure on the ground that they could not restrain their feudatories, and that they themselves would be compelled to join with them, unless the General should halt, and promise an inquiry into Mír Rústum's grievances. To designate the attack on the Residency, after such repeated warnings, as a "treacherous" attack, was a direct perversion of language and of fact. It was in truth the first reciprocation, on the part of the Amírs, of hostilities which the British General had commenced two months before, and which, before the commencement of the attack, he had resolved to prosecute with vigour.

The second point which requires notice is the suppression by Sir Charles Napier of the notes of the conferences between the Amírs of Sindh and Major Outram, in violation of his official duty and of his promise to forward them to Government. An examination of these documents by the Governor General was absolutely necessary to his acquiring a just knowledge of the points at issue between the Amírs and his representative. The perusal of them would have acquainted his Lordship that the Amírs had unreservedly acquiesced in the terms of his treaties, harsh and oppressive as they were; but that they protested against the fraudulent exactions from Mír Rústum, which formed no part of their stipulations, and the unjust and unauthorized enforcement of which, by his General, proved, the immediate cause of the war. The shifting and contradictory reasons subsequently assigned for withholding these important documents are melancholy exemplifications of the subterfuges to which it becomes necessary to resort in support of an indefensible act.

A third point to which we would advert, regards the terms on which the Amírs surrendered on the day after the battle of Mianí. Having previously received, through their Vakils, a promise of honorable treatment, those Amírs who were present in the battle (viz. Mírs Rústum, Nussir, and Mahommed Khans of Khayrpúr, and Mírs Nussir, Shahdad, and Hússen Ali Khans of Hyderabad) entered the British Camp, and surrendered to the General, who returned their swords, and intimated that they would be treated with consideration, until the receipt of the Governor-General's instructions for their ultimate disposal. Under this guarded stipulation, Sir Charles could not be held responsible for the fate of any of these six Princes, with the exception of Mír Hússen Ali, Major Outram's ward. As no charge had ever been preferred against this young Prince, who was only sixteen years of age, except that of being present in the battle, Major Outram interceded



in his behalf, and obtained his release, and, as was inferred, his pardon. Notwithstanding this, he was soon afterwards arrested, without any assigned reason, and imprisoned with the others. That there may have been a misconception of the General's precise meaning when he set him at liberty, is extremely probable: but, as the misapprehension was entertained not only by the Prince himself and the whole of his family, but also by the British Officer at whose intercession he was released, his subsequent imprisonment, without any known cause, cannot be reconciled with the strict principles of justice and good faith.

But whatever difference of opinion may have existed regarding the treatment of Mír Hússen Ali, there can be but one opinion as to the injustice perpetrated on Mírs Sobdar Khan and Mír Mahommed Khan. The former of these had, up to the outbreak of hostilities, been recognized by all parties as the "old and ever faithful friend and ally" of the British Government, the latter had on all occasions been employed as a mediator between contending chiefs; and neither of them had been present at Mianí. It was, in consequence, intimated to them by the General, after the battle, that no harm should befall them, if they remained quietly in their houses. Under this assurance they peaceably surrendered the fort of Hyderabad, which Sir Charles admitted he could not have captured without reinforcements; and three days afterwards they were arrested, and condemned to share the fate of their kindred. The treatment of these two Princes has left an indelible stain upon the humanity, justice, and good faith of the British Government.

The next question which arises, and which has been the subject of much angry discussion, refers to the property seized in the fort of Hyderabad, and subsequently appropriated as prize. As the fortress was surrendered, and not captured, it follows that whatever treasure or other property was found therein, that could justly be considered lawful prize, belonged of right to the British crown, or the East India Company, and not to the Army. But the complaint chiefly insisted on by the Amirs, was, that they had been deprived, by the Prize Agents acting under the General's Orders, not only of the state property, but also of their personal and private property, including personal ornaments, clothing, and articles of household furniture. Another complaint urged by them, under this head, was, that the privacy of the female apartments was violated; that the Princesses were compelled to throw away their ornaments, rather than undergo the shameless scrutiny to

which they knew they would be subjected; that jewels and other property were actually taken from the persons of their female attendants; and that the houses of some of their servants were plundered. These alleged acts of spoliation were aggravated by the circumstance of their having been committed, not in the immediate excitement of a siege, but at an interval of two or three days after the peaceful surrender of the fort. There may possibly have been some exaggeration, and mis-statement in these accusations: but their substantial truth has never been publicly disproved.

