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THE LIFE OF ABDUR RAHMAN

AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN

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Pry, Luskow, photo

Walker & Cokerell ph. ac

*Abdur-Rahman
Amir of Afghanistan
From a photograph made between 1871 and 1876.*

THE LIFE OF
"ABDUR RAHMAN,"

AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN

G.C.B., G.C.S.I.

EDITED BY MIR MUNSHI

SULTAN MAHOMED KHAN

ADVANCED STUDENT OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
SECRETARY OF STATE OF AFGHANISTAN; BARRISTER-AT-LAW

WITH PORTRAIT, MAPS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS

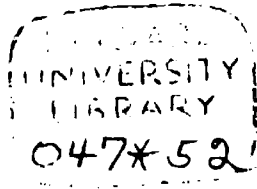
IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL I . . .

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1900

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NOTE BY THE PUBLISHER

THIS record of the Life and Policy of the Amir Abdur Rahman has been entrusted to me by his former State secretary (or Mir Munshi) Sultan Mahomed Khan.

The first eleven chapters, containing the narrative of his early life; of the strange vicissitudes through which he had to pass; of his adventures, successes and failures; of his eleven years' residence, or rather imprisonment, in Russian Turkestan, and, finally, of his accession to the Afghan throne, are written by himself. The MS. was brought to England from Kabul by Miss Lillias Hamilton, M.D., and translated from the Persian original by Sultan Mahomed Khan.

The remaining chapters, consisting of an account of the work which he has achieved in consolidating and developing the powers and resources of his country; of his domestic and foreign policy; of his personal life and occupations, and of his advice to, and aspirations for, his successors, were taken down at different times by Sultan Mahomed Khan from the Amir's own words.

Sultan Mahomed Khan was recalled to Kabul by the Amir before the MS. of this book could be placed in the printer's hands, and the responsibility of revising the proofs, and seeing the whole work through the press, has devolved upon me. I am, of course, in no way responsible for any statement contained in the book, as

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I have no direct knowledge of the facts. My work has been confined to the task of verifying names and places, which has been an exceedingly difficult one, and in the circumstances I must ask for the kind indulgence of readers and critics. To attain to complete and systematic uniformity in the spelling of Oriental names is practically impossible: my aim has been to leave as little doubt as may be concerning the identity of the persons and places referred to in the text.

It would hardly have been possible to do it at all without the invaluable assistance of Mrs Sutton Marshall, who acted as Sultan Mahomed Khan's secretary for some time while he was at Cambridge, and who had consequently derived an intimate knowledge of his intentions and wishes in regard to the book. Miss Lillias Hamilton, M.D., who was for some years the Amir's medical adviser in Kabul, has also been most kind in answering various questions which her personal knowledge of the country and its inhabitants enabled her to do with authority.

For this assistance I beg to offer Mrs Marshall and Miss Hamilton my sincere thanks.

I also beg to thank Colonel St George Gore, R.E., Chief of the Indian Survey, for permission to reproduce a part of the Government map of Afghanistan.

JOHN MURRAY.

50 ALBEMARLE STREET.

October 1900.

PREFACE

BY THE EDITOR, SULTAN MAHOMED KHAN,
MIR MUNSHI TO THE AMIR

I DO not think it necessary to waste time in trying to prove that the Amir Abdur Rahman Khan is one of the greatest men now living. All the European Statesmen who have come in personal contact with him have formed this opinion, and his remarkable achievement in turning Afghanistan, which before his time was a mere barren piece of land full of barbarous tribes, into a consolidated Muslim Kingdom and centre of manufactures and modern inventions, speaks for itself, and shows his marvellous genius.

The Amir himself, conscious of the interest and value which attach to his experiences, considers it politic to leave behind him a written guide of instructions for his sons and successors as well as for his countrymen to follow, and this record I have had the honour now to render into English in the interest of the public.

A portion of the book was written by the Amir

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himself, and I am depositing in the British Museum, Oriental Reading-room, a copy of the original. The rest was written in my handwriting from the Amir's dictation, during the time of my holding the office of Mir Munshi.

The Amir's criticisms on some points and some persons are rather severe, but I did not think it wise to leave them out—firstly, because his views are well known to many English ladies and gentlemen who have had opportunities of speaking to the Amir, and, moreover, have formed the subject of various articles in journals and periodicals, and, consequently, I did not like to conceal them; secondly, because the object in putting this book before the public is to benefit them by communicating the Amir's views without the least flattery.

The Amir is a very witty and humorous genius, and is in the habit of quoting stories with every question that he touches. These Eastern stories are an object of special interest to the European mind. I have therefore left them in the book as they were written or dictated.

I have translated every word of the Amir's own narrative of his early years, because some writers have stated that the early part of the Amir's life is entirely in the dark, and unknown to the world at large.

There are many proverbs in Arabic and Persian books which express the same sense as English proverbs, often in almost the same words. Many of these proverbs have found a place in these volumes, but to show that they have not been borrowed from English books, I have in most cases appended in the foot-notes the name of the Arabic and Persian works from which they are taken.

The only alteration that I have made in translating the book from Persian into English is that I have given different titles to the chapters from those given by the Amir. The change, however, does not affect the book itself, or its real "*Matlab*."

One of the chief features of the book is that since the time of the great Mogul Emperors—Timur, Babar, and Akbar, etc., no Muslim sovereign has written his autobiography in such an explicit, interesting, and lucid manner as the Amir has done, and the book is specially a novelty for the following reasons:—In addition to its being a book of great political significance, it is like a chapter of the "Arabian Nights," for the reader cannot help being interested to notice that a monarch like the Amir, setting aside the idea of boasting, should condescend to make a clear statement of how he was a prisoner in fetters at one time, and a cook at another; a Viceroy at one time, and a subject

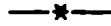
of the Viceroy at another; a general at one time, and under the command of the general at another; an engineer and blacksmith at one time, and a ruler at another. In one place he paints himself as a gardener and a peasant, and in another place mentions the grand reception accorded to him by the Russian, British, Persian, and Bokhara Governments. At one time he places his uncle, Amir Azim, on the throne, and at another he is shown to have been forced by him to leave Kabul. Once a ruler, and then a subject without even a loaf of bread to eat, and so on. The one thing which will puzzle the mind of many European readers of the book will be the fact of such an acknowledged experienced traveller and statesman writing in his book his religious beliefs and superstitions. He says he was crowned by the prophet in his dreams; that he gained his victories by the help of an old flag which he secured from the tomb of a certain saint of Herat called Khwaja Ahrar; that he protected himself from the injuries of swords, guns, and rifles through the effect of a charm he wears round his arm; that he learned reading and writing through the love of a girl who was engaged to him. Being unable to read her letters, he remained unhappy till he was helped by the hidden mysteries of Heaven to read them.

Lastly, I must record my hearty thanks to Professor William Knight, of St Andrews, and Drs Peile and Kenny, of Cambridge, for the kind assistance they have rendered to me in carrying out this work. Last, but not the least, my warmest thanks are due to Mr John Murray for encouraging me to put this book into his hand for publication.

SULTAN MAHOMED KHAN.

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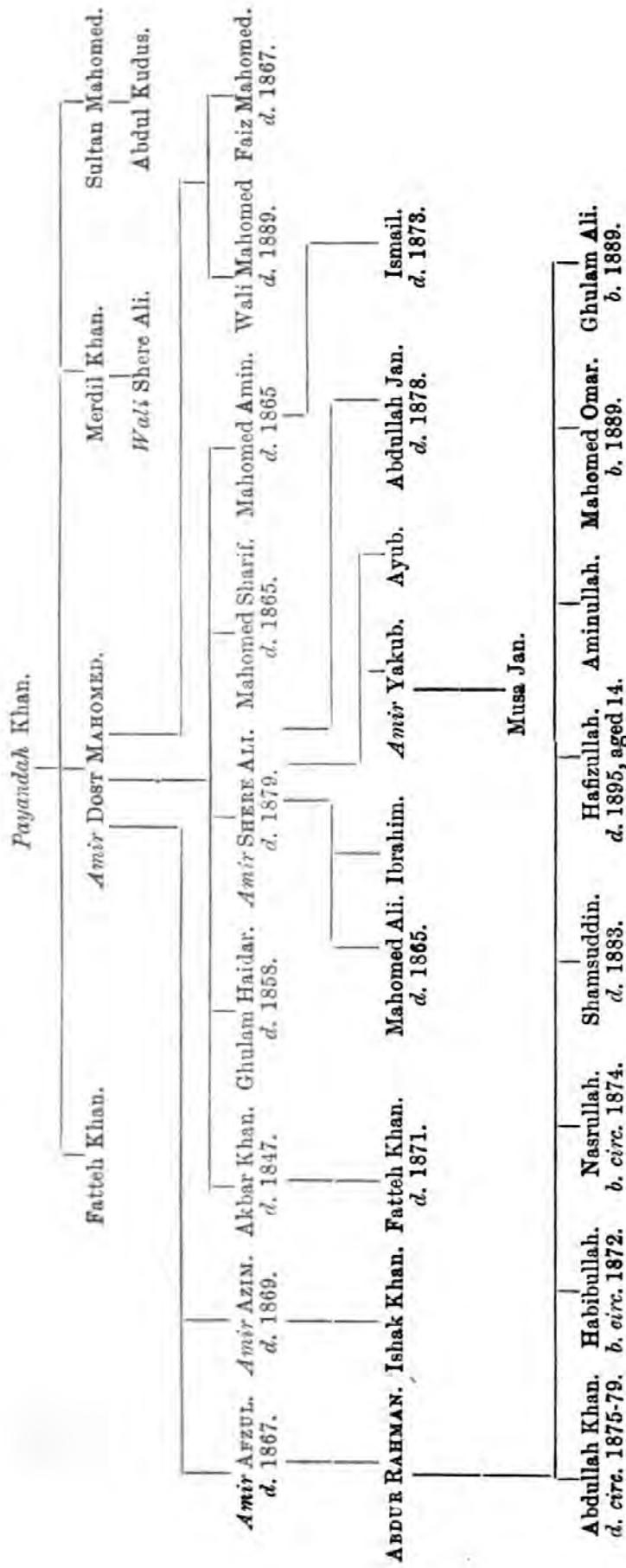
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GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE BARAKZAIS.



NOTE.— The above table, without pretence to being a Complete Genealogy of the Amir's family, will enable the reader to identify the principal persons mentioned in the book.

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THE AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN.

CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS

(CIRCA 1853-1864)

IN the year of Hijira, when I was nine years¹ old, my father sent for me to go to Balkh from Kabul. My father was then King, and Viceroy of Balkh and of its dependencies. At the time of my arrival I found him besieging Shibarghan, and I remained at Balkh for two months, at the end of which period the conquest of Shibarghan was completed; and, on my father's return, I went ten miles south of Balkh to receive him at a place called Dasht-i-Imam (*i.e.* Desert of the Leader). My eyes were gladdened by the sight of my father, who knelt down and thanked God for my safety. We returned to Balkh together, and a few days after, he ordered me to begin my lessons. I tried to read and write all day, but I was very dull. I hated lessons, and my thoughts were too much occupied with riding and shooting. What I learned to-day I forgot to-morrow; but it was compulsory, and there was no getting out of it. My tutor tried hard

¹ Abdur Rahman was probably born in 1844.

to teach me with little success. At the end of a year a new school, with a garden attached, was built for me, at a place called Taktapul (Bridge of the Boards) in the suburbs of Balkh. The reason of this was, that Balkh was an old and unhealthy city, also that my father was accustomed to pray at the holy tomb of the King of the Saints, "Ali" Murtza. This blessed tomb was nearer Taktapul than Balkh; and, in time, my father built his Harems, Courts, Cantonments, and workshops there. Gardens were also planted, and in three years a new and beautiful city sprang up.

In the spring of the fourth year my father went to Kabul to pay his respects to his father, the Amir Dost Mahomed Khan, appointing me viceroy in his place. My programme during the next six months was as follows. The hours before 8 o'clock in the morning I employed in studying, and from 8 to 2 P.M. I held my Court. After dismissing my Court, I slept; and, late in the afternoon, I rode my horse for the sake of the fresh air. At the beginning of the winter my father wrote to me from Kabul that my grandfather had graciously bestowed upon me the honour of the Governorship of Tashkurghan, for which place I was to start immediately, accompanied by 1000 sowars, 2000 militia, and six guns. In accordance with these instructions I set out for Tashkurghan, and on my arrival there, Sirdar Mahomed Amin Khan (brother of Wazir Mahomed Akbar Khan) set out for Kabul, first handing over to me the Governorship of the place. My father had appointed an assistant for me, called Haidar Khan. This gentleman, who was a dignified and clever man, was a Kizal Bash chief, who had

authority to keep his own flag, a military band, and 200 sowars. His father, Mahomed Khan, was an able man, and had a large number of followers at Kabul. My programme at the time was as follows: From early morning till 9 A.M. study. From 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. holding my Court, hearing cases, and settling the disputes of my subjects. After 2 P.M. I slept, and later practised different kinds of military exercise, big shooting, riding, polo, etc. Friday being a holiday, I generally spent the whole day hunting, returning at night to the fort of Tashkurghan. Five months after my appointment my father and my mother (who had been in Kabul since I left) came to see me, and I was very glad to kiss their hands. My father stayed with me at Tashkurghan until the following spring, when he set out for Balkh, leaving my mother with me, and I continued my studies, and administered the Governorship of the districts. Being kindly disposed towards the army, and the subjects of Tashkurghan, many of whom were my personal attendants, I bestowed certain presents on the people, and reduced the fixed revenues on land when there was any failure in the crops.

At the end of two years my father returned, and requested that the accounts of the province should be submitted to him. On discovering my leniency he at once refused to allow the concessions I had made. I begged him not to insist on the repayment of the money, but he refused, saying he was obliged to do so, as the income of the country was so small, and the army so large. He stayed with us three months, collecting about one lakh of rupees, the amount I had exonerated my subjects from paying, and returned to

Balkh. On his departure I resigned the Governorship, stating that I was not invested with full power to govern according to my ideas. I left my assistant governor of Tashkurghan in my place, and took up my residence at Taktapul, again resuming my studies. On Thursday afternoons I always went shooting, returning the evening of the next day, after passing one night and two days out of doors. My shooting party as a rule consisted of nearly 200 dogs, hawks, falcons, and other birds of prey, 100 page-boys, and my mounted suite, numbering in all about 500. We generally chose to shoot and hunt in the jungles near the Oxus, but sometimes we passed our days fishing in the river called Bawina Karā, which is the only river of Hazhdah Nahr of Balkh.

At this time Wazir Yar Mahomed Khan, Governor of Herat, wrote to my father, saying it was his pleasure to bestow on me his daughter's hand in marriage. His request being granted, I was engaged, which strongly cemented the friendship between him and my father. Another great favourite of my father's was Sirdar Abdur Rahim Khan of the family of Sirdar Rahimdād Khan. This man was very treacherous and ill-natured, jealousy being a hereditary disease in his family. He resented my influence at Court, thinking he would lose power if I had the charge of the army, so he made false accusations against me, often causing my father to be angry with me without cause. The head officer in my father's army was an Englishman named General Shir Mahomed Khan, who had changed his religion. This officer, known in Europe by the name of Campbell, was captured by my

grandfather's army in 1250 (Hijira) at the battle of Kandahar against Shah Shujāh. He was a very clever military officer, as well as a good doctor. His character was most heroic, and he had a great regard for me. He was one of the ablest men of his day, and occupied the position of Commander-in-Chief over the entire army of Balkh, numbering 30,500, out of which 15,000 were regulars, including cavalry, infantry, and artillery. The remainder consisted of militia soldiers, belonging to three races, Usbeg, Durani, and Kabuli. There were eighty guns, twelve having been sent from Kabul at the time of Sirdar Akram Khan's governorship; the rest being made in Kabul under the superintendence of my father. The army was in very good condition, being drilled regularly every day. One day Shir Mahomed Khan asked my father to place me under his instructions, so that before his death he might impart his knowledge to me. My father consenting to this, instructed me to go to the Governor for two or three hours daily, as much to train me as to prevent me wasting my time. I said "Ba chishm" (by my eyes), and went willingly. For two or three years I continued to be trained in surgery and military tactics. My father had also sent for a few rifle-makers from Kabul, and opened a workshop near my school. At mid-day, after my lessons and work were finished, I went to this school, and learned to do blacksmith's work with my own hands, also the work of filemen. In this way I acquired the art of rifle-making, and I made three complete double rifles with my own hands. These were considered better than those made by my instructors. The before-mentioned

Abdur Rahim Khan showed great jealousy of my progress, and began intriguing against me. One day he told my father I had contracted the habit of drinking wine and smoking Indian hemp. I had never done anything of the kind, but being very young, and very unhappy with these continual scoldings, I made up my mind to run away from Balkh to Herat, where my father-in-law lived. When I was privately making my preparations, my servants reported my intentions to my father, who made enquiries, and finding the report true, put me in prison, taking all my soldiers, slaves, and servants away from me. My foolish mistake had given colour to the accusations Abdur Rahim had been making against me. I was one year in prison, with chains on my ankles, and was very unhappy.

At the end of this time Shir Mahomed Khan died, and Abdur Rahim expected to be made General in his place, but my father suspecting him to be a traitor, appointed instead one of his trusted personal attendants of the Tukhi tribe, named Abdul Rauf Khan, son of Jafr Khan, who had proved himself a very brave soldier in many battles, and who was killed in the battle of Kandahar. This man was also a descendant of Jafr Khan, Wazir of Shah Husam Ghilzai, ruler of Kandahar. When he found himself selected for the post of Commander-in-Chief of the army, he refused to accept it, saying to my father that his own son, who had been one year in prison, and therefore punished sufficiently for his faults, was the proper person to take the place of Shir Mahomed Khan. My father at first refused to listen to such a proposal, saying Abdul Rauf must be mad to think the army could be placed under

my care, but being urged to give me a trial, he finally consented to send for me.

I came straight from prison to appear before my father without dressing my hair or washing my face, wearing the same clothes in which he had last seen me, with chains around my ankles.

The moment he saw me his eyes filled with tears, and he said, "Why do you behave like this?" I answered: "I have done no wrong, it is the fault of those who call themselves your well-wishers that I am in this condition." While I was speaking it happened that Abdur Rahim appeared in the Court, and on seeing him I continued: "This is the traitor who has placed me in chains; time will prove which of us is in the wrong." At this Abdur Rahim changed colour with anxiety and anger, but he could do or say nothing. My father addressed himself to all the military officers, saying, "I appoint this my lunatic son to be General over you." To which they replied: "God forbid that your son should be a lunatic: we know well that he is wise and sensible, you also will find this out, and will prove that it is disloyal people who give him a bad character." My father then gave me leave to go and take up my duties. I was overjoyed, and went and refreshed myself with a Turkish bath. My servants meantime gathered round me, congratulating me on my release and good fortune.

The next day I took charge of the army, and inspected the workshops and magazines. I appointed General Amir Ahmad Khan (afterwards my representative in India), who was a commanding officer in the artillery, as a superintendent of the workshops, and Com-

mandant Mahomed Zaman Khan as superintendent of the magazines. Sikander Khan (afterwards killed in a battle between the Russians and the King of Bokhara, and whose brother, Ghulam Haidar, is now Commander-in-Chief in Kabul¹), with another of the same name but of the Barukzai tribe, I appointed as chief officers of battalions. I, myself, inspected all the different departments from morning till night, reporting the progress made daily to my father, who became more pleased every day.

The army was so thoroughly organised that neither before nor since has it been in such good order. One of the reasons of this is that the present officials are over-luxurious. In the reign of Amir Shere Ali they were accustomed to take bribes and neglect their duties. Now they ought to be content with their salaries, doing their work regularly and well. A wise poet says: "Do not consort with thieves; they may make some effect upon your minds." By the grace of God my people may profit by my advice, and will gradually make progress.

My father being satisfied with my military services, gave me full authority over the entire army, keeping to himself the civil affairs of the country, with the accounts of the kingdom. After a short time my father went to Tashkurghan, to which place I accompanied him with my body-guard. On our arrival, Mir Atalik's brother brought a letter with some presents for my father, who received him warmly, and persuaded him to return with a message for his brother, to the effect that as his country lay on the

¹ He died in 1897.

side of the Oxus river, and was in close connection with Afghanistan, he ought to consider himself under the protection of the reigning Amir of Kabul, Dost Mahomed Khan, instead of under the King of Bokhara, and ought to repeat the name of Dost Mahomed in his Khutba, as their present habit was an insult to Afghanistan. On receiving this message Mir Atalik lost his temper with his brother, and tried to imprison him, but he fled towards Tashkurghan. He, however, was pursued and overtaken by Mir Atalik's sowars, at a place called Abdan. Hearing of this, we sent a force to assist him, but he was killed before they arrived, and all they could do was to defeat Mir Atalik's sowars, and return with the dead body of his brother. Mir Atalik, hearing of the defeat of his sowars, went to complain to the King of Bokhara (Amir Muzaffar). This King had succeeded to the throne that year on the death of his father, and was staying at Hissar to quell a rebellion in that country. The King gave heed to Mir Atalik's complaint, and sent him a flag and a tent, telling him to erect the tent in his country, with the flag in front, to frighten the Afghans. The credulous Mir, believing that this was all he needed, returned to Kataghan, and sent a defiance to us. My father reported his attitude to the Amir, who commanded him to send an army to take possession of Kataghan. My father invited his brother, Sirdar Azim Khan, to leave Kuram Khost (of which country he was Governor), and to come and see him. I was sent as far as Aibak to receive him.

In the spring, before the army was despatched to Kataghan, I took six days' leave to see that everything was thoroughly in order. Being satisfied that this

was so, I invited my father to make a personal inspection also. He professed himself satisfied with my arrangements, and gave me a horse with gold harness and saddle, also a jewelled belt and sword, saying : "Go thou, God be with you, I leave you in His protection." I kissed his hands, and two days later being appointed Commander-in-Chief of the army under my uncle Azim Khan, I started. On my arrival in the city of Tashkurghan, the people, with whom I was very popular, received me warmly. I encamped my force in the plain of Namazgah, and to show my gratitude to the people, I invited all the chiefs of the town to a banquet. They afterwards proved faithful to me and my army. In about fifteen days my uncle joined me, and together we started for Aibak, arriving there after a few days' march. We halted three days, arranging provisions and transport animals, and from there marched towards the fort of Ghorī, which was fortified by Mir Atalik's infantry and cavalry. We reached this fort after five days' march. On our arrival there, I arranged my troops, 20,000 in number, with 40 guns, in front of the fort, for the enemy's benefit, after which display we encamped in a safe place. Late in the afternoon I inspected the situation of the fort, accompanied by a few officers, pointing out suitable places for guns, etc., also ordering that entrenchments should be made. Under cover of night I gave orders that underground mines should be laid towards the moat of the fort, and these were finished by the following morning.

In the afternoon Mir Atalik showed himself from the top of the hill, with 40,000 sowars, to his soldiers

within the fort, to encourage them to make a brave resistance. On seeing him there, I forestalled any attacks he might make on our entrenchments, by an assault on his rear, with 2000 sowars, 12 mule-battery guns, and 4 battalions of infantry. The Mir was unaware of our approach until I ordered the heavy guns to be fired. At this sudden attack, being ignorant of the smallness of my force, he fled with all his army. I returned to my camp and inspected the mines until eleven o'clock that evening when, after seeing the sentries were at their posts, I retired to rest. At sunrise I inspected the troops, and sent 2000 to a distance of 12 miles as an advance guard, to provide for the safety of the transport animals, and against any unexpected attack of the enemy, also to keep me informed of their movements. Three days after, I received the intelligence that 15 miles distant were 8000 sowars, concealed in a place called Chasma-i-Shir (the Spring of Milk). The object of this manœuvre evidently being to attack our transports on their way to and from the camp, I at once appointed 4000 sowars and 2 guns, under the command of Ghulam Mahomed Khan, Populzai, and Mahomed Alam Khan, to attack them. This they did so successfully that after a very slight skirmish the Kataghan sowars were defeated, and 2000 were taken prisoners. The remainder fled to Baghlan, where their Mir was encamped.

When this news reached Kataghan, Mir Atalik being encamped only 18 miles distant lost courage, and retired towards Kunduz. Of the sowars I had sent to Chasma-i-Shir, 1000 remained in possession of Baghlan, while the others returned to my camp in triumph. My

uncle bestowed rewards on those who had distinguished themselves in battle, and khilats on others.

In the afternoon of the same day I visited the entrenchments, and spoke from behind to the soldiers in the fort, saying: "You people are Muslims, and I also am a Muslim. You have seen the defeat of your Mir, therefore it is folly to continue killing my Muslims and being yourselves killed by them. Leave the fort to me, and I will make terms to your satisfaction." To this, they made no reply, and in the evening I appointed certain of my officers to attack the fort at daybreak in the following manner: First, they were to attack Sukila, a place outside the moat of the inner fort. This place was also surrounded by a moat. Before the attack was made I directed the heavy guns to be continually fired from sunrise to morning, the object being to alarm the enemy. Directly the guns ceased, a few soldiers were to make several attacks on different aspects of the fort, to draw attention from Sukila, the real point of attack. The greater part of my force was to approach this latter place noiselessly, and, having scaled the walls, was to cry out loudly: "Ya chahar yar."¹ All this was carried out as I instructed, the enemy flying from the outer fort to the inner one. The moat surrounding this fort was ten yards deep, and twenty-three yards in width. Fortunately, the water was exceedingly clear, which enabled my officers to observe a hidden bridge composed of wattled cane, which had been constructed about thirty-six inches under the surface of the water. With loud cries

¹ "Oh! Four Friends."

of triumph they plunged into the water, and waded to the opposite side. The soldiers immediately followed, and taking possession of the bazaars, they made holes in the walls, through which they fired at the people within the fort.

While this was happening, I wrote a letter to the Governor in charge of the fort, saying that if he surrendered, I would spare the lives and property of his sowars, and would look upon them as my subjects. I ordered the firing to cease, and sent this letter by one of my prisoners. The Governor and chief officers of the fort came out to answer me personally, and discuss the terms of surrender. They agreed to my conditions, and opened the gates, the inhabitants streaming out in large numbers. The majority of these I sent to my uncle, who bestowed khilats on the chiefs, after which he dismissed them to their homes. Their number was fully 10,000, but their Mir having no knowledge of war, had only allowed them provisions for ten days, and had I delayed my attack, they would have been obliged to surrender. Their Mir evidently thought the tent and flag bestowed on them by the King of Bokhara was alone sufficient to sustain a large army. God be praised for having created so wise a people!

The followers of Mir Atalik were overjoyed and surprised at our kind treatment, as their chiefs had told them so much of the cruelty of the Afghans. Their fears being now dissipated, they deserted in large numbers, and returned to their homes. The Mir left Kataghan with a few faithful followers, and

took refuge in Rustak, under the rule of the Mirs of Badakshan. On receiving this news, we immediately marched from Ghorī to Baghlan, his capital, and from there sent letters to all the chiefs of the country, giving them every promise of our support, and on some bestowing khilats. We also appointed governors and magistrates of the religious courts. After this I left Baghlan for Khanabad, encamping on a high ground near the river bank. I sent 2 battalions, 1000 Usbeg militia sowars, 500 Afghan sowars, 500 militia infantry, with 6 mule-guns, towards Talikhan. The commanding officer of this force, Mahomed Yamen Khan, son of the great Amir Dost Mahomed Khan, was appointed by my uncle to be Sirdar. The army arrived at Talikhan after crossing the Bargi river, and immediately made entrenchments near the fort, destroying it in a short time. My uncle and I, meantime, were busy in Khanabad, making every alteration necessary in a captured city, one of these being that my grandfather's name was inserted in the prayer-books.

Shortly after this, the people of Andarab and Khost, being persuaded by Mir Atalik and the Mirs of Badakshan to rebel, attacked their Governor, to whose assistance I sent 4000 soldiers from Khanabad under the command of Sirdar Mahomed Omar and others. My grandfather dispatched Sirdar Mahomed Sharif Khan from Kabul, with 2 battalions and 1000 militia infantry, 1000 cavalry, and 6 guns. The two armies united at a place called Buzdara, where they fought, and severely punished the rebels, who lost 2000 men, killed and wounded, in the field.

After this victory the two forces returned to Khanabad and Kabul, leaving 500 men with the Governor at Andarab. The Mir of Kataghan, on hearing of the destruction of the fort of Talikhan, left Rustak, and crossing the Oxus took up his residence in a place called Syad, near Kolab. The Mir of Kolab at that time was Mir Sarabeg, afterwards defeated by the King of Bokhara. Being obliged to leave his kingdom, he came to Kabul, where he became a highly respected member of my Court. Being a relation of Mir Atalik, he allowed him 10,000 sowars, while the Badakshan people gave him 10,000. This force, with 2000 of his own men, jointly attacked the provinces near the camp, and the forts of Hazrat, Imam and Talikhan, and plundered all the transport animals they could capture. The sowars whom I had employed as advance guards constantly came in contact with these men, and as many as one or two hundred were killed on both sides. Those captured I had blown from the guns. The total number punished in this way, during the three years of the rebellion, amounted to 5000. Those killed by my army were about 10,000.

After a year passed in endeavouring to quell the rebellion, Sirdar Yamen Khan wrote to say he had not sufficient troops to resist 15,000 families of the enemies of Badakshan; that he must either receive reinforcements, or retire. Receiving no reply, he finally started for Khanabad without permission. My uncle and I consulted together. I suggested that I should go and fight in his place, and I said that, with God's help, I would put the country to rights

without further assistance than 6 mule-battery guns, and 5000 sowars. My uncle replied that it was a very difficult matter, and that being a young man without a beard yet, I might lose courage. I said I would show him if this was so, and I started the same day. After a long march I reached Talikhan. The army was delighted to see me, and Sirdar Yamen Khan met me on the way. Although he was my uncle, and far older than I, being proved a coward, I turned my face from him, and would not say anything but that he was a disgrace to his celebrated father, Dost Mahomed.

Two days after my arrival, the populations of Rustak and Badakshan, under the instructions of Mir Yusif Ali, brother to Mir Shah of Faizabad, appointed 2000 or 3000 sowars to plunder the country round my camp, and in the valley of Talikhan. They suddenly attacked my pony and camel transport animals, which were bringing provisions under the charge of 200 militia soldiers and 50 sowars. These men at once despatched a messenger with the news of their plight to me, and at the same time defended themselves as best they could. On receiving their message I hurriedly sent 700 soldiers to their aid, who defeated the plunderers, bringing the camels and ponies safely back to camp. Two days later the rebellious force attacked those villages which rendered their allegiance to me, and I again sent a strong force and dispersed the rebels, taking ten prisoners, and capturing 200 horses.

This kind of thing lasted for three months till one day an Ashan, who was an ecclesiastical leader

of the Mirs of Kataghan, invited me to dinner. I accepted his invitation, taking with me 300 cavalry and 200 militia sowars. His house was only two miles from my camp, and unknown to him I sent 100 sowars as an advance guard to surround the house some distance off. After some conversation with my host dinner was announced, and almost at the same time one of my advance guard brought me news that a large army had attacked them, and they were being obliged to retire slowly. I immediately took my host and his sons prisoners, and started to join my men. At the same time I sent a horseman to my camp demanding that 1000 sowars, 1 battalion, and 2 guns should be sent at once to my assistance, suggesting that the gunners and infantry should ride behind the cavalry to save time. Finding the rebel army amounted to about 10,000 in number, and were marching towards us, I divided my small army into eight divisions, stationing each division some distance from the other, and keeping the largest division with me. The first of these I ordered to fire, and when they were surrounded as I expected, the second division were to open fire, and when they were surrounded the third was to make an attack, and so on, until they were all engaged, and it remained for me with the largest division to draw our swords and engage the enemy.

Meanwhile reinforcements from the camp arrived, and I made a general attack. The rebels, exhausted and divided by reason of having to face so many divisions of my army, were so thoroughly defeated that leaving their wounded—100 dead, and 400 prisoners—in our hands, they fled, whilst only 100 of my soldiers

were killed. I thanked God for so complete a victory over such superior numbers, and there was much rejoicing among us. Amongst my prisoners were ten or twelve chiefs of the Rustak people, who abused the Ashan ecclesiastic, saying he was the cause of their imprisonment, as he had written to their Mirs of his intention to invite the Commander of the Afghan army to deliver him up into their hands, if they could send a sufficient army to defeat his body-guard. In expectation of success the Mirs had sent these chiefs with 10,000 sowars, only to fall prisoners into my hands. Late that night I returned to camp, and reported the matter to my uncle in Khanabad, sending the Ashan priest also as a prisoner. The wounded I placed under the care of the surgeons, and when they were recovered I presented some of them with khilats, and others with their travelling expenses and dismissed them, instructing them to persuade their people to give up their habit of robbery. I also sent a message to their Mir to the effect that if he desired to go to war, he and his brother should openly do so, instead of resorting to the treachery of sending an envoy to my father at Taktapul to assure him of their friendship, when all the time they were conspiring against him. I also instructed them to say, that if my father wished me to conquer Badakshan, the Mir had not sufficient strength to stand against me for six hours. The Kataghan prisoners I did not release, but sent a message to inform their relations (who had left the country, and settled under the King of Bokhara) that unless they returned to their homes I would execute all the prisoners then in my hands. I persuaded these men

themselves to communicate with their friends, admonishing them to return without fear. The result of this was that a few Kataghan priests came as their representatives to make terms with me. I gave them an oath in the name of God, that if their people did nothing to injure the Government of Afghanistan, and would prove themselves peaceful and loyal subjects, I would look upon them as my own people, and would protect their interests. On the priests returning with these my assurances, all the 2000 families returned to their homes, and settled at Talikhan.

The message I had sent by the Badakshan prisoners to the obstinate Mir Yusif Ali, had no effect on his mind, and he continued his habit of robbery and plunder. After a few weeks of peace, he consulted with the Mir of Kataghan, the Mir of Kolab, and his brother Mir Shah, and managed to persuade them that the only way to gain a decisive victory over me, was to combine their forces, and make two desperate attacks simultaneously in two different places, viz. Talikhan and Chal. In this latter place were stationed 400 infantry soldiers, 400 militia, 500 sowars, and 2 mule-battery guns, under the command of a brave experienced officer called Sirdar Mahomed Alam Khan. The plan of attack was as follows:—A small body of men were to pillage the surrounding country to deceive us into thinking there was no organised army, but merely a handful of robbers. At the same time, about 30,000 sowars were to hide themselves in the gardens of Talikhan at night under the command of Mir Ali Wali (a cousin of Mir Atalik). The following morning 100 of these rebels coming out

of their hiding-place plundered 100 camels, which had been let out to graze, and the officers of the advance guard carelessly sent 200 sowars to beat back the rebels, and secure the safety of the camels. On learning what had been done, I explained to the officer that he had made a mistake in sending so small a force without first ascertaining the strength of the enemy, as I felt convinced that 100 sowars would not have interfered with my camels so near the advance guard, unless their force were concealed near by, and I ordered the entire army to be prepared for war immediately. As it turned out, I was right, for by the time the men were ready, we perceived our sowars, of whom only 160 had escaped with their lives, headed by one of my bravest officers, flying towards us pursued by 40,000 of the enemy. I had taken the precaution to place my guns with 200 infantry on the top of a hill called Ortabuz, and had instructed the gunners not to fire until the word of command was given. I also placed 1000 infantry on the right of the enemy, and 500 on the left, and with the remainder of the cavalry and infantry I faced the enemy outside the entrenchments. When the armies were fully engaged in battle, and the enemy's attention was entirely occupied, I sent the gunners to the rear, and ordered the infantry on their right and left to fire, and redoubling my attack in their front, they became bewildered at the sharp showers of shell and bullets from all directions, and, not knowing the extent of my force, lost ground, and turning round faced the gunners. On observing them waver I incited the cavalry to a renewed attack, which broke their ranks, and the rout was complete. The

battle had lasted nine hours, the rebels losing 3000 dead in the field, whilst our losses were estimated at 100 dead and a number wounded. We also took 600 prisoners with 5000 horses. I ordered a tower to be erected out of the heads of the dead rebels to strike fear into the hearts of those still alive. I then wrote a full report of this great victory to my uncle, congratulating him on our triumph.

The rebels of Chal offered but slight resistance, being only 12,000 in number. They were commanded by Mir Bababeg and Mir Sultan Murad. After a short skirmish they broke and fled with their wounded, leaving 100 dead on the field. Mir Bababeg fell from his horse, breaking his leg, and was carried away by his followers. After this decisive victory the Mirs of Badakshan felt convinced they could not face the trained Afghan soldiers in the open field of battle, and that their only hope was to continue their system of plunder and treachery.

About this time Mir Muzaffar, the King of Bokhara, being anxious to see what treatment the Afghans showed to the people of Badakshan, crossed the Oxus, and took up his residence at Charikar. My father, having only 10,500 men in his army, and doubting the friendly relations of Mir Muzaffar, wrote to my uncle to keep 12,000 Charkhi soldiers out of the 20,000 he now had, and to send 8000 men under my command to reinforce him. This number would enable him to protect the country, and to fight if called upon to do so. There was also a possibility of a general rebellion among our Usbeg subjects, who were of the same nationality as the King of Bokhara. My uncle having very little know-

ledge of the country of Turkestan, became alarmed at this prospect, and wrote me to leave possession of Talikhan and start for Khanabad with my army. I answered that it would be better for me to hold myself in readiness to start if required, as it would be imprudent to leave a country so lately conquered after so many struggles and difficulties, with no army to protect our interests. But my uncle would not listen to reason, and again wrote insisting on my starting immediately. So there was nothing to do but obey, and the next morning I started early with my whole army. Not having sufficient transport animals to carry all the ammunition, I arranged that the remainder should be divided among the infantry and sowars, each man to carry a little extra weight. As there would be considerable difficulty in providing the army with food on the way to Khanabad, I sent 100 sowars to plunder and carry away as many sheep as they could from a flock of 15,000 belonging to the Ortabuz people.

I then divided my army into three divisions—the advance guard under Sirdar Shams-ud-din Khan, son of Sirdar Amin Mahomed Khan; the militia, infantry, and part of the cavalry to form the centre division with four guns; and the third and last division with the whole of the artillery, the remainder of the infantry, and one-third of the cavalry. The 100 sowars who had been sent to obtain sheep, joined me at a village called Khwaja Chungal. The Talikhan people being encouraged by our sudden march, followed us from the rear, in number about 5000 to 6000 sowars, but they had not the courage to attack us. To put an end to this, I ordered

one battalion of soldiers to hide themselves in a cave about 1000 yards in length on the road-side, instructing them to fire when the rebels passed by.

My orders were carried out as arranged, and at the sound of firing my men turned and attacked them from the front. This sudden onslaught from front and rear completely overwhelmed the sowars, who fled in all directions, some throwing themselves into the river, others climbing to the tops of hills, to escape our bullets. Including men lost in this way, their casualties amounted to 400. We continued our way unmolested towards Khanabad, and at night-fall one of our guns fell into a river as we were crossing it. The soldiers failing to recover it, I dismounted, and with a few others, managed to bring the gun to the opposite bank, but my clothes were very wet, and I could not leave the army to change, whilst the soldiers dried theirs by setting fire to the dry bushes of the jungle. About two o'clock, when we were nearing Khanabad, we heard the sound of heavy firing, evidently coming from the direction of my uncle's camp. Sirdar Shams-ud-din Khan suggested that the guns belonged to the Usbeg sowars, who must have plundered my uncle's camp, and that our best course was to escape towards Kabul. I replied that in the year 1257 I had heard people admiring his bravery in the battle fought against the English, and where was that bravery now? At which he remained silent. I sent six sowars to my uncle, saying I had heard firing proceeding from his camp, and I had determined to remain where I was, but was ready to fight if necessary in any direction, on receiving a summons from him. In

an hour's time a man came galloping to me with the news that the guns were fired by my uncle to celebrate the fact that the King of Bokhara had fled across the Oxus from Bosaga.

Now, one of my father's personal attendants, a brave and experienced man, a very lion in the field of battle, named Ghulam Ali Khan, had the care of the chief frontier guards of the Oxus; he was also governor of three Nahrs of Hazhda Nahr. This man had gone to Karki and Bosaga on a visit of inspection to the frontier. When he came across 2000 sowars belonging to the King of Bokhara, they immediately exchanged shots, and after a small skirmish fled towards the camp of Mir Muzaffar. The Mir marched towards Bokhara, leaving a part of his luggage and tents behind. These were captured by Ghulam Ali, who distributed the baggage as booty to the soldiers, sending the tents of the king to my father. At this good news I started at once to my uncle, and congratulated him on our mutual good fortune. Receiving his permission the following day, I sent 2 battalions, 1 regiment of cavalry, 2 guns, and 500 militia soldiers to Talikhan to let the people know that we had not yet given up possession of their city. I also sent a message to the effect that if the people of Badakshan misbehaved again, I should arrive there with reinforcements without loss of time.

Meantime I remained in Khanabad, putting the army (which I had not seen for five months) in order. When the Talikhan people found that the army, so lately got rid of, had returned, and there was no hope of evading the Afghan rule, they offered the

cousin of Mir Shah in marriage to my uncle, who accepted her with great pleasure. I was greatly averse to this alliance, and expatiated on the drawbacks of a union with so treacherous a people, craving rather my uncle's permission to go and take Badakshan by force, and so rid ourselves of the trouble of an untrustworthy enemy, or so-called ally, who would always be a thorn in our flesh. My uncle, however, would not listen, and ate the sweets of his engagement.

The Mirs of Badakshan, being satisfied with the turn which affairs had taken, sent Mir Yusif Ali (a very treacherous man) with promises of loyalty and many presents to my uncle, who entirely changed his mind about conquering the country. At this time my mother, taking advantage of the general peacefulness of affairs, begged my father to allow me to go to see her. He consented, and wrote to me to join them at Taktapul. I left the army in charge of the colonels and commandants, and started with a body-guard of 400 sowars. On my way I halted at Tashkurghan, and from there visited the blessed tomb of the King of the Saints. I rubbed my face on the gates to give light to my eyes from the light of his tomb, and comfort to my heart from the help of his soul, and continued my way to Taktapul. On my arrival I kissed the hands of my parents, who gave much charity to the poor in token of their pleasure at seeing me, all my relations doing the same according to their means. The next day I inspected the magazines, workshops, and stores, and finding them in good order, I added to the salaries of their superintendents, also giving away khilats to those of good character. All the tents and other requi-

sites required by my army at Kataghan I ordered to be made at the workshops. These were completed and sent in less than a month.

For the space of one year I was occupied with the administration of the Taktapul army, at the end of which time, in the spring, I started for Kataghan. One curious accident which I may mention happened to me on my way there. At one of our halting-places, called Kazwinar (which means, "The playing-place of the girls"), I went to take a walk on the surrounding hills where the transport animals were grazing. I happened to have missed my soldiers, when a wild camel attacked me. I had no arms save a small dagger in my belt, so I began running round and round a large stone. The camel followed me many times round the stone, till I was well-nigh exhausted, and, finding none of my soldiers had arrived, I was obliged in self-preservation to stop and face the camel, and picking up a big stone, I hit him as hard as I could on the ear, which knocked him on his knees. Before he had time to rise I drew my dagger and cut his throat, the blood spurting all over me. Seeing the animal dying before me, and being worn out, I fainted, and must have remained unconscious for an hour. On recovering my senses I was delighted to find the camel quite dead. To punish my servants for so long neglecting me, I ordered each one to receive thirty strokes, and made it a rule, that during any private business, which necessitates my leaving my body-guard for any short time, two or three confidential people must always be near me. This world is beset with dangers!

I found the army of Kataghan very pleased to see

me, and I conveyed to the soldiers a message from my father, that he looked upon them all as sons, and felt the same fatherly affection for them as he felt for me, Abdur Rahman. At this they cried out with joy, saying: "Every one of us will sacrifice his life for our father, Sirdar Mahomed Afzul Khan." I also conveyed my father's compliments, with kind messages, to my uncle; after which I retired to my house, where the military had arranged a banquet, with fireworks afterwards, in my honour. The following day I went my usual round of inspection to the magazines, stores, and artillery, thanking God that I found everything in such good order. The next day I ordered a grand review to take place.

After a week's stay I went to see the army in Talikhan, which I also found in a very satisfactory condition. The Mirs of Badakshan, hearing of my arrival, sent me as presents six handsome slave boys, nine horses complete with silver harness and saddles, nine bags of honey, five hawks, and two hounds. In return I sent the Mirs khilats and other presents, besides a letter reminding them that when I was last in Talikhan they had promised to give me the possession of certain mines, consisting of one topaz, five gold, one lapis lazuli, one malachite, and others, but that when I had made enquiries from my uncle, I found they had not done so. On receiving my letter they authorised me to take possession of them, which I did, forwarding some of the precious stones with the other presents to my father.

The events of the following two years are not worth recording. At the end of this time my uncle was re-

called by my father, and Sirdar Abdul Ghais Khan, my father's cousin, was appointed Governor.¹ My uncle stayed a short time in Kabul, after which he left for his own states of Kuram Khost. I met him in Shuri on the way thither, and received an invitation from my father to meet him in Aibak, and to accompany him to Balkh. Giving careful instructions as to the proper care of my army, to the officers in Khanabad, I went to Aibak and kissed my father's hands, and we started together for Taktapul, where we remained during the whole winter.

In the spring, at Noroz (New Year's Day), Sirdar Abdul Ghais died of the plague, and trouble also broke out at Herat, of which country Sirdar Sultan Ahmad Khan, my grandfather's nephew, and an official of the Shah of Persia were Governors. This man had caused a disturbance in the provinces of Kandahar, and my grandfather, Dost Mahomed, set out with my uncle to punish him. They besieged the fort of Herat for several months, and in March my father and I were rejoiced to receive tidings at Balkh of the victory of Farah (in the province of Herat). After thanksgivings which this good news occasioned, my father sent me to Khanabad as Governor-General of the army. I found the country in very bad order. The Governors of each town had consumed the revenues of their districts themselves, and the late Sirdar had known nothing of what had gone on, being more of a doctor than a governor, who spent most of his time in prescribing for the people. He was, however, such a coward, that he

¹ His son, Abdul Rashid, was made Governor of Jellalabad by me (1897), and dismissed, owing to his cruelty and oppression.

had been frightened by the threats of a Mir of Badakshan into releasing a thief who had been justly imprisoned. This man (Mir Shah), who had so abused his office, was dead, and had been succeeded by his son, Mir Jahandar Shah. Mir Yusif Ali, his brother, had been murdered by his nephew, Mir Shah Syad, a year before my arrival; and this man's son had succeeded, although he was partly a lunatic, an opium smoker, and a drunkard. Mir Bababeg Khan, ruler of Kishm (whose father died before the two brothers), had fallen in love with the widow of Mir Shah, sister of Yusif Ali. Their engagement was announced, when, furious at this turn of events, Jahandar Shah attacked Kishm, and taking Bababeg prisoner, married his step-mother himself, boasting that he had married his own mother. Shortly after this, Mir Bababeg escaped from prison just before my arrival, and fled to Khanabad. I found also that the soldiers had not received their pay for eight months of the past year and four of the present. My first care was to collect the revenues and arrears of money due from all the Governors, and to discharge this debt. The officers of two battalions and 400 sowars of my uncle's army were also stationed at Khanabad, and these men had taken advantage of the apathy of the late Sirdar to collect and spend the revenues of the country to a large amount. My arrival, which put an end to their malpractices, was keenly resented by them, and their first attempt at revenge was to induce the army to rebel and desert to Kabul. My cousin, Mir Aziz, who was in Kabul, and the nominal head of his father's army, being only eleven years old, was completely under the bad influence of his tutors and

guardians, who were all allied with the officers of the battalion above-mentioned. These men instilled into the minds of the soldiers that the country belonged to their master, and it was foolish to submit to Abdur Rahman's interference and governorship. They further suggested that they should all go to Kabul with the son of their real master.

All this made a great impression on the minds of the ignorant soldiers, and to add to this, we received news of my grandfather's death. Encouraged by this sad news, the soldiers of the two battalions and cavalry surrounded my house, and tried to force the doors with large stones. My army turned out and quickly dispersed the rebels, who fled to Kabul, but their disloyal officers who had brought them to this state of bad behaviour, thought it better not to accompany them. After waiting three days, the soldiers lost heart, and wrote me a letter, begging to be forgiven, adding that they had been deceived by their officers. I replied, requesting the names of those who had incited them to rebel, and on receipt of this information I promised pardon to all the others. I added, that if they refused to send me these names, they could continue their way to Kabul, as I had no need of their services. In reply, they sent a list, including the names of eight captains, and sub-lieutenants, with the commandants of the army, and concluded with the guardians and tutor of Mahomed Aziz, saying that these men had sworn on the Koran to unite against me. After this explanation I pardoned the soldiers, and sentenced the eight captains to be blown from the guns, the commandants of the corps I dismissed, as they had been my uncle's page-boys; so

for the time being, the country was restored to tranquillity.

