The Punjab
As
A Sovereign State
(1799-1839)

GULSHAN LALL CHOPRA

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THE PANJAB

AS A

SOVEREIGN STATE

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SOVEREIGN STATE

(1799-1839)

THESIS APPROVED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

BY

GULSHAN LALL CHOPRA, M.A. (PANJAB),
PH.D. (LONDON):
Fellow of the Royal Historical Society; Barrister-at-Law; sometime Lecturer at the School of Oriental Studies, University of London; Lecturer, Government College, Lahore.

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ERRATA

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Dr. Chopra's work was done in England and is based upon original and unpublished documents preserved at the India Office and the British Museum libraries and not to be found in India, particularly the very copious mass of material codified in the Political Consultations. It is regretable that at this time the Record Office in Lahore had not been reorganised and its contents made more accessible. It is however hoped that Dr. Chopra will now be able to supplement the valuable and interesting work he has already achieved by even more material of a primary nature from the Record Office of the Punjab Government.

LAHORE:
January 1928.

H. L. O. GARRETT, I.E.S.,
Keeper of Records of the Government of the Punjab.

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FOREWORD

Dr. Chopra's work is a thesis produced by him for the Ph.D. Degree of the London University. It is an exhaustive study of the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, his court, his army and his policy. The period must always be one of great interest to the student of Indian History. The rapidity with which the Sikh monarchy was built up and the equal rapidity with which it disintegrated on the death of the Maharaja are strangely dramatic. This latter period, which is not covered by Dr. Chopra's thesis, has been dealt with exhaustively by Mr. Grey in his "Great Anarchy in the Punjab."

One peculiar feature of Ranjit Singh's reign was the employment of European adventurers—Civil and Military—on a far larger scale than in any other Indian monarchy hitherto. Dr. Chopra's list of such runs up to fifty-four. The recent investigations conducted by Mr. Grey and myself, bring up the total to nearly seventy. They were of all nationalities and of all classes of society. At one end of the scale are to be found refined and well educated soldiers like Court or Allard, at the other drunken deserters from the ranks such as Michæl O'Brian or that prince of liars, Alexander Gardner. The latter deliberately stole the adventures of other men and passed them off as his own, and was so plausible in his narrative that he completely deceived a number of people—including his biographer.

Harlan, the American Doctor, another of Dr. Chopra's list, produced a volume of his adventures which is not only far from truth but so wildly improbable as to make one doubt his sanity.

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PREFACE.

The historical material upon which the following thesis is based may be divided into four sections, as arranged in the Bibliography. The first section comprises a number of Persian manuscripts, of which short descriptions are given in the catalogues of the various libraries where they are lodged. I find, however, that these descriptions are not, in all cases, correct. The catalogues sometimes give the title inaccurately and sometimes omit the author's name. For example, the title of manuscript no. 4 of my Bibliography is described in Rieu's catalogue of the British Museum as "A History of the Sikhs from their origin to A. D. 1811," and the name of the author is not mentioned. A perusal of the volume, however, shows that the real title is *Kitab-i-Tarikh-i-Panjab*,* and that its author is Khushwaqt Rai, once the Company's news-writer at Lahore. A study of Sohan Lal's *Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh* shows that the author called it *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh* (f. 199), the title which he applied to his enlarged work, written subsequently, and published by his son in 1884. Again, in the first folio of the *Tarikh-i-Mulk-i-Hazara* it is wrongly described as *Tawarikh-i-Jamun*, whereas it is a history of Hazara and the adjoining districts on the frontier, and not of Jamun.

The Persian material is almost all in the form of chronicles. The most important of these manuscripts is *Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh* by Sohan Lal. He was a court

*Throughout this thesis an attempt is made to conform to the latest systems of transliteration, with the exception of certain names which have become stereotyped by common usage.

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chronicler of Ranjit Singh for several years, and was intimately acquainted with the activities of the *Darbar* at Lahore. His work is the most exhaustive and elaborate narrative of the events of the Maharaja's reign, and is the greatest storehouse of information. The facts are recorded in chronological order, the volume containing over five hundred folios. The copy I have used is the one given to Captain Wade, the British Political Assistant at Ludhiana in 1831, by Ranjit Singh himself. Both the language and the facts differ, though only to a slight extent, from the author's published work, called *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*. Captain Wade, who knew more about the affairs of Ranjit Singh than any other Englishman, writes on the fly-leaf of the volume as follows: "Allowing for the partiality of the writer's views and opinions as regards the fame and credit of his patron, yet as a record of dates and a chronicle of events, tested by a minute comparison with other authorities and my own personal investigations into its accuracy during my residence of seventeen years among the Sikhs, I am enabled to pronounce it in those two respects as a true and faithful narrative of Ranjit Singh's eventful life." This verdict is just even although the same praise cannot be accorded to the record of events preceding the Maharaja's reign.

Another important work—'Ibrat Nama—is likewise voluminous, and includes a detailed account of the incidents of the earlier period, as well as of Ranjit Singh's time. It deals not only with the political and military events, but also with the personalities at the Court and the customs and manners of the people. The greater portion of the volume, however, is devoted to the Sikhs. The author Mufti 'Ali-ul-din was a native of Lahore, but in 1823 went over to Ludhiana to reside there. This was due to what he describes as the tyranny of the Sikhs. He

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seems to have suffered in some manner at the hands of the Sikh officials. This fact has left traces in the writer's work, and has reduced his appreciation of Ranjit's achievements, as for example in the account of the conquest of Multan. The manuscript is dated 1854, and was on view at the Imperial Exhibition at Paris.

Bute Shah's *Tarikh-i-Panjab* is another manuscript of considerable historical value (1848). The writer was the *Peshkar* of Colonel Ochterloney, by whom he was asked to compile a history of the Sikhs. It also is a lengthy chronicle, extending to over four hundred folios. On the whole it is a faithful and correct account of the latter days of the Sikh sovereignty. The only defect is that, like other chronicles, it mainly deals with military events. The writer, however, shows some appreciation of the external policy of the Sikh ruler, and considers his government a distinct improvement over the old order.

The *Kitab-i-Tarikh-i-Panjab* is another reliable manuscript on the early period of Ranjit's career. The writer, as already stated, was Khushwaqt Rai, the Company's newswriter at Lahore. The work begins with the history of the *Gurus*, but deals less fully and correctly with this period than with the years succeeding the death of Banda. It is unfortunate that the account ends with the events that took place in 1811, since the author's treatment of the earlier topics promised a useful contribution to the knowledge of points which have remained obscure in the later period. The date is 1834, and this also was written at the request of Colonel Ochterloney.

A detailed account of all the less important manuscripts is unnecessary, although in the study of these I have found information hidden away in a record of secondary value as a whole, which was omitted from the previous sources. It may, however, be said that the

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writers of the Persian works in general pay little attention to the system of Sikh government. They scarcely touch upon such topics as the administration of justice, the methods of assessment and collection of revenues, and the machinery for preserving law and order. In fact they fail to describe in any detail the various departments of civil and military organisation.

Section 11 contains all the miscellaneous correspondence which passed between the Company's agents at Ludhiana and Ambala, the Resident at Dehli, and the Governor-General. This constitutes a useful source of information drawn from the personal observations of English officers who visited the Court of Lahore in a diplomatic capacity. Most of this correspondence is recorded in Bengal Political Consultations, and only a few of the communications can be found in the series known as the Bengal Secret and Political Consultations. A third series, called the India Proceedings, includes some material pertaining to the Maharaja's designs against Sindh, but is otherwise only corroboratory. The copious accounts existing in the first Consultations form an extremely fruitful fund of knowledge respecting the external policy of Ranjit Singh. The accounts given there of the military organisation of the Panjab are complete as to all its essential features. But while indispensable for the right understanding of the political and military events, the Consultations, like the Persian manuscripts, leave us uninformed concerning the system of civil administration prevailing in the kingdom.

Section 111 is composed of contemporary printed works. Their writers may be divided into two categories. First, foreign and Indian tourists, travellers, and military adventurers who visited the Court of Lahore on their way to or from Afghanistan, Kashmir, and Tibet. They have

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drama that followed,—such as Griffin, Thorburn, Douie, Payne, and others. Most of them were members of the Indian Civil Service, who, in the discharge of official duties, came in contact with the families whose ancestors had served under the Sikh government. Their works are partly based on valuable but disjointed family archives, and partly on the information gathered from the old rural survivors of the Sikh days. These books, however, betray a superficial knowledge of earlier Sikh history, and therefore scarcely appraise the benefits of the Sikh rule at their true value. None of these writers, except, perhaps, Griffin in his work, The Punjab Chiefs, seem to have studied their subject deeply. This work is a skilful piece of historical selection and re-arrangement. The author labours to present a fairly complete account of almost all the families of note in the province, and the nature of the service their ancestors rendered to the Sikh government. The book has the special merit of being the only one of its kind, and for our purpose far excels the author's more popular biographical volume. Indeed, it may be reckoned as a work of reference regarding some notabilities of this period.

The present thesis is divided into six chapters. In the first chapter, I have sought not only to trace the various stages in the extension of Ranjit's authority over the Panjab, but also to show that this was the outcome of a regular and sustained policy. The whole of the section, and particularly its concluding part, aims at elucidating this definite policy of consolidation, and endeavours to remove the erroneous judgment, which attributes the united kingdom to haphazard encroachments on neighbouring territory. In the second chapter, I have given a detailed statement of the origin and development of the relations of the Maharaja with two powers which lay

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given vivid impressions of their interviews with the ruler of the Panjab, and contributed varied side-lights on the men around the throne, their designs and capabilities and the future possibilities of the kingdom. Their narratives are generally the product of a disinterested and impartial judgment, although limited to matters of personal observation and experience. Except those among them who, like Gardner, Steinbach, and Honigberger were employed by the government of Lahore, they did not understand the working of the various departments. Hence in their writings they have seldom touched upon administrative topics, but are indispensable for a correct estimate of Ranjit's character. The second group includes the Diplomatic Officers, Political Agents, and the like, who visited Lahore at different times on behalf of the Company's government. Being the representatives of a predominant and friendly power in the land, they enjoyed the privilege of occasional invitations from Ranjit, and had ample opportunities of meeting him and his principal courtiers. Long experience and strict schooling in political affairs, together with several negotiations which they conducted with the Sikh potentate, gave them a deep insight into the military and political tendencies of his kingdom. Prinsep, Murray, Osborne, Cunningham and others have one common feature, *viz.*, they always try to supplement their facts with thoughtful discussion and criticism. They are enabled to do this by their intellectual training and equipment which was far superior to those of the Indian writers. But from the points of view of the methods of civil and revenue administration, and the organisation of the army, their accounts are equally meagre and scanty.

The last section is made up of the authors who wrote after the death of Ranjit Singh and the close of the tragic

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I hope I may claim to have rendered some assistance to lighten the labours of others along the path of historical research.

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beyond the eastern and western boundary of his kingdom, and have also studied the influence of his external connections on his internal policy, specially with regard to the creation of a huge disciplined force. I have attempted in the next two chapters a systematic account of the military and the civil administration of the kingdom. In addition to a prolonged discussion of the growth and organisation of the various branches of the army, and the degree of success attained by Ranjit in his reforming efforts, I have sought to examine and explain his financial system, including the methods of assessment and collection of revenue, and I have also attempted to set forth the judicial arrangements. The chapter on the "Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh" is designed to give in a compendious form the information needed by the student of general Sikh history. The last chapter contains a character sketch of the Maharaja, comprising a comparative study, and an independent judgment. This occasions a criticism of the various points on which differences of opinion have arisen on which, however, newly discovered facts seem to have a decisive bearing. The appendices include some statistical information, a minute personal examination of the Sikh coins, a short description of certain points of etiquette and ceremonial observed in the *Darbar*, and, last but not least, the reproduction of a number of documents from the Consultations. These latter, which have not hitherto been examined for historical purposes, indeed, make a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the history. In bringing to light many details which have a considerable accumulative value, and in making a frank criticism of the whole subject with these additional particulars and thereby suggesting a view of the character and policy of the Sikh ruler appreciably different from that usually maintained,

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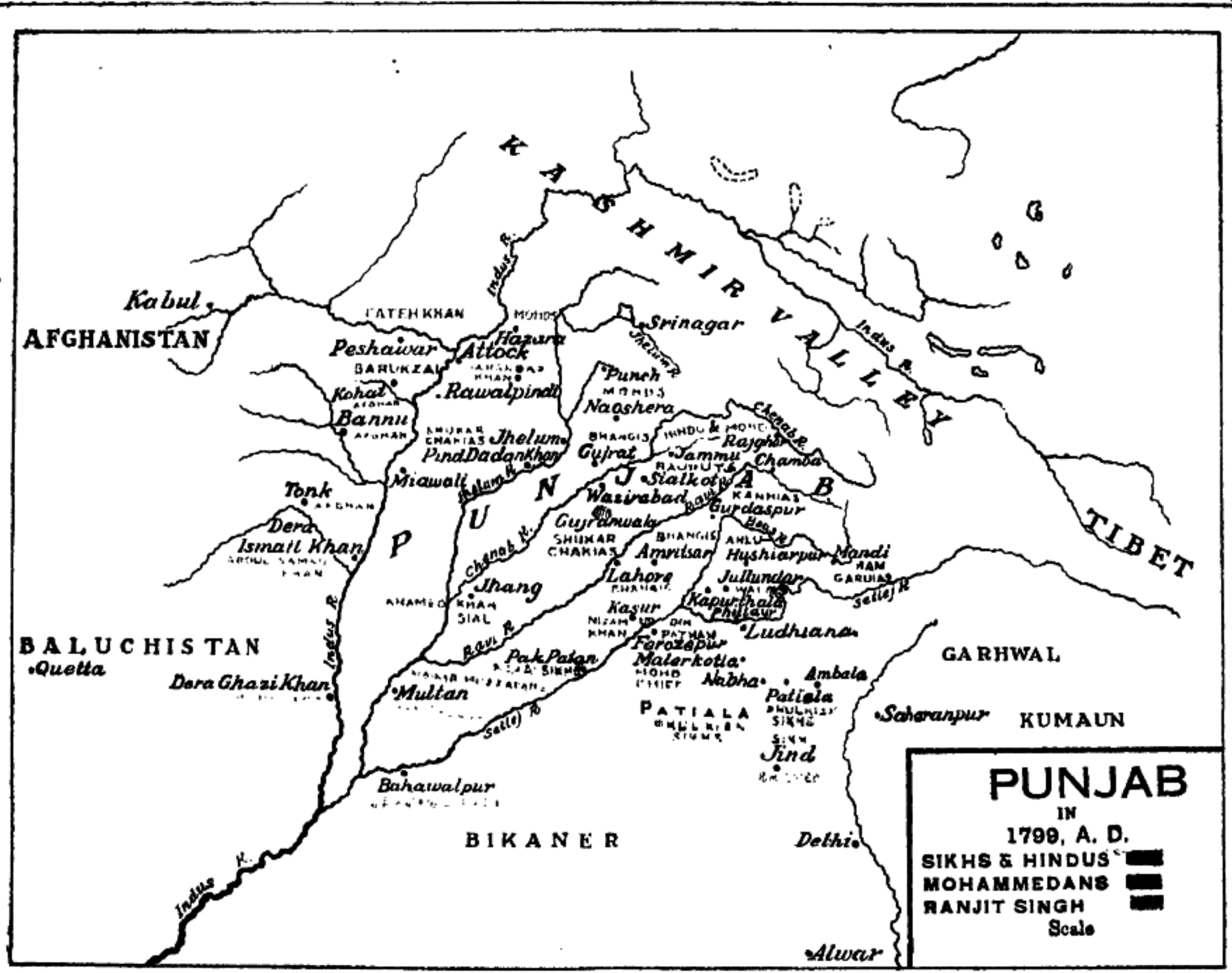

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CHAPTER I.

Events Leading to the Unification of the Panjab under Ranjit Singh.

A.—Introductory.

The Sikh power rose in the Panjab during the general confusion and anarchy which followed the invasions of Nadir Shah and the Abdali. Those invasions were continued for about thirty years and had resulted in completing the process of political disintegration which had set in at the death of Aurangzeb and increased under his inefficient successors. Even the nominal suzerainty of the Mughals over the Panjab disappeared, and with it the central authority in the province also collapsed. This in itself was an opportune moment for the Sikhs to re-emerge from their hilly places of refuge to which they had retired after 1716. Moreover the Durranis destroyed without replacing the Mughal provincial organisation of the Panjab. The policy of Ahmed Shah was mainly of military adventure but not of territorial acquisition. His object was more to plunder than to build an Empire; and consequently his deputies were left to their own resources in governing his Indian possessions. The Sikhs, on the other hand, formed a close fraternity of religious zealots and other discontented elements of the population. Their instincts and their needs impelled them to a life of plunder; and their position necessitated the building of forts for the protection of their settlements, which were known as *Deras* or *Garhis*. The stronger groups laid claims to a share of the produce of the lands. The Sikhs would

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issue forth to plunder under leaders who, either by individual bravery or by family influence, could gather round them relatives or personal followers. When a party succeeded in occupying a village or a piece of territory, it settled there, and seized the lands in which each member of the party had his share. The usual plan was to leave the cultivators unmolested on condition of their obeying the new masters and paying them the revenues. Different lordships were thus established, some of which proved short-lived, while others were more permanent. Such was the origin of the Sikh chieftains who established themselves in the Panjab about the middle of the 18th century.

The death of Ahmed Shah in 1773 changed their situation. Until that event they had exercised few functions of government other than the collection of revenues. For one thing, no permanent territorial delimitation was possible, so long as the country was regularly invaded. When that danger passed away, the control of the Sikh chiefs over their territories became more regular and systematic. This gave rise to the organisation known in Sikh history as that of the *Misl*. The *Misl* was an organisation, the members of which were bound to one another by communal ties; although later on the influence of locality in which the leader centred his activities transformed it for all practical purposes into a small state. The large number of separate principalities thus formed covered most of the land situated between the Indus and the Jamna. The *Misls* greatly varied in size and resources. Some of them were, in fact, no more than a party of armed band, who depended for its maintenance on the support of some larger *Misl*, and thus cannot be regarded as an independent organisation. For this reason, it is usual only to take into consideration the more important ones which, at this time, were twelve in number. These

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are: (1) the Bhangi *Misl,* (2) the Shuker-Chakia *Misl,* (3) the Kanhya *Misl,* (4) the Nakai *Misl,* (5) the Ramgarhias, (6) the Dallewalias, (7) the Ahluwalias, (8) the Faizulpurias or the Singhpurias, (9) the Karorsinghia *Misl,* (10) the Phulkian *Misl,* (11) the Nishanwalas, and (12) the Nihangis or the Shahids. A detailed account of the rise and growth of each falls outside the scope of the present work. But the following general conclusions, based upon a comparative study of their origin and development may be formulated. In the first place, they were named either after their leaders, or from some general peculiarity of their members, or from the locality in which they were situated. Secondly, they were principally composed of men belonging to the sturdy race of the Jats. Thirdly, their founders were originally freelances, who, as their possessions and followers increased, acquired the character of chieftains. In this way they passed from plunderers to conquerors, and from conquerors to rulers of their territories. Fourthly, the internal administration of each *Misl* was carried on not according to any hard and fast rules but in practical conformity with customs and traditions. There was no fixed law of succession; although in practice the son or the nearest relation usually succeeded a deceased chief, subject always to his ability to maintain his position. Lastly, the *Misls* were constantly at war with one another.

Side by side with the growth of the original Sikh settlements into *Misls,* there had developed another important institution, known as the *Gurumata.* The word literally means the Council of the *Gurus'* followers. It was an assembly representative of the Sikhs. We cannot definitely say who founded this institution. From its name, functions, procedure and other characteristics, however, it seems probable that it owes its origin to the genius

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of Gobind Singh, the most martial of the Sikh *Gurus* (Pontiffs). Its early growth also is shrouded in mystery. It probably ceased to exist after the Mughal repression in the beginning of the 18th century until it was revived during Abdali's invasions. It then served as the central institution of a loose confederacy formed by the *Misls*. Its constitution was somewhat indefinite; for though in theory it was intended to be democratic, yet in practice it invariably consisted of the chiefs of various *Misls*. Within the Council, however, the members were of equal rank. The leadership of the federation was elective; and the authority of the elected Sirdar (Chief) was limited to the direction of the military policy of the *Misaldars*. He was in reality their chosen war-lord. Thus the main purpose of the *Gurmata* was to preserve the corporate existence of the Sikh people. This fact justifies its aristocratic character and entitles it to be considered as a national institution. It was in reality so looked upon by its members in those days. They recognised its value, not only from the point of view of saving their respective possessions, but also for the safety of their theocratic commonwealth, the Khalsa (the Body of the Chosen). Malcolm thus describes the proceedings of this assembly: "When the chiefs meet upon this solemn occasion it is concluded that all private animosities cease, and that every man sacrifices his personal feelings at the shrine of the general good, and, actuated by principles of pure patriotism, thinks of nothing but the interests of religion and the commonwealth to which he belongs. When the chiefs and principal leaders are seated, the Adi-Granth* and

*.*Adi-Granth* is the name of the Scripture compiled by Arjun, the fifth *Guru* of the Sikhs. It consists of the compositions of the first four *Gurus* and of Arjun himself, together with the verses of other bards and minstrels in praise of the *Gurus*.

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for the common weal. In the Panjab there was no such man and no such spirit. The victories over the Afghans between 1760 and 1767 were claimed on behalf of the *Khalsa*, it is true; but under this thin veneer of religious purpose were the real motives of self-interest and self-aggrandisement. Thus the *Misls* and the *Khalsa* Commonwealth were to serve merely as intermediary stages in the political evolution of the Sikh people; and their present history was to form one of the links of that elaborate process by which a community, at first deeply religious and peaceful, took to the profession of arms, developed military instincts of a high order, and completed its final destiny under a strong military despotism. Henceforth the course of events seemed clear even to a casual English traveller,* who wrote in 1783 that "we may see some ambitious chief, led on by his genius and success, absorbing the power of his associates, display from the ruins of their commonwealth the standard of monarchy." The following pages will show how remarkably true his verdict proved to be.

B.—Ranjit Singh and the Central Panjab.

When in 1790 Ranjit Singh succeeded to the leadership of the Shukerchakia *Misl*, the Panjab was divided as follows. The central part of the province, or the land situated between the Jehlam and Sathuj, was mostly under the *Misls*. Chief among these were the Bhangis, who besides controlling a long strip of territory along the River Jehlam held in possession the greater part of the

*Forster, while travelling in Northern India in 1783, *i.e.* only three years after the birth of Ranjit Singh, made these remarks. *Vide* Travels, 11, 240.

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Daswen Padshah Ka Granth* are placed before them. They all bend their heads before these Scriptures and exclaim: 'Wah! Guru Ji Ka Khalsa! Wah! Guru Ji Ki Fateh!'†

Karah Prasad‡ next receives the salutation of the assembly, who then rise, and the Akalis pray aloud. The members then resume their seats and partake of the Karah Prasad, in token of their general and complete union in one cause. The Akalis§ then exclaim: 'Sirdars, this is a Gurumata,' on which prayers are again said aloud. The chiefs then draw closer and say to each other: 'The sacred Granth is betwixt us; let us swear by our Scriptures to forget all internal disputes and to be united.' This moment of religious fervour and ardent patriotism is taken to reconcile all animosities. They then proceed to consider the danger with which they are threatened, to settle the best plans for averting it, and to choose the generals who are to lead their armies against the common enemy."‖ The fruits of conquest were divided among the Sirdars who took part in it. The meetings of this Council were held annually during the *Dusschra* festival. This simple Constitution of the Sikh Commonwealth sufficed to preserve the *Khalsa* through

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*The phrase means the *Granth*, or Scripture, of the tenth *Guru*, *i.e.* Gobind Singh.

†'Hail! the chosen band of the *Guru!* Hail! the victory for the *Guru!*' This exclamation was most probably introduced by Gobind Singh among his chosen followers. It became the war-cry of the Sikhs.

‡The name of an ordinary Indian pudding, which is largely used by the Hindus at religious occasions.

§A special order of religious zealots, said to have been founded by Gobind Singh. The word *Akali* means Immortal.

‖*Vide* Sketch of the Sikhs, pp. 77-78.

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troubled times.

I have mentioned in a previous paragraph that the *Misls* were constantly at war with one another. This state of things resulted from a change in circumstances. The earlier Sikhs of the days of Gobind Singh and Banda were a purely religious community, suffering from great persecutions. In taking up arms, their chief object had been the defence of their religion and individual existence. Their predatory practices were merely the means of securing that object. With the later Sikhs, however, the case was different. They were fighting principally for a dominion. Moreover, like their predecessors, they had not to contend with a power of native growth but with an alien invader from a distant region. The intervals between his successive invasions afforded, as already explained, favourable respites to Sikh leaders to acquire territory. This was a new factor of serious consequence for the Sikh theocracy, because it tended to create mutual jealousies and rivalries among its members, and thereby to undermine their sense of unity. The popularity of the *Gurumata* rapidly declined with disappearance of danger from the Durranis. There is hardly a trace of any meetings being held after the year 1764—the year which marks the last serious effort of the Abdali to visit the Panjab. It was not even summoned during Zeman Shah's invasion in 1798. During the years which intervene between 1764 and 1805, when a representative meeting of the Sikhs was held, the sessions of the *Gurumata* seem to have been abandoned. The foundation on which a great republic in the East might have been built vanished, without the immensity of the loss being realised. There was, in fact, only one Washington in the world in those days, but he was in America. The spirit which animated him and his followers was one of liberty and law and an ambition

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districts of Gujrat, Sialkot, Lahore and Amritsar. Their possessions however were not contiguous, for, both between Gujrat and Sialkot and between Gujrat and Lahore, were situated large tracts and several strongholds belonging to other *Misls*. Wazirabad was under an independent Sikh chief, Jodh Singh. Gujranwala formed the centre of Ranjit Singh's own *Misl*, the Shukerchakias. The Shukerchakia possessions also lay around Sialkot, Gujrat, and across the River Jehlam in Pind-dadan Khan and Miani. The lands between Amritsar and Ludhiana were divided among various Sirdars, the most important being the Kanhyas, with their seat at Batala in the Gurdaspur district, and Ahluwalias, with their centre at Kapurthala and their possessions reaching in the vicinity of Jalandhar in one direction and embracing Hoshiarpur on the other. Jalandhar itself, however, was in the control of a separate Sirdar. Some tracts in the districts of Gurdaspur and Amritsar, and in the Jalandhar Doab, were held by the Ramgarhias, whose possessions also lay across the Satluj. The country which intervenes between Lahore and Multan was divided among the Pathans of Kasur, the Nakai Sirdars of Pakpatan, and the Sials of Jhang. A number of Mohammedan and Rajput chieftains administered Rajauri, Bhimber, Jamun, and the adjoining lands. A Hindu Raja, Sansar Chand, possessed the Kangra Hills; but Chamba belonged to Raja Charat Singh. The province of Multan was under Nawab Muzafar Khan Sadozai. Beyond the Indus, Dera Ismail Khan was in the possession of Abdul Samand Khan, while Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan were in the hands of the Daudputra chief, Bahawal Khan. The fort of Attock was held by Jahandad Khan, the Wazir Khel chief; and Mankera, Bannun, Kohat and Tonk were under different Mohammedan rulers. The valley of Peshawar was ad-

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ministered by Fateh Khan Barukzai; and the province of Kashmir by his brother 'Azim Khan. Most of the Mohammedan chiefs were originally feudatories of the kings of Afghanistan, but had lately become independent by reason of the death of Ahmed Shah and the weakness of his successors.

The Cis-Satluj portion of the Panjab was divided among the ruling families of Patiala, Jind, Nabha, and several other less important Sirdars. Most of these chiefs had descended originally from the Phulkian *Misl*. They are even now known by that name. Another *Misl*, the Nishanwalas, possessed some territory between Ambala and Saharanpur. Only one small state, that of Malerkotla, was governed by an Afghan dynasty on the Cis-Satluj side of the Panjab.

It will be seen that there were sharp religious and racial differences among the numerous rulers who governed the Panjab at this time. There was no unity of purpose among them. Even among the Sikh *Misaldars* there was little inclination towards unified action. The Bhangi *Misl* itself was divided into three armed camps, with their respective headquarters at Lahore, Amritsar and Gujrat. The Kanhyas were pitted against the Ramgarhias, and the latter were hostile to the Ahluwalias. There existed also the bitterest enmity between the Shukerchakias and the Bhangis, and between the latter and the Kanhyas. All were at war one against the other. There was a constant grouping and re-grouping of parties and factions, the balance of military strength frequently shifting from one to the other. Among the Mohammedan chieftains also there was little unity. Although most of them had derived their authority originally from the same source, *i.e.* the Durrani Empire, yet they had hardly learnt to look upon themselves as forming so many units of it

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before it had fallen. As a result, the various deputies *had become independent.* They now thought only of holding fast to their possessions, against one another as well as against the more formidable Sikhs. Thus the political situation on the eve of the 19th century was eminently suited for the rise of a resolute and outstanding personality, who might weld these discordant elements steadily into an organised kingdom; and, as we shall see, Ranjit Singh availed himself of this opportunity.

When Ranjit Singh inherited the leadership of his *Misl* at his father's death, he was merely a boy, but he displayed the same early grasp of political affairs as the great Akbar had done before him. The work of administration however was undertaken by a Regent, who, according to the Sikh custom, could be no other than his mother. She was helped in this task by Sirdar Dal Singh, Ranjit's great-uncle, and Dewan Lakhpat Rai, his father's minister. In 1795 Ranjit was married to Mehtab Kaur, to whom the last of the Kanhyas had bequeathed all his lands and treasures in 1792. But the Kanhya possessions also were administered by a Regent, Sada Kaur, the mother of the Princess. Sada Kaur was by all accounts a woman of extraordinary ability, and her considerable talents now enabled her to play a prominent part in Ranjit's affairs. In fact she became the leading personality in Ranjit's councils and the most powerful instrument of his early triumphs.*

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*Some writers, notably Prinsep and Huegel, are of opinion that in her material contributions to the projects of Ranjit, Sada Kaur's real object was self-aggrandisement. Huegel even accuses her of deliberately encouraging the young Prince during his minority to lead a life of dissipation. He says: "This ambitious woman was not only scheming against his health, but she also prevented him from receiving any of the benefits of

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In 1796 the first invasion of Zeman Shah took place; and in the following year Rammagar was finally captured by Ranjit's ministers from its Mohammedan rulers. Ranjit personally took part in the latter campaign and, though young, showed great skill when attacked with a sword by Hashmat Khan, the Chhata leader.* In the latter year, Ranjit Singh's second marriage, *viz.* with the Nakain Princess, took place. It was after this event that Dewan Lakhpat Rai was sent by Ranjit on a perilous enterprise, in which he was killed. The despatch of the Dewan was the first independent act of the Prince, and as such marks his personal assumption of power. At the same time, Ranjit appointed Sirdar Dal Singh, between whom and the Dewan there existed much jealousy, as his minister. The co-incidence between the two events explains to a large extent the suspicions usually entertained by some writers about Ranjit's complicity in the death of the Dewan.† Soon afterwards Ranjit Singh

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education." This seems too severe a judgment, especially in the absence of any positive evidence against her. Neither Huegel nor any other writer states reasons for this belief. At the same time, I fail to find the traces of any such impressions in the Persian manuscripts.

*Ranjit was on horseback when attacked. His belt was rent asunder, but he himself escaped injury. He at once retaliated with a blow which killed his adversary. *Vide* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh.

†Prinsep, Huegel, Cunningham, and—following them—Latiff, believe that Ranjit involved the Dewan in this adventure in order to bring about his death. 'Ibrat Nama (f. 216) accuses Ranjit of actual intrigue with those who killed the minister. No positive evidence however is put forth by any of the writers for their views. From the perusal of all the materials bearing on the point it seems to me probable that Ranjit might have sent away the Dewan in order to prevent his interference with his assump-

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gained an opportunity to visit Lahore, while on the way to Sada Kaur's estates; and was entertained in the fort by the Bhangi Sirdars of the place. This was followed by Shah Zeman's second invasion of the Panjab. The Shah penetrated to Lahore. Ranjit Singh was one of the Sirdars who fought in the defence of the Saman Burj. His conduct is said to have impressed the inhabitants of the city. This may account to some extent for the invitation subsequently sent to him by the leading citizens for the occupation of Lahore. Ranjit received the invitation in the summer of 1799, just before he had secured permission from Zeman Shah to govern the capital on behalf of the Afghans. This grant by itself was of little value, for it was unaccompanied by any material assistance. Nevertheless, it is conceivable that it suggested to the young prince the possibility of his occupying the city.

In this most important undertaking, Ranjit was assisted by Sada Kaur and the Nakai Sirdars; and the allied forces amounted to 25,000 men. The capture of the city and the fort proved an easy matter. The defenders scarcely fired a shot. The peculiarly favourable circumstances under which this success was secured may be enumerated as follows:—

(1) The Bhangi Sirdars were too engrossed in their debaucheries and too jealous of each other to offer a united resistance.

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tion of Royal power. That he intended him expressly to be killed is not established. The question in fact is one of motives and hence difficult to decide. The statement in 'Ibrat Nama is exceptional among the Persian works, and comes from the pen of a Mohammedan writer, whose views about Ranjit Singh's character are exaggerated. Hence it can hardly be regarded as conclusive.

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(2) The Bhangi *Misl* as a whole had no uniform plan or policy; and its different strongholds lay in territories which were not contiguous, and were interspersed by Ranjit's possessions. They were thus incapable of acting together against another organisation.

(3) The Prince had in this undertaking the active support of the leading citizens of Lahore, who opened the city gates to him.

(4) The active co-operation of the Kanhyas under Sada Kaur, and that of the Nakais under their own Sirdars, was an invaluable material addition to the Prince's resources.

(5) The old age and infirmity of Jassa Singh of the Ramgarhia *Misl*, the inveterate enemy of Ranjit Singh and Sada Kaur, prevented the formation of an alliance against the Shukerchakias.

(6) It may be said that Zeman's grant invested Ranjit's conquest with an appearance of legitimacy.

The conquest of Lahore was an important addition to Ranjit's possessions, and greatly enhanced his political prestige as the holder of the traditional capital of the Panjab. It also meant the destruction of the chief centre of Bhangi influence in the province; although they still possessed strongholds at Amritsar and Gujrat. Before proceeding further, however, Ranjit assumed the emblems of kingship. He proclaimed himself the Maharaja of Lahore and established a mint of his own. But soon after this his energies were required to dispel a formidable alliance, formed under Bhangi leadership by five of the

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ever failed to take Shujabad from its Sadozai governor, Shuj'a Khan, who continued administering it until his death in 1776. He was succeeded by his son, Muzafar Khan, who after several attempts drove away the Bhangis from Multan, with the help of Taimur, the son and successor of the Abdali. From 1779 to 1818 Multan remained in the possession of Muzafar Khan, who, at first feudatory of the rulers of Kabul, became afterwards an independent prince.

Muzafar Khan came into contact with Ranjit Singh as early as 1802, when the latter made a military incursion up to the frontier of his kingdom. Ranjit however retired on the promise of tribute. He invaded Multan again in 1805, reached the outskirts of the city, but withdrew on account of the arrival of Holkar on his frontier. Nevertheless, he exacted a tribute of Rs. 70,000 from the Nawab. Two years later, the Maharaja appeared the third time, and charged the Nawab with harbouring Ahmed Khan Sial of Jhang. Ranjit advanced on the city, and the Pathans shut themselves up in the fort. But the Sikh ruler, having no siege train, again contented himself with a tribute. In 1810 the fourth attack was made, under pretext of arears of tribute. The city was occupied and the fort besieged. The siege lasted for about three months, but the fort could not be reduced.* In 1812 the Sikh army appeared before Multan for the fifth time, and, the arrears of tribute having been extorted from the Nawab, it returned to Lahore. Four years later Ranjit Singh again marched to Multan, his *Akali* general, Phoola Singh, stormed the town with a few fanatics of his sect, and compelled Muzafar Khan to make a *Nazar* (offering) of Rs. 80,000 to the Sikh

*For full account of this siege, *see* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh.

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the numerous campaigns which he carried on against the rulers of Kasur,* Wazirabad,† Gujrat,‡ Jhang,§ and various other places. They are to-day a matter of common history. It may however be stated that, as a result of this policy, Ranjit Singh succeeded in absorbing the Central Panjab into a single kingdom before 1809.‖

C.—Ranjit Singh and the Province of Multan.

The province of Multan was finally detached from the Mughal Empire in 1752, when it became a part of the Durrani kingdom of Afghanistan and was entrusted to a family of Sadozai Pathans. In 1758 the Marhattas overran the country, leaving behind a Mohammedan governor. Two years later another Durrani invasion resulted in the establishment of another Muslim administrator. From 1771 to 1779 the Bhangis held and terrorised the greater part of the province. They had how-

*The first invasion of Kasur took place soon after the break-up of the alliance of 1800; the second in 1801; the third in 1802; and the fourth in the same year, but after the death of Nizam-ud-din Khan and the succession of his brother Kutub-ud-din Khan. During the two latter invasions Ranjit succeeded in exacting a tribute. In 1807 he finally annexed the territory, after a brief campaign, in which he was supported by Jodh Singh Ramgarhia. The acquisition of Kasur, the mythological rival of Lahore, removed the Pathan colony and increased the popularity of the Maharaja among the Sikhs.

†Jodh Singh of Wazirabad acknowledged allegiance to the Maharaja in 1802.

‡Gujrat was finally wrested from the Bhangis in 1809. Henceforward, the Bhangis ceased to exist as a political power.

§Jhang was subjected to successive military raids and incursions, before it was incorporated into the Sikh dominions in 1806.

‖*See* the Map, showing Ranjit's possessions in 1809.

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strongest chieftains* of the Central Panjab. For about two months the rival armies lay within sight of each other, at a place called Bhasin, situated half-way between Lahore and Amritsar. But Ranjit's enemies dispersed without a serious battle, owing to the death of the leader,† and the want of unity among themselves. Thus Ranjit secured an easy triumph.

The defeat of the Bhangi alliance induced the Maharaja to march against the religious capital of the Panjab. In this he was assisted by a new ally, Fateh Singh, the Ahluwalia chief.‡ Ranjit Singh attacked the city in 1802, at the head of an army consisting of the Kanhya, Nakai and Ahluwalia troops in addition to his own; and after a few days' siege it surrendered. The fort was captured at the same time. This conquest destroyed another Bhangi stronghold. By it Ranjit Singh secured considerable material of war, including the famous *Zam-Zama* and several other guns, and territory yielding a handsome revenue. Moreover, the religious and commercial importance of the city enhanced the conqueror's prestige.

The other members of the late alliance were also punished one after another. They came, in fact, under that general policy of ruthless aggression and plunder which the Maharaja henceforth followed towards his neighbours. I need not enter into the tedious details of

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*They were Golab Singh Bhangi of Amritsar, Sahib Singh Bhangi of Gujrat, Jodh Singh of Wazirabad, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, and Nizam-ud-din Khan of Kasur.

†Golab Singh Bhangi. Sohan Lal attaches great importance to the death of Golab (f. 232); and the author of the 'Ibrat Nama agrees with him (ff. 222-223).

‡Fateh Singh had exchanged turbans with Ranjit shortly before the conquest of Amritsar, thereby binding himself to an alliance with him.

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ruler. In the following year, another force under Dewan Bhawani Dass was despatched; it laid siege to the fort but was compelled by the determined opposition of the Pathans to raise it. For this failure the Dewan was heavily fined by Ranjit. In 1818 the last invasion of Multan took place. During each successive attack the Sadozais had shown an increasingly determined capacity for resistance. Hence Ranjit made great preparations. He urged his *Jagirdars* (feudatories) and *Kardars* (governors) to collect as great a number of men and as much munition and grain as possible. An elaborate system of boat transport through the Ravi, the Chenab and the Jehlam was organised, with its chief base at the capital. Ranjit supervised all the arrangements at Lahore, whence continuous supplies of grain, horses and ammunition were forwarded throughout the period of the siege. One of the queens, the mother of Prince Kharak Singh, was deputed to Kot Kamalia, a place situated half-way between Lahore and Multan, to superintend the despatch of provisions to the scene of action. The army in the field consisted of 25,000 horse and foot, together with a strong equipment of siege guns. Even *Zam-Zama* was brought from Lahore. The entire force was put under the command of Misar Dewan Chand.*

The Nawab also made great efforts to meet this for-

*The nominal command was given to Prince Kharak Singh to prevent jealousy among the Sikh Sirdars. The 'Ibrat Nama says in this connection that several Sirdars actually refused to serve under the Misar before Ranjit appointed the Prince as Commander-in-Chief. It also mentions that Ranjit went out of Lahore to live at a little distance, and took a vow not to re-enter the capital until he should hear the news of the conquest of Multan (f. 248). Sirdars Dal Singh, Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Dhana Singh Malwai, and Dewans Moti Ram and Ram Dial, were the principal leaders in the campaign.

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hundred men belonging to the Nawab's own family or tribe, the rest having been either killed or disabled by the Sikhs. At last the gates were blown in; but the garrison raised behind them mounds of earth, on which they stood and fought hand to hand against the superior number of the Sikhs. On the 2nd June, however, an *Akali* fanatic, Sadhu Singh, made a determined rush with a few desperadoes of his sect into the outwork of the fort, and took the Afghans by surprise. The Sikh force, seeing his success, advanced to the place of assault and mounted the breach near Khizri gate. Here the old Nawab, with his eight sons and the remnant of the garrison, stood sword in hand, determined to die rather than surrender. There was so much bloodshed and so many heaps of dead that the Sikhs had to withdraw a little and open fire from their matchlocks. "Come on like men!" shouted the Pathans "and let us fall in a fair fight." The contest however continued on both sides, until the grey-bearded Nawab had fallen with five of his sons, all dead; and his son, Zulfiqar Khan, with two others, wounded. The fort and the city were given up to plunder. The jewels, together with other wealth belonging to the Nawab, were confiscated, and several hundred houses were pulled down. The soldiers, flushed with victory, perpetrated all sorts of atrocities on the inhabitants. A considerable amount of booty was collected.*

When this news reached the Maharaja, he rode on

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*The Maharaja, although he remained at the capital, played no insignificant part in this campaign. Besides the unceasing despatch of supplies, he continued sending instructions to the Misar regarding the conduct of the campaign. Some of these show great imagination and sound judgment. For example, Ranjit repeatedly emphasized the need for self-control and cool calculation on the minds of his officers and men, who seemed too

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the back of an elephant through the principal streets of the capital, showering silver wherever he went. Great rejoicings were made at Lahore and Amritsar, both of which were illuminated for several nights. Thank-offerings were made to the shrines of various Hindu and Mohammedan saints, as well as to the Golden Temple at Amritsar. Some jewels were immediately despatched to Multan, to be distributed to the soldiers for gallant service; and Royal instructions were issued to the officers to prevent them from maltreating the inhabitants. On peace and order being re-established, Prince Kharak Singh made a state entry into Multan. Ranjit Singh rewarded his officers suitably on their return to Lahore. Misar Dewan Chand was given the proud title of *Zafar-Jang* (conqueror in war), a *Jagir* and a robe of honour. The Maharaja received Sarfraz Khan, the eldest son of Muzafar Khan, with notable courtesy. The civil government of the conquered territory, which comprised roughly the modern districts of Multan and Muzafargarh, was entrusted to Sukh Dial; and military posts were estab-

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fiery and impetuous to carry on a protracted siege and wanted to make an end of it by a bold assault on the fortifications. The Maharaja, in order to avoid the ruinous loss of life involved in such a rash adventure, wished to offer the Nawab a chance to surrender before he should be actually compelled to do so. Negotiations were several times opened during the course of the siege, substantial *Jagirs* were promised, and at one time the Nawab offered to pay two *Lakhs* of rupees annually. Ranjit however would not accept anything less than the surrender of the fort. Negotiations were resumed several times, and it is asserted by Sohan Lal and Mufti Ali-ud-din that the Nawab would have surrendered on Ranjit's terms, but for his proud Pathan followers who opposed his intentions. *See* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh (ff. 400—405), and 'Ibrat Nama (ff. 247—249).

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Kashmir were also maturing. Jamun and the hilly principalities south of Kashmir had already been reduced by the repeated encroachments of his deputies; so that the plans of Ranjit and the *Wazir* (the ministerial title of Fateh Khan) came into conflict. The latter indeed proposed a joint enterprise; and, at a meeting held near Jehlam, Ranjit agreed to send twelve thousand troops under Dewan Mohkam Chand, on condition of receiving as his share one-third of the plunder of the valley. The *Wazir*, however, had no intention of allowing the Sikhs to take part in the campaign. He merely intended to keep them on his side during the enterprise. At the Pir-Panjal range, progress was checked by a heavy fall of snow; but Fateh Khan, taking advantage of it, ordered his hardy Afghans to advance. Although the Dewan did not know of this movement, he managed to follow in their wake, and came up in time for the siege of the hill-forts of Shergarh and Hari-parbat. However, although the Sikh army on account of exposure and exhaustion could not accomplish much, 'Ata Mohammed Khan fled, after a mere show of resistance and the forts and strongholds in the country were occupied by the *Wazir* without much opposition. Kashmir was subjugated, but Fateh Khan refused to share the booty, and the Dewan had to return empty-handed to Lahore.*

At the end of the following year Ranjit planned another expedition to secure Kashmir for himself. He established one base at Sialkot and another at Jamun for the despatch of necessary materials up the hills. Elabo-

*The Dewan howveer managed to capture Shah Shuj'a-ul-Mulk, who had found refuge with 'Ata Mohammad Khan in 1810. He brought the Shah to Lahore where he remained for some time.

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lished all over the province. The land-revenue was also settled by specially deputed officials.

D.—Ranjit Singh and the Conquest of the Kashmir Valley.

From the time of Akbar to the middle of the 18th century, Kashmir formed one of the provinces of the Mughal Empire, administered by *Subedars* (governors), who possessed very wide powers. The effectiveness of the control of the Emperor over them varied according to his own power and ability. When the Mughal power began to weaken, after the death of Aurangzeb, the governors of distant provinces became less subservient to their sovereign. After the invasion of Nadir, the relationship of Kashmir to the authorities at Dehli became vague and indefinite; and in 1750 the Abdali sent an expedition which occupied the valley. It remained under the Afghans until its conquest by Ranjit Singh in 1819. The administration of the country was left to the arbitrary decision of the governors, who, in the absence of interference from Kabul, relapsed into tyranny and misgovernment. This became more pronounced in the time of Zeman Shah, whose sovereignty was for long not fully recognised, even in Afghanistan. In 1800, Zeman Shah gave place to Mahmud on the throne of Kabul; and the latter appointed his own governor of Kashmir. Five years later, however, Kashmir was returned to 'Ata Mohammed Khan, who remained at its head until Mahmud again became supreme in Afghanistan. Mahmud deputed Fateh Khan Barukzai to wrest Kashmir from 'Ata Mohammed Khan, the nominee of his predecessor. This was in 1812.

At this time the designs of Ranjit Singh against

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midable attack. He raised the cry of religion and thereby tried to enlist the help of neighbouring Mussalman chieftains. He failed in his object, however, partly on account of the latter's fear of the Sikhs, and partly owing to the superior diplomacy of Ranjit.* The Nawab's request for help from the British, like that of the Maharaja, met with a courteous refusal. Thus the Nawab had to depend on his own resources, which had already been weakened by Ranjit's repeated attacks.

The Sikh army marched from Lahore at the end of January, and, having captured the towns of Khangarh and Muzafargarh on the way, it reached the outskirts of Multan in the beginning of the next month. The city was entered without serious opposition, and the Pathan army retired into the fort, which the Sikhs besieged. The Nawab had only 2,000† men inside the fort; nevertheless he made a gallant defence. The Sikhs carried on an almost continuous bombardment for several weeks, fired *Zam-Zama* more than once, and succeeded in breaching the wall. But still the capture of the place was far from accomplished. The Pathans obstinately clung to their defence, until their force was reduced to some five

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*For example, he released Ahmed Khan Sial of Jhang on the eve of the expedition, gave him a substantial *Jagir*, and thereby attached him and his followers to himself.

†While most writers put the strength of the garrison at 2,000 men, Moorcroft—on the authority of a conversation with Ranjit—puts it at 3,000. He also talks of the Maharaja having mentioned that the Sikh troops were 25,000, that they lost 1,900 men in one assault, and that only 500 of the besieged survived. Ranjit at the same time admitted that after the reduction of the fort the officers could not for a time prevent the soldiers from plunder, but he emphasized that they did not kill a single Pathan in cold blood. *Vide* Travels, I. 101.

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near Srinagar.

The main body of troops under the Maharaja was also obstructed by rain and snow; and it was not till the end of June that he reached Punchh, which however he found deserted. The town had at the same time been completely stripped by the inhabitants of all kinds of stores and provisions. Ranjit pushed his troops on to Mandi, and thence to Tochu Maidan Pass, where he found the hostile force under 'Azim Khan the governor, entrenched. Ranjit avoided taking the offensive, in the hope of a more favourable opportunity; but, hearing soon afterwards of the critical condition of the detachment under Ram Dial, he sent a force of five thousand to its help. No sooner was this done than 'Azim Khan began to attack the Maharaja's force. Ranjit, realising the futility of defending his position with insufficient troops and inadequate supplies, decided upon a withdrawal. He fell back on Mandi and thence—by a disorderly and disastrous retreat in which the inclemency of the weather wrought a still greater havoc among the rank and file—he reached Punchh. From Punchh he retraced his footsteps to Bhimber, and from there to his capital where he arrived in the middle of August.*

Kashmir was finally conquered in 1819. Ranjit had by this time subjugated the Central Panjab, destroyed the Pathan power in Multan, and had even penetrated into the trans-Indus lands. At this time Kashmir was ruled by Jabar Khan, on behalf of his brother 'Azim

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*The advance section under Ram Dial had a very trying ordeal near Srinagar. The relieving force despatched by Ranjit had failed to move up the Bahram Gala, and the Dewan was left to his own resources. However he defended his position with such resolution that the Afghan governor allowed him to retire unmolested to the plains.

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Khan who had lately departed to establish himself at Peshawar. Another favourable circumstance arose from the arrival of one Bir Dhar, the able minister of the governor of Kashmir, at the Sikh court, where he had found refuge after falling out with his master. He supplied much useful information to the Maharaja concerning the strength and disposition of the Afghan army, and the various routes to Kashmir. A large expeditionary force was organised and divided into three sections. The advance section was put under the command of Misar Dewan Chand, the conqueror of Multan. The second detachment was placed under Prince Kharak Singh, with orders to support the former. Ranjit himself commanded the third, which formed the reserve at Wazirabad. The advance column started from Bhimber in May, an opportune season for moving to Kashmir, and reached Rajauri in a few days. The Dewan carried with him only light mountain guns. At the end of June he reached Bahram Gala and secured the passage to the Pir-Panjal. The Misar then divided his force into three parts, each of which was to enter the valley of Srinagar by a different route. He himself headed the one which marched over the Pir-Panjal straight into the valley. The attempted opposition of the Afghans was overcome without much loss on either side. On the 16th June, the entire Sikh force—some twelve thousand strong—collected together near Supin. Jabar Khan was also entrenched there at the head of five thousand men. The Sikhs attacked him. The Afghans at first defended themselves heroically, repulsed the invaders and captured two of their guns. But the latter retrieved their position by a determined attack, and the Afghans had to give way to superior numbers and discipline. They fled in disorder. Both sides lost heavily, but Jabar Khan himself was among the wounded.

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The valley was thus secured by the Sikhs, who made a triumphant entry into Srinagar. On entering the city the soldiers began to plunder but were energetically stopped by the Misar. On hearing the news of the conquest, Ranjit Singh deputed Faqir 'Aziz-ul-din to study the climate of the valley and Dewan Devi Dass to organise the assessment of revenues. He himself celebrated the victory at Lahore in his usual manner.

The conquest of Kashmir made an extensive addition to Ranjit's kingdom and increased his revenues considerably. Srinagar, besides possessing a flourishing shawl-making industry, was the centre of trade between the Panjab on the one hand and Ladakh, Iskardo and Tibet on the other. As regards its political results, the conquest removed the last vestige of Afghan power and influence in the Cis-Indus lands, thereby increasing the stability of the Sikh kingdom. The extension of the frontier line to the natural limit in the North, and the reduction of many petty chiefs who existed in the hilly fastnesses between Bhimber and Srinagar, helped to establish peace and tranquillity in Ranjit's dominions.

E.—Ranjit Singh and the trans-Indus Lands.

The trans-Indus lands, like the provinces of Multan and Kashmir, formed part of the Durrani Empire in the middle of the 18th century. After the death of the Abdali, Taimur's control over them became less secure. At the latter's death in 1793, the throne of Kabul became an object of rivalry between his sons, whose military enterprises and varied fortunes have a romantic interest for the historian. But their principal effect was the dissolution of the Empire, and the assumption of independence by governors of the out-lying provinces.

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Among the trans-Indus tracts which thus repudiated the Kabul overlordship were the Derajat and the whole valley of Peshawar. The former was partly under the Nawabs of Multan and Bahawalpur, and partly under petty Afghan chiefs like 'Abdul Sammand Khan and others. The latter had fallen into the control of the four Barukzai brothers.*

Meanwhile the Sikhs had appeared on the scene. By 1810 Ranjit had extended his dominions up to the banks of the Indus, and two years later he had allied himself with Fateh Khan, the chief of the Barukzai brothers, against the governor of Kashmir. That Fateh Khan failed to fulfil the conditions of agreement with Ranjit, has already been stated. This however provided excuse to the Sikh ruler for encroaching upon other Afghan territory. Negotiations were opened with the *Wazir's* discontented brothers, 'Ata Mohammed Khan and Jahandad Khan, for the cession of Attock, an important strategic fortress on the Indus, with the result that the Sikh ruler occupied it in 1813. Fateh Khan, after several futile remonstrances, decided to fight the Sikhs. He laid siege to the fort, but a large force under Dewan Mohkam Chand was sent to relieve it. The Sikh and the Afghan armies fought a fiercely contested battle at a place known as Haidaru. Both sides lost heavily, but the victory finally rested with the Sikhs. This was the first real victory gained by the Sikhs over the Afghans in a pitched battle, and as such was celebrated at the capital with festivities, illuminations and salutes.

In 1818, taking advantage of the political commotion in Afghanistan consequent upon the murder of Fateh

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*They were Sultan Mohammad Khan, Yar Mohammad Khan, Pir Mohammad Khan, and Jahandad Khan.

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rate arrangements for the transport of light artillery were also made. The Maharaja himself headed the force and was assisted by several other Sirdars and hill-chieftains. He first reduced Thatta without much difficulty, but met with a strong resistance near Bahram Gala on the Pir-Panjal route. To avoid a net-work of ravines and rapidly flowing streams, it was decided to push forward a detachment of about thirty thousand men by a different route, and they arrived within a small distance of Srinagar with batteries of camel artillery. But the heavy rains and snow checked further progress, the operations had to be stopped, and the Maharaja—having secured the newly conquered passes and stored grain there—returned to Lahore after an absence of about two months.

The next expedition was undertaken in the middle of 1814. A large army was collected at Sialkot. In the month of June the expeditionary force reached Rajauri. Following the treacherous advice of the chief of that place, Ranjit made the initial mistake of dividing his force into two sections. The main body, commanded by himself in person, was to pursue the Punchh route by the Tochi Maidan Pass; the other detachment, under Dewan Ram Dial, was to proceed by the Bahram Gala, *via* Supin. The latter was to act as an advance column. It secured the passage through Bahram Gala, and, surmounting the lofty barrier of the Pir-Panjal, drove the Afghan forces from Mirpur and Haripur. This was followed by a fierce fight at Supin, in which the Sikhs, being outnumbered and having lost some of their officers, were compelled to disperse in disorder by a fall of snow. They were shown little mercy either by the weather or by the enemy, who hung on their rear and wrought havoc among the retiring columns. Without provisions or reinforcements, Ram Dial sheltered himself in a village

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Khan *Wazir*, the Sikh army advanced upon Peshawar, and overran the country as far as the foot of the hills. The valley was however given over to Jahandad Khan Barukzai, on condition of his paying an annual tribute to the Sikh ruler. Ranjit made his next attack on trans-Indus lands in 1820 and 1821, when, after a few desultory skirmishes with the Afghans, he succeeded in annexing the Derajat to his dominions. This conquest established his influence on the right bank of the central part of the Indus.

In 1823 'Azim Khan, who had acquired power in Afghanistan after the death of his brother Fateh Khan, determined to re-establish Afghan supremacy over Peshawar. He marched down to the Kabul river at the head of a large army, accompanied by his brother Dost Mohammed Khan. A separate force was raised by Sammand Khan from among the Khattak and the Usafzai tribesmen, which entrenched itself on the left bank of the Kabul river. Ranjit Singh with the choicest portion of his army crossed the Indus and the Kabul river, and marched up to its left bank; while Prince Kharak Singh was sent with another detachment along the right bank, to prevent the junction of the two sections of the enemy. Before 'Azim could join the force under Sammand Khan, the latter was attacked by Ranjit at a place called Nowshahra. The Afghans fought with great valour, and wrought such havoc among the Sikhs, that the latter began to waver towards the end of the battle. For a time the issue was uncertain; but the ruler of the Sikhs, alarmed by the growing unsteadiness of his troops, caught hold of a religious standard and rushed into the thick of the battle. The Sikhs were so moved by his action that they made a desperate attack which drove back the enemy. The Afghans retired in disorder, leaving be-

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hind their dead and the wounded whose number is said to have run into thousands. 'Azim Khan and Dost Mohammed Khan, neither of whom had been present at the battle, fled to Kabul. The Sikhs also lost heavily, including the old and gallant Phoola Singh *Akali*, who was killed. The Sikh ruler advanced to Peshawar and entered the city, but delivered it again to the four Barukzai brothers,* who acknowledged his overlordship and promised to pay him an annual tribute. He himself retired to Lahore.

About this time, one made his appearance in the valley of Peshawar, whose short but adventurous career well illustrates the readiness with which the ignorant masses in India invest men of extraordinary religious zeal with the attributes of superhuman power. The name of this man was Syed Ahmed Shah. Travelling in 1824 from Bareilly, his original place of residence, he reached the Usafzai country, and claimed the divine mission of waging a war of extirpation against the infidel Sikhs. He soon gathered under his standard a large armed following from among the most fanatical section of the population; and even the four Barukzai Sirdars threw in their lot with him. With the intention of laying siege to the fort of Attock, the Syed marched in 1827 to Nowshahra; but he found the Sikhs fully prepared. Ranjit had already sent Hari Singh Nalwa with twenty thousand troops to await him on the Indus. He now sent another force, under Budh Singh Sindhanwalia, to cross the river and meet the Syed. The opposing armies met at Saidu. At first the Syed succeeded in surrounding and harassing the Sikh force, but Budh Singh resolved to decide the

*These brothers were opposed to 'Azim Khan and had refused to help him in the campaign.

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Afghans and their mutual distrust spoiled what little chance they had of resisting the Sikh power.

In 1835 and 1836 Hari Singh remained busy in building a new fortress on the site of the Bala Hissar and posting garrisons at different places in the country. At the end of the latter year, he occupied the fort of Jamrud, situated at the very mouth of the Khaibar Pass. The position indeed was of little use for controlling the tribes of the vicinity, for parties from the hills could still enter the plains without obstruction; and the hollows and ravines in the neighbourhood afforded good shelter for bands of dacoits. Still the position was regarded as one of considerable strength, and its occupation was looked upon by the *Amir* as threatening a further advance towards Afghanistan. He therefore despatched an army under his two sons against the Nalwa Sirdar. The Afghan force arrived near Jamrud in 1837 and began to bombard the place. Accounts of the battle that ensued are conflicting, and the victory has been claimed for both parties. The fact seems to have been that the Afghan artillery laid the walls in ruins and the soldiers were about to commence an assault, when Hari Singh, who had held back till the enemy advanced, fell upon them with his wonted vigour, broke their ranks, and captured fourteen guns. As the Afghans began to disperse, a small party under Afzal Khan still clung to its position. The Sikhs, too, soon presuming upon their victory, pressed on in their pursuit, without maintaining much order. Then Shams-ul-din Khan, a nephew of the *Amir,* advancing with another party, charged down upon the scattered Sikh masses and drove them back; and Mohammed Akbar Khan, coming up with some more troops, recaptured some of their guns. At this critical juncture the Sikhs lost heart at seeing the fall of their

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day by a bold fight. A sanguinary battle took place, in which the Afghans suffered a great slaughter. In the rout which followed, their cries for quarter were unheeded by the excited Sikhs, who mercilessly put hundreds of them to the sword. The Syed himself fled to Surat.

Shortly afterwards the Syed returned to the Usafzai country and once again succeeded in establishing himself and collecting tithes from the inhabitants. In 1828 he attacked Yar Mohammed Khan, and, having killed the Sirdar and routed his followers, compelled the other three Barukzais to tender submission. However the Syed's influence did not last long. He grew unpopular, chiefly owing to his strict discipline, peremptory ways, and above all his constant interference with the traditional customs of the people. A plot was consequently hatched by his lieutenants, which resulted in a general massacre of his soldiers. He again had to flee for his life. In 1830 he was encountered by Prince Sher Singh on his way back from Kashmir; a battle was fought at Balakot, in which both sides lost heavily, and the Syed was among the killed. Thus ended the career of this daring adventurer.*

Since the battle of Nowshahra in 1823, the entire valley of Peshawar had lain at the mercy of the Sikhs, but no regular occupation had been attempted. Subject to the payment of an annual tribute, the administration had remained in the hands of the Barukzai Sirdars; while Ranjit had contented himself with sending an army occa-

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*For further details, *see* the secret correspondence which took place between Captain Wade and Dr. Murray, and between the Resident at Delhi and the Governor-General.

Vide Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vols. 16, 18, 19, 20 and 21. (India Office MSS. records.)

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sionally to collect the tribute and keep up the terror of his name among the inhabitants. He visited Peshawar once during the interval between the Syed's flight and return, and punished the Barukzai brothers for their attitude during the last campaign by doubling the tribute, destroying their stately residence at the Bala Hissar, and taking the son of Yar Mohammed Khan as a hostage. A rough estimate of the revenues to be paid by the more orderly of the tribesmen was prepared, and the occupation of Kohat, Hangu, and several other places of importance was effected. After leaving Sirdar Hari Singh Nalwa in charge of the army of the frontier, Ranjit retired to Lahore. The army of the Indus consisted ordinarily of about twelve thousand men; and it often had to be employed to raid the different parts of the valley in order to get in the revenues.

The actual annexation of the valley was effected in 1834, when the Barukzai brothers themselves began to plot with the Sikhs against Dost Mohammed Khan, who had proclaimed himself the *Amir* of Kabul. As a result of their intrigues, Hari Singh Nalwa crossed the Indus and established himself at Chamkauri. The Sirdars however grew suspicious of his designs and fled to Shabkadar, thus leaving Hari Singh in possession of Peshawar. In 1835 Dost Mohammed arrived in the Khaibar, won over the Afridi Maliks to his cause, and established his camp at Sherkhan. Soon after, Ranjit arrived there, and disposed his force of about 40,000 men in such a manner as to threaten to cut off the retreat of the Afghan camp, leaving them no option but to fight or flee at once. Mistrusting relatives and reposing no confidence in his troops, Dost Mohammed decided on the latter course, and retraced his footsteps to Kabul in a precipitate retreat. Thus, once again, the want of unity among the

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KASHMIR VALLEY

AFGHANISTAN

Kabul

Peshawar

Hazara

Indus R.

Srinagar

Jhelum R.

Punch

Rawalpindi

Naoshera

Chenab R.

Bannu

Jhelum

Jammu

Chamba

Mianwali

Jhelum R.

Wazirabad

Nialkot R.

