



CHAPTER IV.

1829-35.

Bhils at school—Francis Outram—Dang Expedition of 1830—Summary of Remaining Service with the Bhils till 1835—Shikar Experiences.

EARLY in the new year Outram had reported to the collector of Khandesh that the time had arrived when the experiment might be made of opening a school for the children of his Bhil soldiers. Heretofore the scheme had been judged impracticable; because that, in the eyes of these men, to educate was to degrade, and no Bhil had been known, on the testimony of an existing generation, to be capable of either writing or reading. A change had, however, been effected, which, without directly affecting the Bhil estimate of education, greatly facilitated the introduction of a healthier state of things. The discovery had been made that an Englishman could use the rod with impartiality, even though it were one of iron. If other Englishmen were of the stamp of those sent to govern Khandesh, within the limits of the agencies, then, it might reasonably be argued, must their words and wisdom be trustworthy; and if *they* said that education was essential to those under their charge, it was more than probable that they were right. It was not to be expected that so little advanced a thinker as the Bhil would stop to inquire whether all Englishmen were alike. And of course he knew nothing whatever of policies, or of the views of particular Governments, and particular Vice-



roys. A school was accordingly established at Bhil headquarters, to teach the *sipahis* themselves and their children.

One event in the year 1829 would have, doubtless, cast a deeper gloom over the routine life of the Bhil commandant, had his mind not been so healthily and usefully engaged in the service of the State. As it was, he felt the blow severely. The death of his Engineer brother, at the early age of 28, occurred on September 18, under painful circumstances.

We have before stated that Francis Outram was a man of no ordinary abilities. That he was also generous and unselfish above the average of his fellows, is demonstrated in a little incident which occurred on the occasion of his leaving England for India. He was then, like other cadets of his stamp, supplied with a first-class passage; but, without informing others of his intention, he exchanged his passage-ticket for one of the second-class, so as to be enabled to make parting presents to his sisters and friends out of the money saved. The discomfort and indignities to which he voluntarily subjected himself by the arrangement, in a long voyage round the Cape, were as nothing in the scale to the satisfaction he derived from the knowledge that the tokens of affection provided would be received after his departure, and that he had not become indebted for them to any resources but his own. Many may consider the story insignificant in its simplicity; others may agree with ourselves that it illustrates the morality of a whole life, in which it would be the key to many apparent anomalies.

In India he soon established a character for talent, energy, and professional zeal. His standard of honour was high and well maintained; but his independent spirit involved him sometimes in trouble. On one occasion, when he came in contact with a superior whom he could not



respect, he laid himself open to a charge of insubordination, and the result was a court-martial, which sentenced him to the loss of six steps. Opinion was divided on the justice of the finding, but the severity of the sentence was generally admitted, and there is every reason to suppose that, had the sufferer proceeded home as intended, a reversal would have been obtained. He did not, however, await the result of his appeal to this effect, for, in a fit of delirium, caused by *jungal* fever, he put an end to his life. Feeble in health, and keenly sensitive, he was morbidly jealous of character, and a year had scarcely elapsed since the fiat of the court had gone forth, when some misdoings on the part of a native subordinate led him to imagine a defalcation in his cash-sheet for which he would be held morally, if not legally, responsible. That his apprehensions were in point of fact unfounded, and the nature of his personal responsibility in the matter exaggerated, became clear upon after-investigation. Individual statements of men of position and honour, added to the proceedings of the court of inquiry, and the Government letter—which in exonerating his memory from reproach added a high tribute to his worth—give ample proof that the self-accusation which preceded self-destruction was nothing else but the delusion of a fevered brain. Among other testimonies to his character, those of Sir John Malcolm and Mr. Elphinstone, both Governors of Bombay, might be cited. The latter, when in England, had written to Mrs. Outram in eulogistic terms of her elder son. The former, when in the discharge of his pro-consular duties in India, expressed a strong opinion of the harshness of the sentence of the court-martial, so soon to be followed by a yet more serious calamity; and in after years, spoke of the young officer in terms indicating peculiar esteem.

For a Native Infantry subaltern, however intelligent, and even on staff employ, to address the Governor of the Presi-

dency in which his corps is serving, on his personal affairs, is a bold and unusual step. But the object of his appeal being to seek vindication of the character of a deceased brother, James Outram felt satisfied that he need make 'no further apology for the liberty' taken 'to Sir John Malcolm.' After this préface he wrote :—

'The knowledge I have of my late brother's honourable sentiments, and implicit confidence in his integrity, impel me to solicit the influence of your authority to cause the strictest inquiry into the accounts of the office which was under his charge, in order that his innocence may be established of any knowledge of the defalcations (if such there were) in his treasury, and that the guilty authors, who in that case were the murderers of my poor brother, may be brought to justice. The only information I have received of such deficiency in the treasury lately under my brother's charge, is contained in the subjoined copy of a memorandum ¹ found on his death-bed. No communication from himself, or other circumstances have led me to believe that such is the case. I presume the first knowledge my brother had of the circumstance must have been obtained when on the point of leaving his station for the sea-coast on account of dangerous illness.

'Though he could have had little anxiety on account of the deficient sums, which he must have known he had friends able and willing to assist him to replace, yet the idea, perhaps, that the uncharitable world might be too apt to impute dishonourable motives to him—together with the disgrace he had been subjected to by a late court-martial (which had ever since preyed much upon his mind)—have driven him, weakened in mind and body from disease, into a state of temporary madness, during

¹ This paper is not forthcoming, but its nature is evident.



which he committed the dreadful act which terminated his life. I am confident the only guilt that can be laid to my brother's charge is neglect. For this there is no excuse; but to account for it, I have to state that the unfortunate result of the trial at Poonah must have greatly tended to lessen his zeal, to the over-exertion of which he attributed that misfortune; and though he was assured of reinstatement to former rank by your exertions in his favour, for the kind tender of which he ever entertained the most lively gratitude (and latterly, by the promise of assistance from his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief), yet the impression that he had been disgraced could not be removed from his highly honourable mind, and drove him into that state of carelessness to which he alludes.'

He adds an impression of certainty that his brother would not have allowed the loss of a single rupee to accrue to Government through his neglect; and that he holds it a 'sacred duty' to that brother's memory to fulfil his wishes in this respect, by personally making good 'the deficiency he appears to allude to, should any be really found to exist.' He leaves to the Governor, on becoming officially assured of the innocence of the deceased officer, to give the same publicity to such assurance as already obtained for the self-accusing memorandum above mentioned.

'Should the style of this letter be faulty,' is the concluding passage, 'I beg you will pardon it, in consideration of the state of feeling and of excitement under which I write, for nothing but the highest respect can be intended.'

To this appeal Sir John replied:—

'I have received your letter, and can fully understand, and as fully approve, the motives which have led you to write to me upon the melancholy subject of your late brother's



death. You may depend upon every effort in my power to do justice to his memory. He had his errors and failings—and who is without them? but all, I believe, are impressed with the same conviction that I have, that he was as distinguished for zeal and integrity as he was for professional talent. I assure you, I consider his death a serious loss to the public service.’

When writing to his sister, Mrs. Farquharson, on the subject of an epitaph to be inscribed on their brother’s tomb, Outram thus expressed himself: ‘It is my wish that nothing in the usual strain should be written. The feelings of friends, or the worth of the deceased, cannot be described by words. The most unworthy and commonplace characters have fulsome eulogiums written on their tombs by those who despised the person when living. No estimation of the character is formed from these memorials. Poor Frank’s memory is esteemed by all: his worth and talents are known by all our army. The simple inscription I propose is

THE REMAINS OF
LIEUTENANT FRANCIS OUTRAM,
BOMBAY ENGINEERS.
A MOST TALENTED AND HONOURABLE MAN.
DIED IN THE TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

Pray let me know your opinion, and that of Colonel Farquharson.’

Some relics of Francis Outram’s inventive genius and scientific attainments are to be found in practical designs for the economy of manual labour by the use of self-acting machinery; but they would hardly convey a true notion of the intrinsic power which his contemporaries considered him to possess. So marked, indeed, were his artistic tastes and capabilities, that he seriously entertained the idea of



resigning the service and adopting the profession of an artist, in the event of his appeal against the sentence of the court-martial proving unsuccessful.

