



BOOK III. the attacks of so many of the divisions, were highly credit-
CHAP. VII. able to their nationality, and might suggest a suspicion.
1834. that the Raja was less unpopular with his people than had
been represented. Had he manifested the like courage, or
shewn any military ability in availing himself of the
natural defences of his country, the contest might have
been more serious. The barriers on the east and west
might have been found as impassable as those on the north;
and the mountains and the hills of Coorg might have been
defended until the unhealthiness of the advancing season
had compelled the troops to quit the field and afforded
the Raja a chance of obtaining more favourable terms.
Vira Rajendra, however, was unequal to the crisis he had
provoked; and the occupation of Madhukaira was imme-
diately followed by the surrender of its prince. He gave
himself up unconditionally on the evening of the 10th, to
Colonel Lindesay, and was detained a prisoner in his palace.
He was afterwards removed with his family to Bangalore,
and finally to Benares. The management of the province
was consigned to Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser, as political
agent, by whom the heads of the villages were assembled
at Madhukaira and consulted with respect to the future
administration. A considerable number of them expressed
a desire to be taken under the immediate authority of the
British Government; and in compliance with their wishes,
a proclamation was promulgated, announcing the resolu-
tion of the Governor-General, that the territory heretofore
governed by Vira Rajendra Wudiyar should be transferred
to the Company. The inhabitants were assured that they
should not again be subjected to native rule—that their
civil rights and religious usages should be respected—and
that the greatest desire should invariably be shewn to
augment their security, comfort, and happiness. How far
these objects have been effected may admit of question;
but the province has remained at peace, and the Coorgs
have shewn no disposition to re-assert their indepen-
dence.

After the close of the Coorg campaign, the Governor-General proceeded from Bangalore to the Nilgiri hills for the re-establishment of his health; and while at Uttakamund was joined by Sir Frederick Adams, the Governor of Madras, Colonel Morrison, appointed to the Supreme



Council, and Mr. Macaulay, who had been nominated fourth or legislative member of Council, under the arrangements adopted in England for the future Government of British India. To these we shall have occasion to recur: such of them as affected the organisation of the general administration, the establishment of one Supreme Government of India, vested in the person of the Governor-General; and the constitution of a new Presidency, that of Agra, were announced to the public in a proclamation dated the 10th July. The execution of the latter arrangement was suspended until the return of Lord William Bentinck to Bengal, which took place at the end of the year. The other proceedings of the Governor-General, at Uttakamund, were chiefly directed to the reduction of the expenses of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies, which still continued to exceed their resources. Authoritative promulgation was also given to those provisions of the new Charter, which relieved Europeans from the disabilities under which their settlement had been hitherto impeded, and allowed them to acquire a proprietary right to landed property. A partial relaxation of the prohibitory regulations had been previously effected by Lord W. Bentinck; and they had been permitted to hold lands on a protracted lease. They were now freed from all material restraints; and the result has shown how little was ever to have been apprehended from the privilege: very few individuals have availed themselves of the permission; Europeans in India rarely possessing either the inclination to invest capital in landed property, or the capital by which alone such property is to be acquired.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Relations with Native States, — Abandonment of Protective Policy, — System of Non-interference, — partial and mischievous Operation, — Interference authorised with Extra-Indian States, — Inconsistency — and Consequences. — King of Delhi sends an Agent to England. — The Governor-General declines an Interview. — Assassination of Mr. Fraser. — Punishment of the Murderers. — Affairs

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of Oude. — Guarantee of the Person and Property of the Minister, — continued in Office by the new King for a short time, — Dismissal and Demands against him, — allowed to retire to Cawnpore, — his Death, — Conduct of the King. — Appointment of Hakim Mehdi. — Salutary Reforms, — not considered sufficient. — King threatened with Deposal, — Resident not to interfere, — Solicitations of the Minister. — Progress of Reform. — Intrigues against Hakim Mehdi, — his Dismissal. — Conditional Instructions to assume the Government, — their Enforcement suspended. — Death of the Nizam. — His Successor requires the Removal of the British Officers. — Decline of the Country. — Affairs of Palmer and Co. — Differences between the Directors and the Board of Control. — Writ of Mandamus. — Bhopal. — Disputes between the Begum and the young Nawab, — the latter set aside in favour of his Brother. — The Begum unwilling to relinquish her Power. — Nawab appeals to the Governor-General — has recourse to Arms, — final Success. — States of Ghaffur Khan and Amir Khan. — Visit of Amir Khan to the Camp of the Governor-General, at Ajmer. — New Policy towards the States on the Indus. — Origin in England. — Commercial Treaties. — Interview with Ranjit Sing. — Unsuccessful Attempt of Shah Shuja to recover Kabul. — Relations with the Mahrattas. — Nagpur prosperous under British Management, — transferred to the Raja. — Apa Saheb in Jodhpur. — Relaxation of Control over the Gackwar. — Misgovernment of Syaji, — Quarrels with the Resident, — Districts sequestered, — restored to him. — State of Indore. — Defects in the Character of Holkar, — his Death. — Adoption of Martand Rao. — Government seized by Hari Holkar, — acknowledged as Raja. — Disputes at Gwalior. — Insurrection of the Soldiery in favour of the Raja. — Baizi Bai obliged to retire from Gwalior. — Settled in the Dekhin. — Result of British Policy. — Relations with the Rajput States. — Kota — Disputes between the Rao and the Raj Rana. — Final Partition. — Bundi Family-Dissensions. — Murder of the Minister. — Party from Jodhpur attacked. — Interference of the Political Agent. — Decline of Udaypur upon withdrawal of Interference. — Outrages of the Minas of Chappan checked. — Renewed Insurrection of the Gra-



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sias, — Exertions of the Superintendent, — Order re-established. — Death of the Rana Bhim Sing, — succeeded by his Son. — Jodhpur. — Disputes between Man Sing and his Chiefs. — Management of Mherwara. — Chiefs invite Dhokal Sing, — his Progress. — Raja alarmed. — British Government interferes, — cautious Character of Interference, — Mediation accepted. — Secret Hostility of Man Sing, he favours and shelters Marauders. — Force collected against Jodhpur. — Man Sing alarmed, — submits to all Demands. — Jaypur, — long and uneasy Intercourse. — Influence of Jota Ram and Rupá Bhandarin. — Dislike by the Regent Rani of the Manager Bhyri Sal, — his Removal. — Doubts of the Existence of the young Raja. — Return of Jota Ram. — Sentiments of the Chiefs in favour of the Regent-Mother. — Public Appearance of the Raja. — Unpopular Measures of Jota Ram. — Discontent of the Chiefs. — Inveterate Animosity of Jota Ram to Bhyri Sal, — Efforts against him, — frustrated by British Guarantee. — Death of the Dowager Rani. — Force sent into Shekhawat. — Forts destroyed. — Raja protests against the Expedition, — his sudden Illness and Death. — Universal suspicion. — Resignation of Jota Ram, — and Removal of Rupá. — Political Agent sent to Jaypur. — Bhyri Sal, Manager. — Attack on the Agent, and Murder of Mr. Blake, — traced to Jota Ram, — who is imprisoned for Life. — Murderers punished. — Council of Regency under general Control of the Resident. — Evils of Non-Interference in regard to secondary Rajput State, — necessarily resumed. — Sirodhi Frontier. — Adjustment of disputes between Bhikaner, Jesselmer, and Bahawalpur.

THE intercourse maintained with the Native States in alliance with the British Government of India during the period under review, presents an unfavourable picture of the results of the policy pursued by the latter—the decline of that salutary influence which it had at first exerted for the maintenance of public tranquillity, and a tendency to a revival of those disorders which had occasioned so much misery and desolation in Central Hindustan. For a short interval after the close of the Pindari campaign, the ascendancy acquired by the British power, and

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BOOK III. the subordination of several of the princes whom it had
CHAP. VIII. seated on their thrones, and whom, in the immaturity of
1828-35. their years or their sovereignty, it was bound to protect,
neither excited any discontent among the native states
nor disquieted the consciences of the authorities in Eng-
land, usually haunted by the dread of extending the
British territory beyond the limits which were set to it
by the wisdom of Parliament. But with the consolidation
of the supremacy, the apprehension of its visionary evils
recurred; and in a short time instructions were reiterated
to the local governments to withdraw from all interference
with the native princes, beyond such as was indispensable
for the realisation of the tributes they were bound by
treaty to pay, or to prevent them from going to war with
each other, and to leave them to the independent and
uncontrolled exercise of their power in the administration
of their own affairs. However mischievous the conse-
quences, and although engendering within their respective
dominions tumult, anarchy, and civil war, non-interference
was to be the rule of the policy which was to be followed
by the Governor-General. The interposition of the British
Government was to be restricted to the vindication of its
own pecuniary claims; and the character of an importu-
nate and self-interested creditor was to be substituted for
that of a benevolent and powerful protector. These in-
structions were promptly attended to, particularly by
Lord W. Bentinck, who entertained the like views of the
expedience of abstaining from interference with native
rule. It was found, however, to be extremely difficult to
desist from intervention. The protection of the British
dominions from the contagion of contiguous disorder, the
rescue of friendly princes from the effects of their own
misconduct, the impossibility of looking on unconcerned
whilst a tributary or ally was hastening to destruction,
and the necessary assertion of its own dignity and au-
thority, compelled the reluctant Government of India to
interpose frequently, both with council and with arms,
and placed its conduct in constant contrast to its profes-
sions. Inconsistency was therefore the main character-
istic of the proceedings of the Government of Bengal, in
its transactions with the native principalities beyond its
own borders; and while it subjected them to perplexity



and embarrassment, it impaired the consideration and weakened the reliance which they had hitherto entertained on its purposes and its power. Nor was this inconsistency restricted to the local Government. While urging the principle of non-interference as regarded the princes of India, the authorities in England, induced by considerations foreign to the interests of British India and originating in the jealousies of European cabinets, impelled the Indian Government into a course of interference which it had hitherto carefully avoided, and opened sources of danger and disaster which its own prudence would have shunned. The same policy that was disposed to consign Malwa and Rajputana to the renewed horrors of the predatory system, commanded the Governor-General to carry his negotiations across the Indus, and to establish new relations with Sind and Afghanistan. The inconsistency was severely punished; but the results belong to a subsequent period. We have now only to notice the political relations that were maintained between the Native States of Upper India and the British Government, to the close of Lord W. Bentinck's Administration.

Upon advertng in the first place to the Mohammedan powers, we find that no change had been made in the position of the King of Delhi, whose dissatisfaction was still kept alive by the non-compliance of the Government with his application for an augmented stipendiary grant. Finding the Government immovable, His Majesty had appealed to the authorities in England, and had deputed the celebrated Rammohun Roy¹ to advocate his cause.