It is scarcely necessary to notice, except for the purpose of denouncing, the apparently vindictive spirit in which Sir Charles Napier, with the aid of his brother the Historian, has traduced the public and private characters of the Amírs. There is something, to our thinking, at once unmanly and ungenerous in the seeming virulence with which the conqueror of Sindh has thus endeavoured to embitter the exile of the unfortunate victims of his power, and his injustice. If he had even established the truth of the monstrous crimes and vices which he has laid to their charge, he would not in the slightest degree have thereby diminished the political and moral injustice which led to their dethronement: but when we find that these charges are, either utterly devoid of truth, or, to say the least, grossly exaggerated, we feel as if the original injustice of the conquest were almost obliterated by the atrocity of the subsequent libels upon the conquered Princes. In vindication of the character of the Amírs, however, Colonel Outram has adduced the written testimony of several British Officers, who, from their official relations to these Princes during the later period of their rule, and since their exile, have had peculiar opportunities for acquiring a correct opinion, and whose characters are a sufficient guarantee for the scrupulous accuracy of their evidence. From the concurring testimony of the officers we are bound to exonerate their private character from some of the more revolting vices which have been laid to their charge, and to rank them as rulers rather above than below the ordinary level of the *Mahomedan Princes of India.*

We have already in the course of our narrative anticipated most of the observations that naturally arise from a review of the transactions which have been detailed. But, before we conclude, it seems right that we should endeavour to apportion to Lord Ellenborough and to his General their respective shares in the responsibility of these proceedings.

The first great error which Lord Ellenborough committed in the management of our relations with the States on the

Indus, was the supercession of Major Outram, the British Representative by Sir Charles Napier, and the subsequent entire abolition of the Political Agency in that country. We are fully aware of the advantages which result from an union of Political and Military Control in the person of one officer, both on account of the additional weight and influence, with which it invests him, and also because it tends to prevent the delays, jealousies, and consequent injury to the public interests, which may arise, in cases of emergency, from a divided and conflicting authority. But where the officer selected for the duty does not possess the requisite union of Political and Military qualifications, then is there no measure more hazardous to the public peace, or calculated to be more detrimental to the public interest. Lord Ellenborough selected for the discharge of these united functions in Sindh, an officer who was as admirably fitted for the one duty as he was utterly disqualified for the other. He superseded an incapable Commander by the ablest General in India; but at the same time he displaced a Political functionary of tried efficiency to make room for an inexperienced officer, whose utter incompetence for the duty has been made apparent in almost every page of the foregoing narrative. In this arrangement his Lordship evinced either a want of discernment of character, or a more culpable waywardness of disposition, to the indulgence of which the public interests were sacrificed.

The second objectionable measure, for which he must be held responsible, was the imposition of the Revised Treaties, which, as we have shewn, proved the remote cause of the revolution. It has been seen, that, had the General not culpably withheld official information which it was his duty to have communicated, the details of the measure might have been modified and rendered less oppressive to the Amirs: but, after making the necessary deduction on this ground, there will remain much that is censurable both in the terms of the treaties and in the grounds upon which they were imposed. In the first place, he acted unwisely in entrusting to an inexperienced Subordinate Agent the power of passing a final decision upon a matter which was to involve, in its consequences, the forfeiture of the sovereign rights, and of a large proportion of the territorial possessions, of an allied state. But even if the General's decision upon the questions referred to him had been supported by clear and undeniable evidence—a supposition very remote from our real conviction,—we should still consider the treaties which Lord Ellenborough based upon them to be most impolitic. Independently of all other objectionable clauses,

the indiscriminate sequestration of the territory of the different associate rulers of Sindh, and its cession to the neighbouring chief of Bhawulpúr, not only immediately involved all these rulers in the punishment avowedly inflicted for the alleged offences of only a portion of them, but was calculated to perpetuate future discord between the rulers and people of the two states, and to provoke a feeling of bitter and lasting animosity against the British Government.

