



conducted under his superintendence, 'which ended in the subjection or dispersion of certain rebel Ghilzai and other tribes, and which have had the effect of tranquillising the whole line of country between Kabul and Kandahar, where plunder and anarchy had before prevailed.'<sup>1</sup>

Outram's stay at the Presidency was not a long one. Even before his arrival there, Lord Auckland had addressed to him a flattering and kindly letter offering him the appointment of political agent in Lower Sind in succession to Colonel Pottinger, about to give up his charge of Sind and Cutch from the first day of the New Year. After consultation with friends, he quickly made up his mind on the subject; and on Christmas Day, 1839, he wrote a brief letter to the Governor-General from Bombay, expressing his grateful acceptance of the post, and determination to fulfil the duties which it involved to the best of his ability. He at the same time despatched a few lines to Mr. Colvin, his lordship's private secretary, entering into certain details in connection with his proposed office. The pecuniary gain would not be great, in exchanging the Máhi Kánta for Sind: because the expenses in the latter province would be heavier: but he cared little or nothing for this. Only he doubted lest the abolition of the title of 'Resident,' held by his predecessor, might, by an apparent diminution of dignity, impair his usefulness in the eyes of the natives. It was a question whether the designation should not on public grounds be retained; but Lord Auckland preferred for the nonce adhering to his first proposition, and, on the separation of Lower Sind from Cutch, reconstructing the former as a political agency.

In a home letter written on the last day of the year, we have better evidence of his real feelings on the subject of the new appointment. From it we learn that his experience of

<sup>1</sup> See also Appendix E.





the countries he had lately traversed had taught him 'to look upon Guzerat as a paradise in comparison;' and the nature of the Sind climate caused him some apprehension on his wife's account. But he consoled himself with the reflection that, while Haidarabad would be his permanent headquarters, Karáchi, which offered the advantages of sea-air, was available for a change at any time; and he recommended that Mrs. Outram's outward voyage be so timed that she should rejoin him at the close of the very hot weather. When writing thus he contemplated sailing from Bombay within a week for Cutch, proceeding from the place of disembarkation to Bhúj, where he would receive charge of his office from Colonel Pottinger, and then continue his journey across the large waste flat called the 'Rann,' to Haidarabad. Let us pause for a moment longer over a page or two of private correspondence.

Mr. Bax—whom we need not re-introduce to the reader—no sooner heard of his friend's nomination to Lower Sind, than he wrote from Harsol to congratulate him on the Governor-General's approbation of his services. 'How many people,' he remarks, 'have emerged into fame and notoriety who have not accomplished a hundredth part of what you have accomplished! . . . You will get to the top of the ladder, as you deserve.' Then—in evident allusion to expressions of gratitude towards himself on the part of his correspondent, whom he charges with overvaluing the little he had ever done in promoting his successful career—he warmly adds, 'Your own right hand—your own sound heart and right sense—your own energy and enterprise—have accomplished everything—and I knew a dozen years ago they would raise you to fame whenever opportunity offered.'

The next letter—his own—we give in its entirety. It is addressed to Mr. MacNaghten, eight days before departure from Bombay:—





‘I beg to thank you for your two kind letters dated November 4 and 30, in both of which you express the expectation of further warfare in the north-west. My object in now writing is to remind you that in *that* case my humble services are always at your command, and I trust you will not scruple to command them to the utmost for any temporary military and political service you may think me fit. Most gladly shall I obey the summons, for, in addition to zeal for the public service and anxiety to distinguish myself, which formerly led me to Afghanistan, I have now the further impulse of personal gratitude to the Governor-General, to you, and to the Shah. Pray remember also that I require no pecuniary advantage, and would accept of none; for the moiety of my salary in Scinde, which I should still receive while absent on duty, is most handsome and far above my deserts. I look upon it not only to more than compensate for any services I may have to perform in that country, but also as the purchase in advance of all that I could ever do hereafter in the public service. My wife will arrive in Bombay about May, but I would not wait on that account. As a soldier’s wife, she knows, and will admit, my first duty to be to the public, to which all private and personal considerations should be sacrificed. She has two sisters in Bombay to receive her, with whom she will be more satisfactorily situated—so much nearer the scene of operations than if in England. Please order me how, when, and where to go, and what to do; you will find me punctual to tryste, and ready to perform whatever is expected of me in any quarter. At the same time pray write for the Governor-General’s sanction to my temporary absence from Scinde, the duties of which could, I hope, be fulfilled for the present by my assistants, as no great steps for the improvement of our relations in that quarter can be entered upon until everything has been effectually settled in the north-west. In the





meantime things can be maintained as they are, by them as well as by me.'

Outram embarked at Bassein on January 13, 1840, arrived at Mandavi on the 22nd, and was with Colonel Pottinger at Bhuj on the 25th of the same month. This officer's infirm state of health prevented his continuous attention to business; so that it was not until February 24 that the political agent reached head-quarters at Haidarabad. He had, however, been subjected to a five days' delay at Lakpat, whence the first march includes the passage of a creek, and more than forty miles of dreary flat on the Sind side. His reception was all that could be desired. Arrived at a certain point, the representatives of the Amirs insisted on supplying him with every requisite for self and suite, without payment, and at each stage; and at the second march from the capital he was met by a member of the reigning family, and other noblemen of distinction. On approaching the residency, after dark, he was overtaken by the sons of Mir Nasir Khan, and Mir Sobdar Khan, respectively, deputed to congratulate him on his coming; they further insisted on accompanying him to his quarters. The next morning, according to local custom, fifteen trays of sweetmeats, and immense quantities of provisions were sent by each of the four Amirs: the former were accepted, but the latter respectfully declined.

In all these preliminaries of an intercourse which afterwards ripened into a fixed deference and personal regard on the part of the Talpur chiefs for their British adviser, and into more than common sympathy on Outram's part for the misfortunes of those to whom he became the representative of an absorbing power—there was nothing exceptional or contrary to everyday experience. The sugar of compliments and smooth speeches has no truer or deeper meaning than that of the trays loaded with material confectionery; but





the force of personal character works otherwise, and tells even upon the selfish, sluggish Oriental, when it finds opportunity. And as weeks rolled on, the political agent, from a mere diplomatic presence, grew, as it were, into a benevolent personality. It is quite true that, in writing to Mr. Secretary Willoughby from Kandahar in May 1839, he had adverted to the 'treachery and underhand opposition . . . experienced from the Amirs,' as justifying our subversion of the native Government. But whatever ideas he may then or at any other time have entertained, or expressed, on the political exigency of making Sind a British province, he had not long received charge of the Haidarabad residency, before his kindly nature evinced itself in a more congenial contemplation. The day after his arrival, he addressed to the Governor-General the formal report of his instalment in office. Four-and-twenty hours later, he solicited Lord Auckland's instructions on a proposal suggested by a report of his assistant, Lieutenant Whitelock, to teach English to the sons of Mir Nur Muhammad. He was of opinion that 'the greatest benefit would be derived from the intimate intercourse that might be established between the sons of the Amir and the gentlemen of the Agency, who would be reasonably expected to superintend their education.'<sup>1</sup>

And so will it be found, if we trace his subsequent acts, always remembering the motives which we may safely attribute to the doer. The wish was rather to conciliate and win the heart by philanthropic measures, to preach the theory and illustrate the practice of mutual benevolence, than to enforce argument, and carry out the political objects of his Government by intimidation and braggadocio. Where necessity caused him to deviate from the line of his natural inclinations, he acted but in loyal obedience to

<sup>1</sup> *Correspondence relative to Sind, 1838-43*, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1843. No. 232, pp. 234-5.





the orders of lawful superiors, a refusal to acknowledge which would have been tantamount to mutiny; while to decline the responsibilities thrust upon him would have been desertion from his post. To have vacated his appointment at such a time, moreover, would have been a mistaken kindness to the Amirs; for no successor that could have been chosen to support a policy shortly to culminate in territorial annexation, would have been so gentle and sympathetic to the fallen as James Outram.

We do not dwell in any detail upon his official work in Lower Sind. It was, upon the whole, more locally important than generally interesting. The two main features, in 1840, were the reduction of taxes on inland produce brought to the British camp at Karáchi, to which may be added the relief of the Indus traffic from vexatious tolls; and the negotiations with Mir Sher Muhammad of Mirpur, whereby this restless chief was brought into quasi-amicable relations with ourselves. In 1841 he had to deal with the very intricate question of the transfer of Shikárpur to his Government, and no wonder that he was unsuccessful. The Amirs were to be made consenting parties to an arrangement which would deprive them of an important possession on the right bank of the river, and which was to be ceded to us in lieu of the subsidy guaranteed to our Government by treaty. Such a task was neither gracious nor easy of accomplishment. The proposed proceeding was distasteful to the Talpur chiefs, especially Nasir Khan, who looked upon the cession of lands as dishonourable,<sup>1</sup> and was particularly tenacious of the fancied honour of nominal sovereignty<sup>2</sup> involved in this instance. Eventually the negotiation fell through, in favour of alternative measures, soon after followed by wholesale confiscation. Outram's treaty with Mir Sher Muhammad was, on the

<sup>1</sup> *Dry Leaves from Young Egypt*. By an ex-Political. (James Madden, 1861.)