As soon as the news of my grandfather's death reached Mir Atalik, he sent his son Sultan Murad Khan to Kataghan to stir up the subjects to rebellion. I appointed a strong force, comprising 3 battalions, 12 guns, 1000 cavalry sowars, and 2000 militia infantry, under Sirdar Mahomed Alam, and Sirdar Ghulam Khan, to punish the rebels. I intended to meet the enemy at Narin by the road of Shorab (Bitter Waters). An unfortunate incident occurred at the commencement of the campaign. Sirdar Alam was in the habit of marching at the head of his army, accompanied by 200 sowars. He had been repeatedly warned how imprudent it was for a chief officer to expose himself without an advance guard. One day he was suddenly attacked by 2000 Kataghan sowars, who had concealed themselves behind the hills. The followers of Alam fled on becoming aware of the number of the rebels; but the Sirdar, being unaccustomed to surrender, stood with a few brave men and fought till they were all cut to pieces. When tidings of this reached the advancing army, a detachment of cavalry galloped after the rebels before they could carry the dead body of the Sirdar away, and after a severe fight defeated the Kataghan sowars, who fled towards Narin, leaving 300 dead and wounded on the field.

The day following this encounter a decisive battle was fought at Narin, where 40,000 rebels were massed together. The attack began at sunrise, and continued till late in the afternoon, resulting in the flight of the enemy, who fought very bravely, continually making

fresh attacks. My losses were very slight in comparison to theirs, being only thirty killed and wounded, including Sirdar Ghulam Khan. The reason of so slight a loss on our side was the order in which the army was arranged, while the enemy being unskilled in warfare were massed together, so that our guns did great execution. I was proud of my army that day. The manner in which they fought was worthy of admiration; only those persons can appreciate this who know what it is to be attacked by such a large body of men, and not lose courage. The appearance of 40,000 men on a desert plain is like the movement of a mountain.

One of the spies, whom I had appointed in Kataghan to procure me information, was taken prisoner by Sultan Murad Khan. When the news of my victory reached Kataghan he was assisted to escape, and taking a horse came straight to me; but on arrival he fainted. When he recovered consciousness he told me that each day during his imprisonment he had received forty strokes of the lash. In corroboration of this, the surgeons told me that his body was as black as charcoal, which proved what he had gone through. He told me that all the people and families in Kataghan were trying to leave the country to secure their own safety. I immediately sent Naib Ghulam Khan Durani, a clever man (though dilatory), with cavalry and artillery to occupy the road at a narrow defile, through which these people would have to pass on their way to Badakshan. I also ordered the infantry of Talikhan to accompany the expedition. Having cut off their retreat, I sent the Kasi of Kunduz by the Shorab road, with two or three Mirs of Badakshan, who were very popular with the

people, and had a great reputation amongst them. With these men I sent letters, promising pardon to the rebels. On finding their retreat cut off, and escape impossible, and perceiving their army was no match for mine, and, moreover, being satisfied with my promises through the Mirs and priests, they came to ask my pardon and forgiveness.

In reply, I issued a proclamation that I would overlook the rebellion on two conditions. The first of these was, that they should promise in the name of God and His prophet Mahomed, that they and their offspring would be faithful to the government of Afghanistan, and not be persuaded by their Mirs and chiefs to act contrary to the welfare of this same government. Secondly, that they should pay twelve lakhs of rupees as a fine for their misbehaviour.

After a short interval I received a reply in which the people unanimously agreed to the above-mentioned conditions, adding that they would be faithful to me and my sons, and would ever be ready to fight against my enemies, and serve me with their lives. They also expressed their gratitude at having been allowed to retain their property, which included camels and horses worth 20,000,000 rupees.

I sent this treaty to my father, and the people settled down quietly under my rule. The first thing I did was to collect fifteen lakhs of rupees, due for arrears of revenue, with which I paid the army all that was due to them.

About this time a certain class of Badakshan cloth merchants gave me a good deal of trouble. It was customary for merchants, trading between

Badakshan and Kataghan, to ride on horseback between those places on certain days in the week, and it was found that on these special days for a long time past groups of dead bodies were constantly being discovered. To put an end to these murders, I appointed a few soldiers to watch the road without themselves appearing, and I also ordered some sowars, dressed as civilians, to travel to and fro, with instructions that if they were attacked they were to signal to the soldiers. It turned out as I desired, and one day the Badakshan merchants attacked the sowars, who immediately sent a man on a fast horse to give warning to the hidden soldiers. These galloped to the spot, and took some fifty merchants prisoners, who were brought before me. I distributed their arms, saddles and bridles among the sowars, gave their horses to the artillery, and the 10,000 rupees of which they were possessed I confiscated to the Government Treasury. On questioning these men, they owned they had acted as highwaymen for the past two years, owing to the contempt in which they held the Afghans, and although they offered 2000 rupees per head to purchase their lives, I ordered them all to be blown from the guns, as they had committed many crimes on my unoffending people. This punishment was carried out on market day, so that their flesh should be eaten by the dogs of the camp, and their bones remain lying about till the festival was over. When these were buried Mir Jahandar Shah, not being aware of all that had taken place, sent the same man to me who had acted as his envoy on the occasion when he had intimidated Abdul Ghaiz Khan

into releasing a thief from prison. This man brought me a letter, in which he asked why I had dared to take his subjects prisoners, and requested that they should be handed over to him on receipt of this letter. If this were not done, he threatened to write to my father and uncle that I was trying to turn the people of Badakshan against him, their true friend. I read this letter aloud in the public audience, and asked the man if the Mir was in good health and quite sensible when he wrote it. He replied in these words : " My King, Mir Sahib, has commanded me to bring back your prisoners to him, without loss of time, or he will immediately take steps against you." To this I answered : " Do not lose your temper, consider a moment." But he refused to be warned, and said again rudely : " Hand over the prisoners. How dare you imprison our people?" Without further conversation I ordered my servants to pull out his beard and moustache, and to dye his eyebrows like a woman's. I then took him to the place where the remains of the merchants lay, and put his beard and moustache in a gold cloth, advising him to take it to his Mir, both as a caution, and as a reply to the letter he had written me. With this man I sent a strong force, consisting of 2 battalions, 2000 cavalry sowars, 1000 Usbeg sowars, 2000 infantry, and 12 guns, under the command of Mahomed Zaman Khan and Sikander Khan, with Naib Ghulam Ahmad Khan, to Talikhan. When they arrived there the commanders sent this man with his reply to Mir Jahandar Shah, who abused him, and demanded to know why he had returned without the prisoners whom he had sent him

to fetch. The man uncovered his face, and threw the gold cloth at the Mir's feet, saying : " This is what I have suffered by carrying your idiotic messages, and this is what you will suffer, if you are not careful." The Mir, furious at this treatment, ordered his army to repair at once to Khanabad, when he received intelligence of the proximity of the Afghan army, which had already practically taken the country, and subdued the people.

On discovering the truth of this report, the Mir was overcome, and he lost heart. The chiefs, instead of trying to comfort him, said : " Your father saved himself from this dangerous man by offering his daughter in marriage ; you were foolish enough to send him rude messages." The Mir replied : " You were the counsellors of my father, advise me what can be done ?" Upon this they took counsel together, and suggested that the Mir's brother should go to salaam Abdur Rahman, with twenty chiefs, forty slave girls, and forty page-boys ; also that he should take many Chinese presents of silk, carpets, china, etc., and that Mir Shah should write a letter of apology, offering one of his sisters or cousins in marriage, so that by this ruse the Mir might manage to save his kingdom and himself from the fate of Mir Atalik. The Mir having no other course open to him, was obliged to do as his chiefs advised, and at once despatched the apology and presents to me, at the same time writing to my officers to " delay taking action against him for God's sake," till his brother should reach Khanabad, and they should receive further instructions as to the course they were to take. My officers received this

letter at Gulugan, in Badakshan, where they had marched in three days, and they agreed to halt, sending a messenger to me to report what had happened. In due course Mir Shah's brother arrived before me with 3000 servants and the letter in which Mir Shah had explained his behaviour on the plea that he was always intoxicated, and did not know what he was doing. I smiled, and told the chiefs that I considered his apology most reasonable. Having no real cause to quarrel with the Khanabad people, I received the messengers kindly, and agreed to forgive their Mir. I also gave them khilats, but refused the offer of Mir Shah's niece in marriage, saying that as a daughter of his had married my uncle, there was sufficient relationship between the family. Thus ended, for the time being, the troubles of Badakshan.

I must repeat a wonderful experience, or inspiration, which came to me at this time, and about which it gives me much pleasure to write. One day when I was holding my Court, I received a letter from Amir Azim's daughter who lived at Kabul, and who was betrothed to me. She had instructed her messenger to deliver the letter into my hands only, and that it was not to be shown to any one, and the reply was to be written and sealed by me. As I have before mentioned, I was never fond of reading and writing, and I had forgotten what little I had ever learned. Imagine my disappointment on receiving this letter! I felt my heart beating, and I blamed myself very much that while I boasted of being such a fine man, I was really most unmanly, being so ignorant. On retiring that night I wept bitterly, and prayed to my God with

all humility, beseeching the souls of the Saints to intercede for me. I repeated this prayer: "O God, send a light into my heart, and enlighten my mind, so that I may read and write. Thou shalt not make me ashamed in the eyes of Thy creation." At last, being overcome with weeping, towards morning I fell asleep. I dreamed that the figure of a holy man appeared to me. He was of middle size and very straight, with almond eyes, and delicate eyebrows, a long beard, and an oval-shaped face, also small long fingers. He wore a brown turban and a striped cloth around his loins, and carried a long staff, at the end of which was a piece of iron. He appeared to be standing at my head, and saying very quietly: "Abdur Rahman, rise and write." I awoke with a start, and seeing no one, I slept again, and again the same figure appeared to me, saying, "I say *write*, and instead you sleep." I hesitated, and awaking a second time, and seeing no one, I again fell asleep. For the third time the holy man appeared, saying with evident annoyance: "If you sleep again, I shall pierce your chest with my staff." At this I was frightened and awoke, but not to sleep again. I called to my pages to bring pen and paper to me, and began thinking of the letters I used to write at school, the unseen power of God representing the shapes of the letters before my mind one after another. My memory helped me to recollect what I had read, and I scribbled on the paper one word and then another. In this way I finished a letter before sunrise of about sixty or seventy lines. Some of the letters were not joined and others hardly formed. When I read this over I found I could read it all, and

I also noticed the mistakes, of which there were many. I tore this up, and re-wrote it, being so happy and glad I could hardly contain myself. On rising that morning I opened one or two letters addressed to me from the governors, and finding I could understand the subject of the letters, my pleasure was multiplied ten times. When the hour arrived to attend the Court, the secretary, whose duty it was to read my letters, came to me as usual, but I said: "*I* will read my letters to-day, and you shall correct my mistakes." He smiled, and said: "But your Highness cannot read," at which I opened a letter saying, "Hear if I can." With that I commenced to read, and dictated the replies. In this way we got through 200 letters, and answered 100. At the end of a few days I was quite independent of my secretary's help, and read and answered my private letters myself. Some days after I re-read the Koran, and gave money away in the names of the Holy Saints and Prophets. I also wrote to my father an account of the providential help which enabled me to read and write. I sent this letter through my guardian, and when at first my father doubted the truth of my story, my guardian said: "You know your son could not write anything to you which was not the truth. How could he show his face to you if he told you a lie?" My father at last believed him, and presented him with 5000 tangas¹ and a valuable khilat. To me he sent one gold-mounted sword, ten sheets of gold cloth, and a few pieces of woollen material. I praised God, and wrote my thanks to my father for his kindness.

¹ A coin of Bokhara = 4d or $\frac{1}{2}$ rupee (Kabul).

No sooner had the countries of Badakshan and Kataghan settled down peacefully, than I experienced trouble with Kolab. The Mir of that country, named Shah Khan, appointed 2000 sowars to plunder 13,000 sheep belonging to the Kataghan people, which were grazing near the Oxus, as is the custom in the winter. Hearing of this, I sent 2000 sowars to release and return the sheep to their rightful owners. The plunderers had already succeeded in crossing the Oxus, and my sowars forded the river at a shallow point on horseback. A severe fight took place on the opposite side, in which the plunderers lost 500 killed, while many were taken prisoners, and the sheep released. My force did not return at once, but halted there, expecting reinforcements with instructions to conquer Kolab; but, receiving no further orders from my father, I sent for them to return. I restored the sheep to their owners, who offered me 6000 of them, it being the custom of the country that one-third of all plunder taken from robbers belongs of right to the Government. I refused the sheep, but accepted 8000 gold coins offered me instead, out of which I gave 3000 to the soldiers, keeping the remainder myself. I wrote to Mir Shah, warning him that on such an incident being repeated, I would take Kolab away from him. The Mir answered with many apologies, sending presents, and promising that such a thing should not happen again. I then sold the prisoners for one lakh of tangas (5000 sovereigns), thus making 10,000 out of the transaction!

The different countries were very peaceful after this for some time, and I took the opportunity of adding

3000 ponies and 2000 camels to our supply of transport animals. About this time I received a letter from my father, announcing his intention of coming to visit Kataghan, and saying that he would let me know a month beforehand. I answered: "Bakheir braiyed." (Come safely).

CHAPTER II

FLIGHT FROM BALKH TO BOKHARA

(1863-65)

Now I must turn the attention of my readers towards Herat. When this country was attacked, my grandfather was ill,¹ and Sirdar Shere Ali Khan was most attentive to his father, while his other sons, Sirdars Azim, Amin, and Aslim, owing to their hatred of their step-brother, entered into intrigues with Sultan Mahomed, Governor of Herat, who was the enemy of Amir Dost. In this way they much irritated their father by their behaviour. To be friends with their father's enemies! God forbid that I should ever fall into such bad ways! Dost Mahomed was buried close to the tomb of Khwaja Ansar at Herat. After this, his sons, finding they could not succeed to the throne, proclaimed Shere Ali as Amir, and departed without his permission or knowledge, to their own states. Amir Shere Ali, finding himself deserted by his brothers, made his son Yakub, Governor of Herat, and started for Kandahar. On arriving there, he found that his brothers still did not visit him.

Meanwhile my uncles escaped from Herat to their states; Aslim being Governor of Hazhda Nahr and Azim Governor of Kuram Khost. They soon began to create

¹ Dost Mahomed died June 9, 1863.

trouble towards Kabul where Mahomed Ali, the Amir's eldest son, had been appointed Governor by my grandfather at the time he left for Herat. This Mahomed Ali wrote to his father at Kandahar, urging him to return soon to Kabul, or there would be a rebellion. On hearing this, Shere Ali left his brothers unpunished, started for Kabul, thinking he must first deal with his step-brother, before he punished the faithlessness of his own brothers. On his arrival at Ghazni he sent a Koran as a pledge of his sincerity to my uncle Azim, telling him that as he was the eldest, he would always respect him as his elder brother, and that he must come and see him once in Ghazni. Being reassured, Azim visited Shere Ali; and they renewed their oaths on the Koran, after which my uncle returned to his states, leaving his eldest son, named Sarwar Khan, as companion to Shere Ali, who returned to Kabul. Sirdar Aslim, who was at Bamian when Shere Ali arrived at Ghazni, escaped to Balkh, leaving his family and estate behind. My father was at Balkh at the time, and I wrote to him not to encourage Aslim, who was a mischief-maker, and not to allow him near him. He answered that it was impossible to send him away, as he had come to seek his protection. Shere Ali now broke his oath with my Uncle Azim, and sent an army against him, under the command of Sirdar Rafik-i-Din, a very clever man. My uncle, being unable to withstand such a powerful enemy, fled to the dominions of Her Majesty the Queen in India, while Shere Ali took possession of Katawaz, Zurmat and Loghar states, belonging to my father, and which had been presented to him by his father. These states were now in the

charge of Ahmad Kashmiri, who had been brought up by my father. These injustices committed by Shere Ali naturally did not improve the feeling of his brothers towards him, and there were many mischievous people ready to stir up enmity in my father's mind against him. Among these people were my uncles, Sirdar Aslim Abdul Rauf, and Sirdar Amin Khan of the family of the Gunners,¹ who were great intriguers. According to his promise, given some time back, to visit me, my father came to Khanabad as my guest, accompanied by these mischief-makers, and at the same time Ahmad brought him a letter from the Amir, assuring him that he had no desire to take Turkestan from him, and that his feelings were all of a friendly nature. This Ahmad was a traitor, being paid by his master to spy out my father's actions, and to circumvent any plots made against Shere Ali. My father and his advisers were accustomed to meet together for private conversation, and I was excluded from their conference, in case I should disagree with their plots. This I should have done had I known what was going on, and I was grieved to hear that my father had been persuaded that many of the Kabul Sirdars were willing to accept his rule, and that his best course was to make friends with Mir Atalik, by giving him back the country of Kataghan, and so to unite the armies of Balkh and Kataghan, and start for Kabul. Mir Atalik agreed to this, and directly afterwards we received the news that Shere Ali was marching on Turkestan.

My father sending me to take his place at Taktapul, announced his intention to meet Shere Ali himself. I

¹ Descendants of the old Artillery officers of the Mogul Emperors.

tried hard to dissuade him from this, begging him to let me go instead; explaining that if I was defeated by Shere Ali, he would be there to support me, but if fortune deserted him, I could not manage to put matters right. My father saw the justice of my proposal, but his friends, the traitors, overruled him, by persuading him that he understood the Kabul people, and would be better able to communicate with them. Believing this to be the case, my father turned a deaf ear to my entreaties, and I was sent to Taktapul.

During my Governorship of Khanabad I had saved fourteen lakhs of rupees, after paying the army salaries, and my father ordered boxes to be made for the conveyance of this money, with which he started to Bajgah, which country is situated midway between Kabul and Balkh. The officers commanding his army were Ghulam Ahmad, Naib Mahomed, Colonel Sohrab, and Colonel Wali Mahomed. These officers my father sent one day's march ahead to take possession of the hill-tops surrounding the pass, but instructed them on no account to fight until his arrival. I think I have mentioned before that Ghulam Ahmad, although a good officer, was a very lazy man, and on this occasion he did not carry out his instructions, but, instead, postponed taking the hills until the next day. In the meantime the experienced officers of Shere Ali's army, among whom were Sirdar Rafik Khan, and General Sheikh Mir, took advantage of the delay, and posted their men all along the hill-tops, so that before the lazy Ghulam Ahmad awoke the next morning, he was fired upon from these heights. The consequence of this mistake was disastrous, and, in spite of the bravery of

my army, they were defeated, leaving the strong pass in possession of the enemy.

News of this encounter reached my father, who hurried on to be in time to help his officers, but at a place called Kara Kotal his defeated army met him with the sad news. He had no choice but to return with the fragments of his army, and he halted at a place called Doab (Two Rivers), being one day's march away. He arranged his men and guns carefully, and prepared to make another stand against the enemy at that place, but the disloyal Sirdars, having contrived to place him in this position, now turned against him, and wrote to the Amir, explaining that the army trained by Abdur Rahman was too strong for him to stand against, and that he must resort to intrigues, or he would meet with defeat. Shere Ali, listening to this, sent Sultan Ali, son of Sirdar Kuhandil of Kandahar, with an oath on the Koran, in which he undertook to look upon Afzul as his father, and saying he was determined not to disgrace the name of their father Dost Mahomed by fighting against his son. My father being deceived by these assurances, took the Koran on his eyes, and kissed it, starting out for the camp of Shere Ali, leaving his army to return, although they all begged him to fight it out. On his arrival at his brother's camp the Amir walked out to welcome him, and kissed his stirrups, thus treacherously flattering him, and expressing his sorrow for thinking of going to war with his elder brother. He also put a chair for my father, waiting on him himself. My father, whose conscience was innocent, praised God that he and his brother were again friends, and after a few hours re-

turned to his camp, from which he sent 7000 sheep, and 2000 kharwar of flour and barley for the horses, because Shere Ali was short of provisions.

The following day Shere Ali visited my father in his camp, and on his return sent Mahomed Rafik to request his permission to go on a pilgrimage to the tomb of the King of the Saints, after which he would go to Kabul, where he had much business. My father gave his permission, and sent his army by the Darah-i-Yusuf towards Balkh, starting himself with 3000 sowars of his body-guard to accompany Shere Ali by the road of Afak.

When the army arrived at Taktapul, where I was staying, I wrote to my father that he had made a great mistake in sending his army away from him, but he turned his face from me. The Amir sent his son Mahomed Ali to the Saint's tomb, thinking I should go and pay my respects to him there, but I only wrote to welcome him, saying that if he would take the trouble to call on me, I should be pleased to see him. He replied that at present he was anxious to return to his father, but, God willing, we would meet again. When my father arrived at Mazar, I went to kiss his hands; at the same time I tried to persuade him that Shere Ali was playing him false, and asked permission to take the Amir prisoner when he should arrive. But my father, lifting the Koran, said: "For the sake of this Holy Book, do not do such a disgraceful thing." I answered: "You will see my uncle will not mind doing this disgraceful thing." The following day Shere Ali arrived, and passed the night at the Saint's tomb. My father visited me at Taktapul, from

whence he sent presents to his brother, announcing his intention of going to wish him good-bye. I begged him not to do so, but, as usual, he would not listen to me, and started for Tashkurghan, where the Amir broke the terms of the treaty he had made, and thrust my father into prison.

When the army heard this they were furious, and demanded to be led against the Amir, and I marched with this purpose to Mazar, where I pitched my tents, when I received a letter from my father, instructing me not to fight, saying if I did so, he would disown me. I read this letter to my army, who, being angry at my determination to remain inactive, deserted for Kabul, leaving me with only 500 or 600 followers. At midnight I received another letter from my father, ordering me to go to Bokhara with all these loyal followers who were desirous of following me. I started at once, and travelled so fast, that by sunrise I was half-way to the frontier. On my arrival at a place called Daolatabad, I saw about 2000 sowars standing round a hill, on which were some more people. I sent a messenger to make enquiries about these men, and learned they were Usbeg sowars of Balkh. Upon hearing this I started towards them, and they salaamed me, explaining that they were attending a marriage ceremony. I then asked what those sowars were doing on the top of the hill, and they replied they were Afghans, and had nothing to do with them. From this I inferred they must be Naib Ghulam and Abdur Rahim Khan, who had parted from me the night before, and I sent a man to them inviting them to join me. They refused to do this without a written proof that my messenger

was speaking the truth, and when I had satisfied them as to my identity they joined my followers. Ghulam Ahmad was alone, having missed the others by night. We all started at once towards the Oxus, and the Usbeg sowars also prepared to go with us, but I told them they must return, at which they protested they were willing to serve with my army. I replied, I did not require their help, and again requested them to return. I knew well that the Usbeks hate the Afghans, always being ready to do them an injury. At last they consented to turn back, and we continued our way past Hazhda Nahr, after which there were no more villages or habitations, only a sandy desert reaching to the Oxus. Seeing a field of water-melons, I gave directions to my followers for each to take two melons and two water-melons in their horse-bags, in case they should not be able to procure water on their way through the desert.

When we had journeyed about half-way towards the Oxus, about half of my sowars dismounted to eat their melons. I tried to dissuade them from doing this, telling them they had not chosen a safe place, and suggested their eating the melons on horseback, but Naib Ghulam Ahmad said it was better to pass the heat of the day in the shade, and after a short rest they would ride after me. At this they spread their carpets under the jungle trees, and rested in their shade. I took thirty sowars and all the money we had and continued my way, leaving the lazy Ghulam Ahmad with 240 sowars behind. The chief officers of his force were Nazir Haidar, Abdur Rahim, Colonel Sohrab, Colonel Nazir, Commandant Sikander

Charkhi, Commandant Haidar, son of Sikander Charkhi, also forty captains and risaldars. I may mention that I had left in Taktapul my son, aged three years, with his cousin, Sirdar Azim Khan, aged fifteen years. Both boys were in the charge of Sikander Khan Orukzai, and Ghulam Ali. After continuing my way for some nine or ten miles, I was stopped by a sowar who had galloped after us, bringing news that the Usbeg sowars, whom I had dismissed, had followed us instead of returning to their homes, and had attacked Naib Ghulam and his men, whom they had found asleep beneath the trees, and who had despatched their messenger to me to go to their assistance. I said: "How wise my people are! Instead of escaping and saving themselves, they are anxious for me to be killed with them. It is not only bravery a soldier requires in time of war; he must also have the sense to escape in times of necessity. To escape a danger is also a victory." I explained to the messenger that when I had 300 followers I did not fight, and now I was not going to do so with thirty only. One of the officers with me, named Nazir Khan, returned for the sake of his brother Sohrab, who was behind.

We then continued our way to the Oxus, and arriving a short distance off, I directed my men to halt while I galloped on with a single follower to hire a boat. I did this in order not to frighten the boatmen by our numbers. I found only one boat to be had, and many raisin and almond merchants of the Turkoman tribes disputing over the hire of the boat. One of them had already placed his cargo on board with ten camels. I dismounted and got into the boat,

upon which the sailors demanded in Turkish who I was. I replied in the same language, "A merchant," and during the dispute that followed, I sent my sowar to fetch his comrades, who arrived to the surprise of the sailors and merchants who endeavoured to seize the boat. I pointed my rifle at them, saying: "The moment you enter the boat I will shoot you." At last they agreed to dispute no longer, and asked a sowar who I was. On his replying: "Sirdar Abdur Rahman, son of Afzul Khan," they salaamed me and apologised. I forgave them, and divided my men, half of whom, with their horses, were to fill the boat with me; the other half were to remain behind, of necessity. These I advised to borrow pickaxes from the sailors and raise sand-walls for their protection.

When we had almost crossed the Oxus, I saw another boat in front, and I ordered one of my men who was a fast swimmer to go on and make enquiries. He returned with the news that it was Abdur Rahim with an envoy from the King of Bokhara, and we were delighted to meet. I landed in Bokhara territory at ten, it being a six-hours' journey. The boatmen put their horses at my disposal, but I preferred waiting on the shore till any detachment of the others should arrive. I gave them ten gold coins to bring food for themselves and our horses. Abdur Rahim and the envoy went on with the boatmen, and to him I gave 200 tangas, instructing him to buy ten sheep, and to have the mutton ready cooked, also to provide 300 loaves of bread for my sowars, who were to arrive the following day.

I wrote to the Mir of Shirabad under the King

of Bokhara, informing him of my arrival in his territory, and asking him to send 200 sowars across the Oxus for the support of my sowars. On receiving my letter the Mir agreed to send 400 sowars and several boats early in the morning for this purpose. At day-break I heard the firing of guns, and after some ten volleys I awoke my sowars, persuading them that the firing came from their comrades as a token of pleasure on their embarkation. To the boatmen I promised fifty sovereigns for each boat they brought me up to the number of twenty. They replied that, as there was fighting going on on the opposite side of the river, they would not take the risk of going across. I hesitated a few minutes, and then ordered my page-boy, named Hassan, to bring a package of 1000 sovereigns which was in his charge. We counted these coins before the boatmen, to whom I promised them all if they would bring the boats. They would not believe this was my real intention, but I said they could take them away now, if they sent their men for the boats. In short, thirty boats arrived, and we travelled so fast, that in little more than two hours we had crossed two-thirds of the river.

I found that my sowars whom I had left asleep in the desert, after being attacked by the Usbegs, had gradually retreated fighting until the Oxus was reached. These sowars, seeing there were no boats, desisted fighting for the night, thinking to capture their enemies in the morning. This was the firing I had heard, and my sowars being encouraged by the sight of my boats fought bravely. The others behind their sand entrenchments also took courage to fire on the enemy,

who finally fled in confusion. We all crossed the river safely, and the sowars took every advantage of the meal I had ordered to be prepared for them, having eaten nothing for thirty-six hours. We slept very soundly in the houses of the boatmen until the afternoon of the following day, when I started for Bokhara, halting one night at Aliabad, where the Mir of Shirabad and the chiefs of the country came out to receive me. We went to the Mir's house, which was prepared for my reception, and remained as his guests for ten days, after which the King sent a letter to me, inviting me to go to see him, and I started at once. The first day I halted at Shorab, the second day at Sar-i-ab, and so on, staying one night at Bilak, Chakbazgah, Chasnah, Hafizar, Pihi Karah Sakh, Kharaz, and Kadukli. I stayed five days at Karchi, from thence I went to Bokhara, passing Khoja and Kakar. The Wazir of the King, with the Kazi, or head priest and the Kotwal, came to receive me, also some of the chief officials, at a place called Kakar, and they escorted me to a house which had been prepared for my reception. The guest-receiver, or host, came and salaamed to me, and I was given banquets for nine days, after which the King sent khilats for me and my officers, with 10,000 tangas for me, and 1000 each for my officials, 500 or 600 for those of lesser degree, and 200 for each of my sowars. He also sent two sets of gold-plated harness for me. In return I sent him one gold-handled sword, one set of gold-mounted harness weighing 12,000 sovereigns, one gold-covered dagger, 200 gold coins, one jewelled belt, price £400, with two Arab horses of my own breeding, also

gold-mounted English saddles, nine pieces of gold cloth, nine pieces of Kashmir cloth, nine Kashmir shawls, nine Kashmir shawl turbans, nine pieces of white muslin, and nine gold caps. The King had also sent me some clothes, with three shirts and trousers. The trousers had no straps to them, and I was told they were worn by the King himself, at which I was surprised, as they were made of four different coloured cloths—red, white, crimson, and green.

When I and my officials had put on these clothes, a servant came to say that the King would like to see us. On our arrival at the palace, the Wazir received me, leading us to the King's rooms. The custom of the Kings of Bokhara is this. The King sits in a big house with two or three favourite page-boys. All his officials sit round the house on small raised terraces under the wall. At the door of the house there are two door-keepers who peep in occasionally to see if the King makes any sign with his eyes. If he gives them a wink, they run to see what he requires, retreating backwards to repeat the message to the Hudachi, or head of the Court. When I arrived near these door-keepers they ran to the King, then back to the Hudachi, saying their King had been pleased to accept my presents. I was then told to take the bridles of my two horses in my hands, also to balance the tangas on my back, and make a bow to the King. I replied that the tangas were one man's load; the two horses required two grooms, and that I would not put my head on the ground for any one in existence. I added: "I am created by God, and shall kneel to no

one but Him." The door-keeper, who had never heard such a reply from any one before, was much annoyed, so I offered to take my message to the King myself, or to go to some other country. At last the Wazir said something to the Hudachi, who went to the King, returning to tell me that His Majesty accepted my salaams. I entered the house, saying in the ordinary way, "Salam Aleikum" ("Peace be on you"), and I shook hands with the King, who told me to sit by his side. I sat with proper respect and addressed him during our intercourse with due courtesy. We talked together for an hour, when I returned to my house.

Two months after this the King appointed one of his servants to tell me that he was kindly disposed towards me, therefore it was advisable that I should give him 1000 sovereigns and three handsome page-boys. I replied: "These boys are to me as sons. To give gold away is the part of sovereigns. I gave to the King presents, according to the custom, and now I expect gifts and grants from him in return." Ten days later the same man came to me, and said: "The King sends you his salaams, and wishes to make you one of his Court officials, so that you should attend on him every day. He is very friendly towards you." I replied that I had never been a servant, and did not know how to behave as one, upon which the man assured me that if I accepted the service I should be given an estate. I replied: "I pray for the King's long life, and do not require money or estates." The man then told me that if I did not accept the post I should get into trouble, which idea I repudiated, saying that only those who did wrong got into trouble, besides I was under

the King's protection. I expressed myself willing to obey his commands in any other way. I did not see how I could accept such a position, never having been required to perform such duties even for my grandfather, the Amir of Kabul. I also suggested to the man, that if I agreed to become an official, I could not be idle all day, as the others did, and if I worked for my pay, the King would become dissatisfied with those in his present Court. I repeated a maxim which applied to me, "Neither is a camel's load on my back, or am I on a camel's back," *i.e.* "Neither the King of subjects, nor a subject of the King." After all this the man discovered that his advice to me was so much waste of breath, so after writing down our conversation he left me.

When I had first arrived in Bokhara, I had appointed a confidential servant at twenty sovereigns a month to let me know all that was passing in the palace. The etiquette is that everything is done verbally, nothing being written, therefore all those in the Court get to know what is going on. In the month of Ramadan (Fasting) all the officials did very little, fasting daily, and I had no rest from the fear of the Kotwal's assistants, as from the day I refused the post the King had offered me at Court, I was watched, being little more than a state prisoner. I took no apparent notice of this, not mentioning it to my servants.

On the day of Id the King's servants brought me two robes, a turban, and a handkerchief as khilats, saying the King had been kind enough to command my presence at the palace at sunrise

next morning, to join in the Id congratulations. When I arrived there I saw forty men sitting in a large hall, amongst them being one Mahomed Khan, one of the writers of Balkh.¹ I was appointed to sit on the lowest terrace with twenty men, while Mahomed Khan was on the highest terrace with ten men. Meanwhile the King arrived, and the people rose and kissed his hand. I followed suit, and he retired. After this a great many trays of refreshments were brought, containing sweetmeats and confectionery. A table-cloth was spread, and the food was placed on it. The servants then retired, and those present immediately began eating as much as they could. Those sitting further away filled their handkerchiefs and returned to their place, eating the food before them, like so many cattle, who also require no plates. I was gazing amazed at all this, when some one said to me: "This is a sacred feast of the King, why do you not eat?" I took a cake, saying I did not want anything more. As soon as possible I went to the praying-ground, where I was shown a place selected for me by the King. I noticed that among those present were Naib Ghulam Mahomed, and Commandant Sikander Khan, with about forty former followers of mine who had joined the King's service a month before. These men ignored me, not even salaaming. The King then arrived riding a white horse, wearing a long aigrette on his turban and another on the head of his horse, while a third was on his horse's

¹ He was formerly Mir of Saripul, who having rebelled against Afghanistan and being defeated by our army under Ghulam Ali and Colonel Wali Mahomed Khan, had sought refuge in Bokhara.

back. He wore a Kashmiri Arah belt round his waist, and about twenty or thirty yards of gold cloth around his head as a turban. He carried a jewelled dagger in his belt, and was swaggering a good deal. All the people bowed almost to the ground at every third step, but I stood motionless. The King came and sat opposite to me, calling the Takbir,¹ while every one repeated his prayers. I noticed that three of the straps fastening the King's turban had come undone, and when the prayer was finished he could not raise his head for fear of his turban dropping off. I could not bear to see this grand King disgraced, so I salaamed to break my prayers, and leaning forward I fastened the straps. God is forgiving, and although I lost my prayers I was pleased to have done a good act. At the end of the prayer, the King mounted his horse, the people meanwhile bowing to the ground. When I was free to do so, I retired to my house. A short time after this the King instructed the Kotwal to accuse me of intercourse with other people's wives, but this accusation fell to the ground, as it was proved I was never alone, having always sixty or seventy people following me about. Next, the King advised that mischief should be made among my servants, so they should all leave me.

At this time news arrived that the Russians had taken Tashkend, and intended to take Bokhara. The King left at once for Samarkand, leaving me and my followers behind. I immediately sent a servant to my uncle, Mahomed Azim at Rawal Pindi in Her Majesty's dominions, with a letter in which I

¹ That is the Magnification "Allah Akbar" ("God is the greatest").

expressed my determination to release myself—Insha' allah (God willing) and start for Balkh, and begging him if he could possibly leave India by the road of Swat, to go thence to Chitral and Badakshan, so that we might meet at Balkh. I also wrote to the army at the latter place, and to the King of Bokhara at Samarkand, asking his permission to return to my country. I sent this letter by Nazir Haidar Khan and Commandant Nazir. On hearing of what I had done, the Wazir of the King, the Kazi, and Kotwal of Bokhara sent a message to me, demanding to know why I had sent to the King without their permission. I replied: "The King has many servants, I do not acknowledge any of them to be my superior." They then said they would send after my messenger, but I gave them to understand that if they did this, I would depart without the King's or their permission, leaving them to explain my action to him. The King did not reply to my letter, and kept my messenger with him, so in a few days I again sent to him General Ali Askar Khan, and at this second letter the King consulted with his advisers, who suggested that as I had received no support in money or provisions from the King since the beginning of the year, it was of no use my remaining at Bokhara. The King listened to this, and ended by giving me the permission I desired, to leave his kingdom. The King also wrote to the Wazir to find out whether my servants would prefer to accept his service or remain with me, but the letter was not very explicit, and the Wazir understood the King to mean those servants who

were at present in my service, instead of those who, after having arrived with me at Bokhara, had gone over to the service of the King. In consequence of this misunderstanding the Wazir sent a message to ask me to send my servants to receive some instructions which the King had sent for them. At this I naturally thought the Wazir intended taking them all prisoners, and myself afterwards, so I refused his request, saying that if he had any message for my servants, he could come and repeat it in my presence. My followers also agreed to this, saying they would fight on my behalf, and their dead bodies could be taken to the Wazir, for they refused to go alive. They armed themselves to the teeth, and I sent the messenger back with our reply. In answer he sent his secretary, who delivered the King's message to me, but my servants replied they had come to Bokhara to serve their own prince, and not to act as slaves to the King.

Two days after this, when I was preparing for our journey, Sikander Khan with Naib Ghulam and all their followers, having their sleeping rugs and bedding strapped to their shoulders, came to me with the news that the King had asked for a signed paper from each of them, admitting that they were his slaves, and on their refusal, he had dismissed them, upon which they had returned to me. During this conversation a great many creditors had followed them, clamouring for the payment of their debts, which amounted to about 2000 sovereigns. I remarked to Naib Ghulam that had they remained faithful to me he would have spent more than this

sum himself. He was unable to raise his eyes to mine.

I then asked Commandant Sikander what he intended to do. He told me that he had lost his heart to one or two women of Bokhara, and if they refused to accompany him, he would rather stay behind. I sent to those people, offering them 1000 sovereigns to go with us, but they refused, so Sikander preferred to remain behind also. I bought horses and harness for Ghulam and his followers, as theirs had been sold to pay their expenses. In five days our preparations were completed, and we started for Balkh.

CHAPTER III

STRUGGLE WITH SHERE ALI

(1865-1867)

I MUST now return and mention Shere Ali's doings from the time of my flight from Balkh.

When I turned my back on that country the Amir went there, after six days' halt at Tashkurghan. His first act was to send our wives and children as prisoners to Kabul, taking my father about with him in all his journeys. After appointing Sirdar Fattah (son of Akbar Khan), his nephew, to be Governor of Balkh, he left for Kabul, and at once set about preparing for war against his own brothers, Amin and Sharif Khan. His preparations being completed he started for Kandahar, leaving his son Ibrahim, and Sirdar Naizar Khan in charge of Kabul. My father accompanied him as a prisoner, but our families he left behind with neither money to defray their expenses nor guardians to look after them. My father wrote a letter to him from prison, in which he remonstrated about his actions, saying he had treated his step-brothers so badly, and now he was going to treat his own brothers in the same way. He added: "Do not disgrace yourself further by being the cause of bloodshed, or the consequences

may be serious for you, and you will repent." Heedless of this warning, Shere Ali fought for two days¹ with his brothers, the result being that his brother Amin was killed as well as his own son and heir-apparent, Sirdar Mahomed Ali Khan.

On hearing of these casualties my father again wrote to the Amir, saying: "Your wickedness will mean an unhappy future for you, sorrow be upon your head." At the death of Amin Khan, his dead body was brought before the Amir, who said: "Throw the body of this dog away, and request my son to come and congratulate me on his victory." His officials, not daring to tell him the truth, brought his son's body to him, and when it was a short way off, he said: "Who is this other dog?" In reply the body was laid at his feet, whereupon he began tearing his clothes, and throwing dust upon his head. When this wild grief was exhausted he fainted, remaining in this state for an hour. On recovering he began talking to the body of his son and again fainted. This continued for two days, when he sent his son's body to Kabul, and the body of Amin was buried by his servants in Kandahar at the door of the sacred *Khirka*. Shere Ali was sometimes delirious and sometimes sane on his way to Kandahar, and when he arrived there, he cried like a lunatic. I took this opportunity of leaving Bokhara, and on my arrival at Shirabad, I wrote letters to the army at Balkh and its dependencies, with the result that I was unanimously invited to join the soldiers in that country.

¹ June 5, 6, 1865.

I must here give a short sketch of the life of two brothers, Wali Mahomed and Faiz Mahomed Khan. These men were Governors of Akcha, my father having granted them this province. They were the sons of a slave girl, and when at Kabul had 2000 rupees annual salary during the lifetime of Amir Dost Mahomed. On his death they enlisted the sympathies of my step-mother, Bibi Marwarid, who wrote a letter to my father, stating that their mother was most anxious for them to be accepted as his slaves, and that they were short of money for their expenses. In answer my father sent 5000 rupees for Wali Mahomed and instructed him to go to Balkh. When he arrived there, he was given 1 battalion, 6 guns, 1000 militia, and 1000 sowars with the province of Akcha. My father also sent for Faiz to bring his family with him. Now Wali Mahomed was a traitor, and had afterwards joined Shere Ali in his plot to take my father prisoner. In consideration of his assistance, Shere Ali had taken Wali with him to Kabul, leaving his estate to his brother Faiz. At the present time Faiz was asked to render his accounts of the country, which, owing to certain monopolies on his part, he was unable to do. I heard from my spies that Wali was also discontented, so I decided to send a letter to them by Nazir Haidar, and General Ali Askar, in which I mentioned that 200 sowars of the Hazhda Nahr cavalry, who were under Wali's command, had already joined me at Shirabad, and I promised rewards if they would do the same. I also sent for the chief of the robbers of the province, and after giving them khilats and rewards, I bor-

rowed 3000 sowars from them. When the King of Bokhara gave me leave to return to Balkh, he also wrote to the Mir of Shirabad that he was not on any account to allow me to remain there longer than three days. Now, as I had accumulated 2500 sowars, and the Mir had only 100, it was for me, and not for the Mir, to decide how long I should stay at Shirabad. The Mir was very perplexed how to act, and came to ask my advice, telling me if he ordered me to go I should probably kill him, while if he disobeyed the King's command he would kill him, so he was between two stools. I told him I would suggest a way out of his difficulty. First, he must write to the King that Abdur Rahman had too strong a force to be turned out against his will, and he (the Mir) was awaiting further commands. This letter I advised him to send by a very slow messenger, and if the King should remark on this, he must say he fell seriously ill on the road, almost to the point of death, but God saved him to enable him to appear in the King's mighty Court. This plan pleased the Mir, who sent a letter by a trustworthy messenger, according to my suggestion. I hurried my arrangements forward, but in a few days I heard that the army of Saripul had rebelled, and, killing their new officers, had started for Akcha. On receiving this news I started at once and halted some hours at Wazirabad, and from there I reached the Oxus. There were only two boats to be had, so, placing my trust in the Almighty, I ventured with thirty of my bravest sowars and officers to cross. The officers with me were Colonel Nazir Khan, Colonel Wali Khan, and my confidential slave,

who was a perfect lion in the field of battle (he is now my Commander-in-Chief). At the time I am speaking of he had no beard, but I had tried his skill several times in warfare, and observed that he, single-handed, was equal to forty sowars. Another man of noted bravery with me was my slave Frihad. We crossed the Oxus, and in due time the remainder of my followers crossed also. We marched all night, and at sunrise arrived at a village in the Akcha province, called Chilak Sarabad. Halting there, I sent a message to the two battalions who had come with the artillery of Saripul, and also to the battalions of good militia, who possessed the six guns presented by my father to Wali Mahomed. After despatching these letters I slept, having had no rest for three nights. My letters so pleased the soldiers, that they responded immediately to my proposals, and about 1000 came on foot to receive me. I gave them many assurances of kind treatment, and in return they swore to fight for me. They also told me that since I had left they had all been unhappy, and were awaiting my return to show their courage against the treacherous Shere Ali Khan.

We all left for Akcha, and were received there by Faiz Mahomed, but he was half mad, and said he had not wished me to come, but his army had invited me. I said: "It does not matter, you are a wise man." I encouraged the army by assuring them that we should certainly be victorious over Sirdar Fatteh Mahomed, who appointed 2000 Militia sowars, and 5000 Usbeg sowars to fight against us. These sowars having the fear of punishment from me before their eyes for their former disloyalty, were abusing their officers for alienat-

ing them from the service of my father and myself, who treated them like brothers and sons, and who had made them owners of camels, horses, and flocks of sheep. Fattedh Mahomed placed his infantry in a fort called Nimlek, arranging his cavalry outside. His army was under the command of Shahabdin, son of Wazir Ahmed, a former servant of my father's, who had treated him very kindly. On one occasion he had appointed Wazir Ahmed Governor of a town in Balkh, and he having stolen two lakhs of rupees from the revenues, had been pardoned by my father, who had also made him and his sons Khans over 100 sowars, and presented them with flags and an army. Shahabdin and Fattedh Mahomed were always drunk. The officers having filled Nimlek with sowars, encamped the remainder of their army just out of Taktapul facing me. I wrote a letter to Shahabdin, in which I said: "Oh traitor, the kind treatment you have received from my hands you have forgotten, and are now serving my enemies for a few bitter mouthfuls of spirit." To the army I wrote as follows: "You are my army, therefore I will not fight against you. If you wish to kill me, I will come to the fort to-morrow, and you shall shoot me, and obtain rewards for killing your old employer." This letter melted their hearts, and leaving 100 men in the fort, they started for my camp. Shahabdin hearing of their desertion sent some Kandahar and Usbeg sowars to stay their progress, and the fighting began. On my ordering my sowars to the field, they rushed in with good-will, overwhelming the enemy, who fled in such haste as to leave 400 horses in our hands. Shahabdin also fled towards Taktapul,

and on his taking flight all the Taktapul sowars started to join me, and the battalions dispersed. Sirdar Fattah leaving all his property, departed for Tashkurghan with 300 or 400 sowars, at the same season as that in which I had fled for Bokhara in the previous year. This world is full of experiences and trials, of ups and downs.

On my arrival at Balkh the army salaamed and welcomed me. I sent Naib Ghulam Ahmad to Taktapul to pacify the subjects, and two days later I joined him and assured the army of future kindness and my goodwill. After improving the condition of the army I promoted Ali Askar Khan to be General of the artillery, and Nazir Khan to be General of the infantry. Other officers I raised to the ranks of Colonels and Generals, also promoting all the soldiers who had been with me from the beginning of my journey.

Soon after I started for Tashkurghan, where Sirdar Fattah Mahomed was stationed with six battalions.¹ I was anxious to free the country of them entirely. I entered Tashkurghan quite unopposed, and after staying there two days I went to Aibak. Fattah Mahomed and Shahabdin, who were at Ghor, fled towards Kabul by the Hindu Kush, and during their flight Shaikh Ali of the Hazara tribe, plundered all their property. By this time Mir Atalik was dead, and his son Sultan Murad was Governor and Mir of Kataghan. He salaamed me, and gave me 500 horses, 200 camels, 2000 sheep, 4000 loads of corn, with 40,000 rupees and other miscellaneous presents. I expressed my sympathy on the death of his father, and said: "When my father

¹ Shere Ali had appointed his nephew, Fattah Mahomed, Governor of Balkh.

gave the country of Kataghan to your father, he retained to himself the Tajik, the Arab, the old Afghan and Hazara tribes, only giving the Kataghan people to you. I will observe the same rule." He replied that Shere Ali had done the same, except that he exacted one lakh of rupees annually for the revenue, but instead of being content with this, he had ended by taking three lakhs, and wanted more.

At this time I received a letter from my uncle from Badakshan, in which he said he was at Faizabad, where he intended marrying the daughter of Mir Atalik, and after the ceremony he would join me. As I had made my arrangements, and the winter was fast approaching, while Shere Ali was still absent from Kabul, I started for Bamian, and crossing the Kara Kotal and Badkak Passes, halted at Bajgah, and from thence I entered Bamian. I gave khilats to the Mirs of Hazara, and asked them to collect 2000 khawars of wheat and barley, 1000 khawars of butter, and 3000 sheep for my army. I waited at Bajgah until these supplies were being collected, and also to await my uncle. He arrived in a month's time, and I went with my army to meet and welcome him. He told me of all the troubles and difficulties of his journey through Chitral, and of the cold treatment of the English Government, which he resented, as he was the medium of friendship while at Jamrud between his father Dost Mahomed and the British Government. He told me that at the end of the Mutiny in India, all the people were persuading Dost not to join the English, and the rupture would probably bring the kingdom of Punjab under the rule of Afghanistan, as it was before. If

Dost had agreed to this, there was no doubt Punjab would have been in our possession by this time, but he (my uncle) had advised his father to keep his promise to the English, as he would have earned a bad name in the eyes of the world if he broke his word. He expected to be rewarded by the British Government, and went to India for this purpose.

On becoming aware of their treatment, my uncle had fled to Banu, and entering Swat, he went near the Star of the Saints, viz. Ahmed. After staying there a short time he entered Chitral by Dir and Kotal Lahore, and from there returned to Badakshan, through the Pass of Dora Kotal, reaching Kataghan and Ghori, to Bajgah. I expressed great joy at his safe arrival, and said I thanked God that he was with me in the place of my father. We at once opened communication with the Kabul chiefs, and after ten days entered Kohistan through Ghorband. I have mentioned before that Sirdar Sharif Khan had been taken prisoner at Kandahar, and his brother Amin Khan was sent to fight against me at Tutam Dara, but on receiving a letter from my uncle, he came and salaamed him, and embraced his brother, who was with us. How short-sighted is Shere Ali to send such men to fight against his brother's friends.