Dharamsala

Gurdaspur

Kangra

Gujranwala

Dera Ismail Khan

Chenab R.

Amritsar

Hushiarpur

Lahore

Jullundar

TIBET

Sutlej R.

Indus R.

Ravi R.

Phillaur

Ludhiana

BALUCHISTAN

Quetta

Pak Patan

Ferozepur

Malerkotla

Dera Ghazi Khan

Multan

Nabha

Patiala

Ambala

Saharanpur

Sutlej R.

Bahawalpur

BIKANER

Delhi

Indus R.

Alwar

PUNJAB

IN

1809, A. D.

RANJIT SINGH.

intrepid general, Hari Singh, who was shot while charging round upon the right. The Sikhs withdrew a little and entrenched themselves under the fort. Eleven out of the lost fourteen guns were recaptured by the Afghans, who also took three others belonging to the Sikhs. Each party therefore retained an equal number of trophies; but the battle can scarcely be said to have been incomplete, for the Sikhs held their ground, and when their reinforcements appeared the Afghans retired precipitately to Kabul. Even if the victory had been more complete, it would have been dearly purchased by the Sikhs with the loss of so brave a warrior as Hari Singh Nalwa, who died the same night. Hari Singh was succeeded by Tej Singh, who however was shortly relieved by General Avitabile. This officer retained the charge of the province till after the death of the Sikh ruler.

F.—Retrospect.

From the way in which the principal writers have traced the expansion of Ranjit Singh's authority over the Panjab, it would appear that it was the outcome, not of systematic design or policy, but of indiscriminate and haphazard encroachments. This in reality was not the case. Ranjit's career in fact is divisible into three well-marked periods, in each of which he achieved definite results. The first may be taken from 1799 to 1809. In this period the Prince established himself in the Central Panjab, to which object his efforts were mainly directed. His penetration into territories lying either beyond the Jehlam or the Satluj was governed by motives of extorting tributes and establishing overlordship, rather than by a desire for immediate annexations. By the exercise of a deliberately aggressive policy, he sought to compel his

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neighbours to look for protection and guidance to himself, rather than to any other power beyond either the Jamna or the Indus. How this object was defeated by the action of the English in the case of the Cis-Satluj States will be shown in a subsequent chapter. In the other direction however it was eminently successful. In the second period, which may be fixed between 1809 and 1822, Ranjit improved upon his former policy of penetration, and brought it to its natural conclusion by actually incorporating into his kingdom most of those lands which he had at first harried by fire and sword. Again, at the end of the first period, the eastern frontier of the Sikh kingdom was established on the Satluj; in the second period, the border line was extended to its geographical limits in other directions by the conquests of Multan and Kashmir. Thus, in making a comparative study of the events of the two periods, a logical continuation of the task to which Ranjit Singh had set himself after the occupation of Lahore is evident. This task was nothing less than the achievement of undisputed mastery over the Panjab.

But, until the third period—which opened in 1824 and ended with Ranjit's death in 1839—the Maharaja had not gained control of the principal avenue by which the Panjab had been attacked. This was now accomplished by the annexation of the valley of Peshawar. The city had already been sacked several times, and tribute repeatedly exacted from its governors; but for one reason or the other its actual incorporation into the Sikh kingdom was postponed until the year 1834. Within the next two years, an advanced post was established by the occupation of Jamrud.

Apart from the annexation of Peshawar, the only event of military significance of this period was the sup-

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pression of Syed Ahmed. Much time was otherwise spent in military and administrative organisation. A detailed discussion of the measures which were introduced into the various departments of state will be attempted in the following chapters. It may however be remarked that the work of reconstruction was a necessary sequel to that of conquest which was now completed.

To sum up: Ranjit Singh, within forty years, raised himself from a petty Sirdar to the rulership of an extensive kingdom. He broke the opposition of a hundred chieftains. Not only did he destroy the *Misls* situated in trans-Satluj lands, but he also removed every vestige of alien influence from within the borders of the Panjab. His kingdom now extended from the highest chains of the Himalayas on the north to the deserts of the Sindh on the south. The Satluj marked the eastern limit of his possessions,* while on the west he had secured possession of the most important post beyond the Indus. The latter fact is all the more significant, because the ruler of the Sikhs was the first monarch after Anangpal who not only checked the recurring stream of invasions which during eight hundred years had poured into the Panjab from the north-western corner, but also subdued and governed the inhabitants of that locality. Thus he brought the scattered people of the Panjab under a uniform and consistent system of government; and thereby evolved a young and vigorous nation. Herein lies the real justification, if this be at all necessary, for that policy of "blood and iron" which Ranjit Singh employed to achieve his end.

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*Ranjit also possessed forty-five *Paaluqas* in the Cis-Satluj territory.

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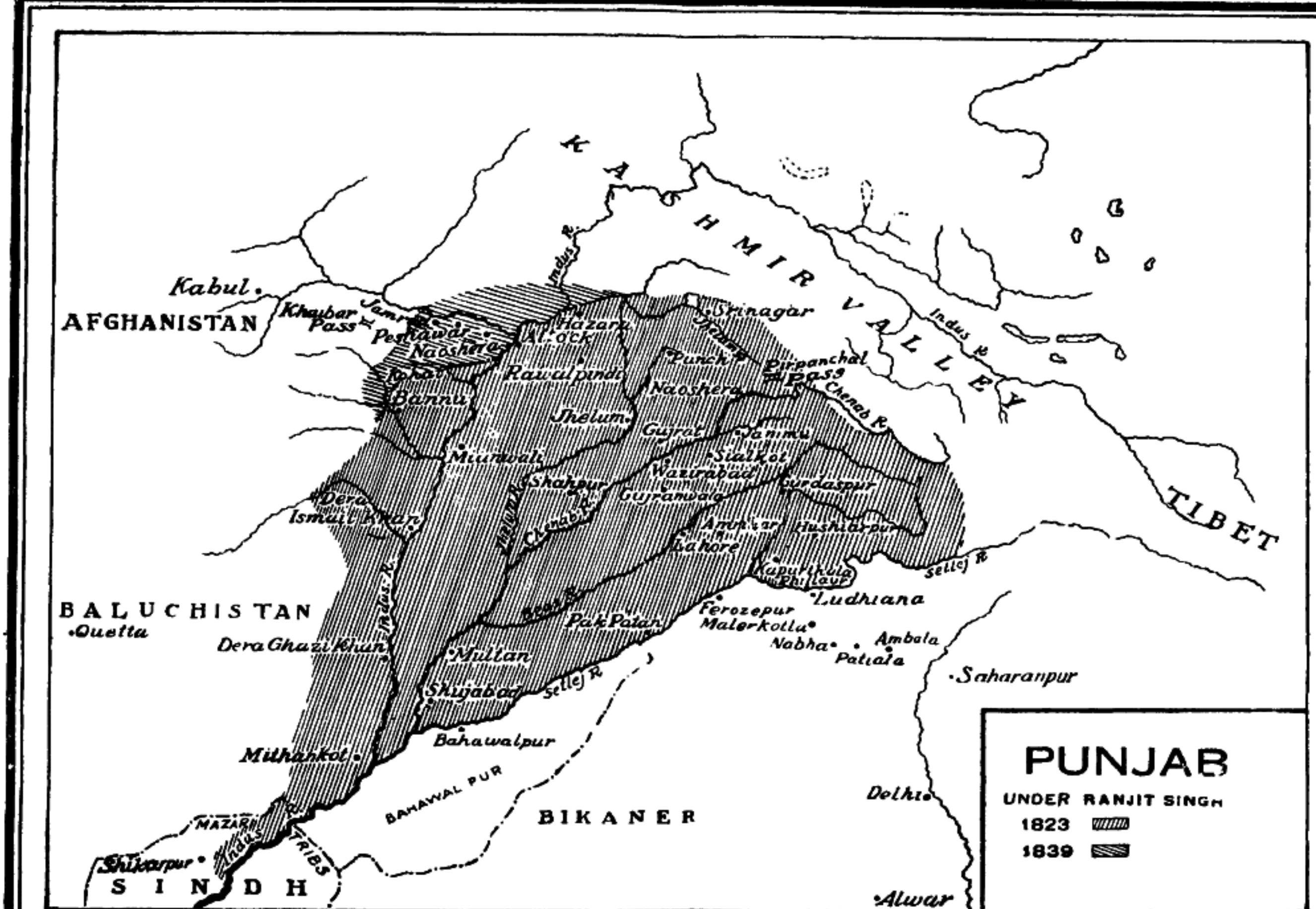

CHAPTER II.

Relations of Ranjit Singh with his Neighbours.

The story of the rise and expansion of the Sikh kingdom, as related in the preceding chapter, largely covers Ranjit Singh's relations with his neighbours. This is owing to the fact that the Sikh ruler was the creator of his own dominion; and the process by which he acquired it determined his attitude towards other chiefs. In the present chapter, however, I intend to trace the origin and development of Ranjit's connections with the two powers which lay on the western and eastern boundaries of his kingdom, *viz.* Afghanistan and the East India Company. Such a study is necessary for the following reasons: (1) it reveals to us factors influencing the growth of the Sikh kingdom up to 1839; (2) it enables us to grasp some of the fundamental causes which led to its ultimate downfall; and (3) it elucidates several points concerning Ranjit Singh's character and policy.

A.—Ranjit Singh and Afghanistan.

In the first section of the preceding chapter, I have explained the causes which precluded the establishment of a Durrani Empire in the Panjab under Ahmed Shah. After his death in 1773, the Panjab was governed by the *Misls*. Beyond the Indus, the precarious overlordship of the Durranis was confined to Multan and Kashmir. Even of these two provinces, the former had been over-run by the Bhangis in Ahmed Shah's own life-time. Ahmed Shah was succeeded on the throne by his son, Taimur,

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who ruled Afghanistan for the next twenty years. But Taimur's hold on his native country was not so effective as that of his father, and it took him several years to reduce his relatives to subjection. He then turned his attention to his possessions beyond the Indus, put down a rebellion in Sindh, drove out the Bhangis from Multan, and even in 1779 gathered together a considerable force at Peshawar, with a view to re-asserting his authority over the whole of the Panjab. But the latter project did not materialise. He felt himself too insecure to cross swords with the Sikhs. Thus the *Misls* were left to themselves, to organise each its own power in order to fight with the rest, thereby opening the way for the rise of a monarchy. Taimur died in 1793, leaving behind the following seven sons: Himayun Shah, Mahmud Shah,* Zeman Shah,† Shahzada 'Abbas, Shah Shuj'a-ul-Mulk, Shah Pur, and Feroz-ul-din. Of these brothers, three are connected with the history of the Panjab. They were Shah Zeman, Shah Mahmud, and Shah Shuj'a-ul-Mulk. The first succeeded to his father's throne, and was the first Afghan monarch with whom Ranjit Singh came into contact during his last invasion of India in 1798.‡ But Shah Zeman lost his throne soon after his return to Kabul. Then began a series of internal dissensions and civil wars in Afghanistan. Half a dozen revolutions took place within a single decade; and the political control of that unhappy country shifted from one to another among Taimur's sons. It is needless for

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*Also known as Shah Mahmud.

†Also known as Shah Zeman.

‡The connection between the two princes, and the circumstances leading thereto, have been described in the preceding chapter.

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our purpose to go into the details of the events at Kabul.*

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*Soon after his return Shah Zeman was dethroned and blinded by Shah Mahmud, who in turn was deposed by Shah Shuj'a in 1803. Shah Shuj'a ruled until 1809, and spent most of his time in counteracting the intrigues of his predecessor. When Elphinstone visited Kabul, Shah Shuj'a was still on the throne, but he lost it soon afterwards to Shah Mahmud. Shah Shuj'a fled to the Panjab, and interviewed Ranjit Singh at Sahiwal in 1810. The Shah was entertaining projects for the recovery of Multan and Kashmir from the governor of these places, and Ranjit amused him with vague promises of help. The Shah then proceeded to Peshawar and made himself master of that district, but was driven away after six months by 'Azim Khan. The Shah next attempted to win over the governor of Multan to his side, but the latter repudiated his overlordship. He again retired to Peshawar, conquered it, and retained its control for a brief period; but was afterwards himself seized by Jahandad Khan and taken to Attock. Thence he was transferred to Kashmir, where he remained a prisoner with the Barukzai governor until rescued by Dewan Mohkam Chand, who took him to Lahore in 1812. Shah Mahmud had also arrived in Lahore, in the preceding year. A meeting took place between him and the Sikh ruler at Rawalpindi; and, as a result of this and of the subsequent negotiations with Fateh Khan Barukzai, the joint expedition to Kashmir was arranged: (*see* Chapter I). In the same year Shah Zeman entered the Panjab, met Ranjit, and took up his abode temporarily at Lahore. He sent his son Yonas to Ludhiana, where he was received by Ochterloney, the British Agent. It transpired however that he was not a welcome guest: (*see* Governor-General to Ochterloney, 10th January, 1811: Bengal Political Consultations, India Office MSS. Records). Therefore the Shah left Lahore and went away as a wanderer to Central Asia. But his family remained in Lahore, and were joined in the following year by that of Shah Shuj'a. Both families escaped to Ludhiana in 1814. The two monarchs also repaired to that place soon afterwards.

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Their general effect, however, both in Afghanistan and the Panjab, may be noted. As a result of these revolutions, the political power in Afghanistan was ultimately acquired by a new house, known as Barukzais and represented by a large number of brothers. These latter began, not only to control the titular ruler of Kabul, but also to dominate the various other provinces of the kingdom. Had they possessed unanimity of purpose, all would have gone well, and the glories of the Durrani power might have been revived; or at least the loss of the Afghan possessions beyond the Indus might have been prevented. But, instead, an acute rivalry divided the brothers. This led to the independence of Multan under the son of the Sadozai chieftain whom Taimur had appointed governor, and also to the independence of Kashmir under one of the Barukzais themselves. Likewise was it with Attock, Peshawar, and the Derajat. Thus, from the dawn of the nineteenth century, the political situation at Kabul precluded the possibility of the invasion of the Panjab from that quarter, and afforded a favourable opportunity to Ranjit Singh to mature his designs and carry them out thoroughly. Besides reducing the Central Panjab to subjection, the Sikh ruler conquered Attock, Multan, Kashmir, the Derajat, Mankera and Peshawar; all of which, except the last, he annexed to his dominions before a tolerably strong and stable government had been evolved in Afghanistan under *Amir* Dost Mohammed.*

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*After supplanting Shah Shuj'a finally in 1809, Mahmud remained the nominal ruler of Kabul until 1818. The real power however had passed into the hands of his talented minister, Fateh Khan Barukzai. In 1818 Fateh Khan was put to death by Mahmud's son, Kamran. Hearing this, 'Azim Khan, the brother of the *Wazir,* hastened from Kashmir to Kabul and

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There is a tendency among the writers on Ranjit Singh to attribute the rapid expansion of his kingdom entirely to his own political genius, and to ignore the advantages arising from the distracted state of Afghanistan. While there can be no doubt as regards the superiority in military skill and organisation of the Sikh ruler over the innumerable chieftains of the Panjab, the external influence of the political situation in Kabul on the growth of his dominions needs adequate appreciation. Had there been as strong a government at Kabul after the death of the Abdali, or even after the deposition of Zeman Shah, as there was before 1773, the extension of Ranjit's authority over the Panjab must have been retarded.

The Sikh conquests in the trans-Indus lands have already been dealt with in the previous chapter. But the general mode of administration, as set up by the victors over that region, may here be noted. After the battle of Nowshahra, Ranjit had permanently stationed in the valley of Peshawar a force which ordinarily consisted of about 12,000 men. It was under the charge of Hari Singh Nalwa. This Sirdar, although primarily a com-

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proclaimed Shah Ayub as king. He himself however held the real power. He wanted to extend his influence over Peshawar, which at this time was in the hands of another of the Barukzais, Yar Mohammad Khan, who, on the approach of 'Azim, fled into the hills. At the same time, a large Sikh force crossed the Indus to assert Ranjit's overlordship. The battle of Nowshahra was fought in 1823; 'Azim was defeated, Peshawar entered, sacked, and again made over to Yar Mohammad Khan, who had hitherto regularly paid tribute to the Sikh ruler. 'Azim died soon afterwards, and Afghanistan once again relapsed into misgovernment, until Dost Mohammad Khan established his authority.

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mander, was also called upon to enforce the collection of revenues and tribute from the petty chiefs and tribesmen of the locality. Thus he came to be possessed of the chief civil and military authority in the province, which he continued to administer until his death in 1837. The amount of revenue was never precisely ascertained. It varied largely according to the possibilities of extortion. As money could never be raised by peaceful methods, the Nalwa Sirdar was allowed a free hand in devising ways and means of enforcing payment. This led to the inauguration of that policy of lawless raids and incursions into the tribal territories which was continued during the rest of the Maharaja's reign. The Sikh soldiers would issue forth at different times and seasons to suppress revolts and to extort revenues either in kind or in cash. Thus there were ample opportunities for ruthless exactions, and all authorities agree that Hari Singh employed them to the full. Ranjit himself does not seem to have felt any scruples about following this line of policy in the tribal regions, partly because it was popular with the Sikhs, but mainly owing to the fact that he found it the most suitable and practicable. Nevertheless, this policy was little calculated to pacify or reconcile the tribesmen, whose hostile attitude towards the Sikhs greatly encouraged the rulers of Afghanistan to repeat their efforts for the recovery of Peshawar. Ranjit was also aware of this fact. He had closely watched the political situation in Afghanistan; and had deliberately decided upon a policy of aggressive penetration as being best calculated to serve his purpose, so long as there was no strong ruler at Kabul. But when Dost Mohammed established a more organised government, Ranjit's attitude underwent a change. He no longer felt assured of maintaining his authority on the frontier solely

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by his superior power; and, although he still relied upon force in putting down local risings and rebellions, he thought seriously of providing in some other way against the danger from Afghanistan. Reconciliation with Dost Mohammed and his Barukzai followers was impossible, owing to the inveterate antipathy and uncompromising attitude of the two rulers. Hence Ranjit fell back on the exiled monarch, Shah Shuj'a-ul-Mulk, who had been living at Ludhiana since 1814, and proposed to assist him in the recovery of his throne.* By establishing a friendly prince at Kabul, Ranjit hoped to provide against the possibility of Afghan attacks on Peshawar, which he now thought of incorporating with his dominions. This plan was first suggested to Ranjit by the Shah's own requests for help. The negotiations however came to nothing, for the following reasons: first, Shah Shuj'a wanted to secure the co-operation of the English,† together with that of Ranjit Singh, and failed to obtain it; secondly, Yar Mohammed Khan, the Barukzai chief of Peshawar, who had lately revolted against the Maharaja in sympathy with Syed Ahmed Shah, now allayed the anxieties of the Sikh ruler by returning to his allegiance and giving him his son as a hostage. Thirdly, owing to the disturbances caused by the Syed on the frontier, the Sikh chief could not spare military assistance to Shah Shuj'a for an adventure of which the outcome was doubt-

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*These negotiations began as early as 1826, *i.e.* a year after Dost Mohammad acquired the throne of Kabul. *See* Captain Wade to Metcalfe, 25th July, 1826; Punjab Press List, vol. V, p. 64.

†*See* Governor-General to Resident at Delhi, 1st July, 1827; Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records).

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ful. Ranjit even postponed the annexation of Peshawar.* In 1829 Yar Mohammed Khan was killed in a fight against the Syed, the renewal of whose hostile activities revived the Maharaja's apprehensions. The negotiations with the Shah were re-opened by an exchange of secret agents, but the plans again fell through. It seems that the object of Ranjit Singh was merely to alarm into submission Sultan Mohammed Khan, the brother and successor of Yar Mohammed Khan, who was suspected of intriguing with the Syed. The Shah however continued scheming until 1833; and during this interval he several times approached the English and Ranjit Singh with requests for help. In the latter year he succeeded in collecting some three thousand armed followers and about two hundred thousand rupees. With these he crossed the Indus, entered Shikarpur, crushed the opposition of the Sindhians, and then proceeded towards Qandahar, where he maintained himself in the neighbourhood of the city for a few months but was ultimately expelled by Dost Mohammed Khan. After many weary wanderings he returned to his old asylum at Ludhiana in March, 1835.

Ranjit Singh had grown anxious about the possible consequences of the Shah's independent action; and he hastened to annex Peshawar for fear that the latter's authority might be firmly established in Afghanistan. This was indeed the chief reason of Ranjit's action in

*Two other reasons probably were in part responsible for this postponement. The Maharaja was ill in 1827-1828. There had also occurred in those years instances of serious mutiny and insubordination among some of his regular troops stationed on the frontier.

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annexing Peshawar in 1834.* Another was the forward policy advocated for some time past by Hari Singh Nalwa.

Meanwhile, however, the victory of Dost Mohammed over Shah Shuj'a had filled the former chief with fresh ambitions about Peshawar. He declared war against the Sikhs, and gave it a religious complexion by representing them as infidels and assuming for himself the title of *Ghazi*. He asked help from the English, but in vain.† Ranjit, on the other hand, detached Sultan Mohammed Khan from the *Amir* with whom he had sought refuge after the annexation of Peshawar. The extent to which the Barukzais were jealous of one another may be gauged from the fact that Sultan Mohammed, although forcibly ejected from Peshawar by Ranjit Singh, still sided with him and not with his own brother. Dost Mohammed had collected a large army near the Khaibar, but the clever diplomacy of the Sikh chief succeeded in delaying attack until the Sikh troops were concentrated. Two envoys, Dr. Harlan and Faqir 'Aziz-ul-din were then sent into the Afghan camp, to persuade the *Amir* to acquiesce in the Sikh possession of Peshawar and to avoid provoking a conflict. But their proposal was not heeded by Dost Mohammed, who, on the contrary, wanted to keep the envoys in custody and treat them as hostages for the success of his project. They were made over to Sultan Mohammed Khan, who, having determined to join the Sikhs, released them. Apart from obtaining release, the envoys proved cleverer than the *Amir*, for they succeeded

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*See Captain Wade to Governor-General, 17th June, 1834: Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records).

†Captain Wade to Governor-General, 4th January and 13th May, 1835: Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records).

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in keeping him idle with empty hopes and promises until his forces were almost surrounded by the Sikhs. When Dost Mohammed realised the danger of his position, he decided to retire precipitately rather than risk a battle with the enemy. Some *Jagirs* were conferred upon Sultan Mohammed Khan by the Maharaja, but the civil and military control of the province remained in the hands of the Nalwa Sirdar, who within the next three years established a further outpost at Jamrud. It was at this place that the Sikhs and Afghans met in a pitched battle in 1837, for the last time in Ranjit Singh's reign.*

The foregoing events may be summarised as follows: first, the Panjab was never invaded from beyond the Indus during the reign of Ranjit Singh. The tide of conquest, which had poured into that province for centuries, was then for the first time effectively checked. Ranjit, as has already been remarked, was the first non-Muslim monarch after Anangpal to have succeeded in inaugurating a power in the Panjab which, in point of military organisation and efficiency, proved decidedly superior to that of the Mohammedans in the North. Secondly, the political events in Afghanistan had a direct

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*For a full account of the events of this period, *see* the Life of Dost Mohammad, by Mohan Lal, vol. I, pp. 170—190; and Dr. Harlan's India and Afghanistan, pp. 120—130. Valuable information also exists in the correspondence which passed between the British Agent at Ludhiana and the Governor-General, from 1834 to 1836.

With the battle of Jamrud, which has been described in detail in the previous chapter, Ranjit's connections with the rulers of Afghanistan may be said to have ended. The only important transaction which took place subsequent to 1837 was that of the Tripartite Treaty, which will be discussed in part B of the present chapter.

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bearing on the rapid growth of the Sikh kingdom. The internal strife at Kabul not only enabled the ruler of the Sikhs to incorporate into his dominions the trans-Indus possessions of the Afghans, but also facilitated his consolidation of the Sikh power in the Panjab itself. But for this favourable circumstance the Maharaja must have encountered many more difficulties in his career of conquest.

B.—Ranjit Singh and the East India Company.

The end of the 18th century presents us with an interesting spectacle of three powers contending for the mastery of Northern India. The English had established their influence over Oudh and maintained their power against the Marhattas. The Marhattas had revived their power to a certain extent after the battle of Panipat, under the able leadership of Mahadaji Sindhia. By 1785 this chief had succeeded in occupying Agra and persuading the Mughal Emperor, Shah 'Alam, to declare him the vicegerent of the Empire. The third power was that of the Sikhs, who, since the death of Ahmed Shah Abdali, had over-run the Eastern Panjab as far as the river Janma. Except for the defence of Oudh, the English felt no direct interest in extending their influence beyond that river, until they thought themselves threatened in the first years of the 19th century. Hence they remained for a while aloof while the other two came in conflict. In 1785 Sindhia concluded an agreement with some Sikh chiefs for joint raids and a fixed division of the booty. Sindhia was to get two-thirds, and the Sikhs the remainder.* But the agreement did not last long, for the

**Vide* Browne's India Tracts, Part II, p. 29.

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Marhatta chief began to treat his partners as his dependents, and exacted tribute from them. He also established his overlordship over the other Malwa Sikhs. In 1797 he appointed General Perron as his deputy in Northern India. Perron, able and ambitious as he was, might have extended his authority beyond the Satluj, but for the unexpected hostility of the adventure, George Thomas.

With the early career of Thomas we are hardly concerned This, however, may be stated, that in 1787 he secured employment with Begam Sammru, and six years later he entered the service of one of the principal officers of Sindhia. While in this latter capacity he defeated the Sikhs near Karnal, and began to cherish schemes of establishing a kingdom of his own. In 1798 he established himself at Jhansi; and, after strengthening his forces, he commenced hostilities against the Sikhs. In the two following years he over-ran the Malwa country as far as Ludhiana, where however he met with a strong opposition; and, being also apprehensive of Perron's hostility, he withdrew to Jhansi. He finally surrendered to Perron in 1802 and was allowed to retire to British territory, where he died soon afterwards. Thus Perron had now a free hand. It was now the turn of his lieutenant, Bourquin, to over-run the Malwa country, exacting tribute wherever he went. This happened in 1802-1803.*

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*Perron is said to have contemplated establishing his own kingdom, and to have concluded an agreement with Ranjit Singh for a joint enterprise against Peshawar. *See* Resident at Dehli to Ochterloney, 5th July, 1814: Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records). But Perron was soon recalled by Sindhia, who himself had become involved in a war with the

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The English may have heard of the Sikhs as early as 1715. In that year, agents of the Company had arrived in Dehli in quest of trading privileges. The insurrection of the Sikhs prolonged their stay at the Imperial court by two years, and they may have witnessed the execution of Banda and his followers in 1716. But no official notice seems to have been taken of the Sikhs until 1785, when their predatory activities and temporary alliance with Sindhia attracted the attention of the Company's Governor-General, Warren Hastings, who grew apprehensive about the safety of Oudh. Three years later the Sikhs suggested a defensive alliance* to the Company's Resident with Sindhia, but it was declined. Even at this time, the English knowledge of the Sikhs was extremely vague and scanty. The following quotation from Franklin's History of the Reign of Shah Aulum is typical: "The Seiks, in their persons, are tall, and of a manly erect deportment; their aspect is ferocious, their eyes piercing and animated; and in tracing their features a striking resemblance is observable to the *Arabs* who inhabit the banks of the Euphrates. The dress of the males consists of a coarse cloth of blue cotton, thrown loosely over the shoulders, and coming down between the legs, is confined round the waist by a belt of cotton. An ample turban of blue cloth covers the head, and over this is frequently wore a sash of silk

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English, and was soon after dismissed from service.

Thus it will be seen that at the close of the 18th century the authority of Sindhia was paramount over the lands situated between the Janna and the Satluj. This supremacy however was soon replaced in regions around Dehli by the English.

*The alliance was intended to be against the Marhattas. *See* Cunningham's History of the Sikhs, p. 134.

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and cotton mixed, resembling both in colour and pattern a *Scotch Tartan.* They speak the Aufghaun or Pooshto language, with prolific additions of Persian, Arabic, and Hindoovee."*

The first action in which the Sikhs were arrayed against the English was the battle of Dehli in 1803. Some of the Cis-Satluj chiefs joined Sindhia against the English army under the command of Lord Lake. The Marhattas were defeated, and the Sikhs tendered their allegiance to the English commander. Henceforward general friendship and cordiality existed between the English and the Sikh chieftains of Kaithal and Jind. The victory of Laswari in the same year annihilated the Marhatta ascendancy in Northern India.

In the following year Jaswant Rao Holkar commenced hostilities against the English, and Monson's retreat filled him with high hopes about the future. Dehli was attacked, but was ably defended by Ochterloney; while the reverse at Dig drove Holkar back to Rajputana. The two Sikh chieftains, Lal Singh and Bhag Singh, assisted Colonel Burn who had been isolated at Saharanpur, and received Lord Lake's praise of their services.† In 1805 Holkar again advanced North, closely followed by Lord Lake. The rapid pursuit of the latter compelled the former to escape into the Panjab. Holkar at first entered Patiala, but, being threatened by the approach of the British General, continued his march towards the Satluj. None of the Cis-Satluj chiefs listened to his requests for help. Crossing the river, he passed through the territories of Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, and entered

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**See* Chapter V, pp. 77-78, of Francklin's Shah Aulum.

†Two other chiefs, Sher Singh of Borea and Gurdit Singh of Ladwa, sided with the Marhattas.

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Amritsar. Ranjit at this time was carrying on raids in the direction of Jhang and Multan. He hastened back to the capital. The two chiefs met at Amritsar. Ranjit treated Holkar in a befitting manner, showed him the city, took him to the Golden Temple, held military parades in his honour, and paid him every courtesy and attention. He even took counsel with him in matters of military and financial organisation.* But he refused to comply with Holkar's request for active support against the English, which was the real object of his visit. It is however a mistake to conclude, as has been done by most writers, that Ranjit Singh's mind was made up on this point beforehand, or even that his answer was quick and decisive. The following considerations no doubt influenced his judgment. In the first place Ranjit dreaded the discipline of the English army, which he had just observed in disguise on the banks of the Bias. He told Captain Wade in 1827 how impressed he had been with the spectacle of Holkar's hundred thousand soldiers flying before a few trained battalions under Lord Lake. The conclusion which he naturally drew was that the addition of a small Sikh force to the vast horde of the Marhatta chief would not change the situation. Secondly, Ranjit was advised against joining Holkar by his maternal uncle, Bhag Singh of Jind, as well as by his own counsellors. Lastly, the military situation arising from the presence of the English force on the border of his own territory offered little temptation to Ranjit Singh to plunge into an armed intervention; for even a slight reverse would have brought the enemy to Amritsar, in the very heart of his small kingdom. But, nevertheless, as appears from

*See Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, f. 246.

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his own subsequent co versations with Captain Wade,* he long wavered between acceptance and refusal of Holkar's proposal and was finally so distracted between the two alternatives that he decided his course by lot.

Finally the Sikh ruler availed himself of this opportunity to propose a treaty of friendship to the English general. A precedent for such a proposal existed in the case of several Cis-Satluj chiefs who had concluded agreements with Lord Lake during his recent excursion. Ranjit sent Fateh Singh Ahluwalia to the English camp, to draw up the terms of an agreement which would pledge "friendship between the Honourable East India Company and the Sirdars Ranjit Singh and Fateh Singh."

In 1806 Ranjit Singh had turned his attention to the rich lands of Malwa which lay beyond the Satluj. The pretext for an invasion was provided by a request for help from the chief of Nabha against that of Patiala. Having crossed the Satluj at the head of a force, Ranjit captured Ludhiana from its Mohammedan owner and made it over to his uncle, Bhag Singh. He then scored several minor successes which caused alarm in the mind of the chief who had sought his assistance, and who now bought off his approach by the payment of tribute and a few guns. Ranjit returned to the Panjab *via*

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*These conversations took p'ace in 1827 and 1831, and formed the subject of various communications by Captain Wade to the Resident at Dehli and the Governor-General. *See* Wade to Resident, 1st August, 1827; and Wade to the Governor-General, 31st May, 1831: Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vol. 33, and Range 126, vol. 22 (India Office MSS. Records). *See* also Umdut-ul-Twarikh, Daftar II, p. 60.

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Kangra.* He crossed the Satluj again in the following year, to settle a dispute between the ruler of Patiala and his wife, and again secured for himself more guns and treasure. Having reduced Naraingarh and several other places, he returned to Lahore. In 1808, when the Maharaja's systematic aggressions had brought under his authority almost all the Sikh Sirdars on the north side of the Satluj, he deputed Dewan Mohkam Chand to settle the lands conquered in the previous year on the left bank of the river. Ranjit's inroads in that quarter had already excited alarm among the Cis-Satluj chieftains, who now grew still more apprehensive of his policy. But they were too weak individually to oppose him, and too much divided to act together. Hence they decided to seek the protection of the English. The decision was made after some deliberation, in which English overlordship was preferred to that of Ranjit, although both were recognised as a necessary evil.† A deputation visited

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*Ranjit at this time did not feel himself strong enough to subjugate all the Malwa chiefs, and contented himself with exactions of guns and money. *See* Metcalfe to Governor-General, 13th June, 1809: Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS Records).

†The following quotation likening Ranjit's domination to brain affection with its immediately fatal effects, and the British overlordship to consumption with its more gradual results, is taken from Bute Shah's MS.:—

چوں سردازان میان دوآب دریاے ستلج و جمن از دست تسلط
و غلبهٔ افواج مهاراجه صاحب بجان آمده از تلفي زراعت و آوارگي
رعایا و نقصان مبالغ کثیر در وجهٔ نزرانه و اتلاف اسباب سرداری مثل
توپ و رهکله متزبزب الحیله شدند و درسال آئنده بر اِنهدام بنیان ریاست

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Dehli on their behalf in March 1808, but it did not succeed in securing anything beyond vague and unsatisfactory expressions of good-will. Ranjit also heard of this deputation, and sent urgent messengers with reassurances which failed to produce any effect.

To understand the attitude of the Company's Government towards the Indian rulers, it is necessary to go back to the time of Lord Wellesley. Under him the British power had made rapid strides in India. As a result of hostilities against the Marhattas, it had acquired a paramount position as far as Dehli. The forward policy of Lord Wellesley, however, had met with strong disapproval in England; and, after the reverse of Colonel Monson, the Governor-General was recalled and his policy openly condemned by the Directors. His successor, Lord Cornwallis, came to India with express instructions to avoid all extension of English responsibility. He however died soon after his arrival, and was succeeded by Sir George Barlow, who held office for the next two years (1805—1807), pending the appointment of a Governor-General from England. Barlow adhered to the policy to which his predecessor was pledged, in spite of the remonstrances of Lord Lake and several other Anglo-Indian officials. Whatever may have been the ultimate effect of its working and the subsequent views of its soundness, it was at that time dictated

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و سرداری خودها یقین کردند لہزا باهم متفق شده بزم مشورت آراستند و سران آینه یاربه بالائے سرسام یعنی از دست تسلط مہاراجه بہادر هلاکت نجاتاً متصور بود رائے همکناں برآں راجع گردید که به مرض حمی دق اعنی عمل و دخل سرکار کمپنی بہادر که بتدریج نوبت به مرگ مے رسد تا در دهند*

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Persian powers cannot be deemed an undertaking beyond the scope of that energy and perseverance which dis*tinguish the* present ruler of France." Minto then goes on enumerating the obstacles in the way of a French march through Persia and Afghanistan into India, and concludes: "Arduous as such an undertaking must necessarily be, we are not warranted in deeming it in the present situation of affairs to be altogether chimerical and impracticable, under the guidance of a man whose energy and success appear almost commensurate with his ambition. We deem it our duty to act under a supposition of its practicability, and to adopt whatever measures are in our judgment calculated to counteract it, even at the hazard of injury to some local and immediate interests."*

Thus it was for the purpose of counteracting the supposed designs of Napoleon against India, that Lord Minto departed from the policy of non-intervention. He sent embassies to Persia, Afghanistan, Sindh and the Panjab: the object being "to conciliate the princes ..... and to obtain their permission to enter into their territories for the purpose of opposing the French in their projected invasion of Hindostan ..... and to establish such defensive engagements with these governments as may obtain their co-operation, or at least their friendly aid and assistance, to our military operations and to our cause generally."† At the same time his attitude towards the Cis-Sathuj Chiefs was modified, and it became manifest that he intended to reverse the policy of the previous year. In March, 1808, he wrote: "Although as a general principle, we cordially recognise the

*"Lord Minto in India," pp. 101-102.

†"Lord Minto in India," p. 148.

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equally by the Company's instructions and by considerations of economy. Barlow moreover had no obvious reason to depart from the principles underlying it, which were acceptable to the Whig section of the ministry in power in England. The political situation in India, too, pointed to no urgent necessity for fresh alliances with native powers. There was no danger threatening from the North-West, as had been the case six years earlier. Between the Indus and the Sathuj lay a large number of Sikh principalities, which were too divided among themselves to make their existence felt by the English. The Malwa country was likewise in the possession of weak Sikh chieftains, whose recent negotiations with the English I have stated in the preceding paragraphs. At Dehli, the English Resident had supplanted the authority and influence of Sindhia. Under a more vigorous and ambitious Governor-General, such a situation might have been regarded as peculiarly favourable for the extension of British influence, especially as the occasion now arose through the Sikh Chiefs' own request for protection. Their past services and their present internal strife would have supplied political and moral considerations strong enough to justify a deviation from accepted principles. Such a course, however, was rejected by Sir George Barlow; and the efforts of the Cis-Satluj princes to secure the English protection remained in abeyance.

Barlow was succeeded in the Governor-Generalship by Lord Minto in 1807. Although Minto had received instructions from the Directors similar to those of his predecessor, nevertheless he stood on an entirely different footing in his relations with his superiors. In the first place, he had been the President of the Board of Control in the ministry of 1805; and the influence derived from that office was far more commanding and

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invasion, by announcing that resolution, no doubt can be entertained that the mere declaration of it would have been sufficient to deter Runjeet Singh from the execution of his design."† Thus Lord Minto's views were definitely formed before Metcalfe started from Dehli on his mission to Ranjit Singh on the twelfth of August, 1808, the ostensible object of his visit being the opposition of the designs of Napoleon. In the long memorandum of instructions issued by the Governor-General to the young diplomatist, it was expressly enjoined upon the latter to adopt a non-committal attitude on the question of the Cis-Satluj States. Metcalfe's arrival in Kasur, his interviews with Ranjit Singh, the communication of the object of his mission, the Raja's evasive answers, the sudden break-up of Ranjit's camp, his march across the Satluj, the reduction of Faridkot, Malerkotla, Ambala and Thaneswar, his "turban alliance" with the ruler of Patiala, and his re-crossing of the river Satluj—these are facts too well-known to require repetition. Metcalfe described this strange behaviour of the Raja as "an extraordinary instance of suspicion, hastiness and disrespect;" and later on summed up the results of Ranjit's recent invasion as follows: "Including those chiefs who have attended him in this expedition, his sovereignty has been completely acknowledged by all the Sikh Chiefs with two exceptions—the Rajas of Puteealah and Thaneswar."* It seems that Ranjit's

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†"Lord Minto in India," p. 145.

**See* p. 278 and *also* Metcalfe to Edmonstone, Kasur, 25th September and 20th October, 1808, quoted by Kaye in his Life of Lord Metcalfe, vol. I, pp. 271-272. From these letters it appears that Ranjit had reached the vicinity of the British frontier-post at Karnal, reducing almost all the notable chiefs to subjection.

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wisdom and the justice of abstaining from all interference in the contests, disputes, and concerns of states with which we are unconnected by the obligations of alliance, and are fully convinced of the embarrassments and inconvenience of extending our protection to petty chieftains, who are unable to protect their territories from the aggressions of more powerful neighbours, yet we are disposed to think that cases may occur in which a temporary deviation from those general principles may be a measure of defensive policy, the neglect of which might be productive of much more danger and embarrassment than the prosecution of it, and that the certain resolution of the Rajah of Lahore to subjugate the states situated between the Sutlege and the frontier of our dominion would, under other circumstances than the present, constitute a case on which, on grounds of self-defence, the interposition of the British power for the purpose of preventing the execution of such a project, would be equally just and prudent."* In another despatch, written about the same time, he said: "Runjeet had alone been induced to meditate the extension of his dominions over the territories between the Sutlege and the Jumna, by a manifestation of our intention not to exercise those rights of supremacy over the Southern Sikhs which had been exercised by the Marhattas. If we had not at an early period of time declared the Sikh chiefs to be entirely independent of our control; if at the time when the Rajah projected his first invasion of those territories we had declared a resolution to protect them; or even if we had attended to the united solicitations of the chiefs of those territories about the middle of last year to protect them against a second projected

*"Lord Minto in India," p. 146.

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considerable than what could be claimed by his predecessor, the senior member of the Governor-General's Council. Secondly, Lord Minto's nomination implied a compromise between the views of those who believed in Wellesley's policy, and those who advocated the theory of non-intervention. Minto belonged to none of those parties. Thirdly, Minto's appointment was followed by the change of ministry in England; and the Whigs under whom his selection was made left office soon after his arrival in India. This fact left him much liberty of action in formulating his policy. But the last and the greatest difference in his and his predecessor's position arose from the changed situation of Europe and India.

Soon after the arrival of the new Governor-General in India, the international situation in Europe underwent a radical change. The peace of Tilsit was concluded in June 1807, and marked the zenith of Napoleon's power. Russia was now joined to the formidable array of the enemies of England; and, with the exception of Sweden, the whole of Europe had sided with the French. Schemes for the conquest of the English possessions in the East were being hatched by Napoleon; and the outlook became graver as the co-operation of France and Russia grew more probable. The danger threatening the peace of India began to engage the attention both of Lord Minto and the ministers in England. The former wrote from India on 2nd February 1808: "As long as France might be engaged in Continental wars in Europe, the project of directing her arms towards this quarter must be considered impracticable; but if her armies have been liberated by a pacification with Russia and by the continued submission of the powers of Europe, the advance of a considerable force of French troops into Persia under acquiescence of the Turkish, Russian, and

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object in adopting a course so unexpected and provoking to the English envoy was to avail himself of the interval which must necessarily pass between Metcalfe's communications to the Governor-General and the latter's response, by converting his designs into an accomplished fact. The Sikh ruler in fact did not attach much importance to Metcalfe's visit. Of the situation beyond Persia he was perfectly ignorant. Nor did he feel disposed to take into consideration a danger so remote and conjectural. His mind was fixed on objects more tangible and easier of realisation. Hence he felt inclined to attribute the visit of the English envoy to the intention of that Government to thwart his designs against the Malwa Sikhs. When the Envoy told the Maharaja at Kasur that he did not possess any instructions on that point, Ranjit cleverly took him at his word and claimed and exercised for himself full liberty of action in the matter.*

Meanwhile Metcalfe remained a passive spectator of the spoliation of the states which his government intended ultimately to protect. He did make a protest against Ranjit's high-handed move against the very chiefs who were on friendly terms with the English, but it failed to produce any impression. The authorities at Calcutta also looked on, determined to avoid a rupture whilst it was still uncertain whether the clouds in the distant horizon would burst upon them or disperse. "I

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*Ranjit could hardly bring himself to believe that the counteraction against danger from Napoleon was the real object of Metcalfe's mission. At the same time, he argued that if it were really so, why should the English not yield to his wishes for the sake of their own interests. Thus he frankly told the Envoy that he would agree to an alliance on the one condition that his Cis-Satluj project should not be interfered with.

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do not think," wrote Lord Minto,† "that we should be justified, in point of policy, in breaking at present with Runjeet Singh. The point to aim at in our present transactions with the Rajah of Lahore appears to be, that we should keep ourselves as free as can be done without a rupture. I should on this principle rather wish to protract than accelerate the treaty." Still the situation which had arisen out of the success of the Prince's late expedition was too delicate to allow the Governor-General to maintain a passive or even temporising attitude. For he believed that "to declare that we do not consent to the proposed conquests, and at the same time to look on while they are achieved, is a contradiction calculated alike to alienate the Sikhs and to provoke the enmity of Runjeet Singh." Consequently, he issued orders to the Commander-in-Chief to prepare for an advance. A more decided step, however, was not taken, until a sudden change in the European situation precluded the early possibility of the French invasion of India.† With the cessation of that fear, ceased also the necessity for an alliance with Ranjit, especially at the expense of Cis-Satluj lands. Metcalfe was now informed that the English government did not regard the proximity of Ranjit's military dominions as conducive to the safety of its own; that the extension of the Raja's authority over the Malwa country could not be tolerated; that Ranjit should consider the river Satluj as the eastern boundary of his kingdom; that a military post should henceforth be established at Ludhiana to look after the interests of the Company; and, lastly, that non-compli-

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†*Vide* Kaye's Life of Lord Metcalfe, vol. I, p. 273 (footnote).

†*See* Governor-General to Ochterloney, 30th June, 1809: Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records).

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ance with these terms by the Raja would involve the active hostility of the English. A letter from the Governor-General addressed to Ranjit Singh accompanied Metcalfe's instructions.

Before the final decision of the Governor-General reached Metcalfe, he had moved from his place on the Satluj to Amritsar, whither the Sikh chief had returned after re-crossing the river. Military encounters had given place to feasts and revels; and "it had become as difficult for the young diplomatist to find the Rajah sober, as it had been to overtake him in his flights."* In spite of repeated efforts, Metcalfe could not induce Ranjit to reply to his propositions. Soon afterwards, the Prince, taking advantage of religious disturbances in the city, brought about—among other causes—by the conduct of his mistress, withdrew to Lahore, followed by the Envoy. While at Lahore Ranjit continued to

*While re-crossing the Satluj, Ranjit had twice agreed to see the Envoy, but had changed his mind. "On the 29th ultimo," wrote Metcalfe, "Runjeet Singh sent me a polite letter, informing me that he would be at Eesroo to meet me on the first of this month. On the day fixed I received a letter from him, containing his excuses for not being at Eesroo; and proposing a meeting on the Sutlej. Before I reached that river, he had continued his march with surprising rapidity to Umritsar ..... Runjeet Singh, in everything that he undertakes, is impatient; but the cause of his extraordinary impatience on this occasion was a desire to see his favourite mistress, Marar [Moran], from whom he has been separated for nearly three months. In her arms he has been resting after the fatigues of his campaign." The Envoy also mentions how he delivered the letter of the Governor-General to Ranjit, who kept it for several days without being able to read it on account of strong doses of drink. *See* Kaye's Life of Lord Metcalfe, vol. I, pp. 280 (footnote) and 283 respectively.

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procrastinate, until Metcalfe made a strong remonstrance. One or two interviews then took place, but with no definite result. Sometimes the wily chief pleaded his inability to answer, owing to the absence of some of his ministers, and sometimes on the plea of indisposition. In short, every day brought new excuses, which his ministers tried to explain away by all sorts of fantastic arguments.* A crisis indeed was approaching, owing to the collection of troops by the Sikh ruler on the one hand, and the advance of a strong detachment towards the Satluj under the command of Colonel (afterwards Sir David) Ochterloney on the other. Metcalfe warned the English Commander-in-Chief of the military dangers of the situation. On 31st December, 1808, he wrote from Lahore a masterly exposition of the views and conduct of the Sikh ruler,† concluding with the likelihood of a speedy collision. Soon after its despatch the

*Metcalfe wrote to Edmonstone: "I asked what explanation I should offer to my government for the delay which had taken place on the part of the Rajah. Imaum-ood-deen begged me to bear in mind that the Rajah from the earliest age had been without control; that his disposition had in consequence become ungovernable; that he had acted throughout life according to his pleasure; that God had prospered all his undertakings; that he had acquired a habit of acting without reference to the inclination of others; and that allowances ought to be made for these considerations. I observed that the Rajah's eccentricities were evident enough, and that I had often been amused by them; that they would, indeed, be very entertaining if they did not interfere so much with important business; but that I could not state them to my government to account for the Rajah's conduct, as any consideration of them would be inadmissible ...." *Vide* Kaye's Life of Lord Metcalfe, vol. I, p. 291 (footnote).

†*See* Kaye's Life of Lord Metcalfe, vol. I, pp. 293—295.

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Envoy broke the news to Ranjit of the advance of Ochterloney's detachment. It seemed to "shock" that Chief, who, leaving the room immediately, mounted his horse, and a few minutes after was seen by Metcalfe galloping furiously round the Palace in a circle. Metcalfe describes the action as one of "surprising levity," and suggests as an explanation that it was Ranjit's proud and fierce nature aiming at self-control. After dismounting, the Prince took his seat in another chamber of the palace, and deputed 'Aziz-ul-din to remonstrate vigorously with the Envoy against the menacing attitude of his government. Metcalfe remained firm and dignified.* 'Aziz-ul-din returned to his master and joined in a lengthy consultation with him. There were present several other Sirdars. The meeting was long; and when the ministers returned their conduct was sober and their answers re-assuring.

I need not enter further into the details of delay and procrastination which continued for some time longer, during which every evasion, compromise and conciliatory effort was attempted by Ranjit's counsellers to whittle down the demands of the English or define them in such a vague manner as to preclude the possibility of their successful realisation. This went on, together with warlike preparations on both sides; and at times Metcalfe felt that he ought to quit the Panjab. At last—on the 6th January—Ranjit despatched one of his officers to recall the troops from Ambala, so as to avoid collision with those under Ochterloney. The latter reached Ludhiana in the beginning of February, 1809, and on the 9th

*Metcalfe's firm attitude called forth Ranjit's complaint that the Envoy treated him as a *Jagirdar* and not as a ruler. *Vide* Kaye's Life of Lord Metcalfe, vol. I, p. 301 (footnote).

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of that month Ochterloney proclaimed English overlordship *over the* Cis-Satluj lands, and his intention to oppose the invasion of those lands by Ranjit Singh. Ranjit acquiesced in the arrangement by evacuating most of the occupied territory across the Satluj in a slow and hesitating manner. Thereupon a treaty declaratory of friendship as well as the new stipulations was signed on the 25th April, 1809.* Thus ended the most important diplomatic transaction effected between Ranjit and the English.

Considerations which may have led Ranjit Singh to avoid the arbitrament of war are not difficult to understand. He entertained great fear of the English arms and discipline since the visit of Lord Lake. He had seen how Sindhia and Holkar, in spite of possessing numerically superior forces, had failed. He also witnessed the admirable conduct of the two companies forming the personal escort of Metcalfe, in a recent affray with the *Akalis* at Amritsar.† Besides, Ranjit's authority over the Panjab was not yet well established. Most of his Sirdars, having been recently dispossessed, were jealous of his ascendancy, and were awaiting an opportunity to shake it off; and, perhaps in the event of a military

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*The Treaty left Ranjit Singh in possession of the tracts he had occupied to the south of the Satluj before the arrival of Metcalfe's mission. The friendly clauses were added according to the Governor-General's final instructions, and in conformity with the Maharaja's special desire and request. *Vide* Kaye's Life of Lord Metcalfe, vol. I, p. 308.

†This incident happened a few days before the final agreement between Ranjit and Metcalfe and is stated by many writers to have greatly impressed the former with the efficiency of the members of the escort, who, although in a minority, succeeded in beating off a sudden attack by the *Akalis* without serious effort.

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reverse, they might have revolted from Ranjit Singh and transferred their allegiance to the English.

The immediate effects of the treaty of 1809 may be enumerated as follows. Ranjit's acceptance of the Satluj as the eastern boundary of his kingdom prevented the extension of his authority over the whole of the Sikh population. A real political cleavage was created for the first time between the Manjha and the Malwa sections of the Sikhs. The possibility of Ranjit's becoming the national leader of the entire Sikh people disappeared; and the loss to the ruler of Lahore was not only political and territorial but also economic.

Yet from another point of view, the agreement which established a strong and friendly power at Ludhiana was of considerable benefit to Ranjit Singh in the rapid expansion of his dominion in other directions. All danger of aggression or hostility from beyond the Satluj was removed, at least for the time being. This enabled the Sikh chief to venture on distant expeditions, and to throw the whole weight of his arms against Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar. The advantages derived from the new situation were very considerable; and it may safely be asserted that had the English been defeated in the second Marhatta war, and had Sindhia consolidated his power on both banks of the Jamna, Ranjit's kingdom could never have been acquired, could never even have been attempted.

Historically the treaty has a greater interest on account of its latent rather than its immediate effects. Its ultimate effect on the stability of the kingdom of Lahore was very unfavourable. It gave to the English an amount of influence and a degree of control over the relations of Ranjit Singh with the neighbouring states, such as Sindh, Bahawalpur and Afghanistan, which they other-

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wise could not have acquired. This fact, as we shall see later on, brought the two powers to the brink of war in 1836. Lastly, the close contact between the boundaries of two states, the rulers of which were imbued with different ideas of political and territorial integrity, was likely to lead to war. This is clear from the difficulty of reconciling the commercial pursuits of the English with the military ambitions of the ruler of the Panjab.

The Cis-Sathuj settlement, brought about as it was by a military demonstration, left behind it a legacy of suspicion and distrust which continued for several years. Each side entertained imaginary apprehensions, proof of which was constantly sought in the other's military or diplomatic activities. The political correspondence of the Company's Agents during the three years following the agreement are full of exaggerated reports of the hostile intentions of the Sikh ruler.* The latter too was not without his fears, which revealed themselves in his efforts to construct forts and strengthen outposts on the Satluj frontier. By degrees however this mutual distrust was partly removed. In 1812 Ranjit invited Ochterloney, the English agent at Ludhiana, to Lahore, to attend the marriage of his son, Prince Kharak Singh. The invitation was accepted, and the English Agent was received in a cordial manner. The conversations that took place during the visit re-assured both parties regarding the

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*See for instance: Resident at Dehli to Ochterloney, 28th June, 1809; and Ochterloney to the Resident at Dehli, 15th October, 5th, 6th and 7th December, 1809, and 5th and 20th January and 22nd August, 1810: Bengal Political Consultations (India Offict MSS. Records).

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situation.†

The years from 1812 to 1819 were of great military activity in the Panjab, the ruler of which remained busy extending his authority over the outlying portions, including Multan, Kashmir, the Derajat and Peshawar. Connection with the English was maintained by means of an occasional exchange of friendly letters and complimentary presents between Ranjit Singh and the Governor-General. Though the ambitious policy of the Sikh ruler was closely watched by the English, an attitude of strict neutrality was maintained towards his transactions with all chieftains in whom the English were not at that time interested.*

In 1822 a fresh crisis arose between the two governments over a place called Wadhni. This is situated to the south of the river Satluj. It had been transferred by Ranjit Singh to his mother-in-law, Sada Kaur, in 1808. Sada Kaur was treated by the English Agents at Ludhiana and Ambala as an independent head of the

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†This is shown by the readiness with which the Governor-General consented after Ochterloney's visit to supply a large number of muskets and flints for which the Maharaja had asked.

*The English refused to countenance the various proposals of alliance and assistance that reached Dehli at different times, either from the ruler of Lahore or from chiefs like Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra, the Nawab of Multan, the Wazir of Kabul and the noblemen of Kashmir. Ranjit on the other hand did not listen to requests for help made by various rulers from beyond the Jamna.

In 1817—19, and again in 1823—25, some disputes arose concerning the treatment of certain British officers on the banks of the Satluj by the Lahore officials. But the matter was satisfactorily settled, as much by Ranjit's conciliatory attitude as by the forbearing policy of the Governor-General.

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Kanhya *Misl*, and they now wanted to protect her possessions on the left bank of the river. The occasion for this arose from a quarrel with her son-in-law. She was imprisoned by the Prince, whose troops occupied the fort of Wadhni. On this, the Agent at Ludhiana ordered an English detachment to eject the Sikhs. This was done. Ranjit prudently avoided a collision; but, growing apprehensive of his neighbour's policy, he began defensive preparations within his own territory, as well as representing matters to the Governor-General. The latter recognised the Agent's mistake, and receded from the position which had been taken up.*

At this time French officers had arrived in Lahore and were entrusted with the task of military organisation Their activities in the next few years and the subsequent increase in their number excited a certain anxiety in English political circles. By 1823 the mass of Ranjit's dominions had been acquired; and the strategic frontiers of the Panjab had been reached. Hence there was a comparative lull in military activity, although the energies of the Maharaja were still devoted to creating a large disciplined force. Drills and parades were constantly going on at the capital under the vigorous personal direction of the French officers. It was rumoured that Ranjit was preparing for an attack on Shikarpur; but the rumours proved to be premature.† In 1825-26 new complications threatened to arise between Ranjit and

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*Most of the correspondence which took place between Ochterloney and the Resident at Dehli throughout 1822 bears on this topic: *See* Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records). *See* also Lieut. Murray to A. Ross, 17th and 20th July, 1822: Punjab Press List, vol. V, p. 33.

†*See* Resident at Dehli to Governor-General, 5th November, 1825; and Captain Murray to Resident at Dehli, 8th November,

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the Company, owing to the flight of Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Kutub-ul-din Khan of Kasur across the Satluj; but they soon afterwards returned to the Panjab and the excitement subsided. The attitude of the English in this affair was entirely reasonable.*

Towards the end of 1826 Ranjit Singh was attacked by sickness, and he sought the aid of Dr. Murray, an English army surgeon at Ludhiana. The latter stayed with Ranjit for eight months and closely studied the political and military situation in the Panjab. His frequent interviews with the Maharaja and his Sirdars enabled him to collect an extremely useful fund of information,† which he regularly supplied to the authorities at Ludhiana and Dehli. At the same time, Lord Amherst, the new Governor-General, visited the northern provinces, and excited both the fear and curiosity of the Sikh ruler. On his arrival in Simla, the Maharaja thought of arranging an interview with him, and expressed his ideas on the point to Dr. Murray several times, but owing to the indisposition of Ranjit the meeting never took place. Ranjit however sent instead a complimentary mission, composed of Dewan Moti Ram and Faqir Imam-ul-din, to Simla to wait upon the Governor-General, who returned the compliment by sending Captains Wade and Pearson and Surgeon Gerard. They visited the Panjab in the

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1825: Bengal Political Consultations, Range 124, vol. 33 (India Office MSS. Records).

See Governor-General to Resident at Dehli, 28th April, 1827: Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records).

†*See* a large number of secret letters written by Dr. Murray to Captain Wade and the Resident at Dehli: Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vols. 15, 16, 18, 19 and 21 (India Office MSS. Records). Most of these letters have not hitherto been examined for historical purposes.

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middle of 1827 and were accorded a hearty welcome by its ruler. In 1827-28 a new dispute arose about the Maharaja's claims over Chamkaur, Anandpur, Makhowal and Ferozepur: but this was soon afterwards settled to the satisfaction of both parties.*

By this time the reputation of the ruler of the Panjab had spread far and wide. His friendship and good-will were sought alike by distant and by neighbouring rulers, whose agents frequented his court. The English were also becoming increasingly conscious of his growing power. The final defeat of Syed Ahmed in 1831 added still greater prestige to his name. The Sikh ruler now began to take a keener interest in the affairs of neighbouring kingdoms, such as Sindh and Afghanistan; and schemes for their conquest were often discussed in the political circles of Lahore. In 1831 Lord William Bentinck arrived in Simla and received a complimentary mission from Ranjit Singh. Its members were Sirdar Hari Singh Nalwa, Dewan Moti Ram and Faqir 'Aziz-ul-din. Captain Wade was in turn deputed to the Sikh ruler with a letter of thanks, and secret instructions to ascertain if Ranjit wished and was prepared to propose a meeting with the Governor-General. In reality both parties equally desired it.† Several ac-

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*Ranjit's claim to the possession of the places other than Ferozepur was recognised by the English.

†After his illness of 1826 Ranjit had shown a great desire to interview the Governor-General. It appears that he thereby wanted to produce the impression on the neighbouring chiefs that, in the event of his death, the English would recognise his dynasty. Bentinck on the other hand aimed at improving his relations with Ranjit, whom he intended to associate with his projects for the free navigation of the Indus. Ranjit had already heard about the English intentions regarding Sindh, and hinted

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counts of the pomp and pageantry which attended the two rulers at Ropar have survived; and there is no incident connected with Ranjit Singh which is better known to the outside world than this interview. Soon after this, Lieut. (afterwards Sir Alexander) Burnes arrived with horses from England, which were presented to Ranjit Singh on behalf of King William IV.

The policy of the Company towards the Indian chiefs since the time of Lord Minto needs to be reviewed to follow the trend of Anglo-Sikh relationship in the coming years. Minto was succeeded by the Marquis of Hastings, who in turn was followed by Lord Amherst. Under these two governors the English rule was extended at the cost of Nepal and Burma. Control of the country north of the Narbada and Rajputana was established. Thus from the Satluj to Cape Comorin there remained no power strong enough to show hostility to the English.

Lord William Bentinck initiated a new policy of peaceful improvement. He wanted to link the remote provinces of the Indian continent in the bonds of commerce. Moorcroft, the traveller, had emphasised the use which might be made of the Indus as a channel of commerce; and Bentinck made up his mind to enter upon schemes of trade and navigation. One object of sending King William's presents to the Maharaja by water was to ascertain quietly the commercial value of the Indus; and Burnes' observations convinced the Governor-General of its superiority over the Ganges and the Jamna. Bentinck thought that by a judicious and prudent exercise

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at them several times during his conversation with the Governor-General at Ropar. But the latter evaded the questions and maintained silence when asked about the object of the English mission on its way to Sindh.

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The years from 1832 to 1835 were spent by Ranjit Singh in negotiating with Shah Shuj'a about the latter's restoration to his throne, and later on in the annexation of Peshawar and hostilities with Dost Mohammed. Ranjit's object in re-opening negotiations with the Shah in 1833, after the conclusion of the commercial conventions with the English, seems to have been both to secure the possession of Peshawar and to hinder English designs on Sindh.* Yet the treaty of 1834 fell through, as the Maharaja's terms were not quite acceptable to the Shah. During this period the English attitude towards trans-Satluj politics generally, and towards the plans of Shah Shuj'a particularly, remained studiously indifferent.

A new factor arose in 1836, which greatly modified the Governor-General's views and caused an alteration in English policy. This was the danger of a Russian invasion of India. Fear of Russian designs had existed in the mind of the English for some years and in 1832 had been discussed between Captain Wade and Ranjit Singh. But the danger was not regarded as sufficiently near to require any change in the relations of the Company's government with the powers beyond the Indus. It is needless for our purpose to discuss the validity or unwisdom of the fears which were revived in English

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tentions against Shikarpur, but not without telling Captain Wade plainly that the commercial measures of the English hindered the attainment of his military ambitions. *See* Captain Wade to the Governor-General, 13th February, 1832.

*Ranjit suspected the English after 1832 of entertaining deeper designs against Sindh than the establishment of commercial relations only. In one of his conversations with Captain Wade he asked the number of battalians which Colonel Pottinger had taken to Sindh to conclude the convention of 1832 with the Amirs.

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circles in 1836 by the attack on Herat by Persia under the influence of Russia.* It may however be stated that henceforth two considerations began to influence English policy. The first, as stated above, was commercial; and the second was political. The effect was seen in the decision of the new Governor-General, Lord Auckland, to mediate between Dost Mohammed and Ranjit Singh,† and thus to prepare for a threefold alliance against the possible Russian menace. This was in 1837. Burnes, who was already at Kabul on a commercial mission, was now invested with diplomatic authority. Captain Wade was at Lahore, and was instructed to sound the Sikh ruler. It became apparent that Peshawar was the real bone of contention, which forbade the reconciliation of the Sikh and the Afghan just as later on it proved an insuperable obstacle in the way of an Anglo-Afghan alliance. Negotiations were continued by Captain Burnes for some time, but they came to nothing. The *Amir* maintained his claims on that province with the same tenacity of purpose with which Ranjit clung to its possession. In the end the *Amir* veered round to the Russians and the Persians; and the English envoy returned as a diplomatic failure.