Lastly, it is to Lord Ellenborough alone that we are to ascribe the dethronement, captivity, and exile of the Amírs, and the annexation of Sindh to the British dominions.

Among the more prominent errors and faults committed by Sir Charles Napier, during the few eventful months of his diplomatic career in Sindh, the first to be noticed is the general mode in which he performed the political duties of his office.

The functions of a British Representative at the court of a protected native state, if we understand them aright, involve the twofold duty of upholding the authority and interests of his own Government, and of conciliating the friendship and watching over the interests of the Durbar to which he is accredited. He represents a Government which has engaged to protect as well as to control; and if he neglects the performance of either of these offices he must be considered to have failed in the fulfilment of the responsible duties committed to his charge.

If we apply this test to the political services of Sir Charles Napier in Sindh, we shall find how grievously and how fatally he failed in their performance. Of the two branches of political duty, just referred to, he altogether neglected the one, and he performed the other with unnecessary and unjustifiable harshness. The former political Agents, as the Historian admits,\* had gained the friendship of these Princes, and there appears no reason to doubt but that Sir Charles would have been equally successful had he evinced a similar desire to obtain it. Instead of attempting to conciliate their confidence, he evinced in all his communications with them a degree of arrogance and harshness that was altogether unprecedented in the official intercourse between allied States, and that was calculated to have a most injurious effect upon the interests of both Governments. Almost every page of the Sindh Blue Books confirms this fact. He, moreover, exercised an interference in their internal affairs that was not only unauthorized, but was expressly prohibited, by the treaties.

The second point to which we have to advert is his inexcusa-

\* Napier's Conquest, 4.

ble omission in not supplying the Governor General with full and correct information on points where his Lordship's knowledge was declaredly defective or obviously inaccurate; and in not forwarding to him such representations and remonstrances as the Amírs repeatedly made against the measures which were in progress or were about to be enforced. This is perhaps to be ascribed, in part, to forgetfulness, but it seems also to have arisen in some degree from a mistaken conception of the duties of his office. He appears to have looked upon himself as the Governor General's "Commander," delighted to carry his orders into rigorous effect; rather than as his Lordship's Political Agent, whose duty it was to supply him with full and accurate information on every point connected with the duties of his office. The grievous results of Sir Charles Napier's ignorance or heedlessness or culpable neglect of this duty have been fully detailed.

His hostile invasion of the dominions of the Princes of Upper Sindh, with whom we were at peace, and were then negotiating a Treaty; and his Military occupation of extensive districts on the plea of that yet unratified engagement, constitute his third great offence. The injustice of this, however, must be shared by the Governor General, who, when issuing instructions to the General for an amicable negotiation, intimated at the same time, in no unintelligible terms, his wish that the Amírs should feel the force of our arms.

The fourth measure chargeable against Sir Charles Napier is one of which the conception and execution rested entirely with himself. We allude to the unjustifiable capture and demolition of Emaunghur—a fortress belonging to a chief who had never even been accused of any participation in the hostile intrigues alleged against some of the others.

The greatest, however, of his numerous offences was his having, in conjunction with Mír Ali Morad, compassed the forcible deposition of Mír Rústum Khan, the prince Paramount of Upper Sindh, at whose court he was at the time the British Representative. In furtherance of this intrigue, as has been shewn, he counselled Mír Rústum to put himself into the power of Ali Morad; he publicly proclaimed the usurper's accession to the throne, without the Governor General's authority for so doing, and in utter disregard of Mír Rústum's solemn protest against the illegality of his abdication, as having been forcibly and fraudulently extorted from him; he publicly notified his determination to treat as rebels all who refused to acknowledge the authority of the usurper; he officially sanctioned the usurper's unwarrantable and indiscriminate

appropriation of territory in the possession of the other Amírs ; and lastly, he obstinately refused to institute or sanction any inquiry into the circumstances of the usurpation. This series of impolitic, unjust, and discreditable acts, proved the proximate cause of the Sindh Revolution, and has left an ineffaceable stain on Sir Charles Napier's reputation as well as on the good name of the British Government.\*