¹ Rammohun Roy was a Brahman, of the most respectable or Kulin tribe of Bengal, and was born in 1780, in the Province of Burdwan. His father and grandfather had held office under the Nawabs of Bengal; and in contemplation of a similar destination, Rammohun Roy was early instructed in Persian and Arabic, and being of a contemplative and inquiring turn, was led by the study of the Koran to look with aversion on the polytheism and idolatry of his countrymen. To his Mohammedan studies, he added the acquirement of Sanscrit and English; and as he grew to manhood, he entered into the service of the Government as a writer in the office of the Collector of Rungpore, rising rapidly to the post of Dewan, or Head Native Assistant and Treasurer. In attracting the esteem of his superior, Mr. Digby, his familiar intercourse with that gentleman confirmed him in his distaste for the religion of his forefathers, and in his desire to awaken his countrymen to a sense of the degrading character of their superstitious belief. Retiring from public life at an early age, he settled in Calcutta in 1814, and employed himself in endeavouring to disseminate the doctrines of faith in one sole Supreme Being. The plan he adopted for this purpose, in addition to his personal teaching, was the publication of portions of the Vedas and of Vedānta tracts in Sanscrit, Bengali, and English, in which the unity of God was inculcated, and a spiritual form



BOOK III. As this mission had not been communicated to the
CHAP. VIII. Governor-General, and had been consequently unsanctioned, the character of Rammohun Roy, as the Agent of the King, was not recognised in England; and his advocacy was unavailing. To mark the displeasure of the Government, Lord William Bentinck, on his arrival at Delhi, in his visit to the Upper Provinces, declined the usual interchange of complimentary visits, and passed on towards the mountains without holding an interview with the king. An addition to the pension was sanctioned by the Home authorities, on condition that the king should refrain from urging his pretensions to the revenue of the reserved districts; but as he hesitated to accede to the stipulation, the increased allowance was not granted.

At a subsequent date, the city of Delhi was the scene of an outrage of an unusual description, and of an act of retributive justice, unprecedented in the annals of British Indian judicature. Ahmed Bakhsh Khan, the Nawab of Ferozpur, of whom mention has been already made, was succeeded by his eldest son, Shams-ud-din Khan, as Nawab. The district of Loharu had been set apart as the

of worship was enjoined; thus endeavouring to establish a Deistical religion by authorities recognised as sacred by the Hindus themselves. Some converts were made, chiefly among the opulent and educated classes of Calcutta; and an impulse was given which has contributed materially to their enlightenment. Falling in with Unitarian Christians, Rammohun Roy adopted in some degree their tenets, and in their defence engaged in an unprofitable controversy with the Missionaries of Serampore, which diverted him from the more useful task of Hindu reform. He did not, however, wholly abandon the cause; but was always among the foremost in advocating measures for the intellectual and moral advancement of his countrymen, as was shewn in the zeal with which he supported the abolition of the rite of Suttee. Entertaining a strong desire to visit Europe, he rather ill-advisedly undertook the office of agent of the king of Delhi, with whom he could have had no sympathy, and whom interested motives alone could have tempted him to serve; and in that capacity repaired to England, where he arrived in 1831. He was received with much consideration by the Court of Directors, and by persons of rank and public importance, and attracted general admiration by the courtousness of his manners, the extent of his information, and the acuteness of his understanding. His partial adoption of Unitarian doctrines led him into a close intimacy with persons of that persuasion, but he never became a member of their church; and his mind retained to the last the colouring with which it had been imbued by the Monotheism of the Koran. His views of society also connected him, at first, with the liberal party, and he manifested a warm interest in the question of Parliamentary reform; but he lived long enough in England to detect the hollowness of party professions, and to regret his having been cheated into a belief of their sincerity. Had he returned to Bengal, his country would have reaped the benefit of his larger experience and corrected impressions; but he was unfortunately attacked by a fever which proved fatal; and he died at Bristol, in September 1833.—‘Personal knowledge.’



appanage of his two younger brothers; and they succeeded to its independent administration. The apportionment was disputed by the Nawab; and as the district appeared to be mismanaged, the Government resolved that it should be placed under the charge of Shams-ud-din; who was to allow his brothers a pension proportioned to the nett revenue of Loharu. This decision was objected to by Mr. Fraser, the Political Commissioner and Agent of the Governor-General at Delhi; and the transfer was delayed for further consideration. The family dissensions had instilled feelings of inveterate animosity in both parties, but more especially in the Nawab, who considered that the justice of his claim had been sanctioned by the supreme authority, and was, therefore, no longer liable to be disputed. Regarding Mr. Fraser as the sole obstacle to his being put in possession of the disputed lands, and listening only to his vindictive resentment, he employed an assassin to take away the life of the Commissioner. He had no difficulty in finding a willing instrument among his retainers; and by one of these, Mr. Fraser, when returning on horseback to his residence from a visit to the city, was shot. The murderer at first effected his escape, but was eventually seized and subjected to trial before one of the judges of the Sudder Nizamat of Allahabad, Mr. Colvin, who had been deputed to Delhi to conduct the trial. The guilt of the assassin was fully proved, and he suffered the penalty of the law. The participation of the Nawab having been substantiated by the evidence against his emissary, Shams-ud-din was also brought to trial and convicted, and, notwithstanding his rank, hanged as a common malefactor. Although no doubt existed of the guilt of both of the culprits, the Mohammedan population of Delhi evinced a general sympathy for their fate, and regarded them with almost as profound a veneration as if they had fallen martyrs in the cause of their religion.¹

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During the life of Ghazi-ud-din Hyder, the heir apparent to the throne of Oude had been at violent feud with his father's favourite minister Aga Mir, Moatemed-ud-dowla, and although the breach was apparently healed, and a

¹ A particular account of this transaction is given by Lieut.-Colonel Sleeman in his "Rambles and Recollections," vol. ii. p. 209.



BOOK III. reconciliation was effected before the demise of the king,
CHAP. VIII. the latter fearing that, after his death, the minister would

1828-35. be the object of his successor's persecution, contrived to obtain the express guarantee of the British Government for the security of his person and property; advancing, on this condition, a crore of rupees, as a loan to the Company in perpetuity; the interest, five per cent., being paid to different dependants of his Majesty, including Moatemed-ud-dowla, to whom about a half of the income was appropriated. The new monarch, Nasir-ud-din Hyder, appeared at first disposed to forget the animosity of the prince, and, retaining Moatemed-ud-dowla in office, treated him with marked kindness and profuse liberality. As soon, however, as he was satisfied that the British Government would not interfere with his choice of a minister, and that he might safely follow his own inclinations,¹ he threw off the mask — dismissed Moatemed-ud-dowla from his office, and demanded from him the repayment of the sums of which it was alleged he had defrauded the treasury, and for which his property was responsible. The Minister appealed to the British Government; and although it was resolved that he should be made to account for the public money which had come into his hands subsequently to the accession of Nasir-ud-din, before permission was granted him to withdraw into the Company's territories; yet the immunity which had been guaranteed to him was to be maintained for all the measures of his administration under the late king, whose confidence had never been withheld from him and whose concurrence in his proceedings had stamped them with the regal sanction. As the object of the reigning sovereign was the entire ruin of the obnoxious minister, he warmly protested against this decision, and instituted a series of vexatious proceedings to gratify his vindictive purposes. The project was steadily resisted; and after a prolonged and troublesome discussion, and a most laborious investigation of all the pecuniary demands preferred against the ex-minister, he was suffered to retire into the territories of the Company; being still held responsible for any

¹ He is said to have ascertained this more particularly from a private interview with Lord Combermere on his visit to Lucknow in 1828, on which occasion the king was very urgent that Aga Mir should be privately arrested and shipped for England.



claims which might finally be substantiated. A military BOOK III.
escort was necessary to protect his person and family CHAP. VIII.
against the vengeance of the king; and under its protec-
tion, in October, 1830, he quitted Lucknow and the hope 1828-35.
of restoration to power, for the humbler but safer enjoy-
ments of private life at Cawnpore. He did not long
survive his downfall, dying at that station in May, 1832,
evidently pining for the cares and excitement of office.¹
That he had been guilty of peculation and oppression to
an enormous extent was undoubted; and the British
Government, fettered by the guarantee which it had in-
judiciously given him, rendered itself liable to the charge
of being accessory to a system of both public and private
spoliation. It was not, however, to punish extortion or
to redress wrongs, that the king pursued his minister's
offences; it was merely to satiate personal hatred, which
was to be appeased only by the destruction and probably
the death of Moatemed-ud-dowla. The dismissal of the
minister was far from conducive to the improvement of
the administration. The king declared it to be his inten-
tion to become his own minister; but, ignorant of affairs,
and addicted to dissolute habits, the effect of this deter-
mination was to throw the power into the hands of
disreputable and incompetent persons, the associates of
his dissipation, or ministers of his vices; and as venal as
inefficient. Their unfitness for the duties entrusted to
them was so palpable and mischievous, that the Resident
was instructed to decline any communication with the
king through their instrumentality, and to refrain from all
intercourse until a respectable and responsible minister
should be nominated. After much hesitation, Nasir-ud-
din recalled the minister whom his father had discarded
in favour of Aga Mir, and invited Hakim Mehdi Ali Khan

¹ An interesting account of his last days is given by Dr. Spry, who was for some time his medical attendant. — *Modern India*, i. 246. Aga Mir succeeded to the office of minister early in the reign of Ghazi-ud-din, and although of humble origin was not unworthy of his elevation. He was a man of quick apprehension and acute intellect, and exhibited great address. While never losing sight of his own interests, he maintained for many years the ascendancy over his master, and his influence in the court of Lucknow. He uniformly opposed the projects of reform proposed by the British Government; yet managed to continue on good terms with its representatives, and in general to make them subservient to his purposes. In the communications with the British Government, which bore either his own signature or the king's, and which in either case were probably of his dictation, he appears to great advantage, and generally has the best of the argument.



BOOK III. to quit his asylum at Furrakhabad, and resume the con-
DUCT OF public affairs. The Resident, Mr. Maddock, opposed
CHAP. VIII. his elevation, under an impression that Hakim Mehdi
1828-35. was decidedly inimical to the British alliance; but the
Government, anticipating important benefits from his
acknowledged abilities, concurred in his nomination.¹ His
restoration to power was followed by measures of a bene-
ficial tendency. The finances were improved, the expenses
diminished, the corrupt practices, which had diverted a
large portion of the public receipts into the hands of
individual courtiers, or the inmates of the Harem, were
checked; and the system of farming the revenue was
exchanged, as opportunity offered, for direct collection by
officers appointed by the minister—an arrangement which
had been vainly urged upon the two last princes of Oude.
These reforms were not, however, capable of immediate
influence, nor could they be carried into effect without
considerable opposition. The state of the kingdom was
therefore slowly ameliorated; and, according to the report
of the Resident, it had reached so incurable a stage of
decline, that nothing but the assumption of the adminis-
tration for a season could preserve it from utter ruin.²
Although differing from Mr. Maddock in his estimate of
the character and intentions of the minister, the Gover-
nor-General concurred in his views of the necessity of
interference; and, in April, 1831, when at Lucknow, on
his visit to the Upper Provinces, the king was distinctly
apprised by Lord W. Bentinck, in a speech composed for
the occasion and afterwards communicated in writing,
that, unless his territories were governed upon other
principles than those hitherto followed, and the prosperity
of the people made the principal object of his administra-
tion, the precedents afforded by the principalities of the
Dekhin, the Carnatic and Tanjore, would be applied to
the kingdom of Oude; the entire management of the
country would be vested in British functionaries; and
the sovereign would be transmuted into a pensioner of
the State. These menaces stimulated the minister to

¹ Minute of Lord W. Bentinck on the Affairs of Oude.—Report, Committee House of Commons, Political Appendix.