In the year 1830 occurred the invasion of the Dáng country and capture of its chiefs. This tract of tangled forest, situated on the west of Khandesh, and on the further side of the Sukhain Hills, had never been penetrated by troops. Its Bhíl inhabitants, as little used to subjection as the Arab of the desert, had long been in the habit of seeking prey and plunder beyond their lawful limits, and of encroaching upon the lands of their neighbours. From time immemorial retaliatory measures having been found as difficult as actual suppression, a legacy of disorder had been left to the successors of native rulers, to deal successfully with which would have sorely taxed the powers of a Government less chary of oppression and generally scrupulous than our own. Captain Douglas Graham looked upon the Dángchis as the most uncivilised of all the wild tribes he had come across in Western India; deficient in intellect of the most ordinary description; physically stunted by hardships of living, climate, and poverty; extremely superstitious; addicted to intoxication, and careless of any fixed home. He thought it no matter of surprise that among a set of such degraded beings the principle of right and wrong was entirely lost, or the fear of consequences overwhelmed in a blind reliance on fortune; that the dread of treachery was the predominant idea, and that the animal instinct alone remained in full force to urge the supply of daily necessities.

Outram was convinced that by the medium of his own Bhíls he could effect a settlement of the Dáng, the unruly occupants of which could easily be turned one against the other, and thus prevented concentrating against the sovereign authority represented by British officers. Accordingly he undertook to march a body of troops into the heart of their



country, consisting of 250 of the newly raised Bhil corps, four companies of native infantry from Surat and Khandesh, 120 auxiliary horse, and 1,100 auxiliary Bhils under their own chiefs or Rajahs.

Entering himself from the eastward,¹ with two companies of native regular *sipahis*, his own Bhils, 50 of the Puna auxiliary horse, and some Bhil auxiliaries, and awaiting simultaneous advances of detachments from four separate stations on the opposite frontier, he had contemplated a partial junction of his forces in the centre of the Dáng, but could give no fixed points of meeting, as his actual routes were unknown. When he had descended from the Gháts to the village of Gabrái, after a march of eighteen miles effected on the first day, the *jungal* was found so thick on all sides that, even had he known the localities reached, it would have been no easy task to open communications with his detached officers. As for the inhabitants of the country, his party had not fallen in with even one; they had passed sites of destroyed huts, and had arrived at the residence of a petty Rajah, where the dwelling-places were entire but utterly deserted. On the day following he heard of the arrival of one detachment of his force at Garvi. Two days afterwards he visited that village, which eventually became a connecting post, with forty horse and fifty Bhil auxiliaries. Two days later still he was able with three detachments to effect a thorough scour of a *jungal* twenty miles in circumference. The Dángchi leaders soon became fugitives and disheartened, and the 'Silput,' their chief authority, was openly deserted

¹ One of the great approaches to Gujrat from the eastward was through the Sindwa Ghat. It appears that the pass in this direction was formerly paved by the Muhammadan conquerors, and that after consolidation of their powers they constructed a line of as many as eighty-four forts in a convenient position west of the Sindwa, to keep the turbulent tribes in subjection. The few of these that remained on the British occupation were distinguished by the names of the respective commanders under whose auspices they were erected.



by his more prominent followers. On April 18, or not a fortnight after commencement of active proceedings, four local Rajahs had personally presented themselves with offers of assistance, and two others had expressed a wish to be received in the British camp; while 500 head of cattle with many prisoners were in British hands. Outram promised to restore the former and release the latter on the apprehension of the 'Silput.'

On May 22, the British force returned, as its leader himself expresses it, 'with the principal chiefs our prisoners, and all the others in alliance, after having subdued and surveyed the whole country.' In the morning of that day, the Silput himself had surrendered, conditionally that his life be spared. The followers of the captives had been dispersed; and an opposing force, said to consist of some 10,000 bows, had vanished into thin air. When it is borne in mind that the country was unexplored, and had been reported impregnable because impracticable,¹ and that the end was attained with scarce a shot fired, and the loss of one life only; the feat will doubtless appear eminently satisfactory. This is one of those expeditions, the importance of which must not be measured by the casualty list. It is to be judged by a knowledge of the difficulties of country traversed, and rapid movements of the lawless enemy, as well as by the results obtained, and their bearing on the pacification and well-being of the peoples concerned, whose habitat may be defined as situated between the Nizam's and Holkar's territories and the sea. Another element of anxiety not to be forgotten is to be traced in the connivance of the officers of a neighbouring native state, Baroda, with the movement we sought to suppress. The Gáikwar was apparently ever willing to lend

¹ The description of the Dáng in the Collector's Revenue Report, dated August 1, 1828, was rather an account, and a brief one, by Mr. Bax, of the chiefs and their resources than of the features of the country.



assistance to the robbers of the Dáng in their opposition to British supremacy.¹

Of Outram's share in the miniature campaign we should give but a faint idea did we restrict it to field operations, or even to the exact fulfilment of the orders and wishes of the civil authorities. We have the best authority for stating that Sir John Malcolm, governor of Bombay, had expressed his opinion in council that a strong brigade of regular troops would be insufficient to attempt invasion of the Dáng country; and it was his confidence alone in the foresight of his Bhíl agent and commandant that led him to sanction the project so satisfactorily put into practice. On Outram's shoulders rested the whole responsibility, and to him was naturally due the main credit accruing from the expedition.

But though there was barely any loss of life on either side occasioned in actual warfare, much sickness prevailed among the troops at the close of the campaign and on their return from the Dáng. The several detachments had been scarcely broken up when nearly half the men and officers were seized with fever, caused, it may be presumed, from the fatigues, exposure, and privations undergone during the two months of their employment in an unhealthy climate. Eventually, it would appear that more harm still resulted from this expedition, for of the thirteen officers engaged, not one was exempt from *jungle* fever; three or four died, and the rest were compelled to leave Khandesh for change of climate. Outram alone, of all the Europeans, escaped, and his immunity he attributed to 'covering his head and face with fine gauze' when sleeping in feverish tracts, a habit which his comrades in the Dáng could not be induced to adopt.

On May 20, 1830, the magistrate of Khandesh conveyed to Lieutenant Outram, and the officers and men under his

¹ Captain Douglas Graham: *Synopsis of Bhíl Settlement in Khandesh*. See also *Public Reports and Despatches of Captain Outram*.



command, the thanks of the Bombay Government 'for the highly meritorious service of the detachment in the Dáng; and four days later, in acknowledging the report of the Silput Rajah's surrender, the same functionary added: 'Nothing can exceed the indefatigable exertions made by yourself and the officers and troops under your command, in bringing this most harassing duty to a conclusion which has now been most happily effected through the unyielding perseverance maintained, and the judicious measures you have pursued throughout.' On June 7, Government endorsed the magistrate's personal opinion by a renewal of thanks to Lieutenant Outram 'for the zeal, activity, and judgment he has displayed on this occasion, to which is to be attributed the fortunate conclusion of the harassing service he has had to conduct.' It will not do to dwell further on this brief passage of an illustrious career; but, as the necessity for economising space and the reader's attention forbids the indiscriminate recourse to extract, we take the opportunity of remarking that Outram's final report to Mr. Collector Boyd (the state of whose health would not admit of his meeting the Dáng chiefs near their own country), shows, on the part of the writer, a knowledge of his subject, and of his men, as well as an administrative ability and a rare energy of character deserving of appreciation and study. Not the least noteworthy feature in his recommendations is the care with which cause is shown for grants of money and other presents to particular chiefs and native officials who had rendered good service to the British Government.

In 1831, the collector of Khandesh deputed Lieutenant Outram to inquire into certain daring outrages committed in the districts of Yáwal and Sauda, in the north-eastern Bhil agency; also, to determine and apprehend the offenders. Accompanied by some of his own Bhils and a few auxiliaries, not fifty in all, he captured 469 suspected persons, and in-



investigated the charges against them, selecting for trial such as appeared to be actually guilty. Of 158 so committed, 114 were Bhils, accused for the most part of gang robbery. Attacks had been, moreover, made on the Dhūlia treasury, and on the houses of bankers, showing an inclination to serious mischief which called for immediate check and punishment. The official reports on these proceedings show that, owing to the measures taken, the spirit to break out had not only been subdued, but the apprehension of all offenders had been effected without the offer of a single reward, or any expense to Government further than the maintenance of the prisoners. The native Mamlutdar of Yāwal and his Sarishtadar were considered to merit especial notice for services rendered. Of the first, named Ram Chandar Bālaji, Outram wrote, with characteristic warmth, that he had 'throughout exerted himself in a manner' he had 'never found equalled in an officer in his situation.