<sup>2</sup> *Sind Correspondence* before noted, No. 308, foot-note.





other hand, a signal success, and called forth the high approval of the Governor-General of India in Council.

In diplomatic ability to cope with Orientals, few officers could be found superior to Colonel Pottinger, whose experience and sound judgment rendered him a more than commonly safe representative of his country in Cutch and Sind. His successor publicly acknowledged the value of the late Resident's advice, given to him during his short stay at Bhuj, and stated that it would ever be his wish and pride to follow, as closely as he could, this gentleman's example and policy in his personal intercourse with the Amirs, and the general conduct of his duties. But the geniality and warmth of heart brought into play for the occasion were his own; and though these might not fall into the classification of strictly diplomatic qualifications, they performed the offices of diplomacy with, at times, admirable effect. If a sneer at the well-meant exertions of his fellows be ever justifiable in a patriotic statesman, it is wholly and especially misapplied when raised at honest men who, discarding the mask and cloak, strive to achieve political objects by honest means. Success in such endeavours may be, often is, and oftener still might be, the result of untiring and uncompromising straightforwardness. The charm of Outram's character was never more strikingly exemplified than on the occasion of the sickness and death of Mir Nur Muhammad of Haidarabad.

The story is told in that opposite of all romance, a Parliamentary blue-book. It is in the words of the political agent himself, and is vivid in its simplicity. Before making our extracts, we would recall to the reader the figures of the Talpur Amirs of Sind, drawn or described by Crowe, Burnes, Pottinger, Eastwick, and others. They were men for the most part portly in person, but of dignified exterior; of semi-Persian, semi-Jewish physiognomies; courteous in manner,





and of frank and open address; dressed, much as their attendants, in *angríkhás*, or 'tunics of white muslin, neatly prepared and plaited, so as to resemble dimity,' with *kamarbands*, or sashes of silk and gold, wide Turkish trousers of coloured silk, and the national head-gear, of cylindrical form, resembling an inverted European hat, covered with the gay brocade known as *kimkhwáb*. Nur Muhammad, we are told, presented a great contrast to his brother Nasir. He was, in fact, rather an exceptional Talpur Baluch, and is described by Edward Eastwick as possessing 'a thin, cunning countenance, and quick, twinkling eyes, expressive of suspicion and distrust;' whereas the other was a man 'of enormous bulk,' with an eminently handsome face, and winning ways which might have been those of 'a highly-polished English nobleman.' We have now to speak of the former chief, the senior representative of the reigning family.

Outram had not seen Nur Muhammad for some days from motives of delicacy. The Amír's state of health was such that recovery seemed hopeless; and negotiations were in progress to which it was neither kind nor prudent to draw his attention. He would, probably, it was thought, seek for promises which could not be accorded; and frequent visits might give a semblance of wished-for interference in family affairs which was to be avoided. One day, however, the invalid expressed a desire to see his English monitor, who would, at the same time, introduce a physician, a fellow-countryman, to prescribe for his malady:—

We were met at the fort gate [wrote the political agent] by Meer Shahdad, Meer Noor Mahomed's eldest son, who conducted us to the dwelling where the Ameer's married wife resides, to which his Highness had been lately removed to die, on all hope of recovery being given over. Meer Nusseer Khan, and the other sons of their Highnesses, received us when we dismounted, and the former led me to the sick Ameer's bedside, who, on seeing me, attempted





to rise, which I hastened to prevent; but his Highness, hailing me as his brother, put his arms round me, and held me in his embrace a few minutes, until I laid him quietly down. So feeble and emaciated had the Ameer become, that this exertion quite exhausted him, and it was minutes afterwards before he could speak, when, beckoning his brother Meer Nusseer Khan, and youngest son Meer Hoossein Ali, to the bedside, he then took a hand of each, and placed them in mine, saying, 'You are their father and brother, you will protect them,' to which I replied in general but warm terms of personal friendship, adding that I trusted his Highness himself would long live to guide and support them; but this the Ameer had evidently given up all hope of, and appeared to regret that he had given Doctor Owen the trouble of coming so far, though very grateful for the prompt manner in which his wishes had been attended to. Meer Shahdad, the eldest son of Meer Noor Mahomed, was present when the circumstance above mentioned took place, but appeared neither surprised nor chagrined at the preference displayed by his father, and continued to join in the conversation as if nothing had occurred.

Doctor Owen, having satisfied himself as to the nature of the complaint, galloped home to prepare some preliminary medicine, I remained for some time afterwards, at his earnest request, with the Ameer, who became quite a changed person, rising from the depth of despondency—in the conviction that he could not live beyond a few hours, or days at the utmost—to cheerful hope, on my imparting the Doctor's opinion that his case was not hopeless, if his Highness would implicitly follow medical advice in all things. He declared his determination to accept the condition, but begged of me to return with Doctor Owen in the evening to see that the gentleman was fully informed of his case from first to last.

In the evening I returned accordingly, accompanied by Mr. Whitelock and Dr. Owen. We were met a few hundred yards from the palace by Meers Shahdad and Hoossein Ali, and conducted to the Ameer, whom we found very cheerful and happy, from the impression that the medicine which Doctor Owen had sent in the morning had already benefited him. He conversed cheerfully with Mr. Whitelock and myself, especially expressing interest in our success in China . . . and trust that all enemies of the British would ever be discomfited . . . with much apparent sincerity.





In the course of the interview, Meer Hoossein Ali, the Ameer's younger son, came from the inner apartments and whispered in his father's ear, who smiled, and informed me that the Khanum (the mother of his sons) sent to say she hailed me as her brother with much gratification, to which I made a suitable acknowledgment. On inquiry afterwards, I learnt that this is considered an extraordinary proof of friendship, such as never heretofore displayed except to the nearest relations.

Ten days later, Major Outram reported the demise of the sick Amir on the previous morning. Dr. Owen had been unremitting in his attendance on his patient, and his prescriptions had been the means of alleviating the sufferings of the dying chief, although it had been out of his power to check the progress of disease. The report continues:—

The remains of his Highness were carried to the grave at 10 a.m., and buried within the mausoleum of his father, the late Moorad Ali, attended by a large concourse of chieftains and followers, besides the immediate relations of the deceased, and sons of Meer Sobdar Khan, and by Lieutenant Whitelock and myself in mourning costume—a mark of respect to the memory of Meer Noor Mahomed Khan, which my public duty, as well as personal friendship for the departed chief, induced me to pay. The attention appeared to be deeply appreciated by all, and especially by the brother and sons of the deceased, who embraced me affectionately before the assembled multitude, and placed us with themselves and Meer Sobdar's sons during the mournful ceremony.

I have every reason to lament the loss of Meer Noor Mahomed Khan, and do so most sincerely, both on public and private grounds. Whatever that chief's secret feelings towards the British may have been, certainly his acts latterly were all most friendly, and I cannot but place faith in almost the last words the dying chief uttered, solemnly protesting the sincerity of his friendship for the British Government, not only because, being then perfectly aware that he had but few hours to live and, seeking nothing, he could have had no motive for deception, but also, because I had myself always found his Highness most ready to forward our interests, and least ready to welcome reports prejudicial to us, which, during





late exciting times, were so industriously propagated, and greedily devoured by those more inimical to us. In fact I am satisfied that Meer Noor Mahomed Khan at last perceived that it was wiser to cultivate our friendship than hopelessly to intrigue against our power; and he had sense enough on more than one occasion, when the signs of the times encouraged others to hope for our discomfiture, to prognosticate that temporary reverses, or the machinations of the factions, would but cause the firmer riveting of our power; and I have lately ascertained that, on the occasion of Meer Nusseer Khan's deputing agents to Mecca, Meer Noor Mahomed positively forbade making use of the opportunity to communicate with the Shah of Persia, and strongly expressed his sense of the folly of continuing their former underhand practices, and determination not to countenance them in future.