² Memorandum on Oude Affairs, by Mr. Maddock. Report, Comm. House of Commons, Political Appendix, VI., No 28.



more energetic efforts, and intimidated the king into a temporary acquiescence; but, after a while, the impression on the mind of the latter became less vivid, and the measures of Hakim Mehdi were obstructed by the same sinister influence by which they were formerly impeded. In this difficulty, he applied to the Resident for counsel and support, and the application was ostensibly repeated by the king. With admirable inconsistency, the Resident was restricted from compliance. The principle of non-interference was pleaded as the ground of the refusal; and the Cabinet of Lucknow, while made responsible to a foreign functionary for the consequences of its domestic policy, was forbidden to expect any assistance from him in averting their occurrence. It was in vain that Hakim Mehdi appealed to the engagement entered into with Lord Wellesley, binding the British Government to afford its counsel and advice; and argued that from the recent language of the Governor-General, it was to be concluded that the obligation was still in force. It was in vain, also, that he maintained that by holding back when the Native Government was anxious to advance, the British Government took upon itself the responsibility of continued maladministration, "for he," observed Hakim Mehdi, "who sees a blind man on the edge of a precipice, and will not put forth a hand to hold him back, is not innocent of his destruction." The Governor-General was not a man to be easily moved from a position he had once taken up; and the principle of non-interference for any friendly purpose, was rigorously prohibited. At the same time reports most unfavourable to the condition of Oude, were transmitted to the authorities at home; and they were recommended to adopt, eventually, one of three courses:— to withdraw the subsidiary force and the Resident, and leave the country to the uncontrolled dominion of the Sovereign; to impose upon the latter a minister, selected by the British Government, and appoint British Officers to superintend the conduct of the native functionaries, as had been done at Hyderabad; or to take the entire government of the country, as at Nagpore. In the mean time, however, it was proposed to give the actual minister a fair trial; as there was no doubt of his abilities,

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BOOK III. whatever might be entertained of his integrity or public spirit.¹

1828-35. Although recourse to such a violent mode of cure might have been justified by the supposed extremity of the case; yet, as we have already had occasion to observe, it may be questioned, if the case was as hopeless as had been represented. The misrule of native princes was no novelty in the history of India: but the deplorable accounts of its effects in Oude, seem to have been repeated without sufficient investigation. That the Sovereign was dissipated and prodigal—that his favourites, whether in the interior of his palace, or in his court, were extravagant and corrupt—that the police was lax and inefficient—that the system of farming the revenues, and intrusting the farmers with discretionary power, was pregnant with gross abuses, and productive of exaction and oppression—that the landholders were driven by it to occasional resistance, which the unaided force of the Government was unable to overcome—and that in many parts, particularly on the borders, bands of marauders plundered the peaceable inhabitants both of Oude and the territories of the Company with impunity—all these things might be perfectly true: but it did not, therefore, follow that the people at large were intolerably burthened, or that the country was in a state of irremediable anarchy or incurable decline. We have evidence to the contrary; and the frequent assertions of ocular witnesses are on record, that Oude was in as prosperous a condition as the Company's own provinces;² and that, whatever grievances the people

¹ Minute of Lord W. Bentinck. — Political Records, etc.

² Bishop Heber, in 1824, vol. i. 374, 403, repeatedly expresses his surprise at finding the country so much better cultivated than he had expected to find it, after the accounts of its mis-government with which he had been familiar. Ten years later, in 1833, Mr. Shore remarks, "I have travelled over several parts of Oude, and can testify, as far as my own observation went, that it is fully cultivated according to the population. Between Cawnpore and Lucknow, numbers must daily pass, who can confirm or deny this statement. Let them declare if any portion of land there lies waste which is fit for cultivation. I have known many officers who have been stationed at Sitapoor, and have made excursions into the neighbouring parts; without an exception, they describe the country as a garden. In the number of cattle, horses, and goods which they possess, and in the appearance of their houses and clothes, the people are in no points worse (in many, better) off than our own subjects. The wealth of Lucknow, not merely of those in authority, but the property of the bankers and shopkeepers is far superior to that of any city (Calcutta, perhaps, excepted) in the British dominions. How can all this be the case, if the Government is notorious for tyranny and oppression?"—Notes on Indian Affairs, by the Hon. F. I. Shore, i. 156. — There is much more to the



might endure, they considered them light in comparison with the unrelenting pressure of the revenue system of their neighbours, or the wearisome and vexatious processes of their Courts of Justice. Certain it is, that the subjects of the King of Oude never shewed any disposition to seek a refuge from their miseries in the contiguous districts under British rule, and that the tide of emigration, so far as it influenced the undulation of the population, was more inclined to set in an opposite direction. At any rate, whatever might be the condition of the people, and however susceptible it might be of alleviation, there was no reason to believe that its improvement was alone to be secured by their transfer to foreign domination. The Governor-General had the power by treaty, and the right, to dictate to the Government of Oude the course to be followed. The right was not only recognised, but its exercise was requested; and yet, with a strange and incongruous perversity, the interference was withheld, as if it had been the policy of the British Government to create, by non-interference for preservation, a crisis which should warrant its interfering for the total subversion of the sovereignty.

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1828-35.

The consequences of refusing to support the salutary reforms of Hakim Mehdi were soon apparent. The numerous and influential enemies which they had engendered, recovered their uncontrolled ascendancy over the feeble mind of the King, and induced him to withdraw his confidence from his minister. The latter, disdaining to conciliate the good will of the Begums and the Courtiers, provoked their enmity by the disrespectful terms in which he spoke of them, as much as by the economy in their expenditure, which he attempted to enforce; and they

same effect, which is deserving of attention. On the other hand, Mr. Maddock reports the country to be fast falling into a state of ruin and bankruptcy, and describes in detail the extortion, corruption, and insubordination which the farming system involves. These are, however, of a general nature, and except in the diminution of the revenue to two-thirds of its preceding amount, we have no positive indication of results. He is obliged to admit that "some parts of Oude are in a high and beautiful state of cultivation, while others are deserted and overgrown with jungle." Even his general denunciations are apparently not founded on personal knowledge, and are qualified as if based upon report. No doubt there was grievous misgovernment; but it loses none of its intensity in the pictures of official reprehension.—Memorandum on Oude Affairs—and Abstract View as gathered from Persian Papers by Mr. Maddock.



BOOK III. desisted not from their opposition until they had per-
CHAP. VIII. vailed upon the King to dismiss him. The Resident,
1828-35. Major Low, endeavoured to dissuade the King from his purpose, and accomplished a temporary restoration of Hakim Mehdi to favour. The reconciliation was not of long continuance; the intrigues of his adversaries ultimately prevailed; and the minister was not only dismissed from office, but was detained at Lucknow to answer numerous charges of fraud and speculation, which the instruments of his opponents were suborned to bring against him. As these were proved to be false and unfounded, the King was persuaded by the British Resident to desist from his detention; and Hakim Mehdi was allowed to return to the security and quiet of his former residence, at Furrakhabad.¹ All hope of permanent improvement departed with him. He was succeeded in office by Roshan-ud-dowla, a person of respectability, but of little talent, and unused to business; and the real authority devolved on the personal favourites and associates of the king, who were recommended to him chiefly by their subservience to his passions, and participation in his excesses. The impulse, however, which had been given by the menaces of the British Government and the corresponding reforms of Hakim Mehdi was not wholly extinct; and although the character of Nasir-ud-din became every day more and more an object of contempt, yet the general aspect of the affairs of Oude was such as to authorise the Governor-General's refraining from acting upon instructions, received in the beginning of 1835, to assume the government of the country, if circumstances should render such a measure necessary. The Court of Oude was apprised that such instructions had arrived; but that their execution was suspended, in the hope that the necessity of enforcing them might be obviated by the spontaneous adoption of the requisite reforms. The hope has not been realised, nor has the penalty been inflicted. The kingdom of Oude remains under the direction of a

¹ The retirement of Hakim Mehdi was followed by a circumstance characteristic of the progressive extension of European usages and notions, even among natives grown old in a very dissimilar state of society. He published in a local newspaper, the *Mofussil Akhbar*, an appeal to the public in defence of his administration and a vindication of his integrity. The document is curious, and is given in the Appendix V.



government, of which it may be justly asserted that it is not worse than native rule in general; and that, while it is discredited by many great and inherent defects, it has also its compensations, in its exemption from many of the evils which are equally inseparable from the sovereignty of strangers. BOOK III. CHAP. VIII. 1828-35.

The death of the Nizam, Sikander Jah, and the accession of his eldest son, under the title of Nazim-ud-Dowla, produced a material change in the relations which had been latterly established with Hyderabad. One of the first measures of the new sovereign was to require the removal of the British officers who had been appointed to superintend the assessments, as he declared it to be his determination to manage his own affairs; and, as the interference to which he objected had occasioned both embarrassment and a deficiency of revenue. Consistently with the principles now in favour with the Government of Bengal, this determination was approved of, and the Nizam was informed that it was the wish of the Governor-General that he should consider himself entirely uncontrolled in the choice of his ministers and the conduct of his internal administration; stipulating only that the engagements which had been contracted under the sanction of British officers should not be violated. To this a ready assent was promised; but the promise was little regarded. Chandu Lal, from his experience and ability, was too necessary to be discarded; and the system of exaction and prodigality which he had countenanced underwent no material modification. The expenditure was undiminished, and the embarrassment of the finances unrelieved. The engagements with the villagers were set aside, and recourse was again had to the farming of the revenues, with its usual consequences of injustice and extortion—the multiplication of robbers and plunderers, and the resistance of the most turbulent of the Zemindars to the equitable demands of the state, requiring for their suppression the employment of a military force. In the course of a very few years, the country had relapsed into the condition from which it had been endeavoured to raise it in the preceding reign; and the Home authorities intimated a disposition to extend to Hyderabad the appropriative policy with which Oude had been menaced.



BOOK III. It was not thought advisable, however, to resort to such
CHAP. VIII. an extremity, or to extend the scale of interference.