Such is a very imperfect sketch of the leading particulars of the conquest of Sindh—a conquest, which, whether it be viewed in reference to the political and moral injustice in which it originated, or to the unjustifiable proceedings which marked its progress and its close, has happily no counterpart in the history of British India during the present century. If we would find a precedent for the spoliation of the Amírs we must go back to the times of Warren Hastings ; and to the injuries inflicted on Cheyte Singh by that able but unscrupulous statesman. In the revolution of Benares, as in the revolution of Sindh, the paramount authority imposed unjust and exorbitant demands (pecuniary in the one case, territorial in the other) on its tributary allies—answered respectful remonstrances by insolent menaces and hostile inroads—treated defensive preparations as acts of aggressive hostility—rejected all overtures for amicable negotiation—goaded them to resistance in defence of their sovereign rights—defeated them in battle—confiscated their territories—and finally drove them into exile. While there was this general resemblance, however, between the atrocities committed on the banks of the Ganges in 1781, and those enacted in the valley of the Indus in 1843, the impelling motives and the ultimate results of the policy pursued by the two Indian rulers were widely different. In the one case, there was an exaction of money demanded, on the urgent plea of state necessity, to relieve the pressing financial embarrassments of the Government ; in the other, there was a spoliation of territory, originating in a whimsical solicitude to enrich a favourite ally, who had no claims whatever upon our bounty :—the one Governor General, by his unjust policy, acquired a district yielding a considerable addition to the permanent revenues of the state—the other, by a similar course of injustice, bequeathed to his country a province burdened with what has hitherto proved a ruinous,

\* The venerable ill-requited Chief who was the victim of such unparalleled injustice, has been released by death from the sorrows of his exile. He expired at Púna on the 27th of May last, and the grave closed, soon after, over another victim, of British oppression—Mír Sobdar Khan, the “ever faithful friend and ally” of the British Government.

and may prove a permanently ruinous, annual expenditure to the state.

While the present century nowhere furnishes a precedent or a parallel to our recent proceedings in Sindh, it is a subject of congratulation that the current year supplies us with a most remarkable and instructive contrast. The spotless justice of the recent war on the Sutlej, and the deep-stained guilt of the war on the lower Indus—the forbearance of Lord Hardinge, who scrupulously maintained peace until a wanton and unprovoked invasion compelled him to draw the sword, and the unjust aggressions by which Sir Charles Napier goaded the Princes and people of an allied state to resistance in defence of their sacred rights—the generous moderation which closed the triumphs of the former, and the oppressive and retributive severity with which the latter followed up his victories:—all furnish points of contrast so striking and so extraordinary, that posterity will hardly credit the fact, that the chief actors in these two campaigns lived in the same century, and were brought up, in the same Military School.

It only remains to say a few words regarding the two works, whose titles are placed at the head of this article.

The "Conquest of Sindh" presents the same characteristic peculiarities which we alternately admire and regret in the previous writings of the Historian of the Peninsular war. We find the same spirited and graphic narration of military operations; the same clearness of topographical delineation; the same vivid and thrilling descriptions of the battles. But these merits, great as they undoubtedly are, are disfigured by even more than the usual proportion of his characteristic faults. A turgid extravagance of diction pervades the general narrative; many of his statements and opinions are singularly distorted by personal and party prejudice; and the direct perversions of facts are so many and so serious, as irretrievably to mar its character for trustworthiness. These misrepresentations are rendered subservient, on every occasion, either to the undue exaltation of Lord Ellenborough and Sir Charles Napier, the unjust depreciation of Lord Auckland and Colonel Outram, or the indulgence of a feeling of what we fear must be regarded as malignant hostility towards the Ex-Amirs of Sindh.

Many of the misstatements to which we have alluded are exposed with unsparing freedom, but in a tone of great moderation, in Colonel Outram's Commentary, which presents, in many respects, a remarkable contrast to the work upon which it comments.