In March 1831, he learnt the death, in India, of his sister Margaret, wife of Colonel Farquharson, one whom he describes, in replying to her husband's letter conveying the sad intelligence, as 'the warmest and most excellent friend' he possessed on earth, and the most affectionate of sisters. About three months later, addressing the same correspondent, he mentioned also having heard from Glasgow of the death of his uncle Joseph Outram, and adds: 'All, all are falling; I shall have no relations left to welcome me home, if I ever can return.'

With a short notice of one more minor campaign which occurred in the spring of the year 1833, we shall bring to a close the historical portion of ten busy and useful years among the Bhils, passing on to consider the less palpable and direct, but not less efficacious, means employed to effect the reformation and discipline of this rough and turbulent people. Let us premise that Outram was no longer



a subaltern: his Captain's commission dated from October 7, 1832.

The Bhils of the Barwáni territory, in the Satpura mountains, north of Khandesh, and of the neighbouring petty states on the Narbada in Nimár, having risen in rebellion, became so formidable that their Rajahs were unable to control or face them, and parties of the rebels having entered the British collectorate of Khandesh under Hatnia and Esnia Náyaks, sacking several villages, killing a *patell*,¹ and wounding others of our subjects, it was found necessary to send against them such force as could be hastily collected.

On April 24 Captain Outram took 25 men of the Bhil corps, and 20 horse, strengthened by some hundred auxiliary Bhils, with the intention of cutting off communication between the gangs of the two leading insurgents, and also of attacking Náyak Esnia when joined by a coming detachment of 50 men of the 18th Regiment. After a fatiguing march of two days through difficult *jungle* and over strong passes, and in a country uninhabited and destitute of supplies, his party arrived in the centre of the Satpura hills. The immediate result of this movement was the capture of Esnia, who was betrayed into the hands of the British officers by his uncle. On April 26 Outram was joined by the men expected from the 18th Regiment N.I., and marched the day following to a place called Mangwára, where he had appointed a meeting with the Barwáni Rajah. This chief, however, failing to appear, though a special escort had been sent to attend him, it was resolved, after three days' waiting, to push on at once against Hatnia, who, it was affirmed, had been joined by a large number of attendant rebels. The small force, marching 24 miles during the night, came upon his encampment at daylight of May 1. It was deserted; but the signals heard among the surrounding heights showed the enemy to

¹ Village head man, or local authority.



be on the alert. Thither, then, did the detachment move. Hatnia—observed ascending a hill with two or three followers, to join his companions assembled on the summit—was captured by Lieutenant Hart's horsemen, who intercepted his retreat. The rest fled on the loss of their leader, with the exception of one small body of bowmen, who stood their ground for a time and fired many arrows, but finally decamped on seeing mounted assailants in their rear. One hundred and seventy head of cattle were recovered on the pursuit of the fugitives.

This blow, however decisive, was not considered sufficient to check the misdoing of the Barwáni Bhils and their accomplices. Outram accordingly proceeded to the village of Auli, whither the Rajah came to meet him, bringing the before-mentioned escort, and about 50 horse and followers of his own. Having ascertained there that two *náyaks* and a *patell*, suspected of active participation or indirect complicity in the recently reported outrages in British territory, were in the camp of his native ally, he obtained the consent of the latter to arrest and forward them to Khandesh; and it is worthy of remark that these men, together with the captive chief Hatnia, were handed over, for this purpose, to the charge of auxiliary Bhils under native officers. The next step was to cross the Narbada and move against one Rajia, Náyak of Dassowa, said to have harboured the scattered rebels of the Satpura, to have long committed depredations in the territories of Holkar and the Barwáni Rajah, and to have become strong enough to defy the whole body of neighbouring chiefs in Nimár.

It was at the solicitation of his native friends and our allies that Outram had come to the resolution to assist in this matter until the strength of the insurgents had been so far broken as to enable the more powerful State officials to act unsupported against their common foe. And he called



upon the Barwáni Rajah, and a certain Mamlutdar of Chikaldi, to join him with such troops as they could get together. But when arrived on the northern side of the Narbada, the news that Rajia had vacated his stronghold, followed by that of the dispersion of his followers, caused him to change his plans; and he judged it prudent to leave the pursuit of a scattered gang to the chiefs themselves, simply furthering and facilitating the object in view by the nearness to the scene of his own detachment. The repugnance of the Mamlutdar to act on this proposal was, however, so evident that he was allowed to return to his home, and Outram himself had eventually to scour the tract in which were situated Rajia's principal posts. Led by a friendly Rajah, Durjan Singh of Dhir, he pressed on during the night to one of these; but on reaching the place at daybreak he found that the usual occupants had decamped. After a march of more than 30 miles, with little intermission, he encamped at Piplod, a deserted village in the Dhir district, and in the heart of Rajia's retreats. Here he stayed for two full days in the hope of securing some of the leading offenders; but the threatening weather operated against him. He was compelled to recross the Narbada and seek shelter for his men, who were totally unprovided with tents or extra clothing, or indeed any necessaries for a prolonged absence on active service. Arriving at Barwáni on May 13, he addressed the collector on that date, signifying his intention to halt there in completion of his arrangements on behalf of the Rajah, and then to return to Khandesh *viâ* the Sindwah, doing such further service with his detachment as he might 'find necessary to insure tranquillity after its departure.'

On June 2, a full report of these proceedings was made from Dhúlia, satisfactory and to the point. Already, some three weeks before this date, the collector had addressed Government on the subject as follows:—'The capture of the



Hatnia naick (the rebel chief), previous to the monsoon, was what I could not, I confess, feel sanguine enough to expect; and as he is in reality a person of greater weight and importance in the country than his hereditary chief and superior, the raja of Barwani (an independent prince, whose country is situated between the Satpura hills and the Nerbada), his having escaped for the present must in probability have called for the employment of a regular expedition the ensuing season, till which period our whole northern frontier would have been a prey to the numerous gangs which would have risen at the instigation of Hatnia and his adherents.

‘I cannot sufficiently commend the prompt and judicious manner in which Captain Outram proceeded against and captured Hatnia, who in considerable force occupied a position in a tract of country the nature of which can only be known to those who have entered the Satpura range of mountains, and considered by themselves as totally impracticable.

‘The effects of this decisive and successful measure will be experienced not only at present, but for years to come; it will now check the rising inclinations of our own Bhils on the immediate frontier, who showed signs of beginning to join in the robberies perpetrated in the vicinity, and for the future it will prove a lasting warning to the foreign chiefs and Bhils, that, however little we know of their country and its strength, no outrages committed upon our territories can remain unnoticed, or the culprits undiscovered.’

On June 27, Government expressed to the Magistrate of Khandesh their great satisfaction at the successful termination of the expedition, and requested him to communicate to Captain Outram the high sense which they entertained of his ability and judgment in concerting, and zeal and activity in executing those measures by which the insurrec-



tion had been suppressed, and the neighbouring parts of the province of Khandesh preserved from plunder.' The thanks of Government were also conveyed to Lieutenants Hart and Partridge, Ensigns Morris and Renny, and Jemadar Allahyar Khan, who co-operated with Captain Outram on the occasion, with an intimation that their deserving conduct would be brought to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief.

Prior to this expedition of 1833, Outram had begun to feel that he should like a wider field for the exercise of his powers; and now that it was brought to a happy conclusion his mind not unnaturally reverted to the prospect of a new appointment. He had written to his mother in April 1832, to use her home interest to get him employed in the political department, 'the only line in the Indian services which allows a military officer to display his talents, both civil and military.' His great wish was to be appointed an Assistant to the British Resident at Holkar's Court, or Indor, where he thought that his services might be useful, and an anticipated vacancy would give reasonable ground for the application. In November 1833, when there was question of the formation of a separate Agra Government, we find him writing home in the following strain: 'I am most anxious to leave the Bombay Presidency for the new one in Central India, for there is no further honour and advancement to be obtained for me here in this confined sphere. . . . In India I believe I can ensure success, having gained some little distinction, and many friends in power; therefore, get me home patronage, and strong recommendations to the new Governor; I will do the rest. Mr. Elphinstone, I think, would espouse my cause, as *he* was my *first* and best friend.'

To Mrs. Outram's letter in accordance with, and quoting the above request, Mr. Elphinstone replied:—



Albany, May 5, 1834.