1828-35. The pecuniary dealings of the house of Palmer and Company with the Government of the Nizam, which had excited so much interest during the administration of the Marquis of Hastings, continued for several years to occupy the attention of the authorities both in England and in India; and in the former, led eventually to an unusual collision, and an appeal to the Courts of Justice. The opinion given by the Twelve Judges that the limitation of the rate of interest prescribed by Act of Parliament, did not apply to loans made to the subjects of Native independent princes by British subjects domiciliated and residing within their dominions, materially altered the position of the house, and authorized their claiming the full amount of both principal and interest due to them by native debtors.¹ Their accounts with the Nizam had been closed by the acquittal of the demands against him by the money advanced to the minister, in redemption of the tribute of the Northern Circars, payable to the Nizam; but there remained claims of large amount upon persons of rank and influence in the Court of Hyderabad, which the trustees of the late firm were now at liberty to prosecute before the native tribunals. The Resident was, however, still wholly prohibited from exercising in any way his official influence, either for or against the prosecution of any claim which they might advance on individual subjects of the Nizam, and from being in any manner the channel of communication between them and such individuals.² A few years afterwards, a more lenient view of the case was taken up by the Court. Doubts were expressed, whether the relation in which the trustees stood towards the debtors of the firm had not been deteriorated by the use which had been made of the opinions originally expressed, and by the interdiction of the Resident from giving any facility to the recovery of claims at a higher rate of interest than twelve per cent. per annum either retrospectively or prospec-

¹ The opinion was communicated by the Court to the Bengal Government in a letter, dated 3rd August, 1825; and by the Government to the Resident at Hyderabad, 27th July, 1825.

² Political Despatch, 12th March, 1828.



tively, a prohibition made known to the Government of BOOK III.
the Nizam, and consequently to the members of his family and court, who were debtors to the house, and who CHAP. VIII.
were likely to avail themselves of so palpable a plea for 1828-35.
refusing to fulfil their *bond fide* obligations.¹ In order to
counteract such possible impressions, the members of the
house were relieved from a preceding prohibition against a
direct intercourse with the ministers of the Nizam, and
were allowed to have access to them with the knowledge
and sanction of the Resident. Sir William Rumbold was
also permitted to return to Hyderabad, to assist the
trustees in winding up the affairs of the house, in which
he had been a partner. These arrangements were considered
successful, according to the official report of the
Resident, whatever unfavourable impressions might have
at first been produced; as was evidenced by the result
which had attended the proceedings of the trustees, and
the award to them of considerable sums of money through
the instrumentality of the Courts of Justice in Hyderabad,
including interest at the rate of twenty-four per
cent. per annum.

Notwithstanding the decisions of the Native Courts in
their favour, the Trustees found that the sentences were
but partially enforced, the Courts of Justice being powerless
against individuals connected with the minister or the
Nizam. This was particularly the case in regard to Munir-
al-Mulk, the kinsman and nominal minister of the Nizam;
against whom very large claims, arising chiefly out of the
high rate of compound interest, had accumulated, and
whose liquidation of them in full could not be expected,
except through the influential interposition of the British
Resident with the Nizam. This interference, however, the
Government declined to sanction; and the only alternative
adopted, was a reference to the Court of Directors, for
their instructions as to whether any and what measures
were to be adopted for the purpose of effecting a settle-
ment of the claims in question.² In the meantime, the

¹ In a letter from Munir-al-Mulk, one of the principal debtors to the House, to Chandu Lal, he writes — "If the order prohibiting any money transactions with them and the proclamation describing the claims as void had not arrived, my debt to them would have been completely and fully paid; but how could I, in defiance of the prohibition and of such a proclamation, pay them." Papers on the Writ of Mandamus, p. 42.

² Political Letter from Bengal, 8th July, 1831.



BOOK III. matter had been the subject of a difference of opinion
CHAP. VIII. between the Court and the Board of Control. A draft of
1828-35. a letter had been prepared by the former, under date, 23rd
July, 1830, disapproving of some of the measures of the
Bengal Government in favour of Sir Wm. Rumbold. It
was essentially altered by the Board; and a despatch was
substituted, authorising the Resident's support of the
claims of the firm. To this the Court, in their turn, de-
cidedly objected. The receipt of the reference noticed
above, as well as of other despatches connected with the
same subject, furnishing an opportunity of re-considering
the question, the Board withdrew their emendations, and
directed the Court to prepare a new draft in lieu of that
formerly submitted, which should reply to the several un-
answered communications from Bengal.

In compliance with this injunction, a letter was pre-
pared on the 20th March, 1832, in which the Government
of Bengal was authorised to express to the Nizam, through
the Resident at Hyderabad, its wish that the claims upon
Munir-al-Mulk should be settled by arbitration, upon prin-
ciples, regarding the limitation of interest, formerly deter-
mined, and upon a previously obtained assurance from the
Nizam that he would enforce an equitable award. The
constitution of the arbitration was to be left to the discre-
tion of the local government. This draft underwent the
fate of its predecessor; and in its place a despatch was
written, in which it was stated, that the joint interposition
of the Government of Bengal and the Nizam would be
requisite to bring the matter in dispute to a final settle-
ment, which should be effected either by arbitration (the
umpire being nominated by the Governor-General), or by
a commission to be equally appointed by the Supreme Go-
vernment. The choice between the two arrangements was
to be given to the Nizam; but his prior engagement to
carry the decision of either into effect was to be required,
and the Resident was to be instructed to press upon his
Highness, in terms of urgent recommendation, the justice
and expediency of his resolving to enforce the final award.
Some verbal alterations of the letter were subsequently
made; and it was added, that the interference was not to
carried beyond sincere and urgent recommendation, which
it would be perfectly competent to the Nizam to adopt or



reject; and that the motive of the interference was the conviction that the home authorities had, however unintentionally, arrested the earlier settlement of the claim of the house by the promulgation of an erroneous opinion. This circumstance imposed an obligation to endeavour to repair to the parties, as far as possible, the injury inflicted on them; and, in this attempt it was not too much to ask of the Nizam to grant that which with strict propriety he was able to give, and without which every effort would be unavailing — the advantage of his co-operation. The proposed despatch was decidedly objected to by the Court. They maintained that they were not responsible for the erroneousness of an opinion which had emanated from the high legal authorities consulted; and if any detriment had at first accrued to the claims of the firm, this had been fully remedied by the publicity given to the different sentiments of the judges, under which extensive claims had been actually realised. If the decrees of the native Courts could not always be enforced, this was a state of things well known to the parties concerned, and was in fact the only justification of the exorbitant rates of interest prevailing, which were of course intended to cover more than ordinary risk. To employ the authoritative interference of the British Government in the realisation of the claims of its own subjects upon the subjects of an independent prince and ally, was contrary to the principles of the Indian Government, and the practice of all civilised states; and the use of strong urgent recommendations, however qualified, was, with respect to the relations established with the Nizam, equivalent to imperative dictation. Such protection, granted to British subjects in their pecuniary dealings with natives of rank, could only lead to the most mischievous results, such as had been fully experienced in regard to the Nawab of the Carnatic and the Raja of Tanjore; and, on these and other grounds, the Court suggested to the Board the annulment of their alterations. As these objections were disregarded, they endeavoured to evade the Board's corrections by denying its right to interfere; the despatch relating neither to the military nor civil government, nor to the revenues of India, to which the controlling powers of the Board were alone applicable. Considering it also to be inexpedient to interfere in any

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1828-35.



BOOK III. way with the matter under consideration, they determined
CHAP. VIII. to rescind the resolution under which the original despatch
1828-35. was prepared, and to withdraw it altogether. Strong protests were recorded against a resolution which was so utterly inconsistent with the whole course of past proceedings, and which attempted to avoid the honest expression of opinions conscientiously and rationally entertained; but the resolution was carried. It was, however, of little avail. The Board had recourse to the power vested in them by law, and applied to the Court of King's Bench for the issue of a writ of mandamus, compelling the Directors of the East India Company to transmit the despatch to India. The question was argued before the Court at considerable length, and the writ was granted.¹ The Court was, consequently, under the necessity of signing and forwarding the contested letter, as finally amended by the Board.²

The objections taken by the Directors to the interference sanctioned by the Board of Control, were founded on just views of the evils which had been suffered by the natives of India from pecuniary dealings with Europeans, supported by the irresistible influence of the local governments, and were, consistently with the sentiments which they had all along expressed, unfavourable to the particular transactions at Hyderabad. But in their anxiety to mark their disapprobation of the proceedings, and to discard the imputation of sanctioning an undue influence over the pecuniary interests of the Nizam, they had undoubtedly in their dissemination of the doctrine of the illegal rate of interest beyond twelve per cent. per annum, prejudiced the claims of the house upon their private debtors, and rendered it difficult for them to recover sums of money, their right to which, whatever their character or origin, would not have been disputed, or in native estimation regarded as founded on extortion, unless the notion of injustice and

¹ 29th January, 1833. Papers, pp. 55, 58, 107, 111.

² A strong protest against the despatch was signed by ten of the members of the Court, arguing that the proposed interference was contrary to the faith of treaties—the practice of the Court—of former Governments of Bengal, the substantial justice of the case, and the right use which should be made of the past experience of the House. The protest leant more to the whole question than the particular despatch; the interference recommended by which grew out of that previously exercised: the mistake was in the sanction originally given to the pecuniary dealings of the House with the minister of the Nizam. Protest and Appendix, Mandamus Papers, p. 123.



illegality had been suggested to them by the declaration of the British Government. This opinion unquestionably contributed to delay the settlement of some of the most important claims of the house ; and the delay must have been prejudicial to their interests. Some compensation for this injury, it was therefore not unreasonable to bestow ; and the influence of the Resident judiciously exercised, to prevail upon the Nizam to enforce the judicial decrees of his own Courts, was not open to any very serious objection. The interposition was not exercised to any very great advantage. Munir-al-Mulk had consented to a compromise of his debts, when the arrangement was interrupted by his death. The appointment of arbitrators to effect an adjustment with his son and successor was sanctioned by the Nizam ; but the claims of the house were still unsettled at the termination of the period under review.¹

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.
1828-31.

Of the other and minor Mohammedan principalities, Bhopal, became the scene of domestic dissensions which led to a change of the arrangements that had been established for its government after the reduction of the Mahratta power, by which the widow of Nazir Mohammed had been placed at the head of affairs, until the majority of the young Nawab, Munir Mohammed, the son of Amir Mohammed, the affianced husband of the daughter of the last prince. As he grew up to manhood, Munir Mohammed claimed a substantive share in the administration ; but the Begum refused to relinquish any portion of her authority, and, asserting that the Nawab was equally incompetent as a ruler and a husband, cancelled the intended nuptials, and after a sharp struggle, compelled him to relinquish his pretensions in favour of his younger brother, Jehangir Mohammed. The Government of Bengal refrained from taking any part in the contest. The chiefs generally sided with the Begum, as Munir Mohammed was a young man of dissolute habits and disreputable character, while the Begum was a woman of spirit and ability, and competent to exercise the power which she was determined to retain as long as she was able. With this feeling, she delayed the solemnisation of the marriage of her

¹ The Proceedings of the Court and of the Board, with regard to the Writ of Mandamus in the case of Palmer and Co., were printed under a resolution of the Court of Proprietors, — 20th March, 1833.