Amin Khan dismissed his army, which returned to Kabul, and I entered Tutam Dara, through Charikar to Saidabad. By this time winter had arrived, and the snow was waist deep. With the aid of the cavalry I cleared the road to make way for the camels which trampled down the snow, enabling the infantry to pass

over. The artillery was dragged over last with great difficulty.

Our march was so severe that we could only travel two hours daily. In this way we made slow progress, but at last arrived at Tharak-hal. Shere Ali's army was stationed at Khwaja. I took advantage of the hills and posted my army on the heights, where they remained some time, awaiting some movement on the part of the enemy, but none was made. I observed through the telescope that no proper preparations had been made to protect Kabul from an invasion.

After resting that night, I received the following morning a letter from Shere Ali's son at Kabul, in which he promised to release my father and leave the country of Turkestan if I would agree not to attack Kabul for forty days. To this I agreed, because it would have been extremely difficult to fight in that heavy snow, and if they were true to their promise we could return to Balkh in the spring. Meanwhile Sirdar Mahomed Rafik Khan, and General Sheikh Mir, who were courtiers of Sirdar Ibrahim, had quarrelled between themselves, and Sheikh Mir, having a large number of followers, had defeated Mohamed Rafik, who was a clever man and a Wazir of Shere Ali. After his defeat he discovered a plot in which his life was to be attempted, so he escaped from Kabul by night, and took refuge at Tagao, and when I arrived at Charikar he joined us, giving us information of the maladministration of the rule of Shere Ali. This man was now with us, and on our agreement to remain neutral for forty days, we returned to Kohistan with the army.

My uncle remained at Charikar, which is twenty-seven miles from Kabul.

In due time March arrived, and the time of Shere Ali's son's promise had elapsed. When I saw no hope of it being carried out, I marched on Kabul, and arrived at the fort of Dodah Mast. Azim Din Khan, who had been sent with 1000 militia soldiers to stop my advance, abandoned the place after a few rounds of shot, and returned to Kabul. My uncle entered Kabul with a large escort,¹ and on going into the house of Sirdar Shain Khan, the Chiefs and the Wazirs salaamed him. Meanwhile, as Sirdar Ibrahim Khan had fortified the fort in Kabul, my army laid siege to it for nine days, after which General Shaikh Mir and others opened the gates. Shere Ali's son, who was sitting in his harem at the time, came out and salaamed us. Thus we took Kabul, and Shere Ali's son fled to Kandahar.

After six weeks of quiet we received news that Shere Ali was marching towards us. I had prepared my army for this, and dividing my sowars into three divisions, one of which I left at Kabul, I started with the other two divisions for the Surkh Sang Hill. The reason I left part of my sowars at Kabul with my uncle was because a daughter of Fattah Sing was attacking Kabul from Jellalabad, where the army had been stationed during the winter. Some 3000 soldiers whom I had lately employed I also left with my uncle. I took with me 9000 sowars and 30 guns. I directed Mir Rafik Khan to accompany me to Ghazni, and left Shaikh Mir with my uncle at Kabul. When I reached Ghazni, I found that Nazar Wardak had already

¹ February 1866.



THE FORT OF GIAVNI.

[To face p. 72. Vol. 1.]

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fortified the fort. I surrounded it, but it was too strong to be taken by my small mule-battery guns, and I did not consider it wise to waste any powder and shot, of which I had only a limited amount. The enemy in the fort was encouraged by a daily communication from their Amir, in which he told them he was marching with 40,000 soldiers to their relief. Eleven days passed in inaction, until Shere Ali's army was within one day's march from Ghazni, when my spies brought me the information that his troops were all well trained and amounted to 40,000 in number. Hearing this, I consulted with Mir Rafik Khan, and we agreed it was impossible to fight against such a large army in an open field with our small force. We therefore retreated to a narrow pass, where our small numbers would have a better chance. Mir Rafik demurred at first to this plan, saying that the army would probably lose courage and desert if we marched them back, but I over-ruled this objection, persuading him that my army was trained to follow me anywhere, and was not composed of ordinary Afghan soldiers. Saidabad was a very narrow pass, having small hills rising from one end to another; we arrived there that night. During our retreat Shere Ali ordered 10,000 Herati and Kandahari sowars to attack our rear, and also to take possession of the road to Kabul, so that we should be unable to escape if the fight next day went against us. These detachments of the enemy came across 600 of my followers whom I had sent ahead as an advance guard, and engaged them in battle. These sowars fought bravely, gradually retreating, and, as they did so, sending me word of their difficulty. Directly the

messenger reached me I sent to their assistance two battalions of infantry, who arrived unexpectedly, and as Shere Ali's sowars were massed together in a large body, a few shots did great damage, putting them to flight. My soldiers returned in triumph with booty, and we continued our march to Saidabad.

When Shere Ali heard of his defeat he sent another detachment of the same strength to their aid, but they, finding the ground deserted and my army in full retreat, returned to the Amir with the news that, being discouraged by his numbers, I had turned my face from him and refused to fight. Upon this the Amir ordered a triumphal salute to be fired, and directed the cavalry to pursue us and take me prisoner. On our arrival at Shashgao about 9 A.M., we were surprised by this cavalry. I was marching behind the transport with four battalions and twelve mule guns. I had appointed Sirdar Rafik with one division to march to the right of the baggage, and General Nazir with Abdur Rahim in front of the transport. On the near approach of the enemy's cavalry I marched very fast, taking advantage of a large roadside cave in which to secrete one battalion, with orders to be ready to fire the moment they heard my guns. I then ordered my sowars to march on slowly, and directly I observed the cavalry pass the cave, I turned my twelve guns to their front, ordering immediate fire. Simultaneously my hidden battalion, who were quite close to the enemy, fired, with the result that 1000 sowars fell, and after a short skirmish the rest were put to flight. Very soon, however, they rallied again, and followed my force without having the courage to attack us. They followed us for some time till I

ordered 1000 sowars to attack them. This was carried out successfully, and 150 were taken prisoners. These men I released, telling them it was impossible for them to fight against my trained army. On experiencing my kind treatment, and observing the bravery of my soldiers, they returned to Shere Ali. On their way they cut off a hundred heads of the Wardak subjects, whose villages they passed through. These heads they presented to Shere Ali, saying they belonged to the Afghan sowars. But very soon after, the relations of these sacrificed Wardaks arrived to complain to Shere Ali of the treatment of his cavalry. Hearing their complaints, he called the chief officer to explain the truth of the matter. This man said that Abdur Rahman's soldiers were very difficult to fight against, and had the field of battle been a desert his sowars would have been surrounded, so that none could have escaped.

The Amir marched upon Ghazni, where he rested four days, and, leaving my father a prisoner in the fort there, continued his march against me at Saidabad.

I had taken up a strong position at this latter place, having arranged my guns on the tops of the hills, and prepared for fighting. After four days' march the Amir halted in front of our entrenchments. I had previously plundered a village called Unchi, to secure provisions for twenty days. The people of Unchi had refused to allow me to buy the food. My army consisted of 7000 men, while the Amir possessed 25,000 with 50 guns. We were soon engaged in a struggle, which was exceedingly severe. The smoke of the guns and cannons rendered the sun practically invisible.

It was not before 4 P.M. that the fighting ceased, and I found I had lost 2000 men killed and wounded. Shere Ali's losses were estimated at more than three times the number.¹ Directly I was sure that God had granted the victory of the day to me, I appointed a band of fast cavalry to ride to Ghazni to release my father, but before they arrived, the sentries, hearing of my victory, had set him free, and salaamed him. The chiefs who were set free with him were as follows:—Sirdar Sarwar Khan, son of Sirdar Azim, Sirdar Shah Narwaz Khan, Sirdar Sikander, his uncle, and Mahomed Omar, brother of Sirdar Sultan Jan, Governor of Herat. These last mentioned were taken prisoners at Herat. The former Amir, finding the fort of Ghazni in our hands, fled to Kandahar, and his cavalry (which originally had belonged to my father) left him directly he was defeated, and returned to our allegiance.

Before the war began I had written to my uncle to come and assist me, but though he came to within a short distance, he did not join me, preferring to watch the progress of the battle from afar. His son, Mahomed Aziz, who was only seventeen years old, fought very bravely by my side. My father also wrote me a letter in which he expressed his pleasure at my victory. I was delighted to receive this, and praised God. I answered his letter by asking permission to pay my respects to him, but he replied that he was soon coming to join me, and that I had better not leave my army.

For four days my soldiers plundered Shere Ali's treasury and goods, and on the fifth day my father

¹ May 10, 1866.

arrived. I went at the head of my soldiers to receive him. Dismounting from my horse, I kissed his feet, thanking God many times for his release. The next day I determined to follow Shere Ali to Herat, and my father consented to look after affairs in my absence, but my uncle would not agree, which made me angry, and I suggested that if he objected to the danger of war, he might join me after Shere Ali was captured. My father being influenced by my uncle's objections, added his voice, with the result that we all left for Kabul. The people there received us very gratefully, and dispensed much charity. We entered the palace, and I read the Khutba¹ in the name of my father as King, and the chiefs gathered together to congratulate him on becoming Amir, saying that he, being the eldest son of Dost Mahomed, and their rightful heir, they were pleased to acknowledge him as their ruler. They also said that only a few of the military chiefs acknowledged Shere Ali as Amir, and that they never approved his rule, nor his act of killing his real brother, and imprisoning my father, who, being older, should have stood in place of a father to him. They lamented the loss of Shere Ali's son, through his own sin, in which we joined.

The summer passed pleasantly, my father administering state affairs, while my uncle and I looked after the army. In the autumn the Amir informed me that

¹ Khutba is the sermon preached by the Mahomedan clergy in the mosques on their Sabbath day, which is Friday. On New Year's Day and such other holy days the name of their King must always be mentioned in the sermon. It is customary in Afghanistan, when they proclaim a new ruler, to enter his name in their sermon, which is called "reading the Khutba in his name."

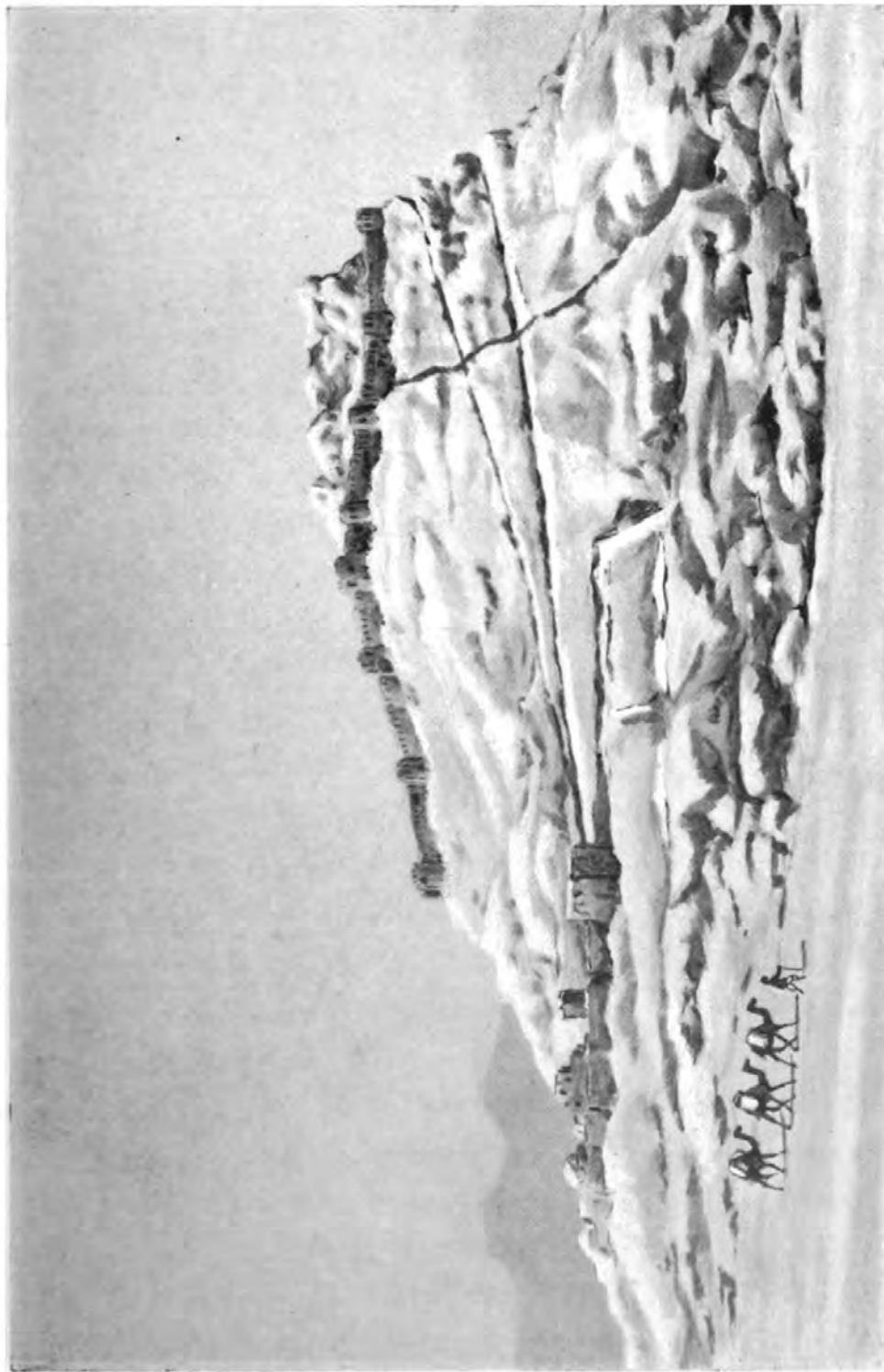
Shere Ali had made arrangements to march from Kandahar on Kabul, to which I replied that had he allowed me to follow him after my victory, he would have been unable to prepare for another war. He then asked me how many days it would be before I should be ready to start, and I told him that I had foreseen all this, and I had therefore kept my army in readiness to start at a moment's notice, and was prepared to do so that day. He was much surprised, and said it was the first time an Afghan army had been ready to start for war the same day as war was declared. Without leaving the Amir's presence I gave directions, and in four hours my army, amounting to 12,000 soldiers, encamped near the palace of Kabul, left for Dihburi. My father examined my arrangements before I started, but found nothing lacking in my preparations. The Amir turned his face to my uncle, and asked if his army was ready to accompany me. He replied that, except for tents, they had nothing else ready, and would take a month to prepare for the journey. I agreed to wait for him at Ghazni, and after kissing my father's hands, I started for that place. After waiting twenty days there, I heard that Shere Ali had reached Kalat Tokhi, upon which I wrote to the Amir to enquire when my uncle proposed to join me, saying that as he had only 3000 sowars, it was a pity my whole army should be delayed for him. I also said that my cavalry only amounted to 4000, which number was not sufficient for me, and should my uncle be delayed longer, some cavalry must be sent after me at once. After despatching this letter, I left for Mukur. Hearing this, Shere Ali fortified

Kalat and remained there. After waiting at Mukur twelve days for my uncle, I started for Kalat.

The following day 10,000 sowars, under the command of Shah Pasand Khan and Fatteh Mahomed, were appointed by Shere Ali to plunder the country surrounding my camp. I heard from a spy that these men had hidden themselves about six miles away, and later on, on arriving at a place called Chashma-i-Panjak, I was informed that they had spent the night on an old fort. Upon this I ordered General Nazir Khan and Abdur Rahim, with 1000 cavalry sowars, 1000 Durani sowars, 2 battalions, and 6 guns, to make a night attack on the fort. This order was carried out and the enemy surprised, with the result that they fled, leaving 300 dead and 1000 prisoners in the fort. Of my army only one man was killed, as the enemy never attempted to fight, but fled panic-stricken. These prisoners I sent to Ghazni. Shere Ali being crestfallen at his bad fortune, did not attempt to fight for eleven days, during which time my uncle arrived with cavalry and infantry, and I informed him of what had happened. From our position there were two roads, one leading to Kandahar, *via* Kalat-i-Ghilzai; the other passing through the territory of the Hotaki people into Nawa Arghastan, runs again through Mundi Hisar into Kandahar. These two roads are separated by a high mountain, and it occurred to me that, as Shere Ali had taken great pains to fortify Kalat, if we marched by the road of Arghastan, his labour would be lost. I mentioned this to my uncle, who agreed to my plan, and we started by that road.

My plan of marching was invariably as follows. The baggage I sent in front with strict orders never to

unload until I arrived. Following behind were General Nazir Khan, Abdur Rahim, and a few other officials. I marched on one wing of my troops to prevent side-attacks. On our arrival at a place called Dewalak I gave the word to halt. My uncle and I remained about a quarter of a mile behind, having with us two guns, and 200 sowars. At this moment some sowars brought me word that a flock of sheep appeared to be coming towards us, but on looking through the telescope, I found the supposed sheep to be part of the enemy's forces. Upon this I gave the order to the 200 sowars with me to continue climbing up and down a hill, four or five at a time, to give the appearance of being a large number, and to gain time. I also sent a messenger to Abdur Rahim to hasten to us and prepare for battle. In a short time all Shere Ali's troops appeared in the following order—10,000 from Pusht-i-Rod, 3000 from Herat, 10,000 Kandahari, and 4000 of Shere Ali's own sowars from Kabul. All these troops were marching towards us, when my officers came to me and advised me to ride on to join our army. But I objected on the ground that the enemy would observe our small numbers, and their cavalry would probably cut us off, whereas, by constantly moving, and keeping fires burning, they would take some time to discover our real number before they would attack us. To this they agreed, not knowing how anxious I was getting. On one side the enemy were arranging themselves in fighting order, but evidently delaying their march upon us until they discovered our strength. On the other hand, as our troops were so far away, it would take some time before my messenger would reach them, and they could come to



[To face p. 80. Vol. I.

KALAT-I-GHILZAI.

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our assistance. At last I observed Abdur Rahim in the distance, but before he could join us the enemy charged our guns (which made small impression on their large numbers), and, after killing two gunners and wounding one, they managed to take possession of them, while the remaining gunners escaped. When they were engaged in dragging my two guns away, I sent two battalions of infantry and two more under Abdur Rahim to surround them on all sides. In the struggle that ensued 500 of the enemy and many horses were killed, and our guns were rescued. I pursued the remaining sowars towards the south of Kalat. On their reaching a village called Thalla late in the afternoon, they stationed themselves on the hills called Tabak Sar. We halted close by, from where we could see Shere Ali in the fort of Kalat, without the help of a telescope. I could also see that the arrival of the defeated sowars discouraged the rest of the army, and they were moving about within their entrenchments dispiritedly. I took great pains to form my line of battle, and pointed out the hills on which to place the guns. My troops comprised twelve battalions of 600 soldiers, 2000 cavalry sowars, and 1000 Durani sowars. The rest of my men were in the camp. I stood on the hill till dusk, returning without the enemy's knowledge, and directly it got dark I marched my army back to my camp, where we arrived about 2 A.M. From that time, by the grace of God, rain fell until ten the next morning, making the roads muddy and the tents wet. We halted two days, and then started for Kandahar, upon which Shere Ali also marched in that direction, and there being one range of mountains in between us, my army was march-

ing on one side, while his marched on the other. We hoped to reach Kandahar before Shere Ali, and he intended stopping us on the way thither. We continued in this way for five days. Our armies were about 5000 paces distant from each other, but neither army was prepared to attack the other.

On the 5th we arrived at a place very suitable for a battle, and Shere Ali also halted. I arranged some of my guns with flags on the hill-tops to deceive the enemy, the others I hid behind the hills. I sent all superfluous baggage on ahead, and also directed General Nazir and Abdur Rahim with 3 battalions and 1000 militia infantry to take possession of the caves adjoining the road by which Shere Ali would have to pass. Observing that I had occupied this road, Shere Ali was obliged to fight, and he formed his men in position. When he noticed my few men on the hill-tops, and that my baggage had gone on, he said to his officers that they would make one attack, as the enemy had so few men. He therefore attacked my sowars on the hills, and simultaneously I ordered those hidden to come out, and when the battle became serious, and both sides were getting exhausted, I sent for Abdur Rahim and General Nazir, who attacked the enemy's flank and rear. A short time after this, Shere Ali's army gave way and fled towards Kandahar, and I allowed my sowars to plunder their baggage. We also captured thirty-five guns. I marched to my camp, which was thirteen miles distant, and had a long sleep, as in the last fifteen days of anxiety and small skirmishes, I had not slept more than two or three hours daily. I awoke next evening and ate, and then slept again until the

following morning. Having rested so long, I felt very well, and thanked God for my victory.

The following day I went towards Kandahar with my uncle, and entered the city five days after. Shere Ali had fled straight to Herat. On our arrival at Kandahar my uncle was anxious to go to Kabul, and leave me behind; but I refused, saying that I would go to Kabul, and he must remain as Governor. I arranged to procure transport animals and riding horses for my men, and for the artillery, as during the winter those I had had become very weak, and had to be turned out to graze and get strong.

I must here mention an officer in my uncle's army, named Fattah Mahomed, son of Sultan Ahmad Khan. This man's father was captured by Shere Ali at the battle of Herat, and my father had released him, and appointed him Governor of Hazarajat. He had run away from this latter appointment, and had joined Shere Ali, who placed him at the head of his cavalry, so that he was now fighting against me. What can be thought of the character of one who fights against the man to whom he owes his freedom, and joins him who took him prisoner? An evil-minded man cannot be made good by culture. In gardens grow flowers, and in jungles grow thorns.

CHAPTER IV

STRUGGLE WITH SHERE ALI—*continued*

AMIR AZIM

(1867-1870)

Now I must draw the attention of my readers to Balkh. I have mentioned that after taking that country, I appointed Faiz Mahomed with Nazir Haidar Khan and General Ali Askar Khan, as Governors. When I arrived at Bamian, Faiz Mahomed had been quarrelling with the General and Nazir. On hearing this I wrote to them to refrain from disagreeing at such a time, when I had to attack Kabul. In the winter I had sent to Faiz for 1000 pack ponies; and that traitor, seeing me engaged in warfare, refused to send them. After the victory of Saidabad, my father wrote to him inviting him to come to see him. This invitation he also declined. About this time my cousin, Sirdar Sarwar Khan, was sent with 8000 sowars and Ghulam Ali to Bamian, for the administration of Hazara. At the same time Shere Ali was marching from Kandahar to Ghazni, and I faced him at Kalat, as mentioned above.

During this time Sirdar Faiz became more and more troublesome, and at last my father ordered Sarwar Khan to march against him. This officer left Bamian at once for Balkh, and they met at a village called Ab-i-

Kali, five days' march from Aibak. This encounter resulted in the defeat of Sarwar Khan, who rallied his men, and again offered battle at Bajgah, but was again defeated. Sarwar fled, and many officers and men were taken prisoners by Faiz Mahomed, who killed Naib Ghulam and Ghulam Ali, with two or three other important officials. He then returned towards Kataghan and Badakshan, which countries he took from Mir Jahandar after a small skirmish. Mir Jahandar came to complain to my father in Kabul, but he had no army there with him, and hearing that Faiz was marching on Kabul, he sent for me to check his advance. On receiving his letter I started at once, although I was very weak, suffering at the time from kidney disease. I could not ride my horse, so was carried in a "Gakht-i-rawan" (moving throne); and, making two days' march in each day, I arrived on the 5th day at Ghazni.

On my arrival there I received a letter from my father, saying I need not hurry, as the traitor Faiz had returned towards Balkh and Kataghan. I was pleased with this news, for although I was better in health, my men were very tired with their long marches. I halted at Ghazni for five days, and then started for Kabul. My father sent many people to receive me, and to these I gave friendly assurances. I was delighted to kiss my father's hands, and to pay my respects to my mother. I encamped my army on the banks of the Kabul River, going once daily to see my parents, returning always to the camp to sleep. Thus the time passed until the summer, when cholera broke out in Kabul, and my father suggested that I

should go to stay in the Bala Hissar,¹ as the air in the tents was unhealthy. I dismissed my soldiers, who dispersed to their homes, and I left for Bala Hissar.

Soon after I heard that my father had taken the disease, and the medicines which the ignorant druggists of this country know of were being tried upon him, until the malady turned to cholera fever, and he was very ill. At the same time, news came that Shere Ali had arrived at Balkh, and being reinforced by Faiz Mahomed, had marched with him on Kabul. I immediately wrote to my uncle, telling him of the dangerous condition of my father's health, also that Shere Ali and Faiz were marching against us, and though I wished to be free to fight them, I could not leave my father till he came to take my place. I had no answer to this letter for a long time, so I arranged for my spies to bring me an account of Shere Ali's marches, and prepared to go and fight him, when he was within two days' journey of Kabul. I was surprised one day to hear that the enemy had returned to Panjshir, and intended entering Kabul Kohistan suddenly. Upon this I took leave of my father, who prayed for my success, and started for Charikar. My uncle also arrived at Ghazni, but halted, with the intention of remaining there until the war was over. When I reached Charikar my spies reported Faiz Mahomed's intention to come through the Panjshir Valley. On hearing this I marched all night, and at sunrise arrived at a place called Gulbahar, and Kala Alahdad, which is at the mouth of the valley. I arrived at the head of my entire army, and Faiz Mahomed also reached the top of

¹ Persian—Bala = high ; Hissar = palace or fortress.

the mountain. I afterwards learned that he was surprised to see the Kabul army in front of him, for the Kohistan chiefs had invited him to come through their country, as he would be less likely to meet with resistance, and that the unexpected evil had taken hold of his throat. He also received a letter from Shere Ali, telling him not to continue his march till he arrived, which he expected to do in two days. Faiz was much upset at this, and sent many reproaches to Shere Ali, explaining that Abdur Rahman had arrived, and would kill them both, if he waited longer.

He made entrenchments on the hill-tops that night, and next morning I attacked his position. The fighting was very severe, as Faiz had the advantage, being above us, but after many hours I succeeded in taking possession of some of his sangars. When he heard of this he came from behind the hills, and I fired a shell straight at him, hitting him in the stomach. The salt which he had eaten of us was thus exposed—so ended the life of a traitor, his end being worthy of his character. I took nearly all his army prisoners, and Shere Ali fled to Balkh with 2000 sowars whom he had brought from Herat.¹ I sent the dead body of Faiz to Kabul, to his elder brother, Wali Mahomed, and his mother, and returned there four days afterwards myself.

My uncle received tidings a few days later at Ghazni of my victory. Immediately on arriving in Kabul I went to my father, and found him in a dying condition. The ladies of the harem called loudly to him that Abdur Rahman had arrived, and was waiting for an audience. He was unable to speak, but

¹ September 13, 1867.

moved his hand towards me, and seeing that he would never speak again, I wept. After spending some time with him, I left for my camp, and paid attention to my military duties, going twice daily to see my father. The third day after my return, being a Friday, he departed from this world, leaving in my heart the sorrow of our parting. But I was contented to acquiesce in the desire of my God. After all the proper funeral services, his coffin was deposited in the place appointed by him, in the fort of Hoshmend Khan, being his own property, and broken-hearted I returned to Kabul, giving feasts to the poor and helpless people.

Three days after, I said to my uncle (Mahomed Azim) that as long as my father was alive, he was his younger brother, and I was as a younger brother to him (my uncle); now my father was dead, I would look upon him as occupying his place, and I would take his myself, leaving my place to his eldest son. My uncle replied that I was the rightful heir, being the late Amir's son, and he would be my servant. But I replied: "Your white beard, uncle of mine, makes it unfitting for you to be a servant of any one. I am young, and therefore will serve you as I served my father." We discussed this question for four days, and on the Friday night I invited the Kabul Royalty and chiefs of the provinces, and gave orders that the Khutba should be read in my uncle's name. When this was done, I first offered the hand of allegiance, and the other Sirdars followed my example, and we congratulated him. I then returned to my camp, and for forty days and nights the priests repeated the Koran, and offered their prayers, with much charity to

the soul of my father. A few months after his death, the mischief-makers turned my uncle against me, persuading him that while I was in Kabul his influence was limited. It would therefore be better that I should be sent to Balkh, while his own son was appointed in my present place. I must mention the names of these disloyal people who, with their fathers, have pulled the noses of his camels, the Amir being a puppet in their hands. They are as follows: Sarfaraz Khan (Ghilzai), Sahib Jadak Ghulam Jan, Malik Shere Gul (Ghilzai), Nawab Khan, Sufi Khan (Kayani), Mahomed Akbar Khan (Ghilzai), Mir Akbar Khan (Kohistan), Mir Jan Abdul Khalik, son of the before-mentioned Ahmad (Kashmiri), and Malik Jabar Khan. These men prejudiced my uncle so much against me, that one day when I went as usual to salaam him, I was stopped outside by the doorkeeper, who told me that the Amir Sahib was asleep. I had to sit at the door from morning up to one in the afternoon, whilst all the servants and other officials were going in and out. His luncheon was then served, and I was surprised at the kind of sleep he was enjoying. After this I was allowed to go in, and upon my doing so, I saw all his officials sitting round him. I sat down also, and when asked to go in to dinner, I said I had had mine, and sat in a corner until they had finished. The courtiers then began whispering to each other, so I got up and walked away. This intriguing and secrecy lasted two or three days, when my uncle told me it was better I should go to Balkh. I assured him that his wisest policy was to send his son Abdullah, with Abdur Rahim, General Nazir, and

such other military officers of my army who were inhabitants of Balkh, with twenty-four guns, leaving me free to remain in Kabul to be at his service when required. I considered if Shere Ali marched from Herat I should then be able to resist him. My uncle said: "The country of Balkh cannot be managed without you," and seeing by this that he wished to get rid of me, I left for Balkh in ten days, leaving my family in Kabul. It was winter at the time, and the ground was covered with deep snow. I suffered a good deal, and about 300 of my army lost their hands and feet by frost-bite.

I must mention that before I started the Amir had ordered Mahomed Ismail, son of Sirdar Amin, to march at the head of 1 battalion, 6 guns and 5000 cavalry sowars to Hazara, and Colonel Sohrab with 400 cavalry and 4 guns to march to the mouth of the Bajgah valley to meet me. These officers came to salaam me, and I requested them to return with me as far as Balkh, and help me to fight the people of that country who had rebelled. I promised to send them back the following spring. They did as I requested, but Colonel Sohrab received a letter from my uncle with instructions to return at once with or without my permission. A few days after, the Governor of Bamian, who had been appointed by me, wrote to tell me that he had received orders to go to Kabul to render his accounts and to receive his dismissal. The only answer I could give him was that he must obey the Amir. When I arrived at Aibak, after a severe journey and many difficulties, the Mir of Kataghan came to pay his respects to me, bringing many presents,

including 400 camel and 1000 horses. From there I started for Tashkurghan. I found the country much upset in consequence of the maladministration of Shere Ali. The Mirs of Balkh, who had taken refuge in Bokhara, Kolab, Hissar, and other directions, were invited by Shere Ali to return to their country, which he had sold to them with the guns, taking payment in cash. These idiots, believing he had the power to sell the country, had handed over the money to him, and immediately plundered the Afghan inhabitants, saying that they had been sold to them by Shere Ali. To this the Afghans replied that Abdur Rahman was their king, and they did not acknowledge Shere Ali as Amir. This caused much discussion, which ended in bloodshed, and when I arrived the Mirs, afraid of the consequences, fled to Akcha, Andkhoi, Shibarghan, and Maimana, and fortifying the fort of Nimlek, endeavoured to raise levies to fight against me.

I went from Tashkurghan to Mazar, and thence to Taktapul. Some days after my arrival, the officers of Ismail's artillery and infantry reported to me that Ismail did not appear very friendly to me, and they would be glad if I would take them into my army. To this I replied: "My uncle, Amir Azim, having appointed you to serve under Ismail, I cannot transfer you until I receive his permission to do so." I promised to write to my uncle, which I did, but in answer my uncle said that any one who spoke against the light of his eyes, Ismail Mahomed, would be a traitor and a liar. I showed this letter to the officers, and left for Nimlek, the fort being held against me.

I tried hard by friendly assurances with an oath on the Koran to persuade the people not to be ruined by fighting against me, but they, believing the fort could not be taken, would not listen. It seemed almost impossible to cross the moat, which was about 330 yards long and 50 yards wide. Next day I arranged my guns, and at sunrise ordered the attack. By 9 A.M. the gate of the fort was destroyed and two minarets. My army threw down 10,000 trusses of dry hay in the moat to make a bridge across, and gaining foothold, they reached the walls. The rebels and inhabitants of the fort set fire to large bundles of cane, and threw them in the faces of my advancing troops, also attacking them with bayonets when they were climbing the walls. Notwithstanding this, they managed to gain a footing, and soon entered the minor fort, although 700 were left dead and dying in the attempt. All those in the fort were put to death, 2500 in number, only one man being found alive, and that because he had thrown himself into a dry well. He told me that the Mirs on hearing of my march towards Balkh, selected 2500 of their bravest men, who voluntarily offered their lives for the protection of this fort. They had been given khilats, swords, guns, etc., as a reward for their services.

I asked the commander of the fort, Kara Khan, son of Ashan Sadur, Mir of Balkh, why they did not accept the Koran which I sent them as an oath, to which he replied: "You know as well as I do, that this fort has never been taken before, therefore we were convinced of its impregnability." I knew that this was so, as my uncle had besieged it for eighteen

months, and then was obliged to make a treaty with the defenders, as his provisions had run out. By the grace of God I had taken this fort in six hours, and avenged all the cruelties practised on the Afghans in this country. The next day I released this man, sending him with an account of the capture of the fort to the Mirs. I then marched against Akcha. The inhabitants came out to meet me, offering their salaams, and apologising for their Mir's behaviour. I forgave them, as the fault had originated in Shere Ali selling them the country. The Mirs fled towards Maimana, all except Mir Hakim Khan, who submitted himself to me, and the Mir of Saripul, named Mahomed Khan, sent me many presents. This man was mentioned by me before, when I gave an account of his residence at Bokhara. I returned his presents, and sent a letter with a new governor to take possession of his country, and he also fled towards Maimana.

Arriving at Shibarghan, I restored the former Mir Hakim Khan, and sent a new governor to Andkhoi. Mir Hakim, being grateful for my kindness, offered to me the hand of his daughter in marriage. At first I refused his offer, but afterwards accepted it. The guardians of Ismail reported to me that he was an enemy of our government, and I must take precautions against him. This warning being the same as that I had received from his officers, I advised them all to write to the Amir, adding their seals. I also wrote to my uncle on the subject, but he paid no attention to our letters, except to abuse us all. He sent me orders to go to Maimana at once, but as this would have been unwise, I remonstrated with him, saying that as

my army had travelled all the winter, enduring many hardships, and having fought and gained a victory since then, it was due to them to have a long rest. I added that, owing to the disturbed state of this country, it was most important I should remain here until the inhabitants had grown accustomed to our rule. To this he replied that he was certain Shere Ali would send his army to fight against his sons, Sarwar and Aziz, at Kandahar, and should this happen, and result in the defeat of his sons, he would consider it my fault. I wrote in answer, suggesting that he should send some other reinforcements to Maimana, and allow me to remain here near him, in case Shere Ali attacked Kandahar. I added that the siege of Maimana would of necessity mean a matter of months, and Shere Ali might take advantage of my occupation at a distance to march on Kabul. My uncle would not heed any of my advice, writing that if I was his friend I would go; if I was not, I could do as I chose. I was much disappointed, and felt inclined to write: "If I am not afraid of Shere Ali's enmity, I am not afraid of yours." But, on second thoughts, I desisted, considering that as I had put him on the throne, I ought to uphold him in everything. I therefore appointed governors in all directions, and started for Maimana by Andkhai. At the same time I despatched a letter to the Amir, advising him of my departure, adding that I was sure he would be sorry for the fact one day.

I reached a village within one day's march of Maimana, when he wrote me that the sons of Shere Ali were marching against Kandahar, having already

taken Larah. He requested me to send half of my troops to Kabul at once, keeping the remainder to besiege Maimana. He also desired me to send the "Light of his Eyes" (Ismail) with this force. I replied to these commands that I had warned him of these possibilities, which had already come to pass. As he would not listen to me, and it was now impossible for me to besiege Maimana with only half my army, I could not come nor send to his assistance.

I thereupon proceeded on my way, and arranged for entrenchments to be made outside the fort. I erected my tent on a hill called Tal Ashikan, about 1500 paces from the fort, on higher ground. When I had opened the siege I received another letter from my uncle, in which he said that his son, Mahomed Aziz, had been defeated by Mahomed Yakub, and was a prisoner in his hands. Yakub had also seized the province of Pusht-i-Rod, and he commanded me at once to send the half of my army to him. But I again refused, saying that as I was in the face of the enemy, and besieging the fort, I had not sufficient troops to send half away.

I attacked the fort vigorously, but could not take it, because Mahomed Ismail had told the enemy of the hour we intended to attack them. They judged from the force of my attack that they might not be able to resist a second one, so the Mir of Maimana sent his son, with some chiefs and priests, also an oath on the Koran to me, offering 40,000 sovereigns as annual tribute to us. He sent, too, presents of horses and other things. I agreed to his conditions, because of the troubles in Kabul, upon which the Mir came

himself to salaam to me. I took possession of the fort with the six guns which were in it.¹ Hussein Khan (the Mir) interceded on behalf of the other Mirs, and I forgave them also.

My uncle wrote to Ismail, saying he had written five letters to him, asking him to return, and he had taken no notice. I handed Ismail this letter, explaining that I did not give him the former ones, as I had need of his force, but now as I did not require him any longer, he could go. The following day he started, and I left also for Balkh. Mahomed Ismail, being in his heart a traitor, made long marches on purpose, to arrive there before me, so as to plunder the city, but I suspected his intention, and did not allow him to get ahead of me. On my arrival at Balkh, I received a letter from Colonel Sohrab, saying he had brought Sirdar Sharif Khan (according to instructions received from my uncle) to Taktapul, and I was to see that he was kept in proper confinement. Now this Sharif Khan was the uncle of Ismail, and I thought that most probably Ismail would attempt to release him. Accordingly I sent two battalions and one battery the same night, with instructions to march day and night to fortify Taktapul. They marched through the sandy desert across through Akcha and Balkh, thence to Taktapul. Ismail arrived the next day with intent to attack the city and release his uncle, as I had suspected, but finding my army already there, he changed his mind, and returned towards Mazar. On arriving there, he forced the governor, with threats of torture, to give him all the government money,

¹ May 1868.

amounting to 30,000 tangas, after which he marched to Tashkurghan to plunder the treasury there, but the people being advised of his intent, fortified themselves, and prepared to resist him. On becoming aware of this, he altered his course to Bamian, plundering everything he passed on his way. My uncle having heard nothing of his misbehaviour wrote to him at Bamian, asking him to come to Kabul as soon as possible, as he was going to Ghazni to fight against Shere Ali, who had conquered Kandahar, and was marching to Kalat. This Ismail, with the title of "Light of the Eyes," wrote in reply that his two battalions, artillery, and sowars would not let him leave for Kabul until he had paid them twelve months' salary. At the same time the news of his march from Taktapul reached my uncle's ears, and he sent me word that I had been right in saying Ismail was a traitor. I replied that he had yet to have many services rendered him from the "Light of his Eyes;" I added: "For God's sake, do not leave Kabul, wait a month, when I shall be able to help you." I sent at once 2000 brave men to him under the command of Ghulam Ali (Populzai) until my arrival.

The following day I took fever, which did not leave me for twenty-one days, and directly I recovered I started for Kabul. At the time of my illness I had appointed Abdur Rahim and General Nazir, with other officers, to make all necessary preparations for the journey, and these being carried out, I started for Tashkurghan, and thence to Aibak, where a page-boy of my harem, disguised as a Fakir, met me with the news that Amir Azim had gone to Ghazni, and

Sirdar Ismail, with a few chiefs of Kohistan, was besieging Kabul. There were only 200 soldiers in the fort, who fought for six days, when the Kabul inhabitants went over to Ismail, and opened the gates to him. He immediately turned my family, as well as that of the Amir, out of the palace, and proclaimed Shere Ali Amir. I heard through my page-boy that my mother was much upset. I also received a letter from Sirdar Sarwar Khan from Ghor, in which he said that his army had suffered defeat at Ghazni; and having become separated in flight, had missed the Amir without knowing in what direction he had gone. This news depressed me much, and I wrote to Nazir Haidar, Governor of Balkh, to send men to search for my uncle. They discovered him at Balkhab, which place he had reached through Hazara. I wrote to the Governor of Balkh to send him 100,000 tangas, with riding-horses, and everything he required, and giving up my intention of marching against Kabul, I started for Ghor, at the same time advising General Nazir to desist from his project of marching upon Bajgah.

When we reached Ghor, Mir Jahandar Shah, who was with me, offered his niece (daughter of Mir Shah Jat) to me in marriage. I refused this offer, saying that the connection my uncle had formed with his family was sufficient for me. But, upon his insisting, I accepted her. Mir Mahomed Shah (to whom Faiz Mahomed had given Mir Jahandar Shah's country) sent presents to me, which I returned, saying he must either give the country back or leave in any direction he chose. To Mir Jahandar himself

I gave 200 sowars, under Shah-ud-din Khan, to take his country. I remained at Ghori, putting the affairs of Kataghan straight, whence I wrote to my uncle to come and join me. To this he replied that I must go to him, but as I was staying at Ghori for the purpose of commanding the roads of the Hindu Kush and Kabul, I could not leave. My uncle, satisfied with my explanation, came to me, and I welcomed him. He was very anxious to secure Kabul again, and insisted on my marching against Shere Ali. I explained how important it was that we should wait till spring, and that we could do no good in such snowy weather, but, as usual, he would not heed me, and said that if I did not leave at once, he would go to Bokhara. I promised to be ready to fight in six months, and did my best to get him to take my view of the situation, but all to no purpose. I was obliged to start with him for Bamian, through the road of Badkak and Shuluktu. From Bamian we arrived at Gardandawal, where 3000 Herati sowars of Shere Ali's were stationed. They fled to Sar-i-Chasma on my approach, upon which my army advised me to follow them, so that Shere Ali would lose courage. I agreed to this suggestion, but my uncle refused, and insisted on going to Ghazni by the Nor and Dara-i-sokhta roads. We reached Ghazni after many troubles, the season being severe. Khodainazar Wardak fortified the fort, and we encamped at Roza. My uncle had previously sent his son Sarwar to Sarfaraz Ghilzai in the direction of Tazan. He had great faith in the loyalty of the Andra subjects,

and being one day's march from their country, he wrote to them for help. After a few days they came to our camp, but refused to give any help or to accept our khilats, so my uncle was again deceived.

Shere Ali, hearing we were at Ghazni, marched against us. This was greatly to our disadvantage, as we should have had a better chance of success if we had attacked him at Kabul. On reaching Shash-gao, he found the snow about a yard deep, and he had no provisions, neither was there any sunshine. We, on the other hand, were encamped on a sunny level ground where there was no snow, having large stores of provisions.

One day we had sent our camels as usual for provisions under convoy of 2 battalions and 6 guns, when they were met by 10,000 of Shere Ali's sowars. I happened to be looking through the telescope at the time, and observing a large body of the enemy approaching, I sent 2000 sowars, who were ready at once, to their assistance. These men soon reached the spot, and attacked the enemy from the rear with drawn swords. Our sowars were greatly encouraged with this reinforcement, and did great execution with their guns, so that the enemy being surrounded lost great numbers, especially as being raw levies from the country and not properly trained, they fell over one another in their efforts to fly, and for this reason about 1000 horses were captured, with 4 guns, and many prisoners.

The same night Shere Ali appointed 10,000 sowars to attack my transport animals at Nani and

Shandip, under Fattedh Mahomed. On receiving information to this effect, I employed spies to bring me news of their halting-place for that night. I sent 2000 sowars, 6 mule-battery guns, and 6 horse artillery, with 2 battalions of infantry, and 500 militia, under Abdur Rahim and General Nazir, to take them by surprise. These marched the whole night, and before daybreak attacked and put the enemy to flight. This skirmish was so successful that the Herati sowars fled to Herat, and the Kandahari to Kandahar, leaving 3000 wounded, killed, and prisoners.

After this triumph I wrote to the military officers of Shere Ali's army, saying that I was very fond of them all, and asking why they fought against me. They replied that they hated my uncle, and being tired of his cruelties, had joined Shere Ali; also adding that, if my uncle were not with me, they would submit to me. I showed this letter to my uncle, and said that as long as I had remained at Kabul these people were satisfied, and it was his treatment that had caused them to rise against us. To this he could find no reply.

Shere Ali being in trouble for provisions, moved his position to Zanakhan (a place close to Shashgao), where there are six or seven forts. He was thus enabled to obtain food. About this time my uncle thought it would be advisable to attack Zanakhan, and in the event of it falling into our hands, Shere Ali would be unable to obtain provisions. I tried to make him understand that in such severe weather it would be extremely unwise to march out of our

position, as the snow lay waist-deep on the ground. It would be impossible to make entrenchments, neither could the sowars stand in such snow at night. My uncle, with his usual obstinacy, refused to believe that my plan was the wiser, and insisted on my attacking and taking the forts of Zanakhan. These forts were nearer Shere Ali's camp than mine, and if I could take them in a few hours all would be well; but Shere Ali would probably seize the opportunity to attack me with his whole force at daybreak, and if by that time they were not taken, I should have very little chance of success against him. It would also necessitate the troops marching all day and over heavy snow towards night. Besides this, I should have had to leave half my army with my uncle, and the remainder would not be sufficient to face Shere Ali. I explained all this at length to him, but he still refused to be convinced: and, as he insisted, I was obliged to start, which I did at sunset.

On reaching the fort I took up my position in front of it, and after failing to induce the Militia sowars to give it up in a friendly manner, I sent General Nazir, with 5 battalions, 24 guns, 2000 militia infantry, and 4000 cavalry sowars—in fact nearly the whole of my army—to the top of the surrounding hills, to make entrenchments during the night, to place the guns in advantageous positions, and to make all preparations for a battle next day, as I foresaw the following day would be the decisive battle. By this time it was dark, and the cold most intense. Our sufferings were very severe, sitting all night in the snow.

The morning dawned, and the fort was still impreg-

nable. I sent a messenger to my uncle to come at once with 1000 cavalry sowars and 500 Kataghan sowars, also to send Sultan Murad with 3 battalions, and batteries of horse artillery. I pointed out to him that Shere Ali would attack us, and the result one way or the other would decide everything. My uncle replied to my message that the cold was so intense, he would start directly it got warmer, although my messenger explained that as it would take three hours to reach Zanakhan, he ought to start immediately, and the fighting would begin at sunrise.

Owing to the intensity of the cold, General Nazir drank a great quantity of wine and spirit, and fell asleep before the guns had been placed on the hill-tops, or any entrenchments made. At sunrise a sowar came galloping to me with the news that Shere Ali had arrived with all his army. I had only forty sowars with me, and I galloped with these men to the hills, only to find all the guns in the valley, with no gunners, artillery, or magazines. I climbed the hill, and found Shere Ali's army quite close, in good fighting order, and General Nazir still in an intoxicated sleep. I awoke him saying: "Why have you done this? You are responsible for your behaviour. Where are the gunners, the soldiers, and transport animals?" He replied: "It was so cold I permitted them to sleep in the camp, they will arrive directly." I said, "You will see directly what will happen." He replied: "I will tear Shere Ali's mouth." In spite of my depression and disappointment I could not help laughing, seeing he was drunk. As we had no army to fight, and those few who were with me had fled in all direc-

tions, the enemy proceeded to take our guns. Being anxious to escape, and the enemy being all round me, I joined some of these sowars who were chasing a small body of men, calling out, "Catch them." In this way I travelled two miles, and directly I was able I disguised myself, and joined a few of my sowars, who were looking for me. With these men I turned my steps towards Maimana, where I met my uncle, and explained to him all that had happened, saying: "If you had only listened to me, I should not be in this plight now." I then inquired for twenty loads of gold coins which I had left in his care. He replied he did not know, as he had fallen asleep while the treasurer had moved the loads. I said I had left the money with him, not with the treasurer, and now we were defeated and had no money. The road to Balkh being closed by heavy snow, we could not return there, so were obliged to go the Waziri Hills. Before we had decided, 200 or 300 sowars of the enemy appeared. Seeing a frozen canal on my right, I crossed with four sowars, and the rest were pursued and captured by the enemy's cavalry within my view from the opposite side of the river. I was most disappointed to see all this without being able to help. Later in the day my uncle joined me with Abdur Rahim, and 300 sowars. Towards night we reached the fort of Zurmat, tired, ruined, and broken-hearted.¹

After resting two hours in the village, we rode on again. At 8 A.M. we arrived at Sar Roza. The inhabitants, thinking we were some of Shere Ali's troops, came out in a large body and fired a shell, but recog-

¹ Jan. 1869.

nizing us, they apologised, while their Maliks and priests brought food for us and our horses. One priest gave me a copper drinking-cup as a present, and another gave me a jug. I bought a hubble-bubble, and some tobacco; not having smelt tobacco for two days, I greatly enjoyed a smoke. All the property I possessed in the world was one copper cup, one jug, and one hubble-bubble, also one small rug, either to wear or stand upon, also the suit which I was wearing in battle, a sword, rifle-belt, revolver, and riding-horse. A few days before I had possessed in my treasury 800,000 gold coins of Bokhara, 20,000 English sovereigns, 20,000 drams of gold, eleven lakhs of rupees, Kabuli, five lakhs of rupees, Kunduz (each of which is equal to an Indian rupee), 10,000 khilats, cooking utensils for 2000 people (the number that used to eat with me every day), 1000 camels—in fact, I possessed more property than any one in Afghanistan. However, this did not weigh upon me heavily. My grief was at being parted from all my kind and sincere servants, who had brought me up so kindly, and of whose fate I was ignorant.