We regret that our limits do not admit of our furnishing

any adequate specimens of the earnest, truthful, straight-forward, and business-like style in which the author has treated every department of his intricate and voluminous subject. Our anxiety has been to disentangle, for the benefit of the general reader, the main thread of the narrative of leading facts, from the multitudinous details which are apt to weary or repel those who are neither personally nor officially concerned in the evolutions of the Sindhian tragedy. In this way we have endeavoured to contribute our mite to the diffusion of sound and accurate views respecting its real character and merits; since an undistorted retrospective view of what has actually occurred can alone effectually pave the way to healing prospective measures. And we are very sure, that, to the noble-minded author of the Commentary, any service calculated to exhibit *the truth, the plain undisguised truth*, as respects the memorable series of events which led to the subversion of the Talpúr Dynasty in Sindh, must prove far more gratifying than any elaborate attempts to illustrate his own personal merits, or those of his recently published work.

Towards the conclusion, however, of the work there is one passage so well fitted to display the moral grandeur of his sentiments, that we must find room for it:—

“ Reverentially I say it, from my first entrance into public life, I have thought that the British nation ruled India by the faith reposed in its honour and integrity. Our empire, originally founded by the sword, has been maintained by opinion. In other words, the nations of the East felt and believed that we invariably held treaties and engagements inviolate; nay, that an Englishman’s word was as sacred as the strictest bond engrossed on parchment. Exceptions, no doubt, have occurred; but scrupulous adherence to faith once pledged was the prevailing impression and belief, and this was one of the main constituents of our strength. Unhappily this charm has, within the last few years, almost entirely passed away. Physical has been substituted for moral force—the stern, unbending soldier for the calm and patiently-enduring political officer; functions incompatible—except in a few and rare cases—have been united; and who can say for how long a space—under such a radical change of system, such a departure from all to which the Princes and People of India have been accustomed, and most highly value and cherish—the *few* will be able to govern the *millions* ?

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The moral effect of a single breach of faith is not readily effaced. “ I would,”—wrote the Duke of Wellington, on the 15th of March 1804,—“ I would sacrifice Gwalior, or every position in India, ten times over, to preserve our credit for scrupulous good faith, and the advantages and honour we gained by the late war and peace; and we must not fritter them away in arguments drawn from overstrained principles of the laws of nations, which are not understood in this country. *What brought me through so many difficulties in the war, and the negotiations for peace? The British good faith and nothing else?*”

It is another great misfortune, that acts like those I am deploring, pre-



vent those who are really imbued with pacific views and intentions, from acting upon and carrying them out. The present Governor-General, to his honour be it said, has endeavoured to carry out his wise and pacific intentions to the utmost verge of prudence and forbearance. Who shall however venture to say that his measures, which we know to have been purely defensive, have not, under the warning of Sindh, been regarded by the Sikhs as indicative of meditated aggression on the first favorable opportunity ; or that the bold step they adopted of invading our borders, is not to be attributed to the distrust and suspicion excited in their minds by the subjugation of the Princes and People of Sindh ?

If, in the performance of the necessary duty of self-vindication, I have read a warning to those in power to retrace their policy before it is too late, may it not be neglected ; for nations require occasionally to be reminded that " the love of Conquest is national ruin, and that there is a power which avenges the innocent blood." Our interests in the East require consolidation, and not extension of our dominion."

With this single but characteristic quotation, however, we must conclude. Of the Commentary, it may, in brief, be said, that without displaying the fitful eloquence or the practised literary skill of the military Historian, it evinces a thorough mastery of the subject on which it treats, and it is written in clear, forcible, and unaffected language, with an earnestness that bespeaks the author's honesty of purpose, and with a scrupulous accuracy, to which his opponent can lay no claim. Colonel Outram has most fully and triumphantly vindicated his hitherto unsullied reputation from the aspersions which have been so ungenerously and so unjustly thrown upon it ; he has cleared Lord Ellenborough's character from much of the guilt heretofore imputed to him in connection with the injuries inflicted on the Amirs ; he has taken down the Conqueror of Sindh from the political eminence on which the Historian had so indiscreetly placed him, and fixed on him a brand of political dishonesty, which, it is to be feared, he will find it difficult to efface ; and he has exposed, in General Napier's History of the Conquest, a series of mis-statements so numerous and so flagrant, as must for ever damage its claims to historical accuracy.

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