It was now decided to help Shah Shuj'a to recover the throne of Afghanistan. The scheme of a joint military enterprise, which had been repeatedly put forth by the Shah but had been hitherto ignored by the English, was decided upon by the Governor-General. Ranjit was to

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*These fears were subsequently strengthened by the arrival of Captain Vicovitch at Kabul.

†Until 22nd August, 1836, the English refused to interfere in Sikh-Afghan disputes. *See* the abstract of a letter of that date, addressed by Macnaghten to Wade: *Vide* Panjab Press List, vol. VI, p. 194.

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of English influence over Sindh the political obstacles in the way of a free and prosperous commercial intercourse with the trans-Indus regions might be removed.* The chief difficulty however arose from the plans already laid by the Maharaja against the Sindhians. Bentinck resolved to remove these by persuasion, or to counteract them by diplomacy. Thus the English policy, which had tolerated for several years the claim of Ranjit Singh to deal as he pleased with Western neighbouring states, sought now to moderate and later to thwart his foreign policy.

Soon after the meeting at Ropar Lord William Bentinck deputed Captain Wade to the court of Lahore, to explain the object of Colonel Pottinger's mission to Sindh, to propose a free navigation of the Satluj in continuation of that of the Indus, and to convince the Sikh ruler that the objects of the Company's government were merely commercial.† The Maharaja was on the other hand already feeling his way towards Sindh; and had expelled Bahawal Khan from his territories on the right bank of the Satluj. He was now maturing plans to seize Shikarpur. Consequently it was with the greatest hesitation and reluctance that he yielded to the suggestions of Captain Wade.‡

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*See Governor-General to Colonel Pottinger, 22nd October, 1831 (quoted from Cunningham's History of the Sikhs).

†The proposals seem to have had also a political reference to the designs of Russia. See Governor-General to Captain Wade, 18th December, 1831. This consideration however was kept studiously in the background, and purely commercial motives were advanced.

‡Ranjit agreed to the common use of the Satluj and the Indus, and to the residence of a British officer at Mithenkot to superintend the navigation. He also temporarily gave up his in-

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be a party to the enterprise. He was informed of the English project in May, 1838, by Sir William Macnaghten who went to Lahore for that purpose. Ranjit did not show any liking for the scheme, and seemed to distrust the active co-operation of the English. In fact the change of attitude of the Governor-General towards the ex-King had occurred so suddenly* that it naturally aroused the suspicion of the Sikh ruler, who saw in this bold plan and in the readiness of the English to carry it out the traces of an intention to establish their influence in Afghanistan. Hence he wanted to avoid furthering a measure which threatened to surround him with English influence. In the reality of the Russian menace the ruler of the Panjab showed little interest. His attitude towards that vexed question was as indifferent as it had been to the Napoleonic scare some thirty years before. He suddenly broke up his camp at Adinanagar as he had done in 1808 at Kasur, leaving the English envoy to act as he thought fit. It was not till he had been expressly informed that the expedition would be undertaken whether he joined it or not that he consented to the conclusion of the Tri-partite treaty, which was but a slight modification of his own terms of 1834. The minor points were settled between Ranjit and Lord Auckland during the latter's visit to the Panjab at the end of 1838.† The campaign was opened by an ad-

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*Until 20th January, 1838, there was no intention in the mind of the Governor-General to support Shah Shuj'a. *See* Government to Captain Wade, 20th January, 1838: Bengal Secret and Political Consultations.

†A detailed account of the visit is given in Lord Auckland's Private Letters, vols. VI, VII and VIII: (Brit. Mus Add. MSS.)

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vance from two directions: one through Sindh and the other through the Panjab. The auxiliary Sikh force was reluctantly assembled at Peshawar under Kanwar Nau-Nihal Singh.*

In the latter part of 1838 Ranjit's health began to decline. He lost his strength; even his powers of speech became impaired, but his remarkable energy of mind continued to the last. For a little while he carried on the administration of the country with the zealous assistance of his favourite minister, 'Aziz-ul-din. But the symptoms of his disease grew so serious, that on 20th June 1839 he made over the administration to Prince Kharak Singh, who was advised to seek the help of Raja Dhian Singh as his chief minister.† Ranjit Singh died on 27th June, 1839, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

It may be remarked that the policy of conciliation which Ranjit maintained towards the English throughout his career was inspired by the dread of their power. It was not the result of any genuine feeling of trust or good-will, as has been supposed by several writers. That Ranjit made repeated professions of friendship and regard may be admitted; nevertheless it is equally true that he as often sought similar assurances from the

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*The Sikhs were very unwilling to co-operate with the English, of whom they were extremely jealous. The author of the *'Ibrat Nama* says that a few Sikh regiments actually refused to act, objecting to their position as auxiliaries of the Company's forces: (ff. 278—280).

†According to Bute Shah, Dhian Singh was raised to the position of Chief Minsiter on the advice of the *Faqir*. Several titles were also conferred on him at this time to signify his pre-eminent position among the ministers. *See also* 'Ibrat Nama, f. 280.

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Company's representatives. His earlier fears, though partly dispelled by the pacific attitude adopted towards him by the Marquis of Hastings and Lord Amherst, were revived when Bentinck informed him of his commercial projects. In the beginning of those trading aspirations he saw the likelihood of the absorption of regions which were the object of his military ambition, and felt grave apprehensions even about the safety of his own kingdom. It was during this period that, glancing at an English map of India and noticing the division of the area in red and yellow lines, he gave vent to his innermost feelings by exclaiming: "all will become red!" Had he felt strong enough he might have attempted to check by force of arms what he considered to be the unjustifiable interference of the English in his designs against Sindh. This seems probable* from the persistence with which he maintained his claims on Shikarpur and urged his right of free action in Sindh, even after the commercial treaty of 1832,† the English remonstrances of 1835,‡ and the crisis of 1836.§ But happily he was conscious of the inferiority of his military resources.

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*Sohan Lal mentions Ranjit consulting General Allard in 1837 about the manner in which the trained Sikh battalions could be most profitably used in the event of a war with the English: *see* Umdat-ut-Tawarikh, Daftar III, Part IV, p. 435.

†In a letter to John Lock, dated 17th March, 1837, Auckland wrote that, although in deference to the wishes of the English, Ranjit had withdrawn his troops from the direction of Sindh, he still talked freely of his intentions to resume hostilities: *Vide* Auckland's Private Letters, vol. II (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.).

‡Captain Wade went to Lahore in 1835 and succeeded in persuading the Maharaja once again to relinquish his designs against Shikarpur.

§Towards the end of 1836 Ranjit picked a quarrel with the

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Hence, although he adopted for a time a very defiant attitude,* he did not push matters to the extreme, but fell back on his old policy of conciliation and forbearance. How long he would have maintained that policy, if he

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Mazari tribesmen across the Sindh border, thereby seeking a fresh opportunity to capture Shikarpur, even at the risk of immediate conflict with the English.

*The gravity of the situation as it arose in 1836 was thus described in a letter by Lord Auckland to Sir Charles Metcalfe, dated 24th September, 1836: "I share with you the apprehension of our being at no distant date involved in political and possibly in military operations upon or beyond our western frontier; and ever since I have been here more than one event has occurred which has led me to think that the period of disturbance is nearer than I wished and expected. The constitutional restlessness of the old man at Lahore seems to increase with his age. His growing appetite for the jungles and treasures of Sindh, the obvious impolicy of allowing him to extend his dominions in that direction, the importance which is attached to the free navigation of the Indus, and most justly I think, lead me to fear that the wish which I had to confine my administration to objects of commerce and finance, and improved institutions and domestic policy, will be far indeed from being accomplished. Meanwhile, I have entreated Ranjit Singh to be quiet and have refused to give him 50,000 muskets." *Vide* Auckland's Private Letters, vol. I (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.).

In another letter, dated 7th October, 1836, Auckland wrote to Sir J. C. Hobhouse: "I have sent despatches home of rather a serious import. The conduct of Ranjit has of late been such as at least to excite some apprehension of the perfect cordiality which has so long subsisted between him and the Indian government being disturbed ..... Ranjit Singh has for some time adopted a more swaggering and less friendly tone towards us than usual. His acceptance of a mission from Nepal, his admission of *Vakils* from our protected Sikhs, his

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had lived, it is difficult to say. This, however, is certain that in the last three years of his reign he showed a marked disposition towards pursuing an independent line of action, irrespective of English interests and good-will. In this he was supported by several of his ministers, notably Raja Dhian Singh.* A clear proof may be found in the reluctance of the Sikh rank and file to perform their part of the Tripartite Treaty,† and in their subsequent satisfaction at the disastrous retreat of the British troops from Afghanistan.

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requests for large importations of arms, his successful aggressions on his neighbours and his growing French connection were all matters for painful consideration." *Vide* Auckland's Private Letters, vol. I (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.). The volume contains several other unpublished letters bearing on the subject.

*See Bute Shah's Persian MS., f. 403.

†See Captain Wade at Peshawar to Mr. Clerk at Lahore, 12th May, 1839: Lord Auckland's Private Letters, vol. VIII (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.).

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CHAPTER III.

Army of the Panjab.

A.—General.

Ranjit Singh was primarily a conqueror and a military organiser, rather than a civil administrator. It will be shown in a subsequent chapter that he made no bold innovations in the mode of governing the country. On the contrary, at first he accepted the existing methods of administration, and when in the latter part of his reign he attempted to improve them, his steps proved halting and hesitating. Even these were largely made under the stress of financial stringency which, indeed, supplied the main reason for efforts in that direction. Ranjit's motives for creating a large and disciplined force, however, were different. Various considerations worked upon his mind. First of all, the task of military organisation agreed with his natural temperament. Secondly, the political and geographical situation of his kingdom prompted him to undertake that task. His authority over the Panjab, acquired as it was by force and aggression, required for its maintenance the continued existence of the same means by which it had been created. His dominions were surrounded by strong neighbours. On one side lay the fanatical and hostile Afghans; while, on the other, was established the formidable power of the Company. Thus Ranjit Singh made the progressive consolidation of his forces the central aim of his policy.

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the bonds which already united the soldiers to their chiefs; and, secondly, it diverted large numbers of the *Khalsa* from a life of plunder to one of tillage. In this manner, the Sikh population, most of which at one time led a life of fighting men, was now divided into two distinct sections—those who took to agriculture and other peaceful avocations and those who adopted the regular profession of war.

The army of the *Misls* consisted principally of cavalry who provided their own horses. The infantry formed an altogether inferior branch and was used only for garrison and sentry duties. Of artillery the Sikhs knew little, and the few references* to the use of certain guns by the earlier Sikhs, prove even more clearly that it never was popular among them. In their later struggles against one another they do not seem to have used any cannon at all. The sword and spear, afterwards supplemented by the matchlock, were the principal weapons employed, although bows and arrows were also originally used. The use of the matchlock was much restricted owing to the scarcity of powder. I know no evidence pointing to any kind of drill or systematic training in shooting. There was little discipline of the kind which was introduced subsequently among them by the Maharaja. The place of discipline, however, was supplied by enthusiasm. The war cry of the soldiers was "Sat Sri Akal," or "Wah! Guruji Ka Khalsa! Wah! Guru ji Ki Fateh"—both of which still survive on the

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*See Narang's Transformation of Sikhism, p. 95; Irvine's Army of the Indian Moghuls, p. 128; Bute Shah's Twarikh-i-Panjab, f. 376; and Franklin's Life of George Thomas. The last writer mentions, on the authority of Thomas that in 1800, the Sikhs possessed about forty field guns.

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lips of Sikh soldiers.

The Sikhs at this time had no uniforms. The common trooper was clad in a turban, a shirt with open sleeves, and a pair of short drawers with tight-fitting slippers; but the chiefs were often seen in chain armour, steel helmet, breast plate, back plate, wrist guards and greaves. The mode of fighting is thus described by Francklin:* "The Sikhs are armed with a spear, match-lock, and scimitar,† their method of fighting as described by Mr. Thomas, is singular After performing the requisite duties of their religion by ablution and prayer, they comb their hair and beard with peculiar care. Then mounting their horses, ride forth towards the enemy, with whom they engage in a continued skirmish, advancing and retreating, until man and horse become equally fatigued. They then draw off to some distance from the enemy, and meeting with cultivated ground, they permit their horses to graze of their own accord, while they parch a little grain for themselves, and after satisfying nature by this frugal repast, if the enemy be near, they renew their skirmishing; should he have retreated, they provide forage for their cattle and endeavour to procure a meal for themselves. Seldom indulging in the comforts of a tent whilst in the enemy's country, the repast of a Sikh can not be supposed to be either sumptuous or elegant. Seated on the ground with a mat spread before them, a Brahmin, appointed for the purpose, serves out a portion of food to each individual, the cakes of flour which they eat during the meal serving them in the room of dishes and plates. Accustomed from their earliest infancy to a life of hardship and difficulty, the Sikhs

*Memoirs of George Thomas, p. 71.

†Probably the *Kirpan* or religious weapon of the Sikhs.

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despise the comforts of a tent. In lieu of this each horseman is furnished with two blankets, one for himself and the other for his horse. These blankets which are placed beneath the saddle with a grain bag and heel ropes comprise in time of war the whole baggage of a Sikh. Their cooking utensils are carried on tattoos (or ponies)."*

The total military strength of the *Misls* cannot be precisely estimated. The figures quoted by various travellers and writers are merely conjectural, and differ so widely from one another that no reliance can be placed on their accuracy. Probably no exact calculations could be formed at a time when the armed followers of various chieftains, not only transferred their allegiance from one to the other according to the rapidly changing vicissitudes of mutual hostilities, but also frequently changed their occupation from a soldier to a civilian. In 1783, Forster† estimated the total armed strength of the *Khalsa* at 200,000 to 300,000. Browne‡ put it at 73,000 horse and 25,000 foot. George Thomas§ thought the number was about 65,000 including infantry of 5,000 men. Prinseps‖ estimate amounts to a still more modest figure of 58,700 men. The last two figures closely agree with each other and are probably more correct than the rest.

For reasons explained above, no definite estimate can even be formed of the Shukerchakia forces before Ranjit conquered Lahore. The earliest reliable statement

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*See also the account given in Browne's two India Tracts, Part II, p. 8.

†Travels, 1, 333.

‡India Tracts, Part II (Map).

§Life, by Franklin, p. 274.

‖History of Ranjeet Singh, etc., p. 186.

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B.—The Sikh army before 1800.

The foundation of the Sikh army was laid in the time of Arjun, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs. It was he who had first encouraged a love of horsemanship among the Sikhs as a means of creating in them a spirit of enterprise and adventure. The Sikhs took to their preceptor's training all the more quickly because of the practical utility of riding in a country of long distances such as the Panjab. By the time of Gobind Singh and Banda, an average Sikh soldier was considered a first-rate horseman. During the chaos which followed the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1738, Sikh horsemen played a prominent part. The saddle in fact had become the very home of the *Khalsa*. Within the next few years these free-lances came to be styled the *Dal Khalsa** or the army of the *Khalsa*. The word *Dal* is a colloquial Panjabi expression meaning a horde; and suggests the notion of an undisciplined force. The soldiers now fought under the banner of the different chiefs who had recently arisen in the land. But they always disbanded after the division of the plunder. After 1773, when the danger of invasion from Afghanistan lessened, and the Chiefs began to quarrel among themselves, it became necessary for them to retain permanent armed followers. But the latter were still paid out of the gains of war, which in this period often included territory. This had most important results. In the first place, it cemented

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*Browne wrote in 1787: "Since the Sicks became powerful, and confederated for the purpose of conquest, they have called their confederacy *Khalsa Gee*, or the State, and their ground army Dull Khalsa Gee, or the Army of the State:" India Tracts, Part II, p. 8.

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Ranjit had at the same time visited Lord Lake's camp in disguise* and observed the drill of the Company's troops. It is also known that he had actually raised some battalions† before the incident of 1809 occurred, which, although trivial in itself left a deep impression on the Raja's mind and certainly confirmed his previous

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مقدمات مشغول بود و اکثرے قواعد پلاٹن و سوارن خود مشاهده مے کنانید و بنابر نگاهداشتن پلاٹن و افواج ملازمی مے فهمانید و هم بنابر فراهمي خزانه تائید اکید کرد *

See also 'Ibrat Nama, f. 226. The original reads thus:

پیش از آمدن مهاراجه هلکر قلعه مُستحکم وخزانه و سپاه و پلٹنها نزد مهاراجه نبود ـ بصلاح صوابدید مهاراجه هولکر بفراهمي خزانه و تعمیر قلعه گوبند گڑهه و لاهور إستحکام دیگر مکانات پر داختند*

Lastly, Captain Wade in a letter to Resident at Dehli, dated Ludhiana 1st August, 1827, says: "It was not until after the flight of Holkar to the Punjab that he (Ranjit Singh) thought, the Rajah mentioned [sic] of forming a regular army." Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vol. 33 (India Office MSS. Records).

*Moorcroft's Travels, 1, 102.

†The descriptive rolls of Ranjit Singh's army show that the Maharaja had raised at least three trained battalions by 1807: *vide* Catalogue of Khalsa Darbar Records, vol. I, p. 2. A year later Metcalfe saw five of them in the service of Ranjit Singh. Lastly, a letter from the Resident at Dehli to the Secretary of the Governor-General, dated 19th September, 1807, states that Ranjit's army at that time numbered 25,000 horse (of which 12,000 were trained) and 7,000 foot. The Resident received this estimate from his news-writer at Lahore, but doubted its correctness. There was certainly considerable exaggeration in the number of trained men.

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on the point is one made by Malcolm* who expressly states that at the time of Lord Lake's visit in 1805 Ranjit's troops numbered less than eight thousand men, a part of them being under the command of those Sirdars whom he had lately subdued. From this, it may be inferred that, at the time of the conquest of Lahore, six years earlier, their number was still less.

C.—The Date when Ranjit first raised a Disciplined Force.

There has been considerable confusion among the principal writers, specially the Europeans, about the year in which Ranjit Singh first raised regular units. Most of them have stated that the idea originally struck the mind of the prince in 1809, while observing the discipline of Metcalfe's escort in an affray with the *Akalis* of Amritsar.† However, its inception may be traced to a much earlier period, certainly as far back as 1805. In that year Holkar had entered the Panjab; and in the course of conversation with Ranjit, had urged upon him the desirability of organising the treasury, constructing defensive fortifications, and disciplining the forces.‡

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*Sketch, p. 143.

†Two companies of Hindustani troops forming Metcalfe's escort, repelled an attack suddenly made by a much superior number of the *Akalis;* and the discipline of the former deeply impressed Ranjit Singh. The incident happened at Amritsar in consequence of the celebrations of Moharram festival by the Mohammedan members of the escort.

‡Twarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, ff. 246-247. The author writes:

بعد ازاں هلکر همراه سرکار والا از درشن دربار صاحب سعادت جاودانی حاصل ساخت و اکثرے تادوپاس خلوتاً به فهمانیدن بعض

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opinions. But yet a greater incentive to reforming activities—the activities which clearly manifested themselves soon afterwards in strengthening outposts, constructing fortresses, and raising armaments—came from the agreement with Metcalfe. This agreement, forced upon Ranjit Singh as it was by means of military demonstrations and threats, hardly inspired him with confidence in the friendly professions of the English. On the contrary, it created grave anxiety in his mind as to the safety of his kingdom from the superior strength and organisation of a power, which, in the very teeth of his opposition, had established itself on the eastern boundary of his dominion. The recent experience naturally led him to believe that the maintenance of a strong standing army was indispensable for the triumphs of diplomacy as of war.

In the Khalsa Darbar records the army of Ranjit Singh is divided into two sections—the *Fauj-i-Ain*, or the regular army, and the *Fauj-i-be-qawa'id*, or the irregular force. The first section was also called sometimes as the *Fauj-i-qawa'idan*, or drilled troops; the second as *Fauj-i-Sowari*, or the cavalry force and the *Ghorchiaras*, *i.e.* horsemen. This arrangement obviously orginated in the time of the Maharaja when the regular troops were raised. In the following pages I propose to deal with the two sections separately, at least, as regards their growth, organisation and other distinctive features.

D.—Fauj-i-Ain* or the Regular Army.

The regular army may be subdivided into three parts I.—Infantry, II.—Cavalry, III.—Artillery.

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*It was also afterwards called *Campu-i-Mu'alla* or the exalted camp.

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I.—Infantry.

The creation of infantry was a gradual process which began soon after 1805 and continued throughout the Maharaja's reign. In the first few years the Panjabi element was insignificant; and the bulk was recruited from the Afghans, Gurkhas, and Purbia Hindustanis, the latter being in many cases deserters from the army of the East India Company.

The Sikhs looked upon the foot-service with contempt and refused to join its ranks. But Ranjit persisted in his efforts and succeeded ultimately in overcoming their traditional prejudices.† The result was visible by 1818 when the inhabitants of the Panjab, both Sikhs and others, began to dominate the service. In 1822 Ranjit employed French officers (whose number was subsequently increased) into his service. Most of them had taken part in the Napoleonic campaigns, and were fully conversant with the latest methods of western tactics and drill. Under the vigorous personal supervision of Ranjit, they performed their duties energetically, and in a few years organised and trained an efficient force.

The early organisation of the infantry was simple. It consisted of a number of *Paltans* (battalions), to each of which two horse guns were attached on an average, to form them into separate manoeuvring units. Each of these was put under a *Kummedan* (Commandant). This

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†Ranjit talked with Captain Wade about the difficulties he experienced for a long time from the opposition of the Sikhs against drill and discipline: *see* Wade to Governor-General, Adinanagar, 25th May 1831; Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records).

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simple organisation, however, was expanded later on as the strength of each battalion increased. On the one hand, a battalion came to be divided into several companies; while on the other, the battalion itself formed part of a larger organisation called the brigade. The latter change was effected in 1833 when the whole regular army was re-constituted into brigades, each containing a fixed proportion of the three arms, infantry, cavalry and artillery. On an average, a brigade contained four battalions of infantry, a small force of varying strength of cavalry, and a battery of eight to ten horse guns. A company of *Beldars* (Sappers and Minors) was generally attached to it.

It appears from the pay rolls given in the Khalsa Darbar records that the strength of a battalion in 1819 varied between four hundred and six hundred men, and in 1829, *i.e.* ten years later, between seven hundred and nine hundred. At the time of Ranjit Singh's death, however, eight hundred formed the minimum strength of a battalion, which was now divided into eight companies; each of which in turn, was composed of four sections. Thus the average strength of a company was one hundred, while a section comprised roughly twenty five men. As regards officers, the Commandant was now assisted by an Adjutant and a Major. Each company was under a *Subedar* who was assisted by two *Jam'adars*. Each section of a company was commanded by a *Hawaldar* who had also a *Naik* for his assistance.* The officers of the battalions were sons or relatives of Sirdars or members of the landed gentry. When a Sirdar had two or more sons the Maharaja usually took one while young,

*See Dr. Murray to Captain Wade, Lahore, 30th December 1826: Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records),

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and trained him for service.* The non-combatant establishment of each battalion included a *Munshi* (clerk), a *Mutasaddi* (accountant), and a *Granthi* (priest), in addition to the manual workers such as *Khalasis* (scavengers), *Saqqas* (water carriers), *Ghar-yalis* (bell ringers), *Beldars* (earth-diggers), *Jhanda Bardars* (standard bearers), *Mistris* (artificers), *Kamas* (bullock drivers), and *Tahliyas* (grooms).†

The uniform of the infantrymen was scarlet. There were, however, different coloured facings to distinguish the regiments. The trousers were of blue cotton cloth; and the turbans which formed the head dress were of the same colour. The belts were of black leather. These men were usually armed with sword, musket and bayonet.‡

Fauj-i-Khass or the French Legion.

The *Fauj-i-Khass* formed the model brigade of the Sikh army; and hence may be described here separately. It was raised in 1822 by Generals Ventura and Allard. Its normal strength was four battalions of infantry, two regiments of cavalry, and one troop of artillery comprising twenty four guns. Special efforts were made in its training, and in point of discipline and equipment it grew to be the best organised section of the regular army. The infantry section of the brigade consisted of the

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*"The officers of the battalions, the Raja said, are all sons of Sirdars. When a Sirdar had more than one or two sons, he usually took one when young and had him educated for this purpose." *Vide* Dr. Murray to Captain Wade, Lahore, 1st January 1827: Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records).

†*Vide* Catalogue of Khalsa Darbar records, vol. I, Part I, p. 5.

‡*See* The Panjaub, by Steinbach, pp. 91—110.

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1822, however, the progress was more rapid. It is shown from the fact that in 1829, *i.e.* within seven years of Allard's arrival, the strength of the regular horse increased more than four times. It was then about four thousand five hundred; and remained much the same until the end of the Maharaja's reign.

A cavalry *rajman* was, at first, composed of men of different creeds like the Pathans, Rajputs, Dogras, and others. Its number variel from one hundred to more than five hundred men. Later on, however, the service in this branch grew popular among the Sikhs themselves, and the number of regiments increased, the minimum strength being over two hundred and fifty men and the maximum over six hundred. The regiments of large numerical strength were divided gradually into *Risalas* (troops), the strength of which ranged from one hundred and fifty to two hundred. The officers in a cavalry regiment were similar to those in an infantry battalion; and similar was the arrangement of non-combatants. The pay of cavalry regiments was much higher, however, than in the infantry.

Lieut. Barr* gives the following description of the dress and arms of Allard's dragoons: "The trooper's dress is a red jacket (by no means new or of a bright colour), with broad facings of buff crossed in front by a pair of black belts, one of which supports a pouch, the other a bayonet. Round the waist, they wear a girdle, partially concealed by a sword-belt to which a sabre with a brass hilt and leathern scabbard is suspended, and before the saddle is a small leathern receptacle for the butt of the carbine, which is so attached to the individual as to give it the appearance of being slung across the

*See Journal of a March, etc., pp. 214-15.

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Khass battalion, a Gurkha battalion, and two more commanded by Deva Singh and Sham Sota. The cavalry portion comprised a *Khass* regiment, and a dragoon regiment. The artillery was the corps known as that of General Ilahi Bakhsh.*

As regards the officers of the Khass brigade, Dr. Murray† says: "To each company in these battalions there is attached one Subedar, one Jam'adar, four Hawaldars, and four Naiks; and to each battalion one Commandant and one Adjutant."

The *Fauj-i-Khass* had as its emblems, the eagle and the tricoloured flag, with an inscription of the martial Guru, Gobind Singh, embroidered upon it. It used French words of command in pursuance of the instructions of its French officers. Thus it has often been called the French brigade or the French Legion. Gardner‡ styles it the "Franscese Campo."

Capt. Wade§ saw the parades of the infantry section of the *Fauj-i-Khass* in 1827, *i.e.* only five years after it had been constituted, and described his impressions thus: "They are all dressed, armed, and equipped like the Raja's other regular battalions but in a neater and superior style. The four Sikh battalions wear the Sikh turbans, the colour of which is different in each battalion. The Gurkhas and Purbias wear Chakos [?] of a neat manufacture ..... M. Ventura put his Legion through

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*This was raised in 1814, and was called *Top-Khana-i-Khass.*

†Murray to Wade, Lahore, 16th January 1827: Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vol. 18 (India Office MSS. Records).

‡Memoirs of Colonel Alexander Gardner, p. 185.

§Wade to Resident at Dehli, Ludhiana, 1st August 1827: Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vol. 33 (India Office MSS. Records).

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back. Their trousers are long, of dark blue cloth, with a red stripe; and their turbans of crimson silk, brought somewhat into a peak in front, and ornamented in the centre with a small brass half-moon, from which springs a glittering sprig about two inches in height. Their saddles are concealed by a crimson cloth edged with a border of blue and white stripes, and the harness is adorned with brass studs. The officers are attired from top to toe in bright crimson silk, and they merely carry a sabre attached to their person by an ornamented belt. Altogether, the appearance of the detachment was very creditable, and the men would look remarkably well if a better cloth was used for their jackets."

The regular horsemen have been described as "mean-looking, ill dressed and wretchedly mounted," and their horse-trappings as "of the leather of the worse quality." In the field, their conduct corresponded with their general appearance. Steinbach* says; "When the horse is in motion, the legs and arms of the rider wave backwards and forwards, right and left, by way, as if it were, of keeping time with the pace of the animal bestridden."

Osborne† recorded his opinion in his diary in 1838 thus: "I took the opportunity of looking at the two squadrons of General Allard's cavalry, who were on the ground. They were the first of them I had yet met with, and I was much disappointed in their appearance. They do not look to advantage by the side of the infantry. They are men of all ages, ill-looking, ill-dressed, and worse mounted: and neither in appearance nor in reality are they to be compared to the infantry soldier of the

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*The Punjaub, pp. 91—110.

†Wm Osborne was military Secretary to the Governor-General; see The Court and Camp of Runjeet Singh, pp. 165-66.

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manœuvres which the corps executed with a steadiness and precision it would be difficult to excel. Their formation into close column, and their march and deployment into line were performed with such closeness and accuracy as to surprise the whole party. It was, indeed, impossible not to admire the high degree of perfection to which M. Ventura had brought his Legion."

II.—Cavalry.

The regular cavalry formed a force altogether less important than the infantry both in numbers and in efficiency. It consisted of a few *Rajmans* (regiments) of dragoons and lancers trained by European officers, more specially General Allard. When Ranjit began reforming his troops after 1805, his idea was to create a disciplined force of all the three branches, infantry, cavalry, and artillery. He accordingly attempted to introduce the European drill among the irregular horsemen. But the proud *Ghorcharas* regarded the new practices as the tricks of a dancing girl;* and refused to abandon their old mode of warfare. This led to the raising of new recruits, which, coupled with Ranjit's preoccupations in organising the foot service, hindered rapid progress. From the catalogue of the pay rolls, I find that until the arrival of Allard in 1822 there were only four trained regiments of cavalry in the Sikh service as against fourteen battalions of infantry and eight *Deras* (units) of artillery. The total number of drilled horsemen was one thousand as against nearly ten thousand foot. After

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*In a petition to Ranjit Singh, the Ghorcharas are said to have protested against the changes and described the drill as

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Panjab. One reason for this is that Runjeet personally inspects every recruit for his infantry, while the cavalry is generally recruited from the followers of the different Sirdars, and most of them owe their appointment to favour and interest more than to fitness and capability."*

III.—Artillery.

I have already stated that in the days of the *Misls* the Sikhs did not possess any artillery worth mentioning. Ranjit Singh, however, soon realised the importance of this branch, as forming an indispensable support for infantry. From the beginning of his career he paid particular attention to acquiring guns; and this tendency showed itself even more clearly during his Cis-Satluj raids.† In matters of organisation and training, however,

*Osborne's view is supported by various other writers. *See* Calcutta Review of August 1844; Steinbach's The Punjaub, pp. 91—110; and Captain Wade's letter to the Resident at Dehli, dated Ludhiana, 1st August 1827: Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vol. 33 (India Office MSS. Records).

Ranjit's comparative indifference towards the cavalry seems to have been due to various reasons, the chief among which were the reluctance of recruits of good quality to enter this service, the financial difficulties in the way of improving the costly equipment of horsemen, and the personal preoccupation of the Maharaja in the training of infantry and artillery. But still more important was the existence of the fine force of the *Ghorcharas*, which precluded the necessity of a large disciplined cavalry, specially in an age when the utility of the latter in warfare was fast declining.

†"The Rajah's attachment to guns and his opinion of their weight," wrote Metcalfe in 1808, "are both so great that he will never miss an opportunity of obtaining a gun. If he hears

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Ranjit experienced considerable difficulties. The Sikhs, as a people, although not perhaps so averse to serving in the artillery as to serving in the infantry, had no great liking for the patient training which the former involved. Then there was the dearth of shot and shell, and of many other things necessary for daily practice. To meet the first difficulty, Ranjit at the outset employed a large number of Mohammedans. Many were deserters from the armies of Sindhia, Holkar, and the Company.* As regards the second, progressive arrangements were made to manufacture the required materials withing the boundaries of the Panjab.

In the beginning, two guns were usually attached to each infantry battalion, there being no distinct detachment of artillery in existence. In 1810, however, a separate corps was raised and placed under an officer called *Darogha-i-Topkhana*. Two years later, this corps formed the principal unit of the artillery, and as such was called *Topkhana-i-Khass*.† It was commanded by

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that there is a gun in any fort, he cannot rest until he has taken the fort to get at the gun, or until the gun has been given up to him to save the fort. He immediately dismounts the gun from the walls and drags it after him as an addition to his field train. He boasted to me once that he had made the Rajah of Putealah give him a fine gun which the Rajah wished to rescue, for twenty thousand rupees." *Vide* Kaye's Life of Lord Metcalfe, vol. I, p. 276.

*From 1814 the inhabitants of the Panjab began to enter the artillery in larger numbers, and formed an ever-increasing proportion of that force up to the end of the Maharaja's reign. This was a result of a continued policy of lavish rewards, in cash, jewels and *Jagirs*, by the Maharaja. *See* Memoirs of Colonel Alexander Gardner, pp. 182-183.

†It was sometimes called *Topkhana-i-Mubarik*.

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a Mohammedan officer, named Mian Ghaus Khan.‡ The entire *Topkhana* was now divided into four sections, the first comprising *Aspi* guns (driven by horses), and the second *Gavi* guns (driven by bullocks). The third section consisted of a separate horse battery;* while the last comprised a number of guns which were distributed over the various battalions of infantry. The *Ghubaras* (mortars) and *Zamburaks* (swivels) were organised into *Deras* (camps), called *Dera-i-Zamburkhana*. In 1814 a fresh battery was raised, and placed under Ilahi Bakhsh; but the separate battery of the earlier period was assigned to the regular army. By 1826 the number of batteries attached to the regular army rose to seven, and the number of guns including the swivels to about two hundred. The next year saw the employment of General Court by the Maharaja, and in 1832 Colonel Gardner was added to the staff. As a result of the reforming efforts of both these officers, the entire *Topkhana* (artillery) was reorganised. It was divided into three sections: (1) *Topkhana-i-Jinsi,* or heavy and mixed batteries; (2) *Topkhana-i-Aspi,* or purely horse and light

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‡Ghaus Khan died in 1814. Hence the chief command of the artillery was transferred to Misar Dewan Chand. But the battery which was under the immediate command of Ghaus Khan was handed over to his son, Sultan Mohammed Khan. Dewan Chand died in 1825, and was succeeded by his son, Sukh Dial, who held the chief command for two years but was degraded for incompetency. Sultan Mohammed had meanwhile shown his fitness for the task and was put in charge of the whole ordnance department. But, two years before Ranjit Singh's death, Sultan Mohammed also was degraded for his habit of excessive drinking. He was succeeded by Lehna Singh Majithia.

*This battery also was placed under a Mohammedan officer, named Mahsar 'Ali Beg.

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field-batteries; and (3) *Zamburkhanas,* or swivel batteries. The mixed batteries of the first were composed of *Aspi* guns,* *Gavi* guns and howitzers. The old practice of assigning guns to separate battalions, which had continued to a certain extent until this period, was now definitely abandoned. The *Topkhana-i-Khass* was amalgamated with other batteries to form one of the three principal sections of the regular army. In 1835, when the army was organised into brigades, the artillery branch underwent further modifications. One horse-battery was now assigned to each brigade, but the few *Jinsi,* or heavy siege trains, remained a distinct corps, commanded at first by Sultan Mahmud, and afterwards by Lehna Singh Majithia.

Towards the end of the Maharaja's reign, the number of guns in a *Jinsi* battery varied from ten to thirty, in an *Aspi* battery from five to ten, and in a swivel battery from fifty to seventy-five,—the usual number being sixty. There was a close resemblance between the internal organisation of a battery and a battalion of infantry, the average strength of a ten-gun battery being two hundred and fifty men, including non-combatants. Each battery in turn was subdivided into sections, every section comprising on an average two guns and eight to ten gunners. Thus the number of non-combatants in each section ranged from five to seven. The ten-gun battery was officered by a Commandant, assisted by an Adjutant and a Major; while each section was under a *Jam'adar,* with a *Hawaldar* and a *Naik* to assist him.

The uniform of the artillerymen is described as

*These guns were heavy pieces, probably drawn at walking pace by cart-horses, which were thus able to keep pace with the bullocks.

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lows: "The men dress something like our own horse rtillery, except that instead of helmets they wear red turbans (the *Jam'adars'* or officers' being of silk), which hang down so as to cover the back part of their neck; white trousers with long boots, black waist and cross belts; and black leather scabbard with brass ornaments. Both their appointments and accoutrements are kept in high order."*

The training and organisation of the artillery on European lines was accomplished in something less than a decade. General Court, to whom this task was chiefly assigned, joined the Sikhs only in 1827, and within a few years he raised the corps to a high pitch of efficiency. The Europeans who witnessed the parades and manœuvres of this branch praised them. Osborne† attended a review at Lahore in 1838 and made the following observation: "After manœuvring for about an hour and executing several of the more simple movements with considerable precision and steadiness, and at a tolerable pace, they commenced practising with grape at a curtain at two hundred yards distance; the practice would have been creditable to any artillery in the world. At the first round of grape, the curtain was cut clean away, and their shells at eight and twelve hundred yards were thrown with a precision that is extraordinary, when the short period of time, since they have known even the existence of such a thing, is taken into consideration. I rode up to the curtain with Dheean Sing at the conclusion of the practice, and found them all cut to pieces. The Rajah appeared highly delighted at his success, and

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*Journal of a March through the Panjab, by Lieut. Barr, pp. 259-260.

†The Court and Camp of Runjeet Sing, pp. 164-165.

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remarked to Ranjit Singh that he wished Dost Mahommed could have been present as a witness to his proficiency." Lieut. Barr* witnessed Court's artillery at Peshawar in 1839. He wrote: "The General directed the native commandant, a fine soldier-like looking man, handsomely accoutred, to put them through their drill. This they performed with great credit; their movements being executed with a celerity and precision that would have done honour to any army. The orders were given in French, and the system of gunnery used by that nation has also been adopted. At the conclusion of the exercise we walked down the line and inspected the ordnance. The two guns on the right of the battery were six-pounders, and were the same which Lord William Bentinck had presented to Ranjit Singh at Ropar. The rest were cast by himself from their model, and appear almost equally good. The precise number of pieces we saw I forget, but I think nine, including two small mortars for hill service. We then tried some of his 'Fuzes,' which are very good, and burn true; and his pot-fires are also tolerable, but when compared to those in use in every other part of the Sikh army, admirable; as with the latter, they are nothing but cases filled with pounded brimstone indifferently rammed down. All the shot was formed by beaten iron, and cost a rupee each; and the majority of the shells were composed of pewter, which he told us answered uncommonly well. When it is considered that all we saw was the work of the General's own knowledge, and we reflect on the difficulties he has had to surmount, it is a matter almost of wonder to behold the perfection to which he has brought his artillery."

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*Journal of a March through the Panjab, pp. 259-260.

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E.—Fauj-i-Be-Qawa'id, or the Irregular Army.

Fauj-i-Be-Qawa'id means a force which follows no prescribed rules. The term appropriately explains the chief characteristic of Ranjit Singh's irregular army. It was principally* composed of horsemen, called the *Ghorcharas*. When describing the development of the Sikh army before the time of the Maharaja, I traced the steps by which, at the end of the 18th century, the *Khalsa*, or the whole Sikh community, had been divided into two distinct classes—the one composed of people engaged in peaceful avocations, and the other consisting of professional soldiers, who lived either on the spoils of war or on grants of newly-occupied land made by their chiefs. Ranjit Singh, however, wished to raise a standing force of regularly trained horsemen, who might take the place of armed followers, loosely associated by the hope of plunder. He accordingly constituted, at an early period of his reign, a regiment of cavalry, called the *Ghorchara Sowars;* to which was added a few years later another, known as *Ghorchara Khass*. Both of these were to be paid a fixed salary, which constituted the essential difference between them and the horsemen of the earlier period. Otherwise they remained equally free from that discipline to which the regular cavalrymen were subjected.

The *Ghorcharas,* that is, the general body of irregu-

*There were a few irregular infantry battalions, like the Najibs and Ramgouls, surviving from the earlier days of the Maharaja. They were more fully organised later on, although not so systematically trained as the regular battalions. In other respects however there was little difference between them and the trained infantry. *See* the Calcutta Review of August, 1844.

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lar horse, were gradually divided into two sections—*Ghorchara Khass* and the *Misldars*. The former constituted a single organisation, and was recruited from amongst yeomen or landed gentry. Many members of this force were relatives of the dignitaries of the court. They supplied their own horses and equipment, and were regularly paid, at first in *Jagirs,* later in cash. The *Misldars* comprised all the petty chiefs who, having been recently dispossessed of their territories by Ranjit Singh, had consented to serve under him at the head of their respective bands of horsemen. The latter thus represented all classes of society and were regarded as inferior in social status to the *Khass* troops. This difference was also visible in their horses and equipment. With the extension of the Maharaja's authority over the Panjab and the absorption of many principalities into his kingdom, the *Misldars* grew in numbers, and, at the end of the reign, formed by far the greater proportion of the irregular cavalry.

For administrative purposes the *Ghorcharas* were divided into several *Deras,* each *Dera* comprising several minor groups of horsemen, which were called *Misls.* The men in a *Misl* generally belonged to a single clan, tribe, or community. Their leader was usually the descendant or relative of one under whom they had originally joined Ranjit Singh's army. These *Misls* were of various strength, ranging usually from twenty-five to seventy-five men. In 1822, the *Deras* were grouped into bigger divisions, each of which was put in charge of a high dignitary of state. In these appointments,* care was taken to keep the clans intact, and to preserve

*Misar Dewan Chand, Jam'adar Khushal Singh, Lehna Singh Majithia, Raja Sochet Singh, the Sindhanwalia and Atariwala.

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official status and landed interest, had a considerable stake in the country. They represented the conservative element in the state, and were ever eager to uphold its political independence and territorial integrity. Their past achievements in many a desperate campaign against the Afghans of Multan, Kashmir and the frontier entitled them to a commanding position in the Sikh army; and they enjoyed the fullest confidence of their ruler. Though attaching great importance to his regular army, which was the creation of his own reforming efforts, the ruler of the Sikhs felt equally proud of his irregular horsemen. He showed the *Ghorcharas* to several European visitors, including Huegel, Wade and Osborne. The first-named—a Prussian traveller—was shown this force in 1836, and he has recorded the following impressions of his experience. His striking account throws much light on the dress and arms of this force, and several other points concerning them: "'Those are the Gorcheli,' he (Ranjit) said, pointing to the troops, 'of whom I told you that I had 4,000.' I asked him the meaning of the word. He told me that they had territories which brought them in a revenue of 3,000 or 4,000 rupees a-piece, and that their horses and entire equipment were also their own. They are, in fact, the remainder of those 69,500 Sikh lords of the Panjab, brought under the power of Ranjit Singh's authority, and receive from their despotic master an assignment of property which he can take from them whenever he sees fit. I requested leave to inspect them, and never beheld a finer nor a more remarkably striking body of men. Each one was dressed differently, and yet so much in the same fashion, that they all looked in perfect keeping.

"The handsome Raja Sushet Singh [*sic*, that is Sochet Singh] was in a similar costume, and reminded of the

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the tradition of fighting under the immediate command of a tribal chief. An adequate staff of non-combatants, such as was introduced into the regular army, was also supplied to each *Dera*. Apart from these changes of administrative organisation,* the *Ghorcharas* were scarcely subjected to any other system of regimentation, drill, or discipline.

By careful examination of the names of the troopers, their parentage, place of residence and sub-caste, as recorded in an important Persian manuscript,† I have arrived at the conclusion that the Jat Sikh element was in a large majority among the *Ghorcharas*. This seems to have been the case from the beginning of the Maharaja's reign. These Jats were mostly inhabitants of the Central Panjab, especially of the Manjha tracts. The groups next in numerical strength were those of the Hindu Rajputs of Lower Kashmir and the Mohammedans of the various districts lying along the Jehlam. A few Pathan and Brahman names also occur in the lists, but these groups were always very small.

The *Ghorcharas*, composed as they were of the upper strata of society, claimed much respect and consideration from their master. Many of them were the relatives of the high dignitaries at the court, who, by virtue of their

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Sirdars commanded separate divisions. (Catalogue of Khalsa Darbar records, vol. I.)

*Each *Dera* had its own commander and one or two subordinate officers of no specified rank. On the non-combatant establishment were a *Wakil* (reporter), a *Munshi* (clerk) a *Dhaunsa Nawaz* (drummer), a *Nishanchi* (ensign), and a *Granthi* (priest).

†Catalogue of the Oriental Public Library at Bankipur, vol. VII, MS. no. 622.

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Lord Auckland* saw the *Ghorcharas* during his visit to the Panjab in 1838, "with their metal caps, heron-like plumes, and silk dresses;" and considered them to be "the most picturesque troops in the world."

The Akalis.

Though forming a part of the irregular horsemen, the *Akalis* were somewhat different from the rest in their origin and characteristics, and hence may be treated separately. The word *Akali* means "immortal," and relates to a particular sect of the Sikhs which probably

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few among them wear high jack boots. When I returned to Ranjit Singh he asked me if I should like to see them fire, and on my requesting to do so, a brass pot was fixed about 100 paces distant, and one Gorcheli after the other stepped forward to shoot at the mark. One of them hit it every time, and very shortly the poor brass pot was perforated in every part. A fresh one was then set up, and the company of regular troops advanced and were ranged into rank and file, evidently to disadvantage. The number of regular troops which fired were three times that of the Gorcheli, and the Maha Raja was much amused when in three rounds a few balls only hit the mark; for the men at the wings could scarcely aim at the pot at all. Ranjit Singh saw me smiling and he observed: 'This is the way that regular troops fire; a great inducement, is it not, to turn old warriors into disciplined soldiers?' I said that the Gorchelis would not fire so well if they were in rank and file; the adversary was not the target but the line." *Vide* Huegel's Travels, pp. 330—332.

**See* Lord Auckland's Private Letters, vol. VI (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.). *See* also Captain Wade to the Resident at Dehli, 1st August, 1827: Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vol. 33 (India Office MSS. Records).

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time when the fate of empires hung on the point of a lance, and when the individual whose bold heart beat fearlessly under his steel breastplate, was the sole founder of his own fortunes. The strange troop before me was most peculiarly Indian. The uniform consisted of a velvet coat or gaberdine, over which most of them wore a shirt of mail. Others had this shirt made to form the part of a tunic. A belt round the waist, richly embroidered in gold, supported the powder-horn, covered with cloth of gold, as well as the Persian Katar and the pistols which many of them carried in addition to those weapons. Some wore a steel helmet, inlaid with gold, and surmounted with the Kalga or black heron's plume; others wore a cap of steel, worked like the cuirass in rings: this cap lies firmly on the turban, and covers the whole head, having openings for the eyes. The left arm is often covered from the hand to the elbow with a steel cuff inlaid with gold. The round Sikh shield hangs at the back, fastened with straps across the chest, a quiver at the right side and a bow slung at the back being carried as part of the equipment; a bag made in the belt holds the balls, and a tall bayonet, frequently ornamented with gold, held in the right hand when the man is on foot and carried over the shoulder when in the saddle, completes the dress."*

*The author continues: "One would suppose that the arms that each man carried would be enough to weigh him down, but this is not the case, and though the Sikhs are anything but strongly-built men, they seemed to bear them with the greatest ease; the black curly beard which hangs as low as the chest giving then an appearance of power which they do not in reality possess. It is a strange sight to a European to see their slippers embroidered in gold covering their naked feet. Some

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owed its origin to Guru Gobind Singh. To his teachings, accordingly, the *Akalis* were peculiarly attached. In consequence of religious persecution at the hands of the Mohammedans of India and Afghanistan, they grew into an extremely fanatical and intolerant sect, and they gave free play to their feelings during the latter days of the *Khalsa* ascendancy over the Panjab. In the eyes of their co-religionists, however, they were the champions and defenders of their creed. Through their extraordinary zeal and enthusiasm they acquired the character of priests, in which capacity they acted, while directing the conduct of the *Gurumata*.

In the time of Ranjit Singh they formed an essentially militant class, led a life of intimidation and plunder, and frequently indulged in insolent and insulting behaviour towards Mohammedans and Europeans. They now constituted themselves into bands of horsemen, armed to the teeth, and were often seen riding or tramping all over the country, especially in the vicinity of Sikh shrines, with a drawn sword in each hand, two more in the belt, a matchlock at the back, and two or three quoits fastened round the turban. The quoit had ever been their peculiar weapon,—a steely ring, varying from six to nine inches in diameter, and about an inch in breadth, very thin, and the edges extremely sharp. This weapon was commonly believed to possess an effective range from sixty to a hundred yards, and, if thrown with force and dexterity, was supposed to be capable of lopping off a limb. Hence it was much dreaded by the people. In reality, however, its efficiency was much exaggerated. In addition to this weapon, the distinctive mark of the *Akalis* was the dark blue colour of their dress. This, combined with the insolence and "swagger" of their manner, gave them the appearance of strange warriors. Much as he

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disliked their unruly propensities, Ranjit avoided interference with their mode of life. This was due to their religious character. He made some efforts, however, to check their violent tendencies by embodying them in military formation. But they showed no inclination for disciplined training, and preferred to follow the old system of fighting indifferently on horseback or on foot. Nevertheless their personal courage and recklessness proved of great benefit to the Maharaja in several hazardous enterprises.*

F.—Recruitment and Pay.

(1) *Recruitment.*

Enlistment in the army was voluntary, and recruits could always be found in abundance. This was due to several causes. In the first place, many of the tribes inhabiting the Panjab possessed martial traditions of a high order. Such, for example, were the Jats, the Dogras, the Awans and the Tiwanas. Secondly, considerable social prestige was attached to the profession of arms. Thirdly, Ranjit Singh's personal attitude towards the fighting services, his lavish bestowal of rewards and honours on officers and men, and his persistent efforts to put his army on the best possible footing, secured an abundant supply of men who sought a military career.

(2) *Pay.*

I have already stated that in the days of the Misls,

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*Sadhu Singh's attack on the fort of Multan, and Phoola Singh's charge against the Afghans in the battle of Nowshehra are instances in point.

The total number of the *Akali* troops has been estimated by Steinbach at 2,000 to 3,000 men.

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the troops were paid either out of the plunder or by grants of land, usually liable to the payment of revenue. The latter system continued even under Ranjit Singh. It was, however, found unsuitable for the purposes of a standing army. Hence, cash payment in the form of monthly salaries was introduced. But the new system was not easily accepted by all classes of Sikhs. While the infantry, for whom it was specially designed, showed no dislike for it, the *Ghorcharas* displayed much aversion. The latter associated the idea of fixed salaries with mercenary troops, and regarded it as derogatory to their status and position as an army of patriots. When the number of the regular infantry increased, however, their example helped to remove such prejudices from the minds of other classes. Thus the introduction of the new system was a gradual process, extending over several years.* By the end of Ranjit Singh's reign, the practice of cash salaries had become the most general method of payment in the army.

Though theoretically the salaries were fixed at a monthly rate, in practice they were never paid at regular intervals. The army, like most Indian armies, remained in arrears on an average from four to six months, and payments were made three or four times a year. This was partly due to the inefficiency of the pay department, but to a greater extent to deliberate policy on the part of the Sikh ruler, who thereby checked the insubordina-

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*At one time during Ranjit's reign, three different systems of payment, *i.e.* by *Jagirs,* by a lump sum at the harvest time, and by a fixed monthly salary, existed side by side. The recipients were accordingly known as *Jagirdars, Faslanadars* and *Mahdars.* Towards the end, the second system almost disappeared, and the third became the most usual.

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tion and desertion of his men. For purposes of distribution of pay, the army was divided into three branches—*Fauj-i-Sowari* (irregular horsemen), *Fauj-i-Ain* (regular army), and *Fauj-i-Qil'ajat* (garrisons). Separate distributing agencies were established for each. *The irregulars* were paid, at first by the commanding officer of each unit, and afterwards by a *Dewan* (treasurer) attached to each division. The regulars were always paid through a *Bakhshi* (paymaster), who was entrusted with a separate treasury, called *Peti Khazana-i-Fauj*. Payment to the third branch was made through *Thanadars* (officers in charge of the forts). The paymasters of all the three arms used to submit a *Taqadama* (estimate), based on the approximate strength of the units under their jurisdiction, to the central treasury at the capital. They were in turn provided with funds, partly by cash remittances and partly by drafts on neighbouring *Kardars*.

A close examination of the details of salaries in different units of both the irregular and regular troops, as recorded in the Persian manuscript* already mentioned, reveals great lack of uniformity in the scale of pay of officers and men. The scale differs in various grades, and in different units of each section of the army. Thus all estimates are only approximate. Nevertheless, some conclusions of a general nature can be definitely formed. First, in the regular army, the pay of the cavalry was higher than the infantry; but the artillery and the infantry were paid much the same. Secondly,

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**Vide* Catalogue of the Oriental Public Library at Bankipur, vol. VII, MS. no. 622.

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(2) Mobilisation.

The soldiers of the Panjab were, as they still are, tall and hardy. They had a great capacity for physical endurance, and could traverse long distances in rapid marches. Steinbach quotes an instance of his own travelling on foot three hundred miles in twelve days, at the head of a Sikh column.* Cantonements were established in various places all over the country, mostly in the vicinity of Lahore and Amritsar. But on long marches the troops accommodated themselves in ruined mosques and caravansarais. Some regiments were always kept on a war-footing to facilitate an easy and rapid mobilisation of troops. Marching orders were often issued at short notice, and at any hour of the day or night. The troops on the move had their own regimental bazaars to supply articles of private use. The drum, the fife and the bugle were in use among the infantry, and in several units bands were also introduced.

(3) Animal Transport.

The horses employed have been very variously estimated; but on the whole those maintained by the *Ghorcharas* were superior to those supplied by the government to the regular horsemen. The artillery horses and mules, especially the latter, are described as fairly good. The foot-artillery was drawn partly by horses and partly by bullocks, but the army-waggons were drawn only by

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was completed. Pompous names were selected for this purpose, such as *Fateh Jang* (Victorious in War), *Jang-i-Bijli* (Destroyer like Lightning), and so on. In addition to the name, some bore Persian inscriptions, which were often in verse.

**Vide* The Punjaub, pp. 63-64. For notices of endurance of fatigue, *see* Forster's Travels, I, 332-333; Malcolm's Sketch, p. 141; and Masson's Journeys, I, 433.

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the emoluments of the *Ghorcharas** were still better than those of the regular horsemen. Thirdly, instead of a regular system of pensions for long service, occasional *Jagirs* and donations of money were bestowed, but no systematic provision was made for the widows or children of those who lost their lives in the field.†

G.—Equipment.

(1) *Arms and Accoutrements.*

The arms in use among the different branches of the army were of various kinds and qualities. The *Ghorcharas* were armed with swords, spears and matchlocks; and the same was the case with the regular cavalrymen. The principal arm of the infantry was a musket, which the English considered inferior to their own, as short in range and liable to burst. This was partly due to the poor quality of the powder procurable in the Panjab, and partly to the inferior metal of which the

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*The *Ghorcharas* were at first paid in *Jagirs*, whose average annual yield per trooper varied from Rs. 300 to 400. This included the payment for the horse. When cash payment grew more common, the starting salary of a *Ghorchara* ranged between the two above-mentioned sums. The commanders of the *Deras*, however, continued to be paid in substantial *Jagirs*, to which, in certain cases, salaries were also attached.

†A general scale of pay for officers and men of the regular army is given in the Appendix. It has been prepared by me after a minute examination of the salaries of almost all the infantry, cavalry and artillery units, as recorded in the Persian manuscript of the Oriental Public Library at Bankipur: (*vide* Catalogue, vol. VII, MS. no. 622); and the result has been compared with, and modified by, the figures given in the Catalogue of Khalsa Darbar records, vol. I.

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the latter. The ammunition was filled sometimes in boxes *and carried by the* camels which were also employed to transport fuel and forage, and sometimes even small pieces of artillery.

H.—Statistics.

There is an obvious difficulty in dealing satisfactorily with the total military resources of a kingdom like the Panjab, the ruler of which was progressively augmenting them until his death. In such circumstances, the strength of the personnel of the army multiplied every year. The same was the case with the guns and every other article of military equipment. Heavy artillery was steadily increased, particularly towards the end of the period. In short, there was an all-round improvement in the army, which continued throughout the Maharaja's reign. Another difficulty in computation arises from the existence of the irregular force, especially that part which was under the exclusive control and management of the chief nobles in the state. For example, some of the forces of the *Dogra* chiefs were raised, equipped and maintained entirely by themselves. As in the matter of the civil administration of the land under their management, so in that of their forces, they enjoyed a kind of autonomy which in some respects was very complete. Lastly, the existence of the quasi-feudal practice of requiring quotas of armed men (called the *Jagirdari Fauj*) in time of war made the total strength of the army variable. Thus all calculations are necessarily approximate.

In 1831, Burnes visited the Panjab, and formed an estimate of the forces of the kingdom.* He gives the

*See Travels, vol. I, pp. 289—91. In the same year Murray

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musket was made. Armour consisting of helmets, coats of mail, shields, breast-plates and gauntlets was manufactured within the borders of the Panjab at various places, notably Amritsar, Multan, Shuj'abad, Jamun and Srinagar.* The shields were made of thick hides, studded, knotted or plaited with brass or iron. Other arms, such as swords, spears, matchlocks and pistols were also made in Lahore and elsewhere.

The guns were of various calibres, light and heavy howitzers, mortars for hill service, and camel swivels. There were, besides, a large number of what Lt. Barr called "Fuzes" and "Purmeers," which were light guns, the latter being long and shaped like a duck, and fired either from the ground or from a tripod. In the work of casting, boring, polishing, and decorating guns and pistol barrels, Kashmerian artisans were at first employed. But later on trained craftsmen appeared at the capital and other provincial cities, under the supervision of officers like Sirdar Lehna Singh Majithia, Faqir Nur-ul-din, Dr. Honigberger, and other Europeans. The metal employed in the manufacture of guns has been described as inferior to that of British make, and their finish too as somewhat poorer. But the pieces of artillery, of which the majority were less than six-pounders, were on an average greater in weight than those of the English.†

**Vide* Huegel's Travels, p. 397.

†The information contained in these two paragraphs is largely obtained from two communications, namely, Dr. Murray to Captain Wade, 1st January, 1827; and Captain Wade to the Resident at Dehli, 1st August, 1827: Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vols. 15 & 33, respectively: (India Office MSS. Records).

The heavier pieces were generally named after the casting

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total as 75,000 men, including 25,000 regular infantry. Masson, however, thought the army amounted to 70,000 of whom he regarded 20,000 as disciplined.* This is the estimate of 1838, when he returned from Kabul. In the same year Lord Auckland visited the Panjab, and sent an account of the Sikh forces to Sir John Hobhouse. He reckoned the regular infantry as 70 battalions,† the regular and irregular cavalry as 30,000 men, and the artillery as 200 pieces. These figures tally with those mentioned in a Persian manuscript called *Tazkirat-ul-Umara*.‡ The last of the contemporary writers who formed an estimate of the Sikh forces is Shahamat Ali.§ He was attached, as Persian secretary, to Captain Wade's detachment which proceeded to Peshawar in 1839, a few months before the death of the Sikh ruler. He writes:

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estimated the army at 82,000 men, including 15,000 regular infantry and 376 guns: *Vide* Murray's Ranjit Singh, by Prinsep, pp. 185-186.

*Masson's estimate is approximate. He writes: "I believe it may be estimated in round numbers at 70,000 men; of whom perhaps 20,000 are disciplined after the French and other modes. I do not pretend to speak positively as to the position and number of the Sikh troops, but generally speaking the following particulars may be relied upon." He then assigns definite numbers of troops, both regular and irregular, to various commanders, and brings the actual total to 73,400 men. *Vide* Travels, vol. I, pp. 430—433.

†It seems as if he considered the average strength of a battalion as 500. *See* Auckland's Private Letters, vol. VII; Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.

‡Brit. Mus. Add. MS. no. 27254, f. 163. The date when this manuscript was written is not given, nor is there any introduction to it.

§*See* The Sikhs and Afghans, pp. 23-24.

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"It (the Sikh army) consists of 31 regiments of infantry, 9 regiments of cavalry, and 288 pieces of artillery of various calibre, of which 143 pieces are drawn by horses, 147 by bullocks, and 8 howitzers, besides 11,800 irregular *Sowars* ..... Besides these troops, the following are furnished by the *Jagirdars*:

"Irregular *Sowars*: 6,460.
Regular Infantry: 9 regiments.
Regular Cavalry: 5 regiments.
Horse and Bullock Artillery: 87 pieces.

"The troops forming his (Ranjit Singh's) garrisons in different forts, and the establishments maintained for police and other purposes, are not included in the above enumeration."

Among the more recent writers, Griffin,* who claims to have based his information on the pay abstracts and returns of the Sikh army lying in the Secretariat offices at Lahore, calculates the number of the regular troops for 1839 as 29,168, and roughly puts the irregulars at 30,000—thus making the total of about 60,000 men. The latest estimates are those contained in the Catalogue of the Khalsa Darbar records. This catalogue is probably based on the examination of the same material which was employed by Griffin; but it seems to have been compiled after a more careful and thorough study, and thus makes a useful contribution to the statistical information at our disposal. According to it, the Sikh army in 1838 comprised 31 battalions of regular infantry, 7 regiments of cavalry, and 19 *Deras* of artillery,—the distribution of men between three arms being 26,617, 4,090, and 4,533 respectively. In addition to these, there were 10,795 irregular *Sowars*. The last figure falls far short of all

Vide Ranjit Singh (Rulers of India series), pp. 142-143.

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I.—General Estimate.

Various accounts have been given of the general standard of efficiency of the soldiers of the Panjab under Ranjit Singh. The Maharaja always conducted European visitors to the parades, reviews and manœuvres of his troops, and thus afforded them ample opportunities to form their own opinions. The impressions of the more notable among them have already been recorded in the preceding pages. Here, perhaps, it will suffice to allude to the verdicts of two of the most eminent persons who set foot in the Panjab during the lifetime of the Sikh potentate. Sir Henry Fane, the Commander-in-Chief of the Company's forces, was invited by Ranjit Singh in 1837 to witness the marriage festivities of his grandson, Kanwar Nau-Nihal. In a private letter to Lord Auckland, he made the following observations:* "The next day the personal retainers and irregular cavalry passed by on horseback, and along a road through one of his

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each other in quick succession, and there was consequently no settled policy. Secondly, the armed followers of the principal Sirdars, as well as of the ruler, were rapidly increased during the interval. Two facts emerge clearly from the confused mass of figures and statements, *viz.* that the army had more than doubled since the days of Ranjit Singh, and that there had been proportionately greater increase in the regular forces than in the irregulars. Strictly speaking, the topics concerning the period after 1839 fall outside the scope of the present study. But I have thought it proper to refer to them, in order to show both the general trend of military affairs, and side-lights on the after-history of the kingdom of the Panjab. In both these respects, the general policy was originally laid down by Ranjit Singh.

**See* Lord Auckland's Private Letters, vol. II (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.).

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(Ranjit Singh's) flower gardens. About 5,000 of the most picturesque people in chain armour, breast-plates, cuirasses, shields, spears, and dresses of every colour of the rainbow, with horses bounding along like heroes at Astley's. The next day was a review of four regiments of cavalry, 2,400, twenty-eight battalions of infantry, 14,000, and sixty pieces of cannon, all well clothed, armed, accoutred and completely organised, and brigaded and placed under proper officers; and their movements were as good as those of our troops could be. The cavalry, regular and irregular, was not less than 12,000."

Lord Auckland,* in a secret letter to Sir J. Hobhouse, gives an account of his visit to the Panjab. While on the way to Amritsar he writes: "On Wednesday morning was a review of his (Ranjit Singh's) troops, about eight or nine thousand in number; and I must say that in equipment, in steadiness, and in precision of manœvres, they seemed to be in no respect inferior to our own army." On the 12th December, 1838, he reached Amritsar, the religious capital of the kingdom, and wrote from that place in the following manner: "I entered my camp near Amritsar this morning, and was cordially and magnificently welcomed by the Maharaja. He has here irregular horsemen innumerable, with their metal caps, heron-like plumes, and silk dresses, the most picturesque troops in the world, and he has 150 pieces of cannon, and about 25,000 regular infantry. They formed up on the plains about four miles and a half in length, and the sight was altogether very beautiful."