The same afternoon I started from Sar Roza, taking one Amir Mahomed, a man of the Kharoti tribe, as a guide. We went to Birmal, where we arrived after 8 P.M. Dismounting, we found some ground from which the snow had been cleared, and set light to some wood to warm ourselves. The people of the fort of Birmal came to speak to us, and began quarrelling with me, during which my sowars and uncle rode on, leaving me behind. Soon after, seeing my opportunity, I seized a horse which an inhabitant of Birmal was going to mount, and putting one foot on the stirrup, I jumped

on. The man tried to throw me down, upon which I drew my sword, and he let go. I hastened on, and my uncle was surprised to see me. I asked him why they ran away leaving me alone, and they had nothing to answer. As none of us knew the road, we were at a loss which way to go, and consulted among ourselves. I suggested halting there until daylight, when we could see our way, and they agreed. We slept on the top of a hill. On lighting a fire my uncle said we should be seen and followed, and it would be better to endure the cold. I replied I was not such a coward, and would take the risk, as my followers would lose their hands and feet if we had no means of keeping warm. Soon after, about forty people of the Kharoti tribe came, and said they were looking for us, and only discovered us from the light of our fires. They placed their houses at our disposal, and provided food for us and our horses, paying us every attention, for which I am greatly indebted to them. We left them in the morning, furnished with a guide, and towards sunset we reached the fort of the Pir Koti tribe, taking the people by surprise. They attempted to shut the gates, but I galloped in without hesitation, and my followers close after me. They were obliged to welcome us, and asked us to remain as their guests, but we refused, and only taking tea we started again, but without a guide, and as there were many paths and valleys on every side, we were again puzzled as to our correct route. I went ahead, telling my followers to come after me, until we came to some habitation where we could secure a guide. We had gone about four miles when we met a sowar, who asked who we

were. Hearing I was Abdur Rahman, he galloped to me, and kissed my feet, telling me he was my father's old servant, and the servant also of Dost Mahomed, and he reminded me of many things which happened when I was young. As he was a guide by trade, and offered to go with us, I decided to trust him. He told me that the Waziri country was two days' journey by road, but he could show us a quicker route over a high mountain, and by going that way we should arrive that afternoon. My uncle was so afraid the guide might be deceiving us that he proposed going by the longest route, but I was sure he spoke the truth, and we started for the mountain. Gaining the top of one high hill, we were surprised by the sight of an army which seemed to be following us. All my sowars dispersed, except forty brave men who remained with me.¹

These men and a few sowars turned and faced the enemy. But for some reason they all dispersed as suddenly as they had appeared, leaving about ten men, who fled on our firing the guns. This danger over, we again started, and a few miles further on we overtook our sowars and my uncle. On climbing another mountain we were stopped by 200 sowars of

¹ Their names are as follows :—Abdur Rahim Khan, Parwana Khan (now Deputy-Commander-in-Chief), Abdullah Khan (now Viceroy of Badakshan and Kataghan), Jan Mahomed Khan (now my Treasurer), Faramurz Khan (Commander-in-Chief of Herat), Said Mahomed (Colonel of the body-guard), Mahomed Sher Khan (Colonel of the cavalry), Abmad Khan Rasildar (who died at Samarkand), Mahomed Alah Khan, Rasildar Haidar Khan (whom I made Commander-in-Chief at Kandahar, but who was obliged to fly to Kakar, because of his cruelties and oppression), Commandant Naibulla Khan, Colonel Marsirili (now at Kabul), Colonel Merab Khan (brother of General Nazir) and Mir Alam Khan (now General of artillery at Balkh.)

the same tribe. Our numbers being about 300, I dismounted, and prepared to fight, but before I began, I tried to tell them it would not be to their advantage to fight without reason, but they said I had wounded five of their men, and they intended to avenge them. I divided my men into three divisions, sending one division to the right, one to the left on higher ground, and with the third I attacked the enemy. Being surrounded, they were soon vanquished, and we again continued our way.

Very soon we espied the forts of the Waziri country, called Murgha. My uncle, who knew the people, wrote letters to the Maliks, which he sent by our guide. In consequence of this, 100 sowars came out to welcome us, and about 1000 footmen played national music in our honour. They feasted us for two days, and fed our horses. We endeavoured to induce them to accept money for their kindness, but they refused. Sirdar Abdullah (son of Abdur Rahim) had placed 200 gold coins at my disposal, and this was all the money we had in the world. Abdullah had sewn this money in his cartridge-belt, and it was black with powder. After two days' rest we started again, and halted in another part of the country, where we were asked to pay for our necessities, and on my offering some of these coins, the natives refused them (thinking they were copper), and demanded rupees. Hearing that Sher Jan had 1000 rupees, I offered to exchange my gold coins for them, but he refused, saying, "If no one will take them from you, who will accept them from my hands." At last I was obliged to take the money by force, giving

him 100 sovereigns in return. With this money I bought provisions for men and horses.

Two days later, we entered into the forts of Malik Adam Khan Waziri, who received me very warmly, and entertained us that night in his fort. The following day we reached the next village, where the people also received us very warmly, and gave us a banquet. Next day both Maliks who had acted as guides took leave and returned to their country, and we entered Dawa, an Afghan village outside the Indian boundary,

I must mention an interesting incident which happened to me a short time before. The first night I entered the Waziri country I had eaten nothing since my defeat, and I told my sowars I was very hungry, and should much like a piece of meat. They had one piece of money between them, and with this they bought some mutton, butter, and onions. We had no cooking utensils, and the people in that country only used clay pots. However, my men managed to procure an iron saucepan, and in this I cooked some of the meat, making also some gravy. I had been obliged to tie the saucepan to some sticks to hang it over the fire, and as I was going to take the cooked meat out of the saucepan, a dog, thinking the hanging string was the intestines of some animals, seized it in his mouth and ran off with the whole thing. My sowars ran after the dog, but the meat was upset. From this I learned again the power of God. Three days before I had 1000 camels to carry my cooking utensils, and now one dog could run off with my cooking pans, together with the food. I

could not help smiling at so humiliating an incident, and eating the piece of bread without the meat, I went to sleep.

At Dawa, Sirdar Mahomed Khan (whom my uncle had sent to Jagi and Khost to his mother's brother), arrived with forty sowars and General Ali Askar Khan and Moa Zula. A few days later we celebrated the Id Festival, the people of Dawa coming to join in our thanksgivings. To these I gave sweatmeats and turbans, welcoming them. My expenses were now becoming heavy, as we were then about 600 in number, and I was much pressed for money. Imagine our gratitude when a servant of Abdur Rahim came from Kabul on foot to bring us 2000 sovereigns. This act of loyalty impressed us all. The man had formerly been Abdur Rahim's treasurer, and having no shoes, had bound up his feet (which were torn and bleeding) with bits of carpet. He asked leave to return to Kabul to look after the family of Abdur Rahim, and also to execute further commissions for us. I gave him permission to return, also offering him a horse, which he refused, preferring to go on foot in case we might need the horse for our own use. I changed the sovereigns for 20,000 rupees, with which I bought medicines, clothes, and provisions for my followers.

Meanwhile, my uncle received a letter from two English officers of the districts of Banu and Peshawar, asking why we were staying at Dawa instead of taking refuge in British territory. My uncle replied after compliments: "When the Viceroy of India writes me a letter of invitation, promising not to take us beyond

the Indus, we will come." To this letter he asked me to affix my seal, but I refused, saying I had never seen the benefit of English friendship, and if he, after being once deceived in them, cared to trust again, he could go alone. I asked him why his opinion of the English had altered so much since he left Rawal Pindi, when he complained to me of their cold treatment. He replied that his opinion was just the same, and that he had no intention of going to their country, but was corresponding "for something to do." I answered: "Do you call lying something to do? It is not a good habit. Answer them plainly that you will not put yourself under their Government, as you have no hope of benefit from them." At last he wrote as I suggested, but I would not put my seal, saying my name was sufficient, and that I was not a recognised person. He complained of this, and at last, being angry, I broke my seal into pieces, but told the messenger to take a verbal answer from me, to the effect that "I never would have anything to do with them. They were the enemies of my friends, whose enemies were my enemies." The man returned to Peshawar and Banu, and I suppose repeated my message.

We remained at Dawa eight days longer, and then left for Kaniguram, at which place we arrived after five days' journey. We halted there for seventeen days till our horses were recovered, there being quantities of green grass growing. I had an attack of fever, which lasted five days, but I started for Wana, halting there two days, after which we crossed the Gomal river. As we reached the opposite side

we saw a man running towards us, waving a handkerchief in his hand. I sent Ali Askar Khan back to find out what he wanted. To his surprise, he discovered the supposed man to be a woman, who had been stolen by the Waziri tribe from Afghanistan at the age of twelve years. She was now twenty, and had seized the opportunity to come to us for protection. I comforted her, giving her a horse to ride, and promising to return her to her parents.

Starting from there we reached the territory of the Sherani people, at a place containing only two habitations. They had no rice, only one sheep, four goats, and three fowls to sell. We were then 300 in number, the others having left me to go to Banu. We bought these animals, and managed somehow to subsist on them. Next day we reached one of the villages of Kakar Zhob, where we bought flour, butter, and mutton, also cooked food enough to last two days, doing the same in future. We next arrived at a village called Dihbring, where we laid in a store of provisions. Besides what we required, the inhabitants brought a large quantity of different stores, which they insisted on our buying, but I refused; on which they left the goods on the ground and went away. The next morning, finding the stores were untouched, and that we were not to be forced into buying them, they very reluctantly took them away, scolding me all the time. When we had started a few miles, we saw about 2000 men standing awaiting us in our road, carrying naked swords. One of them took hold of the bridle of my uncle's horse, but before he had time to draw his sword I

galloped up, and placed my rifle against his chest, threatening to shoot. He dropped the reins, and when I demanded to know what they wanted of us, they replied that the name of that place was "Zhob," and if we did not pay them twenty rupees a head as duty, they would not let us go. I argued that if we gave in to them the whole Kakar country would also intimidate us into paying duty, so I refused, and made ready to fight. Seeing this, they declared they were only joking, and let us go on our way.

Before we arrived at the end of our day's march, an old man at the head of ten disciples, wearing a white turban, with hair matted on each side of his ears, and carrying a stout stick in his hand, appeared in our road. This apparition had been preceded by two of his followers, who told my uncle that they were chiefs of the country, and on the appearance of this old man they bowed low to him, saying to us: "This is a holy Saiyad."¹ At this my uncle rose, and after kissing his hand, seated him beside him. I had seen many impostors of this kind, and his appearance gave rise to the suspicion that there was something behind all this saintliness. It was my habit on going into every fresh village to make the acquaintance of some inhabitant, and present him with a few rupees to give me information of all that was going on there. On my making enquiries of such a spy, he told me that the old man was a celebrated thief, having a band of 100 robbers under him, and he had brought forty of them with him to plunder our property. I reported this to my

¹ The descendants of Mahomed's daughter Fatima.

uncle, who would not credit the story, and, instead, told his son Sarwar that the "Saint" was to be a guest in the camp for that night. Near sunset, a few men surrounded the wells from which my servants wished to water our horses. Seeing this, and being on the look-out for treachery, I had recourse to the ruse of dividing up my horses into small bands, and sending a double escort of men to water them in different parts of the village at different times, without approaching those wells near our camp, where the robbers were waiting, and where they expected the horses would be watered. In this way our horses (300 in number) all arrived safely in camp. My uncle and his son had about fifty horses, and their followers who looked after them brought word to him that the men surrounding the well refused to allow them to go near it. At this the "Saint" professed anger, saying: "I will go with the horses and command the people to allow your servants to give them water." This he did, and when some distance off, he sent the grooms on to draw water in buckets, and when they were thus employed he and his men ran off with thirty horses, twenty being rescued by our sowars, of whom five were wounded. I was present when these men returned with the story, and laughed heartily at my uncle, saying: "I told you this afternoon, but you would not listen. You forget a well-known maxim that 'There are many devils in the guise of men; do not give your hand to all.'" My uncle and his son Sarwar spent their night lamenting the loss of their horses and dressing the wounds of their servants.

The next march my uncle's followers were obliged to ride behind the backs of the others. On the eleventh day we arrived early in the afternoon at a village in the Kakar country, where my followers laid in provisions for themselves, and I was looking about for a young fat sheep for myself. Finding one, I paid twenty rupees Kabuli for it, the price agreed upon to the owner. When we were about to kill it, the owner said he had changed his mind, and wanted it back, but when I said he could have it, he changed his mind again, so it was killed for me, at which he threw my money at me, demanding that I should make his sheep alive. I replied I had not sufficient power to do this, but he could have the dead body of his sheep as well as the money. He refused again, insisting on my performing the miracle! At this I was obliged to resort to a trick, and turning to a priest who was standing near, I told him the man had been cursing him all the time. At this the priest turned his face to the owner of the sheep, to whom I said, "Curse me if you like, but do not insult the wife of this holy man, who is a prophet." The priest was naturally furious, and called the man a pig for insulting his wife, and the sheep owner cursed him in return. At this they began to fight, and I took both sheep and rupees away, leaving them to settle their little difference. Half of the inhabitants were on the side of the priest, and half on the side of the sheep owner, and after a good fight the people interceded. An hour or two after, the sheep owner brought me two jugs of custard, two trays of bread, and one young baked sheep, offering me salaams. I said to him, a little time ago he was rude, and now he was respectful, and noticing from

his conversation that he was quite reasonable, I asked him why he had made the sheep an excuse to pick a quarrel with me. He replied that Sarwar Khan had treated him badly when at Kandahar, and therefore he took his revenge on me. I replied: "Sirdar Sarwar is here himself, why do you quarrel with me instead of with him?" and he explained that as I had appointed Sarwar Governor of Kandahar, he held me responsible. We talked for some hours until he returned home, and I went to sleep.

Next day we started on our way again, in a heavy wind and dust storm. When we were near our halting village, the chief of the tribe came out with two sowars to receive us. Before he met us, one of his servants came to tell us that "Shah Jahan Padshah is on his way to receive you, you must dismount and embrace him." My uncle asked me what we should do. I replied that before deciding I would go on in front. I went on, and saw two men coming towards me. I asked one of them where his king was, to which he replied that his companion was he. This so-called king was an old man, wearing a coat of old sheep-skin, which was patched in parts with different pieces of coloured cloth, where the skin was worn. He wore on his head so dirty a turban as to disguise the material of which it was made. It also had no conical-cap in the centre. On his feet were woollen socks, without any shoes. His mare was nothing but skin and bone, with bells tied to her knees, and the saddle was of wood. The bridle was of hair-cloth, with bells tied to the corners. I smiled at such a grand apparition, and approaching him, I said it would be a pity to dismount to

embrace our Amir, that he had better welcome him verbally. To this he agreed, and I galloped back to say the "Shah Jahan" would welcome him without dismounting. When they met, my uncle's horse took fright at the extraordinary apparition covered with jingling bells, and began to rear and jump about. My uncle was very frightened, and called to me to help him, but I laughed, and said I could not interfere between two kings. He cried: "For God's sake, suggest something, or my horse will throw me off. This is not the time for joking." I replied: "If you will give me something, I will help you." He offered me one of his two swords, and I agreed. I first quieted my uncle's horse, and then went to Shah Jahan, asking him to come with me to make arrangements to receive his followers. He told me he had prepared some goats' flesh soup, and had forty pieces of Indian corn bread. I assured him it was too grand, but we would go ahead and see about it. With this excuse I got him away from the horses. After going on for about a mile I said I had forgotten some necessaries, and must go back to fetch them. At first he would not agree to go on without me, but on my saying I would bring back sugar with me, he was delighted, and consented at once. I returned to my uncle, and asked what he thought of so grand a king, and he laughed. On our entrance to the village we began hunting for the king, for some time in vain, but at last discovered him in a hut made of straw. He told me that he had sent for fuel from the jungle with which to cook, but it had not yet arrived. Also, the bread was not baked, because the sheet of iron on which it was baked had been borrowed for a marriage ceremony.

I replied: "It does not matter if you have nothing to eat, we are your guests." I then sent for our own provisions, and we asked the people if this was their king and chief. They replied in the affirmative, upon which I said: "How wise a people to have for a ruler so powerful a king," and the more I flattered them the better pleased they were. We stayed that night in the jungle, and next day the king came and told me that our next halt would be in the village of his cousin, Dost Mahomed, who would give us a warmer reception than he had done. He said it would be better for us to start early. We enquired for a guide, on which he offered his own services. I suggested to my uncle that there was perhaps some reason for this, but he did not think so, and we started.

At the end of our first day's march we arrived at the bottom of a high mountain, and the next day we had to cross another, passing through a village where there were no inhabitants. I told my uncle that our devil guide was leading us astray, and we had neither grass for the horses or food for the men. I asked him what we should have done if we had not had provisions for two days with us. We halted in the desert at night.

The next day Dost Mahomed came to meet us with 2000 followers, sending a man on first to tell us he was at our service. He asked us why we had come such a difficult way, and not kept to the road, and when he found our guide was his cousin, he demanded that he should be given over to him as his enemy for having taken us by the mountains to escape passing his village, and by so doing cast a disgrace on him.

He told us we must retrace our steps a long distance to get to his house, where he hoped to entertain us, having prepared Indian hemp for us to smoke, and provisions for my followers. I said to my uncle: "If you had been warned by me, this would not have happened. What are we to do between these two devils?" During this conversation a few thieves who had been sent by Dost Mahomed to plunder anything of ours they could come across, had attempted to steal our baggage, for which they were fired upon and wounded. On hearing this, Shah Jahan went and hid himself, and I suggested leaving the place in the night, or the followers of Dost Mahomed would fight us. At last we found Shah Jahan, and told him that as he had brought us there he would have to take us back again. He said he had hidden for fear we should hand him over to his enemy, Dost Mahomed, but we promised not to do so, and marched with him all that night, although the cold was severe. We passed no village where we could get food until the afternoon of the second day, when we arrived at a deserted village, to be again disappointed. I asked the King of Devils where the people were, and he said the people come in the spring, and leave for the top of the high mountain which lay before us, so soon as it got cold. I said: "Curses be on your father, we and our horses have no strength left, this is due to your mischief." He said we had better go on to the mountain and meet the people there, who would give us food. He said he could not go with us, as the tribe was hostile to him and his family. We were glad to get rid of such a man, and gave him leave to go, and after sunset we arrived on the mountain near the

habitation of the tribe he had spoken of. They received us very kindly, after just preparing to fight us, thinking we were sowars of a rival tribe. We were very pleased to eat again, and feed our horses, but they would not allow us to pay for any provisions.

We accepted their hospitality for two days, when we started for Pishin *via* Kotal Sairi. On our entering a village near Pishin, a spy reported to me that the governor had collected 40,000 rupees of the revenue, which he intended sending to Kandahar. I consulted with my uncle, saying I would ride on all night, and surprise the village before sunrise, and secure the money. My plan was frustrated by a few servants who, in hope of reward, started before me to inform the Governor of my intention, and enabled him to collect a few hundred men from the surrounding villages to strengthen the fort. I had, fortunately, sent a spy ahead to wait for my arrival, and this man returned with the news of the treachery of five of my uncle's sowars. Failing to achieve my purpose, I returned to Karez Wazir, where we halted two days. The inhabitants of this place called themselves Sivards, but I do not think they have any right to the title, for the reason that generosity, courtesy, and mercy are the attributes of Sivards, while those men had none of these qualities—they are handsome, well-built, and wealthy, but very hostile among themselves, having the habit of killing each other, which naturally causes disputes. After leaving this place we halted in a village called Abrug. On our way to Nushki, rain fell heavily all the day, and the wind was very cold. We got soaked, and our hands and feet were nearly frozen. We

arrived after many difficulties, but the people received us very kindly. The next day we departed, and our march lay through a sandy desert where there was no water. We were obliged to retrace our steps, and were told it would be better for us to go by the Kharan road, although it would prove longer by four or five days. I decided, however, in favour of the desert, and hiring 200 camels to carry sufficient provisions, we started again through the desert. By God's help it rained each day, which gave us sufficient water for our needs. At the end of the tenth day we arrived in sight of Chaghai. The road was entirely broken up by the rain, and we were obliged to dismount, and lead our horses in mud knee-deep. At the end of our march both men and horses were well-nigh exhausted. I myself cooked some meat and distributed it among men who were almost fainting; the horses meantime lay down, unable to rise again. Only one horse (my own Arab, being a foal from my grandfather's stable) remained standing.

For two days we were in the utmost straits, but the third day we entered Chaghai. We were surprised that the Khan of the village would not welcome us. We remained there some time, and after a fortnight a servant came to my uncle with the tidings that the Khan and Mir asked permission to pay their respects to him. I asked why they had not done so before, and was told the reason was, that all their subjects had gone to the desert to graze their horses. They were now returned, and 500 had collected to salaam us. On our acceding to their request, the Khan came out of the fort on foot, with 500 followers behind in a single

line, and preceding him were two dancing boys of nine and twelve, who looked quite unlike human specimens, having no clothing save one small loin cloth, and matted hair which had never seen soap and water. There was one band of music, and this was our grand reception—the preparation for which had taken fifteen days! We stayed at Chaghai twenty-five days, during which time our horses had grown quite fat, having plenty of grass and hay.

Setting out again towards Palalik, by the side of the Helmand river, after six days we entered Kheil-Shah Gul, so named after Shah Gul, a Baluchi chief. This village was uninhabited save for two old men, who were doing their best to escape notice. On enquiring why the village was deserted, they first said they did not know, but on my insisting, they told me that the army of Mir Alam Khan, of Kanat, under the command of Sirdar Sharif Khan Seistani, was on its way to plunder their property. For this reason they had fled to a place near by to hide themselves. My uncle told them we would go to aid them, if we were led to their hiding-place. This the old men did, and Shah Gul was pleased to receive us, and glad of our help. He gave us a banquet, and at midnight two of his spies reported that the Seistani sowars, having passed through the next village, would enter his district on the morrow. Shah Gul told us he intended going next day to a fortified place on a mountain with his subjects and their property. My uncle asked my advice, to which I answered that they could go if they liked, but we would also go to meet the Seistanis, if Shah Gul would give us a guide. This he did, and on his

leaving for the mountain, we departed in the opposite direction.

After some hours' marching we observed the dust of the advancing sowars, whereupon we prepared to fight. Going ahead of my uncle with my followers, I arranged my line of battle, but the Seistanis were so surprised at seeing me, that they showed no intention of resisting us, but came to make enquiries as to who we were. We explained that we were Afghans, and not Baluchis, on hearing which the chief came to salaam us. I sent for my uncle, and we told them we were there to help Shah Gul and his subjects who were under the Afghan rule, and therefore the Seistanis must not interfere with them. The chief agreed not to do so, but stipulated that Shah Gul should salaam to him for the sake of retaining his prestige. I told the subjects of Shah Gul that they must allow him to do this, but his sister was so anxious for his safety that she would not allow him to go. I offered to remain with them as security, if he went with my uncle. At last they consented to this, and I impressed upon my uncle to send him back at the end of four or five days at latest. Seven days passed, but no Shah Gul, and all his people came to claim the fulfilment of my promise, saying they had already waited two days longer, and they were convinced their chief had been taken prisoner. I assured them this was not so, and offered to go and bring Shah Gul back with me, but they would not agree, saying, "As long as he remains away, you are our prisoner." I prepared my 200 sowars for a probable attack, and shortly after they came in a body with drawn swords. I ordered half my sowars to fire, and the other half to attack them with

swords. At this they fled towards their stronghold, and I loaded 200 camels with our baggage, and started in the direction Shah Gul had gone. His subjects soon followed us, apologising for their behaviour, and I took them to Seistan when I returned their camels.

On our arrival, after two days' journey, at the village I enquired for my uncle and Shah Gul. The former told me there were two chiefs, Sirdar Sharif Khan, chief of the Seistani sowars, and Musa Yusif Hazara, head of the body-guard of Mir Alam Khan. This latter man had imprisoned Shah Gul, and paid no heed to my uncle's objections. I went straight to this chief, and shook hands without dismounting, saying: "Where is Shah Gul?" and hearing he was in his tent, I called loudly, "Shah Gul, come forth," at which he appeared. I asked the chief the reason why he had imprisoned him, and he replied, it was his intention to take him to his chief, Mir Alam. I said: "I sent him with you, giving myself as hostage for his safe return. He is not your subject that you should take him before Mir Alam." I then took Shah Gul and a servant who had been imprisoned with him, and sent them with ten of my sowars to his own people, who were rejoiced at his safety.

After halting three days, we marched with the Seistanis to their country. Arriving the second day at the Helmand river, we found a clan of fifteen houses of Kandahar subjects, being attacked by some sowars belonging to the same Hazara chief who had wished to plunder the Palalik tribe. The inhabitants of the houses fortified themselves, and shot fifty Hazara sowars, wounding 100. Meanwhile, the neigh-

bouring villages collected together and prepared to resist the sowars. Things had arrived at this pass when our army reached the village. I ordered my servants to give a good thrashing to the Hazara chief, who had sent his sowars to plunder these villages, and I cheered the inhabitants by promising to make terms with their enemies to ensure their future safety. I went on foot to the fort, which I found garrisoned, and having no guns or ladders it was impossible to effect an entrance, so I sent a servant to make terms. This man was allowed to enter, and explained to them that their troubles were all due to one Hazara chief, whom Abdur Rahman had had punished and sent away, and that they might return in peace to their homes. Hearing this, several chiefs came out of the fort to salaam me, and I assured them that I regarded them as brothers, as they also were Afghans. We all marched back together, our road taking us for two days and two nights through the villages of these people, who gave provisions to us, but none to the Seistani sowars, whom we were obliged to feed until we arrived at Banjar. There the militia sowars went to their homes, and the military returned to Mir Alam Khan to bring him to receive us.

Sirdar Sharif Khan gave us a feast lasting two days in his place called Sharifabad. The third day we marched to the fort of Mir Alam, who came out to receive us, embracing my uncle and myself, after which we entered his new fort. He had made great preparations for our reception, and had erected new tents around the fort for our sowars, and larger ones for my uncle and myself. He had also appointed a clever

man as host to look after our comforts. They kept us twelve days with them as their guests. After which we started for Kolab Seistan. At the time of our taking leave Mir Alam begged us to take all the tents and furniture with us ; saying that as he was a neighbour of ours, he wished to show us every hospitality. We refused, with thanks ; but, on his insisting, we accepted two or three small tents. He also gave us 10,000 Persian rupees for our expenses to Birjand. I gave this money to my uncle, saying I had sufficient for myself, if I did not pay his expenses in future, as I was in the habit of doing, I had still 200 gold coins left of the money brought by Abdur Rahim's treasurer.

Quitting Kolab Seistan (called Hamun by the inhabitants) we entered Bandan, thence through Neh into the Lut desert, and from there into Birjand, where two of Mir Alam Khan's sons received us very warmly, and his mother entertained us at a banquet.

It was the 5th of Muharram when we entered Birjand, and on the 12th of the month we went towards Mashhad, in which place is the sacred tomb of the eighth Imam (Riza). We entered into the city of Sirahiyan, where we saw the grand ruins of the old buildings. Our next halt was at Nisi, a very unhealthy place, where the water is salt and bitter, and the inhabitants have built large tanks to catch rain-water, which they drink. They have dug two wells, but though the water is good for cooking, it cannot be drunk. Unfortunately, just before we arrived at this village, my uncle got an attack of severe fever, and we were obliged to stay until he recovered, which he did not do for quite a month, and

by that time my money was all spent. I begged him to let me arrange a travelling throne for him, as he was still weak ; but he replied it was impossible, as there were no trees to procure wood from. Without replying, I cut from the building the people use as their mosque, four pieces of wood ; and, when they objected to this, I explained that we were strangers, and suffering from illness, and therefore I was using God's property for the best purpose, namely, to help his suffering children, which satisfied them. By the evening of the same day I had completed this travelling throne, and we marched to Turbat-Isa-Khan, and thence to a place called Karez Shahzadah, which was considered very healthy. The Shahzadah had erected a very nice building for himself there, where my uncle took up his abode for a time, during which I cooked his food myself and nursed him. We were not short of servants, and his son Sirdar Sarwar was with us, but, notwithstanding my uncle's unkindness towards me, I was more fond of him than his own son was, for during his illness, which lasted forty days, Sarwar had only called twice to enquire after his father's health, occupying himself instead with private business.

One day some apricots were sent to my uncle, but as the fever had only left him a few days, I begged him not to be so unwise as to eat them. He would not listen to me, but began to eat the apricots, and I told him I had attended to him day and night, having very little sleep except during the last few days, when I had rested a little, but should he get ill again, I should have to be again in attendance. However, he finished the plate of apricots, and I was so angry to think that all

my services throughout my life were wasted on my uncle—for I was now reduced to selling my arms for his comforts—that I begged leave to go to Turbat-Isa-Khan. He gave me permission, and I made a two days' march in one night, as I had no money to keep men and horses, besides the heat of the day was so trying. I halted in one of the buildings used by a Shahzadah who had since gone to Tehran, and I prepared another house for my uncle's reception.

At this place a merchant of Herat, named Kazi Hassan Ali, who had lived here for several years, came to me, and offered me as much money as I required for my expenses, saying he possessed one lakh of Kabuli rupees of his own, and two or three lakhs of Persian rupees intrusted to him for commercial purposes. I replied that I was grateful for his offer, but as I could not return the money, I was obliged to refuse it, although I would gratefully accept food for my men and horses during our stay there. My uncle arrived six days after, and this same Kazi undertook to pay his expenses also, and as our men's suits were worn out, and their saddles and harnesses also, he offered to give me new ones for them. I refused for my followers, but my uncle accepted the offer for his. In fact this man did us such great service, that as long as I live, I cannot sufficiently return his kindness. For an ordinary man to bear such heavy expenses requires a liberal mind.

My uncle being careless about his food, again fell ill, during which time I nursed him for ten days and nights. After a few days the Governor of Mashhad, hearing of our arrival, sent by instruction of the Shah

one travelling throne with twenty-four mules for my uncle. He wrote, saying he had heard of my uncle's illness, and had sent the throne to carry him to Mashhad. We accepted this attention, and started for Mashhad at the end of a month. By this time our debt to the Kazi mounted to 70,000 Kirans (Persian coins=6d. each), my uncle having borrowed 60,000 and I 10,000. This good man accompanied us to a hill called Salaam Tadaï, five days' march from Turbat Isa; from this place the people said they could see the blessed tomb of the Eighth Imam. I was much comforted to observe the light of God shining on the tomb, and prayed to Him after reading the Koran. On leaving this place, we were met by six Arabian horses, jewelled and properly saddled and bridled, pulling two carriages with 1000 sowars behind, being servants of the blessed tomb. This was the property of the Shah's cousin, and we were guided to the palace with great pomp, and told we were to take up our residence there. For three days we were guests of the blessed Imam, and after that we remained as guests of the state. The cousin of the Shah, having gone to fight against the Turkoman people, was absent, but he returned after ten days, when he invited my uncle, his son Sarwar, myself, and a few officials to dinner, and expressed many friendly feelings towards us.

The following day the Shah's uncle Hamza Mirza came himself to see us, and after the interview I went to the blessed tomb, to rub my face in the dust, to give my eyes light and my heart comfort. The Wazir of the Shah, who is employed as sweeper of the tomb, invited me to his house, and I was pleased to accept

the invitation. During the fifteen days of my stay at Mashhad I had a touch of fever, but God cured me, and on my second visit to the Shah's uncle, I asked if they would kindly give me leave to go to Turkestan by the way of the Pass of Gazba Tajan, and Urgunj. I also asked for a guide to accompany me to the frontier of Persia, to a place called Daragaz, where Ali Yar Khan was Governor. In reply, I was told that my requests would have to be submitted to the Shah before an answer could be given me, and that they would be telegraphed immediately. I waited two days, when the servant of the Shahzadah came to me, and after smoking hubble-bubble and drinking tea, he told me he had telegraphed to the Mir Munshi of the kingdom, who had asked the desired permission of the Shah. Before granting my requests, the Shah had requested me to go and see him at Tehran, when, if I still wished to go to Turkestan, he would give me leave. To this I replied that I would rather not go to the Shah at present, but if I did not succeed in gaining my purpose elsewhere (of rescuing Afghanistan), then I would return and visit him. I did not think it wise after seeing such a great King as the Shah, to leave him and appeal for help to another kingdom. Others would then think the Shah had refused his help, and it would be a kind of insult to him. The servant asked for two days in which to consider my resolution. At the end of that time I was told that the Shah would prefer my visiting him, but if I decided not to do so, I could go to Turkestan when I wished, but the Shah would always look upon me as his son, and I was to look upon Persia as my home. For all the kindness shown to me I

thanked the Shahzadah's servant warmly, and asked him to beg the indulgence of the Shah for me. He gave me from the Shahzadah one chief with ten sowars and a letter to Ali Yar Khan, who came out to meet us at the end of our six days' march with 1000 sowars. He allotted to me a garden to stay in outside Daragaz, a very healthy and comfortable place. This man received me so warmly, one would have thought him an old friend, and he kept me with him a month, during which time he asked for some security from the Turkoman people for my person, as he told me they were robbers.

About this time some Turkoman merchants with 1000 camel loads of commercial products came to trade in Daragaz, and these men Ali Yar Khan held as security. I started with three sirdars of Tajan, one of them named Uzbeg, the other Aziz, and the third Urtak, these men were to act as guides to me as far as Urgunj. I was escorted by the Khan and 1500 sowars to Ishkabad. There was a good deal of shooting to be had in the rice fields on our way, and as we had good guns and horses, we spent two or three hours daily amusing ourselves in this way.

After passing Ishkabad the Khan took leave, leaving a few sowars with me to take the news of my safe arrival back to him. We rode all that night, and next morning reached the jungle which skirts the streams of Herat. On the banks of the streams were melons and water-melons growing, and at the ripening season it is the custom for the inhabitants to take up residence in the fields, and eat nothing but these two different kinds of melons. Their horses

meanwhile eat green reeds, there being no other kind of grass.

The following day we arrived at Tajan, and halted with these gipsy people for five days, firstly, to get provisions, and secondly, on account of my health, as I needed rest, having been kicked on the leg by a horse.

On the sixth day we started for Urgunj. Of the three sirdars who accompanied me, one returned to his country, and the other two, Aziz and Usbeg, went on with me. We marched all night up to 10 A.M., when we arrived at a well, the water of which was very bitter. We stayed there two days, starting at mid-day, and riding till morning, only halting to feed our horses with corn. About 10 P.M. on the fourth day we came to another well, where the water was more bitter and dirtier than the former one, but we were obliged to drink it, our horses too could go no further, and we had to halt six days to give them a thorough rest. After this we continued our march by night, sleeping through the heat of the day, till we came across a caravan of the Turkoman people, who, thinking we were Persians about to attack them, hid themselves.

I must here mention that the Persians and Turkomans are enemies, although they are both Muslims, yet their high priests being servants of the Devil, instruct them to kill and sell each other. This is an ignorant infamy. God says that all true believers are brethren and parts of each other, and though these two tribes call themselves Muslims, they treat one another as heathens through ignorance. Thus do the unbelievers triumph over the true and faithful, the cause being

that the latter are disunited. Islam itself has no faults, it is we who are full of faults.

We were able to ask a few stray Turkomans if there were any wells near, and they replied, if we rode on at the pace we were going, we should reach one before daybreak. We continued our way till the sun increased in power and our horses could travel no further, but we saw no signs of a well, and our tongues were parched with thirst, and those of our horses were as dry as wood. I cut the tongues of some of them, but there was no blood, and I squeezed the juice of a lemon in my mouth and rubbed my tongue on that of my horse, but still there was no moisture.

From this want of water I learned the fact that hell itself is in a person's body, as he gets as hot as fire without drink. We went on till evening, when we came to a well, but only four of my followers arrived with me, the others having dropped behind on the road. After drinking a little water, I thought of my lost servants, and could not help weeping at their fate. I found one horse which I had got from the Ishkabad people, and which was not so exhausted as the others, and placing two buckets of water on it, sent a man to ride back and to find, if possible, the rest of my followers. I instructed him not to lose the trace of the horse, and gave him a compass in case he should be in doubt of his way. He found all my men, who had fallen from their horses, having no power to help themselves through thirst. He poured a little water in each man's mouth until he recovered, and in time brought them all back to me. We

remained at the well seven days, when the caravan of the Turkomans which I have mentioned before arrived, and hearing who I was, some of them came and apologised for sending us purposely out of our road to die of thirst, thinking we were Persians. I had come to the end of my store of food, so they gave us provisions for four days, and I bought sufficient for three more. They left the next morning, but we stayed there for three days longer. The city of Khiva was distant about five days' journey from the well.

We marched in this direction, halting outside the city under some trees, whence I sent a few men to buy provisions. The Khan of Khiva asked my servants for whom they were buying food, and on their replying for their master, Sirdar Abdur Rahman, son of the late Amir Afzul, and grandson of the great Dost Mahomed, he sent a Wazir to me, who told me they considered it most improper that I should pass a night in such an inconvenient place. He insisted on taking us to the city, where they had arranged a few nice houses for us all, and welcomed us very warmly.

After two days' feasting the Khan of Khiva and Urgunj sent his Wazir to me, with the news that he intended coming to see me. I suggested that as I was a stranger, and of no consequence in Khiva, it would be more fitting if I went to him, and I rode to the palace. Arriving there, I saw sixty guns and gun-carriages, but all the gunners were negroes. I had never seen so many in one place before. They fired fifty guns as a salute to me, and the Khan walked out to receive me. I dismounted, and we shook hands,

and hand-in-hand we walked into the Durbar hall. At that time I did not know the Turki language, therefore the Khan appointed an interpreter to translate the conversation between us. We spoke together for two hours, during which time he told me that he regarded me as his elder brother, as his father Mahomed Amin was most friendly to my father at the time of his residence at Balkh, and he thanked God that we had met. He offered me two of the seven cities now under his rule, and at any time I chose to go to Balkh, he would lend me 100,000 sowars and footmen, who would conquer the city for me, so that we might remain friends and neighbours. I thanked him for his generous offer, and told him that I would answer him in a few days, and give him a few suggestions as friendly advice, which might be useful to him. I then took leave, and his servant, who was acting as a guide, told me that the Khan had arranged his own residence for our use, and I should find my followers in the garden. This garden and house was about 200 paces from the city, and had very nice buildings in it.

About two hours later the Khan's treasurer came and said he was instructed by his master to give me as much money as I required, to the amount of 200,000 sovereigns. The Wazir also corroborated this fact. I said: "God prosper your Khan for a good man, I cannot find words to express how greatly I am indebted to him. What should I do with 200,000 sovereigns? My expenses daily amount to 30 Kirans."¹ The next day the treasurer brought me 1000 gold coins,

¹ Persian coins, 6d. each.

saying the Khan had instructed him to do this every day. At last I accepted this, telling the man to hand the money to my treasurer, and each day he brought a similar amount, although, as I had said, my expenses only came to 30 Kirans daily.

Five days later the Wazir came to ask for my answer to the Khan's suggestions, and for the advice I had offered. I answered that I thought it wise (if the officials agreed) that the Khan should send me as his Envoy to Russia, accompanied by a few of his own confidential officials, to make arrangements between them and the Russian Government. Otherwise I foresaw that one day the Russian army would arrive near Urgunj, and the handful of men they kept for their protection could not fight against such a great power. The Khan consulted with his advisers upon the wisdom of my advice, but the people never having experienced the power of a great nation, did not agree, saying, "Death awaits the Russians if they come near Urgunj." The Wazir returned to me with this news, saying that the Khan and a few officials approved of my plan, but the people had replied as above. I answered, "If the people are so ignorant, I cannot stay among them," whereupon the Wazir disclosed to me an arrangement of the Khan to marry his daughter to me, so that in time the people would accept my advice.

I answered that the people would soon be jealous of me, and would turn into my enemies if I accepted the Khan's offer of two of his cities, and therefore it was not safe for me to remain among them, and I would go to Bokhara. The Wazir was distressed by my resolve, and warned me that the King of Bokhara did not give

away ordinary food to my followers who found their way there, and he had made my cousin Ishak a state prisoner; he advised me instead, to send for my people from his country, but I insisted on going, saying that I had business there, and requested him to ask permission of his Khan for me. The Wazir took leave, promising to bring a reply the next day, which he did, saying the Khan was very disappointed to part with me, but if I insisted, he was obliged to let me go, but he hoped I should wait two days to allow of him making arrangements for my journey.

On the third day he gave me 150 camels, with provisions, carpets, and tents, and when I went to bid him good-bye, he expressed his great regret at my departure.

After journeying five days I arrived at the Oxus, and crossed from the frontier of Guz and Shorab Khan, which is now under Russian Government. From there I marched seven days, arriving at Kara Kol, one of the dependencies of Bokhara. My servants who were there, as well as my cousin Ishak, were all pleased to hear of my arrival, and sent letters expressing their pleasure. Reaching Bokhara on the third day, I found that the King had gone to fight against Mir Sora Beg at Hissar and Kolab, under the instructions of the Russian Government, as the Mir had not accepted their suzerainty. As I had some friendship with the King, I wrote to him informing him of my arrival, and asking if he would prefer that I should remain at Bokhara until his return, or that I should go to him at Hissar, as I was shortly to be at Samarkand. The unjust King wrote, inviting me to go to see him. I

produced the gold coins which the Khan of Khiva had given me, and bought riding-horses and other necessities. I also sold all the camels, which were also his gifts, and in this way prepared every necessary for my journey (with 500 sowars). I started for Hissar (releasing the slaves who had also been presented me by the Khan), and arrived there in ten days. On my way there I saw a high piece of ground, which had been prepared to receive the tents of the King. This ground was covered with blood. At first I supposed this was due to the amount of cows killed for charity to celebrate the King's victory over the new country, and asked why they had not been killed farther away. The villagers sighed, and replied: "This is the blood of men, not of cows." It appeared that fifteen days previously, when the King's tent was pitched there, the fort of Herat had fallen, and 1000 prisoners had been brought to the King. He had at once ordered their throats to be cut in front of him. I was shocked to hear of this cruelty, and said they may have been guilty, but no one kills prisoners. The people replied that hundreds of victims had been murdered by the King, without fault or trial. I was surprised to hear this, and thought to myself that this triumph of the Russians over Turkestan is caused by the neglect of the Muslim rulers of God and His religion. They make the true believers slaves, and kill human beings, who are God's creation, without fault. The King does not care for the laws laid down by God and His prophet, and the priests who are guardians and instructors of those laws take no notice of their violation. I was very disappointed to find that Bokhara, which

had the reputation of being a very religious country, acted so contrary to the teachings of Mahomet. I regretted the carelessness of the Muslims who are mad in their own conceit, so that the unbelievers, finding them ignorant and hostile to each other, take advantage of this. I wept over the death of these innocent people, and appointed a few sowars to cover over their blood with earth, in the shape of graves.

After passing a night in despair and unhappiness, I entered Hissar, where the King had sent 1000 sowars under a few officers to receive me. I took up my abode in a house which had been prepared for me. After three days the King's servant came with an invitation, and I went to see him, after which I returned, and he sent me 10,000 tangas (6d.) with a few pieces of gold cloth.

After staying in Hissar a few days, I started for Samarkand. The Russian Governor received me very kindly, and gave me and my servants houses to stay in, paying us every attention as a host. I was shortly afterwards invited by the Viceroy of Turkestan to visit him in Tashkend, all necessary arrangements being made for my journey by the Samarkand Government. I was received with all kindness. Next day I was invited by the Viceroy to see him. He received me very kindly, and, after returning my visit, invited me to a conversazione, where I was interested to observe the European habits. They receive their guests in a large hall, and the guests walk from room to room to have quiet chats, smoke, or take fruits. This continued until 2 A.M.,

after which we all retired to our homes. The following day the Viceroy returned my visit, and I walked to the gates of my house to receive him. After making enquiries after each other's health, I gave him some presents, consisting of a jewelled sword, six pieces of valuable Kashmiri cloth, and two pieces of gold cloth. He sat with me for two hours, when he took his leave. The next day General Alikhanoff invited me to lunch, and we passed the day in a very friendly way. During the few days I was there, several other Generals invited me to their houses.

Meanwhile the great festival of the Russians, which they call Christmas, arrived. This is the birthday of the son of their God. On this day the Viceroy sent me his carriage, and an invitation by his secretary to go to his house. We drove together, and the Viceroy met me on foot as usual, taking me to the same hall where the former reception had taken place, all the officials and their wives and daughters being present. There was everything to eat, of the Halal and Haram. The friends never stopped eating till midnight, when they began kissing each other, saying, "Christos, Christos," after which we all bade our host good-bye, and retired to our houses.

After three days of these ceremonies, the Viceroy again sent his secretary with his carriage, inviting me to see the parade of their army. The infantry, cavalry, and gunners all saluted, and the parade began. It was very well arranged, and at the end they blew up an artificial mine. The following day the secretary came again with the intelligence that the lord would like to see me, and we had an interview. After taking tea

he told me the great Czar had enquired after my health by telegram, for which I expressed my thanks. He then informed me that the Emperor had graciously invited me to go to Petersburg to visit him, that he might give me all friendly assurances. I assured him that I looked upon the country of the Czar as a haven of refuge, and had come so far for the purpose of expressing to him my hope of hopes, for which I desired success and prosperity. The lord enquired whether I would go to Petersburg, and I promised him my answer the next day. I discussed the advisability of taking the journey with my confidential servants. They unanimously declared they would not let me go, as they could not do anything without me. I pointed out to them that there were many refugees like myself in Russia, and the Czar never invited any of them to go to see him, and I ought to comply with his request. But although I tried my best to persuade my followers, they would not agree that I should go. The next day I went to see the Viceroy, and, after taking tea, exchanging compliments, and smoking, I told him that I thought his King had shown me great kindness, but I was a new arrival in his country, and had 500 followers with me, who had all travelled a long distance, and after making due preparations, I would go if I were invited. To this he replied, "Very good, I will telegraph to the Czar."

Two days afterwards, the secretary again arrived with a carriage to take me to the house of the Viceroy. He informed me he had telegraphed to the Prime Minister, who was authorised to say that the Czar approved of my suggestion, and had ordered a place

to be bought for me, either in Samarkand or Tashkend, according to my choice. I was also given 1250 sums¹ monthly for my expenses. I replied I had come under the protection of the Emperor, and what he gave I accepted. I was also informed that the Czar had asked for my photograph, and those of a few of my officials; to this I agreed, saying they should be ready next day, after which I took my departure. The following day the secretary drove us to a photographer, but my officials refused to allow their portraits to be taken, saying: "He who allows his photograph to be taken turns an infidel." Up to now I had always given my followers credit for some sense, but now I perceived they had none. The secretary enquired of me why they had not been photographed also, and I replied they were none of them officials or chiefs of any tribe, but my own servants, therefore I honoured them, but that they are not of sufficient importance to be photographed for the King. He thought I was very wise, as, should the Czar have asked to what rank they belonged, we should have had nothing to say. In future, I did not ask the choice of my servants so much, as they had twice refused my requests; I also had not much opinion of their wisdom. A few days after the secretary again fetched me for a festival of the Governor, and we again enjoyed music, refreshments, and entertainments until midnight. On this occasion I asked permission to go to Samarkand to look after my followers. To this he assented, and gave me a letter to General Abramoff.

The next day I went to Kaufmann, and taking leave of him, I started for Samarkand by the way I had

¹A Russian coin.

come. I visited General Abramoff, who told me he had been instructed by the Viceroy to buy any place and garden that I chose, up to the price of 100,000 roubles. I replied that the King of Bokhara possessed Government gardens, and I would send a servant to see these, and give my answer later. My servants looked about for several days, and I also made enquiries, and, finally, wrote to the General that there was a garden at the gate of Kalandar Khana, which belonged to the Bokhara Government. The size was two acres, and it was situated in a very healthy spot, having springs in it. I chose this garden, so that the General should not waste money in buying a new one, but give me one which already belonged to the Government. In the end I took up my residence there, and for my cousin, Sirdar Ishak Khan, I took one house on mortgage in the city, and one for my servants from the people of Samarkand.

