and all, was General Willshire's lack both of provisions and of information about the road in front—postal communication having been effectually cut off by the marauding tribes. On his arrival, he found that only six days' supplies remained in the commissariat stores. However, his consultation with Mr. MacNaghten resulted in measures which, it was hoped, would relieve the wants of the army till the approaching harvest. Supplies were accordingly sent back, and the Bombay division came up on May 4.

Kandahar now became the head-quarters of the army of the Indus; the Bengal and Bombay divisions, and the Shah's troops being there united under the commander-in-chief. The Shah had made his State entry a few days before Outram's arrival; but the latter was called upon to arrange with Mr. MacNaghten the military programme for a later ceremony of no less significance—the celebration of his Majesty's restoration to the 'kingdom of his ancestors,' a strong expression, perhaps, when applied to a grandson of the founder of any monarchy at all in Afghanistan. 'On his ascending the *masnad*,' we are informed that 'the whole line presented arms, whilst a salvo was discharged from 101 pieces of artillery'; and then that 'the army of the Indus marched round in front of the throne, in order of review, mustering some seven thousand men of all arms, and presenting a most imposing spectacle.' In the evening Outram attended the commander-in-chief to the residence of the envoy, who gave an entertainment in honour of the king's accession, and made a speech for the occasion, as did also Sir John Keane and Sir Alexander Burnes. It was a bad omen, perhaps, that the few lamps which loyalty or obsequiousness had lighted in the streets were totally extinguished when the British guests returned home.

It will be appropriate in this place to reproduce certain opinions entertained and expressed by Outram on the part

taken by the Indian Government in the expedition to restore Shah Shuja to the throne of Afghanistan. We do not ask attention for them so much as pertinent to a biography, as on account of their significance on all our subsequent relations with that country. It was his lot in more than one instance to differ in respect of policy from the authority which he was bound to acknowledge. And among other eminent men to whose views he could not always subscribe were Lord Auckland and Sir William MacNaghten. Both were aware of this divergence of opinion, but neither was dissuaded thereby from employing the intelligent Bombay officer on important military and political duties. Later on, as the Kabul disasters are approached, we shall have more to say on this subject. At present we confine ourselves to letters addressed to friends from Kandahar, at the period already reached in our pages, adding one from Kabul which barely anticipates the narrative.

Outram writes thus to Lieutenant Eastwick, assistant political agent, Upper Sind, on May 6, 1839 :—

> Every day's experience confirms me in the opinion that we should have contented ourselves with securing the line of the Indus alone, without shackling ourselves with the support of an unpopular Emperor of Afghanistan, whom, to maintain, will cost us at least thirty lakhs annually, besides embroiling us hereafter with all the rude states beyond, which it must perpetually do. We have now stretched out our feelers too far to pull them back, however, and must and will carry our objects for the *present* triumphantly; but I cannot blind myself to the embarrassment we are storing for the future: for it is too plain that the Shah is *not popular*, notwithstanding some little temporary enthusiasm displayed by the mob on his entry into Candahar the other day, and the flocking to his standard of a few greedy and needy Afghans, who hope to benefit by any change, and whom the poor Shah is obliged to entertain in his service, although without the means of supporting them. . . . Neither is the Shah's popularity apparent in the country we have passed through, the inhabitants of which have heartily united in injuring

him and us to the utmost of their power: *all* classes—peasantry as well as soldiery—turning against us, robbing and murdering whomsoever they can get hold of belonging to us, and inveigling our people to their villages for no other purpose than cold-blooded murder.

To Major Felix he writes, ten days later:—

If—as I suspect will be the case—Dost Mahomed prefers temporary exile to submission, seeing that the Shah is only upheld by the presence of a British army which must soon be withdrawn, he will return with tenfold popularity to raise the standard of the faithful against a King forced upon bigoted Afghanistan by infidel bayonets. Then will Shah Shooja be in his turn deserted by those who are now seduced to his side by British gold, but who only can be held there so long as the golden stream flows undiminishedly. The fact is not to be concealed that Dost Mahomed, at the outset of this struggle, had the preponderance of *personal* weight in this country, a well-tried, able, and fortunate ruler, against the bad luck ('bad bakht'), which goes a great way with natives, and *bad name* of Shah Shooja: and it is not to be supposed that the Dost's temporary expulsion will otherwise than enlist the sympathy of his countrymen, who will hail his return too as the triumph of the champion of the 'true faith' *over* the hireling slave of '*infidels*'—as they will then be taught to consider Shah Shooja, if they do not already do so. . . . I am of opinion we should be restricted to placing Shah Shooja in possession of Cabool, leaving officers to discipline his contingent, and a resident to guide him; and that our army should then descend to the Attock before winter, thence to operate on Scinde, or to return to India, as may be required.

. . . For our own sakes I think it better we should pass peaceably through Afghanistan, and fulfil our mission without hostilities, because once involved in warfare, we should have to continue it under lamentable disadvantages in this country. A blow once struck by us at the Afghans will oblige us to become principals on every occasion hereafter, much to our cost and little to our credit. . . . You will be surprised that *I* should display so little desire for actual war; but I hope you will give me credit for some discretion, which is as necessary as bravery to a good soldier, and do me the justice to believe that I would weigh well

consequences before plunging into war, when hostilities can honourably be avoided. I have well considered every side of the question, and am now satisfied that British bayonets need never be pushed beyond the Hála mountains for the defence of India; that British armies of any strength could not be supplied or supported for a length of time on this, the Afghan, side of these mountains; and that the natural and impregnable boundary of our Empire is the Indus.

On May 22 he thus expresses himself to Mr. Willoughby:—

It is possible from what we learn of opinions at home, that our armies may be ordered to withdraw from Afghanistan, after seating the Shah at Cabool, without waiting for or enforcing the submission of the rebel chiefs. If unopposed on this occasion, we can do so without discredit, leaving the Shah in possession of his throne, with the support of his own contingent and subjects; but if opposed by Dost Mahomed, we must go to extremity with him, which would be uphill work if he leads us into protracted warfare, and knows how to deal with us—i.e., cutting off our communications, destroying crops and water in our route, attacking baggage on the line of march, harassing our camp by night alarms, cutting off foragers, &c., &c. Eager as I am for service, still so convinced am I that little glory to our arms, and less benefit to the State, could be gained in such a struggle—where our enemy need never meet us hand to hand, and has it so much in his power to destroy our very limited resources—that I shall consider it fortunate if we are permitted the credit of marching in warlike array from the sea, through Afghanistan, to Attock, without any enemy daring to face us! We should then leave behind us a high reputation for power, wealth, and moderation, as, of course, we sumptuously pay as we go (and most lavishly too), prevent any sort of oppression to the people, and forego what they see in our power—the appropriation of any portion of their territory.

The Kabul letter to which we have alluded is to Major Felix again, and bears date August 20:—

Unless to prevent a European enemy obtaining a temporary footing in Afghanistan, and breathing time therein, I am satisfied that

our armies need never enter this country, and that such a measure should be avoided if possible; that it would suffice to maintain our ascendency tranquilly on the Indus until invasion *is* threatened, when our detachments pushed forward to the main passes, within reach of supplies and support, might defy any army in the world, especially after traversing such a country as Afghanistan,—or, were it feared that our enemy's object was to establish himself in this country in the first instance, that a small force advanced to Cabool—which (being received as friends) would always be practicable to and within reach of our troops on the Indus—would effectually frustrate his design. What I mean to say is, that British power on the Indus must secure the preponderance of our influence here, above that of any European power; and that that alone would most probably prove a sufficient bar to the advance of any hostile army into Afghanistan; but that it would then be in our power at any time to establish troops at Cabool, if necessary, long before our enemies could approach, without a hope being left to them of maintaining themselves in that country, or the possibility of debouching into the valley of the Indus.

CHAPTER VII.

1839.

Ghazni—Outram's employment at, and prior to the Siege—Pursuit of Dost Muhammad Khan—Return from Bamian, and Mission from Kabul to Ghilzai Country—Work in the disturbed districts—Return to Kwatta—Siege of Kalát—Journey from Kalát to Sonmiáni with despatches for Bombay.

OUTRAM left Kandahar with the advance column and headquarters on June 27. His journal represents the march to Ghazni to have been upon the whole uneventful: but habit had inured him to road adventures, and he lays comparatively little stress upon transport difficulties, impudent robberies, and ruthless murders, in which last the Ghilzais were the heroes. Of these there was a kind of daily record. He makes the distance traversed 240 miles and a fraction, and, as there were twenty-two marching days and three halts, the average daily progress was within eleven miles. About two-thirds of the way lay near the right bank of the Tarnak river, the source of which was reached on July 14. Here Shah Shuja overtook the column. At the seventh stage out of Kandahar two of Outram's horses were stolen from their pickets by the Ghilzais. One of the two, a chestnut Arab charger, which the owner considered 'without exception the finest in the whole army,' was a very serious loss; and a reward of 2,000 rupees (200*l.*) was offered, through Sir Alexander Burnes, to anyone who could effect its ransom. Twelve miles south of Ghazni, at midnight of July 20, General Willshire's brigade came up with the remainder of the force; and the whole army, arranged in three

columns, moved the next morning over the intermediate spacious plain. No enemy, however, appeared until the British troops were actually within a mile of the fort, when preliminary operations commenced with the discharge of guns and matchlocks from the walls and outskirts, the clearance and occupation of a garden by our infantry, and the assignment of a position to our artillery. Outram himself had the honour of eliciting the first shot from the fort when reconnoitring; being, moreover, exposed to a heavy fire at sixty yards' distance.