BOOK III. daughter with Jehangir Mohammed, and withheld from
CHAP. VIII. him, as she had done from his brother, all political power,
1828-35. after he had attained an age which entitled him to a voice
in the conduct of public affairs. The young Nawab ap-
pealed to the British Government for its interference, and
having been deputed to meet the Governor-General on the
latter's visit to Saugar, in January, 1833, represented to
Lord W. Bentinck, in a private interview, the expectations
of himself and his friends to be placed in the immediate
possession of the rights attached to the station to which
he had been raised with the concurrence and sanction of
the British Government. Considering, however, that Se-
kander Begum enjoyed the popular support, the Governor-
General declined interposition, beyond insisting that the
marriage should take place at the period at which the Be-
gum had engaged that it should be solemnised, in compli-
ance with the urgent recommendations of the British
Agent and the representations of her own adherents. It
was accordingly celebrated in the beginning of 1835; and,
for a time, the domestic squabbles of this little court were
appeased. Sekander Begum, however, was as little dis-
posed as ever to lay aside her power; and finding the
usual restraints of Asiatic manners embarrass her public
proceedings, discarded them for manly habits, and held
public levees, and walked and rode about without any
attempt at concealment. This conduct impaired in some
measure her popularity; and her persevering exclusion of
the young Nawab from any share in the administration
again gave rise to disputes, which ended at last in a mutual
appeal to arms; the British authorities being precluded by
the policy of their government from maintaining the pub-
lic tranquillity undisturbed. The Nawab fled from Bhopal
— levied troops, and obtained possession of several strong
towns, including the fort of Ashta, which became his head
quarters. The Begum sent her forces against him, and an
action was fought, in which the leaders on both sides were
slain, and the troops of the Nawab were defeated. The
victors laid siege to Ashta; but the British Government
was now satisfied of the mischievous consequences of its
indifference, and offered its mediation, which was readily
accepted. Negotiations were concluded under the auspices
of the Political Agent; and tranquillity was restored. The



intentions of the original engagements were accomplished. BOOK III.
The Begum was compelled to resign her sway, and accept CHAP. VIII.
the grant of an inferior but independent Jagir, and the
Nawab was placed on the Musnud of Bhopal. 1828-35.

The two other Mohammedan States of Central India, which owed their origin to the decision of the British Government in favour of Ghaffur Khan and Amir Khan, require no particular notice. Upon the death of Ghaffur Khan, in 1827, disputes arose for the regency during the minority of his successor, between the Begum his mother, and the minister of her late husband; but they were prevented from coming to extremities by the timely intervention of the Resident at Indore. The territories of Amir Khan remained in a peaceable and prosperous condition until his death in 1838, when he was succeeded by his son Mohammed Khan. In 1832 Amir Khan, in common with the other chiefs of Central India, visited the camp of the Governor-General at Ajmere, and effaced all recollection of his political delinquencies and predatory practices, by his frank and soldier-like deportment¹, and the fulness and freshness of the anecdotes he narrated of the adventures of his early life.

With the administration of Lord W. Bentinck, commences a new era in the politics of British India with regard to the Mohammedan states upon the Indus, or beyond its banks, with Bahawalpur, Sindh, and Afghanistan. The character of the relations which were established was professedly commercial; and the main objects were declared to be the unobstructed navigation of the Indus, and the opening of a new and desirable channel for the access of British merchandise to the heart of Central Asia, through the Punjab and Kabul. Events, however, occurring at the moment, and still more those of subsequent years, have shown that the commercial advantages were of secondary consideration, and that others of a political complexion were the main springs of this departure from the prudence which, since the time of the Earl of Minto had actuated the Governments of India, who in

¹ It was on this occasion that he presented to Mr. H. T. Prinsep, Secretary to Government in the Foreign Department, the memoir of his life, written from his dictation by his Munshi (as the soldier was no scholar); of which, Mr. Prinsep has published a translation. It is a most valuable contribution to the materials of Anglo-Indian history.



BOOK III. their relations with the bordering principalities, had been
CHAP. VIII. contented to express the general subsistence of friendly
— feelings, while steadily declining any more intimate inter-
1828-35. course. Motives which had formerly dictated a different
policy, were now again in operation, and, as in 1809 apprehension of the designs of France had instigated the British Ministry to direct the attention of the Governor-General to the formation of alliances beyond the Indus, so, in 1829, a panic fear of the projects of Russia, induced the Cabinet of St. James's to instruct the authorities in India to establish a commanding influence upon that river, in order to counteract the consequences which might be anticipated from the complete prostration of Persia and its subservience to the designs of Russia against the empire of Britain in the East. From these instructions originated a policy hitherto repudiated by the wisdom of the Indian Governments, as foreign to the interests of India, and only calculated to involve them in embarrassment and discredit. Events belonging to a subsequent period demonstrated the justice of these views; and a ruinous expenditure and ineffable disgrace were the penalty of uncalled-for interference with the affairs of Afghanistan.

Consistently with the avowed objects of the British Government, negotiations were conducted with the different princes ruling on either bank of the Indus for the free transit of vessels laden with European goods; and, after some hesitation, in which the Amirs of Sindh manifested extreme repugnance to open their territories to European adventure, and an instinctive dread of the result of a more intimate connection with the Indian Government, which was justified by events, treaties were concluded with the Government of Hyderabad in Sindh, by which it was stipulated that perpetual friendship should subsist between the contracting parties; and that they should never "look with a covetous eye on the possessions of each other;" that a free passage along the Indus should be granted to the merchants and traders of India; that fixed, proper, and moderate duties only should be imposed, and no vexatious delays at the Custom stations be permitted. By a supplementary treaty it was provided, that no duties should be levied on the goods; but a toll be



imposed on the boats carrying them, at a fixed sum per boat, whatever might be its tonnage. Similar engagements were concluded with the Nawab of Bahawalpur, and with Ranjit Sing, for that portion of the river which flowed through their territories, and for the rivers of the Punjab.¹ With Ranjit Sing, it appeared to the British Ministry, to be highly desirable to form a still closer and more intimate connection; and with the purpose of conciliating his good-will, a letter was addressed to him by the President of the Board of Control, Lord Ellenborough, in the name and by command of his Majesty William IV., forwarding for his acceptance several English horses of unusual size and stature, for which it was known that the Raja entertained a childish predilection. The letter and the horses were conveyed to Lahore by Lieutenant A. Burnes, and presented to Ranjit Sing in July, 1831;² and in the following October an interview took place, at Rupar, on the Setlej, between the Maharaja and the Governor-General, intended to confirm the friendly disposition of the wily ruler of the Punjab. No object of a deeper import was avowed; and a week was spent in the interchange of personal civilities and displays of the military equipments and discipline of the Sikh and British troops, who constituted the respective escorts of the Governor-General and the Maharaja.³ That subjects of more importance were discussed, was manifested by the result; and the foundation was then laid of the alliance which was afterwards formed against the ruler of the Afghans. A more immediate though unacknowledged consequence, was the assistance afforded by the Sikh ruler to the ex-king of Kabul, Shah Shuja, who had been expatriated for more than twenty years; and had been indebted for his support, during the greater portion of that interval, to

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1828-35.

¹ See Treaties with the Government of Hyderabad in Sindh, April 1832 and December, 1834. With Maharaja Ranjit Sing, December, 1832 and January 1835; and with the Nawab of Bahawalpur, February 1833 and February 1835. — Treaties printed for the House of Commons, 11th March, 1839.

² Narrative of a Voyage on the Indus, by Lieutenant Alex. Burnes; forming the third volume of his Travels into Bokhara.

³ The Governor-General on the occasion was attended, in addition to his usual body-guards, by two squadrons of His Majesty's 16th Lancers, a troop of Horse Artillery, two Risalas of Skinners' Horse, His Majesty's 31st Foot, and 14th and 32nd Regiments, N. I. Ranjit Sing was escorted by ten thousand of his best Horse and six thousand trained Infantry. — Prinsep's Life of Ranjit Sing, p. 161.



BOOK III. the generosity of the British Government—residing with
CHAP. VIII. his family at the station of Ludiana. That a negotiation
1828-35. had been opened between the Shah and the Maharaja, before the meeting of Rupar took place; and that conditions had been proposed, and generally acceded to, was known to the Governor-General; and Ranjit Sing would scarcely have entered into the project unless he had felt secure of the acquiescence of the British Government.¹ Subsequently, indeed, compliance with the application of Shah Shuja for assistance was declined upon the principal of religiously abstaining from intermeddling with the affairs of the neighbouring states. Matters were not yet mature for a rupture with Dost Mohammed, although his intercourse with Persia and the designs of Abbas Mirza the Prince of Persia, upon Herat, instigated and supported, it was suspected, by the Russians for their own purposes, were jealously watched agreeably to the instructions from England; and the recovery by Shah Shuja of the throne of Kabul was contemplated as an additional security against the nearer approach of the Russian arms to the frontier of India.

Shah Shuja made his first move from Ludiana, in January, 1833, with a few hundred followers; but by the time he arrived at Shikarpore, he had collected thirty thousand. The Amirs of Sindh, who had engaged to promote his cause, at first received him amicably and supplied him with pecuniary assistance; but finding that he was in no haste to leave their country, and that he demanded still more considerable succours, they determined to compel his departure, and marched with a body of troops against him. An action was fought near Rori, in January, 1834, between the Shah's force and that of the Amirs, in which the latter sustained a very severe defeat, losing many chiefs of note. The result of the encounter was the submission of the Amirs; and, upon their consenting to pay an additional subsidy, and provide him with an auxiliary force, the Shah moved on to Kandahar. No opposition was offered to his advance; and some ineffective attempts at resistance in the neighbourhood of Kandahar, were defeated without much difficulty. The Sirdars of

¹ The Treaty was not formally ratified until March, 1833, when the Shah was in Sindh, on his march towards Afghanistan.



the Barakzye family, Kohan Dil Khan, Mihr Dil Kan, and Rehim Khan who jointly governed the district, were confined to the city, which the Shah was about to besiege, when the arrival of Dost Mohammed from Kabul, with a strong body of troops changed the aspect of affairs. The king retired to Abbasabad, and was there attacked on the 29th June, by the Kabul army. The brunt of the action was borne by two battalions of Hindustani troops, who had been disciplined by a European of the name of Campbell, and who behaved with an intrepidity which at one time afforded promise of success. The misconduct of Shah Shuja's Afghan followers, and the treachery of some of his chiefs, frustrated their efforts; and the consequence was, his total defeat, the dispersion of his army, and the flight of the Shah with a slender escort to the fort of Lash, where he was sheltered by an Afghan chief. Having collected a small force, he then proceeded to Furrakh, where he expected to be joined by reinforcements from Herat; but being disappointed of their arrival, and threatened by a party of horse under Rehim Khan, he fled across the desert of Sistan to Kelat, after enduring severe privations and losing many of his followers. Mehrab Khan, the Baluch chieftain of Kelat, gave him refuge, and refused to surrender him to Rehim-Dil-Khan; but an agreement was concluded between them that the former should withdraw his protection, and the latter desist from pursuit. Shah Shuja, thus forced to quit Kelat, repaired to Sindh, where he was received, notwithstanding their late disagreement, by the Amirs with respect and hospitality. After remaining a short time at Hyderabad, the Shah returned by way of Jesselmere to his former retreat at Ludiana.¹ A few years more witnessed his second departure from that place, under auspices of more brilliant promise, but which, after a short interval

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.
1828-35.