Of the late Ameer's personal feelings towards myself, I had latterly received many affecting proofs, especially during the last three days of his existence—when I daily visited his Highness, on finding that my doing so gave him real gratification. On the 4th instant, the morning before his death, the Ameer, evidently feeling that we could not meet again, embraced me most fervently, and spoke distinctly to the following purport, in the presence of Dr. Owen and the other Ameers: 'You are to me as my brother Nusseer Khan, and the grief of this sickness is equally felt by you and Nusseer Khan; from the days of Adam no one has known so great truth and friendship as I have found in you.' I replied, 'Your Highness has proved your friendship to my Government and myself by your daily acts. You have considered me a brother, and as a brother I feel for your Highness, and night and day I grieve for your sickness.' To which he added, 'My friendship for the British is known to God. My conscience is clear before God.' The Ameer still retained me in his feeble embrace for a few moments, and, after taking some medicine from my hand, again embraced me as if with the conviction that we could not meet again.<sup>1</sup>

On the Amir's death, the question of succession and inheritance arose, and immediate decision was urgent, in

<sup>1</sup> *Correspondence relative to Sind, 1838-1843*, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of her Majesty, 1843, pp. 268-69.





anticipation of coming difficulties. Well it was that its disposal was not left to the will of native partisans. Outram undertook it, as he undertook everything, in an earnest and honest spirit, and entered upon the task with single-mindedness and thorough conscientiousness. His long and elaborate reports on the subject are lasting certificates of the labour so ungrudgingly bestowed, in fulfilling a trust which was almost as much personal as official. In acknowledging the uses of his individual influence exercised in the matter, Government directly approved of the part he had taken in bringing about a settlement. But his time was occupied in affairs of a more distasteful nature than even family disagreements among Sindi-Baluch chiefs in whose welfare he was interested. The frauds and general peculations of one Jetha Nand, a Múnshi in the employment of the British Government, gave him untold trouble, and tried his patience sorely. This person—besides unlawfully enriching himself at the cost of his employers to the value of nearly 40,000*l.* by business transactions, the accounts of which were falsely rendered—had bribed the servants of the *darbár* with such judicious roguery as to deter the Amirs themselves from giving evidence against him. To English ideas of justice, the imprisonment and dismissal which followed the detection of his misdeeds were but mild awards in satisfaction of a long course of complicated villainy. Among Orientals the shame of such offence is rather in discovery than commission. Neither in perjury nor in forgery is there the same intensity of crime recognised in the East as in the West; but we shall hereafter have more to say on the Indian idiosyncrasy in this respect.

On August 18, 1841, Outram had taken his leave of the Haidarabad court; and we find him then addressing instructions, on board the river steamer Comet, bound for Sakhar, to his assistant, Captain Leckie, regulating the conduct of our future relations with the Amirs in those parts.





His official despatch concluded with a request that certain presents might be given to certain native secretaries attached to the *darbār*, as a trifling mark of 'gratification with the very friendly tone' pervading every international discussion in which he had had a share during the eighteen months of his residence in Sind. In the previous October, the Secretary to the Government of India had written to the political agent at Haidarabad, informing him that possible failure in health might compel Mr. Ross Bell, the political agent in Upper Sind, to relinquish his duties, and that in such case it was Lord Auckland's wish that Major Outram should assume them, in addition to his existing charge of Lower Sind, with the full authority committed to that officer. Now, the contingency spoken of had arrived.

Men in high places had formed their own opinion on Outram. They had judged him for themselves apart from the wretched intervention of interested advisers, too ready to submit a false estimate of character of those whom they personally dread or dislike; and consequently their appreciation was a true one. Lord Auckland's letters to him in Sind are full of confidence and friendliness. On one occasion, he had thought it necessary to explain to the Governor-General the particulars of an untimely honour paid to him at Haidarabad. His Lordship good-naturedly replied: 'You need not have made any apology for the salute which was prematurely fired by the Ameer of Sind upon the rumour of your promotion. I must feel that goodwill exhibited . . . whilst it is an evidence of kind personal feeling towards you, is an exhibition also of goodwill towards the Government which you represent, and I readily therefore admit of such a compliment being paid you.' At a later period, when he had taken up the higher post for which the Governor-General had specially selected him, Lord Auckland refers to a certain policy which his nominee had adopted, slightly at variance with home instructions. 'It is





generous and bold,' are the expressions used; 'I am always disposed to turn to the judgment of those in whom I place such confidence as I place in you.' But the fulness and freedom from reserve with which these semi-official papers were written, afford the truest and strongest evidences of the Governor-General's sentiments towards his political agent. In like manner, at Bombay, successive governors were proud to acknowledge him as one of the officers of their own Presidency. The signs of distinction which Sir John Malcolm had observed in the dawn of his career were not delusive. Some twenty years afterwards, Sir James Carnac, the outgoing governor, addresses Outram, when still political agent in Lower Sind, in the following strain:—'I cannot bid adieu to this country without bidding you, if you will allow me to use the expression, an *affectionate* farewell. I shall always hail the day when we became personally acquainted, as one of the *bright* spots of my career in life. I entertain for you most sincere sentiments of regard and respect, and you will ever find me, I trust, when thinking or speaking of you and your valuable services, influenced strongly by those impressions. I foresee, please a kind Providence, a career before you which will give full scope for the display of all those eminent qualities with which you are endowed.'

The appointment to Upper Sind, honourable and flattering as it was, had its drawbacks and inconveniences, in that it was subversive of domestic arrangements. Mrs. Outram had again arrived in India before the first half of 1840 had quite passed away; and it had been agreed that the hard-worked political agent in Lower Sind should obtain leave to visit the Presidency, meeting and returning thence with his wife to Haidarabad, where his principal amusement in leisure moments had latterly been the superintendence of the building of a 'Residency.' But a delay of months had scarcely been anticipated; and although the lady had reached Bombay





at the beginning of June, it was not until January 24 in a new year that Outram was enabled to fulfil his intention. And then—such were the continuous exigencies of his employment—their short sojourn together in Sind was but the prelude to another lengthened separation. In May 1841, Mrs. Outram's delicate health rendered a change necessary to Karāchi, where her brother-in-law, Brigadier Farquharson, was in command; and when her husband was summoned to the still more unhealthy region of Upper Sind, where no proper accommodation for ladies then existed, it was judged advisable for her to return to Europe once again, he, meanwhile, proposing to follow her thither, on well-earned and long-anticipated furlough, at the earliest possible opportunity.

Colonel Pottinger had not been left alone in the conduct of Sind diplomacy. It had been found necessary to depute a second agent to Khairpur; so Sir Alexander Burnes, always *en route* somewhere, was stopped on a mission to Kalāt, and directed to revisit the old Rāis of Upper Sind. He was to explain to him the part he would have to play in the approaching spectacle of the army of the Indus, and the few requirements he would have to meet—among them the cession to his English allies of the fortress of Bakhar. It was true that he had taken this island-stronghold, in his younger days, by the aid of his own good sword; but what of that? it was only required as a loan by very intimate friends. These friends could not, by the terms of the treaty before concluded, covet anything similar on either bank of the river; and this possession was happily isolated in mid-stream. And so one army came from the north-east; and another army from the south-west; and Sind was thrown into terror and confusion. The Amirs of Haidarabad struggled, and were silenced; the Amir of Khairpur groaned, and gave in. A further treaty with Mir Rustam was the result of these proceedings. On January 10, 1839, the ratification of the Governor-General thereto





fairly annulled the independence of the Khairpur State. 'Friendship, alliance, and unity of interests' ushered in a set of articles whose general tendency was to prove, as it appeared, the existence of the two former an anomaly, and the latter impossible. Shortly afterwards, Burnes found another, though not a fresh field for employment, and plunged, for the second time, into the vortex of Afghan politics. A new star was now observed in the Sind horizon.

Towards the middle of 1839, Mr. Ross Bell, of the Bengal Civil Service, was appointed political agent at Shikarpur.<sup>1</sup> The policy which he had been sent to carry out with the Amir of Khairpur and his brother, would occupy, if set forth in detail, several pages in the exposition; but the substance of it may be expressed in very few words. It was to befriend those who did what we required them to do, and to punish those who thwarted and opposed our objects. His official labours were not confined to Sind. He had important duties, besides, beyond the Sind-Kalât frontier, which required his presence and the exercise of all his energies. The burden of responsibility was heavy, and the strain upon the mind excessive. The action required was for the most part impulsive, and too immediate to brook the delay of a reference to Calcutta; and consultation with others on the spot, whatever the issue, would be ignored at head-quarters, where all confidence and control were given to, and intended for acceptance by a single individual. The situation in Kalât in 1840-41 was especially critical. Mihrab Khan had paid the penalty of resistance to our armies and failure to advance our interests, with his life, and we had put up in his place young Shah Nawaz—a descendant of Mahabbat Khan, the chief deposed by Ahmad Shah—arbitrarily annexing part of the country to Afghanistan. But our proceedings had not satisfied the people; and a revolution shortly broke out in favour of Nâsir Khan, son and

<sup>1</sup> Appendix E.





heir of the deceased Mhrab. Our nominee was compelled to abdicate; and the British representative at Kalát was imprisoned and afterwards murdered. We found ourselves engaged in a serious and untimely conflict; to retire from which, with the least possible loss of honour and prestige, would necessitate a reversal of Government policy. The dilemma had been caused by our awkward interference in the affairs of a neighbouring State in a spirit of selfish interest; and though late in the day for moral reflections, there was no more politic remedy than to practise justice. Wisely, but tardily, we paid attention to the popular cry; and Mr. Ross Bell, at the time of his last illness, was busily engaged in conciliating the ruler whom we ought never to have refused to recognise. Independently, moreover, of the Kalát succession, the prestige of our native soldiery had been shaken by more than one military disaster in the hill country of the Baluchis.

In Upper Sind we were involved in the most ungracious task of extracting payment, from doubtful and not over-solvent debtors, of an obsolete money claim on behalf of our particular king of Afghanistan; and the arguments of Mir Ali Murad, in the matter of his inheritance under Sohrab's will, had gained an attentive hearing from the British agent. This same Ali Murad, his half-brother Mir Rustam Khan (old enough to be his grandfather), and Nasir, eldest son of another brother Mubarak, were the leading native chiefs awaiting Major Outram's arrival at Sakhar, in August 1841.