As the day advanced firing was continued generally by the enemy; the 35th and 48th regiments of native infantry, occupying the garden, exchanged shots with the garrison of an outwork; and there was promise of extended skirmishing, but Sir John Keane wisely prohibited the further exposure of his men in desultory warfare. Guns and troops were withdrawn out of range; a systematic reconnaissance of the fort and approaches was effected; and the camp was shifted, across the Ghazni river, to a position commanding the Kabul road on the north. On July 22 the commander-in-chief reconnoitred the place in person, and approving Captain Thomson's proposal to blow open the Kabul gate by bags of powder, and follow up the act by a dash at the gateway, gave all the necessary orders, and made all the necessary arrangements for an assault early next morning.

How Ghazni was successfully stormed on July 23 need not here be narrated. The capture of this strong fortress, accomplished within three quarters of an hour from commencement of the assault, is an event which occupies too prominent a place in history, and has already been too well and circumstantially chronicled, to warrant the obtrusion, at this late hour, of any new account.[1] That Outram's name

[1] Perhaps the most recent and circumstantial version is that contained in Durand's *First Afghan War* (Longmans, 1879.)

does not appear in the despatches is one of those unexplained occurrences, which if it were compulsory on the historian or biographer to fathom, we venture to affirm that few histories or biographies would be written at all. Either would the inquirer not arrive at the root of the matter, or, arriving there, he would find weaknesses and littlenesses which, if not unbecoming his office to exhume, would sorely embarrass him to apportion fairly to the respective possessors. In this case, the omission cannot be accounted for as accidental: nor can it be laid at the door of custom or precedent.

On the eve of the capture of Ghazni, Captain Outram performed an exploit which, as it has already been narrated and eulogised by historians of the Afghan war, we will retail as it has reached us in his own words:—

'About noon the hills to the southward of our camp were crowned by masses of horse and foot, displaying several standards; their designs appearing to be directed against the Shah's camp, which lay immediately under their position. Two of his Majesty's guns, with all his cavalry, supported by lancers, and by a regiment of Bengal cavalry, moved out immediately to oppose this demonstration; and the enemy, who had already begun to descend into the plain, being met by the Shah's horse under Captain Nicolson, were, with trivial loss on our side, compelled to re-ascend the heights, leaving behind one of their standards in our possession, and four or five of their number killed in the conflict. Having galloped out to ascertain what was going on, I reached the scene of action just before this occurrence, and finding no European officer on the spot, I prevailed on a body of the Shah's horse to follow me round the hills in the enemy's rear, where I stationed them so as to cut off their retreat. The enemy, being intimidated by this movement, and repulsed

by Captain Nicolson's gallant charge, ascended the heights beyond all reach of our Horse, whom I therefore left in position, returning myself to the front.

'Meeting, at this juncture, a small detachment of the Shah's contingent, consisting of about one hundred and fifty infantry and matchlock-men, under a European officer, I suggested to him the propriety of an immediate attempt to force the enemy from the heights, in the direction where I had just stationed the cavalry. He expressed his readiness to act under my orders and, relinquishing to me the charge of his detachment, which was composed of piquets from different corps hastily assembled, we ascended the hill together. The matchlock men behaved with great gallantry, advancing steadily under a galling fire, and availing themselves of every rock and stone as fast as the enemy were dislodged. They were followed by the sepoys in close order, who occupied every favourable undulation of ground, and were thus prepared to meet any sudden rush that might be made on the part of the enemy. Step by step we thus at last attained the loftiest peak, over the crest of which floated the holy banner of green and white—the largest and most conspicuous in the ranks of the whole host, the first unfurling of which by the Moslem High Priest, who had preached a crusade against the British, had called together a mob of fanatics, who, judging from their reckless personal exposure, must have been deceived into the belief that they were safe under the charm of its sacred influence. Towards this object we made our way, ascending a very precipitous acclivity under a smart fire, from which we were sheltered by the rocks, until on our arriving within fifty paces of the enemy, a fortunate shot brought down the standard-bearer. The whole of our party then rushing up with a general cheer, the banner was seized, whilst the enemy, panic-stricken at this proof of the fallacy of their belief, fled with precipita-

tion to a second hill, whither I deemed it useless to follow them, both because our men were already much exhausted from thirst and fatigue, and because the range, instead of terminating, as I had conjectured, at this point (in which case the fugitives might easily have been driven into the plain), proved to be a succession of steep hills, among which it was not practicable for cavalry to act.

'Having rested some time therefore, we finally retired, bearing off our wounded—nine or ten in number—and leaving the bodies of five of our opponents lying around the spot on which the large standard had been planted. Ten or twelve others, who had fallen in the contest towards that position, were likewise strewed on the face of the hill, making a total loss on the side of the enemy of thirty or forty killed and wounded, in addition to about fifty made prisoners by the cavalry: one of these latter, on being brought into the King's presence, stabbed one of the principal officers of state in the open *durbar*—an offence for which the whole are said to have atoned with their lives. On our side the total loss throughout this affair amounted to about twenty in killed and wounded.'

Nor had Outram been an idle or inactive aide-de-camp, in fulfilling the wonted requirements of his office in the field. On the day of arrival before Ghazni, he more than once conveyed his chief's orders to the troops engaged with, or threatened by the enemy, after fire had been opened on both sides. He himself has admitted that, during the actual assault, the personal staff of the commander-in-chief had very little employment; but he was twice despatched, in that exciting interval, to ascertain the progress of operations, and was the first to announce to His Excellency the entrance of the troops into the town by the Kabul gate. He, moreover, under Sir John Keane's instructions, placed guns at a

point to command the western face of the fortress, with the view to check the escape of the garrison; and afterwards rode round the eastern walls to make arrangements to intercept the fugitives in that direction. However, as before stated, his name did not appear in the despatches reporting the fall of Ghazni, and he missed his well-earned honours or promotion.

On July 30 the army of the Indus resumed its march towards Kabul, and halted at Haidar Khel[1] on August 3. Here it was joined by Shah Shuja ul Mulk, who, with the Bombay infantry, had been left to follow from Kandahar. Here also Outram received his orders for undertaking a new and important duty—the capture, if possible, of the Amir Dost Muhammad Khan. This remarkable man, against whom we were now unfortunately arrayed in open hostility, was clearly unwilling to risk a general engagement with the invading troops; and the loss of Ghazni had not tended to lower his estimate of our power. Information had just been received that he had fled towards Bamian, a valley on the high road to Turkistan, and about a hundred miles to the north-west of Kabul; and it was determined to send two thousand of the Shah's Afghans in pursuit of him. One Hajji Khan, Kakar, otherwise the 'Nasiru-d-daulah,' or Defender of the State, a person of low origin, who had raised himself from the condition of a seller of melons to that of a State minister, and who had passed from the service of Dost Muhammad Khan to that of the Kandahar chiefs, and had now transferred his allegiance to Shah Shuja, was placed at the head of this body. The detachment was to be further strengthened by one hundred of our own cavalry, regular and irregular, and the following officers, volunteers:—Captain Wheeler, Bengal cavalry, Captain Backhouse, Bengal artillery,

[1] 'Hyderzye' in the 'Rough Notes'; but 'Haidar Khel' seems to be the place intended; it is placed by MacGregor, quoting Hough, Campbell, and Bellew, at thirty-three miles from Ghazni and fifty-four from Kabul.

and Captain Troup, Shah's contingent, Majors of brigade; Captain Christie, commanding regiment of Shah's cavalry; Captain Laurence, Bengal cavalry; Lieutenant Ryves, Adjutant 4th local horse; Captain Keith Erskine, Poona auxiliary horse; Lieutenant Broadfoot, Shah's Gurkha battalion; Lieutenant Hogg, Bombay staff; and Doctor Worral, local horse. Outram was to exercise command of the whole.