¹ Papers relative to the expedition of Shah-Shuja-ul-Mulk into Afghanistan in 1833-4, printed by order of Parliament, 20th March, 1839. Mr. Atkinson, from materials furnished by Shah Shuja himself, gives an account of the expedition, differing in some respect from the official accounts, especially in regard to the conduct of Mehrab Khan, who is accused of having attempted to intercept the Shah's flight, and make him prisoner.—Expedition into Afghanistan, by J. Atkinson, Esq., p. 48. Mr. Masson confirms the official testimony of Mehrab Khan's hospitality to the Shah. He ascribes the defeat at Kandahar to Shah Shuja's precipitancy and want of courage.—Journées in Baluchistan, etc., by C. Masson, Esq., iii. 259.



BOOK III. of uneasy triumph, were signally falsified by his disgrace
CHAP. VIII. and death.

1828-35. From these transactions affecting the Mohammedan princes, we now proceed to consider the state of the relations which subsisted with the several Mahratta chiefs, particularly with the Raja of Nagpore, the Gaekwar, Holkar and Sindhia.

In the first of these principalities, the arrangements, which were rendered unavoidable by the minority of the Raja, and the incapacity or unfitness of the persons at first intrusted with the direction of affairs, imposing the task of management upon the British functionaries, have been already adverted to. Under the judicious and active administration of Mr. Jenkins, Nagpore had made great advances in population and prosperity.¹ Moderate assessments for definite periods had been framed with the concurrence of the cultivators—arbitrary exactions had been prohibited, and the abuses of the native methods of collecting the revenue suppressed. The expenditure of the State had been contracted within the limits of its income, and the troops were obedient, and the people contented. The theoretical dread of interference which was ever present to the imagination of the Home authorities, rendered them regardless of its beneficial operation in the case of Nagpore; and repeated orders insisted on the country's being consigned to the misrule of a youth, who, although not deficient in ability, was of frivolous tastes, and disinclined to serious business. His age, inexperience, and pliability of disposition could not fail to throw him into the hands of interested and mischievous advisers, whose suggestions there was no person of sufficient influence or authority to correct or control, and all the evils of native mal-administration would be again inflicted on the country. Notwithstanding these obvious objections, the injunctions from home, being in harmony

¹ In 1820, the population of the reserved districts was 2,214,000. In 1825, it was 2,471,000, being an increase of 257,000 in five years. The revenue of the earlier date was thirty-five lakhs of rupees; the later forty lakhs; although, in consequence of augmented cultivation, the price of grain had greatly declined. Wheat, which sold in 1820 for twenty rupees the khandi, sold for less than four in 1825. Notwithstanding this fall of price, the agricultural peasantry were in improved circumstances, and the increased revenue was levied without any difficulty—shewing that they were less heavily burthened than when large sums were exacted from them, which never found their way to the public treasury.—Jenkin's Reports on Nagpore, p. 259.



with the policy of the local government, were implicitly obeyed; and it was determined to restore to the Raja, now in his nineteenth year, the uncontrolled management of Nagpore. It was in vain that the Resident advocated the gradual transfer of the ruling authority, and recommended a delay until the Raja should have attained a more mature age; by which time the arrangements that had been found advantageous would have acquired consistency and permanence, and a sufficient balance would have accumulated in the treasury to enable the Raja to provide for the extra demands to which he would be liable, without adding to the burthens of his people, and causing them to relapse into the condition from which they had been so recently extricated. The orders from home constituted the reply to these recommendations; and they were carried into effect. The Raja was installed as the active head of the administration. A Resident, with power to advise and control, was continued; and some of the provinces were retained under his management¹; of which, the surplus revenue was destined to provide for the charge of the subsidiary force until other funds should be available. A treaty was accordingly prepared; in which it was stipulated, that the Raja should ever pay attention to the advice of the British Government, and adopt such ordinances and regulations as it should suggest for ensuring order, economy and integrity in the adjustment and collection of his revenues; and that whenever a deterioration in the resources of the state and the condition of the people might be apprehended, the British Government should be at liberty to bring under its own direct management any portion or the whole of the Raj. At a subsequent date, these stipulations were modified. The reserved districts were restored to the Raja; and the regulation and disposal of his military force, with the exception of the subsidiary troops, left to his unfettered discretion—a privilege for which he was to pay a tribute of eight lakhs of rupees a year, under the denomination of a subsidy. The article respecting the eventual assumption of the management

BOOK III.
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¹ They were Deogherh above the ghats, Chanda, Chateesgerh, and part of the Wayn Ganga; yielding a net revenue of seventeen lakhs of rupees. — Treaties and Engagements with Native Powers, i. 604. Calcutta, 1845.



BOOK III. of the country was also modified; and it was stipulated, CHAP. VIII. that, if gross and systematic oppression, anarchy and misrule, should at any time prevail, seriously endangering the public tranquillity and placing in jeopardy the stability of the resources whence the Raja discharged his obligations to the Company, the British Government reserved to itself the right of re-appointing its own officers to the management of such district or districts of the Nagpore territory, and for so long a period as it might deem necessary. The necessity has, fortunately or the Raja, never arisen; and the administration of Nagpore has been quietly, and not unsuccessfully, conducted by the native ministers, in friendly dependence upon the Resident.

The ex-Raja of Nagpore, Apa Saheb, had been tempted to quit his asylum in the mountains about the time of the agitation which prevailed in India at the close of the Burmese war; and, after various adventures, took sanctuary in the temple of Maha Mandira, a celebrated shrine in the territory of Jodhpur. The Raja was at first required to secure the fugitive and deliver him to the British Agent at Ajmere; but he declined compliance, pleading in excuse his inability to infringe upon the privileges of the temple, and his fear that he should be for ever disgraced in the estimation of all Hindustan if he were to refuse to an unfortunate prince the rights of hospitality. The excuse was admitted, and the demand urged no further; but Man Sing was held responsible for the conduct of his guest, and expected to restrain him from any attempts to disturb the public tranquillity. Some obscure intrigues were set on foot by Apa Saheb with individuals of no note, who engaged to accomplish his restoration to sovereignty; but neither the persons nor the projects were of a character to endanger the security or excite the alarm of the government of Nagpore.

The proceedings of Syaji Rao Gaekwar on his accession to the sovereignty of Guzerat, disappointed the expectations which had been founded on his previous familiarity with public business, and his cordial co-operation with the British Resident during the reign of his imbecile predecessor. Relying upon his favorable disposition and



matured experience, considerable latitude was granted to him in the management of his internal affairs, subject to the general control of the Resident, and the observance of all obligations guaranteed by the British Government, according to stipulations which we have already had occasion to describe. These engagements, into which Syaji had readily entered, were soon disregarded; expenses were incurred without the knowledge of the Resident, or in opposition to his judgment, and serious defalcations took place in the revenue. The capitalists of Baroda, who had advanced large sums of money to the Gaekwar, upon the guarantee of the British Government, appealed to it for interposition; and as its own credit, as well as that of the Gaekwar, was at stake, active and decided interference became necessary. Arrangements were in consequence concerted with the minister, Vital Rao Bhao, and concurred in by his master, by which extensive tracts were let in farm to the leading bankers of Baroda, for a term of seven years, upon conditions which protected the interests of the people, as well as of the creditors of the state. The arrangement was concluded under Bhandari, or guarantee of the Company for its faithful execution.

These measures had no sooner been adopted than they excited deep dissatisfaction in the mind of Syaji, who complained that the minister had sacrificed his interests to those of the British Government,¹ and that he had been unjustly deprived of that authority to manage his own affairs with which he had been deliberately invested by Mr. Elphinstone. He also complained, and not without some show of justice, of the many and vexatious encroachments on his authority and his rights, which arose from the multiplication of the guarantees granted by the British Resident. Originally designed for the security of the bankers, whose assistance was indispensable for the solvency of the state, the principle of the Bhandari had undergone a gradual and insensible extension to very

¹ Vital Rao had been appointed sole minister in 1820, upon the dismissal of his former colleague in office, Dhakji Dadaji, removed for peculation, rather against the wish of the Gaekwar, who was desirous of appointing Sitarám, the minister who was deeply implicated in the murder of Gangadhar Sastri, and was therefore decidedly objected to by Mr. Elphinstone. Vital Rao's nomination was acquiesced in as a matter of indifference. — Minute of the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, 3 May, 1820. — Report H. of Com., Political App. vi. 23.



BOOK III. different purposes, and comprehended immunities and
CHAP. VIII. privileges, emoluments and pensions, and offices and lands

1828-35.

secured to different individuals for a longer or a shorter period.¹ It was true, that these grants had mostly originated with the Gaekwar himself, and that it was the term of their duration only which was guaranteed; but as this rendered revocation impossible without the Resident's consent, it prevented the prince from following the bent of his own caprice, when disposed to resume the benefactions he had bestowed under a different state of feeling, and rendered the objects of his liberality independent of his change of sentiment. A perpetual struggle took place, therefore, between the Prince and the Resident; the former attempting to set aside, the latter to uphold, the guarantee; pending which the Gaekwar not unfrequently had recourse to violence, and, by seizing upon persons or sequestering lands for the security of which the character of the British Government was pledged, justly incurred its displeasure.

The good effects of the financial arrangement which had been concluded were, in the first instance, frustrated by the occurrence of an almost universal drought, which rendered large remissions of the revenue unavoidable: but a more permanent source of disappointment originated in the conduct of Syaji himself, who, with a short-sightedness not uncommon among Asiatic princes, diverted the revenue from its application to public expenditure, to accumulate it in his private treasury, regardless of the embarrassment of the finances, as long as he was possessed of individual wealth.² The reimbursement of the capitalists who had advanced him loans, the charges of the force he was bound by treaty to maintain, the pay of his own civil

¹ Between 1801-2 and 1827-8, no fewer than 119 Bhandari engagements had been sanctioned, of which fifty four were in force at the latter date; of these, twelve were for loans, twelve for hereditary offices and emoluments, eight for pensions and grants of land, two for personal protection, eight for contracts, seven for dealings between the Gaekwar and his subjects, the rest miscellaneous. The office of Dewan was guaranteed to two families, as a perpetual hereditary duty; but as the representatives of both were obnoxious to Syaji, he employed neither. They received, nevertheless, the sinecure pay of minister amounting to about 1,34,000 rupees a year.