‘Having the highest opinion of Mr. Outram, both for his enterprise and gallantry, and for his power of conciliating and gaining the confidence of the natives, I should be most happy to forward his views, if it were in my power; but I have not seen Sir Charles Metcalfe for these five-and-twenty years, and I do not feel myself entitled to address such a recommendation to him as Mr. Outram desires, or indeed to make any such application as would be effectual in a case like the present. This being the case, it is with much satisfaction that I perceive the date of Mr. Outram’s letter, from which I conclude that he had not then heard who was to be the new Governor, and supposed that it would be some stranger from this country, on whom Indian reputation would have no effect. The Governor who has been named, however (Sir Charles Metcalfe), spent all his life in India, and probably is more difficult to approach from this quarter than from others more within Mr. Outram’s reach. I make no doubt that he is already well acquainted with Mr. Outram’s merits, and he is a great deal more likely to employ him from his own impression of his fitness, than in consequence of any recommendation that could be sent from England.’

The Bombay Government, however, were not going to part with so valuable a public servant without further putting to the test and reaping the advantages from his capabilities within the limits of their own control. His work with the Bhils was not yet over; nor, when over, was it to be exchanged without a second and equally hard apprenticeship before he would be permitted to acknowledge other immediate superiors. -

But we have now to illustrate Outram’s ‘non-official’ dealings with the Bhils; that is to say, his off-parade behaviour to his men, at times when he might have kept aloof



from them altogether without prejudice to the strict letter of his duty to the State. Should it have been no infrequent practice with young officers of the native Indian army to avail themselves of leisure hours rather for the indulgence of their own particular tastes than the indirect advantage of their profession, they have only done what their fellows have done in other walks of life. Time and example often work, in these cases, a wholesome and effectual change. The real evil is, to ignore, or to forget that the *sipahi*, whom they are accustomed to meet at drill or in orderly room, is a human being like themselves, and susceptible of heart influences as much as professional instruction. Those who do this, and consequently touch no chord of personal sympathy in their relations with the Indian soldier, are assuredly not acting in the true spirit of the covenant under which they serve. To use a hackneyed, but appropriate term, they are to all intents and purposes 'hard bargains.'

Had James Outram followed such impulses, the Bhil corps would never have been raised by him, and never would he have become a power for good throughout these uncivilised regions. The secret of his success lay in the unselfish and unwearied pursuance of principles exactly the opposite. He spared no pains to establish over his outlawed friends the power which springs from tested sympathy—not that inspired by awe alone. They found, not only that he surpassed them in all they most admired, viz., in all that was most manly, but that he thoroughly understood them and their ways; that he loved them; that he could and did enter thoroughly into their fears and their difficulties, their joys and their sorrows. Such a bond, all-powerful in its action, could be established and maintained only by the genial intercourse of daily life. Though his wild subjects saw their *sahib* exercising the open-handed hospitality of Anglo-Indian bachelor life in his costly residence at Dharangaon—a



palace in their eyes—yet they felt that he essentially belonged to themselves; while his active habits brought him into constant contact with the minute interests of their every-day existence.

No wonder that we hear of his memory still lingering in Khandesh, shrouded by a semi-divine halo. We are told that, a few years ago, some of his old *sipahis* happened to light upon an ugly little image. Tracing in it a fancied resemblance to their old commandant, they forthwith set it up and worshipped it as 'Outram Sahib.'

Reminiscences of Khandesh life must now be brought to a close by extracting a few of the many anecdotes still extant regarding those exploits in the *jungal* which formed an effective link in the chain of influence the young soldier made it the business of life to draw around his Bhils. He loved *dangerous* sport for its own sake, but rightly considered it a duty, though it happened to be a congenial one, to follow his own instincts in outdaring the brave little hunters whose hearts he sought to win. It must be confessed that his assurances to his mother were more honoured in the breach than the observance. For James Outram to eschew 'acts of temerity' within his reach, when duty did not absolutely forbid, seemed a physical impossibility.

The following are among the many gleanings of Captain Stanley Scott from the recollections of old Bhil native officers. They will serve to illustrate, in some degree, the kind of impression made on the minds of the narrators themselves by the deeds of prowess recorded :—

In April or May, 1825, news having been brought in by his *shikari*, China, that a tiger had been seen on the side of the hill under the Mussulman temple, among some prickly pear shrubs, Lieutenant Outram and another sportsman proceeded to the spot. Outram went on foot, and his companion on horseback. Searching through the bushes, when close on



the animal, Outram's friend fired and missed, on which the tiger sprang forward roaring, seized Outram, and they rolled down the side of the hill together. Being released from the claws of the ferocious beast for a moment, Outram with great presence of mind drew a pistol he had with him and shot the tiger dead. The Bhils, on seeing that he had been injured, were one and all loud in their grief and expressions of regret; but Outram quieted them with the remark, 'What do I care for the clawing of a cat!' This speech was rife among the Bhils for many years afterwards, and may be so until this day.

In 1827, it was reported to Outram that a tiger was lurking in the densely wooded ravine of 'Mahi Burda' in the Saigaon *jangal*. He proceeded thither, with his rifle, on foot. When near the spot indicated, it suddenly occurred to him that, by commanding the narrow end of the ravine, and placing the beaters at the other, the tiger must make his exit through the gorge, and he would get the opportunity of a close shot; but to find on the bank a place from which to fire was impossible, as the *jangal* grew close up to the sides, and the bottom of the ravine was not visible from the top. Outram's mind was not one to be baffled by trifles. He and some followers climbed a tree, a branch of which overhung the ravine. Securely posted on that branch, the Bhils tied their *pagris* (turbands) and waistbands together, passed a band round their commandant's chest and under his arms, and let him down dangling in the air. He now saw clearly all that was taking place beneath. The tiger, driven down by the shouts of the beaters, came within easy range of his rifle, and from his wonderful position he got the desired shot and killed the animal dead. Instantly drawn up into the tree again, he turned round laughingly to the Bhils, and said, 'You have suspended me like a thief from a tree, but I killed the tiger.'



In 1832, the inhabitants of Virgáon, in the Taluka of Pimpalnair, brought information to Outram that there was a tiger in their *jangal*. He immediately caused search to be made, and it was discovered that the animal had taken up his abode in a dark cave. Outram went to the mouth with three or four native followers and, placing them outside, he entered. On hearing a low growl immediately in front of him, he fired; the tiger not coming out, he fired again, when to his delight he found he had killed him.

In 1833, in the month of April, when encamped at Sirpúr, the villagers gave Outram information of a tiger that had been marked down in the thorny *jangal* to the north of the village. This part of the country was plain, and there was no hill or ravine near. Outram started on foot, spear in hand, a follower carrying a rifle, and some six others bows and arrows. The tiger broke ground on their approach; Outram followed him up on foot for three miles, and eventually speared him to death. This act, it is affirmed, has never been equalled, before or since, in Khandesh.

For the following spirited account of Outram and his Bhil trackers we are indebted to Colonel Davidson: 'Selecting a few of the most dashing and expert men (who could follow up the trail of man or animal for days together through those jungly wilds), he formed a band of scouts or trackers, with a famous little fellow named Khundoo at their head. In conducting a tiger-hunt on elephants, the first thing to be done is to disperse the Bheels over the country. They scatter, and yet act in concert; and when the "pug" (or print of the tiger's foot) is found, they collect, and follow up the marks. In this, their dexterity, to one who is not initiated in the art, surpasses credence. They seem to follow the game over places where no vestige of a mark could light. Sometimes they are at fault, at others the

scent (as it were) seems to run breast high, and on they go at a jog trot, marking as they run, with the point of a spear, the last decided print. Should they reach any thick jungle, covered with high grass and herbage, where no trace can possibly be found, they divide into two parties, right and left, and circle round the obstructive patch, till they meet on the opposite side, looking with lynx eyes at every inch of the line by which they circumscribe the spot. Finding no signs of egress, they conclude at once that the tiger is within the circle; so they divide again and circle back, dropping a man at intervals till they have formed a ring of sentinels round the patch. These sentinels get into trees, partly for safety, but chiefly to extend their range of vision. The tiger, perhaps not satisfied with his resting-place, or for reasons tigers can only know, is about to quit the spot. A Bheel sees him from aloft, and utters a low deep cough. The tiger, awed by the human voice, generally retires inwards, and tries another place. Again he encounters the same mysterious cough, till at last, from necessity, he becomes reconciled to his quarters, and the sun being hot, he lays himself down to rest. A messenger is then sent to tell the *sahib log*¹ that the tiger is marked down. Should the sportsmen be at a distance, or should any circumstance prevent their immediate attention to the call, these staunch pointers will keep their posts; and if the tiger break cover they track him up from place to place, even for days together, to his final halting place, when they again surround him with their guardian wing; and this faculty of tracking is not confined to the case of animals, for they follow up traces of men with the same facility. This makes them a valuable agency for the capture of marauders when they take to the jungles to escape detection. Outram's band rendered much

¹ For the benefit of the few to whom this Indian expression is strange, we may state that it means British officers or residents generally.



good service in this way when Khandesh was a sort of hiding place for outlawed men. . . .