It was a rough bit of work—as the tale of recent experience in Afghanistan will suggest to the reader—and nobly done, though the main object of the expedition failed. Hajji Khan was guide and adviser as well as commandant of the Shah's detachment, and this Afghan played the double game of which his countrymen are so fond, and which they think so suited to their purpose in dealing with Englishmen. On the day of setting out, the two thousand horsemen were awaited till dark. Not half the number came; and of those who did come, not half were considered effective. The greater part were a mere rabble, mounted upon *yâbûs* and starved ponies. At the outset there was an ominous division of counsels. To the mind of Outram the direction to be taken was obvious: a short and rapidly-made cut across the hills offered the sole chance of intercepting the fugitive. Hajji Khan proposed a start along the high road[1] and, though compelled to abandon his argument, he practically gained his end by the consumption of time and patience. At Goda, after the first night's march of 32 miles, over ranges of hills and amid tortuous river-channels, not more than one hundred Afghans came up with the British officers to the encamping ground: and when, after another day and night of similar or more hazardous

[1] His proposal was to proceed along the high road between Ghazni and Kabul up to Maidan, whence they would turn westward to Bamian, by the high road between Kabul and Bamian. Outram preferred reaching the latter road at a point about three marches beyond Maidan.

riding, the latter had contrived, by clearing a lofty and precipitous pass of the Paghman mountains, to reach the small village of Kádir-i-Safid, barely fifty of their worthless auxiliaries were present. The information received at this place that the Dost was at Yourt, only one march beyond, was a stronger inducement to Outram than the almost utter want of supplies, to push on at all hazards. But Hajji Khan urged a halt on the plea that the force at their disposal was insufficient to cope with the enemy. Outram insisted on moving, and managed in the course of the afternoon to get together some 750 Afghans of sorts whom he induced to accompany his own particular party. Through accident or design, the guides went astray, and in the darkness of the night the way was lost 'amid interminable ravines, where no trace of a footpath existed;' so that Yourt was not reached until the next morning, when Dost Muhammad was reported to be at Kharzár, sixteen miles distant, on the high road leading from Kabul to Bamian. No inducement could get the Afghans to advance another stage until the morning of the following day, August 7; and in the interim, their leader attempted, by every available means, and including even threats, to dissuade Outram from proceeding any further, strongly representing the scarcity of provisions for his men, and the numerical superiority of those whom he sought to encounter. He was unable, however, to carry his point: for he pleaded to one who went onward in spite of every obstacle. When the pursuers arrived at Kharzár, they ascertained that the Amir had gone to Kalu, whither, leaving behind their Afghan adviser, they pressed on the same afternoon, over the Hajji Guk (or Khak), a pass 12,000 feet above the ocean, whence they saw the snow 1,500 feet below them. At Kalu they were again doomed to disappointment. Dost Muhammad had left some hours previously, and it was supposed that he had already surmounted the Kalu Pass, the

highest of the Hindu Kush. Here Outram and his comrades were compelled to remain the night encamped at the foot of Kûh-i-Bábá, 'The Father Mountain,' monarch of that mighty range, and 22,000 feet high: they had been nine hours in the saddle, and horses and men were knocked up. The next day they were overtaken by Captains Taylor and Trevor, with 30 troopers and about 300 Afghans, which reinforcement, though it seems to have inspired Hajji Khan with courage to rejoin his head-quarters, did not a whit diminish his ardour in endeavouring to persuade the British commandant to delay the pursuit. He tried by entreaty, menace, and withholding guides, to keep back this dauntless soldier even when mounting his horse, and in the act of departure: but in vain; before nightfall Outram had crossed the steep Shutargardan (camel neck), a pass some thousands of feet higher than the Hajji Gok, and after dark he halted 'at a deserted village at the foot of the Ghát . . . . on the banks of a stream which flows into the Oxus.' Briefly, after six days' hard riding and roughing he reached Bamian to miss again the object of his search, and to certify that, with such a guide and in such a country, it would be madness to continue the chase. On August 11, the day before leaving Bamian, he addressed a letter to the envoy, from which the following passages are extracted:—

'On my arrival at this place on the 9th instant, I had the honour to address you with information that the Ameer Dost Mahommed Khan had escaped beyond the frontier; expressing at the same time my intention to await the result of a letter that had been addressed to his adherents by Nusseer-ood-Dowlah, myself, and others, or the receipt of further orders from yourself.

'The accompanying extracts from my journal will explain to you the circumstances under which I have been compelled

to resolve on returning from Bamian to-morrow, at mid-day, unless supplies, reinforcements, or orders to the contrary shall be received by that time; when, having completed three days at this place, a sufficient period will have elapsed to admit of an answer arriving from the adherents of Dost Mahommed Khan, to the letter addressed to them on the 8th instant, if it ever was really despatched by Hadji Khan Kakur, which I have now reason to doubt.

'It will be seen . . that the fugitive might have been overtaken at Hurzar on the morning of the 6th instant, had not our guides, who were under charge of Nusseer-ood-Dowlah's people, deserted us during the night; that the Khan then insisted on delaying at Yourt, only half-way to Hurzar, instead of pushing on as urged by me to do; and that, although he promised to make up for the delay in the afternoon, he ultimately refused to go on, thus retarding our advance till next morning, the 7th instant, when we expected to overtake Dost Mahommed Khan at Kulloo—to which place, in that hope, I was compelled to proceed with the British detachment alone, unsupported by Nusseer-ood-Dowlah or any of the Afghan troops, who remained behind at Hurzar notwithstanding my personal solicitations to that chief.

'It will be further seen that he next day again endeavoured to prevent our following the fugitive; that he deceived me by repeated false assurances of Dost Mahommed Khan's escape being cut off; and, finally, that he formally announced to me his inability to face Dost Mahommed Khan with his own Afghans, not a man of whom, he declared, would fight against the Ameer; even hinting his belief that they were more likely to turn against ourselves.'

So they retraced their steps to the commander-in-chief's camp, now stationed, not where they had quitted it, but at

Kabul, before the walls of which town Shah Shuja had appeared with the British army on August 6. But the letter to the envoy did not contain the statement of what was done, or contemplated to be done, on the eve of entering Bamian, where the Dost was supposed to be with 200 staunch adherents. We must refer to the diary for particulars of the 'council of war' held on this occasion :—

'It was resolved that on the Ameer turning to oppose us, of which, on our overtaking him to-morrow, as we expect to do, there can be no doubt, the thirteen British officers who are present with this force, shall charge in the centre of the little band, every one directing his individual efforts against the person of Dost Muhammad Khan, whose fall must thus be rendered next to certain. It being evident that all the Afghans on both sides will turn against us, unless we are immediately successful, this plan of attack appears to afford the only chance of escape to those who may survive; and it is an object of paramount importance to effect the destruction of the Ameer, rather than to permit his escape. Although crowded as usual into one small rowtie (marquee), with little to eat, nothing whatever to drink, and no bed on which to lie, saving our sheep-skin cloaks, our little party, always cheerful and merry, has never been more happy than on this night, under the exciting expectation of so glorious a struggle in the morning. All prospect of danger on such occasions as these is met by the soldier with the gratifying conviction that should he fall, he will have earned an enviable place in the recollection of those loved, though distant, friends, in whose memory he most desires to live.'

The sober spirit in which the return of the gallant band from Bamian was effected, may have offered a marked contrast to the buoyant hopefulness which had characterised its original outset: but, though disappointed and, it may be,

irritated at the deceit practised upon them, its members had no cause to be crestfallen. It was not alone with rocks and ravines, or want of food, shelter, and forage that they had to contend: but with traitors and enemies in the guise of friends. Let anyone acquainted with Afghanistan and other mountainous and roadless tracts on a like scale, study the detailed map of the country between Haidar Khel and Bamian; and, after taking account of the physical difficulties there presented, accept as a truth that these were as nothing compared to the obstacles raised up, and risks occasioned within the same limits, by man's duplicity; and he will have some idea of the whole situation.

Outram arrived at Kabul on August 17.[1] Four days later, he was placed at the temporary disposal of the British envoy, 'for the purpose of conducting an expedition into certain disturbed districts lying between Kabul and Kandahar, in order to tranquillise the disaffected Ghilzai tribes, none of whom had yet submitted to the king.' His duties were subsequently defined under four heads: the arrest of Mihtar Musa Khan, Abdu-r-Rahman Khan, Gul Muhammad Khan, and the 'Mámá,' four refractory Ghilzai chiefs; the establishment in power of three new Ghilzai governors; the punishment of the inhabitants of a certain village of Maruf, who had wantonly destroyed a caravan *en route* to India from Kandahar; and the reduction of the forts of Hajji Khan, the Nasiru-d-daulah, should his adherents decline to surrender them. The last-named nobleman had been arrested by the king's order, for treason and conniving at Dost Muhammad's escape—a charge eventually brought home to him on evidence.

This little expedition would take its leader far on the way to his own Presidency, and his political functions would

[1] He makes the distance from Bamian only 97 miles; but General Kaye reckons it at 112.

cease on its accomplishment. But there was a prospect of active employment for him in the field, previous to return to India: and he would be thrown into contact with authorities likely to avail themselves of his services in a purely military capacity. It was suggested that he should visit Ghazni, and thence proceed by the road branching off near Mukur, east of Kandahar, to Kwatta. Major-General Willshire, who would probably return to India by the same route, was to be instructed to assist him with men, if requisite, within certain limitations. Meanwhile the force to be instantly placed at his disposal, was composed of the Ghurka infantry regiment, with a proportion of cavalry and artillery from Shah Shuja's contingent; he was promised also any detail that could be spared from the Camel Battery. Further south, at Kalát-i-Ghilzai, the Shah's infantry regiment from Kandahar, with a few cavalry, and Captain Anderson's troop of horse artillery, were to await his orders. His departure was hastened by a supplementary commission to punish the murderers of Colonel Herring, an officer of the 37th Bengal native infantry, who had been waylaid by a body of armed men near Haidar Khel, and cut to pieces before assistance could be rendered.