A few days afterwards the same chiefs who had refused to consent to my going to the Czar to put my case before him, began asking leave one by one to take leave of me, and some went without leave. The soldiers stuck to me and served me faithfully, while the chiefs had been nothing but a cause of annoyance to me.

CHAPTER V

IN SAMARKAND

(1870-1880)

MANY events happened to me while in Samarkand, but if I record them all my book will never end. I must, therefore, note only those which will be beneficial to my people. I spent eleven years altogether in the Russian city, spending my days hunting and shooting. Twenty riding-horses, with ten pack ponies, were always ready in my stables, and fifteen sowars, with double and single breech-loaders, always accompanied me; also some good hawks, falcons, and other birds. So I passed my time in amusements to beguile my griefs. I fixed the sum of Rs. 5 monthly for each soldier in my service, and more for my officials, according to their rank. As I have already mentioned, most of them had already left me, for which I was not sorry. We were very hard up for money most of our time, as our expenses were heavy, and my monthly subsidy from the Government very small, but, as I had no claim on the Russians, I was more than thankful for the small sum they allowed me. If any mention of money arose during my conversation with the Government officials, I used to say the money they gave me

for expenses was more than I deserved, and I prayed that God would preserve their Empire for their kindness to me. During any of their festivals General Abramoff and others would invite me to their houses, which invitations I always accepted with pleasure. The General always treated me as a friend, and when I required money or anything else, I would send my treasurer (Sirdar Abdullah Khan, son of the late Abdur Rahim, who is now Governor of Kataghan and Badakshan) to him, and the General would make an appointment for me to see him. At these interviews I would explain my difficulties. In short, I was treated very respectfully, and never bothered with court ceremonies. I was free to go to see the officials whenever it suited me, or *vice versa*. I was in the habit of remaining ten or fifteen days in my house, and the same time in the country shooting.

So passed the eleven years of my stay in Russia. My only anxieties and griefs were the fate of my family, my mother, and my son Abdullah, who were prisoners. After two years of my stay in Samarkand, the friendship of the Afghans and the Russians grew stronger and stronger, and the communication between Shere Ali and the Government became more frequent. I discovered that Mahomed Alam Khan, Governor of Balkh, was in the habit of sending envoys to Amir Muzaffar, King of Bokhara, who forwarded these letters to General Abramoff and the Viceroy of Tashkend. The Russians would reply to the letters through the same medium until the matter became publicly known and published in the newspapers, but as my readers will know all this, I will return to my own story.

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On my first arrival in Samarkand, I had married the daughter of the King and Mir of Badakshan, and in the second year the Almighty gave me a son, whom I named Habibullah (Beloved of God). He is now my eldest son and heir-apparent. Two years after his birth God gave me another son, whom I named Nasrullah (Victory of God), and in due course two more were born, and one daughter, who died when only a few years old.

After a few years of my stay in Samarkand, the Russian Government sent their troops towards Shahr-i-Sabz, and the General told me that I had better go too with my followers. To this I replied that in the beginning I had told the Viceroy and himself that I would not accept any service under the Russian Government, but if they wished, I undertook to persuade and bring the Mirs of Shahr-i-Sabz to their salaams, so that they should accept their terms. General Abramoff replied it was too late to do this, as the proclamation or ultimatum of war had been issued. I thereupon pointed out that it was out of the question for me to join their force, also, that if the people of Samarkand rebelled, my 300 followers had no arms, and I should like 300 guns to be given us, with cartridges for their use in time of necessity. These he promised, and the officers in charge of the magazine carried out the order. They all marched against Shahr-i-Sabz two days later and seized the city, writing also to the King of Bokhara to send his army *via* Karki to frighten the inhabitants. The Russian army attacked the fort of Shahr-i-Sabz four times, but could not conquer it, and General Abramoff was

wounded by a bullet, although not seriously. Out of the 5000 Russian soldiers who made the attack, 2000 were killed and wounded. They then sent a messenger to the people of Shahr-i-Sabz proposing an armistice of six days, saying that a great power like Russia would not break their oath and promise. The inhabitants of the city agreed, being deceived by the great power, and of the 12,000 gunners in the fort, 1000 went towards the hills to bring their families and children from where the army of the King of Bokhara was marching upon them. The Russian army, finding the fort deprived of its strength, suddenly attacked it at midnight three days later, and although the 1000 men left in it tried hard to repulse them, the fort was taken, and the Mirs of Shahr-i-Sabz fled with 300 sowars by the mountains towards Kokand. The Russian General, after giving the city into the charge of the King of Bokhara's officials, returned to Samarkand with his army.

The day following General Abramoff's return, I went to make enquiries after his health. His wound was only a slight one, and he offered me a gold snuff-box, a double-barrelled gun, and one large telescope from the plunder obtained from Shahr-i-Sabz. I told him that according to our religion I could not accept the plunder of Muslims. I was indignant at the breach of faith of the Russians, and soon took leave of their General. The deceived Mirs on arriving at Kokand were taken prisoners by the Khan of the town, named Khudayar, who sent them to the Viceroy at Tashkend, keeping their servants and property himself. These Mirs were kept in confinement for eighteen months, after which they were released, and a fixed

salary was given them. Mir Baba Beg and Mir Sora Beg with their brothers and a few followers were still state prisoners in Tashkend in 1888, their wives and families having been sent to them by the King of Bokhara.

Two years later the Russian army prepared to fight against Urgunj, and the Governor of Tashkend himself arrived with the army in Jazak, and invited me to go to meet him there, as he was going by the road of the sandy desert of Nur Ata. I drove to Jazak, arriving after two days. The Governor received me very warmly as usual, saying he was pleased to meet me. He enquired if I and my followers would go with him to Urgunj, for which journey he would make all necessary preparations. I replied, that it would take a month to make arrangements for my followers to start with him, and he was only to stay there four days; besides their quarrel was with Muslims, and as we were of the same faith, our religion forbade our fighting against the true believers. I mentioned also that I was a person without army or power, and my going would not add prestige to the Russian army, nor would my staying away reduce its strength. To this the Viceroy said he was only thinking of my own pleasure, and that my going with him was not compulsory. I answered that I was quite happy under the protection of his Government, and my pleasure lay in hunting and shooting, as I had taken a dislike to war after my long experience of it. I said this as a joke, laughing. He told me he had ordered me two Turki tents near him, for which I expressed my thanks. They were pitched some thirty paces from

that of the Czar's cousin, and forty from his Viceroy's.

The Governor was in the habit of coming five or six times daily to see me, and we passed twenty days in this way. One day he sent for me and told me the army was on the point of marching to Afghanistan, and enquired if I would go too. I replied, if they intended taking Afghanistan themselves, what was the use of my going? but if they wished to give it back to me, they had only to give me orders, and I would guarantee to retake my country, only employing 1000 infantry, 1000 cavalry, and one battery. I promised to pray for them, saying I was far happier hunting and shooting at Samarkand. I did not really believe they were going to Afghanistan with a few hundred men; they knew the Afghans were warriors, and not like the Urganj people, therefore, I was sure they had other objects in view.

Nothing was done until autumn came, which found them still discussing the advisability of sending an army to Kabul, but meantime a serious plague broke out in the Russian Army. The soldiers left the cantonment in fear, and 600 carriages were full of the sick and dying, who were taken to a place set apart for them. When the Viceroy took leave and started for Tashkend, I reminded him of my prophecy, and said: "You see you did not go to Afghanistan after all your preparations." He agreed that I had been right.

At the end of the winter and beginning of spring, it was proclaimed that Amir Shere Ali had turned against the English, and that the friendship between

him and the Russian Government was increasing daily. A little later the Muslims and priests of the Kokand people rebelled.

What happened was as follows, and it is an interesting story. About 50 priests and 200 chiefs had promised on certain conditions to help the Russian Government against the people of their own religion. I do not know the nature of these conditions. These chiefs and priests disguised a shoemaker, giving him the name of Tolad Khan, who was the cousin of Khudayar Khan, the King of Kokand. The Russians had heard of Tolad Khan, son of Musa Khan, the late King of their country, but had never seen him. The dishonest priests wrote to the Kokand people that Khudayar Khan intended to hand over the country of Kokand to the Russians, and it was the duty of all the Muslims to dethrone him, and to acknowledge his cousin Tolad Khan their King, as they had done. The ignorant people rallied around this Tolad Khan and dethroned Khudayar Khan, after which the Russians took the country, giving nothing to the priests and chiefs, according to their promises. Tolad, their impostor King, received no reward either, and many of the chiefs were taken prisoners and killed, while the Russians took Kokand and built a new city there, called Shahr-i-Sim, which is a very beautiful town, and still remains in their possession.

I must now return to Shere Ali. After a long communication, he was convinced of the firm friendship of the Russian Government, and entered into hostilities with the officials of the British Government, turning his face from Her Gracious Majesty, the Queen,

to that of His Majesty, the Emperor of Russia. He had not sufficient sense to understand that property which is not saleable in one market was of no value in the other. In other words, "What you do to your enemies you will do to your friends." He lost his credit by being faithless and untrue to one side, and promised things which no sensible Government could believe, viz.: that he would allow them to make roads through Afghanistan towards India, that he would ensure the safety of their telegraph wires, and would allow them to build railways towards India, and would join them in fighting against the English. In return for these concessions, the Russian Government had promised that the country adjoining the Indus, and which formerly belonged to Afghanistan, and is the hereditary property of Afghan Kings, being part of their country, should be taken and returned to Shere Ali. The Russian Cossacks were rejoiced that they were going to be led towards India, and their rejoicings were great at the prospect of plunder. Their calculations were upset, however, by the English and Shere Ali meeting in the Khyber Pass and at the mountain of Shutar Gardan, called Peiwar Kotal. The Amir could not stand against them, his army being untrained; and the Amir fled to Balkh, to which place he had sent his family some weeks before. He released his son Yakub from prison, and left him as ruler of Kabul. The English army arrived at Gandamak, and opened communication with Yakub from Jellalabad, who gave them Shalkot (Quetta), Khyber, Kuram, and Pishin. He also accepted one of the English officials, called Louis Cavaguari, as a British

Ambassador at Kabul. Meanwhile Shere Ali on his way to Balkh talked like a lunatic. He said the Afghans did not assist him against the English, and he would go to Russia, and bring back the Cossacks to his aid, and would give them as rewards the wives of the Afghans. However, he died in Balkh very soon afterwards,¹ and the chiefs at Kabul acknowledged Yakub Amir, although the army and subjects were not willing to submit to his rule. I have heard that the British Envoy looked upon himself as Ruler of Afghanistan, and dictated to Yakub what he should do. This boasting was disliked by the Afghan people, and they attacked him. Some say it was with the knowledge of Yakub, and the other version is that the mother of Abdullah Jan (the heir-apparent) had given 3000 sovereigns to Daoud Shah Khan to incite the people to rebel against the presence of Cavagnari, and to kill him, so that Yakub should lose his kingdom. This last account is credited by the Afghans at Kabul.

Daoud Shah Khan was at that time Commander-in-Chief, and belonged to one of the lowest classes of the Ghilzai tribe. When he was a boy, he was employed as a shepherd at a place called Deh-i-Sabz, and it was not until after he was twenty that he came to be employed at Kabul. The village of Deh-i-Sabz (green village) is a suburb of Kabul, well known for growing the best crop of melons. In consequence of the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari,² the British army, under Lord Roberts, marched against Kabul, to make enquiries into the matter, and to revenge

¹ February 1879.

² September 3, 1879.

the breach of faith committed by a cowardly and dishonest people. Yakub Khan came to receive them, but the British officers, seeing through his hypocrisy, took him prisoner, and sent him to India.¹ They took possession of Kabul and Kandahar, and ruled there with justice and peace.

Before Shere Ali fell ill and died, he sent representatives to the Governor of Russia. Their names were as follows:—Sirdar Shere Ali Khan Kandahari, Kazi Peshawri, Mufti Shah, Mahomed Munshi, Mahomed Hassan, with a few personal servants of the late Dost, and two or three military officers. These men arrived at Samarkand, while Shere Ali remained in Balkh, expecting the Russian army to be sent to his aid. The Russian Governor expected to see Shere Ali himself, and had decorated some very fine gardens for his reception. While they were waiting for him and making different plots against the English, Shere Ali died, as before mentioned, thus upsetting their plans. I went to Tashkend to obtain information about coming events, and Yakub wrote to the Russian Viceroy, saying he intended to carry out his father's promises and agreements with them to the letter. The Viceroy was very pleased to receive this assurance of friendship, and forwarded the letter to Petersburg. Yakub also said he was anxious about Abdur Rahman's existence, and would be glad if they would remove him from Samarkand. At this time I noticed that the feelings of the Russians were not so friendly towards me, but I pretended not to notice any difference in their manner to me, acting as though

¹ December 1879.

I was trying to pass my time in amusements all day. When I reached Tashkend, Shere Ali's officers were already there, and I appointed private spies to give me all information of their doings. From these spies I heard that they had entered into an agreement with the Viceroy for each one to carry out certain conditions, in return (I imagine) for the help of the Russian army. The conditions were as follows:—Sirdar Shere Ali was to submit the province of Kandahar to them. The Munshi was to submit the Kasil Bashis of Kabul, together with that of Hazarajat. The Mufti was to submit all the Ghilzais. The Kazi agreed to submit the Peshawar, Swat, and Bajaur Tribes. After receiving this information I left Tashkend and returned to Samarkand, and the representatives of Shere Ali went there also.

Now I must tell of my cousins, for whom I had provided since my stay in Samarkand. They were three in number, named Mahomed Sarwar Khan, Sirdar Aziz, and Sirdar Hassan. On the arrival of the above-mentioned envoys, Sirdar Sarwar wrote a letter addressed to Shere Ali Kandahari on my behalf. He asked for my seal. I refused to give it him, saying I did not wish to invite Shere Ali Kandahari to see me, as he and his companions had entered into treaties with the Russians against me. Upon this Sarwar told me that Shere Ali had made an oath on the Koran with him. I laughed, and said: "These men do not care for the Koran, why should they care for oaths upon it?" I argued in this way for some time, but the Sirdar insisted on my sealing the letter. I was very angry, and threw my seal towards the Sirdar,

saying I would not seal the letter with my hands, and would have nothing to do with the traitors. The Sirdar attached my seal and sent the letter to Shere Ali Kandahari. I assured him he had made a mistake, and would one day regret it. One of my followers named "Ghazi" Jan Mahomed, a very irreligious and dishonest man (although named a Ghazi), had grown a beard to deceive people into thinking him a grey-haired honest man, but his heart was as black as charcoal. This man was sent with the letter to Sirdar Shere Ali, who on reading it despatched it to the General of Samarkand, who in turn forwarded it to Kaufmann, the Viceroy.

When five days had elapsed, and the Ghazi had not returned, I told Sarwar he had ruined me, that notwithstanding my refusal he had insisted on adding my seal to the letter. On the 6th day, while we were out riding, a servant came galloping after us with the news that the Governor of the city, with the interpreter of General Ivanoff, were waiting for me at my house. I turned to Sarwar, and said: "This is the fruit of the seed sown by you." I returned, but Sarwar delayed doing so. After polite enquiries and taking tea, the Governor told me the Viceroy wished to see me at Tashkend. I said I would start to-morrow at ten o'clock, but the Governor said I must go at once. I refused definitely, and he left me. I thereupon sent for my cousins, and gave them instructions what to do in my absence. I told them I expected to be made a prisoner and sent to Tashkend, and exhorted them to escape to Balkh, in order to reach Turkestan. They must communicate with the army

and subjects of Balkh. I gave them letters addressed to people there, in which I stated that I had sent my cousins to their country, and should appreciate any service done to them as if it had been done to me. I gave them an extra seal, in case it should be necessary to write any more letters on my behalf. I also gave them 4000 Kabuli rupees for their expenses on the journey. This I had saved from the 15,000 "sums" the Viceroy had given me two months before. This sum is equal to 5000 Indian rupees. After delivering these instructions I went to my harem.

At twelve o'clock the same night the Governor came with the interpreter, 300 cavalry sowars, and 200 policemen, and ordered my servants to bring me out of my harem. They awoke me and delivered the message. The Governor said I must go with him, as the Viceroy required my presence. I replied: "Had I known I should be taken as a prisoner, I would have gone with him that morning." I put on my uniform and started. The sowars surrounded me with naked swords, and the police constable preceded us. I had taken two servants with me, one named Faramurz Khan, now Commander-in-Chief of Herat, the other named Jan Mahomed Khan, now Lord of the Treasury at Kabul. On our arrival at General Ivanoff's quarters, I enquired why I had been sent for, and he answered: "General Kaufmann has ordered you to go to Tashkend, and he will acquaint you with his reasons." On seeing General Ivanoff, I asked him what crime I had committed that I had been fetched by armed sowars in the middle of the night. He demanded of the Governor why I had been treated so badly,

to which the Governor replied, he was obliged to take this large escort, in case my followers had resisted and refused to let me go. As a proof of the truth of this, he said they were armed to the teeth, and if I had not gone willingly with him, it would have been difficult to take me by force. The General said it was folly to bring me away as a prisoner, and he answered it was foolish of the General to send him at such a time. While they were blaming one another I listened quietly, till at last the General said I could return home, if I said I would come to him at eleven the next morning, when he would send a deputy and a carriage to escort me to Tashkend. So I returned to my house, and found the door of the garden locked. On ordering my servants to open it I found my cousins, with their friends, already asleep, and quite regardless of what might happen to me. My sons, my wife, as well as Parwana, who is now Deputy Commander-in-Chief at Kabul, and Kurban Ali, my present household treasurer, were awake, weeping for my fate. I was disappointed and heart-broken at seeing my cousins and all my servants asleep. I had brought these men up like my children, and this was my reward. Entering my harem, I comforted my wife and my sons, and gave them instructions what to do in the event of anything happening to me. I then made preparations for my journey.

Next morning, on the arrival of the promised carriage, I started, taking with me Parwana Khan, and Nazim-ud-Din (afterwards a Cavalry Colonel), and on reaching the house of the Deputy, I found them writing letters, and so I told them I had

not slept at all, and would now take the advantage of the delay, and sleep if he would allow me to do so. He gave me permission, and I tried to sleep, but being unhappy, was unable to forget my troubles longer than two and a half hours, after which we started. My carriage passed the door of Shere Ali Kandahari, to show him I was a prisoner. The whole world was dark in my eyes from anger and grief, and I thought to get down from my carriage and kill some of my enemies before I myself was killed, but recovering my senses, I argued with myself that such impulses belonged to idiots, that the wise wait for proper occasions to revenge themselves. I told myself that the world was full of troubles and difficulties. I was nearly motionless for two hours, after which I regained my senses and recovered my peace of mind. We were travelling for two days and one night, when we reached Tashkend. I was given the same bungalow as before, a very nice house, which had cost 100,000 roubles to build. Attached to it was a nice garden, and stabling for carriages and 30 horses. I was accustomed to stay in this house four times a year when I went to see the city for pleasure. I was there for a different purpose now, and I wondered what would become of me. When the bearers and cook appeared as usual, the interpreter and secretary took leave. I heard nothing from the officials for two or three days, at the end of which the secretary drove to my house, and, after the customary politeness, he told me the Governor wished to see me, so we drove together, and I was received as warmly as usual.

The Governor made me sit near him and enquired

about my journey. I told him I did not know how I had travelled. He laughed, and said: "The Samarkand people say you have become naughty." I replied that it was to the credit of his Government that I had been made so. At this he pulled out a letter and asked me what it was. I said: "Give it me," and I saw it was the letter which Sarwar had sent to Shere Ali Kandahari. I said: "Though it is not in my hand I have sealed it." He asked me why I had done so. I replied if there was anything against his Government in the letter I was to be blamed, but why should I not have some private communications of my own. He agreed, but said I ought to have asked permission before I wrote the letter. I replied that he was so far off, that before I could have obtained his permission, the Afghan Mission would have returned to Balkh. On saying this I tore the letter in half. He looked at me, and then said: "Go to Samarkand, your family is unhappy about you." I said I had been disgraced in Samarkand by being taken prisoner, and I would not return on any account, but if he would give me a house there, I would settle down in Tashkend. The Viceroy answered I could choose which house I preferred. My object in this was to be at a more convenient point for entering Afghanistan, so that when the opportunity occurred I could escape. I selected a house, and after passing one night there, I went to Samarkand to fetch my family, with whom I returned and settled down.

I was very much occupied making my preparations for my journey to Afghanistan, and after many discussions with General Kaufmann I obtained leave

from the Russian Government to start for my country. One day I disappeared quite suddenly to go and stay with some merchants who had promised me money, and also with the object of finding if I was followed by detectives. I borrowed 2000 sovereigns from the merchants, and returned, rejoicing to find that I was unobserved. On arriving at my home I found all my servants searching for me in despair. Sirdar Abdullah Khan was standing at the door of my house looking most depressed. On my calling to him, he salaamed me, and expressed his pleasure at my return. Leaving the money in his charge, I entered the house. He followed me, asking where I had obtained the sovereigns. I explained that I had borrowed them, but cautioned him to say nothing about it, in fear we should get into trouble. The next morning I hired a carriage and went to the horse-market. The people salaamed, and the horse-dealers, on hearing what I wanted, came to me. From them I bought 100 good horses. I sent Abdullah to buy saddles, harnesses, and other necessaries for my journey and for my soldiers and followers. In this way I made preparations for my journey in three days. The fourth day being Friday, I started on my journey after prayers, wishing all my friends and acquaintances good-bye. That night I halted on the banks of the Chilchic River.

Next morning, when I started, I was on the road to the new Russian city, where I saw a wonderful sign from God. I heard a soft noise of many horses behind me, to the number of about 20,000, and when they came nearer the noise got louder, until it seemed to me they joined my followers, and after riding with

them about 500 yards, went on ahead. By this I reasoned that God had cleared my road for me, and I should be successful in consequence. On arriving at a place near the river I halted, and the Governor of the town (a Russian) sent an invitation for me to dine with him. I at first refused, but on his insisting, I accepted. He asked me during dinner how much the Russians had allowed me for my expenses during the journey. I replied: "They have done me great kindness in allowing me to go back to my country. I did not require anything more of them. God is kind, and He will look after my requirements." On my saying this the Governor (an honorary Colonel) left the room, returning with 5000 "sums," of which he begged my acceptance. I thanked him gratefully, but refused, saying I was not in want of it. At last, finding I would not be persuaded, he brought one six-chambered revolver, and a breech-loader rifle, and asked me to accept them as a remembrance of him. I did so, and passed the evening happily with him. The next morning some friends who had accompanied me from Tashkend, and the Colonel, took leave of me, and I started for Yartepe. Late in the evening I reached this town, and rested there two days. From there I went to Paskit, halting three days, and on to a village called Jintak Li. The next day I arrived in the city of Khojend, where I stayed with a friend for six days.

After three days of my stay I went to the horse-market with the intention of buying horses, but finding only a few bad ones in the market, I enquired of the people where I could buy some good pack ponies. A

man standing by asked me to go with him to take some coffee or tea. I did so, and found he had been a chief of Khojend before the Russians had taken the country, and as all the important citizens had been deprived of their posts, the chiefs had been obliged to open shops and trade like merchants. My new friend fetched other chiefs, also shop-owners, to meet me, and comforted me by telling me they had very good horses. They soon sent for 100, out of which I bought thirty, and they gave many assurances of their friendly feelings towards me.

CHAPTER VI

IN BADAQSHAN

(1880)

AFTER remaining another three days in Khojend, I again started on my way. I intended going towards Kokand, but as I was told the passes were covered with heavy snow, I left the road, and started for Ura-Tepe.¹ I sent a messenger to the sons of Mir Jahandar Shah (who were at Kokand) with a messenger and 4000 rupees, saying that I was leaving for Ura-Tepe, but they must stay in Kokand until they heard again from me. It will be remembered that Mir Jahandar was my father-in-law. He had been sent out of the country by Shere Ali. His sons, to whom I was writing, had killed their father, and been imprisoned for doing so by the Russians, but released by me after three years, on my giving security for their good behaviour.

After my first day's march I reached Bimao. As it was dark and muddy, and I was a stranger, I called at a shop, and asked to be accepted as a visitor, saying I was one of the Islamic chiefs. They received me kindly, and each took two of my sowars to their houses, one of them taking possession of me. They expressed great sympathy with me, and the

¹ Called Pumbah Faroshi.

next morning gave us loaves of bread and other food for our journey. After marching two days I arrived at Ura-Tepe, where I took lodgings in a *sarai*. The Hindu inhabitants came to ask me to their houses, as being more suitable for me, and many merchants who had *sarais* also invited me. I apologised, asking to be excused, but they insisted, and I sent several of my officials in my stead. A friend of mine, also a merchant, hearing of my arrival, came to ask me to be his guest, and I was obliged to accept. I at once wrote to my cousins, instructing them to start for Balkh, and to follow the directions I had laid out for them when in Tashkend. I stayed at Ura-Tepe twelve days, buying khilats and other necessities, the merchants helping me a good deal.

I marched from there to the Auchi Pass, which leads through a mountain, and is the route any one would take coming from Samarkand. This pass is near to Hissar and Kolab, and it is impassable in winter owing to heavy snow. I followed this route to get to Badakshan, but I found the mountain like a hen's egg, being white with snow. Next day we reached its base. It was so high I was afraid we should never reach the top, but I put my trust in God, and we began the ascent. When near the top I found the cold intense, owing to a bitter wind which was blowing. The snow reached to our knees, and we allowed our horses to go in front, and held on to their tails to help us up. When we had climbed for three or four miles, my servants and followers were alarmed at the cold, and I cheered them on, but a few were badly frost-bitten. I

ordered my Muezzin (the priest who chants prayers) to call on the name of God; he had only done so about seven times, when, by the grace of God, the wind dropped, and the cold appeared to be much less severe. Thus God saved our lives owing to our faith. Both my shoulders felt as if they were dislocated by pulling myself up by the tail of my horse, but I was obliged to march on. Of the 100 followers who started with me, only myself and ten others reached the top. I was so tired I could not move my feet, therefore I descended by sitting on the snow and slipping down. Five of my followers arrived at the base before me, and when I also reached the base, I found about 300 inhabitants with wood, which they set alight to warm me; they also took me to their houses, and several volunteered to climb the mountain to fetch the rest of my men. It was sunrise when I reached the village, and on dismounting from my horse I was so tired that I fainted. The villagers put me to bed in a house which had been made warm, and I slept until sunset, when I awoke to find my joints aching severely, and I could only walk with difficulty. I found all my followers had been safely brought in, and I gave a sovereign to each villager, and five to each of their Maliks, with khilats, which pleased them greatly.

We remained ten days in this village, by which time all my men had recovered. I enquired if I could possibly get to Hissar, but on being told there were four more mountains, I decided to go to Samarkand instead. By this road there was only one mountain called Tilgar, but there were ten

difficult places to cross, viz.—Finwar, Pulkheshk, Varzimunar, Lak Lak, Paskhanda, Momin, Janat, etc. The people say about this latter place that there is a danger of falling into the pit of Pulsirat (a pass leading to Paradise, according to an old Eastern belief), the only difference being that there is fire on the former and ice on Janat. I passed these places with great difficulty and danger, resting two nights in the villages of Panjkand, thence to Kara Tarash and Maghian, resting there two days.

I carried with me a flag from the sacred tomb of the Saint Khwaja Ikrar, concerning which I had had a curious dream some years before; the Soul of the Khwaja had appeared to me, and said: "My dear son, take the highest flag of my tomb, and when you go to Afghanistan carry it with you, it will bring you victory and triumph." I had given the meat of two goats for the Soul of the Khwaja in the name of God, and said my prayers to him. Unfurling this flag, I started for Shahr-i-Sabz, arriving at a village called Joz, where the Governor received me. He had previously received a letter from the King of Bokhara, forbidding him to allow any one to sell me any provisions, as I had escaped from the Russian Government. The Governor welcomed me, saying his infidel King had sent these instructions, and he was obliged to keep away from me. I sent him word not to be anxious about me, God was my support. I found that none of the villagers would let us go near them, so I halted in a mosque, telling my followers to remain on the banks of the river. We removed snow from the ground; tied our

horses there, and climbed to the top of the mosque, whence we called loudly to the villagers: "If you will sell us provisions, O villagers, we shall be obliged, but if you will not, we shall be obliged to take them by force. If you are willing to fight, we are ready. You are Muslims, and so are we, therefore how much better it would be for us to remain friends, and buy provisions for ourselves and our horses." I then ordered my servants to enter the village, and the people brought out the Holy Koran, asking me not to plunder, and they would sell us all we wanted now that they had a good excuse to disobey the King's orders. They brought food for us, and told me they were well-wishers of my grandfather, Dost Mahomed, and were glad to do me service.

I passed that night comfortably with the chiefs, and the next day I started for Shahr-i-Sabz, the sacred tomb of Khwaja Am Khana, the Blessed Leader of the Faithful, being near this city. I halted there, and wrote to the King of Bokhara in this style:—

"I, Sirdar Abdur Rahman, write to my exalted uncle, saying I had entered this sacred place, and have the intention of marching to Afghanistan. If you will give me permission to do so, I will come and pay my respects to you, after which I will start for my country."

The next day he replied:—

"For God's sake do not come to me—I cannot see you."

At this, I thought to myself, his face was not worth seeing, being a supporter of the Russians. I started, intending at first to go to Shahr-i-Sabz, but I went instead to Yakobagh, thinking I had better pass the

base of the mountains. After marching about half my journey, we saw 2000 or 3000 cows grazing in the distance, and my followers thinking they were sowars sent by the King of Bokhara to fight against us, we turned our faces, and marched by another way towards the city, although it had not been my intention to enter it. After marching about four miles we saw the cattle coming towards us. The gates of the city were closed to prevent my entering. Some hundreds of my servants and courtiers who had been left in Samarkand had entered the service of the King of Bokhara, and he had thought that if I went to the city they would leave him and join me. For this reason he had written to me not to go there, but had told my followers he expected me shortly. In consequence they joined together and arranged a feast for me. Finding the main gates closed, I went to the other gate, where, luckily, I found a former servant, to whom I gave a letter addressed to those in the city, asking them to join me, as I was waiting for them to go to Afghanistan with me, but if they did not do so by late that afternoon, I would start towards Yartepe. The man took my letter to General Nazir, Kazi Jan Mahomed, and other chiefs, who took my messenger prisoner, and hid my letter from my other servants within the city. Consequently I waited for them in vain, and finally started for Yartepe, which was a long day's march, and which I reached by 3 A.M. I halted there for three days, and was joined by ten of my servants, who had escaped from Shahr-i-Sabz. They told me they had not seen my letter. At this I was disappointed with the cowardly action of my officials.

Three days later I started for a place called Kalta Minar. The King of Bokhara had sent 100 sowars after me to watch my movements, but when I reached this place at dusk, I perceived them on the bank of a river. I ordered my sowars to fire on them, with the result that ten or fifteen were killed or wounded, and the others fled. After this incident I considered it necessary to march forward at once, and though very cold I started immediately, and traversed three days' marches called Karah Khah, Chilik Shorab, and Bunda, arriving at this last-named place at bed-time the following night. The two last towns belong to Hissar. The next day I reached Baisun, and thence by way of Sari-asiya, Yurchi, and Regar, into Hissar. I heard that the King's son was in the city, but on becoming aware of my arrival he left the city for a place on the mountain called Karah Dagh. The only clean and nice place in Hissar was the Inn of the Drunkards and Smokers, and I halted there. As the King and his son had behaved very badly to me, and oppressed the poor of the country, I conceived the idea of taking their horses and those of the chiefs holding civil appointments in the city. With this object in view, I told Sirdar Abdullah Khan to tell them that he wished to say a few private words to them, at the same time, in order to convince them that their King was really friendly towards me, and only showed coldness as a matter of policy, because he was afraid of the Russians, and would incur suspicion if he appeared too friendly. The Sirdar wrote this letter to them, and I arranged to conceal myself behind a

curtain, and when they came to see him, he was to draw this aside and bow to me, and after explaining to them who I was, he must take their horses by the bridle, and offer them to me, saying: "As you are a Prince, these chiefs present their horses to you." This all happened as arranged, and by this ruse I took six of their horses and started for the Oxus, first writing to thank their King for the kindness and presents his chiefs had offered me, and saying I would receive him at Kabul in the event of his falling out with the Russian Government.

I passed one night in Hissar Shadman, the next in Tangi Kak, and proceeded by Kurgan Tepe, where I rested six days, to Khwaja Gulgun, where I had a bad attack of neuralgia, but God cured me in three days with medicine.

Here I learned on inquiry that Shahzadah Hassan (son of Mir Shah) and his uncles, Mir Yusif Ali and Mir Nasrullah, had divided the countries of Rustak, Kataghan, and Badakshan equally amongst them, the former ruling the province of Faizabad, the latter Rustak, and the last Kusham. I wrote to Shahzadah Hassan, sending the letter by a servant called Mir Alam, acquainting him of my arrival at Khwaja Gulgun. It will be remembered that this Mir was my father-in-law's brother.

After despatching this letter I started for Sujah Ab, a village on the Oxus, opposite Rustak. I reached this village after two days' march, and I crossed the river on the third day, entering the village of Rustak in the evening. Shahzadah Hassan did not receive my advances kindly, but took my messenger prisoner, and

wrote to me not to cross the Oxus, as they had vowed that if a piece of their land was touched by the feet of an Afghan, they would throw that piece of land out of the country as well as myself as being impure. This letter reached me in the above-mentioned village. I replied as follows :—

O idiot, O ungrateful coward, I brought you and your brothers up for many years, and I related myself to your cowardly family, believing you would do some service for me in the time of necessity. I have now discovered my mistake, and learned your true character. If I had feared death I should not have come so far. To-morrow will decide which of us is the stronger, O coward.”

That same night the Shahzadah appointed 1000 sowars to guard the river to prevent my crossing. When it was quite dark twenty of my guard fired across at them, and they, thinking we were a large body of men about to attack them, fled, and six of them were taken prisoners. I had only 100 sowars to fight and ten to carry flags, etc., and we had to face 12,000 enemies the next day. I knew that no courage, however great, could succeed against such a number, but as I had given my life for the service of God, and knew all those verses of the Koran which promise rewards to those who sacrifice themselves for the suffering, to me 10,000 were the same as 1,000,000. The love of God was in my heart, and I was fighting for that love, and was happy to think that on the morrow I would die in His service. I knew that if I escaped this time, the people of Badakshan and Kataghan would kill me, and if I escaped them, I had to face the English army, so, considering all these dangers, I

had little hope of living. If the Almighty wishes to protect a humble person, he need not fear the whole world. My heart was so strong that if I had had to face the army of the whole world, they would appear as insects under my feet. I say this in the name of God. This is not bravery, but simply a feeling which He has given me. I distinctly want to tell all true believers what happened to me. This is the experience of my life, that if they have true hearts in the service of God, He will ensure their success. The result of my belief is, that I am a King to-day.

The next morning, putting my trust in God, I started to face the army of Shahzadah Hassan. After twelve miles' march, I saw the enemy, 12,000 strong with twelve flags in their midst, coming towards me. When we arrived about the distance of a mile apart, I saw to my astonishment that the enemy began to disperse gradually in different directions, as if under the influence of an evil spirit. I could not understand what had happened. In the meantime, a body of sowars belonging to the Mir of Badakshan, the cousin of Shahzadah Hassan, was approaching from another direction praising God. I told my sowars to remain where they were, and I marched on with a few chiefs, to find out the intention of the sowars. On reaching them they told me they had come to salaam Abdur Rahman. I answered them that if they submitted to his rule, they must approach him only in small bodies at a time. They selected a few chiefs and returned with me, upon which I told them that I was Sirdar Abdur Rahman. They were surprised and saluted me,

asking if I wished them to follow and kill the army of Shahzadah Hassan. I returned that I had not come to kill Muslims, but for the religious war. I assured them that if those flying sowars would become friends, I would take them all with me to fight against the English.

I entered Rustak, and took up my residence in the fort of the Mir, outside the city, and from there the chiefs came to visit me with presents and friendly assurances. I gave them khilats, and they became faithful subjects. A wise man will understand how I conquered the hearts of these 20,000 men in one day, because the hearts of men are in the hands of God, who turned them that day towards me.

The people and chiefs made themselves into a Jirga, and brought me presents. I ordered them to accumulate 2000 sowars and 1000 militia in a few days, and to send them to Faizabad, under the command of Mir Baba Jan. This command they accordingly carried out, and the detachment departed with the messenger who had acted for me, and who had been imprisoned by Shahzadah Hassan. He now carried a letter in which I had written :

“O Muslims, I am not come to fight Afghans who are true believers, but to make Ghaza. Therefore it is necessary that you should all obey my commands, which are those of God and His prophets. We are all God’s slaves, but Ghaza is a duty of us all.”

I signed this letter “A Muslim,” and trusted they would act as my friends. This letter was addressed to the people. I also wrote one to the chiefs and Mirs,

which I entrusted to Mir Baba. The contents were as follows:—

“Mir Shahzadah Hassan, chiefs and subjects of Faiza, I inform you that I have come to release the country of Faiza from the hands of the English. If I succeed in doing so peacefully, well and good, otherwise we shall have to fight. You are all Mirs, and should not let the country of true believers fall into the hands of the Feringis. If they gain our country, our reputation will go too, and the people of the world will think the Mirs had no shame or pride, and through the fault of disunion, had lost their country and their faith. Hearken to my advice, O Mirs. If you will not listen, it is plainly my duty to make Ghaza against you also, as infidels. Make up your mind either to be supporters of God and Mahomet, or to be prepared for war.”

The chiefs and people on reading my letters went to their Mir, saying they felt it right to submit themselves to me, and so save their country from falling into the hands of the infidels, but their Mir replied that he was a friend of the Sikhs of Kashmir, and would rather go there than submit to a Muslim. To this the chiefs replied, if they had known he was a follower of the Hindus they would never have had him for their Mir, and he had better go to Kashmir as soon as possible. So the idiot Mir went to Kashmir, *via* Chitral and Ladak, with his children and family, but he died soon after, leaving his family without support. The people, on the other hand, submitted to my rule.

A few days after this I wrote to Mir Sultan Murad, Mir of Kataghan, saying I had come to release the country of Afghanistan from the hands of the English, and asking him if he would allow me to pass through

their country, and also help me with money or men. They replied as follows :—

“We have no power to fight or to offend the English, therefore we cannot let you pass through our country.”

I replied to this, that by his resolution he joined hands with the infidels, and I should bring Ghaza also against him, but I could not make him change his mind, so I wrote about 1000 small letters addressed to the army of Balkh as follows :—

“You people of Afghanistan, I inform you that I am on my way to Rustak, but your Mir, Sultan Murad, will not allow you to meet me when I come.”

These leaflets I sent by a man disguised as a beggar, telling him to throw them into the mosques, streets, and cantonments; the people would then find them, and would look after Mir Sultan for me.

Now I must return to affairs in Badakshan. As I have before mentioned, I gave my cousins Sirdar Sarwar and Sirdar Ishak their travelling expenses, with 60 breech-loaders and 12,000 cartridges, also letters addressed to the Turkoman people. I instructed them to leave Samarkand for Turkestan.

I must mention there was a certain man called Ghulam Haidar, of the Wardak tribe, who had risen to the post of Colonel in Shere Ali's time, and had held this post when Yakub became Amir. When Yakub introduced Sir Louis Cavagnari to Kabul as English Resident, he appointed Ghulam Haidar Governor-General and Viceroy of Balkh. This Ghulam in his new capacity appointed one Kadir Khan (of the Kazil-

bashi tribe) to be Governor of Shibarghan, and one Ghulam Muhazadin Nassari as Governor of Saripul, also Mahomed Sarwar as Governor of Akcha. Now when my cousins Sarwar, Ishak, and Abdullah Kudus, arrived in Turkestan, Ghulam Haidar sent 2000 or 3000 sowars (of the tribe of Kazil-bashi) without giving information to the people quietly to take them prisoners. My cousins heard of this in time, and being unable to fight, left the Balkh road and went towards Shibarghan, whence they communicated with the Governor, who was also a Kazil-bashi. It is possible the Governor gave them some hope of help, for when they arrived in Shibarghan it was late and dark, and Sarwar announced his intention of going into the city to see the Governor. His brothers all dissuaded him from such an unwise step, but he preferred to follow the advice of a servant called Sharbad of Khost, saying they must let him go to the fort or he would shoot at them, so he and his servant went alone to the fort. Arriving at the city gate they knocked, and in answer to enquiries, announced that they had a letter from General Ghulam Haidar to the Governor of the city. They were at once admitted, but Sarwar was recognised by the guard, who asked him his real object in entering the city. On his explaining, the guard told him to go away, or he would be taken prisoner by the Governor, but if he would return the next day with his sowars, he and the people would submit to him. Knowing that Abdur Rahman had taken Badakshan, Sarwar refused to listen to all this, saying the Governor had invited him, and would kiss his hands and feet, and submit to him. In short, directly he came before the

Governor his hands and feet were tied, and he was sent under the guard of a colonel and his sowars quietly towards Ghulam Haidar at Mazar, by the road of Dasht Arzana. They reached Dehdadi with their unfortunate prisoner at daybreak, sending a messenger on to Ghulam Haidar with their news. This General consulted with his Chiefs and advisers, and came to the conclusion that it would be wisest to put Sarwar out of existence at once, for fear of a rising among the hill tribes and Usbeks, should they hear of his arrival in Shibarghan. In consequence of this decision, Ghulam Haidar appointed his Wazir named Razwarn, and a courtier named Ghulam Muhazadin, to kill the Sirdar. They carried out their orders, and buried the body of Sarwar under a wall at Dehdadi, carrying his head to Ghulam Haidar, in proof of their obedience.

In the meantime, Abdullah Kudus and Ishak, hearing nothing more of their brother, went to Maimana. The Wali of this town, who was named Dilawar Khan, instructed the Turkoman subjects to take them prisoners and send them to him. The people refused to do this, saying they were the cousins of Abdur Rahman, and they would serve him to the death, and the 2000 houses joined the Sirdar's. But the Governor being anxious to imprison them (Abdullah and Ishak), sent them under pretence to Herat, where Mahomed Ayub was staying, who also tried to secure their imprisonment. Ghulam Haidar, on receiving the head of Sarwar, wrote to Sultan Murad, informing him that the army had put Sarwar to death, and he hoped he would do the same to Abdur Rahman, or also send him to him as a prisoner, but Sultan Murad replied that

Abdur Rahman was out of his reach, being in Badakshan.

It will be remembered that I had sent Mir Baba to Faizabad. After a few days I wrote to him with instructions to return to Rustak with the army, so that by joining the two armies I might make Ghaza against the Mirs of Kataghan, who did not desire the Muslims to make any progress in the world. Mir Baba wrote to me, saying he thought I had better go to Faizabad and show myself to all the people there, and start for Kataghan after doing so. Consequently I at once set out, taking with me Mir Mahomed Omar (whom I had appointed a Governor at Rustak), some chiefs, and 2000 sowars. On our arrival at a place called Argu we rested, and that night my tea supplier awoke me, saying that a half-naked man, who had the appearance of an idiot, demanded admittance to me. I sent for this man, who gave me a letter which ran as follows :—

“I, the writer of this letter, am an Afghan merchant, and have heard that Mir Baba Khan has consulted with a few chiefs of Badakshan and his secretary Dabir, to take you prisoner and send you to the English. This will leave the rule of Badakshan to their family in future. For God's sake, do not come to Faizabad.”

I was most restless, thinking of various plans all night, and in the morning I sent for Mahomed Omar, with the other chiefs of Rustak, asking their advice. They read the letter, and answered, that Mir Baba was an ungrateful coward, and there was no doubt the merchant was right and his tale probably true. Mahomed Omar said he had always been an enemy of

Mir Baba, and therefore would not go to Faizabad. I answered if he liked to return he could do so, but that I would continue my way, not being afraid of the Mir. So I gave him leave to take his sowars to keep Rustak safe from attack, and they started. I also sent Abdullah to watch his movements and report to me. Placing my confidence in God, I continued my way. After going on a few miles we arrived at a hill called Razgan, when we perceived 6000 sowars coming towards us headed by Mir Baba. I ordered my sowars to stop, and said I would go ahead, and if they noticed that the sowars were unfriendly towards me, they were to fire. I then galloped on, and finding I was received warmly, I signalled to my sowars to join us. I talked to the Faizabad sowars, and said I had heard they were famous horsemen, and should much like to see them running races. At this they began racing, and I told my followers in Pushto to surround the Mir. In this way we marched, the Mir in our midst, until we reached Faizabad, when I ordered my followers to take possession of the fort, and I kept thirty sowars at the gate as guard.

After three days Mir Baba received a letter from Ghulam Haidar, asking why I had not been sent as a prisoner to him. At the same time another letter came from the King of Bokhara, with khilats and four horses with gold harnesses. He said that General Ghulam Haidar was a well-wisher of his, and had promised this country to the King, therefore he (Mir Baba) ought immediately to imprison me. He was also told I had fled from Russia, therefore, any one who killed me would not suffer punishment. Mir Baba, who did not believe in God, but only

in rich people and their wealth, began inciting the people of Badakshan against me. One day he came to me and proposed a shooting expedition, as there were so many partridges about. I agreed, but asked when the army would be ready to return, as arranged. To this he answered, that I ought to give him 20,000 sovereigns with which to bribe the people, but I explained I was keeping my money for expenses to fight against the English, and did not require sowars to be bribed into my service, having already 10,000 Kataghanis and 10,000 Rustakis, and expecting hundreds of thousands of Afghans to join me directly I reached Kabul. As a fact, the boxes which the idiot Mir thought were full of gold contained cartridges, and I had only 1000 sovereigns in the world. On our arranging a shooting expedition, I was warned by several Badakshanis that the Mir meant treacherously by me, as he had arranged with his secretary and chiefs to take me prisoner and kill me the next day. Hearing this, I ordered thirty of my followers to go shooting with me, and instructed them to watch Mir Baba, and be prepared to fire, but not to do so until I pointed my rifle towards the Mir. After giving these instructions, I joined Mir Baba, and we started for the mountains. I found on arriving at the base that we were joined by 500 armed sowars. The Mir's footmen were also armed as for a war. Finding there were no partridges, I said to Mir Baba on my left, that I had heard when I left Badakshan he had intended taking me prisoner and sending me to the English as a service to them; if this were true, he could not find a better opportunity of doing so than the present moment. I then turned my rifle at the chest of

Mir Baba and twenty of my followers turned theirs towards his companions. They were frightened at this, and cried out: "Do not kill us. We do not care for our Mir, you appointed him over us." Satisfied by their attitude towards Mir Baba, I did nothing further, but we started to return. Three days later I sent Ashan Aziz, a chief of Rustak, to invite Mir Baba to spend a pleasant evening with me. He came, with 300 armed men, but my guards would not allow them to pass, saying it was neither necessary or reasonable, but that he could take thirty inside with him. The Mir was so angry that he began cursing the nation of the Afghans, and ordered his sowars to take the fort by force, and his bugler to sound the signal for them to fire. They carried the first gate by storm, and my guards hastening back locked the inner gate, and a servant came running to tell me we were ruined.

I was sitting wearing a loose robe and a jacket, but I carried a seven-chambered revolver in my pocket. I got up, and started with my men to the gate, where I perceived 5000 armed men outside. I told my servants it would be impossible to fight against so many, so I would go out and mingle with the crowd in order not to be noticed, and if I got hold of the Mir's neck before being recognised, we were safe, but if I was killed I would leave them under God's protection, and they could fight or not as they chose. I then went out of the gate, hiding my revolver under the sleeve of my overcoat.

By great good luck I passed through all the men unnoticed, and came near the Mir, and seizing his neck from behind, I placed my revolver against his temple.

I said : " Hold now, this is the same Afghan you were cursing. Throw down your sword, or I will shoot." Mir Baba cried out, and implored me to remove my revolver, saying he would then throw his sword down, but I only twisted his neck tighter, until at last he threw his sword on the ground. I then said : " Order your men to come out of the fort." This he also did, and I told my men in Pushto to take possession of the outer gate also. I said to the Mir : " I invited you as a friend under my roof, why have you behaved so treacherously?" And then, turning to the people of Badakshan, I said : " Are you going to fight for me, or for this coward, who cannot move his hands ?" And the people, seeing their Mir at the point of death, said : " For you." Upon which I ordered them to return to their homes. When they had obeyed my instructions, I took the Mir with ten sowars to his house, and ordered his wife and family to give me a dinner there. The next morning I returned to the fort, and took a long rest, thanking God for my safety.

I must mention that Mir Baba and Mir Omar were at enmity with each other, and I made great efforts to reconcile these two Mirs in friendship. I at last succeeded, and Mir Omar came to Faizabad with 4000 sowars, halting outside the city at a place called Jozun. I received a letter, saying they intended giving khilats to each other as a proof of their newly-made friendship, and they asked me to join the ceremony. I accepted, and sat between the Mirs, and in front was a large lump of sugar and trays of sweet-meats. When the Mirs had thrown khilats on each other, after making vows of friendship, Mir Baba said to me sarcastically : " Now that we two brothers have

joined hands, we can divide the big piece of sugar." I knew when he spoke like that, that his remarks were meant for me, and I said: "You will find it very difficult," and ordered the piece of sugar to be removed. A few hours after this I left them, but I was anxious in case they were concocting more treachery against me, and every day I urged a start, and as often they made excuses.