In a letter written subsequently at Amritsar, and ad-

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*See Lord Auckland's Private Letters, vol. VI (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.).

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other estimates, and probably excludes the irregulars maintained by the principal *Jagirdars*.

The estimates of different writers show slight variations, which are but an inevitable consequence of the partly feudal character of the military organisation of the Sikhs. Nevertheless they provide us with sufficient data to draw approximately correct conclusions. In view of the details mentioned above, I am inclined to believe that the disciplined army of the Panjab in the year of Ranjit Singh's death amounted to not less than 35,000, and probably did not exceed 40,000 men. To these may be added an equal number of irregulars of all classes, reaching the total of about 75,000 men.*

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*With regard to the strength of the ordnance, a scale showing the number of guns in the possession of Ranjit Singh at different periods of his reign has been prepared by the author of the Khalsa Darbar records, and is published in the Journal of Indian History of September, 1922. His estimate for 1838, which I reproduce in the Appendix, largely agrees with those of Lord Auckland and Shahamat Ali, which are stated above.

There exist various estimates of the strength of the Sikh army as it stood in 1844-45. These are contained in Cunningham's History of the Sikhs, Steinbach's the Punjaub, the Calcutta Review of 1844, Smyth's Reigning Family of Lahore, Griffin's Ranjit Singh, and Sita Ram Kohly's Catalogue of the Khalsa Darbar records. The figures quoted by these writers do not tally with one another; and the difference is all the more noteworthy as most of these calculations are the result of official investigations on behalf of the Company. Some reasons for these variations I have already explained in connection with the estimates of Ranjit's reign, but two others concerning this period may also be stated. In the first place, the years that intervened between the death of Ranjit Singh and the first Sikh War were full of political anarchy, in which rulers and ministers followed

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dressed to Major-General Lushington of the India House on the 15th December, 1838, he says: "I rode yesterday with Ranjit Singh up a line of 20,000 of his troops and 100 pieces of cannon, everything being perfectly in order and well equipped."*

To sum up: Ranjit Singh, in a single generation, raised his army from less than 8,000 untrained troopers to a magnificent force of about 75,000 men, at least half of whom were regularly trained, disciplined and equipped. The regular infantry, which had only been created after 1805, became in 1839 the best organised branch of the army. It then attracted the pick of the youth of the country, and represented the flower of the Panjab. The artillery also now became, for the first time, a regular part of the Sikh army. The employment of large masses of disciplined infantry supported by a properly organised artillery was, in fact, a comparatively recent innovation in the Indian system of warfare. It was first introduced into India by the European Companies, and was afterwards adopted by several Indian Chiefs, such as Haidar 'Ali, the Nizam and Mahadaji Sindhia. The Panjab, however, had remained free from European influence, and there the traditional mode of fighting had continued until the beginning of the 19th century. But with the rise to power of Ranjit Singh, English influence began to be felt beyond the Jamna, and the superiority of gunners and musketeers over cavalrymen was notably demonstrated in the Second and the Third Marhatta Wars. Ranjit Singh quickly grasped the changed situation, and realised that with the approach of the English near his

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**See also* "Five Years in India" (pp. 10-11), by H. E. Fane, A. D. C. to the Governor-General in 1837. Fane witnessed the manœvres held in Lahore during Auckland's visit.

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own frontiers the existing tactics became ineffective. He accordingly set himself to remodel his forces, and succeeded in creating such an efficient engine of war that he could have fought on equal terms with the East India Company. The soundness of the expediency of engrafting European methods of warfare on the soldiery of India has been questioned by certain students of Indian military history. But even if some measure of truth be conceded to this view,* the case of the Sikhs would indeed present a remarkable exception. Their general conduct in the two Sikh wars, and the doggedness and determination of their opposition to the British arms, far excelled anything of the kind witnessed before on Indian soil. The display which they made of their powers and knowledge of Western tactics on those two occasions, notwithstanding their final defeat, will ever remain an ample vindication of the reforms undertaken by the warlord of the Panjab.

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*In this connection, the statement of Sirdar Desa Singh Majithia, that Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar had all been won by the *Khalsa* cavaliers is significant. *See* Moorcroft's Travels, I, 98.

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CHAPTER IV.

Civil Administration.

The strategic frontiers of the Panjab having been completed by 1823, the years after that date are not characterised by frequent campaigns, like the earlier period. Other causes were also responsible for a temporary cessation of military activities. In the first place, the Maharaja showed symptoms of illness and exhaustion. Secondly, his dominions grew so extensive, and his army so large, that he was compelled to devote more attention to his civil and revenue administration.* The diminished opportunities for plunder necessitated the re-organisation of the sources of revenue on a sounder and more systematic basis. In the following pages, I propose to trace Ranjit's financial arrangements of the Panjab.

A.—Financial and Departmental Organisation of the Kingdom.

At first Ranjit Singh had no regular state treasury, his accounts of revenue receipts and of expenditure being kept by Rama Nand, a banker of Amritsar. In 1805, the Maharaja was advised by Holkar to organise a regular treasury, but until 1808, military preoccupations did not allow him to undertake that task. In the latter year, Ranjit appointed Dewan Bhawani Dass as his finance minister. The Dewan, soon after his appointment, divided the financial transactions of the state among the following *Daftars* (departments) :—

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*See 'Ibrat Nama, f. 266.

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(*i*) *Daftar-i-Abwab-ul-Mal.**

This department dealt with the accounts of the revenue receipts, and was sub-divided into (*a*) *Jam'a Kharch-i-T'aaluqat,* and (*b*) *Jam'a Kharch-i-Sairat.* The *T'aaluqat* section comprised entries referring to the land revenue; while the *Sairat* included all other sources of income, the most important being *Nazrana* (tributes and presents), *Zabti* (escheats and forfeitures), *Abkari* (excise), *Wajuhat-i-Moqarari* (registration fees), and *Chaukiyat* (customs and transit duties). I shall first deal with the various items covered by *Sairat*, leaving the land revenue for separate treatment.

Nazrana was a tribute paid to the supreme ruler of a state on different occasions and under various circumstances by his subjects, specially by prominent vassals and dignitaries. Sometimes it was in the form of a fixed annual charge from a subordinate chieftain. Sometimes it was the price paid to the conqueror for the retention of a piece of territory by a defeated prince. Sums of money and various kinds of valuables, occasionally paid to the Sikh ruler by his own officials, may be included in this category.†

Zabti formed a source of considerable income to the Sikh ruler, who often punished his delinquent officials

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*It was sometimes called *Daftar-i-Maliyat.*

†This latter class of payment was not fixed. It was, however, recognised as customary and as such was rigidly carried out in practice. For instance, whenever an official was granted an audience by the Maharaja, he had to make a customary present or *Nazr* according to his official position and private means. According to Sohan Lal, *Nazrana* often consisted of one or other of the following articles, cash, horses, swords, pistols, shawls, spices and fruits, etc. *See* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, f. 575.

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with fines or forfeitures of property, or both. Besides, in several cases, he withdrew grants of land from the descendants of his deceased Sirdars. These were sometimes retained by the state; while sometimes they were regranted to others in lieu of cash payment.

Abkari included all charges made on the sale of opium, *Bhang*, spirits and other drugs. The income derived from this source was comparatively insignificant.

Wajuhat-i-Moqarari included both the profits of justice and charges corresponding to the stamp duties of modern times. The receipts under this head were collected in different ways. First of all, certain charges were made for the redress of grievances by means of judicial decisions. Fines paid to atone for criminal acts provided another item which may be put under this head, for the sake of convenience. Then there were the proceeds from various charges levied on petitions addressed by the people either to the Sikh ruler or to one of his ministers. Lastly we may include the payments made for the affixation of the Royal Seals, on all kinds of private contracts. The sums realised by this latter source in different districts seem to have been substantial, on account of the fact that the Seals were farmed out by the Maharaja to his more responsible officials for fixed payments of money.*

As regards *Chaukiyat*, I find that as in every other Indian state there was a very comprehensive scale of duties which were levied, in this case, under forty-eight

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*The Seal of the Chief Office at Lahore was farmed out to Dewan Devi Dass for several years on an annual payment of Rs. 1,80,000. Later on, however, it was made over to Dewan Devi Sahai, who agreed to pay Rs. 23,000 more than his predecessor. *See* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, f. 421.

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markets for sale. Moreover, the element of uncertainty incidental to the fluctuations of prices in a market was also eliminated. The adjustment of expenditure to income was made much easier and far more certain than before, owing to the ability of the government to estimate its share in money beforehand. It is important to note in this connection the real cause which led to the introduction of the practice of cash collection. The truth is that the military expenditure had continued increasing for some years,—a natural consequence of the progressive augmentation of the forces. This rendered the need for correct estimates of income more imperative.

But even the *Kankut* system was found partly ineffective because it enabled the government to estimate its income only just before the end of a harvest. Hence it was difficult to make a tolerably correct forecast in advance of the time when provision was to be made for different items of public expenditure. The necessity of such forecasts had been still further increasing owing to the growth of civil establishments. Hence after 1834, Ranjit Singh began to encourage the already existing* practice of farming out the revenues of large areas of irrigable lands to the highest bidders, for periods varying from three to six years. By these contracts the farmers were required to present detailed accounts of the extent of the cultivated area and the total amount of the produce in their districts. This practice of leasing

*This practice existed to a limited extent even in the first period. But there was a considerable difference in the contracts. In the first place, the earlier contracts were made with regard to the outlying and troublesome districts alone. Secondly, the earlier leases were generally for one year. Lastly, these leases at the beginning were given only to the courtiers and nobility.

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Land Revenue System.

The revenue derived from the land formed by far the greater portion of the income of Ranjit Singh. In India it has always been the mainstay of every government. The study of the growth of the Land Revenue System of the Panjab is both interesting and instructive. Its development can be traced in three well-marked stages. In the beginning of Ranjit's career, the system known as *Batai* (division) was re-introduced on the old Mughal plan to regulate the apportionment of produce between the cultivator and the government. This was the old and traditional method of a simple division of the crops, which was in vogue in the Panjab. The share of the State was collected in kind. This system generally continued until 1823; the preceding years, from the point of view of Land Revenue Administration, constituting the first period of the Maharaja's reign.

In the second period, which began in 1824 and extended over nearly a decade, the rude device of sharing corn with the cultivator was largely replaced by a system of assessments known as *Kankut*. According to this, the governmental share was reckoned out of a standing crop, the value of which was estimated in terms of money. The proportion for the State was now collected in cash. This step meant a distinct improvement over the old method, because it saved the revenue officials from a two-fold responsibility, namely, guarding the grain from being stolen by the peasantry, and carrying it to distant

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tax (on menials), and charges for fruit trees on crown lands, are other examples of taxes which were covered by *Sairat*. *See* Moorcroft's Travels, II, 126-27; and Resident at Lahore to Governor-General, 29th Septemer, 1847. (Lahore Political Diaries.)

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out large districts was further developed by selling the farms of the villages, as a whole, to the villagers themselves. In this way, the profits of farmers or middlemen were sometimes eliminated.*

Government share of the produce:—Every Indian government from time immemorial has claimed a share in the produce of land. As regards the exact proportion charged by Ranjit Singh, there is a considerable divergence

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*The farmer was always required to submit to the State a detailed return of the produce and the various items of revenue and other charges collected from the peasantry. The following is the specimen of the *Pata Nama* (contract) :—

منکه—مُلازم قدیم سرکار والا ام – در این وقت بحضور انور دام اقباله نوشته مے دهم و اِقرار مے نمائم که آنچه تعلقات مفصله ذیل بمقابله روپیه ضرب نانکشاهي امرتسریه بلا خرچ سرکار والا تفویض فدوي از اِبتدائے فصل—سمبت—فرموده فدوي بجان و دل در تقدیم خدمات ماموره بخیر خواهي و دیانتداري معروف حاضر بوده باشد— وجه معاملات را بحضور انور فرستاده ام تادرم داخل نمود و هریکدام از پیداوار ملک از جناب والا پوشیده نخواهم کرد و آنچه کمي و بیشي در معاملات ملک مفوضه مفصله خواهد بود در حضور انور عرض خواهم نمود و رعایا را به حسن و سلوک خود راضي و ملک را آباد خواهم داشت *

The principle underlying this policy of farming was further extended when the government tried experiments levying cash *Jam'a* (assessment) in several *Parganas* of Gujrat. There were two varieties of it,—*Zabti Jam'a,* by which the entire cultivated area was assessed at cash rates per *Bigha* or *Kanal,* and *Chahat-i-Iqrari,* by which the cultivated land was assessed at a lump sum.

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different heads, and on most of the articles of daily consumption. An examination of the grading of the scale of charges shows, however, that no discrimination was made between articles of luxury and those which formed the necessaries of life. The charges were generally made in cash. Contradictory statements are made by the writers as regards the actual working of this department. For example, Steinbach* whose opinion should command special respect on account of his long association with the government of Ranjit Singh, says: "Yet the duties, though levied at every ten or twelve miles, are light. To save themselves the trouble of constantly recurring payments, the merchants generally contract for the conveyance of a caravan of their goods from one point of the country to another, the party who takes charge of them paying all duties in the states through which they pass; should any chief, however, impose a vexatious tax, the conductor of the caravan has the option of changing the route, and conveying the goods through the possessions of one who has the power to protect, and the inclination to encourage the transit of traffic through his dominions." Griffin,† probably on the authority of the Administration Reports of English officials, writes: "The mode of collection was extremely vexatious, the country being covered with custom houses at which merchants were treated with the utmost insolence and oppression. An article paid duty on being taken into a town, a second time on being taken into a shop, and a third time on re-export."‡

See The Punjaub by Colonel Steinbach, pp. 106-107.

†*Vide* Ranjit Singh (Rulers of India series), p. 145.

‡A professional tax on the shawl manufacturers of Kashmir, a charge per house on the tribesmen of the frontier, a *Kameen*

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of view among writers. This is largely due to the difficulty of generalising about the proportions taken, which varied in different parts of the kingdom. Besides, the exaction of various sums in the form of *Abwabs* (cesses) in different districts was liable to produce confusion. Under these circumstances, it will, perhaps, be useful to quote the opinions of the more important writers before stating the result of my own investigations. According to Lord Lawrence, "Two-fifths was the proportion nominally taken by the sirkar (state). The estimate might be too much or too little; but the farmer must realise the amount of his own profits too, without collecting more than two-fifths; or his exactions were sure to reach the sovereign's ears and proportionate disallowance was made in his account." Another account says that, "The government's share varied from a half to a fourth or even less, according to the fertility of the soil."* In the Punjab Administration Report† of 1849-50, I find an estimate which is more correct and comprehensive than any other I have come across. It runs thus: "As a rule the Sikh public demand may be said to have varied from two-fifths to one-third of the year's produce. This proportion prevailed in all the districts which the Sikhs had fully conquered, and which were fairly cultivated; and may be said to have been in force in all their Cis-Indus possessions except the province governed by Dewan Mul Raj‡ (the southern districts). Beyond the Indus, owing to the distance from control, the less patient character of the population, the insecurity of

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**Vide* Lahore Political Diaries (1847-48).

†Article 233.

‡Dewan Mul Raj was the son of Dewan Sawan Mall, Ranjit's famous governor of Multan.

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property, and the scarcity of population, the revenue system pressed more lightly on the people. For the last reason also, the rates in Multan were equally light. In all these tracts (excepting the peculiarly rich lands around Peshawar), the government share never exceeded one-third, usually averaged one-fourth to one-fifth, and fell even to one-eightth of the crop. For certain crops—cotton, indigo, sugar and cane, tobacco and vegetables, money rates were always taken." Among more recent writers, Douie* is of opinion that "The Sikhs usually took a fixed share of the produce from the cultivators except in the case of crops such as sugar cane, cotton and tobacco, which could not be conveniently divided and for which money payments were charged. In the Panjab, between the Indus and the Sutluj, except in the territory governed by Dewan Sawan Mall, the state claimed from one-third to two-fifths of the crops, but for land with good natural advantages as much as a half was taken. At least these were the recognised rates, and the villagers had to bribe the appraising officers to take less."†

As a result of my own investigations on this topic, I have formed the conclusion that the share of the gross produce which belonged to the government was never rigidly fixed at one uniform rate. It varied from place to place, according to the productivity of the soil, the nature of the crops, the means of irrigation, and other facilities for cultivation. On lands peculiarly fertile, and easy of irrigation, the outlay on labour was naturally

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**See* Punjab Settlement Manual, pp. 19-20.

†All the evidence stated in this paragraph is neglected by Griffin who devotes only three or four pages to the whole subject of civil administration, in his popular and most accessible book on Ranjit Singh.

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moderate. Hence the state demand in such places went sometimes as high as fifty per cent. of the gross produce. In the case of less productive lands, however, the claim of the government varied from two-fifths to one-third. But it seems seldom to have gone below one-third, at least in the central Panjab. In Multan, on the other hand, land was assessed at a much lower rate, the government share generally ranging from one-third to one-sixth of the gross produce. In this province, fifty per cent. of the total yield, which was the usual rate in the *Suba* of Lahore, was charged only in exceptional cases. As regards Peshawar, the estimate of the authors of the Punjab Administration Report of 1849-50, as quoted in the previous paragraph, may be accepted.

In addition to a regular share of the produce, the state claimed a number of *Abwabs* (cesses). These were collected along with the land revenue, of which they formed a fixed proportion. The percentage, however, differed even within a single *Taaluqa*. From a few scattered examples, I find that the usual rate varied between five and fifteen per cent. of the revenue.*

Collection of revenue:—The revenue was collected twice a year, a month or so after the reaping of the two harvests, called the *Rabi* (summer) and the *Kharif* (winter) respectively. The chief officer in charge of the collection in a *Taaluqa* (district) was the *Kardar* (collector) and he was assisted by subordinate officials like *Moqadams* (foremen), *Patwaris* (revenue assessors), and *Kanungos* (hereditary registrars). These officials formed

*I have not come across any statement of the objects for which the *Abwabs* were levied. The modern practice of taxing a particular locality to satisfy local public needs does not seem to have existed at the time, and no proof is forthcoming that the money thus obtained was ever spent on objects of public interest.

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the *T'aaluqa* organisation, and discharged among themselves the duties of surveyors, assessors, record keepers, and supervisors of crops in different *Mauzas* (villages). In addition to their salaries, some of these officers had a right to commission, aggregating about five per cent. of the total collection of revenue. They were also held responsible for any arrears due from the cultivators. The proceeds of revenue were kept in the district treasury under the control of the *Kardar*, and were either transmitted to Lahore or disposed of directly according to the wishes of the ruler.*

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*My conclusions on the Land Revenue System are based partly on the information obtained from the Persian MSS., but mainly on the Settlement and Administration Reports of several well-known English civilians such as Douie, Barnes, Ibbetson and others.

I have not touched the subject of tenures in my account of the Land Revenue Administration. The omission is intentional for the following reasons. The subjects of tenures in a province of which the various parts differ widely both physically and in respect of the races which inhabit, as in the Panjab, is one which it is almost impossible to treat satisfactorily in the brief space that can be here allotted to it. There is, indeed, very minute information on this topic to be found in the Settlement Reports. From them also I find that the subject of tenures is a very complicated one, more specially in the hills and on the frontier where examples of peculiar tribal tenures survive even to-day. These can hardly be explained with brevity. They are generally tinged with the feudal spirit, and often take the form of rights of overlordship or claims to receive service. The arrangements are further complicated by the fact that the real measure of proprietary right often consisted not of land but of the water which irrigated it. From the Settlement Reports of the districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Bannu, and the Derajat, I have collected the following list of different forms of land tenures in the days of the Sikhs:

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iv. Daftar-i-Mawajib.

In this office, the accounts of pay and other emoluments in the various governmental services, such as the army, the civil staff, the clerical establishment, and the menials were kept. This department was gradually divided into several branches to deal with the increasing volume of work.

v. Daftar-i-Roznamcha-i-Ikhrajat.

This office was set up to register accounts of daily expenditure under various heads. Hence it dealt with miscellaneous items from this standpoint.

These *Daftars* passed through several changes concerning details of organisation in subsequent years. Each of them was subdivided into branches to cope with the administrative developments. Towards the end of Ranjit Singh's reign, there were twelve principal *Daftars* in existence at Lahore. Each of these was controlled by one or other of the prominent courtiers, and worked more or less under the personal direction of the ruler.*

B.—Territorial Divisions and Local Administration.

For purposes of local administration, the Panjab was divided into four following *Subas* (provinces) :—

1. *Suba*-i-Lahore.
2. *Suba*-i-Multan *Dar-ul-Aman* (Multan, the abode of peace).
3. *Suba*-i-Kashmir *Jannat Nazir* (paradise resembling Kashmir).
4. *Suba*-i-Peshawar.

In addition to these, there were several hilly principalities owning allegiance to the Maharaja, and paying

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***See* The Sikhs and Afghans by Shahamat Ali, p. 15.**

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*ii. Daftar-i-Abwab-ul-Tahwil.**

This was the second department organised by Dewan Bhawani Dass soon after his appointment in 1808, and was concerned with the records of accounts of income and expenditure sent by officials. These cashiers were called *Tahwildars,* the term being applied to any individual with whom the government money was deposited, or through whom it was expended. At first this department dealt with accounts of a varied nature, including incomes derived from different sources and expenses incurred in numerous ways. But when separate offices to record income and expenditure of different branches of the administration were set up, the work of this office became more limited.

iii. Daftar-i-Taujihat.†

This *Daftar* attended to the accounts of the royal household, such as the expenses of the *Zenana* (ladies), presents and *Khil'ats* (robes of honour), entertainments of guests, and *Tosha-Khana* (regalia).

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(1) Zamindari estates held by individuals of families; (2) Village communities paying in common; (3) Village communities divided upon ancestral or customary shares subject to the rules of inheritance; (4) Village communities in which possession was the measure of right in all lands; (5) Landholders who had redeemed their revenue; (6) Grantees or lessees of the State; (7) Purchasers of State wastes; and (8) Unassigned government wastes. *See* also the masterly exposition of Mr. Barkley in the Punjab Administration Report of 1872-73.

*Sometimes called *Daftar-i-Tahwilat.*

†This and the preceding departments were afterwards consolidated into one.

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him annual tribute.

Each of the *Subas* was divided into *Parganas*, each *Pargana* into *T'aaluqas*, and every *T'aaluqa* was composed of 50 to 100 *Mauzas*. This territorial division followed largely the system of the *Mughals*, and seems originally to have been based on considerations of administrative convenience, such as the tribal or professional affinity of the inhabitants, and the facility for collecting revenue and maintaining law and order.*

The administration of the *Suba* was entrusted to a *Nazim* (governor) whose duties were analogous to those of the Lieutenant Governor before the Reforms. He had under him a number of *Kardars* (officials). There was usually one *Kardar* to every *T'aaluqa*, but, in cerain cases, where it consisted of an exceptionally large number of villages, there were more than one.† Thus the *Kardars* widely differed in position and importance according to the extent of territory under their charge. In fact, the most important official in the sphere of local government was the *Kardar* rather than the *Nazim*. The *Nazim* doubtlessly occupied a much higher position than that of an average *Kardar*, but his functions were largely of an appellate character and of a more general nature. The *Kardar*, on the other hand, like an average civil servant of to-day, came into immediate contact with the people in their daily activities. The chief among his multifarious duties may be briefly summed up. He was—

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*A *Pargana* roughly corresponded to a district, a *T'aaluqa* to a *Tahsil*, and a *Mauza* to a village of modern Indian administration.

†To every *T'aaluqa*, at least one *Kotwal* (police officer) was attached. In large cities and important stations *qil'adars* or *Faujdars* (garrison officers) were stationed with a small force. These officials were responsible for the maintenance of law and order.

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(1) A Revenue Collector and Supervisor of land settlement.
(2) A Treasurer and Accountant.
(3) A Judge and Magistrate.
(4) An Excise and Custom's Officer.
(5) A General Supervisor of the people on behalf of the government.

In the course of our study we come across several *accounts of the way in which the country as a whole* was governed by the *Kardars*. These accounts are mostly confusing and contradictory. With a few notable exceptions,* most European writers have formed very unfavourable impressions, amounting in some cases, almost to an unmitigated condemnation of their methods of ad-

*Masson praises the administration, not only of the Central Panjab and the districts included in the province of Multan, but also of the Derajat (Journeys, pp. 1, 30, 37, 398, 404, 405, 425 and 426). Cunningham writes: "The Sikh peasantry enjoyed a light asstssment; no local officer dared to oppress a member of the *Khalsa;* and if elsewhere the farmers of revenue were resisted in their tyrannical proceedings, they were more likely to be changed than to be supported by battalions. He (Ranjit Singh) did not ordinarily punish men who took redress into their own hands, for which, indeed, his subordinates were prepared and which they guarded against as best as they could." (History of the Sikhs, p. 179.) Lastly, see the various accounts of Dewan Sawan Mal's *regime* in Multan, Misar Rup Lal's in Jalandhar, and of Sirdar Lehna Singh Majithia in the districts round Amritsar, given by different European writers. On their authority, we know that in all the above-mentioned instances, ample attention was paid by the local officials to the welfare of the people by means of remissions of revenue for failure of crops, advancement of *Taqavi* loans for encouraging cultivation, security of tenure of lands, and systematic grading of revenue charges based on the fertility of the soil and means of irrigation.

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ministration. The Indian chroniclers, although they occasionally mention cases in which the *Kardars* oppressed the cultivators by exacting exorbitant sums in the form of revenues, are not, however, so emphatic in their censure. They, indeed, sometimes praise the conduct of certain *Kardars* very highly, and hold the view that their measures were a blessing to the peasantry.* The divergence in the views of European writers and Indian chroniclers is not due to any serious dispute about facts. Both of them admit cases in which due efficiency and honesty were combined with a striking degree of prosperity among the people. The accounts of both also abound with instances of mal-administration and mismanagement. The difference lies in the general estimate of the *Kardars,* the former condemning them as a class, the latter only the individual delinquents. The disagreement is, perhaps, natural and necessary owing to the view-points of those who were born and brought up in countries which had standards of political development altogether different from one another, and who consequently looked upon the same facts from different angles of vision. Such differences, indeed, show us how difficult it is for historians to study correctly the political institutions of other countries, and to deduce such conclusions from them as are in consonance with the sentiments and feelings of their inhabitants.†

**See,* for example, the Tarikh-i-Mulk-i-Hazara, ff. 39-40. The author describes in detail how the *regime* of Amar Singh Majithia, the Governor of Hazara, was a considerable advantage to that district and was extremely popular. This is all the more important as Hazara was one of the districts on the frontier where the administration on the whole was very defective.

†I do not imply that a historian should necessarily subordinate his own judgment to those of the country about which he

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It seems to me, however, that in recording their verdicts on the methods of local administration, sufficient attention has not been paid by these writers to the peculiar circumstances of the times. In the first place, in that age of defective means of communication, it was impossible for the supreme ruler of even a state like the Panjab to control the actions of his local officers to the extent to which this is possible to-day. These circumstances rendered the delegation of wide discretionary powers to the *Kardars* necessary, which, in turn, offered them opportunities of corruption. Secondly, until long after the period of Ranjit Singh, the idea of the "separation of political powers" was quite foreign to Indian rulers, the Sikh *Kardar* being required to perform the duties of a revenue collector, a magistrate, and a judicial officer. Thus in a government in which the chief official of a district was burdened with multifarious and incongruous duties, the circumstances were certainly not conducive to the attainment of that degree of efficiency and prosperity which is possible under modern systems.

From what has been said in the preceding paragraph, it will be seen that the effects of local administration on the people varied with the personality of the officials; nor was the distance from Lahore of the territory under their charge an unimportant factor. This is borne out by my investigations based upon the testimony of the contemporary European writers themselves. They agree that the *Suba-i-Lahore* or the territory lying between the Jehlam and the Satluj attained under Ranjit Singh a fair amount of prosperity, in comparison with the earlier

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writes; but in my opinion, before giving general verdicts about the effects of the institutions of a country on its people, particular attention should be paid to the latter's own views.

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by the peasantry. Following the example of the Mohammedan rulers who preceded him in Multan, Sawan Mal levied fixed cash assessments on each upland well. For wells and *Jhallars* in the riverain tracts, leases for a fixed cash demand were sometimes given, but even then the finest crops such as cane or indigo paid special rates. A normal well area was fixed according to the circumstances of each locality, and any cultivation in excess of that limit was charged for at a fixed money rate per bigha. In some places the demand varied according to the number of oxen employed on a well. For flooded lands, a moderate share of the produce was taken in kind. The measurements were made at the time of the harvest and the rates were levied on the ripened crops. The share of the state was pitched especially low in the case of new cultivation. The Dewan's system was well suited to the agricultural conditions of the country under his rule, and it is interesting to note that experience has led up there in many cases to methods of assessment very similar to those which he had adopted."* Lastly, he extended the area of cultivation by causing the construction of about 300 miles of canals.

The two out of the four principal provinces, where the Sikh methods of administration have been generally condemned, were Kashmir and Peshawar. Both of them formed outlying parts of the kingdom, and were situated at a great distance from Lahore. The first had been governed by the Afghans until its conquest by the Sikhs in 1819. The Afghan misrule has been severely condemned by all authorities as resulting in the extreme destitution of the Kashmiris; and this fact is rightly

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***See also the Revenue Administration Reports of the various districts which were included in the *Suba* of Multan.**

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emphasised by Cunningham* in appraising the Sikh administration of Kashmir. The difficulties arising from general poverty and two severe famines from which the people of that region suffered in the first decade of the Sikh rule undoubtedly formed the chief obstacle to smooth administration.

In the valley of Peshawar, the actual administration up to 1834 rested in the hands of the Barukzai Afghans, the Sikh ruler contenting himself with a nominal tribute. It was only in the last five years of the Maharaja's reign that Sikh governors—at first Hari Singh Nalwa and afterwards Avitabile—administered the country. Both of them were compelled, alike by the turbulence of the lawless tribes and other inhabitants, and by the geographical and political exigencies of the situation, to resort to peculiarly strong judicial and administrative measures. In spite of introducing exceptional forms of land tenure, and adopting arbitrary methods of extorting revenue, the province hardly paid for its own management, and brought little income to the Sikh Exchequer. The latter fact shows that the methods of civil and military government adopted in the frontier regions were to some extent necessary and unavoidable. Most of these measures were, in fact, devised to deal with an abnormal state of affairs, and bear no comparison with those which prevailed in other provinces of the kingdom.

C.—Judicial Arrangements.

The administration of justice is one of the topics on which very little information exists in the material

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***Vide* History of the Sikhs, p. 180 (footnote). *See* also Forster's Travels, 11, 26; and Huegel's Travels, p. 287. The last writer mentions about a severe epidemic which prevailed in Kashmir during his visit in 1834.**

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period. They make frequent allusions not only to widespread cultivation but also to the existence of a brisk trade in cities like Lahore, Amritsar, and Wazirabad. They also praise the administration of several *Kardars*, such as that of Misar Rup Lal in the Jalandhar Doab and of Lehna Singh Majithia in districts around Amritsar.

Again, the administration of Dewan Sawan Mal, who acted as the governor of the entire province of Multan* from 1828 till after the death of his master, is stated in every account to have been efficient and progressive. The territory under his control had for many years been the scene of warfare and devastation. Nevertheless, within a short time he succeeded in introducing into it agricultural reforms of a far-reaching character, and thereby changing the whole appearance of the country. The following account, recorded by an English administrator, who during the early days of the British rule, was required in his official capacity to investigate the methods of assessment in Multan, gives some idea of the comprehensive nature of Sawan Mal's reforms. He writes: "Sawan Mal paid into the Lahore treasury nearly twenty-two lakhs for the territory subject to his control. He was an Oriental ruler of the best type. He induced the people to dig new and to restore old canals, and bring in cultivators from neighbouring districts. He encouraged the sinking and repairing of wells, by giving favourable leases. He commenced the system of revenue remissions for the introduction of improvements

*The province of Multan included all the territory of the modern districts of Multan, Muzaffargarh, Jhang, and parts of Montgomery and Dera Ismail Khan. For the details of revenue receipts in 1836 from the various tracts under the administration of Sawan Mal, *see* Umdut-ut-Twarikh, Daftar iii, Part iii, p. 336.

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It consisted of the *Panches* or elders of the village. The qualifications necessary for its membership were the possession of land, and a certain amount of local influence and prestige. The *Panchayet*, in reality, was more often of the nature of an arbitration Court than that of a state-appointed judicial tribunal. Hence its decisions were revised by the *Kardars* whenever they were rejected by either party. In the towns, justice was administered by the *Kardars* who also decided the more important cases within their *T'aaluqas* arising from disputes concerning matters of inheritance, boundaries of land, and payment of revenue. In the cities such cases were decided by the *Nazims* or by the more important *Kardars*, and sometimes separate officials were appointed to devote themselves exclusively to judicial work. These latter were known as *'Adaltis* (Justices). A distinct Court was set up at the capital known as *'Adalat-ul-Ala** (exalted Court). I cannot say how this Court was constituted, who the judges were, or to what its jurisdiction extended. Its name, however, suggests that it was probably an appellate Court, analogous to a High Court of the present day. In addition to these local and central courts, judicial authority was delegated by the Sikh ruler to his prominent ministers, for deciding cases pertaining to their own respective departments. Finally, the Sikh ruler himself held his *Darbar* at the Metropolis and heard appeals and petitions against the judgments of the *Kardars, Nazims, 'Adalatis* and ministers.

Civil cases were of a varied nature. First of all,

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its rulings. *Vide* Lahore Political Diaries, 1847-48, by Colonel Henry and Sir John Lawrence.

**Vide* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh by Sohan Lal, f. 559. The author himself was appointed a clerk in this Court but he says nothing of the cases that came before it.

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there were cases of betrothals and matrimonial engagements, which were decided by the *Panchayets* in accordance with the generally accepted social conventions. Then there were breaches of contracts incidental to loans, sales on credit and the like; and in these decisions, great importance was attached to the sworn testimony of witnesses. In such matters the government of Ranjit Singh levied fees on the successful party; though contrary to the modern practice, such fees were levied after the judgments were announced. There were, again, numerous civil suits pertaining to the alienation of landed property among the rural population. Those were decided on the evidence obtained from records which were regularly kept in *Qazikhanas** (local record offices) in charge of the *Nazims*. Pecuniary contributions were exacted by the judges from both parties to a litigation, but those who succeeded paid the *Shukrana* (thanksgiving present). Where there was no *prima facie* case for defence in a civil suit, the defendant suffered a fine for wasting the time of the Court by carrying on vexatious litigation. Thus the administration of justice was a source of considerable income to the State. Litigation in Ranjit Singh's days was quite common, because the various kinds of contracts, which were generally effected by means of verbal agreements could easily be and often were repudiated.

As regards crimes, although it was understood that the infliction of capital punishment was reserved to the ruler himself, yet cases in which *Kardars* exercised this authority are not wanting; but in the absence of reliable

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*Towards the end of the Maharaja's reign, the *Qazikhanas* were established in most of the *Taaluqas*. The method of keeping records is stated to have been efficient.

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available. Most of the Persian manuscripts are silent on the subject, nor do the works of European writers contain definite information. The latter did not fully comprehend the working of an institution which was not based upon any codified system of laws, but depended on very flexible customary rules. Further, the lack of system in judicial procedure, in the *structure* of the courts, and in their relation to each other are also responsible for much of the confusion with which the whole subject is surrounded. An attempt is accordingly made in the following paragraphs to state, in as systematic a manner as possible, the nature of the laws, their administration, and their general effects on the people.

The first point to be borne in mind is that there was no written system of laws in existence in the days of Ranjit Singh. As stated above, judicial decisions were made in accordance with customary principles. The procedure was crude and simple, there being no distinction between ordinary civil and criminal cases. The settlement of village disputes rested largely with the *Panchayets.* The word *Panchayet* means a *Court of Five,** that being the usual number of men composing it.

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*Malcolm calls the *Panchayet* the "*Court of Five,*" and says that "they are always chosen from the men of the best reputation," and that "this Court has a high character for justice;" *vide* Sketch, pp. 127-28. For detailed information regarding the working of the *Panchayets, see* his Memoirs of Central India. The Council of Regency, established in the Panjab after the First Sikh War, regarded the administration of justice by the *Panches* as so satisfactory that they entrusted to them the task of drawing up a code of customary laws as regards marriage, inheritance and other similar topics. The institution of *Panchayets* was so popular that the people called it *Panch Men Parameshwar* (the decision of the *Panches* has the sanction of God) and readily accepted

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occasions. Another factor contributing to the same result was the practice of deputing special justices to tour in different districts for the purpose of hearing complaints and deciding cases of particular importance.* That the judicial processes in civil and criminal actions were not dilatory and expensive was another feature that was very agreeable to the rural and agricultural population of the Panjab. The greatest merit of the system lay, however, in its simplicity and in the absence of those legal intricacies and technicalities, which, if introduced among the rude Sikh peasantry, would have beset the path of justice with unavoidable difficulties.†

**See* *Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh* by Sohan Lal, f. 439. Striking examples are given by this author as to how Ranjit issued strict orders to some *Jagirdars* to send the reports of their decisions to him regularly; f. 421. *See* also *Risala-i-Sahib Numa* by Ganesh Das, f. 57. This author mentions in detail how after 1823 Ranjit devoted most of his time to visiting different districts and busying himself with the examination of decisions and hearing complaints against the corruption of officials.

†In this connection it is interesting to note the view entertained by a Sikh priest, and expressed to Malcolm in the course of a conversation. Malcolm says that this priest with a typical patriotic prejudice, boasted of the equitable nature of the judicial system of the Sikhs, which he considered to be much superior to that of the English. He described the latter as tedious, expensive and vexatious and advantageous only to clever rogues. Malcolm himself held the view that the Sikh system was "most congenial to the temper of the people." *Vide* Sketch, pp. 126—128.

It may be fairly doubted whether the want of written laws and regulations was ever felt by any society which had never known them since its birth; though when once enjoyed their loss becomes a severe infliction. The introduction of strict laws probably would have at first irritated rather than conciliated the mass of the population who would have only submitted to them

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figures, it is impossible to form a definite idea of the frequency of such instances. It is, however, usually accepted that the punishment for murder or other physical injuries was meted out to the offenders more often in the form of fines than of bodily chastisement. Mutilation was employed only in exceptional circumstances. On the whole, it may be said that the rigour of punishment depended upon the nature of the crime, the personal disposition of the magistrate and the likelihood of his action being reported to the ruler. Nor should we forget the important bearing of the locality in which the crime was committed.*

Though to all outward appearance, Ranjit's judicial system was crude and simple, yet in actual practice it eminently suited the social and political environment of the people of the Panjab. Under a system of administration in which the idea of the *separation of powers* was totally absent, one would expect to find instances of miscarriage of justice. Still the abuse of authority on the part of local officials was limited by several considerations. First of all, the term of office of Ranjit Singh's officials depended on good behaviour. The consciousness that their dignity, prestige and social status, and even their private wealth and property, depended solely on the favour of their master, acted as a restraining influence on their arbitrary actions. Secondly, the Maharaja's frequent and unexpected tours introduced a real risk of complaints of bribery and corruption reaching his ears. Indeed such complaints often came to his notice on these

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*For example, the crimes perpetrated in the province of Peshawar were punished more heavily than if the same were committed in the Central Panjab. This is evident from the accounts of European travellers, who saw cases of mutilation on the frontiers more frequently than in the *Suba* of Lahore.

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D.—Ranjit Singh's Government.

Ranjit Singh established in the Panjab a pure and unmitigated despotism. By destroying the *Misls* and allowing the *Gurumata* to decay, he had, in reality, transformed the whole constitution of the Sikhs from an irregular theocratic commonwealth of a loose federal type into a military monarchy based on personal rule. I have already stated in the introduction that the *Gurumata* had lost much of its popularity after Ahmed Shah Abdali's death; and when in 1805 a council of Sikh chiefs was called by Ranjit Singh to deal with the situation arising from the entry of Holkar and Lord Lake into the Panjab, only a few attended. Moreover, none showed any eagerness to uphold and vindicate that fine principle which had induced their ancestors to make a united stand against national danger.* Born in circumstances of comparative affluence, and brought up in an atmosphere of mutual hostility and aggression, the Sikh chieftains of Ranjit Singh's days had lost all sense of common brotherhood. On the contrary, they had imbibed personal ambitions and selfish aims which did not allow them to act together. This was one chief cause of the decay of the *Gurumata*. Another, of more fundamental importance, may be found in the backward condition of the mass of the people. An institution based on such a mixture of political independence and federal subordination, as was implied in the existence of the *Guru-*

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when they could not be resisted. Moreover, whether the multiplication of restraints on the freedom of a social organism whose expansive force was not yet exhausted would have been conducive to its best interests and those of its ruler, is highly doubtful.

**See* Murray's Ranjit Singh edited by H. T. Prinsep, pp. 57-58; and Malcolm's Sketch, pp. 106-107.

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mata, required for its successful working a state of society of far greater corporate consciousness and intelligence than that of the Sikhs. Thus the *Gurumata*, from its very composition, was unsuitable for the purposes of an extensive dominion, as it was also incompatible with the growing power of an inherent genius or one superior mind. Hence it naturally gave way to a single temporal authority.

Under Ranjit Singh's personal despotism, the Panjab was governed in a manner which generally suited the existing state of society. Village life throughout the country was little interfered with. Except for the assessment and collection of land revenue, or for the purpose of military recruitment, the inhabitants of the villages seldom came in contact with the government. Its local affairs were mostly subject to the *Panchayets*, which provided tolerably effective and sufficient agencies for safeguarding the collective rights and responsibilities of the rural population. Thus Ranjit's government, however despotic, was not meddlesome enough to prevent the development of independent character. It also allowed ample scope for the realisation of individual ambition in either military or civil government. One great secret of the popularity of the Maharaja's rule was that it kept open to the humblest citizen the possibilities of acquiring position and wealth. This is borne out by the fact that among the foremost dignitaries of the Court of Lahore, there were many who owed their wealth and greatness to their own personal qualities, rather than to any hereditary recommendations. Another great merit of Ranjit's authority was that he never based it upon his own inherent superiority, or any Divine Right Theory of Supremacy. He never arrogated to himself any high sounding titles, or claimed supernatural powers. On the contrary, he al-

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readily admitted. What I wish, however, to emphasize is that when compared with the conditions which preceeded the establishment of the authority of the Sikh ruler over the Land of the Five Rivers and with those which prevailed in his own time among other neighbouring states, his rule was a distinct improvement over the old order.

Ranjit Singh, however, cannot be said to have bestowed any constitution on the Panjab. If he had any theory of government, it was to reduce all his subjects to the same political level. This was the one fixed aim of his internal policy, and to carry it out successfully, he laboured hard throughout his life. For this purpose he reduced every Sikh chieftain to a subordinate semi-feudal position. From his own predecessors,—the innumerable petty despots who had governed the Panjab after the decline of the Mughals, he had inherited no elaborate system or settled principle of government. These chieftains, apart from their earlier efforts for their own liberation from Moslem overlordship, had remained continually engaged for several decades either in resisting foreign invasions or in carrying on a mutually destructive warfare. Such an atmosphere was obviously little conducive to the growth of definite rules, or the development of any checks or limitations on the absolute power of the ruler. The Panjab had consequently degenerated into a state of anarchy and confusion. It was at such a time that Ranjit established his authority over the province. Then he was occupied for over thirty years with military campaigns and the consolidation of his kingdom. But apart from these circumstances, which were obviously unfavourable to the growth of any elaborate governmental machinery, Ranjit's work as an administrator was necessarily circumscribed by his lack of either intellectual equipment or originality of mind. Hence it was but natural that he

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ways justified his aggressive designs by showing that they were directed to the glory of the *Khalsa, i.e.,* the whole Sikh Church. The people, who had seen or heard of the *Gurumata* as the symbol of the unity of the Sikhs against the foes of their religion, found sufficient consolation for its disappearance in the fact that it was replaced by the power of a monarch who himself represented a living embodiment of the same high purpose. It is, indeed, by recalling to our minds the political environment in which the religion of the Sikhs had developed, and the fact that its transformation into a militarist creed was a counterblast against Mohammedan bigotry, that we fully realise the real cause of the popularity of Ranjit's government. Under the Maharaja, the Sikhs had achieved such brilliant triumphs as they had never attained before. City after city had acknowledged their authority until an extensive kingdom had been created, whose formidable military resources now commanded awe and reverence alike from neighbouring states and distant rulers.

From the point of view of his own subjects, the despotism of Ranjit Singh on the whole may be described as benevolent. He was no alien ruler in point of race and religion. Under his authority the economic resources of the State, though unevenly distributed, were wholly utilised within the kingdom. No part of it was drained away from the country. Through the blessings of his rule, the people of the Panjab evolved a degree of law and order, and entered upon a period of internal peace and prosperity which they had not enjoyed for several generations. That the security of life and property was much less in the days of the Maharaja than it is to-day, when the means of communication are entirely revolutionised by the introduction of railways and telegraphs, may be

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should confine his efforts in the field of legislation to the task of restoration and the revival of a workable system of administration rather than aim at innovations and the introduction of new laws.*

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*The only administrative plan which could serve as a precedent for the organisation of civil departments was that of the Mughals. There is, indeed, a close resemblance between their system of government and that of Ranjit Singh. In all essential features, such as the organisation of revenue and customs departments, the delegation of administrative and judicial functions to one and the same official, and the assignments of *Jagirs* to the nobility in return for fixed quotas of men and money, there was a close resemblance. Finally, the territorial divisions of the Panjab, the names of various officials and agents of government, and last but not least, the language of the Court of the Mughals, we find reproduced under the Sikh rule.

The Maharaja did not avail himself of European intelligence and experience as much in civil administration as in the organisation of the army. A very limited number of Europeans were employed in a civil capacity, the most prominent among them being Drs. Honigberger and Harlan and General Avitabile. Of these three, the last mentioned introduced some improvements in the district of Wazirabad. Still no radical changes were made even by him. We might have thought that a despotic ruler who trusted Europeans in the management of his army, would have not felt any scruples in employing their talents in civil reconstruction. Moreover, we know that Ranjit made offers of such employment to both Baron Huegel and Victor Jacquemont. Further, his correspondence with Captain Wade in 1837, in which Ranjit asked the latter to provide him with a copy of the Parliamentary constitution of England, shows that he was not entirely averse to the westernising of some of his institutions. Any attempt, however, at reform by foreigners would certainly have been unpopular with the people, and perhaps he himself drew back from the interference of such officials in the sphere of internil politics.

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CHAPTER V.

Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh.

In the following pages, I propose to describe the views, and sketch the character of the leading personalities at the Court of Lahore. The selection is made according to their representative position, as well as their individual importance. We may divide them into six groups as follows: (*a*) *Dogra Rajputs;* (*b*) *Sikhs;* (*c*) *Hindus;* (*d*) *Brahmins;* (*e*) *Mohammedans;* and (*f*) *Europeans.*

A.—Dogra Rajputs.

The *Dogras* were represented at the Court by three brothers, Rajas Dhian Singh, Golab Singh, and Sochet Singh, and the son of the first, Raja Hira Singh. The early careers of these brothers is too well-known to need detailed repetition. They entered Ranjit's service in 1811 as mere troopers, were introduced to the Prince for the first time by Misar Dewan Chand and attracted the latter's particular notice.* Within the next three years they were raised to the rank of *Ghorcharas.* The various factors contributing to the rapid increase of their influence with their master may be thus summarised. First, their fine figures, soldierly bearing, and handsome looks specially appealed to the imagination of Ranjit. Secondly, they had the support of Misar Dewan Chand, the most

*For details, *see* Smyth's Reigning Family of Lahore, pp. 219—263; and 'Ibrat Nama, ff. 365-366.

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prominent general at the time. Lastly, the brothers themselves were alert men who carefully watched their own interests and ascended the political ladder with caution and sobriety. Their influence with Ranjit steadily increased until Golab was granted a *Jagir* near Bhimber, while Dhian succeeded *Jam'adar* Khushal Singh in charge of the *Deorhi* of the palace. Golab henceforth usually remained on the family estate at Jamun, but the two others at the capital. In 1818 all the three were created *Rajas* and were awarded increased territory.* Dhian Singh was ultimately made *Raja Kalan Bahadur*† (the great *Raja*),—a title signifying the first minister in the State.

Raja Dhian Singh.

In appearance, the Raja is described as "a noble specimen of the human race, rather above the usual height of natives, with a quick and intelligent eye, high handsome forehead and aquiline features, dressed in a magnificent helmet and cuirass of polished steel, embossed with gold—a present of King Louis Philippe of France—a model of manly beauty and intelligence."‡ His various political duties, and the manner in which he discharged them, are thus described: "The Raja is the channel of conveying the petitions and representations of the people and carrying the Maharaja's orders regard-

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*Dhian Singh was made Raja of Jamun, Golab Singh of Akhnur, Sochet of Ramnagar, and later on Hira Singh of Jasrota.

†Bute Shah calls this title *Raja-i-Rajgan* (the Raja of all the Rajas) and so does the author of the 'Ibrat Nama. Sohan Lal and the author of Sher Singh Nama use the words *Raja Kalan* (great Raja).

‡*See* Osborne's The Court and Camp of Runjeet Singh, pp. 74-75.

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ing them into effect. At night, when he returns from the Court, he is in the habit of holding a Darbar in his own house which the officers of the army and some of the Sirdars also attend, to facilitate the transaction of their business with His Highness. The reports of such of the troops as may be present at the Court are likewise received at the same time and the necessary orders issued regarding them without consulting the Maharaja, excepting in cases of an important nature ..... The Maharaja places great confidence in the Raja's good sense and fidelity and considers him one of his sincerest friends. He entrusts him with the investigation and settlement of affairs of importance both in the financial and judicial departments of state; and the mildness and propriety of conduct with which he transacts his business is not among the least of his good qualities and claims to approbation, since he has held this high office at the Court of Lahore."* The Raja held the command of two battalions of infantry and a corps of artillery besides a large feudal force of

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**Vide* The Sikhs and Afghans by Shahamat Ali, pp. 26-27. Osborne writes about Dhian Singh thus: "He is about thirty years of age and is very high and by all accounts justly so in his master's confidence. He is active, clever and intelligent, possessed of great influence over the Sikh people, and in all probability will be one, and not the least powerful or deserving candidate for the throne of the Punjab on Runjeet's decease. With enormous wealth and property, and a large tract of country, which he rules with mildness and justice, he presents a singular instance of a favourite and a man in power, whose talents and virtues are more appreciated than his power and influence are envied. Gentlemanlike, manly, and unassuming in his manners, he is still cold and repulsive to Europeans, whom he both fears and hates with more than common rancour, and against whom he loses no opportunity of exerting *his influence with the Maharaja.*" *Vide* The Court and Camp of Runjeet Singh, pp. 74-75.

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irregulars which he and his brothers raised, equipped and trained entirely from their own territories.

The Raja seems, by all accounts, to have entertained a deep distrust of the Company's Government. His attitude towards the accredited representatives of that power was always full of reserve. On several occasions he is said to have tried to poison the mind of his master and to have taken pains to show that the words and professions of the English were unreliable. Many statements to this effect occur in the works of European writers. Indian chroniclers also give the same impression.* It may, however, be remarked that the Raja was not alone in entertaining such apprehensions. They were shared more or less by the Sikh ruler himself and several other courtiers; so that there was no fundamental difference between the attitude of the Maharaja and his minister.† Both recognised the danger of conflict with the British and were anxious to seek remedies to avoid that danger. The only difference that might be said to exist between them was regarding the most opportune time. A clash of arms was thought to be inevitable. Ranjit accordingly set himself to the task of military preparations. Dhian, on the other hand, thought the remedy lay in speedy action.

As regards his policy in the internal affairs of the Panjab, he is said to have been actuated by purely selfish motives. This observation, though true to a considerable extent, is explained by his circumstances. He had no racial or religious affinity with the governing classes of the Sikhs. He was neither a genuine Sikh nor an in-

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*See, for example, Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, f. 403.

†See the Calcutta Review of August, 1844. Dhian is described by the writer as "the man in the Punjab much like his master."

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bold, energetic and a wise and prudent commander." Most of the year he remained away from the capital and busied himself with the management of the districts granted as *Jagirs* or farmed out to the brothers by the ruler. His administration, however, was extremely oppressive and tyrannical. Gardner, who served under him for several years, characterised his rule as nothing short of "a ruthless barbarity and a system of terror." In the light of other accounts, his expressions are not too strong. His own influence with Ranjit, and more than this, the influence of his brother, allowed Golab to practise all kinds of severities on the people under his charge. When summoned to Lahore to render accounts or to offer explanations, he always presented himself before his Sovereign in all humility and submission.* This, together with the ready payments of large sums of money always saved him from disgrace.

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*Golab was one of the cleverest diplomatists of his time. In the reign of the Maharaja, and even after his death, he purposely avoided prominence and contented himself with the more modest and safer task of acting as the wire-puller of his party. Though away from Lahore for the greater part of the year, he kept himself well-informed of the rapidly shifting political situation. This singular caution enabled him to survive the revolution which swept away most of the nobility, including his brothers, son, and nephew. With a unique adroitness, he also managed to keep out of the First Sikh War at the end of which he was found to be the only individual in the Panjab whose diplomacy was thought capable of saving the Sikhs from ruin. He went to make peace with the British with an almost final authority; and by his skilful negotiations he brought back peace to the Sikhs and a large dominion for himself.

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habitant of the country in which they lived. He had *come to Lahore* as a mere adventurer, and represented no class among the indegenous population of the Panjab. History has many such instances, in which zeal was due more to selfish interests than to the higher principles of patriotism. Dhian's conduct, specially during the situation which arose after Ranjit's death, showed him a Macchiavelli,—one who sought his end regardless of the means. This may be readily admitted. What impresses me equally, however, is that throughout the reign of the Maharaja he never betrayed or neglected the interests of his sovereign. On the contrary, his constant and consistent devotion won him the most trusted position in the ruler's councils.*

Raja Golab Singh.

Golab Singh was a soldier as well as a politician. He had more of the roughness of the soldier than his brothers. Osborne describes him as "an able, active,

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*Dhian Singh fully grasped the unstable nature of Ranjit's authority over the Punjab. Hence though he remained faithful to the Sikh ruler during the latter's lifetime, yet he had all along been preparing to meet the coming storm. The weakness and imbecility of Ranjit's heir-apparent and the mutual rivalries of the different parties prompted him to play the hazardous game of political ascendancy. The revolt, however, was a failure. That he did not feel the same devotion towards the sons of Ranjit as he did to the Maharaja himself appears to me to be the real charge against him. Nevertheless, even in this matter there were several extenuating circumstances, arising from the general incapacity of Ranjit's successors to govern the country, the pro-British sympathies and leanings of some of them, and the doubtful parentage of others.

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with strings of pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds and other expensive stones. To most of those who saw him he seemed a clever and intelligent youth. Imitation of European manners and forms of etiquette was, curiously enough, one of his habits; and it is said that he learnt a little of the English language. In this attitude he was, indeed, a remarkable contrast with his father. From the ease and comfort in which he was brought up, one would have thought him incapable of much serious effort. In the days of the revolution, however, his abilities were unexpectedly developed. Soon after his father's death, he played an active part in maintaining the *Dogra* ascendancy over the Panjab. With rare courage and resourcefulness, he raised himself to the leadership of his party and by a lavish expenditure, he established a military dictatorship. His power, however, was based on force and money and he had no real hold on the minds of the people; nor did he possess constructive talents. His short-sightedness and pertinacity led him to disregard the wishes of the Sikhs by his selection of the vain and worthless Pandit Jalla as his adviser. This proved to be the immediate cause of his own downfall and death together with his overbearing counsellor.*

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*The *Dogra* chiefs had the greatest share in the governance of the Panjab. Besides the innumerable functions they had to perform in the Court and in the government departments at Lahore, they were often employed in diplomatic service and military expeditions. Their territorial possessions stretched far and wide and formed one compact division of the country over which they exercised most of the functions of an independent sovereign. In brief they ruled a state within the State of the Panjab. Herein lay a great danger to the stability of the Sikh Kingdom,—a danger which, as had been anticipated by most observers, soon brought it to ruin after the death of the great Maharaja.

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Raja Hira Singh.

Hira Singh, the son of Dhian Singh, was the favourite of the Maharaja's courtiers. While yet an infant, he attracted the notice of Ranjit who in later years grew so fond of him that he seldom suffered him out of his sight. Besides the high title of *Raja,* many were the favours bestowed upon him. At the royal Court he became the cynosure of all eyes. In every respect he was treated by the Maharaja on the footing of a son; and with the exception of Kharak Singh and Sher Singh, he was the only person at Court provided with a chair in the royal presence. Osborne* thus describes his imposing position in the *Darbar*: "He is the only individual who ever ventures to address Ranjit Singh without being spoken to; and while his father stands behind his master's chair and never presumes to answer him with unclasped hands, this boy does not hestitate to interrupt and contradict him in the rudest manner. One instance of the way in which he presumed upon the kindness of Runjeet was the subject of public conversation at Adeenanugur upon our arrival. The yearly tribute from Kashmir had arrived and, as usual, was opened and spread on the floor in the Darbar for the inspection of the Maharaja. It consisted of shawls, arms, jewels, etc., to the amount of upwards of thirty thousand pounds, young Heera Singh, without the slightest hesitation, addressed Runjeet and said: 'Your Highness cannot require all these things, let me have them.' The answer was: 'You may take them.'"

In appearance Hira Singh was handsome but effeminate. He was usually dressed in most expensive attire which by all accounts was covered from waist upwards

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***Vide* The Court and Camp of Runjeet Sing, pp. 81—83.**

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Raja Sochet Singh.

Sochet was the youngest and the most handsome of the three brothers. He was also one of the most polished courtiers of Lahore. He held the command of a large force of the *Ghorcharas*. In political and administrative talents, however, he was far inferior to his brothers. Ranjit accordingly seldom entrusted him with the duties of civil administration, but principally employed his services in the more congenial atmosphere of the Court.* During the anarchy that followed Ranjit's death, Sochet displayed unusual activity and made a sudden bid for power against his nephew Hira Singh, at whose hands he met a violent death.

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*The following is an interesting account of the semi-military and semi-court costume in which he was dressed on state occasions: "His dress was magnificent; a helmet or skull-cap of bright polished steel inlaid with gold, and deep fringe of chain-mail of the same material reaching to his shoulders; three plumes of black heron's feathers waiving on his crest, and three shawls of lilac, white and scarlet twisted very round and tight, interlaced with one another and gathered round the edge of the helmet; a chelenk of rubies and diamonds on his forehead and back; breast-plates and gauntlets of steel, richly embossed with gold and precious stones, worn over a rich, thick quilted gasket of bright yellow silk with magnificent armlets of rubies and diamonds on each arm; a shield of polished hide of the rhinocerous, embossed and ornamented with gold; a jewelled sabre and a matchlock, with his long and glossy black beard and moustache, he looked the very beau-ideal of a Sikh chief." *Vide* Osborne's The Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh, pp. 62—64. Gardner describes Sochet as "a splendid swordsman and the very pink of chivalry." *Vide* Memoirs of Colonel A. Gardner, p. 254.

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of Sikh chieftains. He was, moreover, distinguished for his mechanical ingenuity.

Though the honesty and integrity of Lehna Singh are indisputable, yet his politics were timid and hesitating. He seems to have lacked personal initiative in politisal matters and could not make up his mind to act decisively in the stormy days preceding the First Sikh War. He avoided political responsibility of any kind and escaped to Benares on the pretence of a pilgrimage.*

Sindhanwalia Chiefs.

Another family of note in the Panjab was that of the Sindhanwalias. They formed, in fact, a branch of the same *Jat* house to which Ranjit Singh himself belonged. Budh Singh was the first to enter Ranjit's service. He rose to the command of a division of the irregulars, and in that capacity distinguished himself in several campaigns, notably against Syed Ahmed. After he died in 1827, his position was taken by his two brothers, 'Atar Singh and Lehna Singh who showed ability in the frontier campaigns in or about 1837. The total annual income to the family from the various *Jagirs* granted to them by the Maharaja is said to have amounted to nearly a million rupees.†

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*For a more detailed account of Lehna Singh, *see* the Calcutta Review of August, 1844, and the Punjab Chiefs by Sir Lepel Griffin.

†In addition to their *Jagirs*, the Sindhanwalias received several pompous and high-sounding titles such as *Ujal Didar* (bright countenance), *Nirmal Budh* (keen intelligence), *Sirdar-i-Bawaqar* (Sirdar of dignity), *Qaisar-ul-Iqtadar* (chief of exalted position), *Sarwar-i-Giroh-i-Namdar* (leader of a renowned force), *'Aala Taba* (of noble disposition), *Shuj'a-ul-Daula* (the brave among the nobles), and *Shamsher-i-Jang Bahadur* (the sword of the State).

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B.—Sikhs.

The Sikh courtiers represented the landed aristocracy of the Panjab. Some of them descended from the chiefs of the old *Misls*, while others had newly risen to eminence. The Sikh Sirdars served mostly in the army and were seldom employed in administrative posts. They were, however, often attached to diplomatic missions for which they were eminently fitted on account of their twofold prestige as military officers and landed proprietors. In the following paragraphs, I will give a short sketch of some prominent members of this class.

*Lehna Singh Majithia.**

Lehna Singh occupied several important positions at the Court of Lahore. Of his civil duties, the most important was the administration of the districts around Amritsar. His government has been described by many as mild and benevolent. On account of the singular integrity of his character, he was also employed diplomatically. In a military capacity, he served the Ordnance department and controlled the foundaries at Lahore and Amritsar. He cast 'tolerably good' guns, several of which were used in the battles of Ferozshah and Aliwal.

Lehna Singh was a man of considerable ability and literary accomplishments. He possessed a knowledge of mathematics and astronomy and spoke several languages. In this respect he was an exception to the usual type

*The first representative of the Majithia family to enter Ranjit's service was Desa Singh the father of Lehna Singh. For several years he served as the governor of Amritsar and the adjoining territory and also as a divisional commander in the army taking part in the final campaign against Multan. He was the recipient of several titles and *Jagirs*. He died in 1832.

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These Sirdars showed their hand in the days of anarchy following the death of Ranjit Singh. They represented the chief opposition against the *Dogras*. It was by their treachery that Maharaja Sher Singh, Raja Dhian Singh and Prince Partab Singh lost their lives. A detailed study of these events is beyond the scope of this work. It may, however, be remarked that the Sindhanwalias were actuated by no better motives than the *Dogras;* and it is a mistake to imagine with many historians that the former represented the popular cause.* Both were, in fact, selfish and unscrupulous in their conduct.

Sham Singh Atariwala.†

Sham Singh entered Ranjit's employment in 1803 but first gained prominence during the final siege of Multan where he commanded a battery. He was one of the first persons to enter the fort, receiving a severe wound on his shoulder. Next he took part in the final expedition against Kashmir. In 1834 he fought several

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*See Sher Singh Nama by Mohammed Naqi, f. 39.

†The first representative of the Atariwala family to serve under Ranjit Singh was Nihal Singh. It is said that among the earlier chieftains none was a greater favourite with his master than this Sirdar. There was, moreover, hardly an expedition between 1803 and 1817 in which this courageous leader of men did not take part. An interesting account of the circumstances in which Nihal Singh died in the latter year is mentioned by Griffin. Ranjit fell ill in that year. Grave apprehensions for his life were entertained by his devoted followers. Nihal, according to a popular superstition, walked round the bed of his master, invoking the illness on himself. Curiously enough the Maharaja recovered but the Sirdar died soon after. This incident reminds us of Baber walking round the death bed of his son.