Hitherto, history has rendered but scant justice to the manner in which this not unimportant mission was fulfilled. Its general objects were tolerably clear; but the *modus operandi* was rightly left to the leader's own discretion, on which Mr. MacNaghten had every reliance. Independently of political responsibility, there was work to be done which would test his qualifications for military command, and in this respect his instructions were a *carte blanche*. The envoy had quickly taken measure of his man, and selected him from appreciation of his worth and honour. Shah Shuja received his new commissioner in open *darbár*, on September 6, introducing him to the Afghan chiefs who were to accompany

him—and whom he cautioned as to their future behaviour—and afterwards conversing with him in his private apartment. The following day Outram made his first march out, agreeably to notice; but on that occasion the whole escort was comprised in 300 of the Shah's cavalry, and 100 of Skinner's horse; and his Afghans did not really join him in force until a full week afterwards.

The semi-official, as well as official correspondence of the day explains how disturbed were men's minds at the capital. The Dost was stirring up mischief in Khulm, and it was considered imperative to expel him from that locality. Nor was this all to cause uneasiness on the part of those dressed in the brief authority of the Bala Hissar. 'I do not remember any period of my life,' writes Mr. MacNaghten unreservedly to Captain Outram, 'at which I was more bothered and oppressed in my business than the present. Both his Majesty and myself have had the utmost difficulty in driving these heavy Afghans out to join you.'

Our business is, however, not with Kabul. The city has been reached, but we have little to do with it in these pages. We must also take leave of the commander-in-chief's camp, about to be shifted from Kabul to Peshâwar and India. It is the story of Sir John Keane's ex-aide-de-camp we have to relate, and he is moving towards Sind again, and the regions of the Lower Indus.

The first serious opposition which the detachment experienced in the Ghilzai country was on September 22. It had then been recently strengthened by a wing of the 16th Bengal native infantry, under Major MacLaren, from Ghazni. Before this, however, Mir Alam Khan, one of the new governors accompanying it, had secured six of the gang concerned in Colonel Herring's murder, and Bakhshi Khan, an eminent actor in the same tragedy, had fallen into the hands of Outram's native assistants; the difficult Kharwâr

Pass had been surmounted; the Kharwár district crossed; and the Zurmal[1] valley scoured; forts and property had been captured and made over to responsible persons on the Shah's behalf; and nine prisoners had been sent in to the care of the Ghazni garrison. Outram thus narrates the affair in his diary:—

'Made a night march, in order to surprise the Kanjak banditti, whose haunt I had ascertained to be in the Indran mountains, eighteen miles to the eastward. Arrived as the day broke at a deep dell occupied by the gang, and while the infantry advanced from the front, I despatched the horse in two bodies to cut off retreat from flanks and rear. The ground being very broken and difficult, however, most of the enemy had found time to ascend a precipitous hill, along the ridge of which they must have escaped, had I not fortunately been mounted on an exceedingly active horse, and thus been enabled to gallop ahead and deter them from advancing until the cavalry came up. Finding themselves completely surrounded, they defended themselves most stoutly, and maintained their position until their ammunition was nearly all expended, when on a general rush being made from every quarter at once, they were induced to throw down their arms, after sixteen of the more desperate of their body had been killed, and several others wounded. Even the women assisted in the fray, by handing ammunition to their husbands, and throwing stones at our troops. The loss on our side amounts to three sepoys and one horse killed, and two lieutenants, one *rissaldar*, one *dufadar*, and several men and horses wounded. In the evening we returned with 112 prisoners, comprising some women and children who, with the men killed in the attack, form the whole of the Kanjak

[1] A region reported as too turbulent to be entered by any Afghan king without a large army at his back.

188-Page

Plate 1

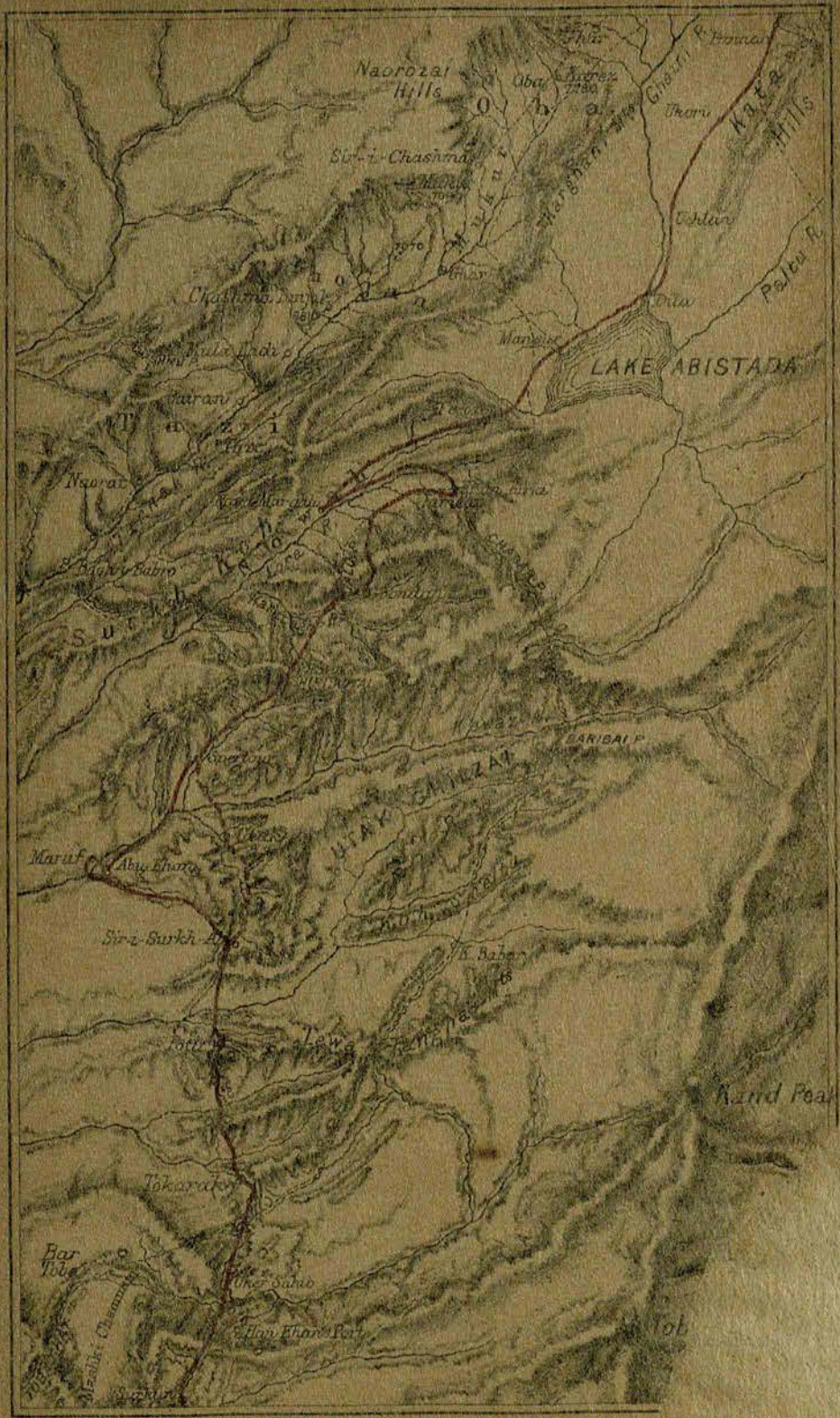
gang. Not a soul contrived to escape, and the whole of their arms and property, together with 112 camels, have fallen into our hands—nearly all the latter bearing the Company's mark, showing that they were stolen from the British army during its advance.'

On September 23, he selected forty-six of the most desperate of the prisoners for transmission to Kabul, and continued his journey to the southward. On the 28th, at Mushkhail, Mihtar Musa Khan, one of the chiefs he was specially commissioned to arrest, and 'leader of the fanatic army' which had 'threatened the British camp the day before the fall of Ghazni, came in and surrendered.' On October 3, at Ushlan, he was joined by the Púna auxiliary horse under Captain Keith Erskine, from General Willshire's camp, then only three miles to the westward; and on the next night, at Mansur, he came up with three nine-pounder guns sent for his use from Ghazni. Thus reinforced, he pushed on, marching forty-two miles in twenty-four hours, to Kalá-i-Murgha, the fort of Abdu-r-Rahman Khan, the principal Ghilzai chief, whose father, in the days of Shah Zamán, had besieged Kabul with 50,000 men, and who had himself kept our army so much on the alert during the march from Kandahar to Ghazni. Outram succeeded in surprising him in his castle, a well-constructed defence with a 'high citadel and wet ditch.' But a wish to rest his troops, and follow up the capture of the place with a dash at the two remaining chiefs in his list (to be brought within reach by a forced march), induced him to defer the attack till next day—a delay which proved fatal. In spite of 500 cava[illegible] surrounding the fort, and two companies of native infa[illegible] placed under cover at less than 200 yards from the ga[illegible] garrison, which had been purposely reduced to some select horsemen, sallied forth during the night and, s[illegible]

rode sharply past the pickets, escaping to a man,[1]—owing to neglect of orders by one of the officers on the watch. After destroying the stronghold, and making the best arrangements in his power for eventual seizure of the fugitives, Outram joined General Willshire's camp between Ghazni and the country of the Utak Ghilzais, east of Kandahar. For this ride of twenty miles he was escorted by only two Ghilzais, a proof of the singularly wholesome effect of his recent operations. He had not, however, marched with his Bombay comrades for many days, before a second brush occurred with the Khans opposed to the Shah. Some of the more notorious happened to be in his immediate vicinity. An expedition against the Barakzai tribes, who had plundered and ill-treated the India-bound caravan mentioned in his instructions, was strictly within his tether—and the presence of a British column, and the locality they had reached, offered an excellent opportunity to organise one. Accordingly, a detachment, comprising cavalry, guns, sappers, and native infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Stalker, moved out in the direction of the villages of Maruf; and the political officer thus describes his own share of the work then accomplished:—