The political agents in Upper and Lower Sind were not personal acquaintances; but their correspondence is that of men trusting, to say the least, in each other's ability, zeal, and good faith. Among the many private and semi-official letters which passed between them, one from Mr. Ross Bell at Kwatta, dated June 1841, informed Outram that, in the event of ill-health, the writer had been instructed to make over his office to him; that he had become a constant invalid,





whose only chance of permanent restoration was, according to the medical officer, to proceed home or to sea by the earliest date possible; and that he proposed to leave Kwatta at the end of September, *en route* to the coast by the Bolan and Sakhar. On July 21, Lord Auckland wrote to Outram in anticipation of his assuming charge of Mr. Bell's agency, calling his attention to the urgency of impressing on the native mind that such appointment would in no way imply a change in the Government views with regard to Baluchistan; the main object being 'the pacification and the prosperity of the countries' within his range. On August 11, Outram had heard a rumour of Mr. Ross Bell's death, and thus wrote to the assistant political agent, Lieutenant Wallace:—

'Should Mr. Bell have fallen a sacrifice to that abominable climate, I shall post up immediately, and I hope you will be able to stay till then. . . . In the event of the head of the office being now vacant, I shall at once write officially to Captain Brown and yourself to inform you that I have assumed it on the strength of my confidential instructions of September, and in the meantime request you to act conjointly.'

But a week before the date of this last letter, Mr. Ross Bell had died, and Lieutenant Wallace had assumed charge of the agency on his own responsibility, reporting the act and his reasons to Lord Auckland's private secretary, Mr. Colvin. Outram had received confirmatory tidings of the early report of the casualty on August 12, within a week from which date we have seen him writing farewell instructions on board the river steamer. A detention of three or four days at Haidarabad was unavoidable, to enable him to complete his pending business with the Amirs; but as this was a State necessity he could submit to it with comparative com-





posure. He must have chafed, however, over the slow passage of the vessel up the stream to Sakhar, which place he reached (in company with Lieutenant French, who had left Sakhar to join him) on the evening of August 24. Two whole days spent upon a sandbank had prolonged the weariness of that Indus journey. From Sakhar to Kwatta is a distance of some 250 miles, of which three-fifths are over a dreary desert. He appears to have left the former station on the morning of the 25th, but he was in all probability detained nearly two days at Shikarpur to allow for posting bearers, or such other *dāk* arrangements as were necessary. We know that he reached Kwatta on September 2, for his report to that effect caused the Governor-General to express satisfaction at the promptitude with which he had joined the headquarters of his office. It is also on record that he halted two days at Dādar to let the *dāk* be laid up the Bolan Pass, the same bearers that brought him thus far on his way having to go on. He must therefore have accomplished his arduous journey, at a fearfully hot season, in the short space of five days of actual travelling.<sup>1</sup> Whether the time be reckoned from Sakhar or Shikārpur (a shorter distance by 24 miles), the feat is a remarkable one when the climate, country, and means of conveyance are taken into account.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Services*, page 92.

<sup>2</sup> The following extracts from Colonel Dennie's letters, published in that officer's *Personal Narrative of the Campaign in Afghanistan*, will give some idea of the sufferings of a solitary European traveller, wending his way from Sakhar to Kwatta—sufferings experienced by Outram, not only in August 1841, but again in June 1842; to say nothing of return journeys. If by rapidity of movement he was less exposed to the evils noticed by Colonel Dennie, it should be remembered that he took this route *in the height of the hot season*:—‘We ascended from Dadur to that place (Quetta) through the Bolan Pass, an elevation of between 5,000 and 6,000 feet, having previously traversed at its foot a long dreadful desert plain, from Shikarpoor to Dadur, of about 150 miles . . . As for the heat, God be praised you can form no conception of it! *I have escaped*, and can only tell you that I shudder to look back





The work before Outram was of a difficult and complicated kind. His letter to Lord Auckland of August 13, from Haiderabad, had broken ground in his new sphere, and well deserved the term 'excellent' applied to it by the Governor-General. It indicated a wonderful aptitude on the part of the writer to comprehend the large question with which he had to deal, and it boldly grappled with detail. In it, among many other subjects discussed, he advocated the union of Upper and Lower Sind and Baluchistan, including the districts of Shál and Kachi, under one control, rather than the formation of two distinct agencies, likely to be conflicting; he proposed stations for European soldiers in case necessity should arise for the permanent occupation of Baluchistan; and he showed cause for sending down detachments of corps from Kalát to Sonmiáni, in place of marching up from the latter port with reinforcements, as had been authoritatively contemplated. A few days later he supplemented this despatch by one addressed to Mr. Colvin, from the Indus steamer, in which he drew out a scheme of establishments. His proposal was to give fourteen assistants to the political agent, and to divide them into three classes: three first class for Upper Sind, Lower Sind, and Baluchistan; five second class for the same localities, with Sonmiáni and Shál; and four third class for all these except Sonmiáni. The cost would be about 500% per annum less than that already sanctioned, irrespectively of the

at what I and those with me underwent. . . . Colonel Thompson, who commanded one of the regiments of my brigade, and who followed me a few days in the rear, died instantly in his tent, and Lieutenant Brady, H. M. 17th Foot, fell dead in the same manner, their bodies turning as black as charcoal. Between fifty and sixty persons of another convoy were suffocated by the breath of this same deadly simoom, which sweeps across the desert at intervals during the hot season, dealing destruction to all within its influence. . . . To give you a correct notion of the temperature, the thermometer stood, in the tent of a young officer, my aide-de-camp—a smaller one than mine, and termed a hill tent—at 125 degrees!





political agent's own salary, on which there would be a further reduction; but the appointment of a first and third class assistant for the management and revenue collections of Shikárpur, would show a counterbalancing expenditure apart from political charges.<sup>1</sup>

After the re-occupation of Kalát in November 1840, by the troops under Major-General Nott—a measure resulting from the revolutionary action taken by its inhabitants—Colonel Stacy of the Bengal army had been directed to assume charge of our relations with the Brahúi State. This delicate and difficult duty involved the reconciliation of the young Khan and his adherents with the destroyers of his house. Undertaken in pursuance of a voluntary offer, it appears to have been performed with single-mindedness and ability. The Colonel's own narrative has the ring of conscientiousness and honesty, and is at the same time interesting and instructive. We see in it a fit sequel to the romance of the previous twelvemonth, during which the fatherless boy had been, more or less, a fugitive, debarred from his lawful inheritance. For ten months Nasir Khan coquetted with those who, in spite of protestations and profession, could hardly be regarded as disinterested well-wishers, but whose responsible representative eventually won him over by perseverance in a new and honourable policy. On the eve, however, of full attainment of the object desired, when the young Khan had consented, and was actually on his way to visit the camp of the British political agent, the news of Mr. Ross Bell's death caused inevitable delay in bringing matters to a satisfactory conclusion. It became essential to await the coming of a successor invested with similar powers. Meanwhile, Colonel Stacy was requested by Lieutenant Wallace, the acting agent, to repeat the assurance of continued kind feelings on the part of his Government

<sup>1</sup> Appendix E.





towards Kalāt; and to say that in Major Outram the ruler would find a warm advocate and friend. A month passed, at the close of which the newly appointed agent arrived at Kwatta. Nasir Khan had been kept amused and much in the same temper as before, through the unremitting exertions of Colonel Stacy and his countrymen. On September 4, he set out from Mastung, attended by his English adviser, to meet Major Outram. Captains Browne and Knyvett went out to welcome him a march from Kwatta. We quote Colonel Stacy's own account of the meeting :—

We rested the day of our arrival; and according to the custom of the country mutual inquiries passed between Major Outram and the Khan. After seeing him comfortably established in a tent pitched for him, I went to Major Outram, and was most kindly congratulated on the success of my exertions, and the zeal with which I had pursued the object of my duties. The next morning was fixed for *darbār*.

At 8 a.m., I accompanied the young Khan to the *darbār*, and introduced him to Major Outram. The brigadier commanding the troops, Major-General England, Captain Bean, and eight or nine officers were present. As might be expected, the youth was rather embarrassed at first, but on Major Outram's assuring him of the kindly feelings of Government towards him, he expressed his desire to become an ally of the Company, the value of whose friendship he said he was fully aware of. He added that he had often heard of their justice and liberality, and he had come to enrol himself amongst the number of their servants (*khizmatgar-i-kampani*), to live under the shade of their flag, and that he was willing to agree to whatever terms the Company might prescribe. Though abashed at first, he gained more confidence as the novelty of the scene wore off. In about half an hour the presents were introduced, and the Khan shortly after took his leave. A salute of twenty-one guns from the civil lines, which was repeated in camp, announced the happy event of the Khan's acknowledging the paramount power of the British Government and his alliance with it.