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battles against the frontier tribesmen; and in one of these had a narrow escape, his horse being shot under him. Three years later, his daughter was married to Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh, the grandson of the Maharaja. The wedding cost the Sirdar nearly a million and a half of rupees.*

After the death of Ranjit, Sham Singh remained in Peshawar for some time and then retired to his native village Atari. He thus avoided any part in the intrigues of Lahore.†

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*For a full account of the marriage, *see* the description given by Lord Auckland, on the authority of Sir Henry Fane in a secret letter to Sir J. Hobhouse, dated 9th April, 1837: Lord Auckland's Private Letters, vol. II (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.).

†After the defeat of the Sikh force at Ferozshah, Sham Singh was called to Lahore by Rani Jindan and was exhorted to fight the battles of his country. He at first declined to associate himself with the fatal policy of the *Khalsa;* but when he saw that his words were being taken as a show of cowardice, he decided to proceed instantly to the front. He, however, pledged himself never to return alive if defeated. It is popularly believed that on the night preceding the battle of Sobraon, he was urged by Tej Sing, the Sikh Commander-in-Chief, to accompany him in flight, but this proposal he rejected with scorn, taking up the *Granth* and once again renewing his vow never to quit the field alive unless victorious. On the day of the battle of Sobraon, he dressed himself in white, and, having mounted his white charger, exhorted his followers to die rather than surrender. Then he rode to the scene of action. During the first part of the battle he was present everywhere, re-joining the broken ranks of his soldiers and urging them on to fight like patriots. It was not till he realised that the battle was lost that he spurred onward against the 50th British Regiment brandishing his glittering sword and calling on a few chosen followers to join him in the charge. Only about fifty obeyed the call and were flung back in the river by the

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Hari Singh Nalwa.

Among later generals of Ranjit, none is more celebrated than Hari Singh. He too was born in Gujranwala and his career was largely contemporaneous with that of his master. He took part in almost all the famous campaigns and was frequently wounded. In 1830 he was appointed governor of Kashmir, but as a civil administrator he does not seem to have proved a success.* Later on, he was sent to Peshawar in charge of a division of the army and there remained fighting against the tribesmen until 1834. In the latter year he entered the city of

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overwhelming force arrayed against him. Sham Singh fell back from his horse but not till he had wrought deadly havoc in the ranks of his opponents and had received seven balls in his own body. After the battle was over, his servants swam across the river and begged permission for his remains. The permission was granted by the British authorities and the corpse of the old Sirdar, conspicuous by his white dress and grey beard, was discovered where the dead lay thickest. His body was taken to Atari, arriving on the third day. His wife, however, who knew his determination not to survive defeat, on hearing the news of his death, had already burnt herself along with his marriage dress. Thus fell one of the proudest Sikh chiefs whose name is still remembered by his countrymen among their greatest heroes.

*Hari Singh's *regime* in Kashmir has been generally characterised as oppressive. The Indian chroniclers take the same view. *See,* for example, Twarikh-i-Mulk-i-Hazara, f. 42. Among the European authorities, however, there is one important exception. Captain Wade writes: "He was formerly entrusted with the government of Kashmir which he held for two years proving himself one of the most able and popular Sikh governors which the Sikhs have had." Wade to Governor-General, 13th March 1831; Bengal Political Consultations, Range 126, vol. 25. (India Office MSS. Records.)

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Peshawar and annexed it to the Panjab. He was now given entire civil and military control of the trans-Indus districts. The manner in which he governed them has already been described in a previous chapter. It may, however, be remarked that his policy and methods were the cause of intense dread of the Sirdar's name so that the Afghan mothers still terrify naughty children thereby. In 1837 he caused a fort to be built at Jamrud, but soon after was killed in a battle with the Afghans near that place.*

C.—Hindus (non-Sikh).

Dewan Mohkam Chand.

Mohkam Chand was one of the earlier members of the Court of Ranjit Singh, and he was associated with most of his military activities from 1805 to 1814. During

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*Of the character of the Nalwa Sirdar, Huegel says: "His manner of conversation is very frank and affable. He had cloven the head of a tiger and saved himself from its clutches. He possessed some beautiful drawings and gave me his portrait in the act of killing the beast. During his diplomatic mission to Simla, his conversation with most people consisted of a real exchange of ideas and references. His questions proved him to have enough of thought and reason. He is well informed about the statistics of many of the European states and on the policy of the East India Company. And what is more rare among the Sikhs, he can both read and write the Persian language. He puts a variety of questions taken down on a paper:" Travels, pp. 254-255.

Many other Sikh Sirdars played a more or less prominent part in civil government—more notably in military administration. The names of some may be mentioned: Dhanna Singh Malwai, Jiwand Singh Mokal, Fateh Singh Kalianwala, Gurmukh Singh Lamba, Dal Singh Naherna, Golab Singh, Dhaunkal Singh, and last but not least, Sirdar Fateh Singh Ahluwalia.

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these years he was the chief military adviser of the Maharaja. For some time he also served as governor of the Jalandhar Doab. In 1812 the title of *Dewan* was conferred on him. He commanded the first expedition to Kashmir in 1812-13, and in the latter year conquered the fort of Attock, dying a year later.

He was succeeded in his *Jagirs* by his eldest son Moti Ram who was confirmed in the title of *Dewan* and the governorship of the Jalandhar Doab. Moti Ram afterwards served as governor of Kashmir for seven years, from 1819 to 1826. He had to contend with the chronic poverty of the country, aggravated by unfortunate visitations of nature in the form of famine and pestilence. Besides this, the entire system of administration had become disorganised under the oppressive rule of the Afghans. Moti Ram, who possessed considerable talents, might have succeeded in improving the condition of the country, had he been granted fuller liberty of action. But there was the hostile faction of the *Dogras* at Lahore, who always thwarted his schemes with the Maharaja. In 1827, he was recalled and was soon afterwards sent on a diplomatic mission to the Governor General. In 1830 again he was appointed a member of the mission which waited upon Lord William Bentick at Simla.*

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*Two sons of Moti Ram, namely Ram Dial and Kirpa Ram, served the Sikh government. The former rose to the rank of a divisional commander at the youthful age of 21 but his career was cut short by death in battle. Kirpa Ram, on the other hand, followed in the footsteps of his father both as governor of Jalandhar and Kashmir. He laid out the *Ram Bagh* of Amritsar. As already stated, the family of the Dewans greatly suffered in the estimation of their master through the enmity of Raja Dhian Singh and were made to pay fines and to suffer sequestration of property and even imprisonment. At last, both the father and the

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Dewan Bhawani Dass.

The ancestors of Bhawani Dass, the first finance minister of Ranjit Singh, had occupied responsible posts in the financial and revenue departments at Kabul. His father Dewan Thakar Dass had served Ahmed Shah Abdali as a councillor and had been entrusted with one of the Royal Seals. Bhawani Dass himself worked for a time under Shah Shuj'a as a revenue official. In 1808 he exchanged the Kabul service for that of Ranjit Singh. As has been stated in the previous chapter, he established a regular treasury and organised different departments to deal with various items of income and expenditure. From 1810 to 1818, moreover, he was often sent to newly conquered places to re-organise the work of revenue assessment and collection. The military services of the Dewan were also considerable. He took part in the siege of Multan and in the Peshawar and Usafzai campaigns. For a time he lost the favour of the master on account of his differences with Misar Beli Ram by whom he was accused of misappropriation of funds. Whether the charge was true or not, is not definitely known. It was, however, readily believed by the Sikh ruler who, in the heat of passion, struck the *Dewan* in the open *Darbar* with his sheathed sword and ordered him to quit the capital. Ranjit, however, soon found out that the *Dewan* was indispensable for the successful working of his office. He accordingly re-appointed him

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son retired in disgust to Benares where they died in 1839 and 42, respectively. *See* Bute Shah's manuscript account and 'Ibrat Nama, ff. 368—75. Lastly, *see* Wade to Governor-General, 10th April 1827; Bengal Political Consultations, Range 125, vol. 23 (India Office MSS. Records).

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to his former position which he occupied till his death in 1834.*

Dewan Karam Chand.

The forefathers of Karam Chand had held administrative positions at the Court of the Mughals. Karam Chand was first employed by Bishen Singh, one of the Maharaja's confidential agents. After that Sirdar's death, he entered Ranjit's service. His name is associated with the drawing up of the articles of the Anglo-Sikh Treaty of 1809. For a time he was placed at the head of the chief revenue office but when Bhawani Dass arrived in Lahore, Karam Chand worked as his subordinate. For the greater part of his career, he remained attached to the revenue department in the details of which he was an acknowledged expert. He died in 1836.

D.—Brahmins.

Jam'adar Khushal Singh.

One of the most conspicuous figures at the Court of Lahore was Khushal Singh. He was the son of a *Brahmin* shopkeeper of Meerut; and came to Lahore at the early age of seventeen in quest of a livelihood. He enlisted in a newly raised regiment on five rupees a month and soon after contrived through the influence of some *Deorhiwalas* (gatekeepers) of the palace to enter the per-

*A brother of Bhawani Dass named Dewan Devi Dass who had served the rulers of Kabul, joined the Sikhs in 1809 and took his share in the task of revenue and financial organisation. Devi Dass has been described as a man of real ability and greater integrity than his brother. He did not, however, become so prominent in the councils of his master owing to a gentle and retiring disposition. He died in 1830.

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sonal military staff of the Maharaja. Somewhat varying accounts are given of the manner in which he himself was raised to be the Chief of the *Deorhi*. All authorities, however, agree that the main factor in securing that responsible position, was his personal appearance. He was baptised as a Sikh and received several substantial *Jagirs*.

Khushal was also employed on military duties. In 1816 he was sent to annex the Ramgarhia estates. Previous to that, he had accompanied the Maharaja to Kashmir in 1814. In the conquest of Multan, the *Jam'adar* commanded a separate division. But he quarrelled with Misar Dewan Chand over the question of the booty. This fact, coupled with the refusal of his brother Ram Lal to receive the *Pahul* (Sikh baptism), cost him his master's favour. The *Deorhi* was given over to Dhian Singh. The *Jam'adar*, however, was reconciled to the Maharaja,* though not entrusted with the *Deorhi* again. The honorary title of *Jam'adar* was now permanently granted to him. He also retained his *Jagirs* and was admitted into the Court as one of its chief dignitaries. Later on he took part in the campaigns against Mankera, Leiah, the Derajat, and Peshawar. In 1832, he was appointed governor of Kashmir, but his regime there proved an utter failure and he was recalled.†

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*This was due to the fact that his brother now agreed to take the *Pahul*.

†The *Jam'adar* did not possess much talent. His influence at the Court was merely due to the favour in which he was held by Ranjit for past services. But the Maharaja seems to have realised the inferiority of his capacity. Hence, although he allowed him a prominent place on ceremonial occasions, he seldom employed him on any responsible and independent post. The only exception was his appointment to the governorship of Kashmir

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Tej Singh.

Tej Singh, a brother of *Jam'adar* Khushal Singh, was employed in the Sikh government in 1811. Five years later he accepted the *Pahul* and became a Sikh. Then he was raised to be a divisional commander in the army. In 1819, he accompanied Misar Dewan Chand to Kashmir and two years after took part in several minor engagements on the frontier. He was also present at the Tehri campaign. In 1838, he was sent to Hazara to construct a fort there and the following year to Peshawar to assist the British in the Afghanistan expedition. Towards the end of Ranjit's reign, Tej Singh was in command of a large force of regular infantry.*

Dewan Ganga Ram.

Ganga Ram came from a Kashmiri Brahmin family which had emigrated to Dehli in the middle of the 18th century. His father had held a lucrative post under the

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which proved a failure. His other duties at the *Darbar* were such as required for their performance routine and regularity rather than originality or initiative. His part in the post-Ranjit period was comparatively insignificant.

*In 1831 he commanded twenty-two regular battalions. *See* Wade to Governor-General 31st May, 1831; Bengal Political Consultations, (India Office MSS. Records). Tej Singh, though one of the influential officers of Ranjit Singh, owes much of his notoriety to his share in the political intrigues of the years of anarchy preceding the First Sikh War. His conduct in that war itself has called forth much comment from historians. I cannot give my opinion in the matter as I have not examined the material concerning the events of those years. It is admitted, however, by all authorities that he did not show any courage for battle but behaved in a weak and vascillating manner. He was created a *Raja* by the Council of Regency which was established to administrate the Panjab on behalf of the minor Prince Dalip Singh.

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Mughals. Ganga Ram was for a time in the service of the ruler of Gawalior. But in 1803 he retired to Dehli, remaining there until 1813. In the latter year Ranjit Singh summoned him to Lahore and appointed him head of the office for military accounts including the pay of the irregular troops. In 1821, the civil administration of Gujrat was entrusted to him. Soon after this, he organised the *Abkari* (excise) system. He died in 1826. Dewan Ganga Ram was one of the few men of great integrity and administrative ability alike at the Court of Lahore.*

Dewan Dina Nath.

Dina Nath, a relative of Ganga Ram, also belonged to a family who had served under the Mughals. He was at first employed at Dehli being called thence to Lahore by Ganga Ram in 1815. He attracted the particular notice of the Maharaja three years later, when he adjusted the confused accounts of Multan and prepared the list of those who were to be rewarded for distinction in the conquest of that province. In 1826, when Ganga Ram died, Dina Nath received the charge of the Royal

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*A son of Ganga Ram, namely Dewan Ajudhia Parshad, served under Ventura for many years as paymaster of the *Fauj-i-Khass*. He was entrusted with the entire administration of this brigade during Ventura's temporary absence in Europe and was warmly praised for his efficient management by the latter on his return. After Ranjit's death and the retirement of Ventura, Ajudhia Parshad himself held the command of the French brigade. Under the Council of Regency the *Dewan* was appointed commissioner along with Captain Abbot to draw the line of demarcation between the territories of Raja Golab Singh and the Panjab. A man of versatile intellcet, Ajudhia Parshad was from all accounts eminently successful in performing all kinds of duties, administrative, judicial, military and diplomatic.

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Seal and at the death of Bhawani Dass eight years after, succeeded him as the head of the Finance Department. Dina Nath was created a *Dewan* in 1838.*

Misar Dewan Chand.

One of the greatest generals of Ranjit Singh was Dewan Chand. Originally belonging to a petty shop-

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*"He (Dina Nath) is a shrewd, sensible man and possesses great statistical and financial information regarding every part of the Punjab. The whole business in that line is conducted through him and the Maharaja places great reliance in his abilities as a good accountant ..... In every corps and district Dina Nath has some of his own men employed and through them he acquires every information necessary to the discharge of his important office. He receives twenty rupees a day besides a Jagir of six thousand rupees and enjoys assignments on Kashmir, Multan, etc., besides many other fees and emoluments which he readily derives from his official station." *See* Shahamat Ali's The Sikhs and Afghans, pp. 35—37. The career of Dina Nath after Ranjit's death is interesting. During the two successive reigns, his office and authority remained unimpaired. He was one of the most trusted officials of Rani Jindan. He has been aptly styled as the Talleyrand of the Punjab and resembled that French statesman in several respects. Both survived all the stages of revolution in which kings rose and fell and most of the prominent statesmen perished. Again, the part played by Dina Nath in the Council of Regency may well be compared with that of Talleyrand in the Congress of Vienna. On account of his services in that Council he was created a *Raja*. The secret of Dina Nath's success lay in the fact that he studied closely the ever shifting political situation of his country like a true diplomatist or rather an opportunist and behaved himself accordingly. He had no scruples and no convictions. Hence he was always quick to side with the party that was for a time in the ascendant and to form fresh friendships the moment it went out of power. For this lack of consistency, however, Raja Dina Nath should not be judged too

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Misars Beli Ram and Rup Lal.

These two brothers held important positions at the Court of Lahore. They entered service in 1809. Beli Ram became prominent in 1816, after the death of his uncle Basti Ram. His duty was to superintend the treasury which included the regalia, robes, jewellery and state documents. Ranjit reposed great confidence in him and seldom called for the rendering of accounts. He remained in charge of this department till after the death of the Maharaja.

Misar Rup Lal's name is famous for his governorship of the Jalandhar *Doab* which came under his charge in 1832. He was a conscientious and popular administrator with an instinctive abhorence of oppression. His revenue measures have been unanimously described as efficient and progressive. His assessments were light and equitable and the work of collection methodical and honourable; the revenues of the *Doab* under him showing few unpaid accounts even in years of famine and scarcity. Rup Lal held this post till 1839 and his name is still remembered in the districts he governed, with respect. Among the local administrators of the Panjab, Rup Lal was second to none in ability, except perhaps, Dewan Sawan Mal;* while in honesty he was superior to him.†

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*For the administration of Dewan Sawan Mal, *see* Chapter III, Part B.

†A third brother Misar Sukh Raj, commanded several battalions of infantry and was created a general in 1836 together with seven other officers. *See* Umdut-ul-Twarikh, Daftar iii, p. 350.

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keeper's family of Gujranwala, he obtained employment *under a Nakai chieftain* Nodh Singh. This Sirdar is said to have once punished Dewan Chand so severely that Ranjit who came to know of it, took pity on the *young man and engaged him in his own service.** He was made a clerk in the artillery which at that time was under Ghaus Khan. When the latter died in 1814, his post was given to the Misar. During the final expedition against Multan, he was entrusted with the chief command of the invading force,† and success made him one of the great favourites at the Court. He was rewarded with the proud title of *Zafar Jang*‡ (conqueror in war) and also received a *Jagir*. The final conquest of Kashmir likewise was achieved under his command. Two years later he conquered the fort of Mankera. He died in 1825.

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harshly. His opportunism was that of a man who had to work against unscrupulous and ambitious leaders. Thus it was natural for him to set his own welfare above abstract principles. But to secure this he never betrayed the cause of his masters. On the other hand he laboured hard for the good of the State. "Among the Sikh barons who stood around the throne of the young Maharaja Dalip Singh, there was not one who honestly laboured for his country or who would have made the smallest sacrifice to save it. If Raja Dina Nath was not more honest than his contemporaries, he was at least more patriotic." *See* The Punjab Chiefs by Sir Lepel Griffin.

**Vide* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh by Sohan Lal, f. 347.

†The author of 'Ibrat Nama says (ff. 367-68) that his appointment, although he was not a Sikh, was made at the advice of the astrologers whose choice was verified on the *Granth* by means of the usual mode of throwing slips of paper on the volume. This method will be described in the next chapter.

‡'Ibrat Nama gives the titles of the Misar as *Khair Khah, Ba Safa, Zafar Jang, Fateh Nasib, Misar Dewan Chand Bahadur* (faithful, honourable, conqueror in war, a man of fortune, Misar Dewan Chand, the brave).

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Ranjit and his guests. In spite of his being a co-religionist of Amir Dost Mohammed, he was sent to his camp beyond Peshawar in 1835, when the Afghan army was about to attack. His diplomacy deceived the *Amir* so completely that the Afghans were nearly surrounded by the Sikhs and had to retire to Kabul.

In person, the *Faqir* was middle-sized and unattractive. Yet he was of a mild and engaging disposition; his dress was simple and unostentatious; and he preferred to appear meek and humble in the Court where all envied his high position. This was one great secret of his popularity among the people. He talked in a highly polished style, and frequently quoted from Persian and Arabic classics. His talk was interspersed with quaint anecdotes and pithy proverbs. A man of literary accomplishments, he loved composing poetry. His poems usually took the form of moral or metaphysical lyrics, often tinged with the spirit of Sufiism. According to Sir A. Burnes, he was well versed in astronomy, and had written a dissertation on theology and physics, treating both together after the manner of the ancient Greeks.

'Aziz-ul-din, indeed, was an anomaly in the Court of Ranjit Singh. He served the extirpators of his religion with unswerving honesty and faithfulness. Much against the tenets of his own religion, he assisted at their carousals and headed his letters with the sign of the Supreme Being whom they worshipped. Yet, notwithstanding all these things, he was a staunch believer in Islam. The way in which he maintained his prestige and influence throughout his career, in such a court and among such a people as that of the Sikhs, is indeed remarkable.*

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*Sir Henry Lawrence who saw him in his latter years, writes

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E.—Mohammedans.

Faqir 'Aziz-ul-Din.

The ancestors of 'Aziz-ul-din had originally migrated from Arabia but before entering the Panjab, they had for a time lived in Bokhara, and were therefore known as *Bokhari.* Moreover, the father of 'Aziz-ul-din had added the prefix *Faqir* to his name ever since he became the disciple of a saint. *Faqir* began to be used as a family title after their father's death, by 'Aziz-ul-din and his two brothers. At the time of the conquest of Lahore by Ranjit, they were residing in that city, 'Aziz being a pupil of Hakim Rai, a well-known physician of Lahore. Soon after, he was engaged by Ranjit as his medical adviser. His advice, however, was not limited to matters of health but, according to the Indian fashion of those days, was sought on all kinds of personal and private matters, and the intelligence and sagacity of 'Aziz induced the young chief to seek his opinion in political affairs likewise. In 1808, 'Aziz-ul-din was among those who dissuaded Ranjit from opposing the wishes of the Company's government conveyed by Metcalfe. Thenceforward he had a great influence in the Maharaja's councils, and together with Raja Dhian Singh, retained it to the last.

In 1810, 'Aziz was employed to annex the territory of Sahib Singh Bhangi, and he also took part in a few other minor campaigns, but was mainly employed in diplomatic service. He was sent to Bahawalpur in 1819, and was also a member of the complimentary mission that waited on Lord William Bentick at Simla in 1831. On occasions when Europeans visited the Court, he generally served as the channel of communication between

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Though serving in the State of Lahore until his *death in 1845*, 'Aziz-ul-din took no active part in the political intrigues that followed the death of his master and his influence began to decline when the people saw him leaning towards Raja Dhian Singh and his party, as if he believed that they alone could save the State from disruption. His last act was to urge the recall of the army which had marched towards the Satluj to invade the British possessions; and he died just before ruin had fallen on the Kingdom he had striven so long to build up.

Faqir Nur-ul-Din.

Nur-ul-din, the brother of 'Aziz-ul-din, entered the Maharaja's service in 1810, and was employed in the civil administration of Gujrat, Jalandhar, Sialkot, Daska, *and Wazirabad*, in succession. From 1818 onwards, he remained at the capital where his duties were of a mis-

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thus: "Aziz-ul-din is his master's mouthpiece and most ably he fills the office. He interprets a word or even a sign and throws Ranjit's meaning at once into beautiful language, embellishing sound sense with rich and appropriate imagery; in his own phraseology, 'he is a parrot of sweet sound.' The Fakir is now emerging into a yellow leaf and affects a dirty, slovenly and impoverished appearance; but he is rich and particularly influential from having got the Maharaja's ear. This has procured for him a patch of land in almost every *Jagir* in the Kingdom for, without him or Dhian Singh as intercessors, no one could be safe." Once again this writer says: "He is perhaps the only one of the Lahore courtiers who has not a blood feud to maintain or who has no enemies seeking his destruction. Consequently, in any outbreak, his life would be safer than that of any other man in Court." *Vide* Adventures of an Officer in the Punjab, vol. II, p. 235.

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F.—Europeans.

General Ventura.

About the early life and career of Ventura, little is *known. Neither the* place of his birth nor his nationality are established beyond dispute. Murray and Prinsep and other writers on their authority, are of opinion that he was an Italian. Wolf states that he was a Jew, and that his name was Reuben Ben-Toora. It is, however, certain that he had served as an officer under Napoleon and that he was one of those adventurers who came to India *via* Afghanistan after the Napoleonic Empire was crushed in Europe. We also know that he with Allard had served for some time in the armies of Persia, but, being dissatisfied with his lot, had turned his footsteps to India.*

He arrived in the Panjab with Allard in 1822. Both the officers were employed on the Maharaja becoming satisfied that they knew their trade and on their agreeing to eschew the eating of beef, the shaving of beards, and smoking. The last condition, however, was subsequently waived.

Ventura was asked to reform the infantry, a work which occupied him for several years. The changes, in the organisation of that branch of the military service subsequent to the year of his arrival in Lahore, were mostly due to his initiative and skill. He personally commanded the *Fauj-i-Khass,* which by means of his sustained and

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*These facts are now known to us from his application made to the Maharaja at the time of securing service. For a copy of the application, *see* Captain Murray to Mr. Middleton, 26th April, 1822; Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records).

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continuous efforts, became first in rank, discipline and equipment in the Sikh army. It served as a model on which the remainder of the infantry was constituted. Indeed his career in the Panjab is marked more by organising activity than by any great victories. Nevertheless, he took part in several important engagements, for example Nowshahra and Peshawar, and in a few minor campaigns across the Indus and towards Sindh. But as the Maharaja, in order to avoid jealousy among the Sirdars, usually gave the chief command of his expeditionary forces to the princes of royal blood, it is not possible to estimate exactly the contributions of Ventura to these victories.*

Ventura drew a monthly salary of Rs. 2,500, but his pay was often in arrears.† He was also granted a

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*In addition to the above-mentioned services, Ventura acted for a time as *Qazi* or governor of the city of Lahore, this appointment allowing him third place in the Royal Court. *Vide* Huegel's Travels, p. 317.

†A remarkable incident is mentioned by Bute Shah in his manuscript. This account is among the most interesting which have not yet been published showing the marvellous ascendancy of Ranjit Singh over all classes of his officials including the French officers. In 1825, Ranjit suffered financial straits owing to the outlay caused in previous years by the *Usafzai* campaigns. One of the methods by which he proposed to replenish his treasury was to ask the French officers to forego two months pay and that of the regiments under their command for the same period. Dewan Bhawani Dass was asked to secure their agreement. He, however, returned with earnest protests from the officers against the proposals. This greatly enraged the Maharaja who sent for them and when they arrived, completely lost his temper, and unsheathing his sword, hastily rose to attack them in the open *Darbar*. He was, however, restrained by other members of the

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cellaneous, though responsible character. He was in charge of the arsenal of the Lahore Fort and of the garrison stationed there. One key of the treasury was kept in his charge, two others being entrusted to Misar Beli Ram and Sirdar Hukma Singh respectively. At one time, he was appointed as a distributor of Ranjit's charitable funds to the poor. For several years he controlled the *Gulabkhana* (laboratories) at Lahore.* Lastly, he worked as supervisor of the magazines and public buildings.

In most points of character he was an exact counterpart of his elder brother. In adaptability, persuasive eloquence, polished conversation, refinement of manners, and finally in understanding political affairs, there was a close resemblance between the two. Nur-ul-din was employed on diplomatic service which he discharged with equal integrity.

Faqir Imam-ul-Din.

Another brother of 'Aziz-ul-din was Imam-ul-din. For many years he remained in charge of the fort of Gobindgarh which contained the greater part of the treasures of Lahore. This responsible post kept him away from the capital; nor was he much employed on active service. Like his brothers, he also acted sometimes as a channel of communication between the British visitors and Ranjit Singh, and in 1827 was deputed on a complimentary mission to Simla.

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*Sir Henry Lawrence calls him "Apothecary-General" and again as "Commissary-General and Head Store-Keeper." *See* Adventures of an Officer in the Punjab, vol. II, p. 234.

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Jagir, including two villages which he obtained as a gift for his daughter Victorine. Thus he was reasonably content with the bounties of his master. After the death of Ranjit Singh, he continued at his post for a time, but, realising dangers against personal safety in prolonging his stay, he retired to Europe and passed the remainder of his life at Paris in ease and comfort.

Court and escorted to his seat. Even from there he threatened them with a pistol and used extremely abusive language. After four or five days Ventura, on behalf of his colleagues as well as himself, approached the Maharaja and placing his forehead on the sovereign's feet, begged forgiveness. The Sikh ruler accepted the apology and renewed his assurances of future kindness. The original reads thus:—

بتاریخ سیزدهم ماه جنوری سنه ۱۸۲۵ دیوان بهوانیداس را حکم شد که شما بذیره صاحبان فرانسیس رفته از طرف سرکار بگویند که امسال در جنگ افغان یوسف زئی وغیره خزانه سرکار بسیار خرچ آمده لازم که طلب تنخواه دوماهیه رجمنت و پلاٹن همراهی خود وضع کرده بدهند دیوان مسطور بعد چهار گهڑي واپس آمده معروض داشت که صاحبان موصوف مے گویند که ما مردم سپاهی هستم شب و روز در نوکري سرکا حاضر مے باشم ـ گاه عدول حکمی سرکار نکرده هیچ قصور ازمایان بوقوع نیامده ـ پس دریں صورت دادن یکدام از طلب تنخواه خود اصلاً منظور نیست ـ خود بدولت ازیں معنی برهم خاطر شده ایما ساختند که صاحبان مزکور را طلبیده بیارند بعد دو سه گهڑي چون اوساں حاضر شدند مهاراجه بهادر شمشیر از نیام گرفته به قصد کشتن آنها از جا برخاستند ـ سردار همت سنگهه حیله والا و دیگر مصاحبان حاضرالوقت

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General Allard.

Jean Francois Allard joined the Sikh service with his companion Ventura. But his early life is not shrouded in obscurity. He was born in 1785 at Saint Tropez in France and joined the French army in 1803. From 1804 to 1806 he served in Italy and from 1807 to 1810 in Naples and Spain where he held a commission and was wounded. He was the recipient of the Royal Spanish Order and Legion of Honour. After the battle of Waterloo, he was persuaded by Ventura to accompany him to Persia and thence to India. On joining Ranjit's service, Allard was required to raise a corps of dragoons to be disciplined after the European fashion. The result of his efforts in this direction has already been described by me in the chapter on the army. Though his success was not as marked as that of Ventura in the infantry, yet he considerably improved the general efficiency of the Sikh Cavalry.

شمشیر از دست سرکار گرفته بر کرسی نشانیدند و باز پیش قبض کشیده بر اوساں کرده دشنام بسیار دادند لیکن مصاحبان وقت دست بسته از سر خون آنها در گزرانیدند ـ بعد انقضائے عرصۂ پنج چهار روز و تئورا صاحب فرانسیس حاضر شده سر برپائے مهاراجه بهادر گزاشت وعذر تقصیرات خود نموده معروض داشت که بنده هائے بے سر و سامان بحضور آمده نوکر شده بودند ـ از آنچه نقد و جنس در بساط خود میداریم همه دولت سرکار است اگر حکم شود همگي مال و اسباب موجوده را در اینجا گزاشته بطوریکه آمده بودیم برخاسته برویم ـ خود بدولت هرکونه تشفی و دلاسائے او پرداختند *

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In 1834 Allard went to France on leave, and on his return to the Panjab next year, brought back a friendly letter from Louis Philippe to Ranjit Singh. In this letter, Allard was described as an agent of France at the Court of Lahore.* Moreover, together with Ventura, Court and Avitabile, he received from the King of France the rank of a General of the French army and the Cross of the Legion of Honour.

A man of highly refined manners and amiable nature, Allard offered hospitality to all the European visitors of the Maharaja. Miss Eden writes of his appearance thus: "Allard wears an immensely long beard which he is always stroking and making much of; and I was dead absent [sic] he was all the time there, because his wings are beautiful white hair and his moustachioes and the middle of his beard were quite black. He looks like a piebald horse." He died in 1839 at Peshawar.

General Court.

Claude Auguste Court was not so popular a figure at Lahore as Ventura and Allard. He was born in 1793 and entered the Ecole Polytechnique of Paris in 1812. A year later he received a commission in the French army, resigning it in 1818. He then wandered to Persia, became acquainted with Avitabile and travelled in his company to the Panjab. Both entered the service of the Maharaja in 1827, then at the zenith of his power, Ranjit, who was improving his artillery, offered him a task for which his considerable talents and scientific

*The original is dated 27th October 1835 and is exhibited in the Library of the India Office. Louis Philippe styled himself as the Emperor of France and addressed Ranjit Singh as the "Padichah du Pendjab."

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attainments eminently fitted him. His achievements in the training of artillerymen, the organisation of batteries, and the establishment of arsenals and magazines to ensure a plentiful supply of all the materials which the armies of Europe were using but of which the people of the Panjab knew nothing, have already been mentioned. His pay was fixed at Rs. 2,000 a month. Court continued his stay in the Panjab till two years after the death of Ranjit Singh and then retired to France with his Indian wife, and children.*

Court was an antiquarian scholar and contributed several articles to the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. He possessed many coins and other historical curios collected by him during his Asiatic wanderings.

General Avitabile.

One of the most remarkable European officials of Ranjit Singh was Paolo di Bartolomeo Avitabile. He was a Neapolitan who had served in the army of his native country for a few years and then had become a lieutenant in the forces of Joseph Bonaparte and Murat. At the siege of Gaeta, he enjoyed an early opportunity of distinguishing himself, but, being passed over by the higher authorities, he quitted the service in disgust and made his way to Persia, serving the Shah for six years and receiving the rank of a *Khan*. But he was far from satisfied with his emoluments and proceeded to the Panjab in quest of more lucrative employment.

On his arrival in Lahore in 1827, Ranjit gave him the civil and military charge of the city of Wazirabad and several adjoining *T'aaluqas*. Avitabile showed cha-

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*For his mostly uneventful career after 1839, *see* Memoirs of Alexander Gardner, pp. 328-29.

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racteristic vigour and energy in dealing with the people. The traveller Wolff,* who visited him in 1832, gives the following interesting account of his private habits and mode of administration: "This famous Neapolitan spoke Italian, French, Persian and Hindustani with equal facility. He had improved the town of Wazirabad to a remarkable extent. He kept the streets of the city clean and had a fine palace and beautiful carriage for himself. He was a clever, cheerful man, and full of fun. He told Wolff at once that he would show to him his *angeli custodes*, and then took him to his bedroom, the walls of which were covered with pictures of dancing girls."

"He and Wolff one day rode out together on elephants and he said to him, 'Now I will show you the marks of civilisation which I have introduced into this country.' They rode outside the town and there Wolff saw before him about six gibbets, upon which a great number of malefactors were hanging. Though Avitabile was full of fun, yet whenever the conversation was directed to important subjects, he became most serious. Though he had amassed in India a fortune of £50,000, he was always panting after a return to his native country Naples; and he said to Wolff, 'For the love of God, help me to leave this place.'"

Avitabile in 1834 was sent to Peshawar of which province he was made governor after Nalwa's death in 1837. He fully inherited the administrative methods of his predecessor—nay, improved upon them with his own barbarous and savage measures. There are many anecdotes of the inhuman tortures which he inflicted upon the lawless inhabitants of the regions under his charge. They generally accord with the impressions of any who

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**Vide* Travels and Adventures, p. 372.

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visited him at Wazirabad and Peshawar. "In cases of murder," (I quote a letter dated 26th March, 1841 from the British Political Assistant at Peshawar) "a thirst for private vengeance is encouraged contrary to the spirit of the law, by the relations of the deceased being permitted to kill the guilty person. One revolting instance of it took place a short time back. A man assassinated another. To obtain the price of blood, Avitabile kept him in prison for some time, and then exposed him stark naked to the scorching heat of the sun and to the attacks of the insects, etc., with half of his body painted red. As he continued obstinate, the mother of the slain was permitted to use her right of slaughtering him with a knife, which she not only did, but in her delirious and savage joy, stooped down and drank two handfuls of his blood, as it welled from the death wound."*

It is true that the conditions of the Indian frontier were in those days exceptional, as to a great extent they continue to be. The tribes inhabiting these regions are wild and turbulent, with no regard for human life. Only the severest retribution can deter them from reckless bloodshed and violence. Nevertheless, the ground of complaint against Avitabile is not so much that he ruled fiercely, but that—to quote the words of a contemporary, Sir Henry Lawrence—"He acts as a savage among men, instead of showing them that a Christian can wield the

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*The Political Assistant adds that, when he was riding with Avitabile, an old woman whose two sons had been murdered, assailed the governor with cries for justice and entreaties that she might be allowed to kill the murderers. Avitabile coolly told the Political Assistant that, as he had absolutely no hope of extracting any money from the culprits, he would probably grant the woman's request and invited him to come and see her carry out the execution.

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iron sceptre without staining it by needless cruelty,—without following some of the worst fashions of his worst neighbours. Under his rule, summary hangings have been added to the native catalogue of punishments, and not a bad one either, when properly used; but the ostentation of adding two or three to the string suspended from the gibbet, on special days and festivals, added to a very evident habitual carelessness of life, lead one to fear that small pains are taken to distinguish between innocence and guilt, and that many a man, ignorant [sic] of the alleged crime, pays for it with his blood."*

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*In appearance and dress Avitabile is described thus: "A tall, stout man of sensual countenance, with large nose and lips, somewhat of the Jewish type, and well-whiskered and bearded. He wore a laced blue jacket, not unlike that of our horse-artillery, capacious crimson trousers of the Turkish fashion and a rich sword." He received the same rate of pay as Ventura in addition to a *Jagir* worth Rs. 20,000 per annum. These enabled him to live in voluptuous splendour. Captain (afterwards Sir Henry) Havelock, who stayed with him at Peshawar thus describes his mode of life and hospitality: "The governor is a man of princely habits. His dress, charges, and equipages all partake of a splendour well calculated to uphold his authority amongst the people like the Afghans. He particularly and very justly piques himself on the excellence of his table and keeps an establishment of not fewer than eight cooks, who are well versed in all the mysteries of Persian, English, and French gastronomy."

When he retired to Italy in 1843, Avitabile had £50,000 in his possession, accumulated by rough and arbitrary methods. He built a magnificent villa for his residence near Naples but did not live long to enjoy it. Heavy drinking hastened the end, and most of his fortune found its way into the pockets of lawyers, so many distant relations claiming a share of his goods that 'Avitabile's cousins' became a byword in Italy. Abu Tabila, the name by which he was known on the Indian frontier had,

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G.—General Conclusion.

From the foregoing pages it will be seen that Ranjit Singh's courtiers did not form a homogeneous body: they represented various creeds, diverse races, and different traditions. Three out of the six groups at the Court were not even natives of the Panjab. These were the *Dogras,* the Mohammedans, and the Europeans. Of the three others, only a few of the Hindus and Brahmins were the real inhabitants of the country. The Sikh group alone was wholly composed of native stock. Thus Ranjit's Court essentially consisted of adventurers who controlled the administrative machinery of the State. The indigenous element, which was so meagre, was almost exclusively confined to the army. Even in the regular forces which formed its most important section, the Sikhs were seldom given the highest positions. Apart from consideration of all the details of the policy which induced the Sikh ruler to employ so many adventurers in the management of his dominions, it may readily be said that a Court constituted on such a basis could hardly secure any identity of interests or oneness of aim. Most of its members were not imbued with that genuine regard for the safety of the State and its people which we call patriotism. They seem to have been actuated by motives of selfish gain. Hence they were incapable of any agreement on political matters, and required for their harmoni-

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thus in the course of his long career, been an officer in the armies of France, Persia and the Panjab; a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour and of the Orders of Merit and of St. Ferdinand (of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies); Commander of the Durrani Order (of Afghanistan); Grand Commander of the Lion and Sun and of the Two Lions and Crown (of Persia); and a recipient of the Auspicious Star of the Panjab.

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ous intercourse the direction or control of one predominant mind. This was illustrated by the conduct of the *Darbar* soon after the death of the Maharaja.*

But if such a body of advisers was a source of weakness to the State, it was a source of strength to its ruler. It provided him with men of his own choice, whom he himself had raised to eminence, and who depended for their position, wealth, and even life on his pleasure alone. Thus, alike from their natural differences and from the absence of vested interests or hereditary prestige, there was little or no danger of organised opposition to his will. In such circumstances, the motive of selfish gain in itself induced the ministers to work well and efficiently under an impulse of loyalty to their master. The most that can be said for Ranjit's courtiers is that in their willing obedience to the Maharaja, they were prompted by ties of personal devotion no less than by the irresistible might of his prestige and power.

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*The signs of mutual jealousy and rivalry among the courtiers were visible even in the lifetime of Ranjit. These were noticed by several contemporary writers. For example, the enmity of the Sikh members towards the *Dogras,* and the intrigues and machinations of the latter against the Hindu governors of Multan and Kashmir, have been emphasised by Europeans who visited Lahore after 1830. In 1838 Auckland discussed them at length in connection with their probable effect on the stability of the Sikh Kingdom. *See* Lord Auckland's Private Letters, vol. VI. (Brit. Mus. Add. MSS.).

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CHAPTER VI.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

States governed by despots seldom present a more instructive or interesting topic for historical investigation than the life and character of the despots themselves. In one sense, this is more particularly true of the Kingdom of the Panjab under Ranjit Singh than of many other despotisms known to history. For Ranjit's Kingdom, besides possessing all the essential features of a typical autocracy, owed its creation and existence to his personal genius. He was not only its originator but was also the only force, as will be seen, which kept together the heterogenous elements of which it was composed. Thus a close study of the life and career of the Maharaja is of primary importance for our present purpose.

Much indeed has been written about Ranjit Singh, his habits, virtues, vices and so forth. Apart from the very valuable unpublished accounts of the Indian chroniclers, there is to be found a useful fund of authentic information in the works of contemporary European writers and travellers. Many of the latter visited the Panjab during the lifetime of the Sikh ruler, and almost all of them had an opportunity of seeing and talking with him. The extreme courtesy and the natural ease of manners of the Maharaja enabled them to make a searching examination of his views and character. Moorcroft, Burnes, Huegel, Jacquemont, McGregor, Osborne, and others have consequently noticed almost every phase of Ranjit Singh's character. To his every whim and caprice, they

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have assigned various causes and attributed various motives. However, these accounts are, in reality, not so fruitful as they might have been, for there is a great deal of repetition in their narratives, as if they were influenced by one another. Apart from the bare facts which, especially when they are based on personal observation and experience, are generally indisputable, the reflections of the European writers are often at variance with those of the Indian chroniclers. There is indeed sometimes a very noticeable divergence of views between these two different sets of authorities. Such differences are of inestimable value to us in forming our independent judgment. They also remind us of that large element of personal predilection, or prejudice, which often serves as a final determining factor in historical verdicts. Accordingly, the subject of the present chapter is twofold. In the first place, I shall state the facts regarding which the authorities are unanimous, and, secondly, by a process of comparative study and criticism, seek to form a correct estimate of Ranjit Singh as a man and a ruler.

Ranjit Singh's Boyhood.

We have already seen how, after the death of his father in 1790, Ranjit was placed under the care of his guardians at the early age of ten. These guardians were his own mother and two ministers Sirdar Dal Singh and Dewan Lakhpat Rai. His mother, who by all accounts was of dissolute habits, evinced little interest in the systematic upbringing of the young prince. Both ministers also neglected to take proper care of Ranjit's training. They, in fact, hardly entertained any clear conception of the task to which this young chief was to set himself in later life. But the very neglect of these guardians

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historians, on the contrary, regarded his countenance as "far from being repulsive," and thought it "full of expression and aiimation."* The peculiar lustre of his keen and restless eye has been noticed by many writers.

In manner, the Maharaja was pleasing and courteous; in conversation attractive and communicative. He possessed an extremely inquisitive nature, always enquiring from his visitors about a variety of topics with bewildering rapidity. Many accounts of his conversations with them confirm this. As one instance, I may quote a striking

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in the most laconic terms. His speech is so much affected by paralysis that it is no easy matter to understand him, but if the anhwer be delayed for an instant, one of his courtiers, usually the *Jemidar*, repeats the question. After I had been subjected to this examination for a whole hour, without one moment's intermission to put a single question in return, he turned to Mr. Vigne, and asked: "And what can you do?" (Travels, pp. 288-89). Again, this author writes: "In person he is short and mean-looking, and had he not distinguished himself by his great talents, he would be passed by without being thought worthy of observation. Without exaggeration, I must call him the most ugly and unprepossessing man I saw throughout the Punjab. His left eye, which is quite closed, disfigures him less than the other, which is always rolling about, wide open, and is much distorted by disease. The scars of the small-pox on his face, do not run into one another, but form so many dark pits in his greyish-brown skin; his short straight nose is swollen at the tip; the skinny lips are stretched tight over his teeth, which are still good; his grizzled beard, very thin on the cheeks and upper lip, meets under the chin in matted confusion; and his head, which is sunk very much on his broad shoulders, is too large for his height, and does not seem to move easily. He has a thick muscular neck, thin arms and legs, the left foot and the left arm drooping, and small well-formed hands," pp. 379-80.

**Vide* Prinsep's History, p. 48.

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no efforts whatever were made to provide any education. On the contrary, Sohan Lal mentions that Ranjit was entrusted to the care of one Bhai Phagu Singh Dharamsalia of Gujranwala for learning the Gurmukhi characters. But the young pupil paid no attention to his studies and would not even learn the alphabet. This author also mentions the name of Daula Singh as being the guide of the Prince, but he does not say what sort of influence he had on the formation of Ranjit's character.

Personal Appearance and Conversation.

As is well known, Ranjit had suffered during his infancy from small-pox, which destroyed the sight of one eye, and disfigured his face. Somewhat conflicting descriptions have been given of his general appearance, although all authorities agree that he was far from being handsome. He has been described by Huegel as "short and mean-looking," and "the most ugly and unprepossessing man ..... throughout the Panjab."* Other

*Huegel also gives the following very complete pen-picture: "The small-pox deprived him, when a child, of his left eye, whence he gained the surname of Kana, one-eyed, and his face is scarred by the same malady. His beard is thin and grey, with a few dark hairs in it: according to the Sikh religious custom, it reaches a little below his chin, and is untrimmed. His head is square and large for his stature, which though naturally short, is now considerably bowed by disease; his forehead is remarkably broad. His shoulders are wide, though his arms and hands are quite shrunk altogether; he is the most forbidding human being I have ever seen. His large brown, unsteady and suspicious eye seems diving into the thoughts of the person with whom he converses, and his straightforward questions are put incessantly and

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description of Ranjit's insatiable curiosity: "His conversation is like a nightmare. He is almost the first inquisitive Indian I have seen, and his curiosity balances the apathy of the whole of his nation. He has asked me a hundred thousand questions about India, the British, Europe, Bonaparte, this world in general and the next, hell, paradise, the soul, God, the devil, and a myriad of others of the same kind." Again, "Ranjit Singh was always fond of getting information about the population, the strength of armies, the taxes, the produce of each branch of public revenue, the axioms of our civil and criminal law, and lastly, the great results of the application of our sciences to manufacture."* Thus we find that Ranjit's interests covered a very wide range of subjects.† Nevertheless, his favourite topic and the one to which he always returned, was the army. He was seldom tired of asking questions regarding the comparative strength of the East India Company's forces and his own, and regarding the utility of the methods of drill and discipline followed in Western countries. He had a peculiar ability of putting questions, generally placing the real subject of his talk between trivial queries. By tricks such as these, he tried to deceive his visitors as to the ultimate object of his conversation.‡ A careful study of Ranjit's

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**Vide* Jacquemont's Letters, vol. II, pp. 22 and 36.

†"He rarely spoke of India or the English territories there, but chiefly asked my opinion of his own country, his army, the European officers in his service, and the designs of foreign countries and very distant lands of which he had hitherto heard nothing." Huegel's Travels, p. 302.

‡With Osborne, for example, the Maharaja talked thus: "Do you drink wine? How much? Did you taste the wine I sent to you yesterday? How much of it did you drink? What artillery have you brought with you? Have they got any shells?

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conversation is important in revealing his innermost feelings and sentiments.

Dress, Private Habits, and Inclinations.

Ranjit's dress, by all accounts, was simple and unostentatious, specially in the latter days of his life. In this respect, he was a marked contrast with the familiar type of Oriental potentate. His winter costume was made of *Pashmina* of various shades, while in summer he wore white muslin. Since, however, yellow became the favourite colour of the Sikhs, the Maharaja, whether he himself liked it or not, was wise enough to conform to popular taste on all important occasions. Although he possessed abundance of jewelry and precious stones, he seldom wore them.* Osborne† describes him thus: "Cross-legged in a golden chair, dressed in simple white, wearing no ornaments but a single string of enormous pearls round the waist and the celebrated 'Koh-i-Nur' or Mountain of Light, on one of his arms,—(the jewel rivalled, if not surpassed, in brilliancy by the glow of fire which every now and then

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How many? Do you like riding on horseback? What country horses do you prefer? Are you in the army? Which do you like best, cavalry or infantry? Does Lord Auckland drink wine? How many glasses does he drink? Does he drink it in the morning? What is the strength of the Company's army? Are they well disciplined?" *Vide* The Court and Camp of Runjeet Singh, pp. 70—80.

*Huegel says: "In earlier days he used to appear in diverse ornaments; but this costume he has long since discontinued, and I never saw him wear any embroidery, brocade or rich ornament of any sort." Travels pp. 379-80.

†The Court and Camp of Runjeet Singh, p. 73.

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shot from his single eye as it wandered restlessly round the circle)—sat the Lion of Lahore."

Ranjit Singh did not possess a satisfactory moral character. From his early youth he had indulged in wine* and women; and in the pursuit of both he often displayed a cynical disregard of public decorum. Once or twice he even went to the length of appearing in public intoxicated and accompanied by a mistress.†

While estimating his character, we should keep in mind the circumstances of the age in which he was born, and the social and domestic environments in which he was brought up. His birth had taken place in a period of singular social and political upheaval in the history of the Panjab. The Sikhs then formed a young and vigorous community, which had recently freed itself from the shackles of slavery and oppression, and had newly acquired the spirit of liberty and conquest. The new

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*He had a great liking for strong and spirituous liquor, which was generaly distilled from raisins mixed with a quantity of finely ground pearls. He occasionally held drinking bouts and nightly orgies in his young days, and to these he admitted only a chosen few of his friends. The food served at such parties usually consisted of various kinds of poultry, especially fat quails, highly spiced and stuffed; and the only drink allowed was that "abominable liquid fire." Barr in his Journal describes this fiery beverage as "rale nate stuff."

†The appearance in public of Ranjit and Moran together on the same elephant is an instance in point. He often talked about his mistresses with his European visitors, for whose entertainment he also made them dance. He occasionally amused himself, by dressing these girls in soldiers' uniforms, equipping them with arms on horseback and arranging sham fights, remarking to one of his guests that they formed a part of the army which he could least discipline.

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a,orded ample opportunities to Ranjit to develop freely his natural propensities. From his boyhood he showed aptitude for those physical exercises which later on eminently fitted him to continue the family tradition of war and conquest. He practised musketry and swordsmanship at an early age and often amused himself with sham fights in military formations among his playmates.*

For reading and writing, however, the Prince did not show the least inclination. It is a mistake to suppose, in accord with almost all European writers, that

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سرکار والا در عمر شش و هفت سال همراه طفلان اکثر درشنا ورئے دریائے چناب مشغول بودند و بعض اوقات رمه میشان و بزان روبروئے توپ ها فرمودند—ارصدمات چهرهائے خود اوشان را باآتش میسو ختند و بسیار اوقات بردوش دولا سنگهه نلوئی وغیره کسان سواری مے دشتند و هر چیز و اشیا بزوز از خانه بر آورده از والده صاحبه گرفته درمیان افواج طفلان عطا و مرحمت مے فرمودند — سرکار والا را هرچند سنگهه صاحب مانع مے آمدند لیکن اثرے از نصیحت اثر نمے کرد — من بعد سرکار والا بنابر خواندن علم گورمکهی در خدمت پهاگو سنگهه دهرم سالیه ساکن گجرانوالا متصل دیوانخانه و حویلی و باغیچهٔ سرکار سپرد فرمودند لیکن سرکار والا را خیال دیگر مرتسم در این ضمیر بود لهذا تعلیم علم نگرفتند و بعد ازآن امر سنگهه نامی بر همراه بنابر نشانه زنی تفنگ مقرر فرمودند و سرکار والا تعلیم تفنگ زنی از او گرفتند و امرسنگهه مذکور در تفنگ زنی اُستاد کامل بود و من بعد صفوف طفلان آراسته جنگ و هنگامهٔ اوشان مشاهده میکردند *

Vide Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, f. 203.

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consciousness of power to which the majority of the people had been unaccustomed for centuries, produced a natural tendency to express itself in excessive forms. We have studied in the course of the first chapter, how this spirit had worked in the domain of politics, and induced the leaders of the *Mi.ls* to indulge in mutually destructibe warfare. This predatory and lawless tendency was happily arrested by the establishment of Ranjit's despotic authority; but, in the moral sphere, the idea of liberty was for a time confused with that of license, with the result that there was a general lowering of the moral standards of the community. Ranjit shared this decline of the governing classes of the Sikhs. His own lack of education and culture, his unsystematic up-bringing, and last but not least, the absence of wholesome family traditions,*—all these combined to make him particularly susceptible to the influence of the times. Nevertheless, the Maharaja did not exhaust his energies by sensual pleasures, nor was he a habitual drunkard. Continual excesses would indeed have been incompatible with his career of administrative vigour and military conquests,† as they were with the mass of the Sikh population, formed of the rude, hardy, and industrious

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*Ranjit was brought up under the influence of a dissolute *Zenana*. Both he and his father put their mothers to death for shameless debauchery.

†That he did not indulge in excesses is clear from his daily routine, which is described by Captain Wade in a letter to the Secretary of the Governor-General, dated 31st May, 1831; Bengal Political Consultations (India Office MSS. Records). Wade's description corroborates that of Shahamat Ali, *see* The Sikhs and Afghans, p. 17.

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*peasantry of the Panjab.**

As regards other tastes of the Sikh ruler, it may

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*The licentious habits to which European writers like Steinbach (The Panjaub, p. 76), Murray (History of Ranjit Singh, p. 85), Elphinstone (History of India, p. 565), and Mason (Journeys, i, 435) allude were mainly confined to chieftains, courtiers, and soldiers. It is doubtful whether even these classes were addicted to moral vices to the same extent as is supposed by the above-mentioned writers. In this connection, *see* Cunningham's History of the Sikhs (pp. 187-89), Forster's Travels (p. 333) and Malcolm's Sketch (p. 141).

Griffin has tried to exonerate the low moral tone of the character of the Sikh Court by comparing it with that of the governing classes of England and France. He writes: "The vices of civilisation are not purer than those of barbarism; they are only more decently concealed when it is considered worth while to practihe the hypocrisy which is declared to be the tribute which vice pays to virtue. In the days of the Georges, our ancestors drank as heavily and ostentatiously as any of the Sirdars of the Lahore Court. 'Drunk as a Lord' was the popular saying which very fairly express the habits of the aristocracy of England in the eighteenth century ..... But if we accept contemporary literature as sufficient evidence, the society of Paris to-day is fully as corrupt as that of the Punjab in 1830; and the bazaars of Lahore, while Ranjit Singh was celebrating the festival of the Holi, were not so shameless as Piccadilly at night in 1892." *Vide* Ranjit Singh, pp. 93-94 (Rulers of India Series). A writer in the Calcutta Review of August 1844 proceeds in a similar strain: "Ranjit Singh's lustful propensities were his most odious vices; but we do not hear of his having, as other monarchs European and Asiatic have done, torn wives and virgins from their families .....; and shameless as he was, he may be favourably contrasted with any contemporary monarch of Asia, and it may be added, with some of Europe. While we execrate such acts in a half civilised Asiatic, let us remember the conduct of many Kings of France, of Augustus of Saxony, of the great Catherine

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As a friend and companion, Ranjit was well known for his geniality and good humour. He possessed plenty of wit, and took delight in ready repartee. Many stories illustrating this survive among the people of the Panjab to the present day. In the absence of corroboration, these anecdotes can hardly be regarded as perfectly

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some £3,000; and although he also had conversed on this subject, he does not say as explicitly as Huegel whether the information was thus obtained. *See* The Court and Camp of Runjeet Singh, pp. 90-91. The following accounts, among various others, give some idea of the costly equipment of Ranjit Singh's horses. "The Passion of Ranjit Singh for horses has passed into a proverb in the East. The Bridle, saddle, and other ornaments of these creatures are most costly. The first is overlaid with gold or enamel, and at the top of the head, or else on either side, waves a plume of heron's feathers; strings of jewels are hung round the neck, under which are the Sulimans, or Onyx stones, very highly prized on account of the superstition attached to them. The saddle is also of enamel and gold, covered with precious stones, the pommel being particularly rich. The housings are of Kashmir shawl, fringed with gold; the crupper and martingale ornamented very highly, and on each side of the favourite usually hangs the tail of the Tibetan Yak, dyed of various hues; the saddle, moreover, is covered with a velvet cushion." Huegel's Travels, pp. 301-302. The traveller continues: "A pommel of one of the saddles struck me as particularly worthy of remark, having a ruby two inches square, bearing on it the name of Jehanghir. Dow, in his history of Hindustan, tells us, that when Jehanghir had his name engraved on this beautiful stone, the celebrated Empress Nur Jehan told him that she thought it a pity, to which he answered, 'This jewel will more assuredly hand down my name to posterity than any written history. The House of Timur may fall, but as long as there is a King, this jewel will have its price.' Many other names are now engraved on it, the best known being Ahmed Shah's, who found it in the famous "Peacock

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authentic, but some are still familiar throughout the length and breadth of the land; and the fact that Ranjit's humour left a deep popular impression is in itself significant.*

Religious Views.

There is a sharp difference of judgment between the Indian and European writers concerning the religious opinions of the Sikh ruler. The former regard him as one who was imbued with a genuine respect for the Sikh scriptures. There is, indeed, much to be found in the avowed professions and performances of the Maha-

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Throne," pp. 302-303. Huegel also says that "Ranjit had 1,000 saddle horses for his own use; 27,000 for his infantry; for the troops in armour 15,000; for the cavalry 27,000; apprehending that I might not have fully understood him, he went over his story again, which I learnt afterwards, was strictly correct." *Vide* p. 305. Miss Eden describes the equipment thus: "I suppose fifty horses were led past us. The first had on its emerald trappings, necklaces arranged on its neck and between its ears, and in front of the saddle two enormous emeralds nearly two inches square, carved all over, and set in gold frames, like little looking glasses. The crupper was all emeralds, and there were stud-ropes of gold put on something like a martingale. Heera Singh said that the whole was valued at 37 lakhs (£370,000); but all these valuations are fanciful, as nobody knows the worth of these enormous stones; they are never bought or sold. The next horse was simply attired in diamonds and turquoises, another in pearls, and there was one with trappings of coral and pearl that was very pretty. Their saddle-cloths have stones woven into them. It reduces European magnificence to a very low pitch." *See* Up the Country, pp. 22-23.

*The old inhabitants of Lahore particularly recount Ranjit's witty remarks to the servants of the Royal Household.

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be mentioned that he was fond of hunting. In his youth, his extraordinary vitality enabled him to indulge freely in this sport and in shooting. On such expeditions he was usually accompanied by the principal grandees of State as well as by a large retinue of followers. The Sirdars, on such occasions, were in the habit of displaying their prowess by engaging different species of wild animal in individual combat. In these fights the chief weapon used was the sword, in comparison with which the use of the matchlock was regarded as cowardly. Ranjit himself always took a prominent share in these diversions.

He had also a peculiar love, almost amounting to a passion, for horses. He himself was a consummate horseman, and never seemed to be tired of riding. On horseback he looked peculiarly stately and dignified. Ranjit liked to see his finest horses caparisoned in costly jewels, and some of them always accompanied him on his tours. The equipment of the horses in the royal stables was more elaborate than that of the elephants. *Laila* was, perhaps, the best horse in his possession. This horse, the Maharaja used to say, had cost him a war of several years with its owners Sultan Mohammed Khan and Yar Mohammed Khan Barukzais.*

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and the greater Peter, indeed, of our own Henry and Charles." But as two wrongs do not make a right, such comparison can hardly serve as a defence for the conduct either of the Sikh ruler or of his Court. The only circumstances that can extenuate their conduct are to be found in the explanation offered in the body of the thesis.

*He told Huegel that this war had cost him £6,000 and that 12,000 men were engaged in it. The latter describes *Laila* as "a dark grey horse with black legs, thirteen years old and full sixteen hands high." *Vide* Travels, p. 333. Osborne says it cost

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raja which supports this view. He was very particular about the daily recital of the *Granth* in his presence, and attended the *Darbar Sahib* (Golden Temple) at Amritsar twice a year. He bestowed special favours on the Sikh priesthood and spent considerable sums of money on the maintenance of religious institutions. While writing or talking of his government, he invariably used the term *Khalsa,* and posed as an humble servant of that mystic and militant Church. As a devoted follower of Sikhism, he caused to be engraved on his Seal the prefix *Akal Sahae* (under the Grace of God), an inscription closely resembling the "God with us" of Cromwell.*

The second group, however, doubt the sincerity of his convictions, and regard his religious enthusiasm as a clever trick intended to serve political designs. Such doubts were chiefly based on the glaring incongruity between Ranjit's moral and political actions on the one hand and the teaching of the Sikh faith on the other. In the

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*His coins, too, as we shall see later on, bore the names of the Gurus Nanak and Gobind Singh. The Maharaja maintained an elaborate establishment of *Bhais* (Sikh priests), one or two of whom held the charge of every Sikh shrine in the Panjab. There was a separate estate attached to every shrine, the produce of which was enjoyed by the incumbent. He was always attended on his tours by a priest with a volume of each of the two chief scriptures. These were wrapped up in rich pieces of silk, placed in a cot under a big canopy, and thus borne from one place to another. A special military escort was provided, each member of which carried a Sikh banner. The procession was often followed by a number of priests on elephants. Besides this, every regiment had its own volumes of the *Granths* and religious insignia. Even the ministers of State carried separate copies of the *Granths* on their journeys: *Vide* 'Ibrat Nama, f. 356.

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East, religion and morality have always been blended, so that most of the rules of social and political conduct are regulated more in accordance with the prevailing ideas of religion than by any distinct conception of civic responsibility. This was even more true of the India of Ranjit's time than of to-day. The views of European writers appear to have been influenced by this peculiar feature of Indian life. But their arguments are hardly conclusive from a historical standpoint, for they only emphasize the fact that rulers of men are as prone to moral lapses as ordinary men themselves.

The truth of the matter is that Ranjit inherited the religious belief of his forefathers. He himself was not enlightened enough to comprehend or criticise the secrets of the Sikh creed. Hence he readily accepted its more obvious features with implicit faith and superstitious reverence. In this respect also, as in many others, the Maharaja was typical of his age; so that his religious views were merely those of other members of the community. He was, in fact, looked upon by them as the staunch champion and defender of their faith, and his rigid and ostentatious observance of the outward forms of worship would account for much of his popularity. Moreover, he thereby maintained the martial fervour of his people, which he skilfully employed to further his political interests.*

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*Before undertaking a military expedition, the Maharaja sometimes cast lots. The method usually followed was this: two slips of paper, one marked 'for' and the other 'against' the proposal, were rolled up and thrown upon an open copy of the *Adi-Granth*, and one was picked out either by himself or by a person appointed for the task. It was then unfolded. If the slip turned out to be the one favouring the expedition, it was

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Ranjit was, however, neither a bigot nor a vain religious dreamer. Although he utilised to the fullest extent the fervour of the *Khalsa* against Moslems in general and the Afghans in particular, he was acute enough to recognise that the inauguration or encouragement of an avowed policy of persecution would ultimately prove detrimental to his own best interests. Thus he refrained from interfering with the religious rights of the different sections of his subjects; nor did he approve of such actions on the part of the governing classes among the Sikhs. On the contrary, he tried to keep in check the fanatical tendencies of the *Akalis*, and entrusted some of the most responsible positions in his government to Mohammedans.* In 1830, he even showed an eagerness to receive a Christian Missionary that he might learn the

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undertaken; otherwise it was postponed. (*See* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, f. 571, and 'Ibrat Nama, ff. 191-92.) The fact that he thus decided upon such vital matters as the despatch of military expeditions, shows that he was not a sceptic. His preference for casting lots upon the *Granth* to consulting the priests in such matters, was significant as being in conformity with the last injunctions of the tenth *Guru*.