'I galloped on with the cavalry and surrounded them before a soul had time to escape. Abu Khan and Jabar Khan, the chiefs of the tribe, together with all their followers, were secured; and they informed against others concerned, whom I also apprehended by proceeding immediately to their villages with a few horsemen. Having placed the prisoners in charge of the infantry, I crossed the valley to the [illegible] of Maruf, which, in consequence of the approach of the [illegible]bay column, had been evacuated some days before. To

[1] [illegible]ram states, in his 'Rough Notes,' that three of the wives of Abdu-r-[illegible] and his sister, who was one of the wives of Dost Muhammad Khan, [illegible] the fort with the rest, protected by the darkness, which rendered [illegible] avail.


Naorozai Hills
Shi-i-Chashma
Chashma Sanjit
Kala Kadir
Naorak
Kaitaza Hills
Ghazni R.
Tharu
Oshtar
Pelta R.
Dila
Manjak
LAKE ABISTADA
Kuz Maidan
Tarika
Chuchar
Kuchi Kabiro
Sabiro
Kuchi
Sarobi
Gardez
Zurmat
Zaribai P.
Jaji Maidan
Jaji
Maruf
Abu Khan
Shiz-Surkh
S. Sabari
Kand Pass
Tokarak
Har Tobi
Tobi Sabio
Hun Khan Pass
Zurmat
Tob
ENGLISH MILES

my astonishment, it proved to be the strongest fortress that we had yet seen in the country, being constituted with *double* gates, a ditch, fausse-braye, and towers of solid masonry, which might have held out successfully against all the *matériel* with which the Bombay division is provided.'

In connection with this concluding passage of Outram's brief but brilliant career in Afghanistan, the following extracts, written on September 23 from the heart of the Ghilzai country, are full of interest and have a present significance. The first was addressed to Mr. MacNaghten :—

. . . . 'Having placed Shah Shooja on his throne, we have done our duty by *him*; but we thus have imposed a further and *sacred duty* on *ourselves*, that of seeing that the government we have so mainly contributed to erect is just and beneficial to the *people*; and we know that oppression and extortion must be the inevitable and immediate consequence of letting loose the Shah's greedy courtiers upon his provinces, so prolific a field for bullying and peculation, especially while yet *unassessed* . . . . for even Dost Mahomed's exactions cannot be taken as a fair assessment—latterly, it would appear, having only been limited by the extent of his power to extort; while those of his immediate predecessors may, on the contrary, perhaps, have been too light, owing to their feeble sway.

'We should best preserve the people from over-exactions, and the Shah from imposition—at the same time performing our duty to both parties and to ourselves, which in justice, honour, and policy, we are surely bound to exert ourselves the utmost to do—by directly supervising and narrowly scrutinising the first settlement of the Shah's revenues, which should render our interference, as it is an obligati

also a benefit to his people, instead of the contrary—a result which the new government might soon bring about if not so controlled, owing to the insatiable demands of those courtiers who fancy they cannot be too highly rewarded for their share in the Shah's restoration (the curse of every *restoration*), or, that they are essential to his stability . . . . he would be too apt to make over to them the management of districts, without previously ascertaining their real value, or instituting any measures whereby to protect the people from the extortions of such persons, whose only object would be to *extort the utmost*, without care for the interests either of king or people.

'By thus acting the part of mediator between the people and the new government, we should soon convince the former of our superior justice and generosity to anything they had hitherto been accustomed to; for *we*, with our independent incomes, can afford to be just and generous, even were we not so, as by nature and education we ought to be, but which the *native* officials cannot be, they having everything to derive *from those they are placed over*. *So far*, our interference would tend to render us popular in this country, instead of the very contrary, which we shall too soon become by continuing only to appear, as at present, in the light alone of *supporters* to the Shah; and as our future connection with the Afghans must now, of necessity, become most intimate, we cannot too soon secure it on a beneficial footing to all classes—a result, the direct reverse of which the system of non-interference, so far from promoting, must, on the contrary, inevitably insure.'

The second was to Captain MacGregor, secretary to the
oy :—

'ear the Envoy may think me intrusive in thus
g my suggestions, but I think not, for he must

appreciate my motives—being sent here to do my best for the benefit of all parties—even should he not agree in opinion as to the propriety, or policy, of assuming to ourselves so intimate an interference on behalf of these people. Time will show whether I am right; and I do not hesitate to prognosticate that these districts, if left to the direct and uncontrolled management of the Shah's native agents, will never prosper, and will ever prove a *hot-bed of sedition*: whereas, if properly managed, as only they would be *through our intervention*, they may become the most prosperous and contented in the Shah's dominions.

'I shall ever look back to my passing visit to this quarter with much satisfaction, if I can think I have been in the slightest degree the cause of so great a blessing to these poor people as an *impartial*, but *energetic*, government, and fair *taxation*, without which these districts will cost the king more than he derives from them, and will ever prove a thorn in his side. In saying this, I now take leave for ever of Loghur, Kurwar, Gurdaez, Zoormut, and Kuttywass'—five of the Ghilzai districts, to establish the Shah's authority over which he had been deputed.

Marching with, and occasionally detached from the returning force, Outram continued in discharge of the duty with which Mr. MacNaghten had entrusted him up to the time of his arrival in Kwatta. Especially had he to give his attention to the strongholds of his old associate Hajji Khan, Kákar, which lay within moderate distance of the main track he was following. In some cases, the occupants were openly hostile to the British troops, and to meet these a more thorough procedure than dismantling was expedient; but the insignificance of the building for defensive purposes might save it from destruction. One fort he completely demolished, 'blowing up every bastion, gateway, and out-

work, to the apparent satisfaction of the inhabitants of the valley below it, on whom the garrison had exercised a system of aggression made all the more formidable from the possession of the higher stream which supplied water to their villages. On October 31 he marched with the column to Kwatta; and here, as already shown, his political functions would have no field for exercise: they ceased, in fact, on his entering the Shál valley. He would have to find new employment, or take leave of his friends in camp.

But James Outram was not one to be spared from the scene of emergencies, when they arose within his sphere of work. Circumstances had made it more or less imperative, on the part of our high politicals, to call Mihrab Khan of Kalát to account for an obstructiveness which had become dangerous to the interests they sought to protect. It was therefore decided that General Willshire should march against him in his head-quarters. Kalát is situated about a hundred miles south and a little west of Kwatta; and thither the attacking force moved leisurely on November 4, through the large and well watered valley of Mastung. A week from that date they were at a distance of two easy marches from their goal. Outram had accompanied as an amateur up to this point. He was now nominated to attend the general in the capacity of aide-de-camp during the expected action, and to serve with the engineers during the siege. Mihrab Khan had threatened to bring out his whole force to expel or annihilate the Farangi intruders, but, wisely perhaps if unfortunately, contented himself with preparing for defence within walls.