The next important day to be marked, in the political annals of the place and period, was that on which occurred





the Khan's installation under British auspices. But the importance of this procedure was greatly enhanced by the circumstance that, two or three hours prior to its occurrence, there had been formally concluded a treaty of friendship between the Indian Government and State of Kalát. The earlier business was transacted at a *darbár* held in the forenoon by the British political agent; to which Nasir Khan came, accompanied by the whole of his *sardárs* and principal people, with one or two exceptions owing to sickness. On this occasion the treaty was publicly produced, as agreed upon, and read out by the minister, the words being repeated by the young chief himself, who, at the close, said, 'I agree' (*kabul*), and, taking his signet from his bosom, put on the ink and applied the seal. The later ceremony was carried out in the afternoon at a *darbár* held by the Khan, whither Outram proceeded, in company with the brigadier-general, and attended by all the gentlemen of the agency and escort. Indian custom at Muhammadan courts seems to have regulated the details of investiture. When the formalities were over, we learn that 'every British officer heartily shook hands with the Prince, followed by every individual in the room, while a royal salute was fired from the Khan's own guns in very good style. The young chief was visibly affected—almost to tears—by the good feeling displayed towards him by the English gentlemen; and general and sincere were the thanks, loudly expressed by the principal natives, to Colonel Stacy for his friendly exertions to bring about so happy a consummation.'<sup>1</sup> Outram and the other officers then accompanied the Khan on horseback to an open space without the walls, where the Brahúis exhibited their horsemanship. At night they returned to the Mírí, or palace, to see the national dance, 'in which all ranks and classes heartily joined.'

<sup>1</sup> Major Outram to Mr. J. R. Colvin, October 7, 1841.





The treaty with Nasir Khan was one of nine articles, of which the first four were almost identical with a draft which had been prepared by Sir William MacNaghten, and sent to Colonel Stacy before Outram's appearance on the scene. It so happened that Lord Auckland's specific instructions for guidance in the matter did not reach the political agent until the second day after the Khan's formal acceptance had been signified. The fortunate hour for the investiture had been fixed by the Mullahs and, when so fixed and approved, it was thought that ample time had been allowed for the receipt of the expected despatches from India. Execution of the treaty would precede installation, because the last and more popular ceremony would thus be admitted as a consequence of the first, in due regard to British *prestige*. But the modifications of the Governor-General were not such as to cause any serious difficulty; and eventually, ratification was accorded to eight articles to the following effect :—

1st. Acknowledgment of vassalage to Kabul.

2nd. Restoration to Kalât of the two first of the three districts of Kachi, Mastung, and Shâl, which had been resumed on the death of Mihrab Khan.

3rd. Power to station British, or Shah's troops in Kalât when necessary.

4th. British counsels to be paramount.

5th. Protection to be afforded to merchants, and no undue exactions made.

6th. No negotiations to be carried on with foreign powers, without consent of British and Shah's Governments.

7th. Assistance to be rendered by British Government, if judged necessary, in the event of external aggression or dispute.





8th. Provision secured for the maintenance of Shah Nawáz Khan, the former chief named by British Government.<sup>1</sup>

It is not too much to say that if, in our recent war with Afghanistan, the previous occupation of Kwatta has facilitated the advance of our troops from the southward, we owe something of the advantage so gained to the annulled Anglo-Brahúi treaty of October 6, 1841.

Outram remained at Kalát until October 14, when he set out on his return to Dádar, which station he reached in a fortnight, travelling to and through the Bolan Pass. His letters at this period, official, semi-official, and private, show how actively he was employed in keeping order and open communications, both jeopardised by the action of hostile tribes and the numerous robbers infesting the neighbourhood of the Passes. The brief experience of the country gained two years before had not been without its value; and he knew his surroundings well enough to apprehend the true distinctions which marked the strange, wild characters brought up daily to his tent, whether calling themselves Afghan, Brahúi, or simply Baluch. At Dádar he fixed for a time his head-quarters, and would, doubtless, have carried into effect many proposals for the pacification and well-being of the Khan and his subjects, which he submitted to the Governor-General, had not disastrous tidings from Afghanistan drawn his attention to more pressing matters.

He was a little sensitive on the subject of certain guns which the Marri Baluchis had captured from our soldiers; and he had written semi-officially to Mr. Colvin, pointing out, with characteristic detail, his reasons for seeking the

<sup>1</sup> This treaty became a dead letter within a year of its ratification, as the vassalage contemplated was to Shah Shuja and his heirs, and not to the Barakzais. It was formally annulled by a new treaty in May 1854, the third article, however, being retained in a modified form.





peaceful recovery of these uncomfortable trophies, reserving to his own unfettered diplomacy the actual process he would adopt to bring about their ready restoration by the Marri chief. On November 14—the day after writing this letter—he communicated to the secretary that he had received from Major Rawlinson, at Kandahar, information of a nature likely to arrest the homeward progress of the Bengal troops, whose arrival at Dádar, from Afghanistan, he had been contemplating. Four days later, he reported, ‘with much regret,’ for Lord Auckland’s information, a still more serious state of things as represented in a letter from the envoy with Shah Shuja to Major Rawlinson; and on November 20 he wrote as follows to Mr. Willoughby, then looking forward to the coming of Sir W. MacNaghten, the Governor elect of Bombay:—

‘There are deplorable accounts from Cabool! I sent you the day before yesterday copy of a note from Sir. W. MacNaghten, dated November 1, showing that he was still there; so there is no possibility of his getting away before spring, I should say. Neither can the brigade from Candahar go beyond Ghuznee, on account of the snow. But it is impossible the rebels can keep the field during winter. . . . neither can they hold the city under the guns of the Balla Hissar. . . . Under the present aspect of affairs, however, we must keep all the troops we have in the country, and it may be necessary hereafter to push more troops to Candahar, which may be sent by the Sonmeanee route in February. Moreover, Captain Hammersley reports from Quetta that he considers the desertion of his Kaukers from the Rangers the prelude to a general Kanker insurrection connected with the Cabool disturbances, and it is possible I may have to act against them from hence. But this I do not apprehend to be likely; nor do I think a general rising of that tribe will





take place. . . . It is proper to be prepared however.' To Mr. Colvin, on the same date, he writes :—

'I have every confidence that the Murree chief is coming to me, and, if he does, the peaceable submission of all the Hill tribes of Northern Cutchee is certain. It is possible that the machinations of the traitor (suspected) Naib of Shawl may have extended to them; but it is not likely, for there can scarcely have been time to communicate with them, and I really am not in the least degree apprehensive on the subject.'

Later again—but still in the same month of November—his letters express a fear lest communication with Kandahar should be rendered insecure by the enforced evacuation of Kalá Abdullah, near the entrance, or at about eight miles east, of the Khojak Pass. Annoyance on this score is, however, somewhat mitigated by the arrival in his camp of the 'high priest' of the Kákars and others of the tribe, to tender the submission of their chief Ghafúr Khan, who had been, up to that time, opposed to all conciliatory advances on our part. December was naturally a month of great anxiety. The following extract is from a letter to Mr. Willoughby, written on the 4th :—

'So critical a state of things, as represented throughout the whole line of communications with Cabool and in the capital itself, at the last accounts dated November 9, renders it incumbent on me to devise every means of preparing support for Candahar, from whence principally we must look for the retrieval of our affairs should we be driven to extremity at Cabool; for our line of posts is more complete, and the obstacles are neither so numerous nor so serious by the Bolan and Sonmeanee routes as they appear to be by the Khybur. I consider we are secure in the Bolan Pass, with the command





above and below, and the Brahoe tribes on the left of the Pass in our interests—even should the Kakurs turn against us, which I do not apprehend. . . . I do not think the inhabitants of the Pisheen valley are likely to become discontent, and if they do, there are no commanding situations from Quetta to the Kojuk where they could attempt to arrest our troops, except the Koochlack Pass, which is commanded from Quetta; and our position at Killa Abdoolla could be strengthened in case of necessity, to afford a flanking party to take up a commanding position at the crest of the Kojuk on all occasions of troops and convoys passing over. From thence to Candahar, no very commanding positions occur easily tenable by an enemy in the face of our troops. At Kelat-i-Ghilzie and Ghuznee we are impregnable, provided provisions have been laid in in plenty, which I presume must be the case, as those places were to be held under any circumstances. Our communications with Cabool can therefore, I consider, be best reopened by that route.'

On the 7th, a hopeful disposition had apparently restricted his main attention to the work immediately before him. 'We are still,' he writes to Mr. Colvin, 'without direct accounts from Cabool; but the tranquillity at Candahar is a strong proof that the insurrection is quelled. . . . The Khan commenced his progress through Cutchee this morning, accompanied by Colonel Stacy, who is instructed to encourage the young chief to personal inquiry into the affairs of the country,' also to induce his pupil 'to invite all aggrieved parties freely to state their grievances.' The Kakar negotiations had progressed favourably, and Ghafur Khan was to be taken to one of the assistant politicals, in order that the settlement with him might be formally concluded. But so far from the insurrection being quelled at Kabul, the disasters to our army in that city were, when Outram was writing, fast approaching to the bitter end.