² In the course of five years, from 1820-1 to 1825-6, above sixty lakhs of the surplus revenue, appropriable to the discharge of the public debt, were lodged in Syaji's own coffers. Instead of the extinction of the debt, which was to have been effected in this period, it had rather increased, amounting in 1827-8, to one crore and thirty lakhs, although the interest had been reduced in 1822 from ten to six per cent.



and military establishments, all fell into arrears; and no prospect appeared of liquidating the debt, for the realization of which the Company was surety. In fact, the Gaekwar was labouring to subvert the settlement, which had been made with the bankers for the farming of the revenues long before their lease expired, and to transfer the assignments, without their consent, to different individuals who professed their readiness to advance money on more favourable terms. The sincerity of these offers was doubtful; and they could not be acceded to without the concurrence of the leaseholders, which not being accorded, the guarantee remained in force. Attributing the disappointment of his schemes to the unfriendly disposition of the Resident, Mr. Williams, the Gaekwar endeavoured to enter into a direct communication with the Governor of Bombay, Sir John Malcolm; and sent an agent of his own to the Presidency, not only for that purpose, but to take advantage of the dissensions which were now rife between the Supreme Court and the Government, and array the authority of the former against the latter, in his favour. The irregularity of these proceedings, the repeated violations of guaranteed rights and possessions; the persevering efforts of Syaji to annul the septennial leases, and break his engagements with the bankers, who had contracted them upon the responsibility of the British Government; his inattention to all the representations and remonstrances of the Bombay Government; his inveteracy against the minister of his own election, because he enjoyed the confidence of the Resident, and his insulting treatment of the latter, at length exhausted the forbearance of the Government, and induced it to adopt vigorous measures for the enforcement of the engagements contracted by the Gaekwar, under its guarantee. It was resolved, accordingly, to assume the direct management of certain districts of the principality of Guzerat, yielding an annual revenue of twenty-seven lakhs, and to apply the surplus, rated at twenty-one lakhs, to the liquidation of the guaranteed debt; after which, the districts were to be replaced under the Gaekwar's officers. A proclamation announcing the arrangement, was put forth, and possession was taken of the sequestered territory by a military force: the general management was assigned to Vital Rao, who

BOOK III.
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BOOK III. had been dismissed by Syaji from his office of minister.

CHAP. VIII. A further sequestration was subsequently authorised, in order to ensure the maintenance of the contingent horse, which the Gaekwar was bound by treaty to keep up for the service of the British Government. These measures widened the breach between the two Governments; and as the presence of the British Resident at Baroda only served to augment the irritation of Syaji, it was determined to withdraw that officer, and place the intercourse with Guzerat, under the charge of a Political Commissioner, who should hold his residence at Ahmedabad.¹ This, however, was only a temporary arrangement; and after a short time it was found expedient to re-establish the Residency. In the interval, a plan was concerted in Syaji's own family, and by the most respectable members of his Court, to remove from his councils the persons to whose advice they attributed the dangerous career in which he had engaged. The project was unfortunately betrayed to him; and the chief individuals accused of being concerned in it were apprehended and put to death, without any investigation, and in the most cruel manner.²

The different policy which influenced the British Government of India, after Lord William Bentinck's accession to power, disposed it to overlook the refractory proceedings of the Gaekwar, in the hope of getting quit of the system of guarantee, and thus removing the principal cause of disagreement. In 1832 the Earl of Clare, then Governor of Bombay, after a meeting with the Governor-General, at Ajmere, visited Baroda on his return, and in communication with the Gaekwar and the principal bankers of the capital, concluded arrangements, which were highly satisfactory to Syaji, and which it was hoped would put an end to the differences that had hitherto prevailed. The bankers were induced to accede to the Gaekwar's proposals for the discharge of his debts, and to release the British Government from any other guarantee than that of personal immunity. A sum of money was deposited, by Syaji, in the treasury of Bombay, as a security for the

¹ Minute of Sir John Malcolm, 30th Nov. 1830; review of the affairs of Guzerat. Report Comm. H. of Com. Political. Appen. VI. No. 25.

² Ganpat Rao was beaten to death with clubs; a Brahman, a Bhora merchant of great wealth, and two others implicated in the plot, were built up in cells and left to perish. Or. Documents.



pay of the contingent force; and upon these arrangements being carried into effect, the sequestered districts were restored to him.

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The harmony which had thus been re-established with the Court of Baroda, was not long preserved. There still remained obligations in favour of individuals, of which the British Government could not with any decency get quit, and which were sources of constant annoyance to the Gaekwar, although in some cases equally imperative on himself. He had promised to respect them; but he had no sooner recovered possession of his country, than he either denied their validity, or violently infringed them. He retained also, as his principal advisers, persons notoriously hostile to the British connexion, and gave countenance and protection to individuals who were charged with committing depredations on the maritime trade, or on the border possessions of the subjects of the Company. The necessary consequences were the discontinuance of the system of forbearance, and recurrence to the sequestration of valuable portions of the Baroda territory. These transactions belong, however, to a subsequent period.

As long as the youth of Malhar Rao Holkar precluded him from exercising any influence over the Government of his country, the affairs of Indore continued to improve under the management of efficient ministers, and the general control of the British Resident. With the advance of the Raja to manhood, the aspect of affairs became less promising. Indolent and extravagant, he displayed no aptitude for the duties of his station, but lent a ready ear to the mischievous counsels of unworthy favourites, at whose suggestions the more prudent advice of his ministers was unheeded; and their endeavours to restrain his prodigality were defeated. The ill-effects of his conduct were partly obviated by the aid of his adoptive mother, who had the command of the accumulated treasure, which the providence of the ministers had amassed; and, partly by the brief duration of his reign, which terminated before the defects of his character had time to be fully developed. He died in October, 1833, at the age of twenty-seven.

No event of any serious importance disturbed the tranquillity of Indore, during the life of its Prince. A feudatory



BOOK III. of Udaypur, the Thakur of Bigu, possessed himself for a season of the border district of Nandwai, and levied contributions from the neighbourhood. He was expelled by Holkar's troops, including the contingent under the command of a British officer; and the Rana of Udaypur, as responsible for the outrage committed by his dependant, was compelled by the interposition of the British authorities to pay a compensation for the injury and expense to which the territory of Indore had been subjected.

Some disturbance and apprehension were excited in various parts of Malwa, contiguous to Holkar's possessions, by the appearance of a Hindu fanatic, a Patel of a village in Sondwara, who passed himself off for an incarnation of the Mahratta divinity, Kandi Rao, and pretended to have the power of miraculously curing cholera, and other dangerous diseases. Absurd as were his pretensions, he found abundance of adherents, and numbers both of horse and foot flocked to his standard. Thus strengthened, he proceeded to levy contributions, both in kind and money, from the surrounding villages; and raised considerable sums, which were devoted to the equipment of his followers. The officers of Sindhia and Holkar were unable to make head against the fanatic; and a strong party of the Mahidpore contingent, under Capt. Mc Mahon, was detached against him. The insurgents confiding in the superhuman character of their chief, and believing him to be invulnerable, boldly advanced to attack the division, but were received by a steady fire, under which their leader fell; thus undeceived, his adherents immediately broke and fled, and the disturbance was quelled with the same facility with which it had been excited.

Malhar Rao dying childless, his widow, in concert with her mother-in-law, adopted a boy who was said to be a descendant of Tookaji Holkar. At the time of his adoption, he was between three and four years of age, and was installed by the title of Martand Rao; the administration remaining in the hands of Madho Rao Furnavis, the minister of the late Raja, with the support, and under the guidance of Kesari Bai, the Ma-ji, or mother of Malhar Rao. The installation was attended by the British representative, but no formal sanction was given to the adoption, as the succession was likely to be disputed. The British



DISPUTED SUCCESSION.

Government thus leaving to a probable conflict the decision of a question, which the slightest intimation of its will would at once have set at rest, either by sanctioning the elevation of Martand Rao, or by acknowledging the preferable validity of the claim of his competitor Hari Holkar, the son of Itoji, the elder brother of Jeswant Rao, who had been held in confinement at Maheswara, during the preceding reign.¹

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Although having good cause to apprehend the consequences of the liberation of Hari Holkar, the authorities at Indore appear to have taken no precaution against such an event, and he was very soon released from confinement by a body of Bhils and Mewatis, and partisans from the neighbouring Mahratta districts. The fort and town of Maheswar fell at once into his hands. As the British Resident refused to give any support to the infant Raja, the Bais felt their inability to oppose Hari Holkar, and sent a message, acquiescing in his elevation, and inviting him to Indore. Notwithstanding this recognition of his claims, he hesitated to leave Maheswara until he obtained the additional security of a British escort; and with some degree of inconsistency, but under a feeling that the presence of a new Raja was necessary at Indore, to arrest the signs of popular commotion which were beginning to appear, the Resident directed a detachment of the 5th Local Horse, and a British officer, to conduct the Raja to the city. Hari Holkar made his entry into Indore in March, 1834, and was seated on the cushion of sovereignty in the following April, in the presence of the Resident. A Khelat was shortly after presented to him, on the part of the Governor-General. The child Martand Rao, was dismissed with his parents to his home in the Dekhin, where they were indebted for a maintenance to the interposition of the British Government. The character of the new Raja was no better calculated than that of his predecessor to maintain the credit, or promote the prospects of the State. His minister, Revaji Phansia, whom he called from the Dekhin to his councils, apparently because he had been in the service of Jeswant Rao Holkar some fifteen years before, was wholly unfit for the duties of his

¹ He is noticed by Malcolm, as having behaved with great gallantry at Mahidpur. — Central India, I. 319.