In dealing with facts, we are not called upon to discuss the political merits of the quarrel with Kalát, or criticise the treatment of Mihrab Khan by the Indian Government. Our business is at present with the siege. General Willshire's force consisted of H.M.'s 2nd and 17th regiments of foot, and

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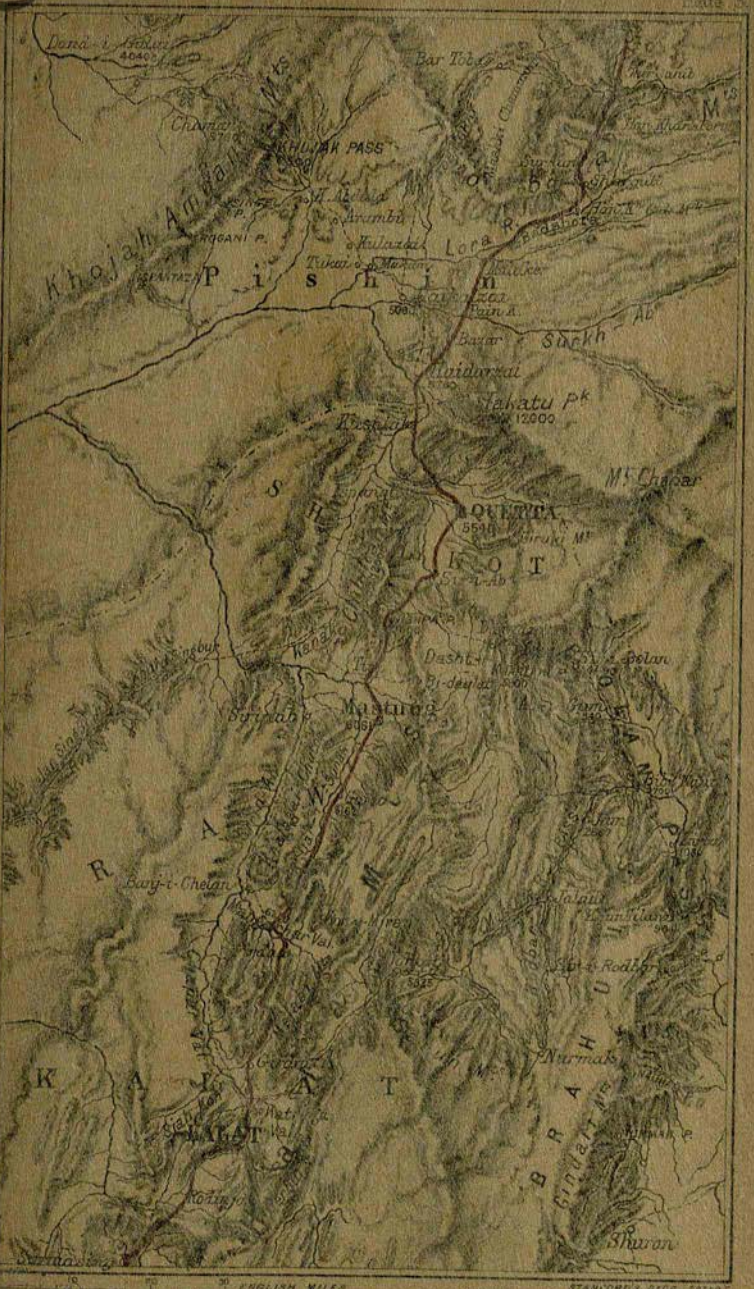


the 31st Bengal native infantry: the three together not numbering one thousand rank and file; two guns of the Bombay horse artillery, and four of the Shah's; some sappers and miners, and 150 irregular horse; 'the whole in the highest possible order.' The remainder of the Bombay column had continued their homeward route by the Bolan Pass. On November 12, the general advanced fifteen miles to the station immediately before the capital; and Outram was sent out with Lieutenant John Ramsay, assistant quarter-master-general, and an escort of local horse, to reconnoitre. If the reconnaissance did not elicit the fighting capacities of our enemies, it cannot be said to have done better for our allies. A few mounted scouts were observed to gallop away the moment the party appeared in sight: while, on the other hand, attack was threatened by some fifty horsemen who descended into the plain from an eminence 'off the road. Beating retreat, however, when they found a resolute front opposed to them, these only halted when their adversaries halted; advancing again when the others retired, and now and then relieving the monotony of the movement by an ineffectual shot. 'This system,' wrote Outram, 'was continued until we had entered a small pass leading through the hills by which Khelat is surrounded, when the enemy once more formed, and suffered us to advance within fifty yards of them, as if here determined to oppose our further progress. They then fired a volley, wheeled, and galloped off—fortunately for us, without waiting to see the result of their bravado, which had sent every man of our escort, saving the *jemadar*, to the right-about! Had our opponents followed up their advantage, Lieutenant Ramsay and myself would have been left to stand our ground as we best might; but it so turned out that the enemy continued their flight to Khelat, upon perceiving which our party recovered courage, and followed them a short distance.'

On the following morning the British troops arrived before Kalát; the town and fortress coming in view so soon as they had surmounted a small range of hills, after a seven miles' march, varied with desultory skirmishing. To Outram, 'it was truly an imposing sight. Some small hills in front were crowned with masses of soldiers, and the towering citadel which frowned above them in their rear, was completely clustered over with human beings—ladies of the harem chiefly—who had assembled to witness the discomfiture of the Feringees, and the prowess of their lords, all of whom, with the Khan at their head, had previously marched out to the heights, where they awaited us in battle array!' We use freely his own words to describe the sequel of that stirring day:—

'No sooner had the head of the British column showed itself, than the enemy's guns, of which there were five in position on the heights, opened upon it; but being ill directed, they were unattended with effect. In order to assemble every efficient man of his small army, General Willshire here halted the troops until the baggage had closed up, assigning the charge of it, and of the sick, to the local horse. It was very evident that the enemy, who greatly outstripped us in point of numbers, were fully bent upon mischief; and our total strength amounting to less than one thousand bayonets, we had nothing to spare in the contest that awaited us. During this delay two companies were sent to clear some gardens on our left; and a body of horse threatening us from that direction, a few shrapnel shells were thrown amongst them, which caused them to withdraw to the fort. The cool and determined demeanour of our veteran general inspired everyone present with confidence of success; nor shall I ever forget the obvious feeling of delight with which his deep-toned word of command, 'Loosen cartridges!' was

received by the soldiers—evincing as it did that an immediate attack was intended, and that serious opposition might be expected.'

According to the plan of assault communicated, four companies of each regiment, in three columns of attack, were to carry the redoubts on the heights under cover of the artillery; two companies were to advance through gardens on the left; and the remaining ten companies would form the reserve. All being in readiness, the columns aforesaid 'moved steadily forward, preceded by the artillery, which unlimbered at the foot of the hills, and opened a cannonade of shells and shrapnel with such admirable precision, that the masses of the enemy, crowning the heights, were compelled to abandon their position long before the infantry had gained the summit. Observing the enemy endeavouring to draw off their guns, the general despatched me with orders to the column of the Queen's Royals, which was the nearest to the gate, to pursue the fugitives, and, if possible, to enter the fort with them—but at any rate to prevent their taking in the ordnance. I overtook the head of the column . . . . and galloped on to the redoubt at the very moment that the enemy were vacating it; when perceiving them to be engaged in an attempt to carry off one of the pieces of artillery, I called on Captain Raitt of the Queen's Royals to push down quickly with his grenadiers, and if unable to enter the gate with the enemy, at all events to capture the gun. I accompanied this party, which rushed down the hill, but arrived too late to enter the fort with the enemy, who, however, abandoned the gun outside, and hastily closed the gate after them.

'Leaving the grenadiers to take post under cover of a ruined building . . . within sixty yards of the gate, so as to be in readiness to enter by it, in case the general might

decide upon following up this advantage by blowing open the gate before the garrison should find time to block it up, as they doubtless would do were the attack to be delayed, I rode back to report progress. The whole of our troops were already on the heights, and the guns were also being dragged up. Four of the latter were directed to play upon the towers commanding the gateway . . . whilst the other two were ordered down . . . for the purpose of battering the gate itself. The general at the same time despatched me . . . with instructions to bring up the light companies under Major Pennycuick to . . . where a mud wall, about four feet in height, afforded shelter within thirty yards of the wall on the opposite side of the gate to that near which the grenadiers of the Queen's Royals were posted. Having brought them at double quick time across the plain to within two hundred yards of the walls, and then directed them to scatter and rush under cover, I returned to the general,' warning the grenadiers on the way, 'that the gate would be immediately blown open, when they were to rush in simultaneously with the light companies from the opposite side.'

Most of the day's casualties occurred whilst Outram was executing the two duties last named. On both occasions he was the only mounted officer present; but although both the nature of his occupation, and the singularity of his uniform, differing as it did from all others, must have attracted a considerable share of the enemy's observation, he escaped with his usual good fortune. To resume:—

'The two guns now opened upon the gate, and being admirably directed (by Lieutenant Henry Creed, of the Bombay artillery) a few rounds were sufficient to throw down one half of it. The general's signals for the advance of the storming parties not being immediately observed, I galloped down, and accompanied the grenadiers to the gate, after

seeing them in secure occupation of which, I returned to the general, whom I met close to the fort, bringing up the main body of the troops. He immediately despatched me with Captain Darley's Company of H.M.'s 17th foot, with instructions to take the 31st regiment Bengal native infantry along with me, and with these to storm the heights and secure the gate on the opposite side of the fort. After passing quickly round the western face, from which we were exposed to a considerable fire, I placed the company of the 17th under cover of a spur of the hill, and thence proceeded back to seek for the 31st regiment, which I found scouring the suburbs. Having united the two detachments, we stormed the heights . . . where we experienced some trifling opposition from matchlockmen occupying the rocks above; these being soon dispersed we rushed down to the gate . . . driving in a party of the enemy with such precipitation that they had not time to secure the gate, possession of which was thus obtained, and the escape of the garrison entirely cut off.