‘Khundoo, the *naïck* or commander of this band of trackers, was the very *beau idéal* of a Bheel. Though a little fellow, he was a great man with his master, and it was one of the saddest days in Outram’s chequered life, when this faithful follower met his death. A man-eating tiger had killed a native, and Khundoo, with a few men, was hard upon his track. Just previous to this, Khundoo had disappointed his master of a tiger, and he laid it so much to heart that he secretly resolved never again to send in word unless he had actually seen the beast himself. Following out this resolution in the present instance, with nothing in his hand but a slight spear, Khundoo approached the bushes where he believed the tiger to be concealed. In a moment the beast sprung out, Khundoo’s spear glanced off his thick head, and in the next instant the tiger’s fangs had met in the upper part of the little fellow’s chest. The tiger slunk back to cover, where he was surrounded by a portion of the Bheels: the others took up their dying chief, carried him to Outram’s tent, and laid him at his master’s feet. Outram’s first impulse was to destroy the savage beast and, vowing he would neither eat nor drink till the tiger had bit the dust, he seized his rifle and rushed off.¹ A well-directed shot laid the man-eater low, and when Outram galloped back, he found poor Khundoo’s life was ebbing fast. It was a touching spectacle, as the brave Outram bent over the dying chief to catch his last farewell. Khundoo took the hand of his little son and, placing it in Outram’s, bid him supply a father’s place to him.’

Major C. Giberne, late of the Bombay Army, tells a story

¹ The Bheels firmly believed that a man killed by a tiger became subject to the beast in the next world, unless instantly avenged. Hence their commandant’s prompt pursuit, to ease Khundoo’s mind in his latest moments.

of these days of Indian *shikar* too good to be here omitted. His acquaintance with Outram dated from 1825, towards the close of which year he proceeded up country to do duty with the 23rd N.I. at Malegão:—

‘A party of us went out under Outram’s leadership. . . . Word was brought us that the Bheels had tracked a tiger into the dry bed of a river, where he had taken refuge among the tamarisk bushes on a small island in the centre. We were at once divided into three or four parties, and stationed on both banks of the *nulla*, while the Bheels were distributed on the rising ground a little farther off to watch our proceedings and prevent the tiger making his escape. Outram, followed by a few sepoy, then deliberately walked across to where the tiger was lying, fired at him and broke his fore leg. He immediately charged out of his lurking place and was received by us with a volley of balls, when . . . he rushed across and laid himself down in a bush on the opposite bank to where I was. Outram then advanced towards him, supported in rear by three sepoy with fixed bayonets, under which it was his intention to cast himself should his shot prove a failure and the tiger spring out upon him. Just as he arrived within three paces of the tiger, and he was on the point of springing upon him, he fired and the tiger fell down dead.’

The following is from Colonel Ord’s notes, but no date is assigned to the occurrence related:—‘One day when Outram was in our camp, some villagers came in from a village about eight or ten miles off, to pray that some of us would come out to kill a well-known man-eating tiger who had just killed a man not very far from the village. It was not long before Outram, myself, and one or two others, among whom was Ensign T. Parr, of the 23rd



Regiment N.I.¹ . . . mounted and were on the spot, guided by some of the villagers. There lay the body in a sequestered part of the jungle, with the fleshy part of the throat torn out, and the legs and arms eaten clean off to their junction with the body. The trunk alone remained, and it was neatly covered with green grass, though still visible. The villagers not being of the hunter caste, knew not where the tiger was. But there was no lack of foot-marks, and we were soon in his trail, accompanied by a few of the Bheels, led by their determined chief, Outram; who, on all these occasions, was our chief also. After an intensely exciting hour or two, occupied in pugging him through the jungle, we came suddenly upon him, or rather he came upon us, or at least on Parr, for on looking to one side, we saw him standing on his hind legs with his jaws, as it seemed to us, about to close on our friend's head, who was instinctively pulling at the trigger of his gun. No explosion, however, followed, for he, like ourselves, not expecting the tiger at that precise moment, had not cocked his gun. Fortunately this was of little consequence, for the brute, scared either by our appearance or the click of our guns being put on full cock, turned away without having so much as touched Parr. He did not go far, however, for a well-directed shot from Outram's famous gun laid him low.'

By his fearless bearing in the presence of danger, and his general prowess in the chase, Outram attracted the affection and admiration of the wild men among whom his lot was cast for so many years. Willingly would they have followed him anywhere. He could excel in tiger-slaying—a feat in which was their own greatest pride. He could trust their rude honour—a result at which none of his

¹ Now General T. Chase Parr, of the Bombay Army.



predecessors could arrive, though officials of a native government. He was clearly their pattern of an authority which they could acknowledge without loss of self-esteem, or such equivalent for caste as they were contented to accept. That *caste*, in the Indian sense, is not a term applicable to themselves, is perhaps undisputed. Even the common village barber would not exercise his profession upon the Bhil otherwise than on compulsion; and one collector of Khandesh had to administer a fine before the razor was produced for shaving the men of his guard.

Lieutenant Douglas Graham, from whose writings we have already quoted, succeeded Lieutenant Beck as adjutant of the Bhil corps. Writing of his commanding officer in 1833, he designates him his own 'staunchest friend,' and the 'boldest and the best sportsman' in Western India. 'We have lived together,' he says, 'for seven long years now . . . without having had a difference. . . . He has saved my life; I have done the like good office to him; we have fought together, and *fed* together, been for months without any but our own sweet society; and, to sum up the story, I do not think friendship can go a step further than what exists between us two.'

If Douglas Graham's journals are known mainly by repute in Bombay, many of the exploits related in them should be familiar there as household words, especially among sportsmen, and have doubtless been circulated far beyond the limits of the Western Presidency. We shall, therefore, select for extract only three or four of the more striking narratives:—

'Before starting this morning (June 12, 1828) on very sure intelligence, I had been wondering why a certain long spear, one of your real Maratha lances, with a knob of rusty iron at one end, and a bayonet-like bit of steel at the other,



was undergoing the process of excessive filing and sharpening; when I recalled to my remembrance some expressions of my commandant, that tended to imply a determination of spearing a royal tiger. And as the exploit was said to have been once perpetrated on horseback on the Bangalore race-course, a sort of vow rose floating among the mazy recollections of the last evening's conversation, of his intention to perform it on foot. Fifty good reasons were adduced why the attempt was rash, nay, amounted to a sort of indifference to the least chance of existence in the struggle; but no, the word had gone forth, and he would peril to the uttermost to redeem the pledge.

'Fears were laughed at, and dissuasion entirely set at nought, so we had nothing for it but to see we had French caps in our pockets (H.B. never miss) and proceed, anxiously desirous that no opportunity would occur for our too adventurous friend. There was a fine thick cover down each side of the broad nullah that ran past the tents, and at intervals on either side two or three small topes, with abundance of under creepers well known to us as frequented haunts. There were only two elephants out that day, so, of course, each took his own side. We had beat through the first cover which was on our line, and had halted abreast of the second, to observe the operations of the other howdah, on the opposite bank, when a startling volley came provokingly across from the very centre of the thicket, and the loud and continued bursts of uproarious music, fully declared that there was more than one of the right sort on foot. Our position was by no means so commanding as our wishes. We were stuck on a bank which extended half a mile on each side of us, and presented, as far as I could see, a perpendicular fall of ten or twelve feet; but this was no time to stick at trifles, so we shoved old Hyder at the place, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the mahout, who declared the descent im-



practicable. But, making a virtue of necessity, for he saw the butt-end of a rifle coming in contact with his scone, he began to manœuvre his "ankooos"¹ in style. Hyder got down on his belly in the most scientific manner, and stretched his fore legs to their full extent over the side, but finding no bottom, and not at all relishing a drop leap, withdrew speedily from this position. Thrice he was brought down, but to no avail; in the third attempt, luckily, the bank gave way, and down we came, elephant, howdah, and all, but landed in safety on the bed of the nullah. The firing still continued in the tope, and on our arrival, we found one tiger mortally wounded on the ground, and two others charging fiercely from below a thicket of creepers. A cast round the wood soon put us in possession of their mark. We had hardly proceeded a hundred yards when the track went right into a porcupine's earth, and I was indulging in the idea of enjoying a novel sort of sport, when I saw my friend's eye turn to the Maratha spear, with a meaning glance that could not be mistaken, and the condition of my nerves was by no means improved on seeing him alight from the howdah, and on his knees creep a little way into the hole, to look, as he said, for the glittering of the eyes. Having ascertained that there were only two entrances to the den, he blocked up one passage with thick bushes, placed the elephant about two yards in front, and my friend took up his station at the very mouth of the remaining hole.