On the 11th, owing to the receipt of bad news again, he thought it prudent to warn the head-quarter wing of H.M. 41st foot at Karachi, to be ready to embark for Sakhar, in the event of having to push on the other wing from Dádar upward. He also directed the 2nd native grenadiers, under orders to return to Bombay when relieved, to stand fast for the time in Upper Sind. On the 15th he heard of the flight of the Durráni Naib of Shál, a disaffected Afghan, closely related to one of the more prominent opponents of the Shah; and requested Brigadier-General England to send up the wing of a *sipahi* corps, so as to complete a force at Kwatta consisting of two strong regiments of native infantry (minus three companies at Kalá Abdullah), two nine-pounders of European (Bombay) artillery, and two nine-pounders of the Bolan rangers, with a company of Bengal artillerymen. He would then be 'under no anxiety whatever, were the rebels to come in their utmost strength against that post:' a contingency which might reasonably be contemplated with the object of stopping communications with Kandahar. In the young Khan he placed full confidence: he was satisfied of his disinclination to join any combination against the British. He closed a long letter to Mr. Colvin, discussing these subjects, with the statement that he was about to send up his report on the assistants and establishments of his agency, which he had reduced nearly a lakh (10,000*l.*) annually, without detriment to efficiency, and independently of reductions in the cost of the Indus flotilla. On December 18 he officially reported to the Governor-General the reforms already effected in these respects, and those about to be effected, addressing to Mr. Colvin a semi-official communication on the same question the day following. He also wrote to Mr. Colvin on the latter date to point out that, should rebellion break out at Kandahar (but *only* in that case), it would be advisable to withdraw the detachment of troops at the intermediate post of Kalá Abdullah; and he added:—





\*Should the counter-Suddozye league prove true, I shall have no fear of any serious agitation extending to this quarter and to the Ameers; but I have little doubt the early appearance of reinforcements from Guzerat and at Sonmeeanee will keep down the disaffected under any circumstances. Colonel Stacy has effected a satisfactory treaty with the Murrees . . . and nothing but the most untoward events in Afghanistan, and the spread of insurrection to our very borders, will cause any risk of serious agitation within my charge, and I am not apprehensive that it will extend so far, or that I shall be unable to quell it if it do take place. Although I have no fears for our Quetta post, I agree with Major Rawlinson in the policy of moving *up* as many troops as the accommodation at Quetta can possibly shelter.' Five companies were to march thither on the day following, and this addition to the force was, he believed, the utmost that could be accommodated. It was afterwards arranged with Brigadier-General England that a company of the 41st regiment of foot, completed to one hundred men, should at once move through the pass with the head-quarter wing of the 25th native infantry. Outram explains his chief aim to have been, the moral effect produced by the passage of troops *up* the Bolan, at a time when, according to Major Rawlinson, there was a growing impression that we were about to evacuate the country.

He wrote to Mr. Maddock, Secretary to the Government of India, on December 22:—

'No excitement has been caused in this country by the exaggerated rumours of disasters to us in Affghanistan which pour in from Candahar. There is little sympathy between the Affghans and Brahoes; and nothing but a general rise against us *on the score of religion* would tend to infect the tribes of Beloochistan. . . . I consider that it must be impossible for the rebels to overcome our troops, *if in the*





*Balla Hissar*, and with three months' provisions—as reported in the last accounts we have received from Jellalabad.' And to Mr. Colvin on the 23rd :—

'Lest his Lordship should be under anxiety regarding Quetta, I enclose the copy of a letter just received from Lieutenant Hammersley which, although evidently written for no other eye than my own, shows so exactly the feeling of the garrison, that I need not apologise for sending it, as affording the best security that our troops at that post cannot be beaten. I never had any anxiety on that subject; but the dangerous move of evacuating Killa Abdoola was, I confess, a source of some anxiety.' Then, in allusion to the return of the detachment from that fort: 'I was much delighted to learn of its safe arrival at Quetta, only five stragglers having fallen, slain by the Affghan horse in our own pay, who turned upon us when they found us in retreat.'

The traitors referred to belonged to a body of cavalry known as Bosanquet's; but what were these events to the more widespread calamity which had overtaken our countrymen and their native associates at Kabul? On the date last named, while Outram, in his usual untiring spirit and readiness to cope with detail, was discussing on paper, with Mr. Colvin, as also Colonel Stacy and Lieutenant French, the questions arising in his more immediate *entourage*, Sir William MacNaghten was shot by Muhammed Akbar Khan—the last of a series of individual murders soon to be followed by wholesale slaughter and all but annihilation. This intelligence did not reach Dádar for some four weeks; but in those days there was little in the general condition of Afghanistan, or the political situation in that country, to render the Anglo-Afghan alliance a fit subject of congratulation to British officers in North-Western India, especially at Christmas and the New Year. How cheerily, however, our 'warden





of the marches' wrote to despondent friends, even at this gloomy Christmas-tide, and notwithstanding his thorough grasp of the real perils of the situation—a grasp of which his many letters of this period give detailed proof—the following note to Mr. Willoughby, dated December 27, is a specimen :—

' Depend upon it you need have no fear of my napping in fancied security, from the fair professions of these people. Of course I know that, however *individuals* might feel well-disposed, they could not resist a sudden and general impulse of religious enthusiasm. But I have little fear of any outbreak being attempted, having so many screws secured in every direction that each chief would wait for his neighbour to begin first, and they cannot combine without my knowledge. Keep a good heart, my dear friend—"nil desperandum"—all will yet go well—we shall rise like the phoenix, resplendent from our ashes.'

On January 20, 1842, when retribution was all that remained to complete the tragedy, Outram wrote to Colonel Stacy :—' This is a lamentable *finale* to poor MacNaghten's career: but just what he ought to have expected from treating with the rebels at all. I am glad that after-negotiations appear to have been broken off under another attack on the cantonment, which I trust must have been followed by the garrison cutting its way into the Bala Hissar. . . . I think it may be as well to tell the Khan the whole truth at once, ascribing all our losses to treachery. . . . and giving hope that we still hold the Bala Hissar, which it is possible the cantonment garrison may have made their way to. However, exercise your own discretion as to at once informing the Khan and chiefs, or delaying till arrival here, which would perhaps be better. Tell what great preparations are making for re-invading the country, and that in three months all Afghanistan will again be subdued.'



Little by little, the whole truth became known,<sup>1</sup> Outram's abundant energies were taxed to the utmost to port the failing prestige of his country.

Throughout the trying occasion how keen was his affliction, how ardent his desire of honourable retrieval competent his appreciation, can only be thoroughly known to his fellow-workers, apparent as they may be from numerous letters of which the record has been preserved. Nor should the labours of his coadjutors be lost sight of in this retrospect. It has been already well said, in reference to the occasion, that 'to provide for the sustenance and support of the weak and scattered military posts within their jurisdiction; to inspire confidence in quarters wherein dangers threatened to consummate the very evils it apprehended; to aid in the retrieval of our tarnished honour by providing generals with the means of prosecuting a war of retribution; and to do so through the agency of those whom we wronged, and who were incited to rise against us—such were the duties which Major Outram and his able staff were called on to perform.'<sup>2</sup>

We now approach the period when a great change was wrought in the *personnel* of the Indian Government. Independent of special and exceptional circumstances, the season had arrived for new appointments in high places at Simla, Calcutta, and prescribed habit would take its course. February 28, 1842, Lord Auckland was relieved from arduous and responsible duties; and British India passed under the rule of his successor, Lord Ellenborough. Two days before, the departing Governor-General addressed a long and highly interesting letter to Major Outram, from which we feel at liberty to make the more pertinent extracts:

'You will feel, as we all of us feel, that our firm

<sup>1</sup> Appendix E.





242

CSL

JAMES OUTRAM.

1839-

must be for the troops in advance; but you will never sight of the great consideration that the basis of safety of power throughout the districts under your influence Sakkar and Shikarpore. And I should generally prefer moderate force very securely placed at Shikarpore, to a cantonment at that place, and I would have your gazines and the main body of your strength in the more healthy and accessible position of Sakkar.

‘It has given me pleasure to learn that you think it probable that the Khan of Kelat may at no distant period be entrusted with the defence of Shál, of Dadur, and Kree—and it might perhaps be good policy that he be made to feel at once our disposition to give to him and his tribes this accession of power and of territory as soon as our difficulties in Afghanistan shall be brought to a close.

‘It is possible that a very large force may in the end be collected by you for the summer in Shál and Mastung, and might safely hold the language which may please you to all around you: and as the cold weather may approach, you might settle on your own terms all the territories which lie between Shál and Kurachee, always keeping out, however, that excellent plan of conciliation which you have acted towards Belochistan. I would endeavour to save at least thus much of our late accessions of power from the disasters which have been brought upon them. This is probably the last letter that I shall have to write to you, and I would take my leave of you with assurance to you, that you have from day to day, since your appointment, added to that high estimate with which I long regarded your character, and which led me to place confidence in you. It is mortifying and galling to me to feel that you had nearly brought to success’





security and influence, for the happiness of the population of immense tracts, and for your own and our honour, should be endangered by events of which our military history has happily no parallel. You will, I know, do well in the storm, and I trust that, as far as the interests confided to you are concerned, you will enable us to weather it.