About this time the leaflets which I had had distributed broadcast in Balkh got into the hands of the military authorities, who intimated to Ghulam Haidar that they were anxious to make Ghaza against Mir Sultan Murad, as he was a friend of the English. Ghulam Haidar thought this a good excuse for taking Mir Sultan's country, and, moreover, he supposed that, as I was near by, I should be frightened lest the army was coming against me, which would probably result in my being taken prisoner by the people of Badakshan. He accordingly sent his nephew with 5 battalions and 1200 sowars, with 5 batteries of artillery to fight against Sultan Murad. On the arrival of this force in Tashkurghan the sowars began to say among themselves that they would punish the Mir for not allowing Abdur Rahman to make Jihad with them. Sultan Murad receiving information on this point, wrote to Mir Baba and Mahomed Omar not to keep me any longer, or the army would revenge itself on them as well as on him. This letter was sent without my knowledge, and I also received one in which he asked me to come to Kataghan, as he was anxious to give me a warm reception. Knowing nothing about the first letter, I was most surprised to receive the second one,

and said, as Mir Sultan had first objected to my coming to him, "Why has he suddenly turned round and invited me." Finding my suspicions aroused, the messenger spoke the truth, and told me what I have related above. I replied we would go to-morrow, and Mahomed Omar prepared to accompany me, but Mir Baba said he would do so later on. I ordered him to bring with him fifty rifles and fifty horses saddled and bridled for fifty Afghans whom I had released from prison. I started two days later, and arrived at Mashhad of Badakshan which is called Kishm. There was also another old fort called Kala Jafar, and notwithstanding Sultan Murad's messenger insisting on my continuing our march, I refused to go further until Mir Baba and the Rustak sowars joined me, my desire being to delay until Mir Sultan was properly punished for detaining me.

Six days later news was brought to me that Sultan Murad had been defeated by the army of Balkh, and had fled with his family and the ex-King of Kolab. Tidings came soon afterwards that they had fled in our direction, and were quite close to us. Hearing this, I sent Abdullah Khan with forty sowars to receive them on my behalf. When they arrived I comforted them by saying I would not harm them, but would treat them kindly if they would serve me faithfully. I promised Sultan Murad to allow him the rule of Kataghan again when I was in power, and I sent him, with Abdullah Khan and 600 sowars to Talikhan to give the people friendly assurances from me. I followed them almost immediately, arriving in Talikhan in two days.

CHAPTER VII

MY ACCESSION TO THE THRONE

1880

WHILE all this was going on, Ghulam Haidar was at war with the other half of the Balkhian army, which had rebelled against him on account of his murder of Sirdar Sarwar. He had started for Taktapul, taking with him 3 battalions of artillery, 3000 cavalry sowars, and 1000 militia infantry. The rebels had taken refuge in the fort of Taktapul, which had been built by my father and Dost Mahomed, and had taken five years to complete. I remember now hearing it discussed when I was about twelve years old, and now I am forty-three. I remember what they said as if I had heard it yesterday. It had been intended as a protection for the royal families, should we at any time lose Kabul and need a refuge from any foreign powers, and it was consequently very strong and well built. Ghulam Haidar arrived outside this fort, and opened fire on the rebels inside, but after a long engagement, in which neither army had gained any advantage, the rebels called out loudly: "We are not rebellious, but are fighting against Ghulam Haidar and the Kazil-bashes for having killed the son of your and our King at Dehdadi. We ought to be loyal to our royal family."

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On hearing this the army stopped fighting, and attacked the General and the Kazil-bashes, who fled with his 200 body-guard towards Mazar, closely followed by the army, who pursued him so persistently that he was obliged to fly to Bokhara, across the Oxus and the Abdu Pass, leaving his property and family at the mercy of the soldiers, who plundered the property of the Kazil-bashes as well as his own, after taking their families prisoners. The rebels also released two of my officials from prison and appointed them to positions of trust. The armies of Tashkurghan, Kataghan, Shibarghan, Saripul, and Akcha soon heard what had happened, and imprisoned in their turn all officials appointed by Ghulam Haidar. At this time I arrived at Talikhan with 6000 Rustaki and 2000 Kishm sowars. When Ghulam Haidar's nephew and his generals were attacked by the Kunduz army the officials fled, but Ghulam's nephew shot himself to escape their wrath. After this all the armies came to me and salaamed. I knelt down and praised God, and said: "O God, You have of course the power to release the country from the hands of the unbelievers, and You have the power to punish those who are in league with them, and to help true believers. Power is in Your hands, Almighty!" When the armies joined me, I sent Sirdar Abdullah with letters to the army remaining at Kunduz, thanking them for their loyalty, and telling them I looked upon them all as my religious brethren and parts of my body; I added, I am sending Sirdar Abdullah to you to enquire after your good health, and to take you the news of my safety until we see each other, as I must remain here for a

few days to make arrangements for provisions and money.

I remained in Talikhan while Abdullah carried this letter across the Kunduz River. The army was delighted to hear from me, and illuminated the camp with fireworks, and gave banquets in token of their joy. They said prayers for the blessed soul of our Prophet, and through the medium of his holy soul prayed God to relieve the Muslims of Afghanistan from the hands of the English, begging Him to give us either victory over them, or to turn their hearts towards us. I received a letter from them, in which they congratulated me on my safe arrival, saying they were sure God was on their side, and had sent me to them to save them from being trodden under the feet of another patron. I gave thanks to God for His goodness to me in turning so many hearts in my direction.

I waited two days for Mir Baba Khan, Mir of Faizabad, but finding he did not arrive, I sent a letter to him, in which I enquired why he did not join me, and he replied he thought there was no need for him to do so, as the army had surrendered to me. I sent an answer to this, saying he must come to me, or I would go to him. He consulted with his councillors, who advised him to join me, or I might send an army to compass his ruin. Listening to their advice he joined me with 6000 followers at Talikhan.

The next day I sent an invitation to Mir Baba, Mir Omar, and Mir Sultan Murad, with their chiefs, to appear in the court, and when they arrived I addressed them as follows:—“You know in what position I stand at present, that I have come on Jihad,

and our army has neither food or money. All the rulers of this country must bring money according to their position, and the subjects must provide for the sowars as their guests. One sheep must be the present from every two houses, also one bag of wheat or barley. After this I will give them no more trouble." I requested an answer the next day, and dismissed the court. I also wrote to Sirdar Ishak, saying I had not heard from him since their start for Maimana, and I should be glad if he would come to Mazar and take charge of that country during such time as I was busy here. He received my letter in the desert of Andkhai, having heard that I had taken Badakshan and Kataghan, and on receiving my letter he started at once, reaching Mazar in three days, whence he wrote that he had arrived, and was without provisions for his army.

In the meantime the Mirs and Chiefs sent me word that they had acceded to my request, and had arranged to send me 300,000 rupees in cash, and would give me more in future, if necessary, in consideration of the fact that I was relieving them from the hands of a foreign enemy, so they were willing to do all in their power to help me. I ordered some provisions to be put in the fort of Khanabad, and some in a few other places. I also wrote to Sirdar Ishak, saying that if he would send me 12,000 camels, I would load them with food and return them to him. At the same time, a merchant named Yar Mahomed Khan, an inhabitant of Tashkurghan, brought some presents for me. I could not understand why, out of so many, he alone should bring presents. I discovered soon after

that the former Viceroy of Balkh, named Loi Naib, had left a few thousand sovereigns with this man, after having plundered the Government money of 4000 Russian gold coins, 10,000 Bokhara gold coins, 60,000 Kabuli rupees, and 2000 pieces of 100 rupee notes. This money was taken from the treasury of Balkh, and the merchant had come to acquaint me with the fact. I sent him, with my page Faramurz (now Commander-in-Chief of Herat), to Tashkurghan to take this money in charge and bring it to me. They accordingly went, and returned safely with this large amount of money.

The day following was the first Nauroz (New Year's Day), and to celebrate it I ordered 6000 girls and women of the Afghan nation, who had been made slaves by the Turkomans at Shere Ali's death, to be released and handed over to their relations. Before my order was carried out, Mir Baba Khan took my messengers prisoners, arguing that I should soon be engaged in war with the English, and if they delayed releasing the poor women I would soon be too busy to remember them. Several of my messengers who did not agree to remain silent were killed, and one threw himself into the river, where he was supposed to have been drowned, but he escaped, and came to me disguised as a beggar, and told me all that had happened. Hearing this I lost all patience with Mir Baba Khan, and took him, with a few of his councillors, prisoners. I appointed Mir Mahomed Omar Governor of Faizabad, and his brother Governor of Rustak, and again ordered the release of the women slaves, and also that of the brothers of my wife, who were

lying in the prison of Shighnan. I sent all these poor prisoners to their friends, and thanked God for endowing me with power to help my nation.

The following day I reached Kunduz, and a salute of 101 guns was fired by the soldiers in my honour. They rejoiced greatly to see me, and brought 200 officers, who were my enemies, into my presence, with the intention of cutting their throats to please us. I would not permit this, and ordered their release.

The next day, while I was inspecting the artillery, I was astonished to see one man come forward, and, after salaaming, throw himself at my feet. I raised him, and found him to be Nazir Mahomed Sarwar, son of Nazar Haidar, who had left me at Samarkand. At first he expressed great contrition, but after my saying that I forgave him, he told me he had come from Kabul with a letter for me. I returned to my tent, and Nazar told me he had undertaken to act as a messenger of the British Resident, and had crossed the Hindu Kush, where the frost and cold were severe and the snow came above the knees of a man. I opened the letter, and found the contents to be as follows:—

“MY EXALTED FRIEND SIRDAR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN,

“After greetings from your friend Griffin, and wishes for your good health, I write to inform you that the British Government are pleased to hear of your safe arrival in Kataghan. They will be glad to know in what way you have left Russia, and your plans and intentions.”

I read this letter to my army, as it was the beginning of my relations with the British Government, and I did not think it wise to reply to it before first consulting my army. I was afraid of mischievous people

who might say I was plotting to hand over their country to the English, which would have been my ruin. I also considered that the opportunity had arisen which would prove to me how much authority they gave me in my foreign relations. After reading this letter out loud, I said I should be glad if the chiefs would help me to compose an answer, as I did not wish to do anything without first consulting my new friends, all of whom I wished to join in the composition of the reply. They asked for two days' delay, and on the third day brought me about 100 letters, some of which ran as follows:—"O English nation, you must leave our country. We will turn you out, or die in the attempt." Another demanded compensation for past losses and damage before they would enter into communication with them at all. Another wrote that they required 100 crores of rupees for the destruction of their guns and forts, or they would not allow one Englishman to reach Peshawar alive, as they did on a former occasion. One chief had written: "O treacherous infidels, you have taken India by treachery, and now you would annex Afghanistan in the same way. We will resist you as long as we are able, and then another power like Russia will join us to fight against you." In short, they presented me with all this rubbish and nonsense. I read these letters out loudly, and after I had done so, I suggested that I also would compose one in their presence, so that they should not think I had consulted with any one beforehand. I took a sheet of paper and pen, and asked my God, who is the God of all creation, to inspire me to write a suitable

answer. I then wrote, in the presence of 7000 Usbeks and Afghans, as follows :—

“ TO MY EXALTED FRIEND GRIFFIN SAHIB,
“ Representative of Great Britain,

“ Greetings from the writer, Sirdar Abdur Rahman Khan. I am pleased to receive your kind letter, expressing your pleasure on my safe arrival in Kataghan. In reference to your enquiries as to how I left Russia, I left it with the permission of the Viceroy, General Kaufmann, and the Russian Government. My only intention in doing so was to help my nation in much perplexity and trouble. With compliments, etc.”

After reading aloud this letter to my army, I asked whether they approved of it. They replied that they were willing to fight for their religion and country under my command, but they did not know how to communicate with kings. On the oath of God and their prophet, they invested me with full authority to write what I thought fit. Raising their loud cries of, “ Oh, *Chahar Yar*¹ (Oh, Four Friends), this letter which you have written is the correct answer, and to it we all agree.”

As they approved my letter, it was handed over to Nazir Mohamed Sarwar Khan, who left Kunduz after four days' rest for Kabul.

I also marched slowly towards Charikar. At the same time I sent a verbal message to the British officials at Kabul, to the effect that I was on my way to Charikar to settle matters with them. On the 30th of April Griffin Sahib sent a letter again, urging

¹ *Chahar Yar* means “ Four Friends,” i.e. the four most beloved companions of the Prophet, i.e. Abu Bekr, Omar, Osman, and Ali. This is the usual cry or joy-song, repeated in the time of war by the Afghans.

me to try to go to Kabul and to hold the reins of the Afghan kingdom. I wrote an answer to this letter on the 16th of May as follows :—

“My valued friend, I had, and still have, great hope from the British Government, and your friendship had justified and equalled my expectations. You know well the nature of the people of Afghanistan. The word of one man can effect nothing until they feel that I speak for their good. But the people want to know the answers to the following questions before giving me permission to proceed to Kabul. Their questions were as follows :—

1. What are to be the boundaries of my dominions ?
2. Would Kandahar be included in them ?
3. Would a European envoy or a British force remain in Afghanistan ?
4. What enemy of the British Government am I expected to repel ?
5. What benefits does the British Government promise to confer on me and my countrymen ?
6. And what services do they expect in return ?

“These I must place before them, and in concert with them I will, having ascertained how far I can do so, agree to such terms of a treaty as I can accept and carry out. I trust in God for your honour that this nation and I may some day unite to do you service, although the British Government has no need of it, but occasions of necessity may yet arise in this world.”

By the help of God the people were coming in crowds to pledge the Oath of Allegiance, and were reany to render all kinds of services with life and money.

So by the time that I entered from Panjshir¹ into

¹ Name of a province under Afghan rule, which means five lions or five tigers ; for there are these five tombs of the five saints of the Mahomedans. The province is called after their name.

Charikar, about 300,000 Ghazis were concentrated and had joined me. I thanked God for bringing so many people, who were all very glad and pleased to look upon me as their future King, into submission to my will. They promised me sincere service to fight against Britain, to which I replied that there was no need to fight against Britain, as the British had written to me, inviting me to accept the throne of Kabul.

Again, on the 14th of June, Griffin Sahib wrote the answers to my questions as follows :—

After compliments :

“I am commanded to convey to you the replies of the Government of India to the questions you have asked. *Firstly*, with regard to the position of the ruler of Kabul in relation to foreign powers. Since the British Government admit no right of interference by foreign powers in Afghanistan, and since both Russia and Persia are pledged to abstain from all political interference with Afghan affairs, it is plain that the Kabul ruler can have no political relations with any foreign power except the English ; and if any such foreign power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the Kabul ruler, then the British Government will be prepared to aid him, if necessary, to repel it, provided that he follows the advice of the British Government in regard to his external relations.

“*Secondly*, with regard to limits of territory, I am directed to say that the whole province of Kandahar has been placed under a separate ruler, except Pishin and Sibi, which are retained in British possession. Consequently, the Government is not able to enter into any negotiations with you on these points, nor in respect to arrangements with regard to the north-west frontier, which were concluded with the ex-Amir Mahomed Yakub Khan. With these reservations the British Government are willing that you should establish over

Afghanistan (including Herat, the possession of which cannot be guaranteed to you, though Government are not disposed to hinder measures which you may take to obtain possession of it) as complete and extensive authority as has hitherto been exercised by any Amir of your family. The British Government desires to exercise no interference in the internal affairs of these territories, nor will you be required to admit an English Resident anywhere; although, for convenience of ordinary and friendly intercourse between two adjoining states, it may be advisable to station by agreement a Mahomedan agent of the British Government at Kabul."

I wrote a short answer to the above letter on the 22nd of June, but did not give my consent to their separating the town of Kandahar from the kingdom, on the ground that Kandahar was the town of the Royal Family, and without including such a town the Kingdom was of very little value.

Placing my confidence in God, I entered from Kohistan¹ into Charikar. The British army were rather uneasy about the large forces of the Ghazis which were gathering. The chiefs of Kohistan, Kabul, and other people who were fighting against the British were joining me daily, and taking the Oath of Allegiance; those who could not come themselves communicated with me by letter or other means. My spies reported from Kabul, that the British officials were rather perplexed about my intentions towards them. On the 20th of July all the chiefs and heads of the Afghan tribes who were present proclaimed me as their King and Amir at Charikar, and wrote my name in the Khutba as their ruler. The people were pleased, that

¹ This word Kohistan means "hilly province." It is one of the north-west provinces of Kabul, and is the home of very eminent Afghan chiefs.

God had delivered their country into the hands of their own Islamic ruler.

Griffin Sahib also held an audience at Kabul on the 22nd of July, proclaiming me Amir before the British officials and Afghan chiefs, and on this occasion made the following speech :—

“The course of events having placed Sirdar Abdur Rahman Khan in a position which fulfils the wishes and expectations of the Government, the Viceroy of India and the Government of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress, are pleased to announce that they publicly recognise Sirdar Abdur Rahman Khan, grandson of the illustrious Amir, Dost Mahomed Khan, as Amir of Kabul. It is to the Government a source of satisfaction that the tribes and chiefs have preferred a distinguished member of the Barakzai family, who is a renowned soldier, wise and experienced. His sentiments towards the British Government are most friendly, and so long as his rule shows that he is animated by those sentiments, he cannot fail to receive the support of the British Government. He will best show his friendship for the Government by treating those of his subjects who have done us service as his friends.”

On the 29th of July a telegram from Simla informed the British officials at Kabul of the severe defeat of the English army at the hands of Ayub Khan, which occurred at Maiwand. On hearing this, Griffin Sahib, without losing any time, rode on to Zimma, a town about sixteen miles from Kabul, with a small detachment of cavalry, to meet me there, and to make arrangements about their future movements. The conference lasted three days, from the 30th of July till the 1st of August. I asked Griffin Sahib for a formal agreement of our understanding

with each other which I could show to my people, and he handed over to me the following document:—

“His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council has learnt with pleasure that Your Highness has proceeded toward Kabul, in accordance with the invitation of the British Government. Therefore, in consideration of the friendly sentiments by which Your Highness is animated, and of the advantage to be derived by the Sirdars and people from the establishment of a settled Government, under Your Highness' authority, the British Government recognises Your Highness as Amir of Kabul. I am further empowered, on the part of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, to inform Your Highness that the British Government has no desire to interfere in the internal Government of the territories in possession of Your Highness, and has no wish that an English Resident should be stationed anywhere within those territories. For the convenience of ordinary friendly intercourse, such as is maintained between two adjoining states, it may be advisable that a Mahomedan agent of the British Government should reside, by agreement, at Kabul. Your Highness has requested that the views and intentions of the British Government, with regard to the position of the ruler of Kabul, in relation to foreign powers, should be placed on record for Your Highness' information. The Viceroy and Governor-General in Council authorises me to declare to you that since the British Government admits no right of interference by foreign powers within Afghanistan, and since both Persia and Russia are pledged to abstain from all interference with the affairs of Afghanistan, it is plain that Your Highness can have no political relations with any foreign power except with the British Government. If any foreign power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the dominions of Your Highness, in that event the British Government would be prepared to aid you to such extent and in such manner as may

appear to the British Government necessary, in repelling it, provided that Your Highness follows unreservedly the advice of the British Government in regard to your external relations."

Griffin Sahib requested me to go to Kabul to wish the British officials "good-bye," before they marched out of the country. He also asked me to make such arrangements as were necessary for their safety, and also to supply the provisions for the British army, which was marching under General Roberts to Kandahar, and under Sir Donald Stewart to Peshawar. I undertook to do my best in this matter, and gave him every possible satisfaction and assurance as to the safety of the British as far as the frontier. I told him that it was my opinion that General Roberts should start for Kandahar as soon as possible, and after his departure I would go to wish Sir Donald Stewart "God-speed." On the 8th of August General Roberts started from Kabul, *en route* for Kandahar, with a portion of the army, and I appointed Sirdar Mahomed Aziz Khan, son of Sirdar Shams-ud-din Khan, with a few other officials accompanying General Roberts' force as far as Kandahar, to see that the people on the road did not oppose them, and to provide food for themselves and for their transport animals. The tribes on the road obeyed my commands, conveyed to them by my above-mentioned officials, and did not offer any opposition on the road. Consequently General Roberts reached Kandahar safely, and Ayub, being defeated on the 1st of September, fled towards Herat.

Sir Donald Stewart and Griffin Sahib left Sherpur

for Peshawar, on the 10th of August, and I went to wish them "good-bye" a few minutes before they started. We held a durbar for about fifteen minutes, in which compliments were exchanged, and our intercourse was of a friendly nature. It was also agreed upon, in the course of our negotiations, that thirty guns of the Afghanistan artillery, which were at Sherpur at this time, should be handed over to me; also that about nineteen lakhs of rupees which had been collected out of the revenue of the country by the British during their stay there, and spent by them to supply provisions for the army, and in building the fortifications, should be refunded to me; and, further, that the new forts which were built at Kabul by the British should not be destroyed.

This ended the Second Afghan War and occupation of Afghanistan by the British. In this way again the throne and reins of the kingdom were delivered into my hands, who, by the ties of blood, nationality, and religion, was entitled to the whole country. The Afghan people were pleased to find their country in the hands of their Islamic King, and I was thankful to God who had entrusted me with this service, thereby enabling me to deliver my people from the sufferings that they were undergoing from the unsettled condition of the kingdom. I then began my work of putting the country in order, peace, and progress, but the task was not a very easy one.

CHAPTER VIII

ADMINISTRATION

ON my succeeding to the throne, and after the departure of the English from Kabul, I placed my foot in the stirrup of progress and administration. In every town which was under my rule at this time I appointed the officials I shall now proceed to mention. To the larger and more important towns I appointed men of the greatest ability and merit; in the smaller towns, where the duties would be less in proportion, I placed men of average ability. These officials were as follows:—

- (1) The Governor (*a*),¹ together with his Secretaries and Staff.
- (2) The Kazi (*b*) (Judge of the Ecclesiastical Court) with his subordinate.
- (3) The Kotwal (*c*) (Head of the Police Department), together with the force of Police, Secretary, and the members of the *Rahdari*² Department.

The notes to this and other following chapters are by Sultan Mahomed Khan, Mir Munshi.

¹ The small letters (*a*), (*b*), (*c*), etc., refer to notes at the end of this chapter, giving, in fuller detail, the duties attaching to these various offices.

² There is a system in Afghanistan by which no person can travel from one town to another without having a paper, in the shape of a passport, issued from the above-mentioned office. The word *Rahdari* means literally "a passport." For people travelling in the country itself, this passport is issued under the seal of the passport officer, countersigned by the seal of the

- (4) *Kafila Bashi* (*d*) (Head of the Caravan Department), with a Board of Commerce (*e*), called *Punchait* (*f*); the office in which all accounts of daily income and expenditure are kept (*g*); the Tax-collector's Office, called *Chabutra* (*h*); the Treasury (*i*); and a force or army (*j*) necessary for keeping peace in the town.

I issued orders addressed to the chiefs of all the various tribes and provinces, urging them to keep the country peaceful, to treat their countrymen and fellow-subjects kindly; if they did this they might expect in return kind treatment, rewards, and royal favours from me. I concluded by giving them assurances of my friendly feeling and kind sentiments towards them all.

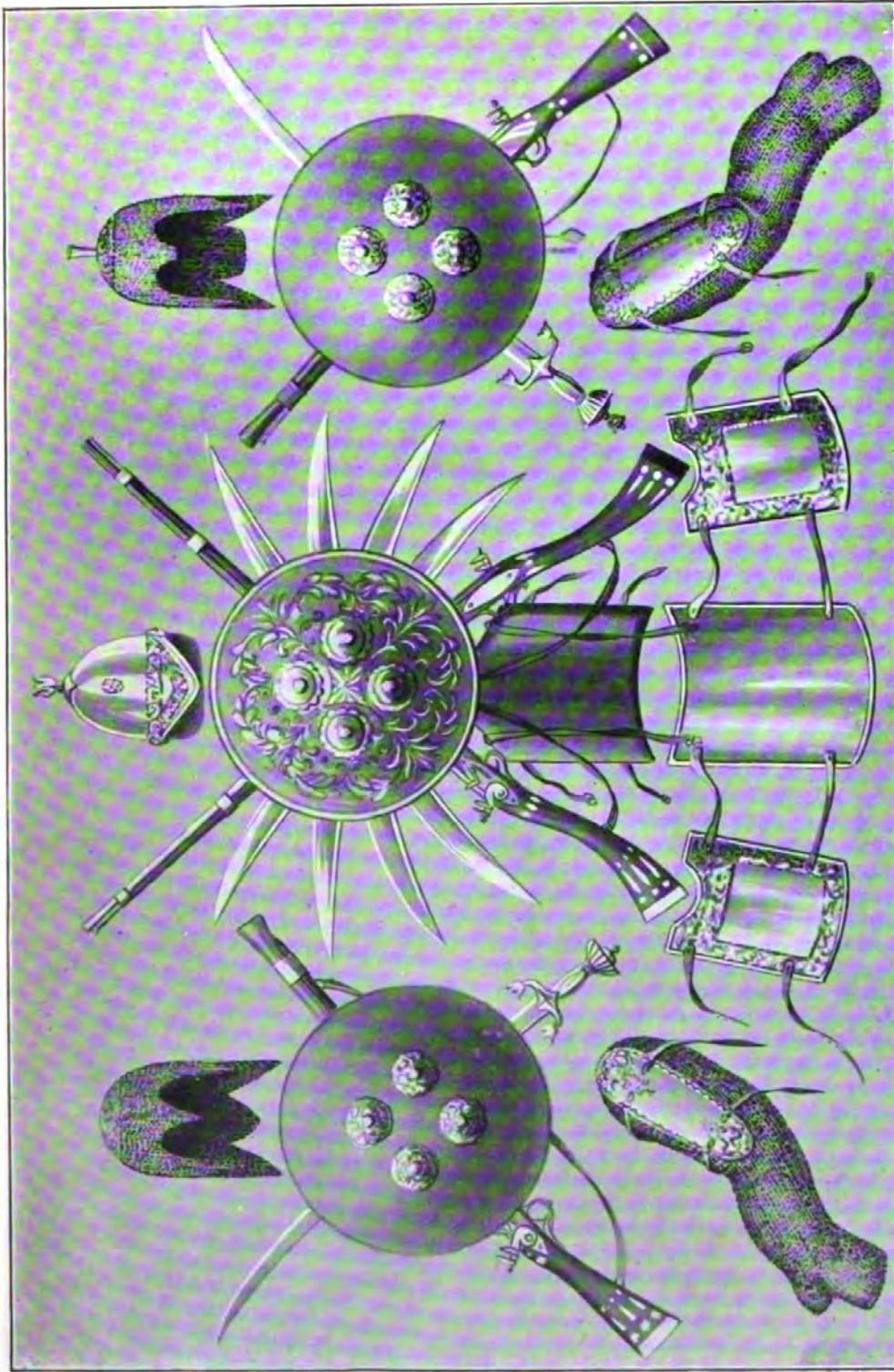
I now sent for my family and my two sons, *Habibullah Khan* and *Nasrullah Khan*, who had been left in Russia, under the care of the confidential servants I had sent to bring them. I also sent for my relatives who were at *Kandahar*, and on the 22nd of November of the same year I married another wife, the daughter of *Mullah Adikullah*, whose mother is one of my aunts. This marriage was arranged through, and in the house of, my uncle, *Sirdar Mahomed Yussif Khan*. My youngest child, *Mahomed Omar*, is the son of this, my latest married wife. In a short time all my children and family, my mother, sister and sons, who had not seen me for years, were brought together, and we praised God for granting us this happiness after

Kotwal and the Governor of the town; but for those who go out of their own to travel in a foreign country, for any business whatsoever, it is countersigned and sealed by the Amir's own son, in the name of the Amir.

we had been in exile for nearly twelve years and passed through so many difficulties and troubles.

The country exhibiting a rebellious spirit, I appointed private detectives and spies to report to me all that went on among the people, thus finding out with abundant proofs those who were loyal and friendly ; these were kindly treated, but those who were unfriendly, and stirred up mischief and strife, were severely punished. The ringleaders and worst offenders were the fanatic priests and headstrong chiefs who had been partisans of the late Shere Ali's family. These were treated according to their actions, some of them being banished from the country, while others suffered the worst fate of all for their misdeeds. All this time I worked very hard, writing all my letters myself with my own hand, as I could not trust anybody else to do it for me.

There were two matters of the greatest importance that claimed and obtained my close attention. The first was that there was no money to pay the army, or for any other Government expenditure ; the second matter was that there were no arms, ammunition, or military stores. I dealt with the first of these matters in this way : I established a mint of my own, where rupees were coined by means of hand dies, because there was no machinery for the purpose. Now, however, I am fortunate in possessing coining presses in my mint, made upon the same system as those employed in European countries. This will be gone into more fully in its proper place. The British Government had given me some money coined in the mint at Calcutta ; these rupees I ordered to be melted down, and, after 6 per cent. of copper had



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been added to the alloy, they were re-coined into Kabul rupees.¹ I also commanded my officials to purchase silver from the country, to melt it down, add a considerable quantity of copper to it, and coin into rupees, in this way making some profit. Moreover, I ordered to be refunded to the Treasury sums of money which, under the former Government, had been borrowed or looted by people, as also other sums that had been entrusted to them by Government for official payments, which sums they had retained in their own hands and used for other purposes.

After this general proclamation many people refunded the money they owed and, in order to get the remainder from those who would not pay, I appointed collectors, giving them instructions to force the debtors to give up these moneys. I further appointed accountants, whose duty it was to examine the accounts, and to see that all unpaid taxes were recovered.

To provide against danger to the country from rebellion or war, I commanded that sufficient military stores and provisions should be collected; that transport animals should be purchased and everything connected with the army put into an efficient condition. In this way I was prepared for any emergency.

To meet the second difficulty, as above mentioned, namely, the lack of war materials, I employed all the workmen available to make rifles, cast guns and shells, and to make cartridges by hand, as there was no machinery in the country. But the hand-works which had been established by my grandfather under my father's

¹ The value of the English rupee is sixteen pence, that of the Kabul rupee twelve pence.

direction, and under my own superintendence, as previously mentioned in my book, were still being carried on at Kabul, though on a somewhat small scale. As the works had fallen into a bad condition, I re-organised them upon a much larger scale. I also ordered my officials to buy as much war material as they could get from the people of the country who had looted arms and ammunition, or from those who had stores to sell. In this manner, shortly after, when I was called upon to go to war against Ayub, I had bought 15,000 shells, though of rather a damaged kind, and other arms and munitions in proportion. These precautions proved of the greatest service to my country. I then proceeded to select a few of the best military officers from the late Shere Ali's army, sending also for all the officers who served under my command before my exile, thus forming a considerable and strong army in a very short time. I abolished the old rule of forcible conscription, as practised by the late Shere Ali, substituting for it the voluntary enlistment of all those who were desirous of entering the army and were fit for such service.

In every cantonment and for every battalion I opened hospitals¹ wherein sick and wounded soldiers might be treated. I also erected schools for the education of the soldiers. For the safety of travellers

¹ The native druggists are the physicians in these hospitals. There were no public hospitals until 1895. The hospitals mentioned by the Amir were reserved for the sole use of the army, the public going for medical advice to two dispensaries; at one of these, European remedies were to be had, at the other Eastern drugs were dispensed. From these two places the public could obtain as much medicine and drugs as they required without any payment. Even these dispensaries did not exist before the reign of the present Amir.

I appointed guards ; and having assured the merchants of my country that they might travel on the roads without fear, I gave them every encouragement to promote the commerce of both imports and exports. Next, I appointed official surveyors to lay out roads and build caravanserais, and to look after other miscellaneous arrangements which would secure the comfort and safety of travellers and render the country happy and peaceful.

I cannot enumerate in detail the various matters that engaged my attention at the beginning of my reign, in order that the country should be put under a proper form of Government. The following story will illustrate the position of the Government and its necessary departments as they existed before my time.

A man, having employed certain contractors to lay out a garden for him, paid them in advance, on the condition that it should be finished by such and such a date. The contractors spent the money, forgetting all about the garden. Accordingly, on the day appointed for the completion of the work, they informed their employer that the garden was ready, and they conducted him to a piece of ground.

“ But,” he said, “ there are no plants in this piece of ground.”

They replied, “ Everything else is complete except the plants.”

“ But there is no irrigation canal for watering the garden !”

Again they replied that everything else was done, except the watering canal.

“But,” said he, “there is no fence or wall about the garden to guard the plants from destruction by animals!”

He received exactly the same answer; that the wall only remained for the completion of their contract.

“But,” he exclaimed, “the land has not even been ploughed yet!”

The usual answer was given, that everything else had been done, the ploughing of the land excepted.

The Government of Afghanistan was in exactly the same condition—“everything else was complete,” but nothing that was required was in existence.

During the time that I was busy in arranging affairs in Kabul and in the south-east direction, I appointed Sirdar Abdullah Khan Tokhi¹ Governor of Badakshan. I also appointed my cousin, Mahomed Ishak, together with Sirdar Abdul Kudus Khan, as Viceroys of Turkestan,² so that they who look after the adminis-

¹ This gentleman is the most trustworthy and confidential official that the Amir has, and he is at present in personal attendance upon him.

² (A) Mahomed Ishak is now in Russia; we shall have a great deal to say about him in future chapters.

(B) Abdul Kudus Khan is now the Usher, or Chamberlain, at the Amir's Court. He is the most powerful official throughout the whole of Afghanistan at the present time. More than ninety members of his family hold the highest offices in the Government. He is the man who took Herat from Ayub in 1881, as will be described in the next chapter.

All the English historians are wrong in their identification of this man. In the first place, they say that he is the son of Sultan Jan, and grandson of the notorious vizier, Akbar Khan. This is not true. He is cousin to Akbar Khan, not his grandson; his father, Sirdar Sultan Mahomed Khan, was the brother of Amir Dost Mahomed Khan, and *not* his grandson, as English historians make out. Another error is, that Sirdar Sultan Jan is not his father.

In the second place, he was not one of Ishak's officials, but was appointed by Abdur Rahman as an assistant to Ishak at the time of their leaving Russia, and he was sent to occupy Herat by the order of the Amir himself.

tration of the south-western provinces of the country act according to my instructions. The south-eastern frontier was under the British, who had appointed Shere Ali Wali, and they were still in Kandahar. The British, however, removed the said Wali from Kandahar, allowing him a pension and residence at Karachi (in India). On the 21st of April, 1881 the city of Kandahar was evacuated by the English army and handed over to me, in consequence of which I made that place a province of my Government.

As far as I can judge, the causes that led to the removal of the Wali from Kandahar by the British were as follows:—

- (1) Mahomed Ayub had made all necessary preparations and arrangements at Herat, and collected a large force to attack Kandahar; Shere Ali was not strong enough to oppose him, as he had proved his weakness once before when fighting against Ayub.
- (2) The people of Kandahar and the other Islamic communities in general were not friendly towards the Wali. He was very unpopular, and lived in constant fear of rebellion and danger of assassination.
- (3) I also had not made any agreement about the separation of Kandahar from the rest of my kingdom, nor had I given my consent to it, though I regarded Kandahar as the home of my ancestors and the capital of some of the former rulers of my country, but at this time, when the English requested me to take the town into my possession, I accepted it, though with great hesitation and deliberation.

On the one hand, I considered the position in which I should be placed by accepting the town a very serious one. For this reason: I knew that Ayub

was ready to attack the town immediately, without giving me any time for preparation for its defence. I knew also that the country, being still in an unsettled condition at Kabul itself, if I left Kabul in order to fight against Ayub at Kandahar, I should be away for months, and there would be danger for Kabul itself during my absence.

On the other hand, the kingdom of Kabul, without Kandahar, was like a head without a nose, or a fort without any gate. I was the last person in the world to appear before the nation as a coward, or as one who would be afraid of any danger that stood in the way of possessing the capital of my predecessors. On considering the above advantages and disadvantages, I found that the risk was very great; still, placing my confidence in God, as usual, I accepted the town, and appointed Hashim Khan Governor of the city.

(a) The above-mentioned are the various departments for the administration of the Government in every town under the Amir's rule. Strictly speaking, there are no positive restrictions limiting and separating the authority of any one official from that of another. Cases often go before any court to which the applicant chooses to take them. Roughly speaking however, the Governor is considered to be the head of all other departments in his town, and is looked upon as a Court of Appeal superior to the courts presided over by other officials. The main duty of the Governor is to collect the revenues from the landowners, etc., to settle the disputes of landowners, to keep peace in the provinces, and to forward the king's proclamations and commands from time to time to the other officials of the town and to the king's subjects in his territory. Over certain small Governors are head Governors; and over the head Governors are the Viceroys, who are called *Naib-ul-hukuma* (Deputies of the Sovereign); and above the Viceroys and all the heads of military and other departments, the Amir's eldest son, Prince Habibullah Khan, is considered a supreme Court of Appeal.

(b) The Ecclesiastical Court of the Kazi is looked upon as the highest, and hence it is not limited to religious subjects, but all civil cases, whatever their nature, may be brought here. Generally speaking, business

differences and religious disputes are settled here ; as also cases of divorce and cases concerning marriage and inheritance. Cases punishable by death are also judged here. The Chief Judge of this Court is called Kazi, and his subordinates Muftis. Cases are decided by a majority.

(c) The Kotwal exercises much greater authority in criminal cases than any other criminal official whatever. He is, in a way, head of the Police Force, Judge of the Criminal Court, in charge of the Intelligence Department—in fact, one of the most powerful officials in Eastern kingdoms. In all old Oriental books we read stories and poems recounting the tyranny and oppression and cruelty of the Kotwals. A Kotwal settles the small criminal cases and forwards the most serious ones to the capital.

(d) Kafila Bashi is an official who supplies the transport animals to travellers ; it is his duty to see that those who hire out the animals do not cheat or behave badly towards those who hire their camels, mules, or other transport animals. He gets his commission from those who hire the animals, and gives an account of every transaction to the Government, out of which all the expenses of this establishment are paid by the Government, and the balance is paid into the Government Treasury.

(e) The Board of Commerce settles disputes between merchants. The President of the Board presides over this court, and its members are elected from among the various communities of merchants of both religions, Mahomedans and Hindus in proportion.

(f) The Revenue Office settles the accounts of the revenue, and keeps a record of the annual revenue which every landowner must pay to the Government.

(g) The Roznamcha are the officers of the daily income and expenditure. This is the Office in which copies of all the documents which are issued from every office, either for collecting the revenues or for spending them, are kept.

(h) The Chabutra are tax-collecting officers. This office is only to collect the duties which are placed on commerce, which is charged at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on all exports and imports.

(i) The Treasury. The revenue or tax-collectors of a town do not receive the money themselves which they collect, but simply issue orders that such moneys are to be paid into the Treasury of that town, also for the payment of the various expenses. Orders on the Treasury are issued by the heads of the different departments.

(j) In every important town a small force or army is kept for times of necessity.

All these various departments send their final reports to the head department of the province ; from the latter they go to the chief department of the capital of Kabul.

CHAPTER IX

THE ANNEXATION OF HERAT

I HAVE said before that when I first succeeded to the throne of Kabul my life was not a bed of roses. On the contrary, I was surrounded by difficulties of all kinds. Here began my first severe fight, against my own relatives, my own subjects, and my own people. I had hardly settled down in Kabul, and had had no time for military preparations, when I found myself obliged to go to war. After Mahomed Ayub had been defeated by the English he remained in possession of Herat, and from that very same day of his defeat he occupied himself in making preparations for war. Having collected a very strong force, he marched from Herat against Kandahar. As mentioned above, I had anticipated this danger, but it had to be faced.

There were several things in Mahomed Ayub's favour and against me. He possessed better war materials and arms, a larger army, and, above all, the ignorant priests had proclaimed a holy war against me, which told in his favour. They alleged that I was friendly to the English, and that my rival was the Ghazi. He had 12,000 trained soldiers with him under the

command of the following officers:—Hussain Ali, Commander-in-Chief; Naib Hafizullah, Deputy Commander-in-Chief; General Taj Mahomed, son of Arslā Khan Ghilzai; Sirdar Hassan Khan; Sirdar Abdullah Khan, son of Sirdar Sultan Jan and grandson of Mahomed Azim Khan; Sirdar Ahmad Ali, son of Mahomed Ali; Nur Khan; Sirdar Abdul Salam of Kandahar; and Kazi Abdul Salam, son of Kazi Mahomed Said.

He left Musa Jan, son of Yakub, and Khush Dil, son of Shere Dil, with a few thousand soldiers, at Herat. Sirdar Shams-ud-din and Sirdar Hashim, who were my Governors at Kandahar, appointed the following to meet the attacking army of Ayub:—Ghulam Haidar Tokhi, Commander-in-Chief; Sirdar Mahomed Hassan, son of Sirdar Khush Dil, of Kandahar, and Kazi Said Din, now Viceroy of Herat, together with 7 regiments of infantry, 2 batteries of artillery, 4 regiments of regular cavalry, 3000 militia cavalry, and 7 regiments of militia infantry.

The two armies met on the 20th of July at Kārez, near Girishk, where severe fighting took place. At first victory seemed to turn in favour of the army of Kandahar, which fought very bravely. Nearly all Ayub's cavalry fell back defeated and fled in all directions. Only about eighty heads and chiefs of Ayub's army were left on the field with a very small number of followers. These thought that it was impossible to try to save their lives by retreating, as all the army had left them, and therefore they considered it better to die bravely than to be killed in running away. So they all united and made a rush on the main body of the Kandahar army, making straight for the Com-

mander-in-Chief and Kazi Said Din, who, being defeated by this small handful of plucky officers, fled towards Kandahar. Sirdar Abdullah Khan and several other officers of Ayub's army were killed in this battle. Ayub marched on and took the city of Kandahar without further resistance or fighting.

Of my officers, Hashim and Ghulam Haidar fled towards Kalat, Sirdar Hassan fled to Mecca. Shams-ud-din hid himself in Khirka,¹ Mahomed Ayub, having promised not to punish him if he would come out of the sacred building, caused him to be beaten with sticks when he did come out.

When I heard this, I felt obliged to start myself for Kandahar, leaving my eldest son, Habibullah Khan, as Governor of the city of Kabul, and Parwana Khan, Commander-in-Chief, as the head of the army. I had about 12,000 fighting men with me, together with the following officers:—Ghulam Haidar Charkhi, Commander-in-Chief; Faramurz, Commander-in-Chief (the first is dead, the second is now at Herat); Ghulam Haidar Khan Tokhi, also Commander-in-Chief. There were many others whose names need not be mentioned here.

About 10,000 people of the Tokhi and Andra and other tribes also joined me on my march to Kandahar against a force of Ayub's, numbering 20,000. Several mullahs had sealed a religious proclamation, saying that

¹ Khirka denotes the "mantle" or robe worn by Mahomed, which has been carefully kept by a succession of Mahomedan sovereigns ever since that time, and is now at Kandahar. It is believed that if a person guilty of any crime or offence whatsoever, once enters the room where this garment is kept, he is not to be touched by anybody unless he comes out of the building of his own accord.

I, Amir Abdur Rahman, was an infidel, as I was the Deputy of the English. It is said by some people that Ayub had compelled the mullahs to seal these documents against their wish.

After a few days' quick marching I got as far as a village called Tamuryan, about four miles from Kandahar, and Ayub, leaving his camp, which was at Khel-i-mulla Alim, a mile from Kandahar, retreated to the cantonment of the city of Kandahar. On the 22nd of September 1881, the two armies faced each other in the ruins of the old city of Kandahar. Ayub's army had lost courage somewhat on account of a few mistakes made by Ayub before the commencement of the battle.

Firstly.—He did not come out of the town of Kandahar at all to meet the advance of my army, and instead of taking the offensive and attacking me, he gave me the choice of attack, by which he showed his cowardice to the army.

Secondly.—He made a mistake in leaving the city of Kandahar unoccupied.

Thirdly.—In retreating from the village of Khel-i-mulla Alim.

Fourthly.—From the beginning of the battle until the end he did not join in the fighting himself, but watched it from the top of Kotal-i-Chahalzina half a mile away from the camp. All these things were sufficient to dishearten his army, by showing that he was afraid to join in the fighting himself.

Fifthly.—He had hidden his cavalry, consisting of 7000 sowars, behind the rocks, on the above-mentioned hill, so that, at a critical moment, when the

battle was in full swing, he could order the cavalry to make a rushing charge.

He, however, became so nervous, that he forgot all about the cavalry, so that they did not get a chance of fighting from the beginning of the battle until the end. In fact, they were behind the rock all the time, and he never once appeared on the field to encourage his army. Notwithstanding this, some competent and brave officers and good fighting soldiers fought very well. His artillery also, which was placed on the top of the old Kandahar hills, in a very strong position, and which kept in good order, did very good service. For two whole hours the fighting was very severe, and it was not known with whom was the victory. My army was beginning to fall back a little on its right and left, but the main force in the centre, where I was standing myself behind 1000 foot soldiers of my body-guard, were working well under the encouragement that I gave them by my presence. Every soldier was so busily engaged in the battle, that a few of my orderlies also were pushing forward to fight, and I had only one groom by my side. At this moment, when I had pushed well forward, Ayub's forces began to show signs of weakness, and these four regiments of my own infantry, which had submitted to Mahomed Ayub's command at the time of their former defeat at Girishk, changed their mind. It had been the usual custom of the whole of the trained soldiers, before my reign began, that the moment they saw one party stronger than the other, they left the weak and joined the strong. These four regiments, therefore, seeing that the victory was turning in my favour, at once turned their rifles from the top of the

old city, and fired at that body of Ayub's army which was fighting hard with my forces. On the other hand, my army, when they saw this incident, pushed forward, and fired with their guns and rifles full in the face of the enemy, who thereupon fled in all directions. Ayub Khan, being thus defeated, returned to Herat.

At the time of my leaving Kabul for Kandahar, I had instructed Sirdar Kudus Khan to march from Turkestan on Herat, thinking that Ayub would be sure to leave that town insufficiently protected against attack. Sirdar Kudus Khan thereupon made an immediate attack, accompanied by 400 cavalry sowars, 400 infantry soldiers and 2 guns of mountain artillery. Loi Naib Khush Dil, whom Ayub had left to defend Herat, sent out a small force to stop my army on its way; but his force was defeated and my soldiers arrived at Herat. Khush Dil had not the courage to come out of the town and take part in the fight himself; his plan was to send out a few soldiers every day to fight against Kudus, but they submitted to Kudus without fighting at all. On the 4th of August, Kudus Khan took the fort by making a strong assault.

To introduce my readers to Sirdar Kudus Khan, I may mention that at the time the English were at Kabul he had started for Tashkend to join me, but as I was about to leave Kabul myself, I wrote to him on his arrival at Samarkand, to wait there for my arrival. As I have elsewhere mentioned, Sirdar Sarwar Khan, Ishak, and Kudus had been sent by me to look after the administration of Turkestan, and Kudus

is to this day one of my most valuable and reliable servants.

Ayub Khan was informed, on his way to Herat, that his soldiers had lost that town, which was now occupied by Sirdar Kudus Khan. He therefore fled toward Mashhad in Persia. I now appointed Far-amurz¹ Commander-in-Chief, together with some cavalry, infantry, and artillery, with orders to march immediately to Herat. After making the necessary arrangements at Kandahar, I left for Kabul.

One of the priests who had accused me of infidelity, named Abdul Rahim Akhund,² Kakar (a tribe of Kandahar), had hidden himself under the Prophet's robe. I ordered that an impure-minded dog such as he should not remain in that sacred sanctuary; he was accordingly pulled out of the building, and I killed him with my own hands.

On my return to Kabul from Kandahar I was delighted with the services rendered by my most reliable servant, Parwana Khan,³ Deputy Commander-in-Chief, and my son, Habibullah Khan. My son was only a little boy, yet he did a great thing in

¹ He is the most popular Commander-in-Chief and confidential servant of the Amir. He was brought up as the Amir's page-boy from his earliest days, and the important city of Herat is now intrusted to his care.

² His son, Maulvi Abdul Rauf, conducts the priests' examinations at Kabul. He is one of the Amir's courtiers.

³ This man was more trusted by the Amir than any of his son's officials or relatives. He had been in exile with the Amir, and when the Amir was in difficulty about obtaining money, he sold himself for a slave. This he did three or four times, and was afterwards redeemed by the Amir. He was most beloved by all the Amir's subjects in the country up to the last moment of his life. He died in 1894. One of his sons is the Amir's favourite, and the other four sons are the favourites of the Amir's four sons.

going among the soldiers and speaking in my behalf to the chiefs; he was neither nervous nor afraid, and in everything he followed the counsel of Parwana Khan, Mirza Abdul Hamid Khan, and certain other officers, whom I had appointed as his advisers. During my absence the people of Kohistan, the people of Hissarak, Mahmud of Kunar, Abdul Rashid, Juma Khan, and Mahomed Hussain, of Wardak, had tried to incite a general rising; but, by the wise policy and friendly assurances of those whom I had left at Kabul, no really serious trouble resulted from these intrigues.