'We were here joined by a party under Major Deshon, which had been sent round by the eastern face of the fort, when I directed the officers to leave a detachment in charge of the gate, and with the remaining portion to make their way up to the citadel, which still maintained a fire upon our troops, whilst I accompanied Lieutenant Creed for the purpose of selecting a position from whence to bombard it with the Shah's guns. Placed the guns in position . . and opened a fire on the citadel, which was continued with destructive effect, until our soldiers had obtained possession. Rejoining the general in the meantime to report progress, I found him at the gate first carried, giving orders for attaching bags of gunpowder to the gates of the citadel, which had hitherto successfully resisted all attempts to enter it from this side. Reported that the party from the opposite quarter had already got well up and, with the aid of Lieutenant

Creed's guns, would shortly surmount every obstacle. Hereupon troops were again sent up to co-operate, and a few minutes more sufficed to display the British standards waving over the highest of the towers of Kalát. All hostilities immediately ceased, and the soldiers displayed much greater forbearance than they usually do on such occasions. Quarter was never refused by them, when craved by cries of 'Amán,' 'Amán,' and before nightfall nearly 2,000 prisoners had been removed from the fort unharmed.

'About four hundred of the garrison are supposed to have fallen in this affair, and amongst them are . . Mehrab Khan, Wullee Mahommed Khan, and other principal Beloche chieftains—every person of note having been either slain or captured. Some anxiety was expressed by the general on the occasion of my rejoining him at the first gate, in consequence of the rumoured escape of Mehrab Khan; but I assured him that as the fighting portions of the garrison had been driven back whilst in the act of attempting to decamp by the opposite gate, I entertained no doubt that the Khan was still within the fort, since he could not, in honour, have previously deserted his followers. This afterwards proved to be the case. Foiled on that occasion in his attempt to escape, the chief had returned to the citadel with Wullee Mahommed Khan, of Wudd, and others of his most trusty followers, where they had all died sword in hand; the Khan himself being slain by a shot through the neck, from whose hand it is not known. Considering the small number of our troops, not one half of whom were actually engaged, the loss on our side is severe. Thirty-two were killed, and one hundred and seven wounded; amongst the former is Lieutenant Gravatt of the Queen's Royals, and there are nine officers amongst the latter.'

The next day, working parties were employed in remov-

ing and burying the dead, as well as in collecting prize property.

'Scattered as the dead bodies are over every part of the town, among houses, the numerous dark chambers of which are not easily explored, it has not yet been practicable to ascertain the number of the slain. The amount of booty is supposed to be very considerable, but we unfortunately do not possess the means of carrying it away, nor is there any market here in which to dispose of it. The arms especially are of very superior manufacture, and the sword of the fallen chief Mehrab Khan in particular, which is of the most costly workmanship, is estimated to be of great value. The members of our little army have with one accord resolved upon presenting this enviable trophy to their gallant leader, General Willshire, in token of their admiration of his heroic bearing yesterday.'

In the despatch, under date November 14, 1839, reporting to Lord Auckland the fall of Kalát, Captain Outram's good service, in conducting two companies of infantry to take up a material position during the siege, is especially noticed: and the following paragraph is more precise still:—'From my aides-de-camp, Captain Robinson, and Lieutenant Halkett, as well as Captain Outram, who volunteered his services on my personal staff, I received the utmost assistance, and to the latter officer I feel greatly indebted for the zeal and ability with which he has performed various duties that I have required of him upon other occasions as well as the present.' Then was added:—'I have deputed Captain Outram to take a duplicate of the despatch to the Honourable the Governor of Bombay by the direct route from hence to Sonmiáni Bandar, the practicability or otherwise of which for the passage of troops I consider it an object of importance to ascertain.'

The fulfilment of the hazardous duty here indicated, one which had been conceived by Outram himself, supplies an interesting chapter of romance in a singularly active career. There are two roads from Kalát to Sonmiáni, the more easterly of which, by Wadd, separating from the other at Sohrab, and re-uniting at Baila, had been reported on by Colonel Pottinger, who traversed it in the early part of 1810, moving upwards from the sea-coast. On that occasion both Pottinger and Christie had assumed the character of agents to an influential native contractor for supplying horses to the Governments of Madras and Bombay; but, although the actual *status* of the English officers was a puzzle to most inquirers, and their European origin was patent to many, the native dress which they wore kept them from that suspicious and continuous scrutiny with which the Farangi traveller is distressed in his wanderings through the less visited regions of the East. They were three full weeks in getting from Sonmiáni to the capital of Mahmúd Khan, then chief of Kalát: that is to say, they performed the journey in fifteen marches, and halted seven days, reckoning the distance at a fraction above 345 miles.

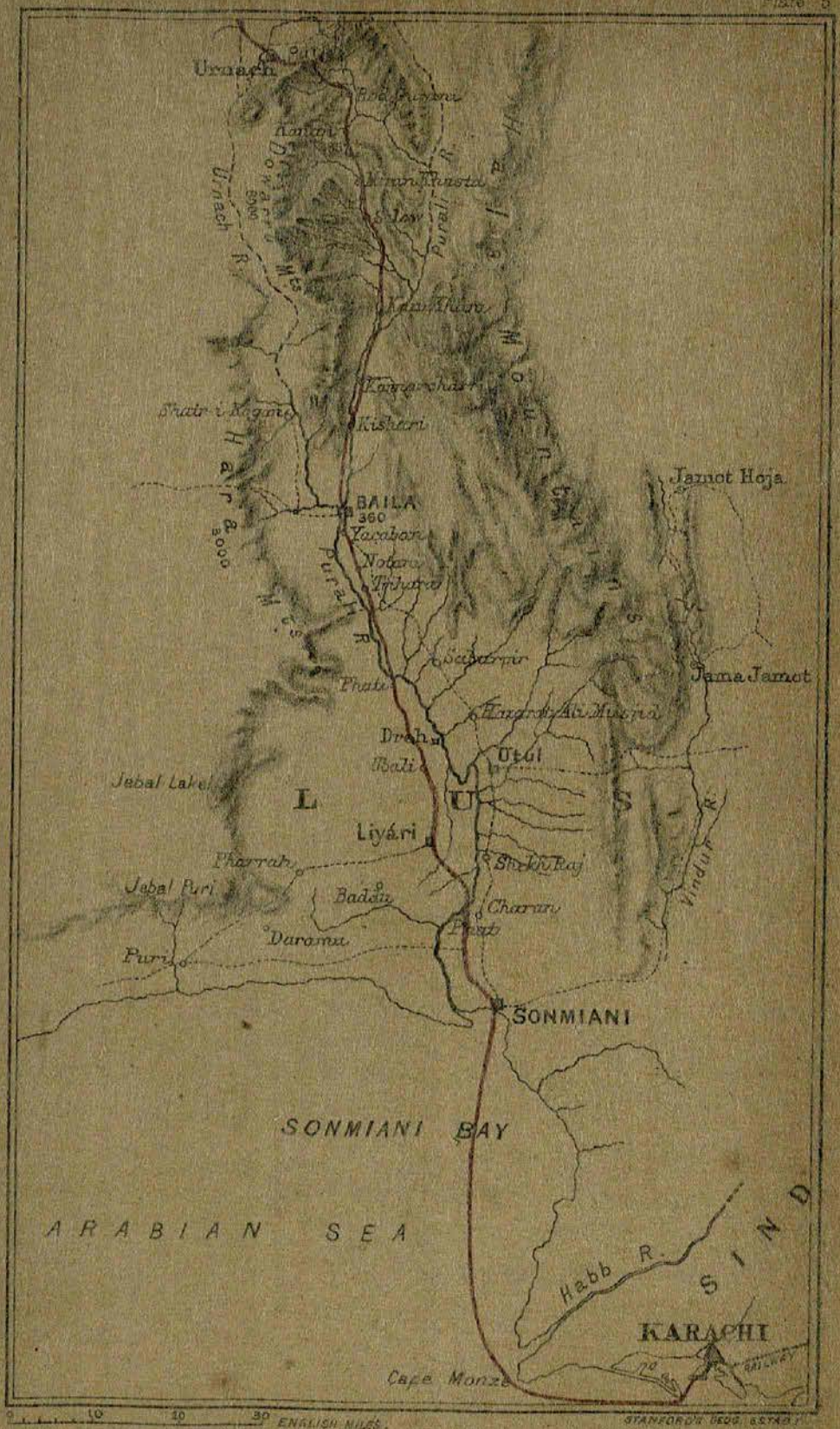
Outram chose the western route, by Nál; made out his journey in less than eight days, and reckoned the distance 355[1] miles—a figure somewhat higher than that of his predecessor. His movements were necessarily secret and rapid, too much so for accurate survey or observation: for he was travelling at a time of great local excitement, through an enemy's country and amid a rough and rude people. Starting at midnight, disguised as an Afghan, with one private servant only, he left camp under the guardianship of two Saiyids of Shál, who had accepted the responsibility of escorting him, and whose two armed attendants made up the whole party. There were thus six persons in all—mounted on four ponies and two camels,

[1] The Itinerary attached to his Diary has become a valuable reference.