And he did well, as the world has testified; and the storm *was* weathered, as history has certified. But 'the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill.' Were there not thousands of instances of merit unacknowledged, to be drawn from the annals of everyday life; did not lame and halt ones reach the goal, when the nimble-footed fail; was not strength subdued by cunning, the bread of the wise given to charlatans, and wealth marred by ignoble uses; and were not the ignorant and unworthy set in honourable seats—how could we interpret this passage of an unadying record left by the wisest of kings to after-generations? Surely the wisdom of these golden words is in their truth.





## CHAPTER IX.

1842.

Retrospect of Outram's work in Sind and Baluchistan, from February to November, 1842—Return from Dōdar to Sakhar—Disaster at Haikalzai—Letter to Mr. Maddock, on available military resources—Return to Kwatta—Subordination to Major-General Nott—Transfer of the Shāl and Sibi districts to Kalāt—Displeasure of Governor-General—Return of General England's force to Sind—Arrival at Sakhar of Major-General Sir Charles Napier—Outram remanded to regimental duty.

LORD Auckland's departure might have been personally a source of greater distress to Outram, who had so long enjoyed that nobleman's confidence, had it not occurred at a time when the honour of his country was at stake, and when so much responsibility in the maintenance of that honour devolved upon himself. Had it been possible to instigate his zeal and energy yet further in the cause, the arrival in India of a new Governor-General would have proved a likely means of imparting the required stimulus. But he was in reality at boiling-point; and his efforts were now directed to putting pressure upon others—in many cases upon men invested with public functions like himself, though higher in the official scale, and some of them cast in a different mould. He had written, only a few days before Lord Ellenborough had set foot on Indian soil, to Major Rawlinson in Kandahar, expressing delight at being made the channel of communication to General Nott, in forwarding the direct orders of superior authority to hold fast in that city.<sup>1</sup> 'The Govern-

<sup>1</sup> Among the many official reports left by Sir James Outram is the copy of a correspondence between General Nott and Major Rawlinson, bearing date





ment of India,' he told Mr. Willoughby, 'had at last recovered from its panic, and displayed the determination and vigour necessary for this crisis.' In a previous letter to Lieutenant Hammersley, he had expressed his hope that Kandahar would hold out as Sale had resolved to do at Jallalabad, at any rate until the views of the new Governor-General became known; adding, 'I cannot believe that a retrograde movement will be allowed by Lord Ellenborough . . . until we have rescued or avenged our captured countrymen at Cabool. I doubt not General Pollock will immediately force the Khaibar Pass to Jallalabad, and, having discretionary power, will then push on to Cabool, where by that time dissensions among the Afghans will favour him.'

To Colonel Palmer, commanding at Ghazni, he addressed a remarkable letter, almost on the eve of Lord Ellenborough's disembarkation, giving strong reasons why the orders to evacuate his post, issued upon due compulsion from Kabul,

February 1, 1842, consequent on the receipt of orders to evacuate Kandahar. We quote two remarkable passages, each worthy of preservation. The latter officer writes:—'I am led to believe that we should avail ourselves of the discretion which is left to us by Government, and shape our proceedings rather with the view to prospective, than immediate retirement, aiming to create such an impression of our power in the minds of the inhabitants of this part of Afghanistan, while we remain in the country, as shall efface the memory of the disasters at Cabul, and lead the people to respect our national character, if not to remember with gratitude the many benefits we have conferred on them.'

In the reply, the view of the situation is thus stated:—'I think our instructions from Government will be widely different from those dated December 3, 1841, and until we receive further orders *I will not consent to retire from this country*. I could offer many reasons for this determination, but at present it is not necessary.' Some one has underlined in pencil the words here rendered in italics, and written in the margin of Outram's copy: 'This is very good; we may be sure he is in his position at Candahar.' Kaye alludes to Major Rawlinson's letter of February 1 in an extract from that distinguished officer's MS. journal of the 21st idem, but does not quote from it.

In the P.S. of a letter to Major Rawlinson at this period we find Outram's summary of the tactics most suitable for warfare in Afghanistan, viz.: '*Attack the enemy on every occasion*, and disabuse the opinion now obtaining that the Afghans are a match for us in the field.' So think, and so act, our gallant frontier officers now.





should not be obeyed. He strove to re-assure him by the prospect of speedy relief which the despatch of a brigade up the passes from India would enable General Nott to afford him from Kandahar. 'We can have no fears for your force in the meantime . . . .' he wrote :—

Nothing could touch you in the citadel, even though the enemy may be in possession of the town; for of course you would leave no artillery in the town, and your musketry from the citadel alone, must render the town a dangerous occupation for the enemy. We hear they attempt to mine you, but fear not that you will fail to counteract such efforts by sallies, and the occasional favour of shells and other combustibles, for nowhere could they find shelter to commence their operations under so commanding a fire; if a lodgment is effected, we know it would be destroyed by countermines or outward sally;—doubtless you would have frequent opportunities of destroying any stores of powder the enemy might collect for the purpose of loading a mine, by the rifle practice of your officers with Norton's shells (egg-bull, with tin tube let in at the small end, filled with powder, and closed at the outward end by a percussion cap)—by mining they may draw off the water from your wells, but still we fear not for you, the river running directly under and within range of your musketry. In fact, we are quite satisfied that you would cheerfully meet and undergo every difficulty rather than surrender on *any terms*, which, as in the dreadful Cabool instance, would be destruction. It is feared that the Cabool artillery given over to the enemy, may be brought against you when the roads will admit of their transport, but we have every hope that in the meantime the rebel chiefs will be too much occupied by dissensions among themselves to think of you; or, in the expectation of our advance from Peshawur, they may keep the artillery at the capital, or send it to oppose our troops; but even should it be brought against you, you have some good artillery to oppose, by the aid of which we doubt not you would successfully resist all efforts of the enemy, in the confidence of ultimate relief. General Sale has no fears for Jallalabad, where he has strengthened the works and laid in provisions. All is quiet at Quetta, and in Scinde and Belochistan at present; Lord Ellenborough, the new Governor-General, is expected at Calcutta about this time; the





birth of a Prince of Wales, and an extensive brevet in consequence, is the only news of interest by the last mail. Our affairs are prospering in China, and the Burmese, Nepaulese, &c., betray no hostile intentions.

The history of the first Anglo-Afghan campaign is too well known to require any separate, or expository sketch in these pages. We do not, therefore, think it necessary to explain all allusions to passing events, in our extracts from the papers before us. Yet it is well to state that, in reviewing the work of one man at that critical period, we are not confining the retrospect to Outram's own correspondence<sup>1</sup>—full and varied as it is. Reference also is made, where desirable for truth and clearness, to independent narratives.

It must be premised that the position of Major Outram in Sind, and of Mr.—better known in later years at the Council Board as Sir—George Russell-Clerk, on the north-west frontier, was that of men who had good reason to fear that an ignominious withdrawal of our forces from Afghanistan was contemplated, without an effort either to release our captives or to restore our most dangerously shattered prestige. They both foresaw the disastrous results of such a solution of our embarrassments, a solution fatal to the future peace and prosperity of India. They both saw how easy it would be for Pollock and Nott to open the way for retreat by aggressive action and the consequent release of our prisoners and reassertion of our power. And they both risked their all in persistent endeavour to induce the Governor-General to see things in the same light and act accordingly. It is not our province to follow the fortunes of the chivalrous Bengal

<sup>1</sup> Of the twelve correspondents, whose names appear on the title-page of the selections from Outram's letters written in 1841-42, and printed for private circulation, but two are now living, Sir Henry Rawlinson, and Sir George Clerk. Sir Henry Lawrence, General Nott, Colonel Sutherland, Sir James Carnac, Sir Richmond Shakespeare, the political assistants, Hammersley and Browne, and the secretaries Maddock, Durand, and Willoughby—have all passed away.





civilian, but it will be seen how his like-minded comrade fared in the struggle. It would but weary the reader to multiply quotations from Outram's many letters bearing on the one aim. Directly and indirectly, officially and demi-officially, by appeal and by allusion, he continued to press the matter during these drearily busy months; others, besides the Generals Pollock and Nott, strove towards the same end, and at last prevailed—after a fashion. Henry Lawrence, himself commissioner of Pesháwar during the crisis, and a correspondent of Outram's—though personally, then and for many years after, a stranger to him—has had naturally something to say on the subject; and thus wrote in the 'Calcutta Review' of September 1845: 'James Outram in one quarter, and George Clerk—a kindred spirit—in another, were the two men who then stood in the breach; who *forced* the authorities to listen to the fact against which they tried to close their ears, that the proposed abandonment of the British prisoners in Afghanistan would be as dangerous to the State, as it was base towards the captives. These counsels were successfully followed: the British nation thanked our Indian rulers, while, of the two men, without whose persevering remonstrances and exertions Nott and Pollock might have led back their armies, without being permitted to make an effort to retrieve our credit—Clerk was slighted, and Outram superseded!'