There he stood, spear in hand, like a gladiator in the arena of a Roman amphitheatre, ready for the throwing open of the wild beast's cage. The bushes were set fire to, and the tiger, by no means relishing the smoke, came

¹ As this word seems to call for explanation, the opportunity is taken to interpret with it four preceding words in the same letter, i.e.:—*Nullah*, strictly *nālā*, a river or river-bed; *tope* or *tōp*, a wood, tuft of trees; *howdah*, strictly *hauda*, an elephant's turret; *mahout*, strictly *mahawat*, the elephant keeper or driver; *ankooos* or *ānkus*, *ankus*, a goad.



puffing and blowing like a porpoise, every five or six seconds, to get a little fresh air; but scenting the elephant, he was always fain to retreat again. This sort of work went on for some time, and bush after bush blazed away without producing the desired effect. I could not have stood the suspense, when life was at stake. At last there was a low angry growl, and a scuffling rustle in the passage. The tiger sprang out, and down descended the long lance into his neck, just behind the dexter ear. With one stroke of his powerful paw he smashed the spear close to the head. There was a pretty business. Mr. Tiger one step below, with the steel sticking in his neck, which by no means improved his temper, had gathered his huge hind quarters below him for a desperate spring; and my friend, armed after the fashion of the South Sea Islanders, standing on a little mound, breathing defiance and brandishing his bamboo on high—odds by far too overpowering; so, to bring things a little more to equality, I threw in a couple of balls from old Hyder, which turned the scale, as Brennus' sword did of old. The tiger was luckily stunned and floored by this salute, but shortly recovered, and finding too many enemies besetting him on the open ground, scampered away to the thicket. We found him again below an old bush, and very vicious he was, tearing through the jungle, and charging in mad fury whenever we came near his entrenchment. Three times he was on the elephant, roaring and screaming; charge succeeded charge, ball after ball went into his inside, and at length he yielded up the ghost, under the very trunk of the elephant. Had the spear not been directed with the most cool self-possession, so as to arrest the progress of the tiger, and give me a slight chance of hitting, and had not old Hyder remained perfectly steady, without taking at all into consideration my fluttering nerves and state of anxiety, there would have been an end of one whose like we shall seldom see again;



at best it was the happy accomplishment of a very rash vow.

Undated, but headed 'Fragments, 1828 to 1832,' are two entries appropriate to these pages. It need scarcely be said that Outram is the 'commandant' whose directions are so implicitly obeyed in sporting attire as in uniform:—

'Moved to Pingulwara, where we killed a very splendid tiger after breakfast, and on our way home fell in with the marks of a tigress and cubs, which we followed for about two miles, when they went into an old tunnel that had been carried for eighty or ninety yards through a small hill. As the aperture was of just sufficient size to allow us to enter abreast, we put our rifles, double-barrelled two-ounce ones, all ready, and went in together, on the understanding that the moment we saw the glittering of the brute's eyes we were to fire sharp and fall flat on our faces. I have no hesitation in saying that it was with fear and trembling that I entered this ugly den; but as my commandant proposed the thing, I could not be off, so, making up my mind for a pretty scrimmage, away we went. The place was foul, dark, and damp; but, as good luck would have it, the tigress had made no stay in the place, but had gone right through. As there was no arguing about these things with my commandant, I always did as he did, and left the result, in this and a hundred other mad tricks, to the entire direction of the fates. The elephants were close at hand, and we bagged the tigress and cub among some very high reeds in the nullah, not a hundred yards from its mouth. She had no chance, as we saw her crouched for a spring, about twenty yards off, and took the liberty of checking her intentions by a couple of well-directed balls. A tiger is very difficult to twig just at the proper moment. His colour confounds him with the decayed leaves and wood, and were



it not for his strawberry-leaf shaped ears, which some way always catch a practised eye, the game would pass often unseen on very open ground.'

The next is entitled 'The First Accident : '—

'I remember well the occurrence, whilst on a hunting trip among the rocky mountain ranges that separate Khandesh from the Deccan. It was towards the close of a June day, when but little of vegetation and water remained; the leaves of the bushes were shrivelled up, the country parched and cracked, the very stones in a glow of white heat.

'We had been particularly successful during the trip, and had upwards of forty full-sized tigers on our list, owing to the research and sagacity of our Bheels, and the skill and perseverance of our chief; and flushed with the fulness of sport, and rendered careless, probably, from success, we all entertained rather too contemptible an opinion for the tyrant of the flock.

'The country was a difficult and dangerous one to hunt—the side of a long waving hill, intersected by numerous broad stony ravines, and covered with short, thick, thorny *babul* bush, whose yellow, discoloured leaves increased the difficulty tenfold of discovering our game. We beat up a nullah with three elephants, but an accidental shot had scared the monster. He had quitted his lair, which we found quite fresh, and sneaked off among the bushes. The party separated, and each elephant took his line about a quarter of a mile apart from the other. I had that day charge of old Hyder—that pink of elephants—and was leaning over the side of the howdah with my rifle in my hand, half a dozen Bheels close beside me, eagerly examining a patch of open ground which extended fifteen or twenty yards from the edge of the nullah where the jungle commenced, and



pressing forward, notwithstanding the strict injunctions they had received to keep well behind, when a roar loud and deep startled me from my position. All had either fallen to the ground or fled, except one, a fine, handsome, active young fellow, and a particular favourite with us all, named Gurwur. He stood riveted to the spot, fascinated by the tones of that awful roar. The huge yellow form came cleaving through the air with the rapidity of light; in one fell swoop he pounced on his prey, and in the same instant his paw rested deep in the shoulder and his ruthless teeth were crashing through the skull of the unfortunate one. I could see the fierce glare of his eye as he stood overtopping his victim, and holding him up in his terrible jaws. It was all the work of a second. I had scarce time to bring my gun to my shoulder, but I aimed high, and fired both barrels. The savage quitted his grasp and disappeared amongst the thicket. Poor Gurwur's sword was half drawn, but his fight was over!

About a week afterwards, Lieutenant Graham was surprised at seeing his chief gallop up to camp with an enormous tiger strapped to his saddle-bow. It was the fierce destroyer of the foregoing story. After committing the act narrated, the beast, in accordance with invariable practice, fled across the hills to seek concealment in the thickest cover available. Outram had followed, with steady determination to avenge, if possible, his Bhil. For three days, we are told, the pursuit lasted, through rain and wind, over mountain and torrent, and across valley and forest. On the evening of the fourth day the tiger was brought up by a long shot, whilst skulking along the side of a palm *jangal*.

To give some imperfect notion of the continuous nature of this exciting sport, we might quote no less than twelve entries in fourteen days, or from May 7 to 20, 1829, inclusive, each day after bears or tigers, and usually with the



sought for result. In the previous year are two successive entries, very brief, and worthy of special extract. One of them has just been made familiar to us in the form of a detailed narrative.

'June 9.—Went out after an immense tiger. Outram wounded him from horseback. He went into a small nullah, and when he advanced, he charged, and wounded one of the Bheels.'

'June 12.—Killed two tigresses and one tiger. The tiger got into a hole, and we smoked him out. Outram stood above the hole, and speared him in the neck as he came out. He turned and broke the spear to pieces, and was just making a *daur* upon Outram, when Tapp and I fired from the howdah and knocked him over. The finest day's sport I ever saw.'¹

In May 1828, there is a vivid account of an assault upon a herd of wild buffaloes in Meywar, ending in the death of a fine bull, who made a vigorous defence against the many spears and rifles brought against him. But we have no more space for extract from these journals of exceptional *shikār*. A summary from Outram's personal record will aptly illustrate the case, in conclusion.