KALAT
Bado R.
Sohrab
5800
Gidar
Mashkai
Khuzdar
Nal
3845
Wad
3791
Hala Mountains
Uthal
Pasni
Ormara
Kalat
Khuzdar
Nal
Wad
Uthal
Pasni
Ormara
Mashkai
Sohrab
Gidar
Bela
Hub
Lasbela
Kharan
Panjgur
Turbat
Gwadar
Jhalawan
Las Bela
Kohistan
Makran
Kharan
Panjgur
Turbat
Gwadar
Hala Mountains
0 10 20 30 ENGLISH MILES
STANFORD'S GEOG. ESTAB.

carrying provision for themselves, and as much as practicable for the animals. On the first day, they were nineteen hours in the saddle, ran the gauntlet through a host of inquirers and families flying from Kalât, and met with many adventures. For some time they had to travel in company with the family of the prime minister, out of whose wardrobe Outram's disguise had been provided. Fortunately, it proved of too mean a character to provoke identification. When resting or refreshing, the Saiyids skilfully managed, as a rule, to keep their charge in the background, and to answer all questions put, as if in every case addressed to themselves. But Outram had to play more than a silent or sleeping part. The comparative fairness of his complexion was alone likely to arouse suspicion, and, this once aroused, any over-anxiety to escape notice would add fuel to the fire. He had been introduced as a 'Pír,' or saintly man, and had to support the character according to his ability. These 'Pírs' are in great local request in Sind and Baluchistan. What wonder then that in one case it fell to his lot, sorely against his conscience, to utter a charm over a tuft of hair which the owner of a sick camel brought for that particular purpose! On the second day, they were little molested, owing to the deserted state of the track through which they rode; and they slept with safety and comfort among uninhabited ruins. On the third day they were in the immediate neighbourhood of Nâl, too large a place to enter into *en masse*, but too important to be passed without procuring there a supply of grain for the horses. Here Outram and his personal attendant lay concealed while his escort did the marketing; but one Saiyid delayed his return so long that the Englishman, anticipating mischief, was on the point of declaring himself to the chief of the village. As to the other Saiyid he was discovered in a small fort, 'assisting at the *coronach* for the dead chief, the tidings of whose fall at Kalat had been received that very afternoon.'

At night they resumed the hazardous march, and did not draw bridle until dawn; their great object being to outstrip the exciting intelligence of the capture of Kalát. After having traversed thirty miles of country without espying a trace of human habitation, they availed themselves of the bank of a river to lie down and sleep until 7 a.m. of the fourth day. The genial mildness of temperature here experienced was a pleasant contrast to the bitter and perishing cold they had lately endured. About that hour they awoke to find that their guide had decamped. But such an occurrence was not extraordinary; and the mishap was soon remedied by the enlistment into their service of a stray shepherd. Eight hours in the saddle, over a good but wholly deserted road, brought them across a lofty range of mountains to the bed of the Urnach river, where water and a little green grass for the horses, and a little tamarisk for the camels—the first green foliage seen since leaving Kabul, with the exception of a few junipers on the Kákar hills—supplied a wholesome addition to the scanty allowance of grain on which the poor beasts had up to this time subsisted. After a repose sufficient for travellers eager to reach a most dangerous journey's end, they again started at midnight, and, moving silently through cornfields and straggling hamlets, threaded the pass over a range of mountains seemingly higher than that of the previous day, by a road utterly impracticable for guns, and incapable of being made so, unless at immense cost of time and labour. This day, the fifth, was a hard one: they dismounted after having been eleven hours in the saddle, and passed the day in a ravine scantily supplied with water, and green pasture for the cattle. In the evening, they continued the journey for seven hours over another range of mountains: not having seen the trace of any inhabitant during the whole eighteen hours' ride. But the monotony of the brief halt was broken by the


Urnach
Kanari
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Kara Kharra
Kamarchhat
Khair i Kigmi
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STANFORD'S GEOG. ESTAB.T

apparition of 'a ferocious-looking Baluchi . . . armed with a long matchlock,' to Outram, as he was reading a copy of the Bombay 'Times' procured from one of the garrison at Kalát. How the unexpected visitor came there—on a high bank overlooking the object of his attraction—was a mystery: no sooner, however, did he hear a call to the Saiyid and attendants, and see them rise in response, than he made off. We need not continue the journey in detail. Passing the large town of Baila, the capital of the Las Baila district—before break of day, so as to avoid observation—the travellers reached Sonmiáni in safety at ten in the forenoon of November 23, having made a last march of fourteen consecutive hours. During the entire journey Outram was obliged to content himself with subsistence on dates and water, to carry out his assumed character of sanctity.

At Sonmiáni, he made himself known to the Hindu agent of Sett Nao Mall, a merchant of Karáchi, whose long attachment to British interests has been rewarded in recent years by the third class Order of the Star of India. This man treated the new comers with great hospitality, and at once provided a boat for the conveyance of his English guest to Karáchi. The latter took with him on board his Afghan *yábu*, of which he relates that, although not more than thirteen hands in height, it had carried himself and saddle-bags, 'weighing altogether upwards of sixteen stone, the whole distance from Kalát . . . in seven days and a half' (an average of nearly forty-seven miles per day), during which time he had passed one hundred and eleven hours on his back.'

On arrival at Karáchi, he astonished his brother-in-law, General Farquharson, by coming unexpectedly upon him in the dress of a native, sword and small shield inclusive. The general thought him looking very well, and little changed, except, indeed, that the hair was thinning on the top of his

head. His visitor's appearance he afterwards described as follows:—A small *pagri* (native turban) composed of a twist about as thick as one's finger sparsely bound about his head, the hair cropping through the interstices; white native tunic and trousers; native slippers; all very dirty and mean-looking. There was no saddle on the pony—merely a cloth over his back.

From Karáchi he embarked, on the evening of November 24, for Bombay. Not many days after arrival there, he learnt that at midnight, on the date of his departure from Sonmiáni, the son of Wali Muhammad Khan, chief of Wadd, killed at the siege of Kalát, had reached that port from the interior in pursuit of him, expressing much disappointment and irritation at missing his intended prey. Outram attributed his escape, in a great measure, to the forced march of fifty miles he had made from Nál, whereby he had 'outstripped the flying tidings of the overthrow of Khelat.' Under Providence, his wisdom and energy had certainly outwitted his pursuers.

CHAPTER VIII.

1839–1842.

Honours and Rewards—Political Agent in Lower Sind—Political Agent in Sind and Baluchistan—Retrospect of Upper Sind History—Mirs Sohrab, Rustam, and Ali Murad—Journey to Kwatta—Investiture of the Khan, and Treaty with Kalát—Work at Dadar—Departure of Lord Auckland, and Arrival of Lord Ellenborough.

For his services at Kalát, Captain Outram was promoted to Major on November 13, 1839; but the omission of his name from Sir John Keane's despatches was one of those undoubted grievances which, under precedent and prescriptive custom, he might, had he seen fit, have fairly agitated. That he did not do so is an instance of that self-denial which was ever a marked feature in his character. To a man constituted as he was—possessing a keen sense of justice and great facility of appreciating the inner, as well as outer life around him—the consciousness of self-sustained injury at the hands of authority, however jealously suppressed or hidden, could not fail to be severely felt. And if it be true Christian teaching, that what we plead in our case should be admitted by us in the case of others,[1] the converse will not assuredly be disallowed, that as we judge of others so may we judge of ourselves. It is not Outram's own ambition, nor is it the assumption of his friends, but a well-known fact, that, had common justice been done to his claims, he would have been gazetted a Major for Ghazni, and, consequently, a Lieutenant-Colonel for Kalát. The Court of Directors in London seemed to think he *had* obtained the two steps, and Lord Auckland

[1] F. W. Robertson.

congratulated him on the supposed well-earned promotion.[1] As it happened, he lost three years of rank in the higher grade, and after honours.

He also received the thanks of both the Bombay and supreme Governments for the 'very interesting and valuable documents' relating to the Kalát-Soomiáni route, which, in the spirit of General Willshire's instructions, he had placed before them. The perusal of these had afforded the Governor-General 'much satisfaction.' Prior to this, moreover, the envoy and minister with Shah Shuja had conveyed his Majesty's bestowal of the second class order of the Durráni Empire, in 'acknowledgment of the zeal, gallantry, and judgment' which he had displayed in several instances during the past year, whilst employed on the King's immediate behalf. Three of the instances in which his 'merit and exertions' were 'particularly conspicuous,' are specially cited:—

First, on the occasion of his gallantly placing himself 'at the head of His Majesty's troops engaged in dispersing a large body of rebels, who had taken up a threatening position immediately above his Majesty's encampment on the day previous to the storm of Ghazni.'

Secondly, on the occasion of his 'commanding the party sent in pursuit of Dost Mahomed Khan,' when his 'zealous exertions would in all probability have been crowned with success, but for the treachery' of his Afghan associates.

Thirdly, for 'the series of able and successful operations'

[1] Paragraph 6 of a Despatch from the Secret Committee of the Honourable Court of Directors, dated February 29, 1840, expresses concurrence in the praises of the Indian Government 'bestowed on Captain Outram, and in the propriety of paying the expense of his journey from Kelat, and of conferring upon him *the brevet rank of Lieutenant-Colonel*.' No explanation was ever offered why this particular promotion—officially announced to 'Lieutenant-Colonel Outram' *by the Government of Bombay*—did not have effect; and no remonstrance on the subject was ever submitted by the officer concerned, who considered that 'honours *sought* are not to be esteemed.'