The defeat of Mahomed Ayub and capture of Herat by my officials made me master of the whole of the kingdom of my father and grandfathers. There was still, however, a great deal to be done before I could really call myself master or sovereign of the country. As I have mentioned elsewhere, every priest, mullah, and chief of every tribe and village considered himself an independent king, and for about 200 years past the freedom and independence of many of these priests were never broken by their sovereigns. The Mirs of Turkestan, the Mirs of Hazara, the chiefs of Ghilzai were all stronger than their Amirs, and, so long as they were the rulers, the King could not do justice in the country. The tyranny and cruelty of these men were unbearable. One of their jokes was to cut off the heads of men and women and put them on red-hot sheets of iron to see them jump about! There were many other worse customs than this, but I will not mention them, for fear of shocking the readers of my book. Every chief, official, prince, and the King himself had parties of assassins and large

numbers of hired robbers and thieves, and as the robbers used to kill the travellers, traders, and other rich merchants of the country, and to plunder their property and money, that stolen property was divided between the employers and employed. Every one of those robbers had a band of his own armed with rifles and guns. I will relate in the next chapter what a desperate struggle I had with two of these robbers, named Sadu and Dadu, who defeated my army several times. One of them now hangs in a cage, where I put him, on the peaks of the Lataband Mountain.¹

Many of these priests taught as Islamic religion strange doctrines which were never in the teaching of Mahomed, yet which have been the cause of the downfall of all Islamic nations in every country. They taught that people were never to do any work, but only to live on the property of others, and to fight against each other. Of course it is natural that every one of these self-made kings should have levied separate taxes on their subjects; so the first thing I had to do was to put an end to these numberless robbers, thieves, false prophets, and trumpery kings. I must confess that it was not a very easy task, and it took fifteen years of fighting before they finally submitted to my rule or left the country, either by being exiled or by departing into the next world. The next chapter

¹ This means the "Mountain of Rags," and it is called by this name because some superstitious people think that if they hang a rag of cloth on the peaks of this mountain, they will obtain children or anything else they want from God. The greatest Empress of India, called Nurjehan, was born on the peak of this mountain when her father and mother were exiled from Persia to India.

will be devoted to an account of these civil wars, which lasted from the time of my succession until the present day. After which I shall return to the narration of other circumstances connected with my life. It was necessary, first of all, to clear out all those who were opposers of every kind of justice, civilisation, progress, education, and liberty of the people.

There are many prejudiced and ignorant people who blame me for these civil wars, and think that my treatment of the people was very harsh. But even in the most civilised countries of the present day examples are not wanting to show that they had at the commencement of their history to fight against their own people, who did not at first understand the conditions of civilisation. In this very century grave disturbances were caused by the working classes in England against their own Government. I am proud to say that in the short time under my rule the people have made such good progress towards civilisation, that persons possessing great riches and wealth can travel safely throughout my dominions, by night as well as by day, whilst, on the other hand, on the borders of Afghanistan, in the parts under British rule, nobody can move a step without being protected by a strong body-guard.

CHAPTER X

THE CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY AT THE TIME OF MY ACCESSION.

“He giveth honour to whom He pleaseth ;
And He degradeth whom He pleaseth ;
In His supreme hands is the power
Of doing as He pleaseth.”—SADI.

PEOPLE may have thought that from the day I succeeded to the Kabul throne, the era of my happiness and enjoyment began, but it was not so; on the contrary, from that very moment the time of my liberty and freedom ceased, and times of difficulty, disappointments, anxieties, and grief increased. The readers of this book are aware that, though I took a very active part in the affairs of the kingdom at the time, when my father and uncle, Azim, were Amirs of Kabul, yet the whole responsibility rested with them. There is no doubt about the truth of the saying: “The greater the position the greater the responsibilities, and the greater the responsibilities the greater the anxieties.”

“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.”

Our religion teaches us that every person is responsible for his actions before the Almighty Judge

on the Day of Judgment, but Kings are not responsible for their actions alone ; they have, moreover, to answer for the peace and comfort of the subjects who are placed under their care by their Creator. One of the greatest saints, the Maulvi Roum, gives the following story in the poem :

“ A goat hurt its foot at the bridge of Bagdad ; the ruler of the time, Omar, was reproached by God.¹”

In one of the traditions of Mahomed, it is said that at the Day of Judgment the Almighty King of kings will first address the kings of this world as follows :—

“ To whom does the kingdom of this world belong to-day ? ”

And the unanimous answer from all the sovereigns will be : “ To Thee, O Allah, who art the only One powerful of all.”

And then the Almighty will ask : “ If you all knew that, why did you not try to care for the peace and comfort of those who were given unto you by Me ? ”

Considering that I should have to answer for the above-mentioned responsibilities for the peace of my people at the Day of Judgment, and considering the

¹ The above-mentioned poem refers to an accident generally believed in by all the Muslim community, stating that, when Omar, the second companion of Mahomed, succeeded to the throne, during his reign one of the bridges of the city of Bagdad was in a state of bad repair. It happened one day, therefore, when a flock of goats was crossing the bridge, the foot of one of them was hurt by the stones of the bridge, and Omar was inspired to give an explanation to the Almighty to this effect, that as he who was the King, and responsible, had not attended to keeping the bridge in proper repair, that was the cause of the pain and grief to the unfortunate goat ; and it is this story to which the Amir refers when quoting the poem.

unsettled condition of my country, I fell into heavy grief and sadness of heart.

Looking at the circumstances and the condition of the country, I thought it was not only difficult, but impossible, to put it in order and to make any progress. Of course, no one had any idea that Afghanistan would make such marvellous progress as, by the help of the All-Merciful Allah, it has made during the short time of my reign. Not only were all the causes of the country's ruin present in the highest possible degree, but all the sources of progress were at the very lowest ebb; and not only at the lowest ebb, but there was no evidence that they even existed. But as the Almighty had placed this responsibility upon me, I begged and prayed of Him to help me in tending the flock of human beings intrusted by Him to my care, so that I might not be disgraced in the eyes of this world and at the Day of Judgment. I did not lose courage, placing my confidence on the promise given by God in the Koran to His Blessed Prophet, Mahomed: "To those who place their confidence in God, and do not lose courage and patience, God's help is sufficient for them; He is in truth the supporter of those who work without losing patience." In short, if I were to mention the trouble and unhappy conditions in which the country was placed at this time, it would require a whole volume to describe them. I will, therefore, give only a short account of the state of affairs in Afghanistan at the time of my succession to the throne, in order to interest my readers, and to enable them to judge for themselves what a difference there is in the condition and progress of

the country at the present day, as compared with the former state of things.

I should like to record a few of the causes of my difficulties. They were as follows :—

Firstly.—I, as King of the country, at the time of my succession to the throne, had to face the difficulty of having no house to live in, because the palace of Bala Hissar,¹ which was the ancestral home of my forefathers, had been destroyed by the English army, and there was no other house ready. Neither was there any lodging where I could live temporarily, there being no hotels at all in Afghanistan. I think there are very few, perhaps hardly any, examples in history where a king has been without a room in which to sleep. Until the time that I built a new palace for myself, I lived in tents and in borrowed mud-houses belonging to my subjects.

In the previous chapters of this book, my readers are informed that I was accustomed from my childhood to live in the open air, and my buildings were always out in the gardens, where I could get plenty of fresh air. It was very hard for me to live in the dirty, close, airless lanes, in these mud-houses, full of holes, where the everlasting noise and fighting of the mice were the first battles I had to face, and their noise kept me awake all the night!

Secondly.—There was not a penny in the State Treasury with which to pay the army or any of the state servants; not only that, there was no such thing as a Treasury at all! The revenue from the country had been already borrowed and collected for a year or two in advance by Shere Ali, Yakub, and the English army, so I could not collect anything from the revenue myself, because it had been borrowed already.

Thirdly.— War materials and ammunition, which were

¹ High palace.

necessary for keeping peace in the country, did not exist; the thirty old Afghan guns, which I had taken over from the British officials, were in such a condition that if a gun had a barrel it had no carriage, and if it had a carriage the axle was broken, or the wooden wheels and the gun carriages were only waiting for the first pull to fall into pieces. Finally, if some were complete, there were no shells to fire from them! Of course a piece of stone or a stick is more useful than a cannon without any ammunition, because no soldier can beat his enemy with the barrel of a cannon, but he can beat him with a stick!

Fourthly.—Herat was separated from my kingdom and placed under the rule of Ayub, who was stirring up the people against me, and preparing for the war. Kandahar was placed by the British under the rule of Sirdar Shere Ali, the then Wali of Kandahar, who was, on the other hand, persuading people to join his party. At Maimana, the Governor, named Dilawar, was intriguing against me. In the country itself, owing to the weakness of the character of the former kings—Shujah, Shere Ali, and Yakub—every chief, syad, or mullah was proclaiming himself an independent ruler, and extorting money from the subjects. The Kings had neither the courage nor the power to punish such usurpers and to put the country into a state of peace and order.

The records of Shere Ali's office, which are now in the possession of my officials, show that a fine of fifty rupees was the only punishment imposed upon one person for murdering another, proving that the lives of men and women were cheaper than the life of a sheep or a cow. In consequence of this laxness, from one small province alone, Najrab, in which there are 20,000 families, the fines that were paid into the Governor's hands at that time amounted to 50,000 rupees annually, which means that 1000 murders were committed in a year.

The supporters at Kabul of Shere Ali's family, ignorant mullahs and so-called Ghazis, who are rightly named by the Afghans "Tazis,"¹ were stirring up the people against me, by saying that I was an infidel because I was a friend of the English, who were infidels, and therefore every Muslim should make a crusade against me.

The system of administering justice was such that the most humble were able to bring their claims before the sovereign, by the simple process of getting hold of the sovereign's beard and turban, which meant to throw one's complaints on the shame of his beard, to which he was bound to listen. One day I was going to the Hum-hum (Turkish - bath), when a man and his wife, running fast, rushed into the bathroom after me, and the husband, having got hold of my beard from the front, the wife was pulling me at the same time from behind. It was very painful, as he was pulling my beard rather hard. As there was no guard or sentry near to deliver me from their hands, I begged them to leave my beard alone, saying that I could listen without my beard being pulled, but all in vain. I was rather sorry that I had not adopted the fashion of the Europeans, whose faces are clean shaven. I ordered that in the future a strong guard should be placed at the door of the Hum-hum.

Another system was that whenever the trays of sweetmeats were brought into dnrbar, the ministers and officials, instead of waiting for their share, used to rush at it, throwing themselves on each other, that

¹ Hungry dogs.

each might get as much as he could by force, and though I tried hard to explain to them that it was a disgrace to them and to their King that they should behave like wild animals in his presence, they paid no attention to my words. Once, on the day of the Id Festival, they irritated me so much by fighting amongst themselves for the sweetmeats, that I ordered the soldiers of the guard to beat them as hard as they could, and I was half amused and half sorry to see their heads broken and bleeding from blows that had fallen upon them from the stakes of the soldiers. But this treatment was effectual in putting an end to such a foolish and unpleasant habit.

I will now give an example of the great wisdom exhibited by the counsellors and ministers of the sovereign. Once, when bread and flour were very dear in the market, there was fear of famine; and my ministers, whom I consulted at that time, strongly advised me to nail the ears of the corn and flour sellers to the doors of their shops, in order to force them to make the corn and flour cheaper. I could not help laughing at this valuable advice, and since that day till the present time, I have never asked advice from my counsellors!

The claimants to the throne were so numerous, that it is impossible to make a list of their names. My family and children were left in Russia. I was obliged to send away from me a few of my confidential servants to look after the administration of the country, and I was surrounded by disappointments and difficulties, without an adviser and without a friend. But he who places his confidence in God alone, in God alone there

is sufficient company for him at times of difficulty and sorrow.

The neighbouring foreign Governments, too, were the cause of much anxiety to me, owing to their taking offence if I showed a little more partiality to one than to another.

Historians and experienced statesmen can understand that when a kingdom falls into such a state of ruin, and gets divided among small petty chiefs, it takes a long time to put it into the shape of a strong consolidated kingdom; see, for example, the Indian Empire, which was divided into many small states, owing to the weakness of the last Mogul Emperors—what a long time it has taken, and what trouble it has given, what mutinies it has caused to the British Empire; and this, notwithstanding the marvellous wisdom, experience, and knowledge of British statesmen. In the same way, the weakness of the kingdom of Afghanistan was so great, that whenever the King went a few miles out of his capital, he used to find some one else King on his return, and the only course open to him was to run away! Then Shere Ali, being unable to fight against the chiefs of his subjects himself, introduced another system, which he thought was a very wise one. This was to set his own chiefs and officials against each other, and to encourage them to cause bloodshed, and a law was made, that if any one wanted to kill his enemy, he had only to place 300 rupees per head in the Government Treasury and to kill as many as he liked. Of course, the King thought he was doubly benefited by this plan: first, he got rid of rebellious chiefs

without taking any trouble himself, as they killed each other; secondly, he got 300 rupees for the life of each individual killed in this way.

The popular poem of Sadi, runs as follows :—

“Upon every nation of which God approves
He bestows a virtuous ruler ;
If He desires to lay the land desolate,
He places it in the grasp of a tyrant.”

Thank God, Afghanistan is not now like the same country, for there are only five murder cases in the whole kingdom during the year, which is a number that beats the record of many other civilised countries. The people had got into such bad habits of living and mischief, that as the eldest sons of the then Amir, Shere Ali, named Yakub and Ayub, revolted against their own father at Herat, one may consider that if the sons of the King set such a good, virtuous example, what lessons might not the subjects have learned from them !

“I am in sorrow from the actions of my own,
What, therefore, can I expect from the actions of those who
are not my own !”—SADI.

The King and all his chief officials were given up to personal indulgence of all kinds; the subjects, on the other hand, were immersed in difficulties, owing to the heavy taxation laid upon them by these cruel officials. The mosques were overrun by the pariah dogs that made their homes in them, finding them deserted by those who used to pray therein. Friday, which is the Sabbath Day, and therefore devoted entirely to prayer, became the day for gambling, mischief, playing, joking, throwing stones at each other. Outside the town, in the graveyards in the neighbourhood of

Kabul, called Jubba,¹ many people were wounded in fighting with each other there. The following quotation from the Koran is appropriately applied to the ruined condition of the people at that time: "Allah does not ruin the nation unless the nation ruins itself by its own wrong actions."

Praise be to God that the same country, which was in the deplorable condition I have described, has made such marvellous progress, blessed by peace and prosperity, that its friends are rejoiced, and look upon the people as a strong nation, which may be of great help to them, whilst its foes look upon them as a strong, dangerous enemy. They are such peaceful, obedient subjects to me, that they are ready to carry out all my orders and instructions with the greatest delight and affection. In the wars of Hazara and Kafiristan they have proved their devotion and loyalty to me to the utmost. They have shown, to my great delight, that they regard the interests of my Government as identical with their own. They went in crowds at their own expense to fight against the Hazaras and Kafirs, looking upon those who had rebelled against the Government as their enemies. A further proof of love and regard for the welfare of the Government was exhibited in 1895, when Government servants, merchants, landowners, and people of every class among my subjects, paid one-tenth of their annual income into the Government Treasury without my asking for it, requesting me to buy ammunition and war materials with the money, that their country might be protected against foreign aggressors. The

¹ A rocky piece of ground.

same nation that was always engaged in rebellion and fighting against me in the early part of my reign, as will be described later, has become the most peaceful, obedient, law-abiding, and civilised nation. They busy themselves in learning every kind of industry and manufacture, and making provision for the progress of their country generally and for their own happiness. By the help of God, there are signs of still greater progress and prosperity to be seen in the lives and conduct of the people. Having described the condition of the people at the time of my accession to the throne, I will proceed to give an account of the events which followed.

I followed with the greatest care the advice which Mahomed gave to one of his followers described in these verses: "The Prophet called out loudly, 'Place your confidence in God, but watch your camel.'" ¹

Two incidents occurred from which I drew much comfort, as they gave me hope that I should not fail in my mission as a King, and that I should be successful in the end.

One night, before I left Russian territory for Afghanistan, I dreamt that two angels took me by my arms and brought me into the presence of a Sovereign who was seated in a small

¹ It is taught in the Mahomedan preaching that everything is subject to the will of God, but God only helps those who help themselves. An example in illustration of this verse is given in the following story. One of Mahomed's followers entered a mosque where Mahomed was seated to say his prayers, leaving his camel outside the gate of the mosque. On Mahomed enquiring under whose care he had left his camel, the man answered: "I put my trust and confidence in God." But Mahomed said: "Place your confidence in God, but watch your camel at the same time." In short, Mahomed's philosophy on this point teaches that people must try their best and leave the issue in God's hands. They must not expect to reap wheat where they have sown barley!

room. He had a very mild, gentle face, of oval shape, a round beard, and beautiful long eyebrows and eyelashes. He was wearing a large loose garment of a blue colour, and a white turban. His whole appearance was the perfection of beauty and gentle nature. At his right hand another tall and rather thin man was seated. He had a long grey beard and a kind face, full of thought. Next to him was another, not so tall, a middle-sized man, with fairer complexion than the old gentleman on his right hand, with a pen-box before him. He was somewhat richly dressed, and had several Arabic manuscripts written on certain sheets of paper, which he had placed in front of him. At the left hand of the King was seated another man with a golden-coloured beard, thick moustaches and eyebrows, large straight nose, and a very kindly, benignant expression on his face. He resembled a statesman more than a saint, as compared with the other three I have described, and he was the tallest of all. By his side was placed a long whip. Seated next to him was another man, extremely handsome, and in appearance resembling the king more than any of the others present. He was dressed somewhat like a military officer of ancient times, and carried a sword. His face showed great cleverness, and his general bearing was that of a warrior. He was the shortest of all in the room. At the moment that I was being brought into the presence of this Sovereign and his four companions, I saw a window which led into the room suddenly open, and another man was brought before them. The King addressed the man who had just been brought before him in the unspoken language of the eyes, so that I did not hear the King's words, but only the answer, which was: "I will destroy the Churches of other religions and build them into mosques, if I am made King." The King seemed rather displeased at this answer, and ordered the angels who had brought him in to take him away, which they instantly did. Then I was asked the same question, and I answered: "I will do justice and break the idols and place Kalima instead."¹ When I had said these words the

¹ Means "to give unity."

Four Companions looked at me with a kindly expression on their faces; it was an expression of consent to appoint me King. I was inspired at the same moment with the knowledge that the king was the Blessed Prophet Mahomed, the two men at his right hand were his companions Abu-Bekr and Osman; the two at his left hand were his companions Omar and Ali. Upon this I awoke, and was so happy to believe that the Prophet and his Four Companions, whose authority it is to appoint the sovereigns of Islam, had chosen me as the future Amir.

The other incident is this :—

When listening to the troubles of my countrymen one day, I was so grieved that I went to the blessed tomb of Khwaja Ahrar to ask his spirit to help me. I wept bitterly for the disappointments and difficulties of my life, and, tired out, went to sleep on the floor. There I dreamt that the soul of the saint appeared to me, saying: "Go thou to Kabul; thou wilt be future Amir. Take thou one of the flags from my tomb; erect that flag in front of thine army, and thou shalt always be victorious." I possess that flag now, and my army has never been defeated.¹

¹ It is the custom amongst the superstitious Mahomedans to erect flags at the tombs of such deceased persons as they believe to be saints. They usually illuminate these graves at night, especially on Thursday night.

CHAPTER XI

WARS DURING MY REIGN

IN the same year that Ayub was defeated,¹ as mentioned before, I had to fight against another chief. This was a battle to be fought against Syad Mahmud of Kunar.² Syad Mahmud was son-in-law of the notorious Wazir Akbar, and was therefore a supporter of Shere Ali's party. At the time of my succession to the Kabul throne he nominated himself King of Kunar, which was considered his state. He had taken his residence on a hill, called Madi, about six miles' distance from Kunar, and on my starting for Kandahar he attacked my territory with 400 or 500 followers out of my disloyal subjects of Kunar. He was foolish enough to think that having 400 or 500 men armed with old guns to support him, he would be able to make himself a king. My officials, named Sirdar Abdul Raswul and Mir Sina Gul, opposed him, but he would not fight. He returned to the same hill again, where

¹ In 1881.

² (A) A province on the north-east of Kabul, near the Indian frontier.

(B) Syad Ahmed, who was the cause of certain troubles on the Indian borders, is a son of the above-mentioned Syad Mahmud. The Indian Government made him a very handsome allowance. He returned to Kabul in 1897, and is now a favourite of the Amir.

he kept on intriguing with the ignorant fanatics of Kunar. Six months later, having by this means collected a large number of followers, he again rose against me. At this time, I had returned from Kandahar after my victory, so I appointed Ghulam Haidar Charkhi my Commander-in-Chief, and Abdul Ghafur to fight against Syad Mahmud. My Commander-in-Chief, having fallen from his horse on the field of battle, broke his ankle, but my brave soldiers continued fighting until they forced Mahmud to fly towards India, thus decisively defeating him, and burning the houses of those people who protected him.

In the same year, 1881, Shere Khan, son of Ahmad of Kilman, falsely called himself Amir Shere Ali, and tried to deceive people into acknowledging him as Amir Shere Ali, and to join him in a rebellion against me. But before he succeeded in causing any serious trouble he was taken prisoner, and died in captivity.

In the year 1882, the following small battles took place :—

Dilawar Khan, Wali of Maimana, who considered himself a supporter of Ayub and Shere Ali's family, having realised that Ayub was defeated by me, and, further, that he could no longer maintain his independence, as the province of Maimana was within the boundaries of my dominion, tried every possible means to keep himself isolated. In consequence of this desire he first wrote to the Russian officials ; but, receiving no help from them, he wrote to Sir Robert Sandeman, Governor-General in Baluchistan, saying that he considered himself a servant of the British Government, and asking for help. In reply he was told to submit to my rule, as neither the British nor the Russian Governments could, according to their treaties, inter-

fere in the internal policy and affairs of Afghanistan. He was accordingly left alone to suffer for his stupidity. I instructed my Governor of Turkestan, named Mahomed Ishak, to send an army against Dilawar Khan, which he did, but he reported to me that the Wali was too strong to be defeated. I believe that Ishak was playing me false, and that he was disloyal all the time that I had been regarding him as a sincere well-wisher and loyal official. His disloyalty was proved later on.

In the same year I sent forces against Mir Yussif Ali, of Shignan and Roshan,¹ the causes for which procedure were as follows:—

Though the above-mentioned Mir had announced himself an independent ruler, he was not contented with that; he considered that perhaps I should annex his country to my own dominions at some future time. To avoid this, therefore, he first commenced negotiations with the ruler of Kokand, and later, with the Russian Government. He invited Dr Laberd Regel, the Russian Explorer, to Shignan, and put the following complaints before him: That the Amir of Afghanistan wished to annex his country to his own dominions, and he considered himself under Russian protection. I was already tired of the

¹ "Two small hill states extending from the Pamirs across the Panja or Upper Oxus. These miniature principalities, between which there is a close connection, had been under the rule of Mir Shah Yusuf Ali, the descendant of Shah-i-Khamosh, a dervish from Bokhara, who first converted the Shignis to Islam, then ruled over them. Like many other Chiefs in this part of Central Asia, the native rulers also claimed descent from Alexander the Great, of Macedon. Legends of Sikandar Zilcarnein, Alexander of the Two Horns, are still current in the country about the Upper Oxus. (Sikandar, after he had conquered the regions of the world, took counsel with his wise men, saying: 'Find me a place out of reach of the Sultans of the time, where I may place my descendants.' The counsellors chose Badakshan, *Tarikh-i-Rasidi*). One tradition is, that a famous magician, who had helped Alexander to capture Bagdad, cast spells about him, and transported him to Kali-i-Khumb in Darwaz. Many years afterwards, Alexander's daughter, Diva Peri, having transformed herself into a bird, discovered where her father was, killed the magician, and set the imprisoned King at liberty."—WHEELER.

troubles he had made in Afghan territory, and intended to punish him, sooner or later, waiting only for a suitable time. On this occasion, however, my detectives and spies in various towns, viz. Kokand, Roshan, Shignan, and Bokhara, informed me of his intentions, and that he had submitted himself to Russian rule. They also informed me that he had invited the Russians to his country, a fact that caused me anxiety ; because if the Russians once occupied Roshan and Shignan, I could not repel them, and my Government would be unsafe. I therefore ordered General Katāl Khan and Sirdar Abdullah Khan—the latter Governor of Kataghan—to march against Mir Yussif Ali. After a small skirmish the Mir was taken prisoner and brought to Kabul, together with his family. I then appointed Gul Azār Khan, of Kandahar, Governor there, and when a Russian Official, M. Ivanoff, who had been invited by the Mir himself to enter with his forces into the country arrived, it was already occupied by my Governor. The Russian claim on this country went on for years, and was not settled quite clearly until Sir Mortimer Durand's Mission visited Kabul in 1893.

After I took possession of these provinces, I put an end to the atrocities practised upon the subjects by the Mir, putting a stop also to the harsh, unbearable system of slavery. I will not say much about the bad habits and nature of the Mirs of these provinces, as I have said enough about them in the early part of my book.

In the year 1883, the Shinwari tribes, lying towards the south-east of Jellalabad all across the Peshawar road, who had been always troublesome to the rulers of Kabul, became quite unbearable. For many years they had been in the habit of looting the Kafilas, murdering the travellers, and plundering the properties and flocks of the villages. During the whole of the late Shere Ali's rule, the Peshawar road was most

dangerous, on account of the plundering by these robbers; indeed, all along the road, as far as Kabul, nobody could travel without fear of being murdered and plundered. I therefore considered it expedient to put an end to such cruelties and dangers which constantly threatened those who had dealings with these tribes.

In the winter of 1883 I left my son, Habibullah Khan, in charge of Kabul, as Governor, and myself went to Jellalabad to endeavour to restore peace and good order to the country round. I accordingly invited the chiefs and priests of the Shinwaris to meet me, speaking to them very gently, in a friendly voice, as follows: "It is against the wish and commands of God and His Prophet, that you should rob and plunder other Muslims." Though I tried very hard to persuade them to stop their bad habits, they had plundered and robbed for so many years, that they paid no heed to my advice. I may mention that Shahmad, who was Governor of Jellalabad in the time of Amir Shere Ali, used to punish those who complained against the robberies of the Shinwaris, arguing that the complainer was trying to make trouble between him and the Shinwaris.

At last, being tired of their obduracy and inattention to my advice to stop plundering the country, I began to make preparations to punish them. At this time, Nur Mahomed, son of Sirdar Wali Mahomed, together with the notorious robbers of the Sala Khel tribe, named Sadu and Dadu, joined the Shinwaris, making up a force of about 15,000 fighting men to oppose my army. I appointed General Ghulam Haidar,

now Commander-in-Chief of Turkestan, together with 3 battalions of infantry, 1 regiment of cavalry, and 2 batteries of artillery to fight against them. My subjects, who lived in the neighbourhood of the Peshawar road, requested me to give them permission to fight against the rebels, as they were tired of being robbed, but I refused, stating that it was my duty to punish those who interfered with the safety and peace of my subjects. The fighting took place four times in four different places, called Hissarak Valley, Achin, Mangal, and Mango Khel. In every one of these battles the rebels were defeated, leaving many killed and wounded upon the field. After this, the rest of the rebellious tribes became subject to my rule. The Mango Khel were either killed entirely or fled towards Tirah.

I ordered that the heads of all those who were killed in battle should be piled up in the shape of two big towers—one at Jellalabad, the other at the residential place of Shahmad, who had encouraged them in their misbehaviour; so that people, when looking at those towers built with the heads of the rebels, should know that this is the reward for those who kill travellers. I will give two lines from a Pushto poem, which gives the character of the Shinwari people :

“You may try gently for hundreds of years to make friends,
But it is impossible to make scorpions, snakes, and Shinwari, friends.”

At the end of this very same year, 1883, the Mangal and Zurmat¹ tribes rebelled against me. This rebellion was caused by events mentioned elsewhere, which was practically at the root of all the

¹ These are two provinces under Afghan rule, lying south-east of Kabul, near the borders of India.

Civil Wars. In addition to this, some of the Fraris¹ were the cause of this stirring up of the people to rebellion. A force was sent from Kabul, under the command of General Saif-ud-Din to stop the rebellion. This General was one of those lazy, stupid officers who, under Shere Ali, had got into the habit of taking their salary and doing nothing for it. Acting upon this principle, he did not fight against the rebels, and was consequently brought back to Kabul as a prisoner in the month of April 1884; another army under the command of General Katal Khan² and Yayah (a priest), being sent to replace him. After a little fighting the people were defeated, and, submitting themselves, became peaceful subjects ever after.

In 1884, it was considered necessary that Dilawar Khan, Wali of Maimana, who had proclaimed himself an independent ruler, and against whom an army was sent by Mahomed Ishak without any result, as mentioned in a previous chapter, should be brought to his senses. This time I was determined to give him no chance of holding aloof any more. I therefore gave instructions that two separate forces should proceed on Maimana; one of them was sent from Herat under the

¹ The word "Frari" means literally "one who has run away," but it is also a general term used to denote the following: (1) Those who have saved their lives by running away from their country are called Fraris; (2) those who are sent out of the country into exile by order of the Government are also called Fraris, or, sometimes, Ikhrajis (expelled); (3) those persons who accompany or follow their Chief or Sovereign into exile when he is banished from his own country are called his Fraris; as, for example, all those men, from a Brigadier to a drummer-boy, who accompanied the Amir to Russia, are called his Fraris, and also all who are with his rivals, either with Ayub in India, or with Ishak in Russia, are called their Fraris.

² This gentleman died in 1895; he was a nephew of the well-known Commander-in-Chief, Ghulam Haidar, who also died in 1898.

command of a Brigadier, Zabardast Khan,¹ which consisted of 1 battalion of the Herat infantry, 200 sowars of cavalry, and 6 guns.

The Jamshidi chief, named Yalun Dush Khan, also accompanied the Brigadier, with 600 militia soldiers. This army, under the Brigadier's orders, left Herat for Maimana on the 10th of April. At the same time Mahomed Ishak was instructed by me to march from Balkh with 5000 fighting men. The fort of Maimana is a very strong one, but after a few days' siege and a small skirmish, the insurgents submitted to my rule. Dilawar was taken prisoner for his misdeeds and brought to Kabul. Mir Hussain Khan, who had been a prisoner in Dilawar's hands, was released from gaol, and appointed Governor of Maimana in the place of Dilawar.

In the same year, having practically made myself

¹ This official has now retired. His father, Mir Alam Khan, is Governor of Kandahar, and his younger brother, Faiz Mahomed, is the Kabchi Bashi (the Head of the Keepers of the gate of the Royal Court). This is an office of secondary importance only, and consists in arranging the seats and chairs for the courtiers of the Sovereign; also to introduce all persons to the Sovereign who wish to see him. The first officer in this department is a Gentleman Usher called Aishak Akasi. This last office is now held by Sirdar Kudus Khan above mentioned, the Conqueror of Herat. When state officials or guests of the state, or any of the subjects, chiefs, or foreigners come to see the Amir, either on his own account or upon Government business, with or without an invitation from the Amir, he must wait outside the Court Hall in a waiting-room. He must then give his name, and, if requested, the reason of his visit to the Amir, to one of the Assistants of the Head Doorkeeper. This Assistant thereupon reports all particulars concerning the visitor and his business to the Head Doorkeeper; or, if he is absent, to the Gentleman Usher, who is always in the presence of the Amir from the moment that he awakes until he goes to bed. On being reported to the Amir by the Head Doorkeeper or Usher, the visitor is either invited to go in, or refused audience, as the case may be. In this way every one must approach the Amir through the intermediary of the Head Doorkeeper or the Gentleman Usher.

master of Kabul and the Kingdom of Afghanistan, including the three most important provinces of the country which had been separated from it, namely, Herat, lately under Ayub; Kandahar, under Shere Ali Wali; Maimana, under Dilawar, I considered it necessary to mark out and delimit the boundaries of my dominions with the Foreign Powers. I will not consider the Boundary question in the present chapter; a special one will be devoted to it. I merely allude here to that one point which led to a war, as will be hereafter mentioned.

A Boundary Commission was appointed by the Governments of Great Britain and Afghanistan on the one side, and by the Russian Government on the other, to divide and mark out the frontier line between Russia and Afghanistan. The head of the English Mission was Sir Peter Lumsden.

In the first place, the Russian Government were not very well pleased at my being so friendly with the English, and, as it were, turning my back upon them. I must confess that I never forgot the kindness shown to me by them during my stay in their territory, but for all that, I am bound to be friendly with the English for two reasons:—(1) because I had made an agreement with them; and (2) it suits me and my interests better.

Secondly.—They were irritated at the idea of the Afghan Government having the courage to put an end to Russian aggression by marking out its boundary line.

Thirdly.—They preferred that the Afghan Government and Russia should divide the frontiers of their

respective Governments without England's interference on behalf of Afghanistan.

Fourthly.—My going to visit Rawal Pindi was a very sore point with the Russians, because the Russian newspapers had spread rumours, at the time of the English leaving Kabul in 1880, to the effect that the British had not left Kabul on their own account, and on friendly terms with Abdur Rahman—but that on the contrary, they had run away from Kabul, after being defeated. One of the chief reasons for my going to Rawal Pindi was to contradict these false statements, and to show the Russians that I was a friend to the British. Furthermore, that the relations between the Government of Great Britain and my own Government continued to be still more strongly cemented than before. For the above-mentioned reasons, and perhaps also for the usual habit of the Russian policy to move towards the East, one detachment of the Russian army advanced towards Panjdeh. Having foreseen this danger, I considered it advisable to send a strong force to keep the Russians from entering and taking possession of the town of Panjdeh as I had done before by taking possession of Shignan and Roshan before M. Ivanoff entered. But the more I tried to impress on the English Government that it was of vital importance that a strong force should be sent at once to protect Panjdeh from Russian aggression, the less notice was taken of my appeal. The answer I received from them was: “Whatever place is in the possession of the Afghan army, the Russians dare not touch it.” Not only that, but the assurances of the British as to the safety of Panjdeh went so far to comfort my mind, that on

the 21st of November 1884, Sir Peter Lumsden wrote to me that he would see that no fighting took place between the Russian and Afghan armies. Meanwhile, the Russian force was advancing rapidly, and on the 13th of March 1885, the Russian army concentrated at Kazaltepe and fortified that place. The Afghan army was at Aktepe, towards the left of the Oxus River. It consisted of only 140 gunners with 4 brass guns, and 4 mountain battery guns, and a small force of infantry. On the 30th of March, the Afghan army was at Pul-i-khishti and the Russian army was at Kazaltepe, only a mile distant from each other. On the 29th of March, General Komaroff sent a message to the Afghan General to remove his army towards the right bank of the river, otherwise fighting would take place and they would attack the Afghan army.

Up to this moment the English officials of the Mission and their soldiers had given every assurance to the officials of my army that Russia dare not attack them so long as they did not move from their station; and, further, that if the Russians attacked my soldiers without any moving forward on their part, it would be a breach of the Conventions existing between the Powers, for which they [the Russians] would be called to account. My General, named Gaus-ud-Din, who was strictly instructed by me not to do anything contrary to the advice of the British officers of the Mission, being satisfied by the promises of the English officials, remained in his position. The following day, the 30th of March, a full brigade of the Russian army attacked the small Afghan force lying there; the English officials,

on hearing this news, together with their army and followers, fled towards Herat.

General Gaus-ud-Din Khan, and the other officers of the Afghan army, reminded the English officials of their assurance that the Russians dare not make an attack upon the Afghan position, and that if such an attack were made the Afghans were to ask for English help. Relying upon these assurances, therefore, they must not be left to meet the Russians single-handed. But this did not stop the flight of the English. The Afghans requested the English to lend them their rifles, as they would be at a disadvantage with their muzzle-loading rifles against the breech-loaders of the Russians. The rifles and powder of the Afghans were also greatly damaged by damp and rain, and were of very little use. But the English, who had promised to stand by the Afghans, refused to lend them their rifles, leaving this small force of brave Afghans to fight for themselves and be killed upon the battlefield. The English fled towards Herat without a moment's delay. I heard a statement, though I cannot be responsible for its truth, that the English army and officials were so frightened and nervous, that they fled in wild confusion, not knowing friends from foes, and owing to the intense cold, several of their poor native followers lost their lives in falling from their ponies as they rode along. Some of the officials also were thrown from their horses—I will not mention their names. But the brave soldiers of the Afghan army, who were proud of the prestige attaching to their nation, felt themselves bound to keep it up by fighting so tremendously, that a large number was killed or

wounded. But, alas! owing to the wretched rifles they had, and to their small numbers as compared with the forces of the enemy, they could do little, and a small number only reached Herat after the defeat. This cavalier treatment by the English has had the effect upon the Afghan nation of minimising the English prestige until the present time. I have tried hard to assure my people that Mr Gladstone was at that time the Leader of the Liberal Party, who were then in power, and that this was the reason why such a weak policy was adopted, otherwise the English would have made the Russians pay for their wrong-doings. My people, however, would not listen to this version, saying: "If in the future we happen to be at war with an enemy, how are we to know whether the Liberal or Conservative Party is in Power?" And, further, "If the Liberal Party was unable to help us, why did not the English army and the heads of the Mission tell us that they would run away at the last moment? So, according to the proverb, 'forewarned is to be forearmed,' we should have made different arrangements, if we had known that the English did not intend to keep their promises." It would have been an easy matter, from the month of December, when these misunderstandings began, to the 30th of March, for the Afghan army to have reached Herat from Kabul for the protection of Panjdeh, though there was no need to send an army from Kabul, there being a sufficiently large Afghan force stationed at Herat and Turkestan. In short, the Russians took the town of Panjdeh by force on the 30th of March 1885, and as no one

has had the power to re-take the town, it is still in their possession.

I was at Rawal Pindi, discussing matters with Lord Dufferin, and on the very eve of Lord Dufferin giving me assurances of British support in the event of Russian aggression upon Afghan territory, the news of the Russian aggression and taking of Panjdeh was sent me by Lord Dufferin himself. But I was not a man to get excited, and therefore took the matter calmly as a lesson for the future.¹

In the same year, 1885, I issued instructions for the subjugation and annexing to my dominions of the people of Kilman. Kilman is a peak of mountains lying towards the north-east of the province of Lamkan.² In addition to my desire to make these people peaceful subjects and to leave them independent, I had a special reason for their subjugation. This

¹ In 1895, when Mr Curzon, now Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, was discussing matters with the Amir personally, I had the honour of being the medium of intercourse between my Sovereign, the Amir, and Mr Curzon. During the course of conversation the Amir mentioned the Panjdeh incident, speaking strongly and bitterly, though under the veil of humour. Curiously enough, Mr Curzon answered that it was not his Government that was in power at that time, but the Liberal Government of Mr Gladstone. The Amir laughed heartily, saying: "I am sorry that I am not a prophet, neither am I inspired to know whether at some future time, if I am in trouble, a Liberal or Conservative Government will be in power. Also, it yet remains to be proved whether the Conservative Party will take a different course, when an occasion arises, to that taken by the Liberal Party." One of the Amir's favourite sayings is that the cleverest thing in the British Constitution is the arrangement whereby there is always one party or the other to put the blame upon when mistakes are made.

² This is the richest and most fertile province lying between Jellalabad and Kabul on the northern side of the Peshawar road. It is called Laghman, which is a corruption of the word Lamkan. The Afghan historians state that one of Noah's sons, called Mihtar Lamak, was the first who landed after the great Deluge; this province is therefore called after his name. There is a huge tomb near Mandrar, a town in Lamkan,

reason was that every person, who used to rebel or commit murders and other crimes in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad¹ used to seek protection on these peaks of the Kilman Mountains. There was no road leading to this valley, and, in fact, no guns could be transported there, nor could horsemen ride into the valley. The only possible path for foot-passengers was exceedingly narrow, with steep precipices on either side. So narrow was this path that only one man at a time could walk along it, and two or three men could easily defend it against a large army by throwing stones down upon them from above, because, however numerous the army might be, they could only approach in Indian file—one after the other. This was the cause of their strength and the reason that they had not been conquered by any force before this time.

The officers in charge of my army were :—Ghulam Haidar Khan Tokhi, Commander-in-Chief; Dost Mahomed Khan Jabar Khel (this gentleman is blind

called the tomb of the prophet Lam or Lamak. How far this tradition is true I cannot tell; though, on the other hand, it is generally believed in Kabul that the Devil was thrown into the Valley of Laghman when expelled from Paradise. This is the reason, according to the statement of the Kabulese, why the people of Laghman are so clever in deceiving and taking in other people. The Laghmanese, on their side, say that the Devil was first landed on the hill of Asmai, lying to the west of the city of Kabul, and therefore the Kabulese are greater devils than the Laghmanese. The larger part of the people, however, believe that the last-mentioned place has the honour (?) of being the Devil's first resting-place on earth. I myself believe the people of Lamkan to be the cleverest business people of all the tribes in Afghanistan, and I will leave the task of deciding which is really the Devil's place for these two tribes themselves to decide.

¹ This is the principal town between Kabul and Peshawar, and it is an important headquarter of the army. The town founded by the Great Emperor Akbar, of Delhi, was formerly named Jellal-ud-din, after whose name the town is called Jellalabad, which means "founded by Jellal."

now); Mir Sana Gul (now in the Amir's service); Mahomed Gul Khan Jabar Khel (he died in prison in 1896); and Mahomed Afzal Jabar Khel (he is also dead). There were two kinds of soldiers under these officers, namely, regulars and some militia from the hill tribes, who were especially skilled in mountain-climbing. When it grew dark the officials pulled themselves up by ropes to the top of the peak of one of the hills, not going near the path held by the rebels; and having in this way concentrated their forces without the enemy in the valley knowing anything of their movements, they attacked him. The enemy's force was not a large one, only 1000 families being the whole population. After a slight skirmish the people were defeated, and they accordingly made peace, promising to live as peaceful subjects in the future.

But they broke their promise and Oath of Allegiance, and, in 1886, treacherously killed one of my Lieutenant-Colonels, together with 200 soldiers under him, who were stationed there. This time the above-mentioned Commander-in-Chief attacked and conquered them, driving the whole population before him out of the valley, and not leaving a soul behind. Other lands were given to them, in compensation for those they had lost, in the provinces of Girishk, Zurmat, and Khost, far away from their original homes. They were replaced by the people from Lamkan and other provinces.¹ In this way the troubles of this valley ended for ever.

¹ The usual mode of exile in Afghanistan is that when a certain tribe or family commit a serious crime or rebellion or intrigue, so that there is any real or probable danger of the peace being broken, such people are removed from the province or place where they have been agitating and

The General Rebellion in 1886 and 1887.

Of the Civil Wars which occurred since the day of my accession to the throne up to the present day, some were, comparatively speaking, small, and were speedily put down by an ordinary force and attention, without causing me much anxiety, or being followed by any serious consequences. There were others which took rather a serious form, and extended over a long period; more than that, there were troubles and signs of a general rebellion all over the country, which resulted in four civil wars; namely:—(1) The war with Mahomed Ayub at Kandahar, in 1881, as I have before mentioned. At this time the ignorant priests had tried to incite the people all over the country to rise against me in a religious war, but they failed to do so; (2) the Ghilzai rebellion, about which I shall write in this section, lasted for about two years; (3) Mahomed Ishak's rebellion at Turkestan in 1888; and (4) Hazarajat in a general rising in the years 1891, 1892, and 1893. The two last-named will be mentioned later on; here we are only concerned with the general Ghilzai¹ rising.

exercising such evil influence, and sent to another part of the kingdom. Here they are given lands and homes, equal in value to the immovable property they have left, such as houses and lands. There are some exceptions to this rule; for instance, those who are the Amir's enemies, and who have friends living in India or Russia, are sent into exile to the places where their friends live.

¹ *Ghil*, in the Pushto or Afghan language, means a thief, and *Zai* means son: the meaning of the whole word is, consequently, "stolen son." The story of the origin of this word is as follows: One of the daughters of an ancient Afghan King fell in love with a prince, called Mir Hussain, who was in exile, and married him without her father's knowledge, and a son

The causes which led to this general rebellion and their consequences are as follows :—

(1) The first cause, as I have said elsewhere, was that during the reign of Shere Ali and Yakub, owing to their bad administration and weakness, nearly every mullah and khan (chief) considered himself independent, and they gave themselves the airs of princes and prophets. The mullahs and khans of the Ghilzais came largely under this category ; they were the strongest, most warlike and bravest tribe in Afghanistan ; in numbers, also, they were one of the three largest tribes of the country ; viz. Duranis, Hazaras, and Ghilzais. The Turkomans also are a very large tribe under Afghan rule ; some may say that the Hazaras are also Mongolians, but they are included in the Afghan tribes, for the reason that they are spread all over the country, and not separate, as the Turkomans are. The Ghilzais had very influential chiefs, with a considerable number of fighting men. These khans or chiefs, as well as their armies, were very cruel and harsh to the subjects, their cruelties, their unlimited authority, their excessive taxation, their robberies and plunderings, their attacks on the caravans, their constant warfare with each other, the wholesale slaughter of humanity in general, were well known to the people, not only of the country itself, but to the world at large. It was natural, therefore, that I, who was the least likely person in the world to allow such

was born to them. The King, upon making enquiries about the child, was informed by his daughter that, as nobody knew that her husband was a prince, she was afraid that her father would not consent to her marriage to an ordinary person, though she knew him to be of royal birth. The father jokingly replied that her child should be called "Ghilzai," meaning "stolen son," and so the descendants of that child are called Ghilzais, now one of the bravest and strongest tribes in the country. In this tribe still, with very rare exceptions, the women choose their husbands for themselves, and they are not shut up in harems. The ceremonies connected with selection of husbands, their engagements and marriages, which are most interesting and peculiar, are described in my book "On the Marriage Customs and Social Life of the Afghans," which I hope shortly to publish.

misbehaviour under my very eyes, should be hated by them, and that every possible attempt would be made to upset my rule.

The poet Sadi says :

“The reason why the meadow-snake doth bite the shepherd
Is that the shepherd’s hand is first to break the snake’s head.”

(2) I had imprisoned Shere Khan Tokhi Ghilzai, who had rebelled in 1881, as has been mentioned in a former chapter, and several of his friends and followers were offended about it.

(3) Asmtullah Khan and other Ghilzai chiefs were friends or relations of the late Shere Ali’s family, and therefore were in communication with my enemies. They were intriguing amongst the tribes, and for this Asmtullah Khan was arrested in 1882. He was a Ghilzai chief, and the cause of some of the agitation.

(4) The well-known mullah, Mushk-Alim (“fragrance of the universe”—I called him *Mush*-Alim, “the mouse of the universe,” a more appropriate name for him than the first, because his face was like that of a mouse, and his behaviour still more contemptible)—joined with the so-called Ghazis who used to extort money from the people. They called themselves Ghazis and Mullahs in order to appear like great men and people of importance in the eyes of the subjects. As I had stopped all this nonsense, they tried to give me trouble by using the great influence they exercised over the ignorant, uncivilised people of the Ghilzai nation, to which they themselves belonged. They continued their intrigues for years, and succeeded in kindling a fire from which sprang a civil war which caused great bloodshed and misery to thousands of people.¹ Allah

¹ One of the Amir’s favourite sayings is : “More wars and murders have been caused in this world by ignorant priests than by any other class of people ;” and further, he frequently says that, if it were possible, he would kill every one of them. He also says that the great drawback to progress in Afghanistan has been that these men, under the pretence of religion, have taught things which were entirely contrary to the principles and teaching of Mahomed, and that, being false leaders of religion, the sooner they are got rid of the better. He has once or twice tied up their long beards to a rope, or to each other’s beards, ordering the one to pull away from the other.

says in the Holy Koran, by His Blessed Prophet, Mahomed, "Live ye on God's earth with justice and peace, and do not be the cause of quarrels and bloodshed, as the Almighty Allah loveth not those who break the peace on His earth." Alas! the actions of the priests are quite contrary to the teachings of the religion to which they belong.

(5) I had issued orders to collect the revenue from the country, which was in arrears, and people did not like to pay.