He has noted that, during ten years, or from 1825 to 1834 inclusive, he himself and associates in the chase, killed no fewer than 235 tigers, wounding 22 others; 25 bears, wounding 14; 12 buffaloes, wounding 5; and killed also 16 panthers or leopards. Of this grand total of 329 wild animals, 44 tigers and one panther or leopard were killed during his absence by gentlemen of the Khandesh hunt; but Outram was actually present at the death of 191 tigers, 15 panthers or leopards, 25 bears, and 12 buffaloes. It is to be regretted that, during the period specified five

¹ See ante, pp. 105-108. *Daur*—Anglicè—'rush,' 'run,' or 'spring.'



natives, while assisting in the *shikár*, were killed, and four wounded; but it must be remembered that the Bhil is not a participator in such dangerous doings upon compulsion, but under pressure from his own restless nature. In 1825-26, of the five English gentlemen who composed the party, two died of *jungle* fever, and Outram, while on foot, was severely wounded by a *chita*. In 1827-28, he, though usually mounted on his elephant Haidar (who was twice wounded), killed and wounded two tigers off horseback, besides spearing one tiger on foot, as before mentioned. In 1831, the highest figure was attained in the account of spoil. Out of 65 animals then killed and wounded, 46 tigers were killed. Outram speared a bear during the same year. In 1830, however, with the exception of ten days passed with the Nagar hunt,¹ he had shared but little in the excitements of the chase, owing to the campaign in the Dáug; and he was again much occupied in the Satpura expedition of 1833.

The time has now come to take leave of Khandesh, and though the scene of action in the next chapter will not be very far away from that province, we shall have to treat of a comparatively new subject, and new characters.

¹ At which time he took 10 first spears—all but one contested—in a party of six, 55 hog being killed; broke the small bone of his right leg the first day, and was compelled to give up running altogether on the eighth, in consequence of bruises. He had before been with the Nagar hunt in 1829, when he managed to take 12 first spears—all contested.



CHAPTER V.

1835-1838.

Appointment to a Special Mission—Leave to Bombay—Marriage—Two years and three quarters in the Máhi Kánta.

EARLY in 1835 Captain Outram accompanied Mr. Bax, then Resident at Indor, through Malwa and Nimar. The scant supply of home letters received from him at this period finds ready explanation in his reports of constant marching and attendance on native *darbars* and festivals. Later on, the same deficiencies are accounted for by other and more pressing demands of the public service. After return from his annual Khandesh tour in June, he was confidentially addressed by Government, and his opinion invited on the affairs of the neighbouring province of Gujrat, which had long been in an unsettled state, and which, in the Máhi Kánta, had assumed a threatening aspect. This tract of territory, literally but incorrectly interpreted as the littoral of the river Máhi, comprised, in those days, all that portion of Gujrat proper yielding tribute to the Gáikawár on compulsion only, or realised at the point of the bayonet. It is situated far above Khandesh and the Narbada, and extends up towards Sirohi and Udaipur on its north, leaving Kaira on its south, Dungapur east, and Pálánpur west. From south-east to north-west its length is estimated at about 100 miles, and its breadth in the direction of the opposite angles at about 60; the area is given at 3,400 square miles.

The following descriptive account from the Rás Málá is

so clear and explicit that we make no apology for its insertion here :—

The level country (which, covered with noble groves of trees, 'may vie,' says Mr. Grant Duff, the historian of the Mahrattas, 'for hundreds of miles with the finest parks of the nobles of England,') was almost entirely reduced by the Mahrattas under direct government; though the jungles of the Choonwal and the banks of the Myhee, as far south as Baroda, still furnished shelter to independent tribes, and many villages, including those which belong to the Rajpoot landholders, in some of the richest districts, required an annual armament to enforce payment of their tribute. As the smallest streams branched off, many independent communities appeared among the ravines and jungle on their banks; as these rivulets increased in number, and the forest grew thicker and more continuous, the independent territories also became more frequent, and were found in more solid masses, until at length the still untamed principalities of Eedur and Loonawara were reached, amidst the mountains of the north-east. Many Koonbees, Wanceas, and others of the peaceable classes, were included among the population of the Myhee Kanta; but the castes which bore arms, and in whom the whole authority of the country was vested, were Rajpoots, Kolees, or Muhammadans; of these the Kolees were by far the most numerous, though they were for the most part found under Rajpoot rule. All the Rajpoots used swords and shields, matchlocks and spears. They often wore defensive armour either of leather or chain, and placed it upon their horses. Their plan of warfare was to defend their villages; they seldom, except after an ineffectual defence, took to the woods like the Kolees, and were quite incapable of the desultory warfare so congenial to the latter tribe. The Kolees or Bheels (for, though the former would resent the classification, the distinctions between them need not here be noticed) were more diminutive than the other inhabitants, and their eyes wore an expression of liveliness and cunning, their turbans, if they used any, were small; their common head-dress was a cloth carelessly wrapped round the temples; their clothes were usually few and coarse; they were seldom seen without a quiver of arrows, and a long bamboo bow, which was instantly bent on any alarm, or even on the sudden approach of a stranger. The natives described them as wonderfully swift, active, and hardy;



incredibly patient of hunger, thirst, fatigue, and want of sleep; vigilant, enterprising, secret, fertile in expedients, and admirably calculated for night attacks, surprises, and ambuscades. Their arms and habits rendered them unfit to stand in the open field, and they were timid when attacked, but had, on several occasions, shown extraordinary boldness in assaults, even upon stations occupied by regular British troops. They were independent in spirit, and although professed robbers, were said to be remarkably faithful when trusted, and were certainly never sanguinary. They were averse to regular industry, exceedingly addicted to drunkenness, and very quarrelsome when intoxicated. Their delight was plunder, and nothing was so welcome to them as a general disturbance in the country. The numbers of the Kólees would have rendered them formidable had they been capable of union; but though they had a strong fellow-feeling for each other, they never regarded themselves as a nation, nor ever made cause against an external enemy.

The inhabitants of this country—and we do not confine the term to the ‘Kúlis,’ or supposed *aborigines*—had long been known as a warlike and rebellious people; and when the British Government was first brought into immediate contact with them in 1820, it soon became evident that without the application of stronger and fairer measures than had been attempted by the Gáikawár for the suppression and control of these his unruly tributaries, there could be no security to life and property in the villages and lands which they occupied. The establishment of a British agency was due to Mr. Elphinstone, who visited the Máhi Kánta in 1821; and who had hoped, by this means, to secure quiet to the country, and a peaceful realisation of his dues to the native ruler. Our local authorities, however, while using undoubted goodwill and good intentions to introduce order into chaos, were unfortunate in the choice of means. Whether right men were not consulted for right measures, or not put into right places, it matters little now to inquire. The result was signal failure to achieve the desired end. But in order



to make the situation intelligible, we must resort to a summary of the state of affairs in the Máhi Kánta, when Outram's services were to be put in requisition there, practically much in the same way as for Khandesh.

In the year 1828, Gambhir Singh, Rajah of Edar, burnt the village of Kíri, which belonged to Fath Singh of Rupál. The latter complained to the British agent at Palánpur, who then exercised a temporary superintendence of the Máhi Kánta. Gambhir Singh was directed to pay a heavy fine; but, as the decision remained a dead letter, Fath Singh took the law into his own hands, and imprisoned the brother of Khem Chand, a minister of the Edar Rajah, when a guest in his house. Such a hostage would, he thought, prove better security for damages due than less tangible professions and promises. Khem Chand, however, pleaded the attachment of the Edar State by the British Government as a cause for non-payment of fine; and his brother remained a prisoner. At this time, one Suráj Mall, the turbulent son of Jahum Singh, lowest in rank but greatest landholder of eight Rajput feudatories of Edar, was in banishment; and to him appeal was made for assistance against Fath Singh. He readily undertook the task assigned, and raising a body of 400 or 500 men, attacked and plundered Rupál. But as the unfortunate hostage was not to be found, Khem Chand refused to pay the promised reward; and Suráj Mall was left to his own devices. His ways were those of strong and unprincipled contemporaries: he supported himself and followers by a course of pillage and devastation among the villages of Edar. Seven years after the occurrence of the original cause of quarrel—and long after the death of Gambhir Singh, the main offender—the feud threatened to become a chronic infliction. A third disturber of the peace had, moreover, appeared on the scene, in the person of Pirthi Singh, son of the deceased Karn



Singh of Ahmadnagar, who, with his brother Hamir Singh and many adherents, caused three widows of the late Rajah to become *satis*,¹ in despite of the injunctions, and almost within sight of the British political agent. Military operations were rendered imperative, and a field force was called out against Surāj Mall and the Thākur of Rupal. By the middle of March 1835, the principal strongholds of both chiefs had been destroyed—and Ahmadnagar was in the possession of British soldiers. But in the former case, the offenders themselves, both outlaws, were still at large, while the occupation of a town, was, at best, but a superficial measure of success. A report, favourable to an approaching peaceful settlement of the Máhi Kánta, sent to the Court of Directors by the Bombay Government in September, was succeeded by one in October of a less cheering kind. It was to the effect that, notwithstanding the ‘severest suffering and privations on the part of the troops in toiling through a most difficult and rugged country’ with which the authorities were imperfectly acquainted, the chiefs had not been captured, and the causes of disaffection and disturbance had not been removed. What was required was a better knowledge of the place and people, and an influence over the popular leaders: something, in fine, which, in effecting the work of pacification, could be substituted for the too common remedy of overwhelming brute force.