These words supply the key to what has now to be related in regard to a cloudy period of James Outram's career. The experiences of 1879 will enable the English reader the better to appreciate the events of 1842. But it must be borne in mind that we were then strangers throughout the independent territories which lay within Major Outram's jurisdiction—from Karáchi on the ocean to the Khojak Pass—strangers, moreover, whose proceedings had tended to alienate into enmity both Sindis and Baluchis; that the





passes above Dádar and the Peshin valley swarmed with predatory tribes then unaccustomed to the curb, and who had yet to learn the inexorable sweep of the Farangi sword and the inexhaustible flow of Farangi gold; that these were days when the spell of our success had just been rudely broken, while all those upon whom we intruded ourselves had only too good cause to dread our rapacity, and distrust our motives; and that while 'etappen' arrangements were then undreamt of, it was the political agent who had to extract from these invaded territories means of transport, local supplies, and nearly all else needful to an army in motion, save hard cash, powder and shot. On him it fell to 'manage' predatory hordes, to maintain communications, to organise local levies, to be the 'intelligence department,' and much else besides. All this in addition to what may be termed 'diplomatic' functions throughout these varied principalities and tribes; with which were connected undefined, or one might say infinite, civil duties involved in efforts to check misrule and ameliorate the condition of the peoples within his influence. In the case of Baluchistan, these duties included the administration of Shál, and other important tracts. This is but an incomplete *résumé* of the work which tasked the energies of Major Outram and his single-minded assistants during the protracted crisis of 1841-2. We must, however, confine our extracts and allusions to a few of the more personal features of the time, leaving the reader to fill in, *ad libitum*, the everyday details of duty and of danger, of worry and of anxiety, of responsibility and of perplexity. The mass and variety of correspondence available are enormous. Illustrations of points dwelt upon might be multiplied to any extent; but patience must not be overtried, and to condense without obscurity is no easy task. We may insert here a letter of May 19, 1842, to Mr. Clerk, not only as illustrative of the above remarks, but as contain-





ing views of general policy which are of weighty interest in our own days :—

I note with regret—but not surprise—that your opinions as to the measures proper to be pursued in Afghanistan do not meet those of the Governor-General, who cannot with all his *home* Indian experience, help being swayed in his estimate of the physical difficulties to be encountered in Afghanistan, and of Afghan prowess, by the results of the past six months. Now these, it must be evident to any *practical* man capable of judging the *true value* of both, were brought about by neither the one nor the other. There exist no further physical difficulties (to signify) than what have already been overcome—the passage of the Khybur on one side, and that of the Bolan and Kojuck Passes on the other; and as to the *prowess* of the Afghans, our experience of four years among them, during which we have had some twenty or thirty hand to hand engagements with them, ought to have lowered instead of raised in our eyes their character in that respect; for in no instance—except in that absurd business of Hykulzye—have they ever been able to cope with us, however superior in numbers, or in strength of position! Every engagement only tended to heighten the despair of the enemy of ever being able to compete with us in the field; and had it not been that our own measures at Cabul drove certain chiefs to desperation, and our insane arrangement of placing treasure and *godowns* (depôts) within their power, enabled those chiefs to inflame the rabble, and commit the whole city, by laying open those stores to indiscriminate plunder—at the same time incapacitating our troops—at this moment, I say, the Afghans would have continued subservient; and as it is, will succumb to any demonstration of our strength. This *you* and *I* know, and every officer of experience in Afghanistan is convinced of. But his Lordship cannot but give heed to the more timid counsellors who preach ‘*prudently* withdrawing from *further* contest’ against an *exasperated* NATION—having in his recollection the struggles of Spain against Napoleon’s efforts, and his disastrous expulsion from Russia! True, the parallels *appear* complete, but they are not really so, and cannot be drawn until 30,000 British bayonets can keep all Europe in subjection, as they now do India. Then—but not till then—will the rules of European warfare extend to Asia. Had we heretofore estimated our enemies in this quarter of the globe on such equality,





we never should have obtained India, nor should we have retained it; and if Lord Ellenborough is induced to swerve from the only course now left us for recovering our honour, through an over-estimate of *any* Asiatic enemy—from that period will be dated the decline of our power in India; and those nearer home will be encouraged to lay their heads together, and to oppose the Government on every favourable opportunity for raising a disturbance. Our armies must be increased to overawe the then turbulent, but hitherto peaceable population of India, while at the same time the revenues decrease owing to such disturbances, until either the people become too powerful, or the country too impoverished to admit of our continuing the government.

With such a result in view, I shall continue to urge, by every means in my power, directly or indirectly, what I with you feel to be the most advantageous course, until we are committed beyond recall, which I still hope the favourable turn of affairs in Afghanistan, and General Nott's decisive opinion, may avert; or, until reproved for intruding such opinions—which I may now expect to be, since you, whose opinion is entitled to so much greater weight, have been checked in expressing what, as coming from me, has hitherto escaped notice only from being less entitled to consideration.

One other extract will complete the general view of Afghan politics. The anxiety here expressed regarding the course of action to be decided on by Government, and by General Nott under his perplexing instructions, formed the chief of the heart-burdens which weighed upon Major Outram throughout this period of doubt and mystery. In June his hopes were raised by Pollock's call to Nott to advance on Kabul upon his (Pollock's) own responsibility as senior officer, and the strength of the indefinite latitude just accorded to the generals. Outram urged Nott strongly to act on this soldierly summons, but was disappointed; and anxieties were only set at rest by the tardy advance in August. He thus continued his train of thought in a letter to Sir R. Shakespear, General Pollock's military secretary, of May 21:—





I am much obliged to you for your very interesting and instructive letter, dated 4th inst. and lose no time in thanking you for it, and in assuring you that I cordially coincide in all your views, excepting in the advisability of assuming Afghanistan to ourselves, which you appear to lean towards, in preference to the alternative of withdrawing after re-occupying Cabul, which I would prefer. I have always been opposed to the *location* of our troops in Afghanistan; and to show you what my sentiments were on the subject so far back as this time three years ago, I enclose an extract from a letter I wrote the Bombay Secretary when we were at Candahar in 1839. Late events have of course strengthened that opinion; but I have ever been adverse to withdraw our troops, *after we were committed* in the country, until we can do so with honour: and I agree with you that cannot now be, *until we have re-asserted our power at Cabul*. You will have been thunderstruck, as I was, on the receipt of the Governor-General's orders of the 19th ult., which I observed were forwarded to General Pollock, and, I conclude, were to the same effect as those sent through me to General Nott, of the same date; and I am pretty sure that the sentiments of Generals Pollock and Nott, yourself, Mr. Clerk, and indeed every practical man concerned, coincide with mine.

. . . . I must say, however, that I would recommend the return of the united armies by this route, instead of by the Khybur, which for the reasons stated in a letter I addressed to Mr. Maddock on the subject,<sup>1</sup> I would abandon altogether; returning the whole army by this route, wherein there is no chance of obstruction, such as retiring troops would be subject to in the Khoord Cabul and Khybur passes. The only pass of any difficulty on this route, the Bolan, we hold the key of in the Brahooes, and I am sure I could ensure the passage of our armies by this route without the slightest loss.<sup>2</sup> From hence, a portion might be shipped round to Calcutta, and the rest march by land to the upper provinces. I shall continue in much anxiety till I hear General Pollock's determination on receipt of the order of the 19th April—still feel little doubt as to the course he will adopt.

<sup>1</sup> In an official despatch, dated May 2 (which is not given in the Blue Book).

<sup>2</sup> It will be seen hereafter how Outram fulfilled this pledge, in withdrawing General England's portion of the army, under far less favourable circumstances than would have attended the return of the whole united army, after having been victorious at Cabul.



About March 10 he left Dádar for Sind, and Sakhar on the Indus was selected as a convenient spot both for his local work and keeping open the communication with Afghanistan. As regards the change of locality, Sakhar may have the advantage over Dádar in cheerfulness and beauty of outer scenery, but for the six months commencing with March the heat is simply indescribable in both places. At such a time the charms of landscape can only be appreciated by the most æsthetic of Englishmen as a brilliant opera can be appreciated by a listener with a splitting headache. He had been at Sakhar for two or three days when, on March 27, he thus addressed Captain Durand, private secretary to the Governor-General:—

I am waiting with much anxiety the development of Lord Ellenborough's views in our present most difficult position. I almost fear the very many and serious obstacles which present themselves against the only course left to retrieve our honour, will deter his Lordship from attempting it at present. The most serious is, the feeling which has displayed itself among the sepoys of General Pollock's force of late: but if he can induce them to go on to Jellalabad, I do hope the rest would be plain sailing;—certainly if they can be persuaded to pursue their march on Cabool it would be so, aided by a simultaneous advance from Candahar—and provided Colonel Palmer maintains his position at Ghuznee, which I am sorry to find by the accounts from Cabool, dated 5th inst., he was thinking of evacuating; but I am in hopes that my letter from Dadur (which I despatched on the 24th ult., and was to have been delivered in twelve days) would reach that officer in time to cause him to defer such a step until he receives the positive orders of Government, for I am happy to see that young Conolly has thrown obstacles in the way, calculated to cause delay. I hope that having thrown up the Pass General England's brigade, will be approved of by the Governor-General: whatever course may be resolved on, it was equally necessary—either with the view to the *advance* or *retreat* of General Nott's army—and indispensable to provide supplies of treasure and ammunition, which were absolutely necessary to enable the Candahar troops to move,