BOOK III. officer and availed himself of his influence over the Raja
CHAP. VIII. to apply the limited resources of the country to his own pri-
1823-35. vate emolument. Under his mismanagement the revenues rapidly declined—the expenditure exceeded the receipts—the troops became mutinous for arrears of pay, and the people were oppressed and discontented. A conspiracy against the Raja was organised, and had nearly succeeded, when the hesitation of the leaders caused its failure. The Raja and his minister reaped no benefit from the lesson, and their mal-administration, unchecked by the interposition of the British Government, produced its usual results—the necessity of that interference which it had been so much an object to avoid, in order to save the State of Indore from utter dissolution.¹

The States of Dhar and Dewas, bordering on the territories of Indore, remained faithful to their engagements with the British authorities, and were, in general, ably and peaceably governed. The tranquillity of the former was disturbed towards the close of 1831, by a serious incursion of the Bhils, subject to the principality. This was partly owing to the abolition of the British agency of Bhopawar, by the superintendence of which the Bhils were equally deterred from committing any outrage on the peaceable cultivators, and protected in the enjoyment of their acknowledged rights. The removal of British superintendence was followed by a relaxed system of control, and by iniquitous encroachments and exactions. This vexatious conduct provoked the Bhils to relapse into their predatory habits; and they assembled in arms and plundered the adjacent districts. They were further excited to insubordination by the presence of an individual, Uchet Sing, who gave himself out to be the son of Murari Rao Powar, a former competitor for the principality, and the reputed grandson of Jeswant Rao Powar, who was killed at the battle of Panipet. Murari Rao had carried on a desperate struggle for several years with the ruler of Dhar, in which he was foiled by the aid of Jeswant Rao Holkar: his chief adherents were the the Bhils, who transferred their

¹ In 1837-8, the Raja was informed, that the British Government would consider it to be its duty to assume the management of the country, unless the Resident should report a material amelioration. The intimation had the desired effect, and important reforms were instituted.



DISSENSIONS AT GWALIOR.

attachment to his son. Being unable to put a stop to the insurrection, and anticipating the ruin of the country, the Government of Dhar earnestly solicited the interposition of the British Government; and, after some hesitation it was granted, on condition that an inquiry should be instituted into the causes of the disturbance, and that the measures thought necessary for its settlement should be complied with. To this the Raja was compelled to agree; but the insurgents rejected the offered mediation, and troops were sent against them, under Captain Outram, by whose activity the Bhils were soon reduced to submission. Uchet Sing and his principal adherents came into camp on an assurance of safety, and a promise that their claims should be inquired into and equitably adjusted. Accordingly, an agreement was concluded, by which Uchet Sing in consideration of a pension from the Dhar State, consented to relinquish his pretensions; and the acts of extortion and oppression of which the Bhils complained, were redressed. Shortly after tranquillity was restored the Raja died, and as he left no son, the widow, with the concurrence of the British Government, adopted a son, who succeeded by the title of Maha Rao Powar.

The arrangements at Gwalior which ensued upon the death of Dowlat-Rao-Sindhia, involved abundantly the seeds of future dissension. Baiza Bai, forced very reluctantly to adopt a successor to her husband, clung tenaciously to the notion that it was Sindhia's intention that she should hold the regency during her natural life, and regarded with extreme jealousy the growing years and pretensions of the young Raja. As he was on the eve of adolescence when adopted, Janakaji soon came to think himself old enough to be let loose from the trammels of tutelage, and to be entitled to more than nominal authority; and he did not want advisers to stimulate him to assert his claims. They were, in truth, recognized by the British Government, when it insisted upon the Bai's consent to the Raja's being provided with a separate seal, and refused to receive any official communication from the Court of Gwalior, which was not authenticated by its impression. The Bai was under the necessity of complying; but she did not therefore forego her hope of being allowed to retain her power, if not in her own right, at



BOOK III. least, as Regent. She did not despair of setting Janakaji
CHAP. VIII. aside altogether, especially as the grand-daughter to whom
1828-35. he was affianced, had died, and her own daughter, Chimna
Bai, was pregnant, affording a prospect of an heir to
Sindhia, in a direct line. Repeated applications were
made by her to the British Government to favour her
views, but they met with no encouragement: the adoption
of a son, and his succession to the throne, having received
the concurrence of all the chief members of the court of
Gwalior and the principal persons of the camp, not ex-
cepting the nearest relatives of the Bai.

The restraints imposed by the Bai upon the young
Raja having become intolerable, he took an opportunity of
escaping from the palace in which he was kept under
strict supervision, and sought refuge with the Resident,
asserting that he did not consider his life safe, from the
insolence of his guards, and from the machinations of the
Bai. With some difficulty, a reconciliation was effected;
but upon the visit to Lord W. Bentinck to Gwalior, both
parties were earnest with him to sanction their respective
pretensions. With that indecision which characterized
the policy of the Government in its relations with native
states, no positive expression of its will or opinion was
pronounced. The Governor-General recommended the
young Raja to be satisfied with the position he occupied,
in which he might regard himself as a fortunate person,
and for which he was indebted to Baiza Bai, to whom a
feeling of gratitude should, therefore, render him sub-
missive. If he awaited patiently the course of events, the
Governor-General would recommend to the Bai not to
supersede the Raja by any other adoption; but if he
raised disturbances, the consequences must fall upon him-
self: the British Government would not interfere in his
favour.¹ The parties were, in short, to follow their own
views—the Bai to keep her power as long as she was
able—the Raja to wrest it from her if he could. The
general purport of the recommendations was, however,
rather favourable to the continuance of the Bai in au-
thority; and such was her impression.² The only result

¹ Report of a conference between the Governor General and Janaka Rao Sindhia, at Gwalior — *Asiatic Monthly Journal*, xiv. 7.

² The Bai, in her correspondence with the Governor General, always unhesitatingly asserted that he had confirmed her in the Regency, and authorised



THE BAI DEPOSED.

of the visit of the Governor-General was to render the breach more irreparable than ever.

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At length, in the middle of 1833, the quarrel came to a crisis. The cause of the Raja was embraced by some of the disciplined battalions of the Gwalior state; and on the morning of the 10th of July, the palace was beset by a turbulent soldiery, a portion of whom carried off the Raja to the camp, and the rest, mounting guard upon the palace, threatened the adherents of the Bai with destruction. The Bai, alarmed for her personal safety, fled from the palace by a private door, and repaired on foot to the residence of her brother, Hindu Rao, where she requested the presence of the Resident. Agreeably to the principle of neutrality which had been enjoined, he declined to obey the summons; and the Bai, having obtained the escort of a battalion of one of the brigades, of which the commandant Jose Sikander remained faithful, repaired by a circuitous route to the dwelling of Mr. Cavendish. She was met on the way by a strong party of the Raja's troops, under Gopal Bhaio Sindhia, and a conflict might have ensued, unless it had been stopped by the Resident, who required both parties to suspend hostilities until he had communicated with the Raja. In consequence of his representations, the Raja consented to permit the Bai to retire unmolested from the Gwalior territory, and promised to grant her a liberal annual income if she would reside peaceably within the dominions of the Company. To these conditions the Bai was prevailed upon to accede; and she withdrew in the first instance to Dholpur, on the confines of Gwalior, the possession of the Raja of Golud, whence she endeavoured to interest the British Government in her restoration, and to excite a counter revolution in the Gwalior State, declaring that she was willing to cede the country entirely to the Company; but that she was resolved never to submit to the usurpation of an ungrateful boy whom she had raised to power, and who was wholly incapable of exercising sovereign sway. The

her to continue in the management of the state. "It is very extraordinary," she remarks, "that, while your Lordship is my protector, such injuries have been inflicted on me, a circumstance which cannot but be considered a cause of shame to yourself." The only answer she received was the remark that no station in life was exempt from vicissitudes, and an exhortation to bear her fate with resignation.

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BOOK III. Raja was, however, acknowledged by the British Govern-
CHAP. VIII. ment; and a letter from the Governor-General congratulated him on his accession — recommending him at the same time to treat the Bai with consideration, restore to her what she claimed as her private property, and set such of her adherents as had been arrested at liberty, with permission to join their mistress. The recommendations were complied with. Chimna Bai, with her husband and daughter, and Hindu Rao, repaired to the camp of Baiza Bai; and the whole party removed to Agra. Chimna Bai, who by her amiable character had engaged general regard, died in giving birth to an infant, which did not survive its mother; and the hopes of a male heir in the direct line were extinguished. The vicinity of Agra enabling the dispossessed princess to carry on secret intrigues at Gwalior, she was sometime afterward obliged to cross the Jumna, and retire to a greater distance. She refused to move further than Furrukhabad, where she remained encamped, surrounded by a numerous body of armed followers, and importuning the Government for its interference, as far as regarded her claims to a large amount of treasure to which her right was disputed: her application was complied with, and a liberal pension was ensured to her on condition of her abstaining from all intrigues against the Raja, and retiring to her Jagir in the South of India. With great reluctance, and after a long delay, Baiza Bai, finding that her followers were deserting her, and that there was no chance of recovering her authority at Gwalior, acceded to the conditions proposed, and repaired to the Dekhin. She was a woman of high spirit, and respectable conduct, not destitute of ability to govern, but disposed to shew injudicious partiality to her own kin, and greedy in accumulating private wealth at the expense of public establishments. She was violent in temper, but not cruel or vindictive, and during her administration the affairs of Gwalior were conducted with as much efficiency as those of any other native principality. The first years of her successor might have justified regret for her deposal, as they were a perpetual scene of turbulence and danger. The insubordination of the ill-trained and irregularly paid battalions, which constituted the chief military force of the state, displayed itself in re-



peated mutinies and disturbances, not only fatal to internal BOOK III.
prosperity, but dangerous to the tranquillity of the CHAP. VIII.
neighbouring states; and they at last produced the catas-
trophe, which Dowlat Rao had predicted,—the virtual 1828-35.
assumption of the civil and military administration of the
Gwalior principality by the British Government.¹

The relations with the Rajput states during this period, presented the same fluctuating and contradictory policy, arising from the same causes—the desire to withdraw from interference, and the impossibility of so doing consistently with the preservation of these states from the effects of their own misrule, and the evident obligation imposed upon the British Government as the paramount power. The conflict between these opposing principles gave occasion to much temporary mischief, and most commonly ended in an extent of interposition exceeding the limits which had been originally proposed.

After the death of Zalim Sing of Kota, he was succeeded, in his joint-administration of the principality by his son, Madho Sing; and although, during the life of his father, Maha Rao Kishore Sing had regarded him with strong feelings of dislike, which there was little hope his own conduct would remove; yet, by the prudent and judicious mediation of the Agent, Colonel Caulfield, and the moderation of the Raj Rana, the Rao and his ministerial co-equal continued on friendly terms, until the death of the former, which took place in July, 1828. When on his death-bed, he required the presence of the Agent, at that time, Lieutenant Hislop, and consigned to his care the honour of his family and the safety of his nephew, Ram Sing, whom he had adopted, and by whom he was succeeded. The young prince was taught to entertain less amicable feelings for the Raj Rana, and frequent dissensions prevailed between them. The administration of the Rana was unpopular, from the heavy taxes laid upon the people, in consequence of the embarrassment of the finances. Arrangements suggested by the Resident, relieved the latter, and the obnoxious exactions were taken off; but no cordiality could be restored between the sovereign-minister and his nominal master. The death of the former, in February,

¹ See treaty with Jyaji Rao Sindhia, 13th January, 1844.—Papers respecting Gwalior, printed by order of Parliament, March and April, 1844.