In furtherance of its views of amelioration, the local Government proposed to make a survey of the tract under report, and to aim at the acquisition of moral control over its warlike inhabitants through the exercise of a conciliatory policy such as had been successfully adopted for Khandesh. Hence the consultations with Captain Outram to which we have referred, and which only took official shape after a frequent interchange of thought embodied in a confidential

¹ *Anglioi*, ‘Suttee.’



correspondence with Government officers. Among the last was the late Major Orlando Felix, so long on the personal staff of Indian governors, whose urbanity and tact in the fulfilment of social duties were on a par with a highly intelligent appreciation of the more strictly professional part he had to perform. One of the subjects discussed with this gentleman was Outram's own proposal to divide his Bhil corps and, instead of raising it, as contemplated, to a thousand strong, to break it into two regiments or battalions of five hundred men each. The palpable advantage recognised in the modification was that, in case of emergency, the force could be doubled in number without any fresh accession of officers. But another question arose from this discussion. Should there be occasion to form a brigade of Kúlis in Gujrat, who more fit than Outram to advise on, and, if practicable, take under his immediate charge the organisation of the scheme? His services would be invaluable for the purpose, and it was natural to try and secure them. A much wider responsibility, however, than involved in the drill and discipline of Kúlis, was to rest upon him in his new sphere of action.

About the middle of March 1835, Sir Robert Grant had succeeded Lord Clare as Governor of Bombay. In prompt obedience to the orders of Government, bearing date August 27 of the same year, Captain Outram quitted Khandesh on September 11 following, for Indor. His object in taking this circuitous road to the Máhi Kánta was to consult with Mr. Bax on some details of his mission; but more particularly to enter, if possible, the disturbed districts from the Malwa side, through a part of the country on which trustworthy information was urgently needed. At Indor he was destined to disappointment; for the route he had laid out for himself was reported impracticable, owing to the deep mud



which, impervious to cattle or carriage of any kind, had generally covered Malwa, during six weeks of continuous rain. He was, therefore, forced to make the best of his way to Baroda, nearer the northern bank of the Narbada, by Bhopáwar, and Chhotá Udaipur. Through the care of the British resident at Indor, the journey across Holkar's territory was uneventful and free from obstruction; but the passage across this section of the Vindhya mountains, and through the neighbouring *jangal*, in autumn, are acts always attended with serious risk to health for Europeans or natives, and it is not strange that fever and other sickness should have visited the camp. Out of Holkar's limits a certain annoyance was experienced in the behaviour of the Gáikawár's *employés*. These, it had been inferred, would have readily aided the progress of a duly accredited British officer traversing the tracts in which they exercised a little brief authority; and faith in their friendly disposition caused Outram, on entering Gujrat, to dismiss the horsemen who had been placed at his disposal by the Rajah of Udaipur. But the event proved he had made a mistake. On reaching, late at night, one of the Gáikawár's large towns, the servants of the mission were refused a guide to show them the public resting-place, and could not procure even a little milk on purchase. Outram himself was not more successful at the Police Thána, and though supperless, like the remainder of his party, was glad to accept the shelter offered him by a kindly Brahmin schoolmaster. From Baroda he proceeded to Ahmadabad, and thence to Ahmadnagar, Edar, and Disa, returning to Ahmadabad to draw up his report, in personal communication with the political commissioner, Mr. Williams, and with the advantage of access to the records of his office. This report, completed at Baroda, was prepared with much care and ability, and is an elaborate and comprehensive State paper. It set forth the measures necessary for dealing



with the insurgents at once, and under certain future contingencies; it detailed the cases of individual leaders; it investigated the elements of which the hostile forces were composed, and the sources and causes of hostility; it entered into the question of Police for preservation of the peace of the country present and future; it discussed the liabilities of the native ruling power; it showed the importance of survey, and the opportunities likely to offer for carrying out the measure; finally, it expressed the writer's conviction that the Máhi Kánta could not be tranquillised, nor could a system of active reform be successfully introduced among its inhabitants, until the unruly clans had been brought under subjection, and the chiefs punished for their opposition to British troops. Its date of November 14, little more than two months after departure from his old Bhil head-quarters of Dharangáon, gave ample evidence that no time had been lost by Captain Outram in fulfilling a mission which, mentally and physically, was arduous, and of special kind.

Later in the same month of November, Outram was offered by the commander-in-chief, Sir John Keane, command of the troops then about to be assembled against the insurgents of the Máhi Kánta. In the spirit which actuated him throughout life, but which circumstances have rendered more conspicuous in his later years, he declined the honour in favour of a friend very much his senior. His letter to the chief's military secretary on this occasion is very characteristic. He declared himself sensible of the distinction conferred upon him by such mark of confidence, but felt it his duty to point out that the appointment of so junior an officer might give umbrage in quarters where unanimity was necessary. The senior officer on the spot was almost the senior captain in the army: none above him could be sent with the detached companies of which the force would be composed; whereas he himself, from his junior position in the army, would, if in

command, be the cause of separating captains from their companies, to the detriment of the service. He wrote, moreover: 'the qualifications of the officer now commanding the detachment in the disturbed districts are far superior to mine. I willingly stake my humble reputation on his conduct. Associated with him, as I presume I shall be in the duty, while his be the honour of success, mine be the blame of defeat, in measures of which I am the proposer.'

If the sentiment here exhibited appear to some in any way Quixotic, it was certainly genuine. Nor was it the expression of an unambitious soldier, or of an untried man, whose temper was unknown to his employers. Sir John Keane, while appreciating the objects of Captain Outram, and admitting the merits of the senior officer on whose behalf he had written, could not accept the change of arrangements submitted. 'His Excellency considers,' replied Major Macdonald, 'that the ultimate success of all the plans of Government will mainly depend upon your being left in the free exercise of your own good judgment without anybody being placed over you to control it. It is not alone the task of meeting the enemy in the field that devolves upon the person having the chief arrangement of affairs in these rebellious districts. . . . His Excellency highly approves of what he understands to be the intention of Government—namely, to invest you with civil and political powers, which will render you independent of the authority of senior officers; and the military, of whatever rank, must take their directions from you. This is according to precedent and Indian usage; and why should it not be acted on in your case, who possess the confidence of Government, and are looked up to, of all others, as the person best qualified to put their plans into execution?'

Seldom has a more complimentary letter than this been addressed to a junior captain under the circumstances. Mr.

Bax, the former collector in Khandesh, wrote privately to Outram on the subject of this correspondence, that he had 'acted judiciously and most considerately' in declining a command which must have annoyed many of his seniors in the service—a result which would have been 'overlooked by nineteen men out of twenty,' for the sake of the distinction to be conferred.

On completing his report Outram repaired to the Presidency. It was not alone on public grounds that the requisite leave to make this visit had been solicited, though a personal conference with the members of Government on the affairs of Gujrat seemed an indispensable sequel to the late inquiry and proceedings. Another urgent cause prompted the application. He was about to be married to his cousin Miss Margaret Anderson; and the bride was daily expected to arrive in Bombay. He had hoped to have welcomed her in the previous year: for the engagement had been of some standing; but passages to and from India were more serious affairs then than now considered, and not arranged as at present, irrespective of particular ships and particular seasons.

The settlement of the Máhi Kánta was a matter of so urgent a nature in the eyes of the local Government that no time was lost in issuing instructions for the more immediate guidance of the executive officers; but Outram's proposals were held to be too warlike, and conciliation was to be put in practice, and thoroughly tested, before recourse should be had to violence. Sir Robert Grant, the Governor, was essentially a man of peace and a philanthropist. He could not believe in the existence of disaffection among the chiefs without a cause, which, at least, demanded full and patient inquiry. He wished this inquiry, if possible, to precede any sterner measures: and no disarming, or tooth-drawing, would be sanctioned in the interim. In the words of the memoir already quoted: 'he had seen a purely conciliatory policy successful in