*The Moslem inhabitants of the Punjab, doubtless, suffered, under one great restriction regarding their liberty of worship; *i.e.* in the days of the Sikh ruler, the call to prayer was prohibited. Yet this prohibition did not begin with Ranjit's reign, but had continued from the days of the *Misls*. *See* Amir-ul-Im'a (ff. 70-71), and the information gathered by Colonel Lawrence from his counsellors, according to which the Moslems had been deprived of this right for more than eighty years: Punjab Government Records 1847-48, p. 372. Ranjit indeed kept it in force, but it was more to maintain his popularity among the Sikhs, and his prestige among the Mohammedans, than from any special love of the measure.

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doctrines of that faith, and to be provided with a copy of the Bible.†

Generosity.

Ranjit Singh was, on the whole, a very generous monarch. He always rewarded his officials handsomely, and entertained European and other guests in a lavish manner. His annual contribution for religious and charitable purposes was very substantial.‡ The liberality of the Sikh ruler has been, however, underestimated by some European historian, on account of his seemingly unappreciative conduct in two particular instances,—(*a*) the confiscation of Hari Singh Nalwa's estates after his death, and (*b*) his order directing the triumphant soldiery to surrender to him the spoils of Multan. In judging the conduct of

†*Vide* Up the Country by Miss Eden, pp. 23 and 26. This is, however, a solitary instance of his interest in the Christian religion. Hence much importance cannot be attached to it. His desire seems to have been inspired by curiosity and not by any serious intention of studying the doctrines of Christianity. Another evidence that Ranjit was tolerant and liberal in practice is the respect and reverence he always showed towards the shrines of Mohammedan saints. He used to pay occasional visits to several such shrines in Lahore and elsewhere.

‡Bute Shah mentions that Ranjit distributed Rs. 9,00,000 in charity on the occasion of his grandson's marriage. In 'Ibrat Nama (f. 260), we find that he bestowed Rs. 1.25,000 on the shrine at Dera Baba Nanak in 1827, in fulfilment of a vow he had taken. Again, it is known on the authority of Col. Gardner, that Ranjit rewarded General Court with Rs. 30,000 when the latter turned out the first shell at the Lahore foundry. Finally, from the information gathered by Colonel Lawrence from his counsellors, we find that he spent Rs. 12,00,000 a year in charity: *Vide* Punjab Government Records 1847-48, p. 372.

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the Sikh ruler in the first incident, it must be kept in mind that the landed possessions of his Sirdars were not always granted by him, as is generally supposed, in absolute ownership, but on certain definite conditions of semi-feudal tenure. This is quite obvious from the fact that on many *Jagirs,* the Maharaja, as overlord, claimed a fixed quota of military recruits and money. The conditions, which varied according to the size of the *Jagirs,* limited in theory, though not always in practice, the rights of a deceased Sirdar's descendants. The size of the holdings of a Sirdar, in turn, depended upon various conditions, such as his personal abilities, services, and general prestige and influence. So that on the death of a chieftain, it was sometimes desirable that his possessions should be redistributed amongst his descendants according to their personal merits.. This was precisely what happened in the case of Hari Singh Nalwa's estates. The Maharaja reduced the landed possessions which his sons inherited, on the plea that they were disproportionately large in comparison to the positions that the holders occupied in the State. Another motive that inspired Ranjit's conduct, in this and other similar cases, was his opposition to the growth of powerful vested interests in the land. It is important to bear this in mind, because it shows that actions such as these on the part of Ranjit Singh were not the result of an occasional outburst of rapacity, (as they have usually been represented), but of a deliberate and calculated policy.*

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*He took possession of most of Sada Kaur's estates at her death. The descendants of Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Uttam Singh Majithia suffered a similar fate. The most striking example, however, is of Prince Kharak Singh, the Maharaja's eldest son and heir-apparent, who was compelled to deposit his

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a matter of common knowledge. Nevertheless, they need to be specially noted in connection with his character. I have already mentioned in the second chapter how Shah Shuj'a, the ex-King of Kabul, after having been deposed by his brother, had sought refuge with the governor of Kashmir. In 1813, however, the Shah was compelled by Fatch Khan's conquest of that province, to accompany the Sikh general, Mohkam Chand to Lahore. Ranjit's object in offering an asylum to the Afghan monarch was to use him as an instrument of intrigue against the rulers of Kabul. In the same year, Shah Shuj'a's wife, Vafa Begam, also arrived in Lahore. Soon after they took their residence in a house provided for them, the Maharaja demanded the surrender of the *Koh-i-Nur*. The exile stated in return that the stone was in the possession of a banker, to whom it had been pawned for a large sum of money. In spite of all kinds of persuasion and cajolery, including the offer of a substantial *Jagir*, the Shah adhered to his assertion, and denied the possession of the diamond. Ranjit, in order to prevent the jewel from being sent away, ordered guards to be set round the Afghan's residence. Not only were all those who left the building subjected to a close search, but no food was allowed to be sent in for two days. Some correspondence, purporting to have been carried on between the ex-Monarch and Fateh Khan Wazir, was also produced, as showing the secret designs of the Shah against Ranjit Singh, who, however, allowed the fugitive two month's respite to enable him to redeem the stone from the banker. After the expiry of that period, tired of perpetual harassment and fearing an even worse fate, the Shah agreed to yield the diamond on condition of the Maharaja's solemn promise of friendship. A document was drawn up in which Ranjit pledged himself on

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As regards the second point, it must be remembered that the plunder of Multan was hardly to the credit of the army. Under a more civilised ruler, the troops might have been viewed as deserving a sterner punishment. The Maharaja's decision was dictated perhaps by the desirability of appearing to enforce a measure of discipline and certainly by a wish to replenish the Exchequer which was seriously depleted. The real objection to the order was that it could not be enforced.†

Ranjit's action against the army of Multan reminds us of the similar punishments which, in a few cases, he meted out to corrupt officials. Finding it difficult and inconvenient, if not actually impossible, to check his officers from accumulating large sums of money by means of bribery and extortion, he waited patiently, and without protest, for a more favourable opportunity when he might summarily confiscate a portion of their wealth. Such a practice, crude as it may seem to our modern notions of government, was peculiarly fitted to deal with the officials of a State in which the details of administration depended almost entirely on individual initiative, and not on any well-defined code of regulations. Punishments such as these, however, were awarded only in extraordinay cases. Ordinarily, the more equitable methods of fines, dismissals,

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mother's cash and ornaments with 50,00,000 rupees in the royal treasury. Her other belongings, worth another 50,00,000 rupees, were divided into three equal parts,—one for the State and two parts for Kharak Singh and Nau Nihal Singh, respectively. Griffin writes: "Ranjit did not approve of hereditary wealth and honour, and like Tarquinius Superbus struck down all the tall poppies in his garden." *Vide* Ranjit Singh, p. 96. *See* also Huegel's Travels, p. 369.

†*See* Moorcroft's Travels, I, 101.

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and imprisonment were followed.*

The Acquisition of the Koh-i-Nur.

The main facts concerning the manner in which Ranjit became possessed of the *Koh-i-Nur* have become

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*The Maharaja also possessed a peculiar aptitude for administering rebukes and reprimands to his officials. This may be illustrated by a concrete instance in which a *Kardar* was summoned to Lahore on a charge of inflicting improper severities on the people. On being admitted into Ranjit's presence, the *Kardar* in question found him filled with wrath and ill-disposed to listen to a reasonable explanation of his conduct. Accordingly, he thought it better to put forward the following apologetic defence: "Your Highness! Once upon a time there was a saint who spent away many years of his life in spiritual meditation and voluntary confinement. He remained motionless so long that his body was covered with a mass of dust on which grass grew. When in his hoary old age this hermit re-entered the outside world, people blamed him for idling away so many years of his life, and reducing himself to a miserable condition. The hermit, however, who claimed to have enjoyed the celestial presence of God, seemed more than reconciled to his lot. Such, Your Highness, is the case with me. You may pardon me, imprison me, or even sentence me to death, but nothing can deprive me of the pleasure that I have gained by obtaining a glimpse of your benign countenance." The Maharaja, who had listened to the whole story with a characteristic twinkle in his eye, made the following significant remark: " Go, I pardon thee. Thou art indeed a clever fellow, and have concocted a nice story." His answer shows clearly that he had fully understood that the anecdote related by the *Kardar* had no bearing on the offence in question but was only intended to soothe his anger. Yet he pardoned the official, not because he was carried away by flattery, but simply because he considered he had been sufficiently rebuked. The *Kardar* in question was my great-uncle who related the incident to my father some fifty years ago.

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the two Sikh scriptures to befriend the exile and to endeavour to restore him to his throne. Shah Shuj'a then invited the Sikh chief to his residence to receive the diamond in person. The latter arrived with Dewan Bhawani Dass and a few other attendants, and it is said that he was received in silence, which continued unbroken for about an hour. At last Ranjit reminded the Shah of the object of his visit, and the latter beckoned to one of his eunuchs to bring the jewel. A packet was produced and unwrapped before the Sikh Chief, who, when he saw the stone, seized it and immediately left the house, forgetting even to bid farewell to his host.*

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*After this episode Shah Shuj'a was allowed more liberty, which he abused by carrying on intrigues against both the Sikhs and the Afghans. Letters written by one of his followers, Qazi Sher Mohammed to 'Azim Khan at Kashmir were captured by the Sikhs. In these, 'Azim was exhorted to sink his differences with Fateh Khan and make a joint attack on the Panjab. The Shah denied all knowledge of these letters, but did not dispute their genuineness. On the contrary, he asked the Maharaja to punish Sher Mohammed in whatever way he liked. Ranjit, after inflicting on him bodily chastisement, sent him to prison; but after a short time, the Shah purchased his follower's release by paying Rs. 20,000. In the following year, however, fresh intrigues were brought to the notice of the Sikh ruler by his officials, upon which he lost his temper and decided to deprive the Shah of all the jewels he possessed. He now sent Bhaya Ram Singh with one of his own wives to search the house and the *Zenana* of the Afghan Monarch, and to collect all the valuables which could be found. The instructions are stated to have been thoroughly carried out by the agents, the lady not sparing even the wives and female servants of the ex-King from search. Thus all that was worth possessing was appropriated. Soon afterwards the Shah and his family escaped to Ludhiana. *See* Prinsep's History, pp. 96—99, and Huegel's Travels, pp. 374-75.

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This story, as I have related it, is one which has been accepted by most writers on Ranjit Singh. It mainly agrees with the facts, as they are mentioned by Shah Shuj'a-ul-Mulk in his autobiography. The Hindu chroniclers of Ranjit, however, assert that Vafa Begam, the wife of the exiled King had sent a messenger to the Maharaja, promising him the *Koh-i-Nur* if he would not surrender her husband to his deadly enemy, Fateh Khan, and that the subsequent demand was in reference to this promise. To Shah, on the other hand, denied any such mention of the jewel by his wife. The letters produced as proving the complicity of Shah Shuj'a in anti-Sikh intrigues, are variously estimated by historians. Some are believed to be forged, while others may have been genuine. Unfortunately, these letters are not in existence to form the basis of an independent examination.

Subject to what I have stated in the preceding paragraph, the treatment meted out by Ranjit Singh to Shah Shuj'a was contrary to all ideas of hospitality. It also formed a contrast with his usual conduct towards other royal fugitives who sought his protection. Generosity demanded that a fallen monarch should have been spared with his private belongings, and treated with due dignity and respect. For Ranjit Singh however, it must be said that he extorted the *Koh-i-Nur* in the same year in which he was treacherously deceived by the Afghans in the matter of the reward promised to him by Fateh Khan for his co-operation against Kashmir. Hence the Sikh ruler, at the time, was not inclined to be magnanimous towards the ex-King of his enemies. Secondly, the possession of that rare stone by an exiled and adventurous prince, such as Shah Shuj'a, was a potential source of danger to the peace of all neighbouring states, and the Panjab. It was almost certain that the jewel, if allowed

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to remain with that intriguing and discontented prince, would have been applied by him to a warlike purpose.* Sooner or later he would have lost possession of it; for its value was so well known in India, that one or other of the chieftains, whose countries he traversed, would have acted in a manner similar to Ranjit Singh. Finally, apart from these considerations, it must be remembered that in forcibly extorting the *Koh-i-Nur*, the ruler of the Panjab merely acted upon a well established precedent, according to which this invaluable diamond, since time immemorial, changed hands among various rulers and at different times.

Ranjit Singh as a Soldier.

Ranjit possessed the precise qualities which make a great soldier. As stated in a previous paragraph, he had acquired in his youth a thorough knowledge of the various arts of warfare. With this essential qualification, he combined a naturally virile physique, a strong determination, and an undoubted personal courage. These qualities were shown in many fields of battle in which the Maharaja commanded his own troops, and directed their operations. He possessed sound views on military affairs, which induced him to centre his aims within limits of reasonable probability, and to avoid exhausting his strength on wild and hazardous projects. Thus his plans were always of a practicable nature. This is evident from the manner in which his principal campaigns were conducted, specially those on the north-west frontier.

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*In 1834, the Shah sold one valuable diamond to Ranjit Singh for Rs. 80,000, and probably spent the money in the preparations of an expedition to Afghanistan. *See* Huegel's Travels, p. 375.

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Ranjit always engaged the Afghans and the tribesmen of that region in the trans-Indus plains, but never followed them into the hills. By a cautious and careful military policy, he subdued his numerous enemies and created an extensive kingdom.

The ruler of the Sikhs has been compared with other great conquerors,—Mohammed 'Ali of Egypt, Frederick the Great, and Oliver Cromwell. Jacquemont calls him "a Bonaparte in miniature." There are several points common between Ranjit Singh and these rulers, especially Cromwell and Napoleon. Alike in the suddenness of the rise and fall of his kingdom, the career of the Sikh potentate resembles that of the Puritan Protector of England and the revolutionary Emperor of France. But there are points of contrast between them, which are no less conspicuous. Unlike them Ranjit Singh lacked the advantages of education. He had to establish his authority over a land in which no stable political institution had existed for nearly a century; and, lastly, his political aims threatened from the bery beginning of his career to unite his future subjects against himself. While both Cromwell and Napoleon rose into greatness as the leaders of the people, but made them the instruments of personal aggrandisement; Ranjit proceeded, at the outset of his reign, to destroy permanently the only popular institution which the *Khalsa* possessed, namely the *Gurumata*. Thus the ruler of the Panjab had to take the first step in his military career with peculiar caution.

Statesmanship.

Ranjit cannot receive a prominent place among constructive statesmen. This is involved in his failure to establish thoroughly efficient organs of administration,

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partly due to his continual pre-occupation with military enterprises, but chiefly owing to his want of any higher political conception than that of personal rule. His genius seems to have grasped only the superficial aspects of the great impulse imparted to the people of the Panjab by Gurus Nanak and Gobind, and he strove to employ it for the attainment of his own political ambitions. Besides this, the Sikh ruler was also responsible, though perhaps not to the same extent as is commonly supposed, for failure to provide against or even to anticipate that chaos and confusion which recurred soon after his death. A close study of the politics of the period suggests, indeed, several conflicting considerations. While on the one hand, it may be readily agreed that Ranjit, if he had sufficiently exerted himself, could have weakened the more powerful personal elements of his Court and thereby considerably reduced the chances of their challenging the authority of his successors; on the other hand it seems probable that even such a policy would have failed to prevent the ultimate decay of his State. At the most, it might have postponed such a fate for a little while. The decay was sure to come sooner or later,—sooner rather than later as the experience of history has shown in similar cases. From the very nature of the rule which he had set up over the Panjab, it was obvious that his empire could not last long after him. The ruler of the Sikhs was, in fact, a soldier-king like Cromwell, ruling over a people imbued with aggressive militaristic ideas. Only a man of an indomitable will and personal ascendancy could hold such people in subjection. It was improbable that any successor, under the circumstances, would be able to maintain his prestige over the Sikhs.

Nevertheless, the Maharaja displayed remarkable political wisdom and sagacity in matters of military or-

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ganisation. In point of such reconstruction, indeed, he may be assigned a unique place among Indian monarchs. At an early period of his reign, he had begun to realise the possible contingency of contesting with the British, at some future time, the issue of supremacy in northern India. Hence he had striven to build up a formidable force. This was achieved by successfully engrafting on the fighting material of India the European methods of drill and discipline. It is true that Ranjit was by no means the first among Indian potentates to appreciate the value of the western system of warfare, or to attempt the introduction of the same among Indian troops Nevertheless, he deserves the credit of carrying out this policy more thoroughly and comprehensively than others.

In the civil departments also, the Maharaja introduced certain improvements. Though his organising talents were not turned to beneficial legislation, he paid attention, at least in the later period of his reign, to the establishment of a working system of revenue and judicial administration. Apart from creating a central secretariat at the capital, he revived a regular machinery of provincial government. This was all done in a country where political and administrative chaos had prevailed for several generations. Ranjit insisted upon his local officials submitting their accounts periodically for his own personal examination. He possessed an extraordinary memory which enabled him to remember intricate figures by heart and to audit the accounts and settle the payments of different districts. He could criticise every financial item presented to him by his *Kardars*, and though uneducated, always undertook to correct the receipts of

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income and disbursement issued by his secretaries.*

Two things are of particular significance in connection with our study of Ranjit Singh's conduct as an administrator. The first, his appreciation of the value of European discipline; and, secondly, his judicious discrimination in the selection of his officials. The first point has been already examined. The second, however, needs further explanation. If we consider the various departments of state and study the different classes of society from which the official heads were selected, we find what careful and sagacious discrimination was shown by the Maharaja. In other words, he selected the right men for the right place, and attached much importance to the hereditary instincts and traditions of the various classes of his subjects. For example he was shrewd enough to understand that the *Manjha Jats* were pre-eminently a fighting class, and, as such, could nowhere be more profitably employed than in national defence. Thus he would seldom entrust the representatives of this martial community with the duties of civil administration. Again, we find that revenue and secretarial departments were invariably given over to shrewd Hindus and Brahmins,—communities whose members had always occupied ministerial posts even in the Mohammedan courts of Dehli and Kabul. The diplomatic service, on the other hand, was usually filled by the landed aristocracy and gentry of the province, whose wealth and vested interests would induce them to discharge their

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*Ganesh Dass emphasises the wonderful memory of Ranjit, who, he says, remembered the names even of the most junior clerks of his establishments, and of almost all the towns in the Panjab. He also could recognise the people whom he had seen only once many years before. *Vide* Risala-i-Sahib Numa, f. 62.

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residence in which the subjects could lodge their complaints. The keys of this box were always kept by the Maharaja. Secondly, he enlarged his acquaintance with the condition of his subjects in different districts either by visiting them at intervals or else by sending his more responsible ministers for inspection. Lastly, he used to subject his provincial governors to a searching cross-examination at the time of their visits to Lahore for depositing instalments of revenue in the treasury. Through means such as these, Ranjit sought to maintain his interest in the welfare of the people.*

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*We have ample evidence of Indian chroniclers showing Ranjit's frequent instructions to his *Nazims* and *Kardars* to promote the well-being of the people. Sohan Lal repeatedly alludes to the despatch of one or other of his expert ministers to various districts with instructions to assess the revenues, decide the cases, prepare the accounts, find out new sources of income and expenditure, and study the conditions of the inhabitants and the possibilities of their betterment. *Vide* Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, ff. 325, 439, 454, 457, 458, 461, 466, and 514. One significant case is the reduction of the revenue, and other measures for the alleviation of distress among the inhabitants of Kashmir during the famine and earthquake of 1827: f. 552. From Bute Shah's MSS. (f. 402), and Risala-i-Sahib Numa (f. 62) by Ganesh Dass. we find that the Maharaja, in his instructions to the *Kardars*, invariably enjoined upon them the necessity of safeguarding the interests of the cultivators and of regularly supplying him with the accounts of the *Taaluqas*. The following language was generally employed in such orders:

آبادئي رعايا و خيرخواهي و فزونئي مال سرکار مدنظر دارند— چهار طرف به همراه آنها راستي و درستي و حسن سلوکي و صلح دارند—

In 1831, Captain Wade, the British Political Assistant at

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duties with zeal and integrity.*

Ranjit has been represented by most European writers as a monarch who cared little for the welfare of his subjects, and who allowed his local officers a free hand in administration, so long as the instalments of revenues poured regularly into his treasury. Such views, however, apart from being based on superficial considerations of prevalent circumstances, are in striking contrast with the testimony of contemporary Indian authorities The true explanation appears to be that in such an age of defective and insufficient means of communication the Sikh ruler found it necessary to entrust his provincial governors with far wider discretionary powers than would be thought expedient at the present day. That such delegation should sometimes lead to maladministration by local agents was but natural, especially in the absence of any well-defined constitutional checks on their liberty of action or systematic means of detecting their transgressions.

This, however, does not mean that the Maharaja was unmindful of the welfare of his subjects. On the contrary, he provided several safeguards against official oppression and mismanagement. In the first place, at the capital itself, he devised a means of keeping himself in touch with his people by fixing a box outside his

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*The more important and intricate part of the duties was, however, entrusted to the really clever associates of these men. For example, the political missions which visited the Governor-General, though composed of high dignitaries like Jam'adar Khushal Singh, Raja Sochet Singh, and Sirdar Hari Singh Nalwa, also included ministers of tried political wisdom and experience like the three Faqir brothers, and Dewans Moti Ram, Bhawani Dass and Ganga Ram.

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In conclusion, it may be said that considering the social and political condition of the country over which he ruled, the government of Ranjit Singh was surprisingly mild and merciful. It is worthy of remark that, during the whole of his reign, he never administered

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Ludhiana, wrote on the subject of Ranjit's special care to prevent the spoilation of crops by his moving columns: "The Ghorcheras and others were almost all dismounted. His Highness said that he had ordered them to send their horses away that the country might not be distressed by supporting them, which led me to enquire whether he had any regulations to restrain the troops from destroying the crops in their line of march. He said that he had the most prohibitive orders in force on the subject and took prompt and severe notice of any infraction of them. His attention to the preservation of the crops from depredation is remarkable. Few chiefs exercise a more rigid control over the conduct of their troops than he does." *Vide* Wade to the Secretary of the Governor-General, Adinanager, 25th May, 1831; Bengal Political Consultations, Range 126, vol. 30. (India Office MSS. Records.) Lastly, Sohan Lal, in his Umdut-ut-Twarikh (daftar III, part IV, p. 515) states that in 1838 the Sikh ruler issued an *Ishtihar Nama* (proclamation) to most of his provincial farmers and *jagirdars*, namely Rajas Golab Singh and Sochet Singh, Misars Beli Ram, Rup Lal and Ram Kishan, Sirdar Lehna Singh Majithia, Colonel Mehan Singh, Bhais Mohan Singh, Dal Singh and Surjan Singh, and Dewan Sawan Mal, asking them to keep in view the solicitude and prosperity of the subjects in all administrative matters, specially in collection of revenue, and to avoid every kind of oppression of the cultivators. The original reads as follows:—

قلمي گرديده كه موافق آبادئي مُلک محروسه و غور پرداخت رعايا
معامله از رعايا تحصيل بايد ساخت و در هرباب غورو پر داخت
زمينداران مد نظر بايد داشت و براحدے من الاحاد ظلم و تعدی
بجلوه ظهور نبايد آورد و خبر گيرئي رعايا مطمح نظر بايد نمود۔

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capital punishment.* Ranjit alone deserves the credit for what he achieved,—a more consistent and uniform system of administration and a greater amount of peace and prosperity for the people than they had enjoyed for above a hundred years, besides transforming the Sikhs, numbering only half a million, into the strongest nation in India.

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*In this connection, I may quote the following observation of Lord Lawrence on Ranjit Singh: "True, he slew and conquered as all Orientals do, without the slightest feeling of right. But with him we hear of no after massacres; of no after impalings or floggings; of no pyramids of heads or of men, built into minars to serve as milestones; of all which atrocities he must have had examples before him. He maimed but it was to save life and to clear the highways of robbers; but he never took life in cold blood." *See* Calcutta Review of August 1844. On the reluctance of the Maharaja to administer bodily punishment, *see* also Huegel's Travels, p. 317, Prinsep's Ranjit Singh, p. 180, and Osborne's The Court and Camp of Runjeet Singh, pp. 94-95. The last writer states: "He rules with a rod of iron, it is true; but in justice to him it must be stated, that, except in actual open warfare, he has never been known to take life, though his own has been attempted more than once, and his reign will be found freer from any striking acts of cruelty and oppression than those of many more civilised monarchs." Another thing showing Ranjit's humanitarianism was his order of prohibition against trade in women and children, to which an allusion is made in the Punjab Government Records, 1847-48, p. 238.

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for almost a century. The results became visible in the increased cultivation and growing commerce of the central Panjab. Had a few years more been vouchsafed him, the effects of his authority would have become visible in many other ways. We infer this from the fact that, in the latter years of his reign, he showed an eagerness for introducing many kinds of commercial and administrative reforms in his kingdom. On the whole, he may be said to have eminently succeeded in the unification of the Panjab under his independent sceptre.

B.—Ranjit Singh's Responsibility for the Ultimate Decline of the Sikh Power.

Ranjit Singh has been held responsible for the ultimate decline of his kingdom. It is generally said that he committed the grave blunder of allowing the acquisition of vast territorial power and influence by the *Dogra* chiefs. This view, on the whole, has a substantial element of truth. Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that the Maharaja was blind to the dangers of his policy. We have already seen how he whittled down the possessions of his Sirdars, even to the point of incurring blame for ingratitude to his servants. In the consistent pursuit of such a policy, however, the Maharaja felt a characteristic difficulty of destroying vested interests, which he himself had once created. It is, indeed, very difficult, if not almost impossible, for a despot, much of whose power depends on the maintenance of a semi-feudal nobility, to curtail the size of their holdings. Thus Ranjit failed to follow consistently the policy of reducing the people of the Panjab to a more or less uniform political level; the most glaring example of such a failure was the grant of an extensive and contiguous territory

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to a single *Dogra* family.

This was, however, not the only cause of the ruin of the Sikh kingdom. There were several others, some superficial, others fundamental. With the discussion of the superficial causes, we are hardly concerned here. Among the fundamental ones, the most important was the despotic and personal character of the Maharaja's rule. That he was a "State in person" is more particularly true of him than of several other depots known to history. Hence his death was certain to bring a rapid paralysis of the central authority in the kingdom. His court also, as has already been discussed in the previous chapter, was composed of diverse elements and conflicting interests; and the harmonious co-operation of its members was only possible under his own unifying authority. His ministers were mostly favourites and adventurers, who had never been allowed to exercise much personal initiative, and were always taught to reflect in their actions the sole will of their monarch. Consequently, when that monarch died, their efforts were directed to individual gain and advantage rather than to collective benefit; while the absence of any complete successor revealed the inherent weakness of all states based on personal absolutism.

Another cause arose from the presence on the frontiers of the Panjab of a power with moral and material standards, and political ideas, different from those of the Sikhs. This was the East India Company. While studying the Anglo-Sikh relations, we saw how difficult it had become in the latter days of the Maharaja's rule, to reconcile the commercial aspirations of the English with his own military ambitions. It had also become clear that the two powers, each conscious of its strength, could not remain peacefully in touch

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CONCLUSION.

A.—The Panjab as Modified by the Rule of Ranjit Singh.

At the end of the 18th century, the Panjab was divided into a number of petty principalities, the leaders of which were incessantly at war with one another. Except the generally precarious allegiance of the followers of each Sirdar to his authority, the people of the province were devoid of all sense of unity. The Sikh Confederacy had already decayed, like the preceding despotisms of the Mughal and the Afghan. The Marhattas were also threatening to establish their overlordship. Thus the Panjab was merely a geographical expression with no sense of co-operation among its people. Ranjit, at his accession, applied himself with rare zeal and determination to the task of consolidating a dominion, of giving unity to diverse and scattered elements and of welding the virile communities into a well-ordered state. This was achieved by a systematic policy of aggressive penetration, which, in turn, depended upon the creation of a strong and disciplined force. His military reforms modified, to a great extent, the predatory habits of the earlier soldiers. The *sepoys* of his regular battalions materially benefited by the discipline which he imposed.

To the civil population, Ranjit's rule brought the advantages of a consistent and uniform administration. Immunity from invasion was the most important He established a degree of law and order, and of peace and security, which the people of the Panjab had not enjoyed

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much longer. The territorial development of the Company, in the 18th and 19th centuries, illustrated the trend of its policy to all but the most superficial observers The Maharaja was aware of it. He knew how the English commercial interests had resulted in the absorption of Bengal, which, in turn, had destroyed, as he himself said, a hundred thousand spears of the *Marhattas.* That is why he resented their interference beyond the *Satluj.* Thus we find that such subtle and fundamental causes were working against the independence of the Panjab, as the ruler of the Sikhs could not possibly provide against, even if he had displayed a better political genius.

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APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

An Approximate Scale of Pay of Ranjit Singh's Officers and Men in the Regular Army.

Rank.	*Starting Pay Per Month.*	*Maximum Pay Per month.*	
	Rs.	Rs.	
General	375	450	
Colonel	250	325	
Commandant	60	125	
Adjutant	30	55	
Major	25	50	
Subedar	20	35	
Risaldar	35	50	In addition to this, he received a horse allowance varying from 6 to 10 rupees a month.
Jam'adar	15	20	
Hawaldar	12	16	
Naik	10	12	
Sarjan (Sergeant)	9	12	
Phuriya (Fourier)	7½	10	
Sepoy	7	8½	The starting pay of a *Sowar* (horse-man) ranged from 20 to 26 rupees.
Amla.			
Khalasi (scavenger)	3	4	
Saqqa (water-carrier)	3	4½	
Ghariali (time-keeper)	3½	4½	
Sarban (camel-driver)	4	5	

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Rank.	*Starting Pay Per Month.*	*Maximum Pay Per Month.*
	Rs.	Rs.
Jhanda Bardar (ensign)	4	5
Beldar (spades-man)	5	6
Mistri (mason)	5	6
Langri (cook)	3½	4

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APPENDIX II.

The following scale, showing the strength of the Artillery branch at different periods of Ranjit Singh's rule, is prepared by the author of the *Khalsa Darbar* records, and published by him in the Journal of Indian History of Sept. 1922.*

Year.	No. of Men.	No. of Guns.	No. of Swivels.	
1819-20 A.D.	834	22	190	
1828-29	3,778	130	280	
1838-39	4,535	188	280	Besides this number, there were about 100 pieces placed in the various forts of the kingdom.

*His estimate of Ordnance for 1838-39, while it largely agrees with those of Lord Auckland and Shahamat Ali for the same year, differs from the one which was prepared by Captain William Murray, and published in 1834 by Prinsep (History of Ranjit Singh, p. 186). Murray put the number of guns at 376, and of swivels at 370. He probably overestimated the guns.

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APPENDIX III.

The following is the List of European and American Officers who were employed by Ranjit Singh. A few of them died while in the Panjab, others left the Sikh service either in Ranjit's lifetime or after his death.*

1.	Alvarine	Italian	Infantry	Died at Lahore.
2	Allard	French	Cavalry	Died at Peshawar.
3.	Amise	Do.	Infantry	
4.	Argowd	Do.	Do.	
5.	Avitabile	Italian	Civil employment	
6.	Battice	Do.		
7.	Barlow	English	Infantry	
8.	Bianchi	Italian	Medical Officer	
9.	Benet	French	Do.	
10.	Canora	American	Artillery	
11.	Court	French	Do.	
12.	Cortlandt	English	Infantry	
13.	Campbell	Do.	Do.	
14.	Dottenweiss	German	Engineer	
15.	Dubuignon	French	Infantry	
16.	De l'Ur	Do.	Do.	
17.	De la Roche	Do.	Do.	(Killed by fall from horse).

*This list does not include the names of all the foreign employees of the Maharaja. Those about whom little is known except their names—a few such are reproduced in Dr. Murray's letters in this book—are purposely omitted.

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18.	De la Font (1st)	Do.	Do.	
19.	De la Font (2nd)	Do.	Do.	
20.	De Fasheye) Father			
21.	De Fasheye) & Son	Do.	Cavalry	Died at Lahore.
22.	Ferris	..	..	
23.	Foulkes	English	Cavalry	(Killed by rebel soldiers.
24.	Fendrid			
25.	Ford	English	Infantry	
26.	Fitzroy	Do.	Do.	
27.	Gillmore	Do.	Do.	
28.	Gordon	Do.	Cavalry	
29.	Guthrie			
30.	Gardner	Irish-American	Artillery	Died in Kashmir.
31.	Garron	French	Cavalry	
32.	Hommus	Spaniard	Infantry	Died at Lahore.
33.	Honigberger	German	Medical Officer	
34.	Harlan	American	Civil employment	
35.	Holmes	English	Infantry	
36.	Hest	Greek	Do.	
37.	Hureleek	Do.	Do.	
38.	Hurbon	Spaniard	Engineer	
39.	Harvey	English	Medical Officer	
40.	Jervais	French	Infantry	
41.	Leslie *alias* Rattray	English	Do.	
42.	Mouton	French	Cavalry	
43.	Martindale	English	Infantry	
44.	Moevius	Russian	Do.	
45.	Metui	..	..	
46.	Macpherson	English	Infantry	
47.	Rossaix	French	Engineer	

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48.	Steinbach	Austrian	Infantry
49.	Storr	..	..
50.	Sheaf	..	..
51.	Thomas	English	Infantry
52.	Ventura	Italian	Do.
53.	Vochus	Russian	Do.
54.	Weir	..	

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APPENDIX IV.

The following estimate of the revenues of the Sikh Kingdom, as quoted by Prinsep in his History of Ranjit Singh (p. 184), was prepared by Capt. William Murray, the British Political Assistant at Ambala.

Sources.	*Rupees per year.*
Land Revenue and Tributes ..	12,403,900
Customs ..	1,900,600
Moharana (profits of Justice and Seals) ..	577,000
Total ..	14,881,500

In addition to this, there was income from the *Jagirs*, which were granted by the Maharaja to various Sirdars and notabilities. Murray concluded it at Rs. 10,928,000 a year. Nothing out of this amount directly went into Ranjit's Exchequer.

The entire annual revenues of the Panjab thus amounted to Rs. 25,809,500.*

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*This sum is approximately equivalent to the income of the Mughal province of the Panjab, which, though it did not include Kashmir, Peshawar, and some other trans-Indus tracts, comprised considerable portion of the cis-Satluj territory.

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the subject, and there is no evidence of any rates having been fixed for the purpose. The Maharaja would then address the subject either direct or through one of his Sirdars. People would attend the *Darbar* for two reasons. Either they came at the royal summons, such as officials who came to pay revenue instalments or render accounts, or else for redress of grievances against official oppression. Sometimes the Maharaja decided the cases personally; at another time he entrusted it to one or other of his ministers for investigation. But in either case the final orders, on every question admitted into the Court, were passed after the Maharaja's personal approval. Most of the orders and despatches were issued in the open *Darbar*, but those of a more confidential nature were withheld from it and were only communicated to the person concerned, through a responsible minister best suited for the purpose.*

The *Darbars* were not only held in the *Samman Burj* at the capital, but also on occasions of parades, and in camp; and special meetings were held on occasions of national festivals, such as *Dusshra, Holi, Diwali*, and *Bassant*. It is from such extraordinary assemblies rather than from the daily meetings in the fort of Lahore, that we learn many important and interesting features of the Sikh *Darbar*. To illustrate this, I may quote here the following passage from Hugel's Travels.† As the reader will see, it is a very realistic pen-picture of one of the meetings of the Court of Lahore. The occasion was that of the festival of *Bassant* (the advent of the spring), and the place of meeting was three miles from Lahore. "We crowded in through a narrow doorway into the interior, for the greatest freedom reigns during the feasts and ceremonies in India, and the people were all pressing forward together. One part of the Court was divided from the rest by a *Kanat*, or canvas screen, and there sat Ranjit Singh in an armchair under a large tent of Kashmir stuff, yellow like the carpet,

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*In the Adventures of an Officer in the Punjab are mentioned several orders sent by the Maharaja to Kangra and other places in the hills through 'Aziz-ul-din and without the knowledge of any other minister, not even of Raja Dhian Singh.

†*See* pages 339-41.

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APPENDIX V.

The Lahore *Darbar;* Its Etiquette and Ceremonial.

An attempt has been made in the last two chapters to trace the careers and discuss the main points in the views and character of both the Sikh ruler and his principal courtiers. Here I intend to deal with certain miscellaneous topics pertaining to the Court, such as the time and manner of holding *Darbars*, dress of its members, and the official language. The authorities on Sikh history seem to have regarded these topics as too trivial to require a methodical treatment. Another cause that contributed, perhaps, to this neglect on their part, arose from the fact that the Panjab under Ranjit Singh was in a state of transition. New social and political conventions were, doubtless, developing under the vigorous personal direction of the Sikh ruler, but these never became definite and well recognised rules. The lack of system in every branch of administration is, indeed, one of the outstanding features of Ranjit's rule over the Panjab. In these circumstances, I shall try in the following pages to give as systematic an account as possible of the various topics mentioned above.

A.—The Time, the Place, and the Manner of holding Darbars.

It was the usual practice with Ranjit Singh to hold his *Darbar* every day. There was no rigid rule about the time and the place of holding it, although in practice it appears that mornings and afternoons were set apart for the purpose. Capt. Wade thus describes Ranjit's daily routine, as he observed it during his visit to the Panjab in 1831: "In the hot weather the Maharaja goes out about 5 A.M., spends an hour or two in riding and inspecting his troops, and then takes his first meal, often without dismounting from his horse. About 9 A.M. he retires to his residence and holds a Court, receiving reports, issuing orders to his officers, and examin-

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left hand resting on the ground, their right grasping some weapon, which hung at their girdle; and as I wached their eyes sparkling with rage, and their compressed lips, I thought how speedily one cry to arms would have converted this peaceful festival into a scene of blood. The garments they wore were most expensive and gorgeous, those of Ranjit only excepted, who, as usual, was dressed in his plain wrapping-gown. The dancing girls were introduced, all in yellow, and to them the Maharaja sent the silver nonep which had been presented to him."

"Presently he ordered silence, and beckoning to Mohan, spoke to him in a low voice: this was a request that I would relate some anecdote of military life. I sent back for answer, that had I known his wish earlier, I would have prepared myself and Mohan, but that with such an inexperienced interpreter, it would be a very tedious undertaking. Ranjit then applied to Zulfikar Khan, who, without rising, told us a story with the greatest vivacity and eloquence, of being once surprised with thirty men, by a party of five hundred, whom he at last drove back, 'carrying away with me this,' he said, pointing to his scar."

B.—Dresses of the Courtiers.

Some idea of the dresses of the Sikh courtiers can be formed from the accounts of European travellers and Indian writers.* We find that *Pashmina* and the woollen cloth of Kashmir were the materials largely used by the Sikh nobility. The national colour of the Sikhs was yellow or light green. In the Dehli Miniature Paintings preserved at the Lahore Museum, are to be found a number of sketches of the Sikh courtiers in their state dresses. Their style and fashion is, more or less, uniform, *viz.*, pink-coloured trousers, with loose white muslin coat coming down to the knees, and fringed with light green or pink. A few of them like Sham Singh Attariwala have a yellow scarf round their necks. Sham Singh is seen sitting in a characteristically Oriental position. A turban is wrapped round his head in a somewhat

*See, for example, 'Ibrat Nama, ff. 355—65.

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himself, and every thing about it. It gave him a look of additional ugliness. Large quantities of *Sirsya* and other yellow flowers were scattered about here and there. Vigne [a fellow-traveller of Huegel] and I were the only persons in dark clothes, Mohan [interpreter] being in yellow, according to the prevailing fashion. Here I saw Karak Singh, the Maharaja's eldest son, whose exterior promises very little. I was presented to him, but could hardly find time to speak a word, for the *Bassant* began as soon as we had taken our seats, and I found that it was in reality a levee, each person being expected, as at every opportunity here, to offer some present to the Maharaja. On his right hand sat Karat Singh [?]; on the left, the favourite, Raja Hira Singh; directly opposite sat Vigne and I on arm-chairs, and more to the left Sultan Mohammed Khan and his son, who came in after us and brought with them a present in gold. Behind the King stood the Jemidar, Sushet [Sochet] Singh, and General Ventura, while in the background were a number of the inferior state officers. The Fakir Sahib, Mohan and the Munshi stood near me. Next came Sirdars, Rajas and Khans, from different provinces, all bringing gold, among whom I recognised my friend Rahim Ullah Khan, the Raja of Rajawar. The most remarkable figure was Zulfikar Khan, one of the sons of the brave Mozaffar Khan, the former possessor of Multan, who entered with a proud bold bearing, and then squatted down immediately like the others, his forehead and cheek being marked with a deep scar, which somewhat relieves his excessively plain features. A descendant of one of the Mohammedan Emperors, who strove with Humayun for the throne, a young man and now a Sirdar under Ranjit Singh, Zulfikar Khan appeared to-day before his lord for the first time: he stood for a while upright and looked about as much as so to say that some of those Sikhs ought to give him one of the arm-chairs. I thought we should have had a scene, for his eyes began to flash, and he did not even incline his head before Ranjit Singh, until two of the masters of the ceremonies who had their eyes upon him, pressed him down very roughly. As I gazed round the circle, their various forms did not inspire me with confidence. Most of the Mohammedan Sirdars sat with their

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ing minutely the financial accounts of his government himself. At noon he reclines for an hour, having a secretary by his side to write from his dictation, as different things requiring execution cross his mind. At 1 P.M. he rises and spends an hour in hearing a portion of the Granth read to him, after which he resumes his Court which lasts till the day begins to close, when he either sends for a set of dancing girls to beguile the time or secludes himself in meditation until his second repast. He goes to bed between 8 and 9 P.M., a secretary still being in attendance to whom he frequently dictates his orders. In the cold weather, he does not go abroad until nearly 9 A.M."* In the *Darbar* the Maharaja is represented as sitting on a gold or silver chair,† while his principal courtiers sat on the carpet in front of him. Dhian Singh stood with clasped hands behind his master, and 'Aziz-ul-din sat on the floor by the latter's side. No one was authorised to speak until addressed by the Sovereign, but all had to be ready to answer a question or render an account. Only three persons at the Court of Lahore were allowed to sit on chairs in the *Darbar*,—the two sons of the ruler, and the boy-Raja, Hira Singh. Audiences were granted at least once a day. The usual form of etiquette observed by a subject on being admitted into the royal presence was, first, to bow low before the Sovereign, and then to make an offer of money both as *Sarvarna*‡ and as *Nazr*. The former was in cash, and the latter either in cash or in kind. The value of these offerings differed in proportion to the dignity of

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**See* Captain Wade to the Secretary of the Governor-General's 31st May, 1831: Bengal Political Consultations; Range 125, vol. 30 (India Office MSS. Records).

†Ranjit did not have a throne. "My sword," he observed to Huegel, "procures me all the distinction I desire; I am quite indifferent to external pomp." *See* Travels, p. 288.

‡The visitors made a sacrifice on behalf of the Maharaja by waving a purse full of gold or silver coins over the head of the Sikh ruler. The money thus collected was distributed among the poor. Huegel performed this ceremony with Rs. 750. *See* Travels, page 86.

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irregular fashion, as is the case with most of the Sikhs. It does not seem to be very voluminous, but being low in height, looks exceptionally compressed. Raja Dina Nath's dress itself shows him to have been a *Pandit*. He is wearing a loose white gold fringed robe of silk down to the knees. His trouser is after the medieval fashion, close-fitting and pink in colour. His turban is tied after the Marhatta style, at once short and light. Phoola Singh *Akali*, unlike other members of his sect, has the air of a true courtier instead of a religious fanatic. He is not attired in the usual blue dress of the *Akalis*, but he has a magnificent white costume fitted to the body, with a broad, double-sided, gold-laced bauldric hung round his neck and interwoven with a light silk scarf, crossed in front of his chest. On his head he wears a white turban with the blue *Nihangi* insignia overhung with a variegated heron's plume. In his left hand he is holding a bright *Talwar*. The coat fits the body like a bodice, and suggests Elizabethan costumes.*

C.—The Official Language of the Court.

The various documents that have come down in original from the time of the Sikh government, establish beyond dispute the fact that Persian was the language invariably employed in all kinds of official transactions. The Sikhs, indeed, had a script of their own known as *Gurmukhi*, which had been invented and employed by Guru Angad in the compilation of the *Adi-Granth;* but it had never passed into popular use. This was, perhaps, due to the absence of any systematic educational institutions, which might have disseminated the knowledge of *Gurmukhi* characters among the people of the Panjab. In these circumstances, the Sikhs in the days of the *Misls* as well as under Ranjit Singh, had continued the old language of the Mughals which possessed the sanction of tradition and long usage. Moreover, as the revenue and judicial work of the Mughal government had been recorded in Persian, the continuance of the same language under the Sikhs was calculated to facilitate administration.

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*The dress of several courtiers has been described in Chapter V.

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APPENDIX VI.

A Brief Account of the Sikh Coins.

The following account is partly based on the information derived from the historical data at my disposal, but mostly on my personal examination of the collections preserved in the British Museum, and the Museum at Lahore.

The first Sikh coins were struck in or about 1758, during the temporary occupation of Lahore by the Sikhs under Jassa Singh Kalal. These coins bore the following inscription in Persian :—

سکه زد در جهان بفضل اکال ـ مُلک احمد گرفت جسا کلال

It means: "By the grace of God, the coin is struck in the world, Jassa Kalal having captured the country of Ahmed." Unfortunately none of these coins are now found; and their total disappearance suggests that they were not struck in large numbers, and that they may have been broken up soon afterwards.*

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*Griffin does not think that these coins were ever struck by the Sikhs, and seems to rely upon the version of Ganesh Dass, the author of Twarikh-i-Panjab, who says that they were only twenty-one in number and were struck by *Qazis* and *Mullahs*, and sent to Ahmed Shah to anger him against the Sikhs. *Vide* Rajas of the Panjab, p. 505. The statement of Ganesh Dass, as quoted by Griffin, is not supported by any other writer. It seems to be incorrect, specially in view of Browne's account, which, apart from being more ancient, explains in a reasonable manner the circumstances leading to the total disappearance of these coins. He says: "About thirty years ago, one Jessa Singh Kalal, a chief of considerable weight and abilities, having been chosen commander of their grand army, when it expelled the Aumils of Ahmed Shah Durrany from the city, and Suba of Lahore, became so popular, that he ventured to strike rupees

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Coins were struck for the second time in *Sambat* 1822 (A.D. 1765), after the Sikh conquest of Lahore in that year. These were called *Gobind Shahi* and not *Nanak Shahi,* as stated by Griffin. The inscription on them is as follows:—

Obverse	Reverse
دیگ و تیغ و فتح بیدرنگ	ضرب دارالسلطنت لاهور
یافت از نانک گرو گوبند سنگھ	سمبت ۱۸۲۲ میمنت مانوس

These are rupees of almost pure silver each weighing 177 grs.* The Persian distich on the obverse is in poetry and means: "Festivity, (abundance), Sword, Victory without delay, Guru Gobind Singh received from Nanak." The writing on the reverse means: "Struck in Lahore, the Seat of Government in the auspicious *Sambat,* year 1822." From the dates of the collection at the British Museum, I find that rupees of this type were struck also in *Sambats,* 1825, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34. The interruption in 1823-24 was probably caused by the last invasion of the Abdali into the Panjab.

In *Sambat* 1835 (A.D. 1778), a rupee bearing a different inscription was struck at Amritsar. Its language is unpoetical and

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at the mint of Lahore in his own name, with an inscription in Persian to this effect, "Jessa Kalal conquered the country of Ahmed, and struck this coin by the grace of God:"—but after they had been current about fifteen years, the Grand Diet of the Sick Chiefs (called *Goormutta*), determined to call in all those rupees, and to strike them in the names of Gooroo Nanuck, and Gooroo Gobind Singh." *Vide* India Tracts, p. vii. The obvious inaccuracy regarding the date on which the change of inscription was decided upon by the *Gurumata,* is corrected by the author himself in the course of his book. *See* p. 27. Brown's version is supported by the author of the Kitab-i-Tarikh-i-Panjab; f. 60.

*This is the average weight of Mughal rupees.

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irregular and runs thus:—

Obverse	Reverse
شاہ نانک صاحب	ضہ ب سری امرتسر
فتح سری گرو گوبند سنگھہ فضل	جلوس تخت اکال بخت
سکہ زد برھر دو عالم ساخت	سمبت ۱۸۳۵

This probably was the *Nanak Shahi* rupee. A few other coins of *Sambats* 1843, 44 and 46 have the same obverse as that of 1822. One of 1843 has an inscription slightly different from others, which I reproduce:

Obverse	Reverse
نانک تیغ	ضرب سری امرتسر
(فتح) گوبند سنگھہ فضل (سچاشاھاں)	میمنت بخت اکال تخت
سکہ زد بر ھردو عالم	سنہ جاوس ۴۳ (۱۸)

The term *Sacha Shahan* (true kings) is introduced for the first time in the obverse of this rupee.

No coins of the *Sambats* 1847-53 are to be found in the collections. These years cover a period of an almost incessant internecine warfare among the *Misaldars*. Hence probably very few coins were struck in that period. It may be that no coin was struck at all. One Amritsar rupee of 1854, however, bearing the usual inscription exists in the collection at Lahore.

Ranjit Singh captured Lahore in *Sambat* 1856, but he did not strike his first rupees till the following year. These rupees do not bear his name or any other sign indicating the change of sovereignty, but closely follow the design and inscription of those of 1822. Several others were coined in Lahore in *Sambats* 1860 and 1864. These latter bear on the reverse an anchor which is a new sign. The inscription is indistinct, and, as far as can be made out, reads thus:—

Obverse	Reverse
تیغ نانک از فتح و فضل گوبند سنگھہ سچاشاھاں سکہ زد برسیم و زر	Same as that of 1822 with the addition of an anchor and a leaf.

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Henceforth rupees were struck almost every year at Lahore and Amritsar. Those minted at the latter city after *Sambat* 1860 (A.D. 1803) show another sign. A few have a double branch, which probably represents a peacock's tail. On one of these coins there is a figure of an *Arsi* or thumb-mirror worn by the women of the Panjab. The dates of these coins are *Sambats* 1861, 62, 63, and 66—the years in which Moran, a dancing girl (whom Ranjit had at first met at the Shalamar Garden of Lahore) was greatly favoured by the Maharaja. Her influence over the Prince is said to have been so strong that he several times publicly accompanied her on elephant in an inebriated condition. According to Cunningham,* she once laid a wager that, like the Empress Nur Jahan, she would get her name engraved on the rupees. In this, however, she but partially succeeded because, instead of the name, her mark only, in the shape of the tail of the peacock, was allowed to be imprinted on the coins. The word *Mor* means peacock. One feature peculiar to all *Moran Shahi* (for so they were called) rupees is that the first letter *Alif* is left out in the word اکال (*Akal*).*

The rupees after the *Moran* series go on steadily until the *Sambat* 1884 (A.D. 1827). In each case the year is marked on the reverse. But on all the coins of the next ten years, the same year 1884 is repeated.† The *Sambat* 1885 has some coins of its own, but they were struck in Kashmir.

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*History of the Sikhs, p. 179.

†*Moran* was afterwards discarded owing to the unpopularity of Ranjit with the priests of the Golden Temple. These priests showed their resentment first by refusing his offerings to the Temple, and then by summoning him before their assembly at Amritsar; and the Conqueror of the Panjab, with folded hands and bare feet, acknowledged his sin and asked for forgiveness. A propitiatory fine of Rs. 1,25,000 was levied, but the wily culprit pleaded poverty, and got off by paying Rs. 5,000. Ranjit sent Moran away to Pathankot, and consoled himself for her loss with the charms of another woman Gul Begam.

†The reason for repeating the year 1884 on coins of the next ten years is not definitely known. One view is that Ranjit

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In the British Museum there is a coin which on the obverse contains the usual inscription, while on the reverse has two figures of Nanak and his Mohammedan fellow-wanderer Mardana. It is a Lahore coin, bearing the date 1885 on the reverse. In reality, however, it was struck in *Sambat* 1893, which date it bears on the obverse. This is the only known specimen.

Apart from the coins minted at Lahore and Amritsar, there were others struck at Multan and Kashmir. These provinces were brought under subjection in 1818 and 1819, respectively. Hence at these places the coins were issued after the abovementioned dates. Their designs and inscriptions follow those of Lahore and Amritsar.

There also exists a rupee struck at Peshawar probably by Hari Singh Nalwa. It bears the date 1894 (A.D. 1837),—the year in which the Nalwa Sirdar was killed. The date is marked on each side of the coin, but its weight is only 135 grs.

Gold coins also were struck by Ranjit Singh. Several of them are found in the British Museum. One weighs 167 grs. It has on the obverse the usual inscription, but in *Gurmukhi* characters: on the reverse is the repeated expression: "*Wah Guru Ji, Wah Guru Ji, Wah Guru Ji*,"—the mystic and militant cry of the Sikhs. It bears neither date nor name of the mint. But its weight indicates it to be a regular *Mohur* and not a medal. Another gold *Mohur* of *Sambat* 1861 (A.D. 1804) bearing the inscription of an ordinary Sikh rupee is included in the London collection, and there are others at Lahore.

Copper coins also were struck at the various mints. One is marked *Derajat*, besides the date, *Sambat* 1896 (A.D. 1839)—the year in which Ranjit died. These coins are chiefly remarkable for their great weight, bold execution, and extreme rarity.

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did it under the influence of a popular superstition according to which the number of breaths which man has to take are fixed from the time of his birth, and that the more slowly he breathes, the longer he lives. Ranjit, who fell seriously ill in 1884, may have thought that if he could manage to drag out one year to the extent of ten, his life would be prolonged, the number of years being originally fixed.

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he had received a report from Attock, that a French Colonel from Kabul, who wished to pass on to the Panjab, had arrived there and been detained until his pleasure should be known and enquired if I knew anything of him. I said no and the Raja supposed he was coming for his service. He spoke much about his French officers, especially Monseur Ventura whom he praised very much.

20th Dec. 1826.

Since I last wrote I have had several interviews with the Raja. One day he asked me very minutely about the Mutiny at Barrackpur, its cause, the effect, the mode of its suppression produced on the native corps, if any of them were employed in suppressing it, also if the Governor General visited Dehli and if the King would allow him a seat in his presence. I moved to-day into the city into a large house that has been appropriated for my use, that my communications may be free from extraneous subjects, I will, as you wish, make my future reports in an official form.

2.

Extracts of a letter from Doctor Murray to the address of Capt. Wade under date the 22nd December 1826.

The Raja at present lies in a small tent pitched in the centre of a garden about a mile from the city, there is a small army in front of the tent, and three sides of the garden are enclosed with new quanats. Hardly any ceremony is observed in my visits to the Raja, except on my introductory one, on which occasion I was conducted to the presence by Surdar Mian Dhan Singh his brother Raja Sochet Singh, and four companies of infantry dressed exactly like our Sepoys (except that the officers had yellow uniforms) were drawn up to

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*The following letters and extracts are taken from the Bengal Political Consultations, India Office, MSS. Records.**

1.

Letter from Capt. C. M. Wade, Political Assistant, Loodeana, to Sir C. M. Metcalfe, Bart, Resident at Dehlee, dated Jan. 11th, 1827. Date of Consultation 23rd Feb. 1827, Letter No. 16, Vol. 15, Range 125.

I do myself the honour to submit for your information a letter from Doctor Murray reporting his proceedings at Lahore in Medical attendance on Raja Runjeet Singh.

From Doctor Murray's previous communications, I have the pleasure to annex some notices, that have either not been inserted in his public letters, as appear to be of any interest date of the accompanying report from him.

The difficulty Doctor Murray seems to encounter, in persuading the Raja to follow his prescriptions arises I believe from the jealousy of his native physicians.

Lahore, 14th Dec. 1826.

I was met by the Hakim's youngest brother Nooruddin and conducted to Shail Mal, an extensive garden about three coss east of the city, where as well as at Umrutsur and Philor I received a Zeeafut of fruits, etc., and one hundred and twenty five rupees—moved the next day about two and half miles towards the city and was met on the road by the Hakim's eldest brother Azizuddin (the Raja's principal Minister) and Dewan

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*These letters and extracts are reproduced exactly as they exist in the records. They indicate some obvious mistakes and omissions which are purposely left uncorrected and unaltered in order to present the original as faithfully as possible.

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there, that they are friends of Monseur Ventura, and that a Purwaunah has been sent to the authorities at Attock to allow them to proceed on.

In my visit yesterday he spoke much about his Battalions, and the fine state of discipline they have been brought to by his French officers, this is a favourite subject with him. He added, if I wished he would give me an opportunity of seeing them reviewed. I said it would afford me great pleasure.

All his troops are encamped about twenty Coss off, and there are only details here to carry on the duties.

I shall continue to send you from time to time reports of the Raja's health, and any other circumstances which may fall under my observations, worthy of recording.

3.

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant at Loodeeana. Dated 26th Dec. 1826. Date of Consultation 23rd Feb. 1827. Letter No. 20. Vol. 15. Range 125.

.....The Raja afterwards turned the conversation on Sepoys and asked what kind of Sepoys the men from the Eastward made. I replied, that our Battalions were chiefly recruited from Oude, and that the men from that province made very good Sepoys. He said he had two thousand of them in his service, but he did not find them as active, forewarded or zealous as the men of the Punjab. He ascribed this difference to the difference in their respective diets. The Punjab Sepoys, he said, used much animal food, milk and butter, while the food of the others was chiefly vegetable. After a visit of one and half an hour I withdrew.

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receive us. In my professional visits I am attended only by Faqueer Imam ul deen, and am ushered into the presence without ceremony, after the usual salutations the Raja desiring me to put on my hat, and sit down on a cushion near to him. I never find anyone with the Raja except Surdar Mian Dhan Singh, his brother and some attendants. Around the tent and so placed as to be always in view are six or seven of the Raja's horses, fine looking animals and superbly equipped.

In the afternoon the Raja generally goes out in his Palkee for exercise, on such occasions there is a considerable retinue in attendance, but they keep at some distance from the Palkee which moves on in front, and only accompanied by Mian Dhan Singh or his brother. He often goes to a small bungalow, not far from his tents, and before I moved into the city he sent for me twice while there. At these visits also there was very little ceremony used. He was sitting in a corner of the bungalow, and he directed me to sit down opposite to him. I have already communicated to you some of his conversations. In those which embrace general subjects his questions and observations are marked with great shrewdness and sagacity. He always enquires about the progress of the Governor General, and in my first visit was solicitous to know what was his object in coming to the upper provinces.

He often speaks of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and the friendship which has always subsisted between them. Once while he was expatiating on this subject, I took an opportunity of remarking that the British Government regarded him as one of their most steadfast allies, and that it placed the greatest reliance on the continuance of the friendly terms at present existing, at which he seemed pleased. He mentioned one day that a French Colonel coming from Kabul was stopped by his people at Attak, and he asked, if I knew him. From another quarter I have learned that there are two French officers

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Moteram who conducted me to a small Garden where I was presented with another Zecafut and five hundred and twenty five rupees. Yesterday morning I again moved and came to my tent pitched close to a garden about a mile from the Raja's camp. Here I was informed that the Raja would see me about 3 *past meridian*. I found him seated in a small tent and after being desired to sit down in a chair placed a few yards in front of him, he particularly enquired about your health, the movements of Sir Charles Metcalfe and the Governor General. He was anxious to know the object of the Governor General's journey. Said, he heard he was coming to Kurnal and asked if any changes were to be carried into effect. I replied that the Governor General was going to pass the hot season in the Hills for the benefit of his health. He then asked several questions about the Burmese War—the qualities of the Burmese as soldiers, if the British troops had all returned from Rangoon and how much money had been obtained for concluding a peace. He asked me also about the comparative merits of French and British troops, and wished to award the preference to the British. He then showed me his horses and as they passed, described their good qualities and names and evidently appeared to have great satisfaction in looking at them, shortly after which I took my leave very much pleased with my reception. Through the Hakim I tendered my Buggy and horse to the Raja which he was graciously pleased to accept. He seemed very much delighted with it and ordered one of his Sirdars to get into it and drive backwards and forwards for some time.

17th Dec. 1826.

To day I paid my first medical visit to the Raja and found him seated as before. In the evening while the Raja was passing near my tent, he again sent for me and talked to me on different subjects. He said, that

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4.

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant at Loodeeana. Dated 30th Dec. 1826. Date of Consultation 23rd Feb. 1827, Letter No. 20, Vol. 15, Range 125.

.....The Raja asked me how much pay a General received in our service. I said about four or five thousand rupees a month in cantonments, and that he had some additional allowances in the field. He said each of his French officers received five thousand rupees a month, *Nuqud*, all of which they expended, a great part being given in presents to the troops under them. The French officers often say to him "Why keep us and our Battalions at Lahore, we are of no use at this place, send us across the Attock, to Peshawar, give five thousand or six thousand more troops and we will take possession of all Kabul for you." He asked me if this would be advisable—I said he must know best what dependence he could place on his French officers, that at such a distance and with such a force at their disposal, they would not be so amenable to authority, as when kept near his person. I understood that the pay of these officers is two thousand five hundred rupees a month each, and that they are often kept in arrears for many months.....

In the afternoon the Raja sent for me, and on arriving at his tents, I found him just leaving them in his tanjoun. He said he was going to show me two of his Battalions which were drawn up in line immediately beyond the small bungalow. We proceeded thither, on arriving near the left bank of the line a salute was fired from three field pieces which were placed one on each flank, and one in the centre.

The Raja called Mian Dhan Singh and told him to take me along the line and show me the men. We dismounted

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and went to look at these men, the Raja proceeding along the line at the same time but more in front. The Battalions were drawn up in open order. One was composed entirely of Sikhs, the other partly of Sikhs and partly of Sepoys from our provinces. The former were dressed in white jackets and trousers, and yellow linen pugries. Their Cartouch boxes, belts, and bayonet scabbards were red. The other Sepoys had black accoutrements and turbans like our infantry. All had muskets and bayonets fixed, bright and well polished. These men in general were strong, tall and muscular, especially the Punjaubies. They were all very steady under arms. After passing along the line I went up and joined the Raja, and complimented him on the fine appearance of the Battalions, pointing out how steady the men were (not a bayonet could be seen waving in the whole line) and saying that was a proof of good discipline. We then marched towards the Bungalow, and the Raja sent Mian Dhan Singh to tell the Commandant to put the men through some manœuvres. Carpets were spread in front of the Bungalow, the Raja got out of his Tonjaun, seated himself in an armchair, and motioned to me to sit down on another near him.

The Battalions commenced firing by companies from flanks to centre. They then gave three vollies, formed a hollow square on the two centre companies, and began file firing, all which they executed very well. They afterwards deployed into a line, and marched past the Bungalow in sub-divisions at a quick step. They marched extremely well together, carrying arms as they passed the..... The officers also saluted but very awkwardly. There are one Subedar, one Jemadar, two Hawildars and two Naicks to each company, all except the Naicks dressed in yellow silk. The officers have sabres, the Hawildars Halberts which are shorter and clumsier than ours. There were drums and fifes to each Battalion which played English tunes as they marched past.

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I was highly pleased with what I saw, and communicated my sentiments to the Raja. I was particularly struck with the steadiness of the men and the firing. Indeed they acquitted themselves much better than I could have expected. The Raja said he would show me some more of his regiments to-morrow. I then came away.

5.

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant at Loodeana. Dated 1st Jan. 1827. Date of Consultation 23rd Feb. 1827, Letter No. 23, Vol. 15, Range 125.

.....While the Raja was at breakfast, two regiments of cavalry (about one thousand men in all) had arrived and taken up ground about two hundred yards in front. They were drawn up in line and after performing a few evolutions which were done very slowly, they marched round in review by threes. The men were dressed in red jackets and Pantaloons. They also had red linen pugrees. They were good looking men, and well mounted. The horses were also in good order. The first regiment had sabres and carbines slung in the usual manner along the right side and thigh. The 2nd Regiment was dressed and accoutred in the same way, but instead of carbines they had matchlocks slung at their backs. The carbines and matchlocks were all made at Lahore. The Raja said there was a large manufactory of matchlocks at this place, from which they were exported in great quantities to other parts of Hindustan. The two regiments were commanded by a Mr. Gordon, a half caste in Raja's service. He came up and saluted the Raja after the Review, and said something about the long arrears due to the men. He was told that pay would be issued soon.

The Raja again adverted to the Barackpoore Mutiny and

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Surdars, a number of whom were to-day in the presence, *viz.*, Mian Dhan Singh, Dehsa Singh, Jeswant Singh, Khoosial Jemidar, Tez Singh, Hukma Singh, etc., etc.

Yesterday afternoon being again summoned by the Raja I went to the small Bungalow where he was with the same Surdars as on the preceding day. A Battalion of Punjabee Sepoys was drawn up and went through the same manœuvres as before. The Raja conversed a good deal with his Surdars, and same Moonshis who were busy in making out the accounts of the pay for the troops now in course of issue. He also sent Fuqeer Emam ul Deen to expedite the payment. Shortly afterwards about a dozen dancing girls who were in attendance, came forward, and seated themselves on the carpet in front of the Raja. They were richly attired, and attracted a good deal of his notice and conversation.

6.

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Loodeeana. Dated 4th Jan. 1827. Date of Consultation 23rd Feb. 1827, Letter No. 23, Vol. 15, Range 125.

Since my last letter to you I have seen the Raja twice, on the first and second instant, on both of which occasions there were two Battalions of Infantry drawn up for inspection but as there was no essential differences between them and those of which I have already made mention, it will be unnecessary for me to enter into further details. Suffice it to say, they were dressed and accoutred exactly as the others and went through several manœuvres with equal promptitude.

In my conversations with the Raja on these days, he enquired particularly about our Invalide Establishments, and the periods of service entitling individuals to its benefits which I explained to him. He also asked what

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with them twenty two guns and plenty of ammunition. They demand their arrears to be paid up, and amnesty for their present conduct. Pay is being issued to the troops in consequence of these disorders, and negotiations are being carried on with the mutineers.

About three past meridian I received another message from the Raja and went to him at the Bungalow. Two Battalions of Punjaubee Sepoys were drawn up for inspection. They were dressed the same, and had the same appointments as the Punjab Battalions I saw on the day preceding. There were upwards of one thousand and two hundred Sepoys, stout, goodlooking men and very steady. They went through the same revolutions very well. The Raja said that the muskets, bayonets and accoutrements were all made at Lahore. They were all in very good order. I observed however a number of English muskets among them. The powder too is manufactured at this place. There is plenty of saltpetre in the Punjab, but the sulphur is brought from the Eastward. The officers of the Battalion, the Raja said, are all sons of Sirdars. When a Sirdar had more than one or two sons, he usually took one when young, and had him educated for this service. All his Battalions except those commanded by the French officers, are drilled according to the English mode and have been instructed by Sepoys who came to him for service, that he had made it a rule never to take any who had deserted, only those who had been regularly discharged and that he made them produce their discharge certificates previous to their admission. The word of command is always in English, the marches quick than our ordinary time but slower than our quick march. He said it was the same as taught by his French officers.

The Raja put many questions to me about our European Regiments, and concerning the siege of Bhurtpoor the details of which he seemed anxious to learn, and as I communicated them, he explained in Punjabee to his

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asked if the native officers were concerned in it, or if they separated from the mutineers. I said they separated from the others and came forward with the European officers. He then asked in what they had done as many, as he understood, too had been punished. I replied this much blame was attached to them that they did not give information to their European officers of what was going on in the Battalion, though from their connection with the Sepoys they must have been aware of the dissatisfaction existing. He said a meeting took place in one of his Punjaubee Battalions at Umrutsur about three months ago, and that the officers had separated from the men and came over to him. The mutineers marched off carrying the colours with them. The disturbances had been suppressed, but many of those concerned in it were still in confinement. While he was speaking three prisoners in irons were brought before him, and he said they were concerned in this meeting. One was a Naick and the other two Nishan Burdars who carried off the colours. He asked if I did not consider the crime of the two latter as more aggravated than that of the others, but I evaded the question, though he repeated it. He spoke in Punjabee to the prisoners and those in charge of them, and they were remanded.

I learned afterwards that the Naick was remanded into confinement for one year, and the other two sentenced to have their ears cut off and to be turned adrift. This meeting occurred wholly in consequence of the long arrears of pay due to the men, and no attention being paid to their remonstrances. At the present time, all the Raja's troops are eight and nine months in arrears, and great dissatisfaction prevails in consequence. A body of Golundauze of about three hundred or four hundred men are in a state of open meeting about six Kos from this. They have sent off all their officers and those who would not join heartily in their cause, and have

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and the punctuality with which their pay was always issued.

Within the last few days two or three months pay has been issued to the Raja's troops, but they are still five months in arrears, and great dissatisfaction prevails. The mutinous spirit which I mentioned as existing among the Golundauzes has much increased. They have taken possession of a small village about four Kos from this, which they have entrenched, and they have announced their determination to die there, unless their demands are complied with. They are nine months in arrears. These they require to be paid up and hostages given for their safety until they are beyond the Raja's territories, as they say they will not serve longer.

The village has been invested with troops. Several Battalions have gone from this place. Sheho Singh with his force and the French officers with their regiments are encamped around it. Khooshial Singh Jemidar, Fukeer Imam-ul-deen and others have for the last three days been attempting to bring the mutineers to terms but without effect. I understand six months' pay has been offered to them and an amnesty for the past. These terms the mutineers would accept if they could depend on the Raja's promises but they say he will act towards them as he did towards the Sepoys of the Corps that mutinied at Umrutsur. Several of the Golundauz have families at Lahore. These have been seized by order of the Raja, but this step has had no effect in intimidating them. The negotiations are still going on, and as the mutineers have good two or three months supply of provisions in the village, and plenty of ammunition for their guns, it is supposed they will obtain good terms for themselves.

Raja Souchet Singh with one thousand horse left this some days ago for Attock, some more troops were ordered, and I understand the French regiments or a part of them were to have gone, but their departure

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became of the Effects of the native officers and Sepoys who died with the Regiments. I told him a particular book was kept by the officer in charge of each company, in which the Effects of each deceased individual were registered, that the amount was paid to the next of kin when demanded, and that in cases where no demand was made, it was, after an interval, remitted to the General Treasury in Calcutta. He asked how long our troops were kept in arrears, and if they were paid monthly or at longer periods. I said they were generally two months in arrears, and that pay was issued regularly every month at our stations. I added, it occasionally happened that they were four months in arrears, but it was of rare occurrence. As one of the Battalions was marching past, he said that corps was guilty of sundry mutinous acts some time ago, and the officers had decided by a Court Martial that two months' pay should be cut from the Sepoys. He asked if that was a proper decision. I said I could not give a satisfactory answer to the question, as such a practice did not exist in our service. He said, Do you never cut the Sepoys' pay. I said, never, except in cases where they lost their accoutrements from negligence and then the amount of the articles lost was cut from the pay of the individual. He asked if the Battalion which mutinied at Barrackpoor was in arrears at the time. I said, every Battalion previous to its marching, was paid up, that the one in question was not only paid up but had received a large advance from Government to enable the men to provide themselves with carriage.

The questions and observations of the Raja were so very apropos to the present situation of his troops, that it occurred to me, he wished to find similar practice prevailing in our service as it would form a kind of apology for his present line of conduct. I was therefore particular in explaining the rigid adherence to its engagements with the Sepoys which our Government observed

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and ordered money to be distributed among the men in proportions according to their ranks—a Sepoy receiving one rupee.

Yesterday afternoon another of Monsieur Ventura's Battalions was drawn up. The men were mostly Goorkhas and it is called in consequence the Goorkha Pultan. They were dressed in dark-green jackets with red facings, and had chakos of a European pattern. In other respects they resembled the Battalion I had seen on the preceding day, and performed the same manœuvres equally well. There are many Punjabees in the Battalion, there not being a sufficient supply of Goorkhas to fill vacancies as they occur. Owing to this, the men were not so uniform in height as the others, and did not look so well on parade, but their state of discipline was excellent. To each Company in these Battalions, are one Subedar, one Jemidar, four Hawildars and four Naicks; and to each Battalion one commandant and one Adjutant.

I understand I am to see the other Battalions, but do not expect to have an opportunity of meeting with their French officers. Indeed, the Raja seems to keep them purposely out of the way. Monsieur Ventura came in from camp on some pressing business both yesterday and to-day but returned immediately after seeing the Raja each time.

Yesterday the Raja's conversation was chiefly on horses, and a number of his were paraded which he seemed to take great satisfaction in showing to me. There were about twenty five and all very richly equipped. He enquired very minutely about English horses, their prices, qualities, etc., and evinced a great desire to get one or two of them. I told him the price of good English horses were in Calcutta from four to six, seven, or even ten thousand rupees. He said he would like to have one or two of the very best, and asked if I knew if the Governor General had brought any with him up the

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for the present is retarded owing to the mutinous state of the Golundauz.

7.

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Loodeeana. Dated 7th Jan. 1827. Date of Consultation 2nd March 1827, Letter No. 68, Vol. 16, Range 125.

One of the Battalions which are under the command of Monseur Ventura having arrived from camp on the morning of the 4th Inst., the Raja sent for me in the afternoon to the Bungalow, near to which it was paraded. The Battalion consisted of about seven hundred men. It was drawn up in three ranks and in open order. The men were all Punjabees of uniform height and looked very Sepoy-like. They were dressed in red jackets (made to fit) white pantaloons and yellow puggries with black leather belts and pouches. I looked at several of the muskets and found they were all English. After passing down the line the rear ranks took close order, and the manuel and platoon exercise was performed. This differed in some points from that practised in our regiments. The Battalion afterwards changed its position by echellan movements, and went through several manœuvres which the men executed admirably, especially the advance in line. They lastly marched past in review and the Raja desired the commandant to bring the Battalion next day provided with blank cartridges. It accordingly was again drawn up on the afternoon of the 5th. There was nothing done except the firing, but that was done in a very superior style. In fact, I never saw it surpassed by any of our Sepoy regiments.

The Raja was highly pleased with their performance and gratified at the delight I appeared to derive from the review. He gave rich dresses to the three senior officers

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lion of Punjabees on the left, which the Raja said had been raised only about eight months, and who were armed with a particular kind of musket. He sent for one, and I found it to be a matchlock with a musket back fitted to it. I thought it very heavy and unmanageable. All the men of this Battalion had similar fire-arms.

While these Battalions were manœuvring, there arrived about one hundred and fifty dancing girls on elephants belonging to the Raja, and dismounting at a little distance, came forward and sat down in a semi-circle in front of the Raja on a carpet spread for the purpose. They all were richly dressed, and wore very expensive gold and silver ornaments. They were also armed, most of them with bows and arrows, and a few with spears, swords, and shields of a diminutive size. Two of the leaders went up and made Nuzurs to the Raja of a few rupees which he took. The whole presented a striking and novel appearance. The Raja with a look expressive of great satisfaction directed my attention towards them frequently and I signified to him how much gratified I was by the novelty of the spectacle. After about an hour they withdrew in the same manner as they came and the Raja directed two hundred Cashmere rupees (a base coin worth from eight to twelve annas each) to be distributed among them. It struck me that he might have enlarged his bounty, without incurring the charge of extravagance.

In the evening I received a visit from Fuquer Imam-ul-deen. After talking a good deal about the great fondness for fine horses which the Raja had, he said that he was very anxious to get some English ones, and that he had sent him to me for the purpose of ascertaining how he might succeed in his wishes. He added that the Raja was preparing some rich presents for the Governor General and that if the latter would make presents in return, that the Raja would prefer some

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English horses to anything else that could be sent. I said I was confident that the instant the Governor General was made acquainted with the Raja's wishes, he would adopt measures for speedily gratifying them, and that, if he wished I would write to you on the subject. The Fuquer said he would speak to the Raja on the subject. The next day he told me that the Raja approved of my suggestion, and wished me to address you immediately, that he wanted to have at least two good horses, and that Bay and Grey were his favourite colours.

On the 10th Raja enquired about the progress of the Governor General.

There have been reviews of corps every day and I have now seen the 5th Infantry Battalions which are under the command of Monsieur Ventura. Their excellent state of discipline shows that great pains have been bestowed on them.

The Rajah's health continues.....and to-day he had a very beautiful small tent pitched in the area of the Bungalow. It was perfectly new, and entirely composed of Pushmina and rich Cashmere shawls. He said it cost him about twenty five thousand rupees.

9.

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Loodeeana. Dated 16th Jan. 1827. Date of Consultation 16th March, 1827, Letter No. 13, Vol. 18, Range 125.

In the afternoon of the 13th instant in consequence of a message from the Raja, I proceeded to the Bungalow in front of which the 1st Regiment of cavalry called Dragoon regiment, was drawn up. The men were dressed in red jackets, white pantaloons and boots and yellow Pugrees. They were in number about seven hundred and all had sabres, carbines, and black belts and pouches. They were well mounted and had a martial appearance. They

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executed some manœuvres which were done much more slowly than is the custom with our regiments of cavalry, but still very well. These were directed by M. Ventura who was present. The Raja said this corps was calculated to act as infantry also. He said he gave the men twenty six rupees a month each, and that with this allowance they provided themselves with every thing, but that if their horses were killed in action they received an extra recompense from him. M. Ventura, he said, was much more strict than the other Sahib, but he distributed presents of money, etc. amongst them on occasions of their behaving well. After a short time M. Ventura dismounted and approached the circle. The Raja called to him and made him sit down betwixt him and me. He is a fine looking young man apparently about 33 years of age, very neat in his person and dress, and gentlemanly in his conversation and manners. He wears his beard long. He conversed a good deal in French, and he told me it was at his pressing instances that the Raja consented to this interview, for a suspicion existed that I would try to exert some undue influence over him and his friend. He enquired about the news of Europe which I detailed to him as far as I was acquainted. He was much affected when I mentioned Beauharnas' [?] death to him, said he had served under him in the Russian campaign and spoke of him in high terms. I said he was regarded by all Europe as the best and most amiable character of all the eminent men the French revolution had produced. After about fifteen minutes he sent him away, and then asked me very earnestly what I thought of him, if he was a Gentleman, and a real Frenchman. I replied there could be little doubt that he was a Gentleman, and that as far as I could judge, I thought him French. He was pleased at this and added, some people said that he and his friend were not *Sahibs* but *Goras*, and that they were not real Frenchmen. I soon after came away. In the

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evening Fuquer Imam-ul-deen called and again represented the great anxiety the Raja manifested about the horses, I told him I had written you on the subject, and would do so again.

On the 14th about 4 P.M. I went to the Bungalow where the Raja was, and where the 2nd or Lancer regiment was drawn up. They were seven thousand strong, three hundred of whom were Punjabees, the rest Hindustanees. The Raja said it was good policy mixing the men in the regiments in this manner as it prevented mutinees. The Hindustanees in this regiment were he said formerly in Mirkhan's service. This regiment was well dressed. The men had grey jackets with red facings, and red conical caps with brass plates which looked very well. The Punjabees however had no caps, merely their yellow pugries. They had all sabres and lances about nine or ten feet long. They went through several manœuvres which were as yesterday directed by M. Ventura and then marched past in review order. M. Ventura soon after approached and sat down near the Raja, and requested he would allow me to vaccine his child, which was readily granted. I took this opportunity of again mentioning vaccination and my wish to establish it. The Raja said he had no objection and asked Mian Dhan Singh about it, who said the natives had a dislike to it, and would not bring their children, regarding it as an innovation. I did not press the business further at the time. M. Ventura after a short conversation withdrew. The Raja said that he had directed the French Gentlemen to give me an entertainment and that it would take place in two days.

During the last two days nothing of importance has occurred. I have not seen the Raja, and am inclined to think that another opportunity of seeing M. Ventura will not be afforded me, the facility with which we conversed was reviewed with distrust by some of the Raja's advisers, and I have not heard anything more of the entertainment

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country.

The insubordination among the Golundauz has subsided. They yesterday accepted the terms of the Raja, *viz.* six months and an amnesty for the past, and Shehr Singh has become security that his father does not violate his word. This morning they marched into cantonments and a number of salutes have been fired both yesterday and to-day in celebration of this event.

8.

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Loodeeana. dated 12th Jan. 1827. Date of Consultation 2nd March 1827, Letter No. 68, Vol. 16, Range 125.

On the 8th Instant, the Raja in total disregard of his promises to the contrary, caused all the Golundaz concerned in the late mutiny to be seized and imprisoned. Some of them hearing that this was in agitation had taken flight, but nearly two hundred I have learned were laid hold of. This step caused much dissatisfaction, and the Sirdars employed in bringing the men back to their duty, and who had pledged themselves that the Raja would abide by his word, were very indignant on the occasion. The men have been nearly all released since, only five or six of those most prominently engaged being still in confinement, and it is supposed that they also will soon be set at liberty. The Raja however did not allow this opportunity of gratifying his ruling passion to pass unneglected. He has accordingly cut two months' pay from the men and one from the officers. Though very communicative in general, the Raja has never adverted in any of his conversations with me to this disturbance.

In the afternoon I went to the Bungalow, the Goorkha Battalion was drawn up provided with blank cartridge and fired in a very superior style. There was a Batta-

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ropes. After going about one or two miles the Raja sometimes returns to his tents, sometimes if he takes a liking to the place, he halts and causes tent to be pitched, and remains during a great part of the day. To-day he halted about half way to the Shail Malbagh (a garden three Kos East from Lahore) and as I afterwards met a number of elephants and camels loaded with tents I suppose he will remain some time at his new ground or proceed on to the Shail Mal.

The Raja breakfasts immediately after his morning ride, then undresses and has the right side, etc. rubbed with a linament for some time, and other topical remedies applied to it. After this the Durbar is opened, usually between 9 and 10 o'clock and business transacted which generally continues till 1 P.M. Everything however trivial connected with his affairs is communicated to the Raja and he issues his orders and instructions promptly, regarding the measures which he wishes to be pursued. About 4 P.M. he again makes his appearance, then two or more Battalions are generally paraded, which go through several manœuvres, and afterwards march past in review. Sometimes the Raja gets into his Tonjan and takes a ride for a short distance, more frequently he remains sitting under an awning with a few of his confidential Sirdars near to him. When the Raja wishes to see me in my medical capacity, I go there usually between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning, and am dismissed again previous to the opening of the Durbar. On other occasions he always sends for me in the afternoon when the conversation turns on general subjects. On the afternoon of the 11th I was sent for, when after the usual questions about the progress of the Governor General, he began asking a number of questions about Balloons, and whether in Europe they were ever used for purposes of war. On the morning of the 12th I was summoned in a great hurry and on my arrival found he had a recurrence of the pain in his side, etc. during the

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night which still continued. He is always considerably alarmed when these relapses occur, and though he strives to conceal his agitation, the state of his pulse shows it at once.

I some days ago asked M. Allard if the desire, the Raja had so often expressed for an interview with the Governor General was really felt by him, or if it was merely a *facon de faire*. He replied that undoubtedly the Raja was anxious for the interview, and that previous to my arrival he had asked M. Ventura and him, if they thought the Governor General would come to Phillore, if he communicated his wish to have an interview. They said they did not think the Governor General would come so far as Phillore, and they suggested the meeting in boats on the Sutlej to the Raja who was much pleased with the idea. M. Allard added, he was induced to mention this, from having recollected at the time, the meeting of the Emperors Napoleon and Alexander at Tilsit.

Some unfavourable news arrived from Attock to-day and troops have been ordered to hold themselves in readiness to march in that direction. The real statement has not yet appeared, but I hear that Raja Souchet Singh has been defeated and obliged to fall back. Yesterday a report was prevalent that the French officers with their forces were to march also. I saw them last night and asked if it was the case. They said they did not know, they had heard that such and such thing was in contemplation, but the Raja had said nothing as yet on the subject.

11

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt, Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, dated 18th Feb. 1827. Date of Consultation 30th March 1827, Letter No. 32, Vol. 19, Range 125.

Three days ago intelligence arrived here from Attock,

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that there had been a serious engagement between the Rajah's troops, and the Rajah's insurgents. If credit could be given to the rumours in circulation, it would appear that the Rajah's troops had been beaten with considerable loss, but I am informed by Chr. Allard, this is not the case. There is a bridge of boats across the river at Attock constructed lately for the passage of the cavalry and an attempt was made by the enemy to destroy this bridge in which they had nearly succeeded. The action took place here, and after a severe loss on both sides the enemy were repelled. A requisition has been made however to the Rajah for more troops which he has speedily complied with. The Horse Artillery crossed the Ravi yesterday with orders to proceed in that direction. Two Regiments of cavalry had passed the day before, and to-day the French officers with their force marched also. The other Battalions disciplined in the British exercise are under orders to march, and some of them move off to-morrow. To give an effect to the whole and strike a terror into the enemy, the Rajah's tents and horses have gone also across the river, and are now at the Shah Durrah, and I believe it is the intention of the Rajah to go there himself for a few days now that his regular troops have marched for the seat of disturbance. It is expected that peace will soon be restored.

The insurgents across the Attock are in considerable number, it is said about forty thousand men but indifferently armed. M. Ventura yesterday showed me a letter from one of the French Gentlemen detained at Peshawar to his friends here. It was dated the 3rd February. The Ruler of Peshawar made the disturbed state of the country an excuse for not allowing them to proceed. The writer describes the insurgents as a rabble with hardly any offensive arms, they consist entirely almost of Eusafzyes, and the fanatic Syed Ahmed Allie is one of their principal leaders. Being without money and

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mentioned by the Raja two days ago.

10

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Loodeeana. Dated 15th Feb. 1827. Date of Consultation 23rd March 1827, Letter No. 28, Vol. 19, Range 125.

The Raja's health continues much the same. His strength is improved but he is still subject to occasional attacks of the pain in his side and the other symptoms of his complaint. Reports have been in circulation for some days past, that he would leave this place for Umrutsur, but no dependence can be placed in them, for the Raja seldom divulges his plans till they are ready to be carried into execution.

Returning from my ride this morning, I saw the Raja taking an airing, and I shall give you a short description of the state which he keeps on such occasions. He travels in a large roomy tonjan panneled on all sides and glazed. In it along with him are generally two boys, the sons of Raja Golab Singh and Mian Dhan Singh, one about eight and the other five years of age. The latter is a great favourite and is always with the Raja. Near to the tonjan, eight or ten of his favourite horses are led, and so arranged as to be always in view. About one hundred yards on each side, and in front, mounted troopers move along to keep the ground, and allow no one to approach the presence without the Raja's permission. In the rear follow those Sirdars who are in attendance, and a number of servants, elephants, horses, etc. Mian Dhan Singh is generally on foot walking by the side of the Tonjan. I observed to-day an English chariot (one which was sent by Mr. Seton from Dehli) in the rear of the pageant drawn by an elephant which was clumsily attached to it by

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a distance of ten Kos between them and his forces, and that he expected soon to hear of another action. He said his forces there amounted to ten thousand (10,000) horsemen, that he had written to Sirdar Boodh Singh who commanded, to fall back until he was joined by the French officers and their troops, but that the Sirdar had replied that he could maintain his ground, and while he could do that, would not think of retreating.

The Rajah said, he supposed the French officers were now at Rawal Pindee (they left this on the morning of the 18th) and that they and the horse artillery would soon arrive at the scene of action. When this occurred, he had no doubt but the enemy would soon be dispersed, as they had no artillery, and were indifferently armed.

The other Battalions which left this for that quarter have been halted, and are now encamped about six Kos off on the other side of the Ravey, waiting for further instructions. The Rajah said his Battalions march about 20 Kos a day, and that the Sepoys besides their arms and accoutrements carry two or three days provisions with them on their back. There are Godowns for storing grain, atta, etc. erected at a distance of thirty and forty Kos from one another on the march, and the men are supplied with rations when necessary from them.

The Rajah enquired, if I had received information lately of the progress of Governor General. I replied I had received a letter from you stating that he had arrived at the Kutah on the 12th and was to enter Dehlee on the morning of the 15th instant. He then desired me to write you fully, and communicate his earnest wish for an interview, and his hopes that his Lordship would come to Loodeeana the meeting might be effected. He then mentioned his intention of sending a present to his Lordship, and wished to know what things would be most acceptable, Kabul horses, Cashmere shawls and pushminah of different kinds, etc. etc. He asked me

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almost without arms, they will be soon dispersed on the arrival of the regular troops. M. Ventura mentioned to me that this gentleman was a cousin german of his and had come to India for the purpose of seeing him, for he had no intention of entering the Raja's service. He had been a Colonel of the Artillery of the Imperial Guard under Napoleon, but as the Artillery of the Raja's army is one in which many salutary changes may operate, and which are indeed requisite to render it effective, I am inclined to think, he has been invited to come to India by his friends here, and that he will have the organisation of this branch committed to him on his arrival.

The Rajah's health continues to improve, and he is in excellent spirits for the last two days. He has been at Shail Mal Bagh, which he will leave in two days more in order to cross the Ravi.

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, dated 24th February 1827. Date of Consultation 30th March 1827. Letter No. 36, Vol. 19, Range 125.

The Rajah left the Shail Mal Bagh on the morning of the 22nd and yesterday had his tents pitched in the garden near the city, which he occupied on my first arrival at Lahore. I saw him there this morning. He looked well and appeared in good spirits. After some conversation regarding his health which he said was much better, he mentioned that he had received late accounts from Attock, that the insurgents there were in great numbers, some said sixty thousand (60,000) but he did not think there were more than forty thousand (40,000) men, that people as far as Candahar had assembled and joined the enemy, that there was only

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to write you also on this subject in order that you might ascertain what things he ought to send, as he would endeavour to gratify his Lordship in this particular. I replied that I would communicate his wishes to you, and added that if he was anxious for the interview, the best plan would be to communicate his wishes to the Resident at Dehlee or to you. Adverting to what the Rajah had told me on a former occasion, *viz.* that he had written to Sir Charles Metcalfe for his opinion regarding the mutiny, I asked if he had a reply. He said not yet, but that he expected one daily. I soon after took my leave.

The Rajah was sitting to-day in an easy chair in the centre of a large flower garden, and he directed my attention several times to the flowers with which he was surrounded, asking if there were any such in Europe. There was no person near him except Mian Dhan Singh and an attendant.

13

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, dated 27th February 1827. Date of Consultation 20th April 1827, Letter No. 5, Vol. 21, Range 125.

The Rajah's health continues much the same but he has been in very low spirits for some days, owing to the unfavourable accounts from Attock which have lately arrived. The numbers of the enemy in that quarter have considerably increased, and Yar Mohammad Khan has also joined his forces with that of the Syed Ahmed Ally. Orders have been sent from this, to the troops on their march towards Attock, to make all possible dispatch and during the last four days upwards of forty pieces of artillery have been sent off from this. The Sikh Battalions which were encamped across the Ravey

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river being upwards of a Kos off. The Rajah sent for me on the afternoon of the 28th ultimo. On entering the garden I found him sitting under a canopy pitched in front of a very handsome tent made of Cashmere shawl pieces. On all sides of the tents were beads of flowers of different colours, all in full blossom, and so intermixed and beautifully arranged, as to have a striking and novel appearance.

The Rajah looked much better than I had ever seen him before and was in excellent spirits. Fuqeer Azeez ul deen who was present, recommenced the reading of a Persian letter to the Rajah, which at the time of my entrance he had suspended, and which I found to be from the Vukeel at Dehlee. It gave a very detailed account of the interviews of the Governor General with the King. When it was finished, the Rajah told me that another officer had arrived at his court today who wished to enter his service, that he said he was a Frenchman, but he had some doubts on the subject. I asked if it was one of the Gentlemen who had been stopped by Yar Mohammad Khan. He said no, that this person professed to have come from Iran, and that owing to the disturbed state of Cabul and the neighbourhood, he had taken a more southernly route, and had arrived by Beloochistan and Moultan. However, he added, you shall see him, giving some directions at the same time to one of the attendants.

The Rajah then began giving me a minute account of the victory his troops had lately gained across the Attock, and which appeared from his account to have been more decisive than I at first imagined. He said the enemy was completely dispersed, and would not be able to re-unite, that the Syed and Yar Mohammad Khan had fled and no one knew in what direction they had gone, that they had left behind eight pieces of cannon and about one hundred Zambooraks, besides tents and horses, all which had become the property

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the Attock, and the hazardous state in which troops there have been for some time, must naturally render him averse from going to a greater distance from them. Indeed if it had not been for these reasons he would have returned to Umrutsur long ere this. If his health was sufficiently re-established, I have no doubt but he would himself be soon at the head of his troops. The well known energy of his character and his military ardour warrant me in drawing that conclusion, and I am given to understand he often expresses to his attendants that inability to undergo much fatigue and to sit on horseback alone prevent him accompanying his troops in person.

A rumour has been rife for some days here, that the Rajah intends going immediately to Wazeerabad (on the banks of the Chanab about forty Kos north-west from this) but there is no real foundation for it. In fact he keeps his measures so profoundly secret from every one that not even his most confidential servants know in the morning whether their master intends to shift his camp or remain where he is.

14

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, dated 2nd March 1827. Date of Consultation 20th April 1827, Letter No. 5, Vol. 21, Range 125.

In the immediate vicinity of Lahore, but chiefly in an East and North-East direction from the city, are several gardens containing fruit trees and flowers, in which the Rajah generally resides, shifting from one to another according to the dictates of his fancy. His tents are at present pitched in one near Summan Boorj on the bank of a small branch of the Ravey, which washes the north-west end of the city, the main stream of the

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have marched to the banks of the Chanab according to orders received, and are to remain there for further instructions.

To-day however intelligence of a more favourable nature has been received. In the forenoon I was disturbed by the repeated discharges of artillery, and soon after I received a visit from Captain Noor-ul-deen. He said the Rajah had sent him for the purpose of communicating the contents of a despatch which had just been received from Attock. It was from Sirdar Boodh Singh.

The enemy it seems had made two desperate attacks upon two positions occupied by the Rajah's forces, but after a severe conflict they had been repulsed in each, and put to flight, which was so ordered and one that great numbers were sabred by the Rajah's cavalry. The action seems to have been a severe decisive one. Both Yar Mohammad Khan and the Syed were engaged in it. The former lost six pieces of cannon, and his camp became a plunder to the victors.

Calipha Noor-ul-deen mentioned that the Rajah was in high spirits on receiving the news of this victory, and anxious that his friends should be made acquainted with it. I bade him offer my warm congratulations to the Rajah on the splendid success of his arms, and to add that I would have much pleasure in communicating the intelligence to you.

This success will cramp the efforts of the enemy, and disable them from repeating their aggressions for some time. In a few days also, the horse artillery, and the regular troops of the Rajah will arrive at the scene of action, which will enable his Sirdars to adopt offensive measures instead of confining themselves to defensive ones.

The Rajah appears to be as desirous as ever of an interview with the Governor General, but I question much if his real inclinations are in accordance with his professions. The disturbed condition of his possessions across

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of the victors. The Rajah detailed this with a great satisfaction and in high spirits. He spoke in terms of the warmest commendation of some of his Sirdars, especially Boodh Singh and Rajas Golab Singh and Souchet Singh brothers of Mian Dhan Singh and both yesterday and to-day he was employed in sending off Khillats and horses to those who had distinguished themselves.

The officer now made his appearance, and the Rajah desired me to converse with him in French and ascertain who and what he was. He appeared about thirty seven or thirty eight years of age, was dressed in a blue coat with red facing and ponderous gold epaulets, a white waistcoat and very loose red satin trousers. He wore his beard long, was very much sunburnt and had a small black cap on his head made of the skin of a lamb with the wool outermost. I spoke to him in French and mentioned the Rajah's wish. He said his name was Ums, that he was a Frenchman born in the South of France, that he had entered into the artillery at an early age, and served in several of Napoleon's campaigns. I asked him what rank he had attained, and what was his last campaign. He said he was first Lieutenant of the artillery under King Joachim in the Russian campaign, but had been made captain before its termination. He said he had his brevet with him. I explained this conversation to the Rajah who was pleased to find that he had been always in the artillery, and bade me ask him if he understood everything with artillery tactics, which I did. He said he had been all his life nearly in the artillery service, and was well acquainted with all its duties, which he hoped to be able to show the Rajah if he would give him an opportunity. The Rajah asked me in a low tone of voice if I thought he was really a Frenchman. I replied I did, that he spoke the language well, and that what he had mentioned about the campaigns in which

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he served, and the Generals under whom he had been was consistent with the history of the times. The Rajah wished to know if he had been invited here by his other French officers. He said no. He was acquainted a little with M. Ventura, he added, whom he had seen some years ago at Constantinople, and of whom also he heard in Persia. He said he had been in the service of the King of Persia for some years, and he mentioned the names of several English gentlemen he had met there. He was going on to relate why he had left that service, and the route by which he reached India, when the Rajah rose from his chair and came forward. I took my departure immediately afterwards.

The Rajah has sent for M. Ums twice since, and has talked with him much about the casting of cannon, and similar subjects though nothing has yet been decided. I have no doubt but he will take him into his service.

The Sikh Battalions and the foot artillery, which left this some days ago, have in consequence of the late victory been directed to halt, and orders were issued to-day for their return to Lahore. Directions have been sent to M. Ventura to proceed to Peshawar and occupy a place called the Balasar in the city, taking care that the inhabitants were not plundered nor molested. M. Allard with his cavalry has been ordered to join the Shahzada Shehur Singh and remain with the force at Husht Nuggar a short distance from Peshawar.

15

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, dated 5th March 1827. Date of Consultation 20th April 1817, Letter No. 7, Vol. 21, Range 125.

I had the honour of addressing you on 2nd instant since which there has nothing particular occurred at this place.

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The foot artillery which had made some marches towards the Attock have returned to Lahore, but the Sikh Battalions which accompanied them continue encamped about fourteen Kos off. Advice received to day from Attock mention that part of the Rajah's force there had moved on to Peshawar, and was within a short distance of that city. To-day the Khiluts, horses, bracelets, etc. etc. intended by the Rajah for those who had distinguished themselves in the late action left this for the army.

The French officer of whom I made mention in my last has had two or three interviews with the Rajah lately, who also yesterday sent him ten rupees. Though no particular duty has yet been assigned him, I think it extremely probable that his services will be accepted. I have heard that the Rajah has written to M. Ventura to ascertain if he is acquainted with him, and is waiting for his reply before he decides on entertaining him or otherwise.

About three weeks ago some merchants arrived here from Kabul and Bokhara with about two hundred and twenty horses, and are still detained by the Rajah though anxious to proceed onward. They had three thousand rupees Masool and five thousand rupees more have been levied from them here. The Rajah has taken besides ten of the best horses and wishes to pay for them at a rate far below what the merchants say is their proper value. They exclaim loudly against the severity with which they have been treated, and say they will never come by this route again.

I was informed to-day by the Ukhbaur Nuvees that the presents for the Governor General would be sent off in a few days, and that Fuquer Azizud deen [?]. This is mere report, however, as Fuquer Emam ul Deen told me yesterday it was not known who would go, the Rajah not having yet specified any person. I am apt to think he would not like to part with Aziz ul deen for so long a period, as he is in constant attendance at night and

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consulted in the most trivial matter. A few days more will show.

16

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, dated 8th March 1827. Date of Consultation 20th April 1827, Letter No. 7, Vol. 21, Range 125.

That Rajah having sent for me on the morning of the 6th I went to the garden in which his tents are at present pitched, and found him sitting alone in the middle of some flower beds. He looked pretty well, said he found his health improved, and that he had not had a recurrence of the troublesome symptoms since the eleventh ultimo, a larger interval of cessation, than has occurred since the commencement of his illness.

He mentioned that the French officers with their forces had joined Sirdar Boodh Singh, and that everything was in a fair way of being speedily arranged. Yar Mohammad Khan who had fled in the direction of the Hills had sent in a letter to Sirdar Boodh Singh in which he engaged to produce immediately fifty one horses for the Rajah, besides some money and rice, and made the most solemn promises never to revolt again. The Rajah did not say if he intended to reinstate him in his favour on these terms. The two French officers who had been detained by him at Peshawar so long, had found their liberty and joined Boodh Singh's camp some time ago.

The Rajah said he intended going towards Umrutsur in a few days after the termination of the Hoolee and after staying their some time, proceeding onwards to Deena Nuggar, a place about forty Kos from Umrutsur at the foot of the Hills, where he has for some years been in the habit of spending the hot season, and the

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climate of which agrees well with his constitution. He had some intention of going to Kupoortollah, before he went towards the hills, for the purpose of meeting Fateh Singh who was extremely anxious to be reconciled to him.

The Rajah asked me if I had heard of M. Moevius who was at Loodecana. I said I had and that I understood he was very anxious to be admitted into his service. He said he had written to him to bring his family with him, and that then he would entertain him. He did not like, he added, employing foreigners who were apt to think of their own country, grow discontented, and apply for their discharge at a time when probably their services could not well be dispensed with. He said Monseurs Allard and Ventura when they came here had not brought famiiies with them, but that since their arrival they had married and got settled and he had encouraged them to do so.

I asked if he had taken M. Ums into his service, he said not yet but that he thought he would. I soon after took my leave.

I understand from other quarters that M. Ums has represented himself to the Rajah as well versed in the art of casting cannon, etc., and that the latter has offered him twenty five rupees a day with the promise of an increase if his services are approved of. This offer however has not been accepted. He insists on having twenty thousand rupees a year, the allowance which he says he had from the King of Persia. To this the Rajah objects and no arrangement has yet been made.

17

Letter from Doctor Murray, Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry, near Lahore, to Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, dated 30th March 1827. Date of Consultation 1st June 1827, Letter No. 17, Vol. 21, Range 125.

The presents intended by the Rajah for the Right Honour-

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able the Governor General were sent off this morning accompanied by Dewan Motee Ram, and Fakeer Emam ul Deen, who have been deputed for the purpose of meeting his Lordship on his approach to the Hills and charged with messages and congratulations on the part of the Rajah. I am unable to account for the delay which has taken place in dispatching the deputation. To my questions on the subject the general reply has been that the Rajah was anxious to send one of his sons, and that some delay must necessarily occur before either of them could arrive.

Having learned three days ago that the Governor General was fast approaching the Hills, I mentioned to the Fakeer, that if the Rajah intended sending a mission, it ought to be dispatched, as if further delay took place, his Lordship would have entered the Hills, where from the nature of the roads, the mission would experience considerable difficulty in proceeding.

I saw the Rajah the following morning. He mentioned that the deputation would leave this immediately (it should have started yesterday but that not being a fortunate day, it was deferred till to-day) and he particularised the presents which accompanied it. He afterwards began talking of his affairs beyond the Attock. He said Yar Mohammad's son would soon arrive at Lahore where he was to remain as a hostage for his father's good conduct in future. He is described as a fine boy of about twelve years of age. Along with him are 25 horses, 100 maunds of Peshauree rice as being of very superior quality and much esteemed in the Punjab. The Rajah also told me that the Syed sent by the Company to collect and bring the late Mr. Moocroft's effects, was also along with this detachment. To my question if he had got any of his books or manuscripts, he replied that there were ten horses and *bahut asbab*. According to his calculation they would be at Wuzeerabad to-day or to-morrow.

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There is a particular horse in Yar Mohammad's possession called Leïlah which the Rajah was anxious to obtain, and had demanded. Yar Mohammad answered that it was killed in the late action. Instructions have been forwarded however to the French officers to insist on getting this horse on a large sum of money in lieu (I think he said fifteen thousand rupees). The Rajah told me he did not believe that the horse was dead, that Yar Mohammad was the greatest *drogh-go* he ever met with and "yet," he added "what a *bewaqoof* he is, he refuses to let me have this horse but does not scruple to send me his son, does he value his horse more than his son?"

The Rajah said that Messrs. Allard and Ventura had met with the two French officers who had been detained by Yar Mohammad, and that one of them had turned out to be the real brother of M. Ventura (He is a cousin german only, so Ventura himself told me) that they had come from Europe chiefly to see their friends, that if the Rajah would accept their services, good, if not they would return after a short time to Europe.

The Rajah's health is improving every day. He is afraid however of a relapse, and has not ventured to mount on horseback. He has been living in the Shainal Bagh since the 25th and I expect him to move into Umrutsur every day as he must be there by the 1st Bysakh which will be in eleven or twelve days hence. I occupy a garden belonging to Kemib Singh about 1½ mile from where the Rajah is.

18.

Letter from Capt. Wade, Political Assistant, Camp, Machiwarah, dated 10th April 1827, to A. Stirling, Esqr., Secretary to Government with the Right Honourable the Governor General. Date of Consultation 1st June 1827, Letter No. 290, Vol. 23, Range 125.

The mission dispatched by Maharaja Runjeet Singh having

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of the most important expeditions in which the Rajah has been engaged, particularly his attacks on Cashmir and Multan. They were chiefly confided to the direction of Mohkam Chand, who may be said to have been the first of the Rajah's officers, who succeeded in planting his authority in these valuable acquisitions to his power. Dewan Moti Ram shortly after the death of his father, was appointed Governor of Cashmir where he remained nearly three years, after which the office was conferred on his son Kerpah Ram, with whom it still continues.

6. Fakir Imamuddeen, I have already had the honour of mentioning in my reports to the Resident at Delhi, as the person, whom the Rajah departed for medical advice to Loodeana the brother of the Rajah's principal adviser Azizuddeen and the same who attended as Mehmandar to the British Embassy to Lahore in 1808-9. The various confidential situations he has filled, attest the high intimation in which he is held by the Rajah, and in his late visit to Loodiana, his mild and pleasing manners, good sense and unaffected modesty, particularly recommended him to my notice.

7. Among the articles of presents for the Right Honourable the Governor General, the mission has brought a handsome tent made of shawls, designed as a present for His Majesty, King George the 4th which the Rajah requests I will explain to his Lordship and solicit him to take charge of it on his account for His Majesty.

Letter from Captain C. M. Wade, Political Assistant, Ludhiana, to Sir C. T. Metcalfe, Resident &c., &c., &c., dated 1st Aug. 1827. Date of Consultation 12th Oct. 1827, Letter No. 3, Vol. 33, Range 125.

Having conducted the mission of the Right Honourable the Governor General to Maha Raja Runjeet Singh and

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returned from his Court at Loodiana I do myself the honour in conformity with the orders I have received to submit a Report of my Proceedings while in charge of the mission, the manner of its reception by the Maha Raja and such observations as the nature of duty has suggested the propriety of recording for the information of his Lordship.

2. On the second of May when Dewan Motiram and Fakir Emamuddin who had previously arrived under my charge as Envoys from the Maha Raja to the Governor General were about to take their leave I received a letter from Mr. Secretary Stirling informing me that his Lordship having reason to believe that Maha Raja Runjeet Singh would be highly gratified by the Deputation of a British Officer to his Court as the bearer of a complimentary Letter and Presents in return for his mission, had been pleased to resolve that I should be employed on that duty. Captain Pearson, an Aide de Camp of the Governor General was at the same time deputed to join me and subsequently Mr. Surgeon Gerard was directed to attend the mission in a medical capacity.

3. An audience of leave preparatory to my departure was granted to the Maha Raja's mission on the 4th of May, and on the 6th I took my leave of his Lordship at Simla and accompanied by the Raja's Envoys commenced my journey towards the Punjab by the Route of Subathoo and the Valley of Pinjore. Before leaving Simla information had been received that the Maha Raja had arrived at Umrutsar. It being uncertain however, whether he would remain there or visit Adinanagar a place about 50 miles to the North-East of Umrutsar near the Hills where he usually passes the hot season, it was necessary to ascertain the intentions of the Raja on that point before I could decide whether it would be requisite to cross the Setlej at Ropar or proceed to Loodiana. On my arrival at Subathoo I learned that the Raja would receive the mission at Umrutsar. I

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arrived at Loodeana, I beg you will do me the honour to inform the Right Honourable the Governor General, that it is now on its way to his Lordship's presence.

2. As a mark of attention and cordiality consonant with friendly relations existing between the two States, the Rajah requested that I would meet the mission on the banks of the Setlej, and conduct it to the Governor General, which I had previously proposed to do.

3. From various communications that I have had, it would appear to have been the anxious wish of the Rajah to effect a personal interview with his Lordship, and I am inclined to think, that the delay which has occurred in the despatch of the mission has been owing to a hope on the Rajah's part, that before the Governor General could reach the Hills the state of his health would enable him to secure an interview, and render a mission unnecessary, but on consulting his own physicians and Dr. Murray it was deemed imprudent for him to attempt the journey, and he has been obliged to abandon that idea.

4. Unable to meet his Lordship himself, he became desirous of paying him the respect of deputing his son Kour Kherek Singh or Sher Singh with some costly presents and messages of friendship and congratulation. They happen however to be engaged at the present moment, on distant expeditions; the one, in subduing the insurgents on the Attock, the other, in exacting a tribute from the new Nuwab of Bahawalpoor on his accession to the Musnud, and his Lordship having approached the Hills much earlier than the Rajah expected, so little time has been allowed for their recall, that he has, to avoid delay, been induced to entrust the mission to Dewan Moti Ram and Fakir Imam-ud-din, whose rank and situations in his service, are well known.

5. Moti Ram is one of his most respectable officers, and the son of the late Dewan Mohkam Chand, distinguished for the talent and ability with which he conducted some

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regulated my march accordingly and arrived at Loodiana on the 17th of May. A troop of cavalry from Kurnaul and a company of infantry from Loodiana had been previously ordered to join the Escort of the Mission but there had not yet been time for the cavalry to join and it became expedient to halt at Loodiana for some days for its arrival.

4. At Subathoo Dewan Motiram paid me a visit, and said that he was desirous of availing himself of the favourable opportunity afforded by his approach towards the Ganges of performing a pilgrimage to Hurdwar and requested that I would give him a Perwanah to enable him to pass unmolested through the country to that place. The request seemed to me to be ill-timed; the duty on which he was employed had not been brought to a conclusion, and I informed him that although he was at liberty so far as I was concerned, to pursue his own course, his departure from the mission at that moment was in my opinion inconsistent with his situation and the interests of his master, and if he asked my advice I had no hesitation in advising him for the present to postpone his desire, but he urged with earnestness the Religious importance of the act and proceeded towards the Ganges, announcing his intention of rejoining the Mission before its arrival at the Maha Raja's Court which he scrupulously fulfilled. During his absence reports were spread that he was to escape from his master and did not mean to return, but had been forced to retrace his steps by the interference of a party of the Raja's Sepahees who attended him to Hurdwar. The Raja had heard the reports that were in circulation. The Sepahees were examined; they declared their entire ignorance of the design imputed to the Dewan, denied in the most positive manner the part they were said to have acted and the results of my own enquiries lead me to conclude that the story originated in an idle attempt to throw ridicule and

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contempt on the Maha Raja by accusing his Envoy of designing an action derogatory from his situation and which the Dewan never appears to have contemplated. Some time ago he had obtained the Raja's permission to proceed to Hurdwar, Gyah, and other places of Hindu worship in Hindoostan. The prosecution of his journey had only been interrupted by his selection as an Envoy to the Governor General and as the Raja in giving Motiram his consent to make the pilgrimage he proposed, applied at the time to me through his Vakeel to provide him on his arrival at Loodiana with the usual passports, it is unlikely that he would have so readily agreed to the wishes of a servant possessing a large Jageer and a confidential office about his Court which it was the Dewan's interest to preserve, if the Raja had not had the fullest confidence and ascribe his wish to visit the shrines I have mentioned to a purely religious motive.

The country through which the mission had to pass from Simla to Loodiana being within the limits of the British authority and well known scarcely needs any description. The first three marches lay through the hilly tract which divides Simla from the plains passing through a part of the possessions of the Raja of Patialah and the petty states of Cothar and Mahbagh In the fourth march the mission descended from the Hills and entered the valley of Pinjore through which it continued to wind in the direction of the Sutlej for two days in the territory of the Hindoo Raja and arrived at Ropar on the 13th. The proprietor of that place Surdar Bhoop Singh a Sikh chieftain under the protection of the British Government came some distance from the town to meet and conduct me to my tents. In the evening he sent a bag of rupees and 25 pots of sweetmeats according to the custom of the country which he begged me to accept. I returned the money, the sweetmeats were distributed among the servants in camp.

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persecutions of the Mohammedans when the Sikhs first struggled for National Independence. Chamkaur is remarkable as the place where two sons and many of the most faithful adherents of the Guru were slain. He was besieged there by a party of Imperial Troops that had been sent to seize and take him to Dehlee. Finding himself unable to offer a successful resistance he fled to Machhiwara which has become sanctified as the place of his escape and where he found the means of eluding the vigilance of his persecutors. Some direct descendants of the family who are treated with great reverence by the Sikhs as the spiritual Lords of their tribe exercise the internal jurisdiction and with some adjoining villages enjoy the Revenues of both places.

8. The day after my arrival at Loodiana I received a friendly message from the Maha Raja expressing that he was much gratified to hear of the mission which I was conducting to him from the Governor General and hope I would bring two or three troops of cavalry and four or five companies of infantry that he might have an opportunity of seeing their exercise. I was informed at the same time that Jwala Singh one of his principal Surdars had arrived in Filor to meet me on my entrance into the Raja's country and that particular orders had been given to the different authorities on the road to receive the mission with every mark of attention and hospitality and provide everything that was necessary for its use. I sent a confidential servant with a complimentary message to Surdar Jwala Singh saying that I hoped to have the pleasure of meeting him in a few days.

9. On the 20th of May a troop of cavalry under the command of Captain Kempland having arrived and the Escort being formed I made my preparations to cross the Sutlej on the morning of the 22nd and encamped on that at Filor. On reaching the opposite bank of the river, Surdar Jwala Singh met and escorted me to

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6. In the course of the day Fakir Imamuddin who still continued with the mission visited me at Ropar and said that he wished to communicate something, the seeming indelicacy of which he hoped I would pardon. He said that during the attendance of Dewan Motiram and himself on the Right Honourable the Governor General at Simla, a claim amounting to 251 rupees had, I was aware, been made by the Zemindars of the country and the money paid to them for supplying forage for the consumption of their party. Some ill-disposed persons had put an evil construction on the act and as an inference had been drawn from it that the Governor General had not received the Raja's mission with the usual marks of favour and hospitality he had resolved to mention the rumour to me that I might if I thought proper apply an antidote for its removal. The money he said was of no consideration but it had created an impression at variance with the fact and repugnant to the friendly alliance existing between the two States. The communication of the Fakir betrayed a sensitive attention to public opinion relative to the reception of his Master's mission by his Lordship which the affair hardly seemed to merit but perfectly according with the susceptibility of a native on points of ceremony. I gratified the Envoy and endeavoured to remove the erroneous idea that had gone abroad by sending him the money the next day in the most open manner with a suitable message that the Newswriters who attended the camp might know and report what I had done.

7. Between Ropar and Loodiana the mission passed chiefly through a part of the territories possessed by Maha Raja Runjeet Singh or his Vassals on the left bank of Sutlej. Chamkaur and Machhiwara, the first and second marches of the mission after leaving Ropar are held in sanctity by the Sikhs; they are the scene of some of the most vigorous efforts made by Guru Govind Sing (the Priest Militant of the Sikhs) to resist the

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sons. A reconciliation has however just been effected. The Surdar has returned to Court and having acknowledged the Maha Raja's authority he has been reinstated in more than half his lands and the full exercise of the rights he possessed in them. The day the mission arrived in Phugwara a Purwanch was received by the Raja's officer in charge of the place to resign it to the Surdar's authority. Azizuddin the Surdar's minister had been deputed on the part of his master to take possession of the district which he effected while I was there. He paid me a visit in the evening and presented the sum of 350 rupees and the usual supply of sweetmeats as a zeeafut from his master. I accepted them after offering some objections which I found I could not urge without giving offence.

12. In riding round the town in the evening I discovered a small but substantial fort detached from it about ¼ mile on an open and extensive plain. The walls were high and solid and appeared to be almost new. On enquiring I found they had been commenced about twelve years ago by Surdar Fateh Singh. The ditch is imperfectly excavated and part of the walls is still unfinished. It is a square fort with Bastions on each angle and a circular work in front of the Gate.

13. On the 24th May the mission marched to Jahlandhar and encamped near the ruins of three large Mohammedan tombs. In the rear was a garden with a tank of water. Jahlandhar is one of the oldest towns in the Punjab and gives name to most part of the country situated between the Hysudeno or Sutlej and the Hyphasis or Biah called "Doab-i-Jahlindhar." There are some extensive groves and Gardens around the town now going to decay. The place is under the authority of Surdar Jeevan Singh one of the Maha Raja's principal Jagirdars. In the centre of the town there is an old fort with walls and Bastions. It was besieged and captured by the Raja some years ago from Surdar Boodh Singh

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mission and myself when I took my leave. In the course of the day the Surdar sent a zeeafut of 625 rupees and a quantity of sweetmeats. Surdar Fateh Sing has a mean person and no manners. He is liked by his subjects and is I believe without being a man of talent or ability a mild and good Ruler.

16. The mission proceeded on the morning of the 26th to Bhirowal and crossed the Biah or Hyphasis. A number of boats were collected at the Ferry. They are similar to those used on the Sutlej about 35 feet in length, broad and flat on the water with a rising stern and very capacious, 10 or 12 horses may cross in them at a time with facility. The bed of the river appeared to be nearly 1½ mile broad but the stream was running in a contracted channel on the right bank. It is broader I think than the Sutlej but not of the same rapidity. From the bed of the river there is a considerable ascent to the town which stands on the top of a high and abrupt bank intersected on either side by deep ravines and broken ground. Towards the river and viewed at a distance the bank has the appearance of being scarped like the ramparts of a fortification. About ¼ mile to the south westward of the town there is a shrine dedicated to Guru Amar Dass the second spiritual leader of the Sikhs. It is surrounded by a thick grove of trees where a number of Sikh mendicants are settled. To the westward is a small fort built of brick in tolerably good order; here the mission also received a zeeafut of 250 rupees and sweetmeats in the name of the Maha Raja.

17. Leaving Bhirowal I marched on the morning of the 27th to Jendialeh and encamped to the eastward of a small fort built on an open plain and detached from the town. On my arrival at the ground I was met by Dr. Murray, who had for some months past been attending the Raja with the permission of government in his medical capacity. I learned from him that great preparations were making

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Faizullpuriah an independent Sikh chieftain who resisted at that time the Raja's authority. Several large breaches were visible in the walls which I heard had been exploded by mining. A zeeafut of 250 rupees and sweetmeats were received here.

14. On approaching Kapurthala the next march and the residence of Surdar Fateh Singh Aliwaliah I was received by a deputation from the Surdar composed of his son Amar Singh (a fine boy about five years of age) and several of his officers. The boy came into my Howdah and proceeded with me to camp and then took his leave. At Kapurthala I was also met by Nuruddin the youngest brother of Azizuddeen the Maha Raja's minister. He said he had been charged to offer Maha Raja's congratulations on my arrival into his country and to accompany me to Umrutsar.

15. In the evening I received a visit from Surdar Fateh Singh. He spoke of Lord Lake's visit to the Punjab with the British army in pursuit of Jaswant Rao Holkar in 1805 and talked of the review mentioned by Sir J. Malcolm in his Sketch of the Sikhs at which the Surdar was present. In my next march I should he said pass the spot where the army was encamped during the negotiations between his Lordship and Holkar in which the Surdar professed he had acted an active part in the British interests. On taking his leave I presented the Surdar with a pair of pistols. He was anxious that I should halt a day or two at this place making many professions of hospitality but I found it inconvenient to accept his invitation and returned his visit with the officers of the mission the same evening. He received the party in a Garden with rows of cypresses planted along the walks. It was a shady and agreeable spot. I found the Surdar seated on the terrace of a large building he had lately been erecting in the European style. After some general conversation, trays of shawls, etc. were brought and presented to the members of the

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for my reception and that the Raja had collected nearly all his regular troops in the vicinity of Umrutsar with the view of gratifying the mission with a sight of them.

18. A few hours after I had been at Jendialeh I received a letter from the Maha Raja expressing his pleasure at my approach and that he had deputed his son Kour Sher Singh and his minister Fakir Azizuddin to meet me early the next morning and conduct the mission to Umrutsar. I was joined at Jendialeh by Dewan Motiram who had been travelling from Hurdwar at the rate of 25 coss a day that he might join me before the party should arrive at Court. In the evening Surdar Jwalah Singh to whom the place belonged sent me a zeeafut of 250 rupees and sweetmeats.

19. From the time I had entered the Maha Raja's country, besides sweetmeats and money, grass, firewood and forage were regularly provided at all the stages on the road. I offered to pay for them but it was insisted that the Raja had directed everything to be supplied at his own expense and no price would be taken. The sweetmeats were allotted on alternate days to the men of the Escort and the servants in camp and the money had been allowed to accumulate. I had no precedent to guide me as to its disposal and as it had been presented in the form of a zeeafut generally to the mission before I left Jendialeh I divided the several sums I had received to that date into shares which I sent to each officer of the party for distribution in any mode he might deem requisite, with a request, to the officer commanding the Escort to apportion a part of the sum sent to him to the Native officers and men under his command.

20. It being arranged that the mission should enter Umrutsar on the 28th, early in the morning of that day Surdar Jwala Singh and the Envoys returning to the Maha Raja from the Governor General came to say that Kour Sher Singh and the minister had arrived during the

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night at a village about halfway to the city where they were awaiting my arrival. I accordingly advanced to meet them. The party had scarcely left camp before some rain began to fall.* It was considered an auspicious sign of the ties of amity existing between the British Government and the Raja just as the Mission was about to arrive at his Court. The rain that had been falling increased to a heavy shower in the midst of which I met Kour Sher Singh and the minister with all their suit. They delivered many friendly messages from the Maha Raja who had desired them they said to conduct me to a spot that had been purposely selected for the mission near his own residence that he might see me frequently without exposing me to the inconvenience of going any distance to visit him. Though heavy, the rain did not altogether destroy the pageantry of the sight which the meeting of the two parties presented. The Raja's son and minister were mounted on an elephant decorated in the most superb style. The Howdah itself was entirely embossed with gold and large plates of the same metal carved into a peculiar shape not unlike the leaves of the Lotus and strung closely together were suspended from different parts of the seat. The Escort which attended them were richly attired. It consisted of 500 men belonging to a corps of cavalry in the Raja's service called Ghorcherahs which forms his personal Guard. All the men were dressed in an uniform of Yellow silk the brightness of which and the shining matchlocks and shields with which they were armed gave the scene a splendid and striking effect. After conversing a few minutes on the elephants I was conducted towards a small Lake where the mission encamped and the Raja's son took his leave. When he had gone I received a visit from his minister Dewan

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*Natives have a belief that a shower of rain during a ceremony is a favourable omen.

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my tent. In the evening I received a second visit from the Surdar to enquire whether I was properly accommodated and in the course of the day 525 rupees and about 50 pots of sweetmeats were sent to me in the name of the Raja as a Zeeafut. I objected to receive the money. I was told however that my refusal would be considered unfriendly. The Surdar said it was the custom of the country and his master would hold him blameable if I refused. I complied therefore with his request.

10. The town of Filor is a small place situated about six miles from Loodiana immediately on the opposite bank of the Sutlej. The camp was pitched on the westward of it. Near the River there is compact-looking fort commanding the town and the passage of the river. It was orignally a Serai and has been converted into a fort since the occupation of Loodiana by a British Force. Some additions have been made to it; a large Circular work has been built in front of the Gateway and a narrow ditch faced with masonry is carried round the fort. It does not appear to be a place of any strength. In passing it the mission received a salute of 15 guns by order of the Maha Raja.

11. From Filor the mission proceeded the next day to Phugwara a large and populous town nearly adjoining which and the ground of encampment there is a large shady garden with a handsome edifice in the centre belonging to a wealthy merchant who is one of the principal proprietors of the place, but owing to the dissensions in the family regarding division of property the Garden is neglected and in ruinous condition. Phugwara with a dependency of 45 villages formed a part of the possessions of Surdar Fatch Singh Aliwaliah. About eighteen months ago that chief apprehensive of some violence from Raja Runjeet Singh abandoned his territory in the Punjab and fled to some possessions he holds on the left bank of the Sutlej. On his flight the Maha Raja assumed his country and occupied his towns with his own garri-

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22. The same day a Surdar and a party of 100 lancers were attached by the Raja's orders to the mission as an Escort. They occupied a spot near the camp to be in readiness to accompany me wherever I might be inclined to go abroad. I found the Surdar and his men very useful and they rendered themselves of service in protecting the camp from the crowd of idle intruders by which it was at first beset.

23. As the evening of the 29th May had been fixed for the introductory visit to the Maha Raja; Fakir Imamuddin came to my tent about four o'clock and informed me that Raja Dhian Singh and the minister Azizuddin had been dispatched by his master to meet the mission on its way to the Court and conduct it to his presence. There had been a consultation as to the mode in which the mission should be received. The Raja took the opinion of his most confidential officers. They reverted to the ceremonies observed when Sir Charles Metcalfe and Sir D. Ochterloney visited the Sikh Chieftains, the one to negotiate a treaty between him and the British with the view of arresting his ambition on the left bank of Sutlej the other as an invited guest to celebrate the marriage of Kour Kherak Singh since which the exception of Mr. Moorcroft and Doctor Murray no British officer had visited his Court.

24. It was decided that the present was a mission of an exclusively friendly nature and might therefore be received in a cordial and distinguished manner without any reference to past usage.

25. A Lake being situated between the camp and the Rambagh I crossed the mission in boats which were stationed there by the Raja for its use, and joining the Escort on the opposite bank where it had been previously assembled to receive the party proceeded in state to the residence of the Maha Raja. I had not advanced far before I was met by the Raja Dhian Singh and the minister. As it approached the Rambagh the mission entered a

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Bisakha Singh. He was accompanied by Fakir Azizuddin and begged my acceptance of a zeeafut of 600 rupees and sweetmeats of various kinds which the Kour had directed them to deliver in his name.

21. The encampment of the mission was about ½ of a mile from Rambagh, a garden in which the Maha Raja in his visits to Umrutsar usually resides. Near the tents was also a small garden newly made where several bungalows had been recently erected for the accommodation of the party and outside some large tents for the servants and followers. In the course of the day the minister Azizuddin came to say that the Maha Raja would be happy to receive the mission that evening or on the following day as might be most convenient to me. It being necessary to unpack and arrange the presents I had in charge from the Governor General before their delivery I proposed that the presentation sohuld be deferred to the next day. On the evening of my arrival the minister again called and presented on the part of the Maha Raja in zeeafut a bag containing 500 Ducats of gold and several trays of silver amounting to 2,500 rupees besides a quantity of sweetmeats and fruits. At the same time I was informed of the Raja's wish to feed the whole of the public and private servants of the mission if I had no objection to the measure offering to send people to issue daily rations to them. Considering the liberality with which the mission had been already treated and the confusion that might arise among the servants in camp and the Raja's people in the distribution of the rations I thought it advisable to decline the offer begging that the Maha Raja would do me the favour to limit the exercise of the proposed mark of hospitality to the first day which after some difficulty he agreed to do. The 2,500 rupees were divided agreeably to the Raja's desire among the Gentlemen with me and the bag of gold carried to the credit of the Government.

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street formed by two Battalions of infantry and a Regiment of cavalry dismounted on passing while it received a salute of 15 guns from two pieces of artillery planted there for the purpose of saluting the mission. A few paces beyond the guns a lofty Gateway marked the entrance to the Rambagh. Here the Escort was left and the party entering the Garden moved on the elephants towards an edifice in the centre where the Raja held his Court. The road leading to the centre of the Garden was lined on each side by Kanats of scarlet cloth with broad yellow borders and at intervals were erected 3 elegant canopies supported on silver poles beneath which the procession passed. The last canopy was placed about 25 paces from the terrace of the Court. On leaving it the mission dismounted from the elephants and was conducted by Raja Dhian Singh and the minister to the place where the Maha Raja was seated with all his Surdars in full state to receive the party. He rose from his chair and advanced several paces towards me as I came in sight of him. On meeting he embraced me in the most cordial manner and after declaring his pleasure at my arrival he retired to his seat desiring me to be seated in the centre of a row of chairs arranged opposite to him for the Gentlemen of the mission.

26. The place where the Court was held was an open portico on the eastern side of the edifice in the centre of the Garden already mentioned. At each end of it was lofty canopies hung on golden pillars and made of the richest shawls. Rich carpets of shawl were also spread along the ground. The front was open towards a canal of water supplying several large fountains the spray of which diffused an agreeable freshness around the spot.

27. The brilliancy and the splendour of the Court attracted particular notice. The Raja sat in the recess of the Portico on a large Golden Chair of a circular form. There was nothing resembling a regular throne. Two chairs were placed right and left of the Maha Raja.

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Those on the right were occupied by Heera Singh the son of Dhian Singh and Lhena Singh the youngest brother of Sirdar Boodh Singh and on the left were seated Naw Nihal Singh son of Fatch Sing Aliwalia and Kour Sher Singh the Maha Raja's 2nd son. On the ground forming a semicircle to the right and left of the Raja sat the Surdars.

28. Maha Raja Runjeet Singh is diminutive in stature and of a very weak and emaciated constitution. He appeared to be about 50 years of age. His face is disfigured strongly by the small pox and from the effects of that malady he has lost his left eye. He wears a very long but scanty beard which has now become nearly white. The expression of his countenance is not of a prepossessing nature at first sight and forms a striking contrast to the noble and manly features of the Surdars who were seated around him. Neither his manners nor his conversation is dignified. His dress is extremely plain and familiar, his voice dissonent and harsh. He becomes animated when he begins to speak and creates a favourable impression in spite of all his personal defects. Though often marked by a puerile curiosity his observations are intelligent and sagacious. His dress was very magnificent. It consisted of a short tunic of Nuck silk over which was a loose transparent garment of the finest white muslin. The front of the dress was embroidered with a number of diamonds and emeralds. He wore some rich strings of pearls round his neck and different parts of his body. On each arm were two armlets of the most costly diamonds besides bracelets of pearls, a string of which of a large size he held in his hand and appeared to use as a Rosary. On his head he had a small turban of the conical shape peculiar to the Sikhs with an elegant Sirpech from the centre of which depended a very large diamond. I looked for the famous Cohi Nur but it was not on his person. In his girdle he wore a Poigniard with

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the belt and scabbard richly embossed with jewellery and in front of him there was a small raised platform on which were placed a pair of pistols, a sword, a bow and quiver full of arrows, all richly ornamented with jewels besides baskets of flowers of various colours.

29. The Surdars were also decorated with costly jewels and elegant dresses of yellow silk. Every one of them had a shield and sword and some matchlocks. They had a very splendid appearance and it was impossible not to admire the order and regularity of the whole assembly, the deference with which the Surdars treated the Maha Raja and the courtesy they observed towards each other. There was no rude familiarity and confusion, everyone seemed to know his place and to be conscious of the station he filled.

30. After I had been seated the Raja enquired after my health and particularly about that of the Governor General. He alluded to the desire he had expressed to meet his Lordship on the banks of the Sutlej and regretted that the state of his health had defeated that wish to which I made suitable replies and proceeded to inform him of the object of my mission. He dwelt on the harmony and goodwill that exists between the two States and said that the arrival of the mission was a source of gratification to him. Captain Pearson and the officers who accompanied me were then introduced. The Raja made enquiries after their health one by one asking me if Captain Pearson knew the Punjabi language and the force Captain Kemplands rank entitled him to command after which he personally introduced me to several of the Surdars among whom was Boodh Singh Sindhanwala who had just returned with the Raja's army employed in suppressing the insurrection in the Attock.

31. In presenting the Governor General's letter I requested it might be read in Court that the Surdars might have an opportunity of knowing its friendly contents and

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at the same time I informed the Maha Raja that I had been charged to deliver some presents to him from his Lordship which I would if agreeable then present. My request that the letter should be read as I had suggested seemed to please him. I rose from my seat and delivered it when the Raja ordering the chairs on which the Gentlemen of the mission had been seated to be arranged close to his, desired me to take the seat nearest to him. The letter was read by the minister; he listened attentively to him while he was reading it, and after it had been fully explained, said that the friendly sentiments expressed by the Governor General were in perfect unison with his own, observed that he had long been allied to the British Government and professed a cordial wish to see the alliance of the two states daily promoted and increased. "I will," he added with evident satisfaction "have the letter again read to me when I am alone." The presents were then brought and displayed, the Maha Raja inspected them very minutely and admired the different articles of which they were composed. Among them were several things for the Rani in return for some presents sent on the part of that lady to Lady Amherst which the Raja said he would present to her. The presents having been all delivered the Maha Raja rising from his seat invited me to look at some of his horses explaining their names and good qualities as they were led past. Some of them were fine animals and decorated according to the estimation in which they were held with the most costly caparisons studded with jewels. He appeared to have a pleasure in viewing them and to be anxious that they should claim my admiration. He has a particular passion for horses and when in health there is no exercise in which he takes so much delight as in that of riding. After the inspection of the horses the mission retired. At night fireworks were sent for the amusement of the party besides a variety of sweetmeats and 1,100 rupees

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front of the procession without any attendants excepting the bearers and a man with a large silken Chattah. About 100 yards in the rear rode the Surdars who usually attend the Court. Behind them came a troop of Lancers, a company of Infantry and several elephants some with empty Howdahs and others with tents. On either flank were parties of Siwars to keep the ground clear and prevent intrusion. Whenever he leaves his palace there are always some elephants laden with tents moving with him even though taking his daily exercise. After being out a short time the Raja alights, sometimes orders a canopy to be spread but generally sits in the open air and holds his court when he receives the salutations of his ministers and officers who sit in a line on one side of the Raja and transact any business that they may have with him. The Court continues assembled in the situation I have described till a man comes with an hour glass and informs the Maha Raja that the time of the day is one and a half pehr or 9 o'clock on which he retires aside, makes a repast and then returns to the palace. I had many opportunities of seeing him abroad and the ceremony was invariably the same.

37. By invitation the mission had a second interview with the Raja on the second of June in the Rambagh. Raja Dhian Singh was sent to conduct me to his presence as before. I found the Maha Raja seated in an open Portico on the western face of the edifice in which I was first received. Fountains were playing in various places and there was a canal of water in front, but no state or ostentation was visible in the Court. The audience seemed indeed to be of an entirely private nature and the Raja made himself very courteous and agreeable, conversing on a variety of subjects with great freedom and vivacity. As I entered his presence he rose from his seat embraced and conducted me to a chair placed immediately on his right. It was a very sultry

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been promiscuously raised on every spot that had been occupied by a tent.

35. The city Umrutsar is situated on an extensive plain. Although it is considered the capital of the Sikhs the present ruler of that nation generally resides at Lahore. It is about five miles in circumference and until lately was an open town but is now fortified. The fortifications consist of an immense rampart of earth at least 25 feet thick and a wide ditch. Beyond the ditch and in front of the gateways, of which there are twelve built wholly of masonry large circular ravelins have been constructed and similar works are projected from intermediate points of the rampart. The design is unlike that of native forts. It partakes a good deal of the European style a knowledge of which has probably been imparted to the Maha Raja by the French officers. He commenced fortifying the place about the time they entered his service. The works are still being executed and when completed will form a formidable defence. The fort of Govind Gurh stands ¼ mile to the westward of the town and forms the citadel to it. On the eastern side at the same distance is the Rambagh the outside of which is fortified exactly like the city. A branch of an ancient canal (cut from the Ravi near one of the sources of that river in the Hills and carried to Lahore) has been conducted to Umrutsar from which the ditches may at any time be supplied with water sufficient to fill them.

36. At night there was a repetition of fireworks and on the following morning I renewed my excursions and passed the camp of the Ghorcherahs pitched separately from the regular troops. In the course of the ride I saw the Maha Raja and had a good view of the state in which it appears when he goes abroad; he was seated in a kind of Tonjhan with double seats and a low top. On either side were doors and glass windows and pannels of glass before and behind. It was moving in

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and oppressive day and after exchanging the usual compliments I took notice of the fountains and the pleasant temperature they produced on which the Raja began to expatiate on the coldness of the climate of Cashmir, asking me whether any country was equally cold. On satisfying his enquiry, he said: "The French Gentlemen who are in my service complain severely of the heat here say it is intolerable to them and they fall sick." The Raja himself has never visited Cashmir. He has once or twice thought of going there; it is believed however that some superstitious prejudice deters him from making the attempt. He spoke of the road to it and observed that it was extremely rugged and mountainous. "In the Hills in the Company's Provinces," he said "I hear there are fine roads and that the proprietors of the land through whose territories they pass are obliged to keep them in good order. In my part of them the people consider their strength to consist in the roughness of their roads and instead of improving do all they can to obstruct them."

38. The conversation turned afterwards to the state of Afghanistan. "The Afghans," he said "were a perfidious race there was no believing what they said, for instance on making a requisition for the famous horse Laili in the possession of the ruler of Peshawar Yar Mohammed Khan and others of his tribe have sworn by the Koran which you know is the book of their religion that the horse is dead and put their seals to a paper to that effect; yet I have good reason to believe that Laili is alive and that they have sworn among each other not to let me have the horse. They agreed to pay 50,000 rupees instead of Laili. I have relinquished my demand and have taken a compensation of 15 horses. They arrived a few days ago with the French officers from the Attock and you will see them presently."

39. A signal being given one of the Surdars left the Court to bring the horses and the son of Yar Mohammed Khan

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which the Raja requested might be divided among the servants who had attended with the presents.

32. Umrutsar at the time of my arrival had the aspect of a besieged city. A force of about 25,000 men including nearly the whole of the Raja's Regular Corps of Artillery and infantry was encamped round the walls. There was also a large body of Irregular Cavalry; and troops might be seen at exercise in every direction morning and evening. It was a scene of activity more like a preparation for war than a military spectacle intending as it was designed to amuse and divert the mission during its continuance at its Court.

33. The morning after the presentation until which none of the Gentlemen left the Camp I took a ride outside the Raja's camps and had a distant view of the Legion commanded by the French officers Messrs. Allard and Ventura at exercise. It appeared to be a remarkably fine body of men. I had afterwards an opportunity of seeing it paraded before the Maha Raja when the opinion I had formed of it was fully confirmed. In passing the camp of the Legion I noticed several standards with the Tri-coloured Flag which the French officers I find adopted as the distinguishing Ensign of their Corps. On my return I passed by the fort of Govind Gurh erected by the Raja a few years ago. It is built entirely of masonry with massive bastions and a broad ditch. It occupies a small space. There is an outwork at the gate and another on the opposite face and in the centre a large....elevated considerably above the walls. Large sums of money have been expended in strengthening and improving the works and it is the place where the greatest part of the Raja's treasures is deposited.

34. In the evening I rode through the city. There was a great concourse of people. The streets were narrow and dirty and built in a very irregular manner. One would have imagined the city had originally been the site of a large straggling encampment and that houses had

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to go until Laili is produced." There seems to be a ridiculous infatuation in the Raja's wish to obtain that horse which it is difficult to reconcile with his natural good sense. After the dispersion of the insurgents on the Attock he kept a large army in the vicinity of Peshawar apparently with no other view than to extort that animal from the ruler of that place, the expense of which he appears to have considered of no importance compared with the attainment of the object he sought.

41. The boy in reply to the Raja said that the horse was dead which led the Raja to advert again to the inconstancy of the Afghans and finding that he was in a communicative humour I took the opportunity of asking him the nature of his relations with Peshawar he replied readily "I receive from the ruler of that country an annual tribute of 25 horses and a quantity of rice (for which Peshawar is celebrated) besides military service if required." He has never however been able to exact the tribute without a military demonstration for Yar Mohammed has never yet fulfilled the last article of the Engagement if it ever existed which I am inclined to doubt. Whatever schemes of policy the Raja may have in agitation his connection with the countries on the right bank of the Indus has hitherto been scarcely more than nominal. His troops have never penetrated beyond Peshawar and excepting at the ferry of the Attock he has not at present *a single soldier* to the westward of that river. He seems indeed to the present time to have viewed the distracted state of the Afghans as favourable to the consolidation of his own dominions and has shewn a disposition to promote rather than put an end to the dissensions of that people by restoring Peshawar though twice conquered to its present ruler. In amity with the British he has nothing to fear from them to the Eastward and so long as the Afghans continue involved in anarchy and confusion among themselves the western side of his possessions

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is likely to be secure from any successful incursions. The French officers however are anxious to see his authority extended beyond the Indus. The large army which the Maha Raja has been lately organising is probably intended to be employed in Afghanistan and I am disposed to think that he meditates ere long the conquest of that country.

42. The Raja speaking of the Afghans as soldiers said "they are very hardy and obstinate and quite ignorant of discipline." It is their custom in battle to run on their enemy in the most bold and fearless manner, if the attack proceeded well, if not they retreat with precipitation and never rally. "They are," he continued, "very stubborn. In the action between my troops and Fatheh Khan near Peshawar they rushed on my battalions with such impetuosity as to seize the muskets of the men. The fights with swords are perfectly callous and think that dying in conflict with the Sikhs is a sure road to Heaven."

43. There was no adequate cause for the disturbances that lately occurred in the Attock. A tribe of Afghans called Kheteks occupy the country between the territories of the Maha Raja and the ruler of Peshawar. By an agreement with Fatheh Khan it was settled that the Kheteks should be left in undisturbed possession of their lands by both parties and the engagement continued inviolated until 1½ years ago.* Alluding to the subject the Raja observed "Yar Mohammed Khan led by folly and utterly insensible to his real interests broke the stipulations of the Treaty, attacked Akora the chief town of the Kheteks, took Ablass Khan the Surdar of the tribe prisoner to Peshawar where he shortly afterwards died it is supposed by poison. On his death Khowas Khan his son solicited my protection and the assertion of his father's rights. As he had always

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**Vide* my letter to the Resident, 25th July 1826.

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whose attendance the Raja had exacted as an hostage for his father's future allegiance. In the interval the Maha Raja when introducing some Surdars to me pointed my attention particularly to two of them Jee Singh Atamala and Amar Singh. "Jee Singh" he said "is the man who fled from my authority and joined Fateh Khan the late ruler of Kabul with whom he remained for some time but he was not long absent before he repented his conduct and returned. Amar Singh is the brother of the Raja of Chambah. He has come here to try and mediate the release of the Raja of Nurpur who crossed the Sutlej a short time ago with a body of men and attempted to excite a disturbance in my territory and was seized. There is a matrimonial connection between the two families and the Chambawala offers a ransom of 50,000 rupees and to become security for his good behaviour hereafter if I will liberate him from confinement."

40. A long train of dancing girls now entered the Court. They were dressed in men's attire splendidly ornamented with jewels and tinsels and armed with bows and arrows. A few had spears. There were about 200 of them. They seated themselves in a group immediately in front of the Raja's chair who spoke in a kind of familiar tone to them and pointed to two or three whom he designated as their leaders. The scene was novel and curious and on enquiry he told me it was an institution of his own. Before their departure Mohammed Hussain Khan the son of Yar Mohammed arrived. The place being very crowded and there not being room for a Morah on which he is allowed to sit without intercepting the Raja's view he seated himself on the ground close to the Raja. Mohammed Hussain Khan is a fine lad about 12 or 13 years of age with an oval countenance unlike the natives of Hindustan and a fair complexion. The Raja treated him kindly and said "If you wish to return to Peshawar send for Laili. You will not be able

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been my faithful partisan and ally I adopted his interests and sent a small body of troops to reinstate him in Akora. In the meantime numerous reports were spread about the country of the bad state of my health which encouraged the Afghans to overt acts of insurrection. They made an attack by night on a small Post I have on the Attock called Hydo and killed most of the garrison. I sent Surdar Boodh Singh with a force to punish them. After he had arrived there a short time he heard of the approach of a man of the name of Sied Ahmed a religious enthusiast who had been travelling through Afghanistan and exciting the Afghans to wage a holy war against the Sikhs and all Infidels. They supposed he was inspired, put faith in his vows and flocked to him in great numbers from all directions until he succeeded in collecting nearly a lakh of men. Boodh Singh wrote to say that they had invested his position and had become very daring. His force being small I sent nearly the whole of my disposable troops regular and irregular to his assistance. Before they had however time to arrive the fanatics attacked Boodh Singh who dispersed and routed them with great slaughter. Yar Mohammed Khan had joined the insurgents but seeing the hopelessness of the part he had taken tendered his submission which I accepted. French officers who are zealous and faithful servants of my Government conducted the negotiations. Khowas Khan has been restored to his estates and Yar Mohammed having given his son as an hostage for the due performance of all his engagements to me has been permitted to retain Peshawar. It is my intention to keep the boy 4 or 5 months and then send for one of his brothers and so on, in succession that I may always have one in my presence."

44. The Raja enquired whether Shah Shujaool Moolk ever thought of his country. An opinion prevailing that it was an object of the mission to effect by negotiation

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with the Raja the restoration to his throne of that exiled monarch it being generally supposed that British Government in affording an asylum to the Shah is actuated by some speculative view apart from a commisseration in his misfortunes. It was the only instance in which the Maha Raja made any allusion to the Shah and no further conversation passed on the subject.

45. "The French officers tell me," said the Raja, "that if I will place ten regular battalions two or three regiments of cavalry and a few pieces of artillery at their disposal they will engage to take Kabul and subdue the whole of Afghanistan to my authority." He asked my opinion as to its practicability and anticipated the reply I was about to give by observing that it was a distant affair (mujedama-i-dur) and the provision of supplies to the army would be difficult. He spoke of the war between the Russians and Persians and seemed desirous of knowing the relations that existed between them and the British Government. I replied that the British were in friendly alliance with both parties. He asked if the Government would assist the Persians in the event of their sustaining a defeat to which I said that the British Government being the friend both of the Russians and Persians it would exercise its exertions to reconcile the contending nations and not promote hostilities. He asked about the power of Russia and the strength of its army, on either of which points he did not seem to be very conversant. I have never been able to trace the existence of any communication between the Russians and the ruler of the Punjab.

46. The dancing girls having retired 15 horses from Peshawar of which the Raja had been speaking were now led past him one by one. They had splendid caparisons but I found they belonged to the Raja. Talking of the relative qualities of the horses of Afghanistan and those of his own country he mentioned that on a journey he preferred the former but for active service or in

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had finished its exercise the Raja ordered a large body of Ghorcherahs which had been standing in rear of the battalion to advance and pass in front of him. Every man as he passed the Raja saluted him with the Sikh expression of "Wah Guru Khalsa Ke Fateh." They were all dressed in yellow silk and there might have been about 2,000 of them. Generally they were well mounted and old looking men. Many of them had been in the Raja's father's service. Their arms were a sword, shield, and matchlock. Some instead of the matchlock had spears and bows and arrows. There are altogether about 3,000 of them. Some were attending the Raja's eldest son Kour Kherek Singh who was absent exacting a tribute from Bhowlpur. Others were at their homes. The Corps had peculiar privileges of its own. The men are not paid in money. Every man has a Jageer varying from 500 to 5,000 rupees a year and some less. They are chosen by the Maha Raja himself from his personal Guard and acknowledge no chief but him. A few of them were directed to give a specimen of their firing at a mark and a Lotah was placed on the ground at a distance of about 50 yards from them which they drilled through and through in a very short time. The Raja spoke of the Ghorcherahs in high terms of praise as a body of men very much attached to his interests. He said he had great reliance in them and gave an anecdote strongly corroborative of the devotion of his Surdars and Troops to his service. "At the siege of Mankera" (a strong fortress in the middle of a sandy desert on the left bank of the Indus above Multan) "no water," he said, "could be found nearer than 15 Koss of the place. The Surdars seeing the difficulty of my situation offered in a body to dig wells and provide themselves with water if I would advance. I did. In the course of a few hours many wells were dug, plenty of water procured and the batteries being erected the fort was quickly

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the field of battle the latter were his favourites after which I took my leave. I had no other interview with the Raja in the Rambagh until the mission had the audience of leave. Scarcely a day however elapsed in which I did not see and meet him during that time. To amuse the mission and perhaps gratify a latent desire he may have had to display his military strength before the officers of the British Government he had as I have before stated assembled a large army at Umrutsar. Corps were paraded every morning and I was invited to join him and see them exercise.

47. Agreeably to the Raja's wishes I proceeded on the morning of the 3rd to a plain nearly opposite to the camp of the mission where I found him seated on a horse on the left flank of a regular battalion of infantry under the command of a native officer. The state of his health has not enabled him for some time to mount a horse and a dread of increasing the disorder from which he suffers deters him from taking violent exercise yet such is the pleasure he takes in riding that even to mount and sit still on a horse for a few minutes is a gratification to him. Every time I saw him mounted he seldom moved from the spot on which he stood. On my arrival at the ground he desired Raja Dhian Singh to take me along the line and show me the men. The Corps was extremely well equipped and very steady under arms. It consisted chiefly of Sikhs but there were two companies of Purbiahs (or men from the Eastward) in all his regular battalions The reason of intermixing them with the Sikhs was the Raja told me one day to counteract any mutinous disposition which the one or other might evince. After I had seen the men in line I joined the Raja who during my absence had dismounted and taken a chair. He requested me to sit by him and the battalion performed several manœuvres executing them in a style of propriety that surpassed my expectations. When it

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whom I had seen yesterday at Court were sent by the Raja to the British Camp. They were dressed and equipped precisely as they had been before. I gave them a present of 101 rupees and they went away.

49. The Maha Raja had expressed a wish to see the troop of cavalry and company of infantry forming the escort of the mission exercise. They were accordingly paraded on the morning of the 3rd on the spot where the Raja's own troops had been reviewed. As the Raja approached the ground I met and conducted him to the front of the troops where he took his seat and chairs were provided for all the party. I observed a European standing near the Raja who appeared to be M. Oms a Spaniard who had lately entered his service. After a time the Raja directing my attention to M. Oms said "he has lately arrived here and seems well skilled in military affairs. The other French officers will not associate with him. There is some difference between them and they dispute each other's merits." Looking at the cavalry which was now performing some manœuvres he enquired how many regular regiments of cavalry there might be in the Company's territories whether they had ever been collected in one place and if they had ever fought against the Marhattas. In the course of conversation he asked about the relative qualities of the French and British troops adding that he had heard there was now a firm peace between the two nations and that the British had placed the present King of France on his throne. His French officers had, he said, often spoken to him of the fame and greatness of the late King (meaning Napoleon), he seemed to have acquired a tolerably good idea of the military renown of that eminent man, the vicissitudes of his life and the causes of his decline and ruin, points on which his French officers had no doubt given him full information. The resemblance between the careers of Napoleon and the Raja so far as regards their sudden rise to

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power and distinction has been often noticed to the Maha Raja and he is gratified by the comparison. He sent for a telescope to view the movements of the troops and after using it said "Of all the means of intelligence (Herkarahs) a telescope is the most faithful and correct."

50. Some allusion being made to the actions in which the Raja's troops had lately been engaged in the Attock he expatiated on the excellence of the Sikhs as soldiers observing that they were inured to arms from infancy and that when a Sikh was born he was initiated into the faith by pouring some water sweetened with sugar into his mouth from the point of a dagger agreeably to the injunctions of their Guru. "A child of 5 years" he said "can ride and use his bow and arrow." At the conclusion of the exercise when the troop was charging he expressed his approbation of the rapidity of the movement and remarked that the charge of 1,000 men must have a fine effect.

51. After the troop had retired the company of infantry advanced and performed such manœuvres as were practicable for a small body of men. While the company was firing the Raja began talking about Gun powder, produced some of his own, and asked what I thought of it. He praised that which was manufacured by the Company, said, that all he could do his people could not attain the same perfection. He mentioned that all his powder was made at Lahore by contract and that he paid 10 rupees per maund for it. The specimen he showed was of a coarse grain but superior to the common powder made in Hindostan. I presented him with some cartridges of the Company's. Both he and his Surdars were struck with its superiority and he said he would try the relative strength of each with a pistol. The exercise having ceased a party of Native officers came in front to whom the Raja called my attention as the Commandants of his regular battalions.

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captured."

48. During the performance of the morning the Raja conversed freely on different subjects speaking of Holkar's flight to the Punjab. He said "I will tell you a good story. Holkar pressed by the British solicited my assistance and made temporary offers to secure my co-operation. Uncertain as to the part I should take I resorted to a measure I have often adopted to determine my decision in doubtful cases. I took two slips of paper and writing on one the proposition of Holkar and on the other whether I should preserve peace with the British, I put them into the leaves of the Granth (the sacred book of the Sikhs) and desired a boy of innocent years to bring one of the papers to me. He brought that on which the last was written and I acted accordingly. Vexed at my refusal to assist him Holkar began to reproach the Sikhs as a worthless and spiritless set of people saying I have heard a great deal of your enterprise but find on coming among you you have none. If you won't join me against the British I shall go to the Afghans and seek the aid of foreigners to which I said: "You talk tauntingly of the Sikhs yet here you are with an army of 100,000 men flying before the troops of Lord Lake which hardly exceed 5,000. He could make no reply. A peace was shortly after concluded between him and the British and the two armies returned to their respective countries. Before they quitted the Punjab Surdar Mith Singh Bherowah, Jwala Singh's father who had been attending Lord Lake during the negotiations went to take leave of him when Sir J. Malcolm (the Political Agent with the army) said to the Surdar, 'go back my friend and tell your master to congratulate himself on getting rid of two troublesome visitors.'" The Raja laughed heartily at Sir John's remark, and related the anecdote in a tone of frankness that was quite amusing. The exercises were over about 9 o'clock and I retired. In the evening the dancing girls

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He pointed to Dhakal Singh a man who had been a Naick in the 23rd now 45 Regiment Native Infantry the oldest Native officer in the Raja's service and who first introduced the British system. He commands two battalions one of which is under his son. Next came Mianh Singh commanding a battalion; then Berriar Singh a large corpulent man (incapable of active duty) whose corps has lately been put under the orders of M. Moevius. These were some of the officers commanding the Battalions comprising what is called the "Camp" lately consisting of 15 battalions but now reduced to about 10 by several having been transferred to the four European officers whom the Raja has admitted into his service within the last six months.

Another party of native officers now advanced belonging to the troops commanded by Messrs. Allard and Ventura which consist of three regiments of cavalry under the command of M. Allard and 5 battalions of infantry under M. Ventura. To each regiment of cavalry is a native Commandant a second in command and an Adjutant besides the usual number of officers to troops. In M. Ventura's legion there is a native Commandant and Adjutant to each battalion and a native Brigadier and Adjutant General to the whole. His name is Shaikh Bassoon a smart active man about 45 years of age. He had come from the Company's service and had been with the expedition to Egypt, the Medal for which he wore. The Raja had ordered the Commandants who were present to attend for the purpose of observing the exercise of the Escort and I heard subsequently that on returning to the Rambagh, he summoned them to his presence and asking each of his opinion. A consultation was held on the comparative merits of the British troops and his own. The Commandants and some native officers who were with them being dismissed, the Raja said those who were Sikhs were the sons of Surdars and

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that it was his practice when a Surdar had more than two sons to take one of them when young and educate him for his military service, making him a Jemadar when fit to join a corpse. He talked much of the expense of his Regular Army but seemed to be fully sensible of the great advantage of Regular troops.

53. I expressed a wish to the Maha Raja to see Hermandel, the famous temple of the Sikhs in the city of Umrutsar to which he readily assented and on the morning of the 4th sent Raja Dhian Singh, Surdar Dera Singh and Herdas Singh to show me the place. I was previously informed of the ceremonies that had been observed by Sir Charles Metcalfe and the presents he made when he visited the same temple in his mission to the Punjab in 1809 and I considered it proper to conform strictly to them. After entering the city and passing through some very narrow tortuous lanes I came to the spot where the temple is situated. It is marked by two large minarets of considerable height and visible at a great distance. From whatever direction the traveller may be coming the minarets (indicating the site of a large city) are discernable long before the walls and houses of Umrutsar rise to his view.

54. On arriving at the place where the temple is to be seen I dismounted from my elephant and in compliance with the request of my conductors who mentioned that it was customary for every one to leave his shoes where I then stood I left mine and descending a flight of steps entered an area. It is a square of considerable size formed by large handsome edifices on each side called Bungahs which belong to different Sikh Chiefs and the principal Surdars of the Court. "Umrutsar" or the Water of Immortality, from which the town takes its name is a large tank built of Burrah bricks in the middle of the area. Each face of the tank is about 125 paces in length and between the front of the edifices and the edge of the tank is a broad terrace

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in which the *Granth* is lodged I made a donation of 525 rupees on which the chief priest of the temple who was acting under a canopy by the sacred book ordered one of his attendants to invest me with a pair of shawls. After he had gone through that ceremony he made the following speech which he appeared to address to the Granth, *viz.* "There is a peace and unanimity between the Khalsajee and the British Government, Captain Wade has arrived from the Governor General to strengthen the bonds of amity, may the union of the two States be perpetual."

57. From the Hermandel I went to the Jhanda Bunga where the standard of the Hermandel is kept. I there presented 51 rupees and received some baskets of sugar. It is usual for every one coming here to visit the three places to which I was taken. On leaving the Jhanda Bunga I was led to the Bunga of Maha Singh the Raja's father on my way to which I heard a man say with a loud voice: "I am sent by a Cow to call your attention to the sin of slaughtering that animal." Surdar Desa Singh said "Do not mind what that man is saying he is mad." I visited the Raja's Bunga and thence returned to my tents.

58. The speech made in the Hermendel and the presentation of the shawls had been arranged the night before by the Maha Raja who had also taken the precaution of summoning all the Akalis to his presence in the morning in order to prevent their offering any rudeness during my visit to the temple. When I arrived in Camp I found the Raja had sent a pair of shawls and a Reward for the officer commanding the Escort and a pair of shawls each for the two officers attached to it besides 1,100 rupees to be distributed among the native officers and men in token of his approbation of their performances yesterday.

59. I attended the Raja on the morning of the 5th of June to the usual ground to the review of a corps commanded

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all round, from which spacious flights of steps afford a commodious descent to the water. There are some small temples on the steps near the water and on two sides, particular places enclosed by high screens are appropriated for the bathing of the women. In the centre of the tank is the Hermandel the literary meaning of which is the temple of the Almighty. It is an octagonel building with a splendid gilded dome. At the time of my visit the walls were covered with ladders and scaffolding which diminished the fine effect the temple otherwise would have had. There is a bridge or causeway built on small arches leading to it which forms the only mode of ingress or egress.

55. The first place I visited was the Akal Bungah or the temple of the Akalis, where I presented, as Sir Charles Metcafe had, I heard done before, the sum of 250 rupees in return for which I was invested with a pair of shawls by the officiating priests. The Akal Bungah is the spot Guru Govind Singh used to occupy in his visits to the sacred tank which at that time was a dirty pool of water. After his death and when the Sikhs had succeeded in giving their religion a firm foundation the Akalis a religious sect instituted by that priest erected the present edifice. Every Sikh who comes to bathe in the tank must in the first instance present an offering and pay his devotions at that shrine. It is here also that every Sikh is initiated into the mysteries of his faith. On the second floor of the Bungah are deposited the arms worn by Guru Govind Singh. When a Surdar succeeds to his estate it is customary for him to come to be confirmed in his succession at the Akal Bungah. It is a place also to which the Sikhs resort to do penance and to obtain an absolution of sins. The Raja one day said that when he thought he had been guilty of any enormity it was a rule of his to go and prostrate himself at that altar for a similar purpose.

56. From the Akal Bungah I was conducted to the Hermandel

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by Dhokal Singh. There were two battalions. The conversation to-day turned to Shah Zeman's last visit to Lahore. The Raja said he used to leave Umrutsar (where the Sikhs generally assembled their forces) with a few Siwars and commit nightly attacks on the Shah's army to distress and make him return across the Indus. He also gave an account of the mode in which he gained possession of Lahore, broke the confederacy of the Sikh chiefs who then ruled the country and became master of Umrutsar. It was not until after the flight of Holkar to the Punjab that he thought, the Raja mentioned, of forming a regular army. Adverting to Sir Charles Metcalfe's mission he said that Sir Charles had told him on taking leave that in twenty years he would reap the fruits of his alliance with the British "and," added the Raja "his words have been verified." He spoke also of the Honourable M. Elphinstone, regretted he had not seen him when he passed through the Punjab on his return from the Embassy to the King of Caubul. The Raja was then at Fort Kangra expelling the Gurkha power from the north bank of the Setlej. He showed me a very handsome pair of pistols presented to him by M. Elphinstone which he valued very highly.

60. After Dhokal Singh's corps had been inspected a company from the "Camp" and one from M. Ventura legion came forward and went precisely through the same manœuvres that the company of the infantry attached to the Escort had been performing two days before.

61. On the 6th I did not see the Raja. He sent a message to say that it was a festival and that he intended going to the Hermandel.

62. According to custom I was invited by the Maha Raja on the morning of the 7th to a review of two battalions commanded by Lelah Anent Ram. They did not acquit themselves so well as the other battalions I had seen and the Raja observed that the Commandant was not a

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soldier by profession but he had been induced to employ him in that situation as he had been many years in the British service and was well versed in its rules and regulations.

63. The Raja spoke of the two French officers who had lately arrived at his Court. He said they had come from Persia by Candhar and Kabul, that their names were Messrs. Court and Avitabile, that M. Oms had known them in the service of the King of Persia, but that since their arrival they had disclaimed all knowledge of him. The Honourable Captain Kepple in the account of his travels through Persia to Europe mentions having resided some days with M. Court at Kirmansha at which time M. Oms was there. He relates an occurrence affecting M. Oms which accounts in some measure for the disinclination of the French officers to associate with him.

64. To-day the Raja also alluded to the attack made by a body of Akalis on Sir Charles Metcalfe when he was at his Court in 1809. He abused the Akalis as a worthless and turbulent set of people and spoke in high terms of admiration of the manner in which the attack was repelled by the two Companies of infantry composing Sir Charles' Escort.

65. Cashmere became the subject of conversation. The Raja said he received a large part of his revenues from that province in shawls the disposal of which he found very difficult to obviate which M. Ventura had recommended him to monopolise the sale of that commodity but on consulting Surdar Desah Singh who has charge of the city of Umrutsar through which the trade of Cashmir is carried that Surdar had dissuaded him from the measure as being pregnant with losses and distress to the merchants and he had been induced to abandon the proposition.

66. The Raja during the morning ordered some of his Surdars to exhibit their mode of firing on horseback. Some of

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them mounted their horses and a Lotah being placed on the plain they rode separately past it at full speed firing their matchlocks at the Lotah as they approached. There was nothing however indicating expertness in the exercise as the mark was more often missed than hit. I took my leave and returned to camp.

67. In the course of the day the Raja requested to see Dr. Gerard. He attended at the palace and after consulting him about his health the Raja gave him his dismissal presenting him with a pair of shawls for himself and 100 rupees for the native doctor who accompanied him.

68. I went on the morning of the 8th to the inspection of some cavalry and horse artillery. They passed in review. First came a corps of cavalry, perhaps 700, commanded by Mr. Gordon, an Indo-Briton in the Maha Raja's service; then another called Nanu Singh's regiment consisting of 400 men. Mr. Gordon's is a fine looking corps. The men are well mounted and uniformly dressed and equipped in the Sikh style. They are all Sikhs, fine looking young men, the sons of the Surdars and Gentry of the country. Each man receives one rupee per day and provides his own horse and arms. Nanu Singh's corps is only now being raised. It is intended that men shall be dressed in the European manner but at present there is not much uniformity in their dress or equipment.

69. After the cavalry had passed came the horse artillery. It consisted of 35 pieces of various calibre formed into brigades of 4 and 6 guns. Some were very small probably not more than 2 pounders. The largest might have been 9 or 10, the generality 4 or 6 pounders. The largest guns were drawn by six horses, the small ones by four. The men, horses, and carriages were generally good, the harness and equipments indifferent. I was altogether disappointed in the state of the cavarly and horse artillery. The Raja does not seem to have paid the

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same attention to their organisation as to that of his infantry.

70. As the time fixed for the continuance of the mission at his court was drawing nigh and I had requested the Raja for a day for its departure he privately communicated to me to-day his intention of giving the audience of leave on the 14th instant. He expressed his regret that I could not stay longer than I proposed doing as he wished to show me Lahore but hoped I would come and pay him a visit in the cold season.

71. A Corps of infantry commanded by Golab Singh being paraded on the morning of the 9th I joined at the usual time and place and saw it go through its exercise. I observed to-day that all his battalions were formed in three ranks and learned that it was the mode pursued in M. Ventura's legion to which the Raja had lately ordered all the infantry to conform. I may here remark that the whole of the infantry is dressed, armed, and equipped in the European style with the exception of the turban. The Sikhs wear that which is peculiar to them, the Purbiahs the cap in use in the Company's army. All the muskets and accoutrements are made at Lahore and are good of their kind. The Raja mentioned to-day that the pay of his regular troops amounted to 50 lakhs a year in which the Jagirdars are not included. Speaking of his revenues he said that the districts on the banks of the Indus scarcely yielded anything, that Cashmir was the most productive of all his provinces and gave a net surplus of 25 Lakhs a year. He has no indirect intercourse with the Chinese but there exists an interchange of presents between the Governor of Cashmir and the bordering states of Thibet. He asked what were the relations of the British Government with China and if the Chinese were a warlike race. About 40 or 50 horses of the Ghorcherahs were now brought before the Raja as unfit for service. He examined them per-

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sonally one by one condemning and retaining them according to his judgment, after which I retired.

72. There was hardly a day that of some of the Maha Raja's troops were not exhibited before the officers of the mission. On the morning of the 10th the two battalions commanded by M. Oms were paraded and went through several evolutions. The Raja said that M. Oms was indefatigable in drilling his corps to which I could myself bear testimony having observed them every day hard at drill both morning and evening till a very late hour. The exercise was apparently severe and I could not help remarking the cheerful alacrity with which the Sikhs seemed to endure the fatigue.

73. The pay of his infantry Sepahees the Raja said was 8 rupees a month from which two were deducted for rations supplied to the men by the State. The Sikhs each eat promiscuously and have few or no prejudices. To each Company are attached two "Langriahs" or cooks with a set of cooking utensils and camels for their conveyance. The men are divided into messes. They have two meals a day and the Raja sagaciously observed one day that his Sepahees had nothing to think of but their public duty.

74. When the battalions had marched away the Raja said "M. Oms is well versed in the drill of a corps but he knows nothing else. Messrs. Allard and Ventura on the contrary are intelligent and conversant with all subjects, especially the art of diplomacy. I have entrusted them several times with the management of my affairs on the Attoc and they have always proved themselves very able and expert in conciliating the good will and securing the obedience of those with whom they had to treat." Messrs. Allard and Ventura are held in great respect by all the officers of the Raja's court and possess his confidence. The Surdars are dissatisfied at the number of Europeans the Maha Raja is admitting into his service. They have I am informed

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been heard to say that they would rather see more battalions added to the large force under the command of Messrs. Allard and Ventura than an additional number of Europeans. I suspect it is ultimately the Raja's object to have all his corps of regular infantry commanded by European officers.

75. Among other subjects the Raja spoke to-day of the expeditions to Cashmir and Multan and related a circumstance illustrative of the difference between the Sikhs and the Purbiahs. In his second campaign to Cashmir after entering the Hills the enemy threw so many obstacles in his way and the roads were so difficult that it was not possible he said to advance unless the men carried 4 or 5 days supplies on their own backs. He explained to the Sipahees the dilemma he was in and that it would be necessary to carry their provisions for a few days. The Sikhs with one accord complied with his wishes but the Purbiahs refused saying they did not enter his service to be the "carriage of the Commissariat." In the end the Sikhs fared well and the Purbiahs were obliged to fast. Before I left the Raja to-day he talked about the Burmese war and enquired what money and what territory had been gained by it by the British Government.

76. On the morning of the 11th the ground where the troops had been in the habit of assembling was occupied as usual by some new corps. They were the battalions that had lately been under the command of Roshen Beg, a Surdar who had been in the service of Holkar and had sought that of the Raja after the defeat and dispersion of Holkar's army in the battle of Mahidpur. Both corps, the Raja mentioned, were now commanded by Messrs. Court and Avitabile, the new French officers who have been noticed before. They were present at the head of the battalions which performed the Manual and platoon exercises and appeared an efficient body of men. When they had gone away some of the gentle-

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men of the mission having expressed a wish to see the Sikhs throw the '*Chekr*' the Maha Raja ordered a party of Akalis to exhibit their agility in that exercise. They did not throw the weapon with that dexterity which was expected. The "Chekr" is a round iron ring something like a quoit but with sharp and thin edges. It is peculiar to the Akalis and was formerly used in warfare. On dismissing the Akalis the Raja gave them a present of a hundred rupees.

77. Before I left the Raja on the 11th he informed me that he would send me the Cohi Nur if I wished to see it and that the French Legion would be the Corps to be paraded on the following morning. The Cohi Nur was brought to my tent in the evening of 11th by Fakir Imamuddin. The celebrated diamond called by that name is about the size and shape of a small hen's egg. Its weight is said to be 3½ rupees. It is set as an armlet with a very large diamond on each side of it. Every one was surprised by its size and brilliancy. The Raja puts great value on the possession of it and keeps it lodged in the fort of Govind Gurh of which Imamuddin is the Governor. It was escorted to my tent by a large party of Sepahees. With the diamond there was a topaz the size of which cannot be much less than Billiard ball of the largest size cut in two. The Raja obtained both gems from the ex-King of Cabul Shah Shuj'a ul Mulk.

78. In proceeding to join the Raja on the morning of the 12th I observed the plain where the reviews were held occupied by the whole of the troops under the command of Messrs. Allard and Ventura. They were formed in one line, the infantry on the right the cavalry on the left and had a very martial appearance. On approaching the Raja who was at the extreme left of the line I noticed a French officer standing near his Tonjhon to whom the Raja introduced me as M. Allard adding that he was the cleverest of all his officers

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shortly after which he desired him to take post at the head of his cavalry and invited me to go down the line.

79. The Cavalry commanded by M. Allard consists of two regiments of dragoons and one of lancers. One Regiment of Dragoons is armed with swords and carbines, the other with swords and matchlocks. The lancers with lances and swords. The carbines are slung with the muzzles upwards, the reverse of the mode adopted in the British army. The Dragoons are mostly Sikhs and wear the Sikh turban. The Lancers are chiefly Pathans from Hindustan who have been in the service of Holkar and Amir Khan. There are however two troops of Sikhs in that corps. The dress and equipment of the 3 regiments are uniform. The sword is slung by a waist belt. They wore white dresses when I saw them, but they have woollen jackets for the cold season similar to that worn by dragoons in the French service. The jacket of the Lancers is French grey with red facings, that of the dragoons scarlet. The strength of each regiment is about 1,000 men. They are not well mounted nor, though intended as regular cavalry, in so efficient a state comparatively speaking as the infantry which is owing to the system of the Siwars providing their own horses and the Raja's reluctance to incur the expense of M. Allard's suggestion for their perfect organisation.

80. The Legion of infantry commanded by M. Ventura is composed of 4 Battalions of Sikhs and one of Gorkhas and Purbiahs. They are all dressed, armed and equipped like the Raja's other regular battalions but in a neater and superior style. The 4 Sikh battalions wear the Sikh turbans the colour of which is different in each battalion. The Gorkhas and Purbiahs wear Chakos of a neat manufacture. M. Ventura remained mounted in front of his Corps as I passed along the line. When I reached the right flank I waited for the Raja who was following me at a little distance and accompanied

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him to an elevated spot in front of the infantry where chairs were placed for the accommodation of the party, while M. Ventura put his Legion through several manœuvres which the Corps executed with a steadiness and precision it would be difficult to excel. Their formation into close column, their march and deployments into line were performed with such a closeness and accuracy as to surprise the whole party. It was indeed impossible not to admire the high degree of perfection to which M. Ventura had brought his Legion. He was the only mounted officer in the field and the facility with which he directed the movements of the whole corps evidently showed that he was an officer of skill and ability. The review concluded by the Legion marching past the Raja in open column of grand Divisions and after expressing the pleasure I had derived from it I retired to camp.

81. The 13th being a festival the first of Harh the Raja went to the Hermandel and I had no personal communication with him on that day. It was rather strange that the Raja did not afford me an opportunity of seeing Messrs. Allard and Ventura until I was on the point of leaving his Court but as there was a mutual disposition to meet each other I invited them and their friends Messrs. Court and Avitabile to dinner on the evening of the 13th when they came and dined with me. I was much pleased with their manners and conversation. On returning M. Allard asked the party to dine with them on the following evening and the invitation was accepted. They had all been some time in Persia and spoke frequently of Major Willock and the members of the legation lately under charge of that officer at the Persian Court.

82. It was expected that the audience of leave would have been granted on the morning of the 14th, but the Raja postponed it till the afternoon of that day and when the time came he sent to say that he hoped I would

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prolong my stay at his court for another day. As however every arrangement had been made for the departure of the mission on the morning of the 15th and I was anxious to re-cross the Sutlej before the rainy season should commence I felt myself under the necessity of resisting the proposition for delay. The audience accordingly took place on the evening of the 14th.

83. I found the Raja seated where I had seen him on my first visit in the Rambagh. It was late in the day and there were few attendants. The only Surdars present were Rajas Dhian Singh and his brother Sewchait Singh and Surdar Herdas Singh, Dewan Motiram, the minister Azizuddin and his brother Imamuddin. The Maha Raja had no state about him. The conversation that passed was of a general nature. He repeated his professions of attachment to the British Government, requested that I would communicate them particularly to the Right Honourable the Governor General and renewing his wish that I would visit him at Lahore in the cold season I received the letters which I had the honour to transmit to his Lordship and the Resident on the 21st ultimo and took my leave. Khelats were conferred by the Maha Raja on myself, Captain Pearson and all the officers of the party. Honorary dresses were also presented to the Native officers of the Escort and all the public servants of the mission besides 1,100 rupees which the Raja desired might be divided generally among the servants in camp.

84. The mission having received its leave I left Umrutsar on the morning of the 15th and arrived on the 19th of June at Loodiana where it was dissolved.

85. Having brought the Report of the Proceedings of the Mission to a termination I need only refer to the tenor of the occurrences I have recorded to convey a correct impression of the marked attention and cordiality with which it has been received and treated by the Maha Raja. So fully indeed does he seem to

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near the entrance to which I passed through two Companies of Infantry. I was saluted with eleven guns. I was then met and conducted by Kufal Dhian Singh and Jemidar Khushal Singh to the presence of His Highness who arose and advancing several paces from his chair embraced and led me to a seat placed directly before him. After some complimentary enquiries I presented the Governor General's letter which Faqir Azizuddin was desired to read. The contents (to which he listened with great attention) appeared to please the Maha Raja. I then explained the reasons which had prevented his Lordship from making an immediate return to his mission. His Highness replied that it did not signify. The subject seems, however, to have previously laid hold of his mind, for the newswriter reported, that the Maha Raja being perplexed to account for the delay, had early that morning sent Rs. 1,100 to the Kirterpuro *Granth* and directed Shunkernath Gorshu, to send an offering of Rs. 125 to the shrines of Jwala Mukhi, Kangra, and Permandel, and consult the aspect of the stars. Whatever suspicions he may have entertained, I have since ascertained that the perusal of the Governor General's letter and my explanation have restored his confidence.

3. His Highness held his Court on a terrace adjoining a Baradaree, and complaining now of the heat, let me into the inside of the Building, where he was only followed by Rajas Seochait Singh and Heera Singh and Faqir Azizuddin. After a conversation on different subjects, for about half an hour, during which he referred several times to the friendship existing between the two states, he called for Atr and gave me my dismissal. As I arose to go away I mentioned to the Faqir that I had brought a horse, a double-barrelled gun and a pair of pistols of which I requested the Maha Raja's acceptance, from myself. I had done the same thing before in my mission to Umrutsar and was ex-

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pected to conform to a practice which is invariably observed in introductory visits to his Court. In the evening zecafuts of money and sweetmeats were sent. I thought it proper to return the money but kept the sweetmeats.

4. Adinanugher, which is near the Hills of Noorpur, is a town founded by Adina Beg Khan the last of the Mohammedan governors of Lahore. Runjeet Singh has made it his retreat for some years past in the hot months having been attracted to the place by the umbrageous groves with which it abounds, and the freshness of the air imparted by the canal which pervades them. In the centre of these groves is the Maha Raja's residence. The rest are occupied by the Surdars of the Court; and beyond them there are encampments of troops on all sides, consisting of the Ghorcherahs his principal camp of infantry, of eleven Battalions; several brigades of horse artillery and the Corps of Messrs. Allard and Court. His Highness' chief motive in keeping them assembled here, is, I believe, to exhibit them before me.

5. In the course of my audience I took an opportunity of conveying to the Maha Raja the satisfaction which the Governor General had derived from the general appearance and conduct of the troops which accompanied his mission to his Lordship. He said that the reports made by his envoys of the reception which the Governor General had given them had been very gratifying to him. I congratulated His Highness on the decisive victory which his troops had gained over the fanatics in the vicinity of Attock. He replied that it was a subject of mutual congratulation as he considered the interests of two states to be one and the same. The other part of the conversation consisted chiefly of enquiries regarding the French revolution, the military strength of France and Russia, the political relations between Russia and China, and those between the British

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have been gratified by the result and the beneficial effects arising from the interchange of the late friendly communications between the British Government and himself that since the return of his own Envoys from the Governor General he has been conferring on them and every officer attached to his mission, additional Jaghirs and promotion in testimony of the high sense he entertains of the satisfactory manner in which they discharged their respective duties and in concluding my Report I humbly hope that I may have the gratification of finding that I have executed the duty on which I have been employed to the satisfaction of the Right Honourable the Governor General and your approbation.

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Letter from Captain C. M. Wade, Political Assistant, Adinanagar, to the Secretary to the Governor General, Simlah, dated 22nd May 1831. Date of Consultation 1st July 1831, Letter No. 42, Vol. 30, Range 126.

I left Talibpoor on the evening of the 20th instant and at half way to Adenanughur was met by Raja Shochet Singh, Jemadar Khovshal Singh and Surdars Jwala Sing Bherania, and Fateh Sing of Mau, sent by the Maha Raja to conduct me to the place fixed for my residence, after arriving at which I received a zeeafut of Rs. 5,000 and 101 pots of sweetmeats, besides bags of rice, Ghee, and other articles of entertainment. I am lodged in a garden belonging to Kour Kherek Singh in which there are a Baraderee and three small temporary bungalows for my accommodation by the side of the canal.

2. At 9 o'clock the next morning Faqir Azizuddin came to me with a message from His Highness, that Surdars Desa Singh Mejithia and Dhena Singh Mahuri would attend immediately to conduct me to him. On their arrival I proceeded towards the Maha Raja's residence;

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Government, Ava and Nepal. The Maha Raja appears in excellent health and in complete possession of that activity of mind and body which has always been the prominent feature of his character.

21

Letter from Captain C. M. Wade, Political Assistant, Adinanagar, to the Secretary to the Governor General, Simlah, dated 25th May 1831. Date of Consultation 1st July 1831, Letter No. 43, Vol. 30, Range 126.

On the evening of the 22nd instant agreeably to invitation, I went accompanied by Jemadar Khorshah Singh to the Maha Raja and found him seated in a shady spot by the canal attended by a few Surdars and a set of about thirty dancing girls, who were asked to come forward, shortly after which, wine was introduced and drinking some himself he asked me and Dr. Murray to follow his example, which we did. He repeated his libations every quarter of an hour measuring the quantity which he took in a small cup containing about a liquid ounce. Sir David Ochterloney had, he said, attended similar orgies in his visit to his court, observing that he could take more wine then, than he could now, and that he had asked Sir David, in their libations, whether the British Government had any design of extending its possessions who said "No, the Company was sealed." ("Sair hogia"). He enquired of me if it was still the case. Then detailing on the satisfaction which he had derived from his alliance with the Company he said, that when Sir Charles Metcalfe had received his leave at Lahore, he was surprised to see him come back, and on asking the reason Sir Charles remarked, "The Surdars who are now around you imagine, I dare say, that my mission to your Court, will be the cause of detriment to you

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said that he had heard that corporal punishments were discontinued in the British Service and asked me whether the information was correct. The Ghorcherahs and others were almost all dismounted. His Highness said, that he had ordered them to send their horses away that the country might not be distressed by supporting them, which led me to enquire whether he had any regulations to restrain his troops for destroying the crops in the line of march. He stated that he had the most prohibiting orders in force on the subject, and took prompt and severe notice of any infraction of them. His attention to the preservation of the crops from depredation, is remarkable. Few chiefs exercise a more rigid control over the conduct of his troops than he does.

6. He talked of the distant predatory expeditions which the Sikhs were formerly in the habit of making, their mode of warfare, impatience of discipline, when he began to organise them into regular corps, their endurance of privations and the severe contest in which they were engaged with the Afghans, before they succeeded in securing their independence. Speaking of Shah Zeman's last invasion of the Punjab in 1799, he said that the Shah had ordered a contribution of thirty Lakhs of rupees to be levied from the city of Lahore, and left a garrison at Goujerat which the Sikhs attacked and killed the Commander, since which the ascendancy of the Sikhs had been progressive.

7. Ameer Singh Thorpa and the Ghorkas became the topic of observation. He extolled the military character of the Ghorkas, spoke of the defeat which the Sikhs had given them at Kangra and that they had in their hostilities with the British Government sought his aid which he refused, and in compliance with the expressed wish of Sir David Ochterloney prohibited the conveyance of any supplies to them from his territory of Anandpur Makhowal. "Ameer Singh proposed the partition of

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Cashmere and the Hills of Kangra with me," the Maha Raja said, "but they appeared to me to be a very designing and faithless race of people and my object was to make them retire across the Sutlej which I effected." Two sons of Thappa and a battalion of Ghorkas are in last few days a son of Bulludhur Sing has come for employment and been admitted. He encourages the Ghorkas to enter his army. Messrs. Allard and Court presented themselves before the Maha Raja while I was in conversation with him and addressed them in a kind of familiar manner. I now took my leave. It is impossible to keep in mind the variety of questions which His Highness asks in my interviews with him, but I endeavour to record some of the most prominent in order to convey an idea of the inquisitive nature of his character, whenever an opportunity occurs of enlarging the sphere of his knowledge.

Letter from Captain C. M. Wade, Political Assistant, Adinanagar, to the Secretary to the Governor General, Simlah, dated 31st May 1831. Date of Consultation 1st July 1831, Letter No. 45, Vol. 30, Range 126.

I have had three interviews of the Maha Raja since I last addressed you.

2. On the morning of the 26th he invited me to a review of some of his troops. When arrived at the ground I found they consisted of two Sikh battalions commanded by Colonel Golab Singh. The manœuvres were directed by Taij Singh, a General who commands a camp of infantry in His Highness' service consisting of twenty two Battalions. He is the nephew of Jemadar Khooshal Singh. Both possess the most extensive commands in the army of the Maha Raja which together with the intimacy which exists between them, renders their in-

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fluence in the state very great. The two battalions formed a square and went through several changes of position in Eschellon, which they executed in the French mode firing by platoons, wings, and Battalion with the greatest regularity.

3. During the morning the conversation was general, *viz.*, whether the British Government rewarded its troops for special services, the amount of prize acquired at Bhurutpur, on the mode of attacking artillery in the field, the battle of Mahidpoore, on the flight of Holkar to the Punjab, and the dread with which he had been inspired by his conflicts with our troops. That he (speaking of himself) had gone incognito, one morning to look at a review of Lord Lake's army and wished to have had an interview with his Lordship, but had been dissuaded by the advice of Raja Bhag Singh of Jeendh, His Highness's uncle. He then asked me some questions about the fort Retembere in Rajputana, what orders the Government had passed relative to the existing disputes at that place, whether it was true that Appa Sahib was raising a force at Jodhpur, and if we had an agent with that State. What was the lot of Holkar's son. The magnanimity of the British Government in acknowledging and confirming the pretension of a distant claimant to the throne of Gawalior, regarding the release from captivity in Cashmere of Shah Shoojah ul Mulk, from the power of Mohammed Khan by Dewan Mohkam Chand, provided the Shah would cede the famous diamond called the Koh Nur; the Maha Raja's subsequent acquisition of that jewel from him. The difference betwen European and native troops: together with the state of fortifications of Lahore and Umrutsar. Messrs. Allard and Court and Haslam were present. His Highness spoke to M. Allard several times relative to the discipline of the troops. It was about 3 o'clock when I took my leave. In the hot weather the Maha Raja goes out about 5 A.M, and spends an

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Be assured that such is not the case. You will find your advantage in the treaty twenty years hence." In the course of the evening he also spoke a good deal about Lieutenant Burnes' journeys, the navigation of the Indus, and the state of his relations with Sindh. He informed me that the Ameers opened a communication with him after his first expedition to Multan, when he sent a vakeel to them, that he had proceeded to Hyderabad by water; that the tribes on each bank of the Indus fired at him as he went down, but the river was so broad that by keeping in the middle of the stream he found himself entirely beyond reach of their shots.

3. Trays of confectionary, dressed in different ways to give a relish to the wine, were brought, of which we partook, and after a sitting of more than three hours he desired Raja Sochait Singh to see us to a boat which was in attendance to convey us home. I was particularly struck with the combination of ease and propriety which he exhibited during the novel scene to which we had been invited.

4. About 7 o'clock on the morning of the 24th His Highness sent Raja Dhian Singh to bring me to his presence. He was seated on the top of the Gateway leading to the Garden in which he has his residence, and was commencing to take a muster of the troops commanded by Jemidar Khooshal Singh, and the Corps of Ghorcherahs, forming his personal Guard. Carpets were spread at the foot of the Gateway, and in passing by each man deposited a Nuzar of rupees.

5. The Sindian Vakeels came while we were sitting. The Maha Raja introduced them to me, and enquiring of them whether they had any intelligence of Licutenant Burnes, they replied, that he would be here immediately. There were upwards of Rs. 5,000 collected in Nuzurs from which I infer that more than that number of persons must have passed a review. He

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hour or two in riding and inspecting his troops, then takes his first meal, often without dismounting from his horse. About 9 A.M. he retires to his residence and holds a Court, receiving reports, issuing orders to his officers, and examining minutely into the financial accounts of his Government himself. At noon he reclines for an hour, having a secretary by his side to write from his dictation, as different things requiring execution cross his mind. At 1 P.M. he rises and passes an hour in having a portion of the *Granth* read to him, after which he resumes his Court, which lasts till the day begins to close, when he either sends for a set of dancing girls to beguile the time, or secludes himself in meditation until his second repast. He goes to bed between 8 and 9 P.M., a secretary still being in attendance to whom he frequently dictates his orders in the night. In the cold weather he does not go abroad until near 9 P.M. His habits in other respects are the same, with the exception of mounting and promenading his horse in the evening along the parterves of his garden.

4. On the 27th I received an invitation from His Highness to a party similar to the one which I attended on the 22nd instant. Mr. Allard was there. Raja Dhian Singh, his brother Seochait Singh, and Goojur Singh, the son of Surdar Desu Singh, were the only Surdars present. The Maha Raja gave me a history of his early expeditions, spoke of the character and services of some of his old officers, and freely conversed on the subjects of various interests. After being with him for about three hours I returned home.

5. I attended His Highness on the morning of the 30th to another review. Two Battalions commanded by Colonel Ameer Singh of Maun, were in line and performed nearly the same manœuvres as I had seen on the 20th instant. Each battalion had two pieces of horse artillery, which the Maha Raja said, were attached to every Corps of infantry in his service. The guns and horses

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appeared good of their kind, but the saddles and harness were indifferent. While the review was going on he sent for some Ghorcheras by name and ordered them to fire at a *Lotah*. Raja Dhian Singh was also required to prove his skill in firing a six pounder at *Chhatch* placed at about one hundred and fifty paces from the gun. He sent two balls through it out of three shots. The Maha Raja said that it was an exercise of which he was very fond in his youth, having often levelled a gun himself in action. That when his father died he left twenty thousand rounds of shot, in store, which he expended in firing at marks. The conversation was of a desultory nature. He referred to the first siege of Bhurtpoore; the comparative excellence of Madras and Bengal Sepahees, and the great superiority of regular infantry over every other description of troops. The review being concluded he introduced the Commandant and others to me and gave me my leave.

23

Letter from Captain C. M. Wade, Political Assistant, Loodiana, to the Secretary to the Governor General, Simlah, 19th June 1831. Date of Consultation 29th July 1831, Letter No. 41, Vol. 32, Range 126.

Agreeably to the intimation conveyed in my last letter of the 5th instant I beg leave to report that I had my audience of leave from the Maha Raja Runjeet Singh on the morning of the 7th and proceeded the next day towards Loodianah where I arrived on the 13th instant.

2. His Highness received me with nearly the same ceremonies and in the same place as in my introductory visit to him.

3. Immediately after my arrival he introduced me to Sher Singh who had just come to Court. When inquiring

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rainy season when the Lieutenant would be entering the Ravee than one by land, to which he readily assented, "I hope," he added, "that you will join me at Lahore when Lieutenant Burnes arrives. I have written to the Governor General that I wish for your attendance and shall give you timely notice of his approach. My intention is to pass away the time in the vicinity of Adinanughur until I hear that the party has reached Mooltan and then I shall descend by the Ravi, in a boat forthwith to Lahore."

5. He now presented me with a letter from the Governor General in reply to the one which I delivered from His Lordship and began to expatiate on the great friendship which subsisted between the two states, that the advanages foretold by Sir Charles Metcalfe had in reality come to pass. The Maha Raja had made the same observation to me before, in speaking of Sir Charles, of his confidence in him and his rise in the Honourable Company's service: "I expect," His Highness continued, "that you will assure the Governor General that I am actuated by the most cordial sentiments of attachment for him and his Government and that I have nothing more at heart than the desire of improving and perpetuating the relations which exist between me and the British Government.

The Maha Raja then inquired if I was going immediately to his Lordship. He said, "I hear the Governor General has gone to Kotgurh. What stay does he make there? How far has the road which passes Simlah been extended, and where is it intended to be carried?" There is an opinion in the Punjab that he British Government is desirous of opening a communication with Cashmere by the route of Kanawar and the Sikhs imagine that the road in question is projected with that view.

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of me in the interview of the 26th ultimo whether the British Government rewarded the special services of its troops, the Maha Raja observed that he had sent Kour Sher Singh a present of 5,000 rupees after his late victory over Syad Ahmed and that instead of appropriating it to himself he had distributed it among his force besides Rs. 25,000 of his own money. Sher Singh partakes largely of that spirit of liberality which characterises His Highness's disposition toward his troops, whether for distinguished conduct against an enemy, or pre-eminence in military exercises. While practising his Surdars and Ghorcherahs in firing at marks which the Maha Raja is often in the habit of doing, the names of those who are the most expert are at once taken down in writing and the successful candidates are rewarded by shawls, horses, golden bracelets of various value according to the rank or skill of the receivers. In imitating these popular qualities of His Highness Sher Singh has more than a common motive. Independently of his predilection for military fame, he is ambitious and bears a high character among the Sikhs for his intelligence, activity and courage. They consider him as the most likely person to obtain eventually the sovereignty of the Punjab to the exclusion of Kour Kherek Singh. The French officers entertain the same opinion.

4. Five Surdars who were in action with the Syeds were also present at Court. The Maha Raja pointed them out to me name by name, mentioned their families, and spoke of their respective merits. He then addressed me regarding Lieutenant Burnes, said that his progress was very slow 4 or 5 Kos a day and that his long confinement to a boat must be very irksome. An idea had entered His Highness' mind that the party would disembark at Multan. I stated that they had not I believe any tents or equipage for marching and besides that a journey by water was more practicable in the

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