(6) In such a country as Afghanistan, where the Treasury was empty, and a great deal of money was required for the internal expenses, as well as for the building and keeping in order of the fortifications of its frontiers against powerful foreign aggressors, who, like hungry vultures, are anxious to swallow their weak victim, money was badly needed. Nearly half the revenue of the whole kingdom was given by the Government as allowances to the mullahs, syads,¹ and numerous so-called saints, or holy leaders, under the name of Pirs. This was a double injury and cause of the ruin and weakness of the Government. (1) There was a loss of half the state revenue which was collected by these people, who had no right to it, and did nothing to earn it. (2) It induced people to live a lazy life and get Government money for doing nothing, rewarding them for being helpless creatures of no use to their country or to themselves. I put a stop to these numerous allowances, which were such a burden on the Government Treasury, with one stroke of my pen, by saying that salaries would be paid to those only who performed services according to their merits, and they would have to pass certain examina-

¹ The descendants of Mahomed, through his daughter Fatima, are Syads. The word means Sirdar or head. It is a curious thing that though the only descendants of Mahomed are from his only daughter, Fatima, who also did not leave many children, yet the Syads are to be found spread over every Mahomedan country in such large numbers, that the Amir says he does not believe that they are all Syads; in fact, according to Mahomed's own words, they do not prove themselves to be true Syads, because they do not follow his example as they ought to do amongst their fellow-believers in ten points—generosity, charity, mercy, kindness to each other, piety, virtue, love of peace, self-sacrifice, etc.

tions to prove their right to be paid. In this way the allowances of all these self-important men, including the family of the above-mentioned "mouse of the universe," and many other mice of the same kind, were stopped. This money was paid to the brave soldiers who were employed to kill such miserable injurious mice, so that they do not make holes in people's houses by their unjust extortions any more.

This step caused the greatest sensation among the mullahs, leaders of religion, and so-called saints, who complained loudly, and the rebellion with which we have to deal was the result of this summary treatment. Luckily, however, in this rebellion, I got rid of all the "mice" for ever.¹ The first attempt made by these people to overthrow my rule was reported to me in April, 1886, when they wrote a letter addressed to Her Majesty, the Queen of England, forwarding it through Sir Oliver St John. In this letter the Ghilzais said :—

"If you ever intended to benefit and support the depressed and oppressed people of Afghanistan, you could not find a better chance than this, but you must give us help without any delay."

Whether this letter ever reached any of the responsible ministers of the British Government or not I cannot say, but this much I do know, that it produced no answer to the rebels. They further invited Mahomed Ayub to come over from Persia to join them, but his attempts to enter the country were unsuccessful. This will be alluded to later. What other means the rebels took I am not concerned about ; so much, however, is

¹ In the Persian language the word, *Mushk-Alim*, meaning "fragrance," which was the name of the mullah, signifies also a "small mouse," if a little more accent is placed upon it, without altering its construction, and the Amir thus makes a sarcastic use of the word, veiled in its ambiguity, to denote a small and insignificant thing.

certain, that after intriguing secretly with no success, they openly took up arms against me, as I will proceed to relate.

The war commenced in the autumn of 1886 by Shere Khan, son of Mir Ahmad, killing the son of Sirdar Gul Mahmud Khan, grandson of Sirdar Kuhandil Khan of Kandahar, on his way from Kandahar to Kabul, at a place midway between Mashaki and Chahardeh, Shere Khan took possession of his wife, family, and property, and carried them away. Another raid was made at Mashaki by the Ghilzai people of Andar and Hotak on one battalion of the Durani nation, which was marching from Kandahar towards Kabul, with Mirza Syad Ali, which, having been only lately recruited, were as yet without arms. In this raid the Ghilzais carried away 140 Government camels, 80 tents, and 30,000 rupees. On hearing of the trouble caused by the Ghilzai tribe, to which Mushk-Alim belonged, I ordered out General Ghulam Haidar Khan Tokhi, Haji Gul Khan, Commandant (now Brigadier), and Colonel Mahomed Sadik Khan (now Brigadier at Kandahar), together with 2 battalions of infantry, 4 regiments of cavalry, and 2 batteries of artillery. This force arrived at Ghazni, where small engagements took place at two places called Dahan-i-Shir and Nani, in which the rebels, being defeated, dispersed.

During the winter the people were quiet, but all the while they were engaged in secret plots and preparations to stir up all the Ghilzais against me, and, having succeeded in their plans, a general rising took place in the month of March. A mullah, Abdul Karim, son of Mushk-Alim, issued a proclamation in the month

of March, 1887, to the effect that he had already 12,000 fighting men with him, and therefore, if these tribes also joined him, the victory would certainly be theirs.

As it was reported to me that in the risings of the autumn of 1886, which are described in the preceding paragraph, the people of Hotak had also taken part, I instructed Sirhand Sikander Khan (now dead), father of General Ghulam Haidar Khan, to march from Kandahar to the Hotak province, and to collect one sword and one rifle per house, as a fine from the people of Hotak. The arrival of Sirhand added to the fury of the already discontented people of Hotak, and a general rebellion broke out throughout Andra, Hotak, Tarakki, and other Ghilzai tribes, who, having sent their wives and families to Waziri, Zhob, and Hazara, took arms to fight against my troops. At that time I had not a strong army in the Ghilzai country, and large towns, such as Ghazni, Kalat-i-Ghilzai, and Maruf, were insufficiently fortified. General Ghulam Haidar Khan had only two battalions of infantry, and three regiments of infantry with him. I at once gave orders that 600 foot soldiers, under the command of Colonel Sufi, in the same month of March, should march out to support Sikander Khan's column. I also ordered some militia infantry and the newly-formed Durani battalion to join Sikander Khan. The last-mentioned body of men did not prove to be of very great service. I also quickly sent other forces from Kabul to support General Ghulam Haidar Khan.

The fortunes of war turned first in favour of the rebels. Isa Khan, Governor of Maruf, was defeated

on his way, as he was going to join hands with Sikander Khan. The rebels who defeated him were under the command of Shah Khan Hotak. On the 12th of April, Sikander Khan opened a battle at the same time and place with the rebels, where he was at first defeated, but he finally obtained the victory.

At the same time war was going on to the north also, where General Ghulam Haidar was fighting gallantly against the Tarakki and Andri Ghilzais, and, after a hard struggle, succeeded in pushing his way through to join hands with the forces of his father, Sikander Khan, who had been defeated by the Hotaks. This junction of the troops took place in May, the united forces comprising 4 battalions of infantry, 2 regiments of cavalry, and 18 guns. In addition to these were some loyal subjects, under the command of Bahlol Khan Tarakki, helping the Government army. The enemy's force numbered 30,000 fighting men, who had given the title of Amir to their leader, Shah Khan Hotak. The rebels were continually being reinforced and supported from all directions; the disloyal Ghilzais were also rising to join them. It was rumoured that they had sent a request for help to the Russians, and the people of Maimana, Herat, and Ayub in Persia, which had been responded to by the people of Herat and Maimana.

The greater number of my army, stationed at Herat, were Ghilzais who, hearing that their nation and kindred had arisen against me, changed their attitude also, and on the 6th of June 1887, a considerable number of the Hazara battalion of the Ghilzais, stationed at Herat, mutinied in the fort of that town.

The number of these disloyal soldiers who mutinied was about 800. They plundered part of the magazine and surrounded my Commander-in-Chief in the fort, making him a prisoner. But my other soldiers, who were also at Herat, remained loyal, and took up arms against the traitorous mutineers who could not stand before them, and finally left Herat for Andra to join the rebels there. Some of the disloyal soldiers also joined a large force of the rebels which had gathered at Murghab, and this fact, by greatly encouraging the rebels, caused much anxiety to the loyal officials. It was feared that many people were only waiting to see which way the scale balanced to throw in their lot with the rebels. At this critical moment when the traitors from my own army had joined hands with the rebels, rumours were spread abroad by the ignorant mullahs and by my enemies to the effect that Herat was in the possession of the rebels, and that the people of Maimana and other parts of the country had risen. But my brave General, Ghulam Haidar Khan, succeeded in defeating and dispersing the rebel army, wherever he encountered them. At this time he defeated a large gathering of the Hotak tribe, at Ata Gurh, and having broken them up into small parties, he left his father in charge of the place, himself marching further north, where he fought another battle with the Tarakki tribe, near Dand-i-Aba Istadah. Here he gained the victory, and marched towards Murghab, where the mutinied soldiers of Herat were joined in strong force with the rebels. I hastened to send two battalions of infantry and 400 cavalry sowars from Kabul to support the chief in the month of June, and on the 27th of July

these combined forces defeated and dispersed one of the columns of the rebel army which was on its way to join the main body. After accomplishing the defeat of these rebels, the General marched against their important concentrated main body. The transport and Commissariat arrangements for moving and feeding the rebel troops were so bad, that the men were almost at the point of death from scarcity of food. In short, they were decisively defeated by the General, and though small skirmishes continued during the month of August, they were of no very great importance, as the general spirit of rebellion had been cooled down by the disastrous defeat of the enemy.

Mullah Abdul Karim fled towards Kuram, his brother Fazal Khan being taken prisoner and killed. Timur Shah Ghilzai, who was my Deputy Commander-in-Chief, and had been found guilty of negligence at the time of the war of Panjdeh, in 1885, but whom I pardoned at the time, was reported to have taken an active part in the rebellion against me; with him also were one of the captains and an orderly. He was taken prisoner and brought to Kabul, and I ordered him to be stoned to death on the 13th of July, for the crime of high treason. This execution was meant as a lesson to other military men, that they might know how wicked it was for a man, who had been raised to such a high and exalted position as Deputy Commander-in-Chief, to take up arms against his own master, whose salt and bread he had eaten for so many years.

When General Ghulam Haidar Khan returned to Kabul, after his glorious victory, I raised him to the rank of Deputy Commander-in-Chief, and gave him

a diamond medal for his services. I also sent a large number of soldiers of the Kabul army one day's march, to act as a guard of honour for his reception, under Parwana Khan. Thus ended the serious troubles with the Ghilzais for ever.

Ayub, having heard the news of the victory of the rebels, fled from Persia, unknown to the Persian Government. But the shrewd and clever system of my Intelligence Department is such that no person of any importance can move in Persia, Russia, India, or in Afghanistan, without being noticed and reported.¹

¹ There is no country in the world, perhaps not even in Russia, where there are so many spies and such a perfect Detective Department as in Afghanistan. Every house is believed to have a spy ; a wife is afraid of her husband being set as a spy upon her, and the husband is afraid of his wife. There are not wanting many instances where children report against their parents, as did the son of Sirdar Dalu against his own father ; the wife of Mistri Kutb betrayed her own husband. In fact, there are hundreds of cases of this kind every year in which sons, relatives, and dearest friends betray suspected persons, who, being proved guilty, are punished, and the spies are rewarded by the Amir. This is the cause of a general terror ; every one fears everybody else. But the Amir is obliged, for his own safety, to be on his guard against the plottings and machinations of a people who have killed their kings and chiefs in the past, and who are always intriguing with the Amir's enemies both inside and outside his dominions. I will quote one out of many instances to show how important it is to keep a strict watch all over the country. In 1891, when nearly the whole of the army was sent out of Kabul to fight against the Hazaras, a number of men in good positions joined in a conspiracy and about a hundred men joined them. One night they determined to fire the gaol, which was in the centre of the city of Kabul, and at a time when the small force of city police were engaged in putting out the fire, a service usually performed by them ; the Amir would thus be left without a sufficient guard, and the coast would be clear for them to go and kill him. It would then be an easy matter to raise a rebellion and sack and plunder the city and all over the country. The Amir, having his spies in the cells of the gaol, was informed of the plot only a few hours before the mischief was to be done ; the plotters were caught, together with the letter of communication with those in the cells of the prison.

Those who blame the Amir for this department and for setting spies upon the people, must remember that he is forced to it for his own safety

On hearing of Ayub's proposed movements, I placed guards all over the frontier, to take him prisoner on his crossing the borders into my dominions. When he arrived at my frontier at Ghuryan, he saw my guards there waiting to welcome him, and instead of gaining the Kabul crown, he had a very unpleasant time in saving his own life. He fled to the desert of Khorassan, where he hid himself, and escaped with very great difficulty from the grasp of those who were waiting to offer him the crown! As the poet says :—

“Any person who knocks his head against the solid rock,
does not hurt the rock, but breaks his head.”

After a hard struggle and with great difficulty, Ayub managed to hand himself over as a state prisoner into the hands of General Maclean, the Viceroy's Agent at Mashhad. After some correspondence, the wise step was taken by Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy, to bring Ayub from Persia to India, where he is still living, and safe from falling into the hands of my brave soldiers.

Ishak's Rebellion

I now come to the third and most important civil war which took place in 1888; the causes which led to it and the consequences that were the result are mentioned further on for the information of the readers

and that of his family. Of course there are many instances of false reports being made by the spies, who have been bribed by enemies who thus seek to revenge themselves on those who have offended them. When such reports are found to be false the spies are severely punished. A mullah, named Kishmash, once made a report against the Amir's own son. The charge was proved to be untrue, and the spy was blown from the mouth of a gun.

of my book. I have mentioned elsewhere that before I started from Russia for Afghanistan by one road, I had sent three of my cousins, namely, Sirdar Kudus Khan, Sirdar Sarwar Khan, and Ishak Khan, towards Maimana. The full details of their journey have been given in previous chapters. But to introduce the principal rebel, Ishak Khan, my disloyal and traitorous cousin, I must give some account of him. He was an illegitimate child of Mir Azim, my uncle, and his mother was an Armenian Christian girl, who was one of the women in the harem, and not one of my uncle's wives. The readers of this my book are fully informed of the character of Ishak's father from what they have read in previous chapters. They will also remember the services I rendered him in placing him on the throne at Kabul, after my father's death. My father had been the King, and I ought to have succeeded him, but I offered the throne to my uncle. All the services that I rendered him up to the moment of his death, and the kind treatment and protection I showed to his son Ishak and his other sons need not be repeated here, as they have been already given elsewhere. These kindnesses were all forgotten, and my readers can form their opinion of the ingratitude of Ishak. It must also be remembered that all the mischief caused in our family was from the hands of Mir Azim, who made my father and Shere Ali enemies to each other. The same love of mischief-making was in the nature of Azim's son, Ishak, and was sure to show itself sooner or later. When I left Russia I exacted an Oath of Allegiance from my followers, and I have now at Kabul the Holy Koran which was

signed and sealed by Mahomed Ishak at that time also, he swearing to give me loyalty, sincerity, and allegiance.¹ Having appointed him as Viceroy and Governor of Turkestan in the first year of my reign, I placed full confidence in him and in his Oath of Allegiance. All the Governors and military officers whom I used to send from Kabul to Turkestan were strictly instructed by me to look upon Mahomed Ishak Khan at all times as my brother and son. The weekly applications he used to make to me at Kabul, which are now in my office, are full of assurances of his obedience and faithfulness. He always addressed me as a most sincere son and obedient servant would address his father and master. He signed his letters with the words, "Your slave and humble servant, Mahomed Ishak." In consequence of this I addressed him, "My dear son and brother." Having not the slightest idea of his disloyalty, I placed the best rifles and arms to be got at Turkestan under his disposal, because he was on the frontier of Russia, and I thought it wise to keep the largest stores of every kind there—war materials as well as food, forage and provisions of all kinds ready for any case of emergency—and I continue to do so still. I did not know then that my own weapons and money would be used against myself, and the bullets from the best breech-loading guns and

¹ The Koran is more used in Afghanistan for making and breaking oaths than for purposes of religious instruction and learning God's commands. Oaths on the Koran between brothers and friends are being made and broken all day long. Examples are many of the ease with which oaths are taken and broken. I will mention one only: Amir Shere Ali made an oath on the Koran with Amir Afzul the day before taking him prisoner.

rifles which I had placed in his hands would be fired at my own breast. He was as false as his father. From the very first day that I left him at Turkestan, he represented that the expenses of the army, which I had stationed there in strong force, were so great that the income of the country was insufficient to pay them. I therefore frequently sent money to him, which I collected from other provinces, so that my soldiers might be paid. All this time Ishak was collecting gold and guns, making secret preparations, and intriguing against me. He posed before the people of Turkestan as a holy saint and a very virtuous strict Mahomedan. He would get up early in the small hours of the morning to attend prayers in the mosque, a procedure which misled one portion of the Mahomedans, namely, the mullahs, who only care for those people who say long prayers and keep fasts without taking their actions into account. These ignorant mullahs did not remember the saying of the holy saint, Abdullah Ansar, which runs as follows:—"To keep many fasts is to save your food; to say many prayers is the business of the idle widows to escape work; but to help others is the true devotion of heroes." The same saint says also: "To fly in the air is no miracle, as the dirtiest flies can do it; to cross the rivers without a bridge or boat is no miracle, as a terrier-dog or a dry piece of straw can also cross it, but to win and help the suffering hearts is the miracle required from holy men."¹

¹ Superstitious people used to believe that a person who is really a saint can cross a river without boat or bridge, and that they could fly from one town to another, which is also now the belief of occultists, and it is to this belief that the great philosopher of Herat, Abdullah Ansar, refers. There are many traditions connected with these supposed miracles; one con-

The second deceit that Ishak practised upon the uneducated Mahomedans was that in addition to being an ecclesiastical leader and mullah, he entered into the group of the disciples of one of the Dervishes of the Nakhshbandis. This famous mystic sect of Dervishes, entitled Nakhshband, was founded in the time of Tamerlane by a holy saint of Bokhara, named Khwaja Baha-ud-Din.¹

There is no doubt that the teachings of the founder of this sect were most reasonable as well as sacred, but many of the pretenders of his sect are false; their

cerning the tomb of a saint called Shahshid, at Kabul, may be given. This tomb has been newly restored and rebuilt by the Amir Yakub. The saint who is buried therein was named Khwaja Ishak of Khatlan, and lived in the kingdom of Kolab, several hundred years ago. He once saw a group of the followers of one of the greater saints, named Mir Syad Ali of Hamadan, crossing the Oxus river without any bridge or boat, and he asked their leader to let him ride behind him on his horse and so get over the river. At one spot where the water was very swift the man told the saint to grasp him round the waist, so that he should not fall into the river. The saint replied: "I will hold you tight in this world as well as in the next." The thought that all men were parts of the one soul of God was revealed to the man's soul, and made such an impression on him, that he became a devoted disciple of this saint.

¹ There are four principal mystic sects in Mahomedanism, viz.: (1) Nakhshband; (2) Kadriya, founded by Shere Abdul Sheikh, about 700 years ago, he is buried at Bagdad; (3) Chishtia, founded by Muin-ud-Din, a few years later, he is buried in Ajmir in India; and (4) Suhar Wardi, founded by Shahab-ud-Din. Sixty-four sects are flourishing all over the Islamic community, and the tombs of their founders are the centre of great devotion from all parts of the country. There is not space here to give the different practices of these devotees, but this much may be said, that the name Nakhshband was given to its founder owing to a tradition which arose that he was in the service of a potter, his duty being to attend to the firing furnaces. One day, as he was repeating in his heart the name of "Allah," he engraved by a miracle the same word "Allah" on every one of the pots which were in the furnace, so that it could be read by every one. Therefore the name of Nakhshband—an engraver—was given to him, and it is believed that, by being merely his disciple, the love of God is being impressed on the hearts of every one.

principal reason for making disciples being to extort money from them, that they themselves might lead a lazy life. They forget that it is entirely against the teachings, as well as against the practice of our Holy Prophet, who used to work hard himself, and against the practice of the founder of this sect, Nakhshband, who, as it has been shown, worked as a potter, and devoted his thoughts to the divine worship of God. The practice of his teachings is given in the following extract from a Persian poem :—

“Keep your hands occupied in work, and your heart occupied with the love of your Beloved [he means God]. Be outwardly occupied in the business of the temporal world and inwardly occupied with the culture of your soul and things of the spiritual world.”

As the Turkomans are specially devoted to this sect, Ishak Khan joined them to curry favour with the Turkomans who were under his governorship. The false Pirs of Mazar-i-Sherif told Ishak that they were inspired, and that the Khwaja Nakhshband had bestowed the throne of Kabul upon him. Ishak believed this, and publicly proclaimed himself Amir of Afghanistan.

We must go back for a little while to mention that three years before the rebellion it had been reported to me that Ishak had collected more revenue than he gave account of to me, that he had more than sufficient money for all requirements from the income of the province, and he was not justified in asking for more money to be sent him. Upon hearing this, I sent one of my officials to go into Ishak's accounts and give me a true report. But although I was told that Ishak was playing me false, I could not bring myself to believe

anything against him. On several occasions similar reports had been made, but not only did I ignore them, but strictly forbade people from speaking against Ishak.

Next year I wrote asking him to meet me and to send in his accounts, but he excused himself on the pretext that he was ill, and sent the accounts by the hands of one of his assistants. I was informed about this time that his intrigues had become unbearable; he also exacted oaths sworn upon the Holy Koran from many people to be faithful to him, and those who would not swear he punished or put to death secretly. When I heard that he was ill I sent one of my Court physicians, Abdul Shakur (who is now at Kabul), to treat him. This clever physician, knowing that his letter might be seized by Ishak's men, wrote to me that Sirdar Ishak's indisposition was mainly mental, thus delicately hinting that there was nothing at all the matter with him except malice towards me. Notwithstanding this, and the constant succession of reports which were sent me from various sources, I hesitated to believe in their truth.

But just about this time I had a long and severe attack of gout that lasted for several months. In the month of June, 1888, I became very seriously ill at my summer residence on the Lamkan Hills, about eighteen miles from Kabul; this attack continued until the month of August. Nobody was allowed to see me excepting the Court physicians and my personal attendants. As I am always accessible to people who wish to see me on any business, even when I am ill, the fact that no one was permitted to approach me

now gave rise to a rumour that I was dead, and that the news was kept from the people.¹

The disloyal Ishak to whom this report of my death had been taken, claimed to be my successor and the new Amir, deceiving many of my loyal subjects by saying that, as I had always treated him as a brother and son, he had the best title to the throne; adding that he intended to march on Kabul at once, so that the country should not fall into the possession of the English, as might easily happen, seeing that it was without a ruler. Ishak actually set to work and coined his own rupees, with the following inscription upon them :—

“Lā illah Amir Mahomed Ishak Khan.” (There is no God but one, and Mahomed Ishak Khan is His Amir.)²

When I heard this news I ordered General Ghulam Haidar Khan Orakzai, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, and General Wakil Khan (dismissed for his cowardly behaviour and defeat in running away when fighting against the bad Mahomed Ishak), Commandant Abdul Hakim Khan (son of the distinguished General Abu Ahmad and nephew of General Omar Ahmad Khan,

¹ Miss Hamilton, M.D., has described how she used to see the Amir, at the time he was so ill and under her treatment, teaching the bricklayers how to build Russian stoves in his own rooms, even putting the mortar and bricks in place with his own hands; and many Europeans who have come into personal contact with the Amir also bear witness to his great capacity for work, that even when seriously ill he cannot be idle.

² The first half of the inscription is the usual Kalima or religious phrase of the Mahomedans, and the next is Mahomed Rasululah, meaning that there is no God but one, and Mahomed is His messenger and prophet. I have seen this rupee myself, and I must say that it was a most audacious stroke on the part of Ishak to substitute his name in the sentence for that of the Prophet.

the Amir's military instructor and personal adviser, and grandson of General Shahab-ud-Din Khan, the first instructor of the Afghan artillery, now in charge of the Elephant Battery at Kabul); Brigadier Faiz Mahomed Khan (now in charge of the Amir's body-guard); Colonel Haji Gul Khan; Colonel Abdul Haya Khan; and others, together with four regiments of cavalry, thirteen battalions of infantry, and twenty-six guns, to march against Ishak by way of Bamian.¹

On the other side Sirdar Abdullah Khan Tokhi, then Governor of Kataghan and Badakshan (now in personal attendance upon the Amir), marched from the East towards Balkh. On the 17th of September, General Ghulam Haidar Khan's forces reached Aibak, two days' march from Balkh; and on the 23rd of the same month, Sirdar Abdullah Khan's forces joined hands with that General. On the 29th of September the battle was fought in the Valley of Ghazni Gak, three miles south of the town of Tashkurghan. The battle was a very severe and tedious one, as Ishak's army, numbering from 20,000 to 24,000 soldiers, together with himself and his son Sirdar Ismail, were trying their best to win the victory, knowing that this battle would decide the fortunes of both parties, one way or the other. On the other hand, readers of the preceding chapters in this book know that I had no more devoted and trusted friend than Sirdar Abdullah Khan, or a better trained

¹ Bamian is the most important town in the centre of Afghanistan, near Ghazni, and is supposed to have been flourishing at the time of Buddha, whose huge statue is still standing outside the town. This statue is considered to be the most famous work of art existing among the ruins of Central Asia. The statue is so gigantic that hundreds of pigeons have their nests inside the ears of the figure.

and experienced officer than General Ghulam Haidar Khan. Neither of these officials were to be defeated easily. Mahomed Ishak was a coward, as was his father before him ; he did not fight in person, but his military officers, who were selected men given to Ishak by myself to face the Russians if necessity arose, were all brave and experienced men, such as, for instance, General Mahomed Hussain Khan, Colonel Fazal-ud-din Khan, and others.

From early in the morning until late night the soldiers of both armies fought hard and steadily ; so many were killed and wounded on both sides that they could not be counted. At length, late in the afternoon, one column of my army, under the command of Sirdar Abdullah Khan, General Wakil Khan, and Commandant Mahomed Hussain, and Abdul Akin, was cut off from the main body and very severely defeated by Ishak's forces, under Mahomed Hussain Khan Hazara.¹ On the other hand, while the battle was still raging between General Ghulam Haidar Khan and the enemy, some of the disloyal soldiers, having joined General Mahomed Hussain, galloped towards the hill where Mahomed Ishak was seated, to submit themselves to him. He, thinking that these men were galloping towards him to take him prisoner, and that his army was defeated, fled away. His army continued to fight against General Ghulam Haidar Khan until long after sunset, till it was quite dark, while Ishak busied himself in running away as fast as he could.

¹ This General was taken prisoner by the Amir's army, and was kept at Kabul as a state prisoner ; he ran away in 1895, and has never been heard of since.

When the news was taken to the soldiers that their master had fled, they lost heart, and were ultimately defeated. In short, on the 29th of September, a glorious victory was won by my General, Ghulam Haidar Khan.

The other part of my army that had been defeated, on the other hand, fled so heedlessly, that they did not rest until they reached Kabul; many, indeed, went to their own country and homes without going near Kabul. They spread reports all over the country that General Ghulam Haidar Khan had been killed; that the whole of my army which had been sent against Ishak was dispersed; in fact, that my rule was at an end. I did not, however, follow the example of some of the Afghan rulers, such as Shere Ali Khan, or my Uncle Azim, who ran away after a defeat. I waited patiently for a day when, luckily, the next morning, after the defeated army had reached Kabul, the news of the victory and rout of the enemy was brought. This proved that victories are in the hands of God; that though the enemy's forces were at first victorious, and my army was defeated, yet still, as it was the wish of God that I should continue to be the ruler of the flock of His creation—His people of Afghanistan—the enemy fled, and the victory was in my hands.

Some of Ishak's officers galloped to him to give him the news of the victory of his army; he would not believe them, and killed them on the spot, saying that they were traitors, and wanted to stop him treacherously, so that they might give him into the hands of his enemies.

As a reward for the distinguished services rendered by my brave General, Ghulam Haidar Khan, I sent him another diamond star and raised him to the rank of Commander-in-Chief of Turkestan, which post he still holds.

After this defeat of Ishak, it was considered necessary for me to go to Turkestan, for several reasons, the principal ones being: (1) To put the country into a proper state of order, and under proper administration, which had been left entirely in the hands of Ishak for several years past; (2) to take steps to send away from the country such disloyal traitors as Sultan Murad, who had taken part in helping Ishak, so that there might not be any more sources of mischief and trouble in the country; (3) it was reported to me that one of the neighbouring powers had played a part in causing the rising, a fact that had encouraged Mahomed Ishak to rebel; (4) it was reported to me that some of the responsible officers in my army stationed at Turkestan were not loyal, and would have joined Ishak if he had not been such a coward. This story, I am glad to say, was proved to be untrue, as I found upon making personal enquiries on the spot. It was also my intention to go to Herat and build there strong fortifications all along my north-western frontier to stop Russian aggression; this intention, however, was not quite successfully carried out for want of money. I had expected that the Indian Government would have helped me. But as this was not forthcoming, I spent as much of my revenue as could be spared upon works of defence, the principal and most important fort being one newly built by me at Dehdadi, near Mazar-i-

Sherif.¹ This is the largest and strongest fort throughout the whole of my dominions; it is situated on the top of a hill looking down upon and commanding the valley through which runs the main road from Russian territory to Balkh, the capital of Turkestan.

I left my son, Habibullah Khan, as Regent at Kabul, starting myself in the autumn of 1888 for Mazar-i-Sherif, whence I did not return until July 1890. At this time my most faithful and loyal old servant, General Amir Ahmad Khan, my envoy in India, died during my stay at Turkestan, and Lord Lansdowne, who had succeeded Lord Dufferin in the Viceroyalty of India, wrote to me, giving me advice on the internal affairs of Afghanistan. This advice I could not take, which probably displeased him; this matter will be further discussed in its proper place.

¹ These words mean "sacred tomb." It is believed that the fourth companion of Mahomed, and his son-in-law, Ali, the husband of Fatima, Mahomed's only child, is buried in this tomb. Fatima is believed by Mahomedans to be the Queen of Paradise. It is the shrine to which Mahomedans from all parts of the world make pilgrimages, and all the successful sovereigns from Central Asia go there to do homage and give offerings to pay the expenses of keeping the tomb in perfect condition.

Two places are said to be the seat of Ali's tomb; one is Najaf in Arabia, the other in the above-mentioned town. The reason for this doubt is owing to the fact that Ali's body was not found after he had been cruelly murdered when he was engaged in his devotions, and people believe that his body was carried away by the angels, one half of the community pinning their faith upon Mazar-i-Sherif, the other half upon Najaf. Some people, either through ignorance or from some ulterior motive, give a false impression to the minds of people of the Christian world, by saying that Mahomedans believe that women have no souls. This note shows, however, that not only do they believe in the teaching of the Holy Koran, that women *have* souls, but that Mahomed's daughter, Fatima, is the Queen of Paradise, who has great power in interceding for the souls of women who deserve Heaven, equally with the Virgin Mary and Eve, and other women who are believed by the Mahomedans to be privileged to intercede for the souls of sinners.

Sultan Murad, of Kunduz, fled and joined Ishak in Russian Turkestan, where he still resides.

The people of Badakshan also rebelled during the time I was at Mazar-i-Sherif. I punished them, and they gave me no further cause for anxiety.

Another event happened also during my stay in Turkestan. In the month of December 1888, when I was reviewing my troops at Mazar-i-Sherif, one of the soldiers fired a shot at me from his rifle. I had a very narrow escape from being killed; this narrow escape is as much a mystery to me as it was to those who were present, because it is impossible to understand how the rifle bullet made a hole through the centre of the chair in which I was seated, and instead of going into my body, hit and seriously wounded a page-boy who stood behind me. I keep that chair as a curiosity; I am a stout man, and the chair was only just large enough for me, and it is puzzling to imagine how the bullet missed passing through my chest. My belief is that if God wishes to save a person's life, nobody can kill him; for a verse in the Koran says, "Thy death is fixed, and it will neither come a moment sooner or later than that fixed time." There must be some other cause also to which I owe my safety, and I believe the following story will explain it. When I was a boy it was reported to me that a certain holy man had a charm which he wrote on a piece of paper, and any one keeping that charm about his person could never be injured by any firearm or weapon. At first I did not believe in its power to protect; I therefore tried it by tying it round the neck of a sheep, and though I tried hard to shoot the animal, no bullet injured her. This was a logical

reason for my believing in the effectual protecting power of the charm, so I placed it upon my right arm, and have worn it from boyhood until this day. My belief is that the bullet might have passed through me, yet without any sign or effect being visible.

The motives which led this soldier to try and shoot me were unfortunately not found out, as a General who stood close to him killed him with one blow of his sword then and there, though I called loudly not to kill him till further enquiries should be made, as I believed the soldier had been employed by some strong and secret enemy.

The other important event that occurred during my stay at Turkestan was that two of my wives gave birth to sons, one born on 15th September 1889, named Mahomed Omar, after the second companion of the Prophet; the other born in October, was named Ghulam Ali, after Mahomed's fourth companion and beloved son-in-law Ali; this boy is in Turkestan now for the comfort of my people, that they may be able to see him as I, their King, cannot be with them. Mahomed Omar is a rather delicate boy. He lives at Kabul, and he occasionally attends the durbar of his eldest brother, Habibullah, as do all his younger brothers, and with the same ceremony as pertains to my own durbar.¹

¹ The Amir orders all his sons to live in their respective houses in the city of Kabul, whence they go about once a week to pay their respects to the Amir, after which they proceed to the Amir's eldest son, Habibullah Khan, for the same purpose. This is a very clever practice on the Amir's part, because the young princes are taught to look upon their eldest brother as second only to their father; and, as a matter of Court etiquette, pay homage to him as well as to the Amir. (The Shahzada, who visited England in 1895, is a true brother of Habibullah Khan, the Amir's eldest son; all the others are the offspring of other wives.)

On my return to Kabul, on the 24th of July, I found that during my two years' absence my son, Habibullah Khan had governed the country so wisely, cleverly, and so entirely in accordance with my wishes, that I conferred two orders upon him, one for his distinguished services in the administration of the kingdom; the second for having very bravely put a stop to a mutiny, which was caused by my own soldiers of the Kandahar-Hazara battalion. He acted most bravely on this occasion, riding alone into the midst of the rebellious soldiers without showing any fear of their injuring him. By this plucky behaviour he showed the soldiers that he placed confidence in them; otherwise he would not have ventured among them without any body-guard. He promised to listen to and consider their grievances, and he put a stop to the mischief. He also put down one or two other minor attempts at rebellion, which had been reported to him as likely to occur at Jaji and Mangal. Since that time I authorised him to hold the public durbar in my stead, as I have such full confidence in his tact and wisdom. I reserve to myself the duties attaching to foreign affairs, together with the more important and weighty matters connected with the internal administration of my country.

As this chapter is supposed to be devoted to an account of civil wars and other disturbances, I will not here dwell further upon matters not immediately connected with them.

The Hazara War.

This is the last of the four great civil wars that took place during my rule, and I consider that the prestige, the strength and power, as well as the peace and safety of my kingdom, have gained more by this war than perhaps any of the others.

(1) The Hazara people had been for centuries past the terror of the rulers of Kabul, even the great Nādir who conquered Afghanistan, India, and Persia being unable to subdue the turbulent Hazaras; (2) the Hazaras were always molesting travellers in the south, north, and western provinces of Afghanistan, and when their maraudings were put an end to, the country became entirely peaceful and settled; (3) they were always ready to join the first foreign aggressor who attacked Afghanistan, as they believed that every Afghan was an infidel. The Hazaras themselves are Shias, while the others are Sunis.¹ Even the greatest Mogul Emperor, Sultan Babar, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, relates in his Autobiography, that he was unable to fight against this strong nation in open battle. I will quote his words, which run as follows:—"I took the field in this way, and by falling upon them by surprise at night we took the pass of Mirkh, and by the hour of morning prayers fell upon the Hazaras and beat them to our hearts' content." The Sultan Babar's Autobiography also shows that they were even at that time, in the habit of making raids upon travellers on the roads which they rendered dangerous, and not to be traversed unless protected by a strong guard.

To give a little information about the Hazara

¹ The Sunis are Mahomedana, who believe that the four companions of the Prophet have equal power; the Shias believe that the fourth companion of Mahomed, named Ali, was his only true companion, and that the other three had unjustly taken precedence over Ali.

tribes to my readers, I may mention that they are planted in the heart of Afghanistan, holding the strongest valleys and mountain peaks extending westward from Kabul, Ghazni, and Kalat-i-Ghilzai to the neighbourhood of Herat and Balkh. In addition to this large tract of country which forms their home in the very centre of the country so strongly fortified by nature, the Hazaras are spread over the country, and are to be found in every province, village, and town. It is a saying in Afghanistan that they would have had to work like donkeys if it were not that the slaving donkeys of Hazaras do all the work for them.¹ The Hazaras are a mixed race, originally descended from a military colony, founded by the Mongols. Abdul Fazal writes in the sixteenth century, that they were the remains of the army of Maryn Khan, grandson of Chengiz Khan. The general belief in Afghanistan is that a great many of the western invaders of India were in the habit of giving houses and lands to their own people all along the road to India, in order to safeguard their rear; and that this is the reason why the Mongols planted the Hazaras from one end of Afghanistan to the other, from west to east, just as Alexander the Great did in the case of the so-called Kafirs from Kokand and Badakshan to Chitral and the Punjab borders. These people are all Shias.

Having introduced to the readers of my book this great, hard-working, brave nation, their homes and origin, I will proceed to give an account of the causes

¹ All the hardest, dirtiest, and most menial work is done by the labouring classes of the Hazaras, and there is scarcely a house without its Hazara servant, in the form of slaves, stablemen, etc.

and consequences of the war. Though they were in the habit of disturbing the peace of travellers on the roads, yet this in itself was not sufficient to justify me in taking serious steps against them ; and in the second place, some of their chiefs were friendly towards me, which called for kind treatment from me in return. But in 1888, when I was irritated and grieved about the great disaster in Turkestan, and was marching to Mazar-i-Sherif by way of Turkestan, one of the tribes of the Hazaras, called the Sheikh Ali tribe, inhabiting the country lying towards the north-west of the province of Bamian, having risen against me, stopped my officials from buying provisions and forage for my soldiers and animals. This caused me a great deal of trouble on the journey. On my way back to Kabul in 1890, I left Sirdar Kudus Khan as Governor in Bamian, instructing him to invite the Hazara chiefs from time to time to see him, and by giving them allowances, rewards, and khilats, to persuade them to become peaceful subjects.

The first trouble was once more caused by the Hazaras of the Sheikh Ali tribe, who were talked over by Mir Hussain and some other chiefs, to take up arms and recommence their fighting and raids upon the caravans ; they also attacked one of my Afghan detachments. For this I determined to send an army against them ; they were defeated, some were killed, others submitted to my rule, the remainder being brought to Kabul as prisoners. I treated the prisoners very kindly, and soon restored them to their homes with admonitions to keep the peace in future, and to be loyal subjects.

In the spring of 1891 some of the Hazaras once more began their raids on the travellers, whereupon my military officials, who were stationed at Ghazni, wrote to certain Hazara chiefs, especially to those of Uruzghan, to the effect that our four neighbouring Governments would consider it a cause of weakness if our own subjects could not agree to live peaceably; we should get a bad name, and it was therefore advisable that they should recognise the suzerainty of our sovereign and cease from strife. The Hazaras had raided and plundered the neighbouring subjects for about 300 years past, and none of the Kings had had the power to make them absolutely peaceful. They considered themselves rather too strong to be defeated, and were very proud of their power. They accordingly wrote a reply to this letter, to which the seals of some two or three dozen chiefs were attached, saying:—

“If you Afghans are proud of the support of a temporal Amir, we are prouder still of the support of our spiritual Amir, the Master of the sword of Zulfikar.”

They meant that as Shias they should look upon Ali as next to God, and inferred in this letter that Ali was stronger than I. There is no doubt that Ali was our spiritual leader and companion of our Prophet, and the support of his holy spirit and soul is great. This also is certain, that such support is never granted to the wicked and rebellious. Their letter continued:

“And why did ye Afghan officials mention *four* Governments in your letter as being your neighbours? Why did ye not say *five* Governments were your neighbours, so as to include *ours*? We advise you, for your own good and safety, that ye keep away from us.”

On seeing this letter, I ordered out Sirdar Abdul Kudus Khan with a force from Bamian, General Shere Mahomed Khan from Kabul, and Brigadier Zabardast Khan from Herat, to punish the Hazaras in the spring of 1891. The command and full authority of these three officers was given to Sirdar Kudus Khan. The strongholds of the Hazaras were very difficult to take, owing to the awkward hills and the absence of roads. But Sirdar Kudus Khan fought bravely and wisely, and, having defeated the enemy, occupied the city of Uruzghan, which was the strongest centre of the Hazara people. After this defeat many of the chiefs submitted themselves to my rule, and the Sirdar sent them to Kabul to see me. I treated all who came (about 100) with great courtesy and very kindly, as I knew that they had been independent for centuries. I would not be harsh with them, but tried to win them over by kindness. I gave them all valuable khilats (robes of honour), and 1000 to 2000 rupees cash to each, which they considered abundant compensation for the loss of crops and harvests at the time when they were occupied in fighting. I then gave them leave to return to their homes.

The Hazaras remained quiet in the winter, but in the spring of 1892 they rebelled more seriously. Mahomed Azim Khan Hazara, to whom I had given the title of Sirdar, to give him equal rank with my royal family, and appointed as Viceroy of the Hazaras, treacherously joined the rebels, and was, in fact, the chief moving power in this second rebellion. This man, being a well-known official of my own appointing, exercised great influence over the general community

of the Hazaras, who rose to his call in large numbers against me ; this time they had more reason than before.

Another traitor, named Kazi Uskar, who was looked upon as the spiritual and ecclesiastical head of the Hazaras, was the supporter of Azim in this rebellion. This time they closed the doors between Kabul and Kandahar and other parts of the country to stop the movement of my forces. I ordered General Mir Ata Khan of Herat, who was at Kabul with a strong army of about 8000 men, to march against them from the Ghazni side, and Mahomed Hussain, Hazara chief, who was one of my personal attendants, and enemy of the above-mentioned Mahomed Azim, from the southern direction, to march against the disloyal Sirdar Azim. The rebels were defeated, and Azim was brought prisoner to Kabul, together with his family, where he died in prison.

Mahomed Hussain Hazara, on returning to Kabul after this victory, was so kindly treated by me, that I gave him a diamond star and the hat of a prince ; in fact, he was more honoured than any of his people or tribe, and, to crown all, I appointed him Governor of Hazarajat. As Sirdar Abdul Kudus Khan had been seriously ill, I invited him to come to Kabul to be treated by my physicians.

This traitor, Mahomed Hussain, who had been raised to such an exalted position in Hazarajat for his past services in battle, and upon whom I had bestowed so many honours, turned against me. He was not contented with inciting the newly conquered Hazaras to rebel, he further persuaded the Hazaras of Bihsud and Surkhsang, lying towards the north-west

of Ghazni, who had always been fierce subjects, to rebel. They plundered the Government war materials and ammunition and swords. This time the fire of rebellion blazed all over the country wherever the tribe of Hazaras existed—so much so that many of those men of the tribe who were prisoners at Kabul and those who were in personal attendance upon me, and very kindly treated by me as confidential servants, ran away and joined the rebels. The people of Dihafshar and Hazaras of other villages in the suburbs of Kabul went over to the enemy, and, as stated before, the Hazaras being mixed up with the Afghan population all over the country, the danger of a universal rising was great.

It was at this time that the Indian Government was pressing hard, on the one hand, to send their Mission, under Lord Roberts, with a strong army, which would have appeared to the Afghans as if the English were going to occupy the country because I could not manage the rebels myself. On the other hand, there were some troubles brewing at Maimana. Omra Khan of Bajaur was causing anxiety and threatening the Jellalabad forces, and the Indian Government would not allow him to be punished.

I was obliged to take all possible means to stop this general rebellion and anxiety.

I ordered the Commander-in-Chief, General Ghulam Haidar Khan, to march from Turkestan with all the army that he could muster. This force was to march against the Hazaras from the north-west, and another force from Herat, under the command of Kazi Said-ud-Din, Governor of Herat. I also sent Sirdar Abdullah Khan from Kandahar, and Brigadier Amir Mahomed

Khan of Taghab from Kabul, to march from the south-east. In this manner the rebels would be attacked from all directions.

Other Afghan chiefs had applied several times to raise a force of country people at their own expense to fight against the Hazaras, whom they looked upon as enemies to their country and religion. I had not given them permission to do this heretofore, but now I gave a general order that everybody would be allowed to go and help in the punishment of the rebels. The armed forces and volunteers who offered their services, numbering between 30,000 and 40,000 fighting men, started for the country of the Hazaras from all directions, under their respective chiefs and heads.

Before the arrival of these volunteers the Hazaras were defeated from three directions by the Commander-in-Chief, Said-ud-Din and Sirdar Abdullah Khan, who had all joined hands to fight with Brigadier Mahomed Khan, near Uruzghan. The Brigadier fought with very great courage and skill, and, having defeated the combined forces of the rebels, took prisoners Mahomed Hussain Khan, the traitorous Hazara chief; Rasul Khan, another Hazara statesman; Tajei Khan, the Mir of the Hazaras, and Mahomed Hassan Hazara, who was known by the name of Sangkhurd (=as hard as a stone, referring to his bravery), together with several other Mirs, chiefs, and warriors. All these prisoners were brought to Kabul, and the country was cleared of all these mischief-makers. The people are quiet, peaceful, orderly subjects, and all anxiety or fear of rebellion is at an end, and the

man is not to be found who could incite the people to rebellion, for he does not exist.

Brigadier Amir Mahomed Khan, on his return to Kabul, was made the first General in the army, and I appointed him as officer in charge of the capital of Kabul and the Royal Palace and my household. This is the greatest distinction for a military officer in Afghanistan, greater even than being Commander-in-Chief away from Kabul. This gallant General, however, deserved it, for his glorious victory. All the officers who took part in this war were rewarded according to their services. Some of the Hazaras asked to be re-appointed in their own country, but I think that the words of the poem appropriately describe the relations between the Hazaras and myself :—

“As long as you remember your son and I remember my *tail*,
To think of our friendship is an impossible *task*.”¹

It may be said that the Hazara war which has just been described was the last civil war that occurred in Afghanistan, and I earnestly hope that there will be no more danger of civil war in this country, as I believe

¹ This is one of the favourite stories of the Amir, and he often relates it. The words quoted are supposed to have been spoken by a snake which had bitten the gardener's son. One day the gardener seized the snake and tried to kill him, but the snake rushed into his hole, and as he did so one half of him being inside, the other half outside, the gardener gave him a blow with his spade and cut off the snake's tail. This frightened the snake, who would not leave his hole any more in the daytime. The gardener, however, was anxious to catch and kill him. So one day he went to the hole, and said : “Oh, my dear friend, I myself and all the flowers of the garden miss you so very much ; do come out and let us have your company ; do not leave us wretched and unhappy at your absence !” The snake is supposed to have made the answer, given in the poem, to the gardener's sweet words, which mean : “As long as you remember that your son died from my biting him, and I remember that you cut off my tail, no friendship is possible between us.”

that the policy adopted by me is calculated to keep a general peace at home. The Afghan subjects and chiefs are sufficiently enlightened to know the advantages of peace and the disadvantages of wars and rebellions, and I may confidently hope that my subjects will be as peaceful in the future as could be desired.

I have not considered it necessary, in this chapter dealing with the civil wars, to mention all the small skirmishes, such as those with the Shinwaris and other frontier robbers, or with Omra Khan of Jandol; they were of minor importance. I must, however, mention two or three skirmishes between my officials and the Russians, in addition to that of Panjdeh already mentioned, which was a battle of great importance. In the spring of 1892, Colonel Yanoff, the same Russian officer who arrested Captain Younghusband in August 1891, advanced towards Shignan, and in the month of July came in contact with the Afghan detachment under the command of Captain Shams-ud-Din Khan, at a place called Somatash, towards the extreme east of Yashilkol (=Yellow Lake). Colonel Yanoff ordered my official, Captain Shams-ud-Din, to get out and leave the place to him (Yanoff). The Captain replied that he was the servant of the Amir of Kabul, and was subject therefore only to the orders of his own master, and not to any Russian official. The Russian Colonel gave him one blow in the face with his fist. This was such an insult that the Afghan Officer could not allow it to pass, and at the moment Colonel Yanoff was pulling out his sword, the Captain pointed his revolver and fired at Yanoff. This bullet missed the Colonel, hitting only his belt, whence it glanced off

and wounded a soldier who stood by the Colonel's side, whereupon a fight took place. As there were altogether only ten or twelve Afghans, and Colonel Yanoff's force was a strong one, it was impossible to fight against such odds. Still with their usual bravery, Captain Shamsud-Din and his Afghan soldiers fought till they were all killed on the spot.

Notwithstanding this illegal and impolitic action on the part of the Russians, no effectual steps were taken by the British Government, and of course I myself, being bound by the terms of my Treaty, had not the power to treat directly with Russia. This incident may be put down in the same category as the occurrences at Panjdeh.

At the time of the Hazara rebellion also, one of the Russian officials marched straight through Afghan territory; this was a distinct breach of faith on the part of the Russian official, but he excused himself when he found some Afghan officials watching him, on the ground that he was not sober.

In the month of September, 1893, the Russian officials, having heard that Sir Mortimer Durand's Mission was on its way to Kabul, marched one detachment of their soldiers to Murghab, an Afghan town of Badakshan, and threatened the Afghan forces there. On hearing this news I at once communicated with Sir Mortimer Durand (who had by this time reached Jellalabad, midway between Peshawar and Kabul), as well as with the Indian Government. Sir Mortimer sent an urgent reply to my letter, advising me most earnestly to instruct my General, Syad Shah Khan, who was near Murghab, not to fight against the

Russians, who were going to take this town by force, as usual.

But I knew that if the Russians were left to their usual practices, they would take one town after the other, and attack my forces on the borders, and there would be no stopping them. Luckily, however, the Afghan officials this time taught them a lesson, and showed them that they could not always have their own way. General Syad Shah Khan answered the Russian guns with a strong fire; and they, seeing that my soldiers meant business, and that there was to be no humbug this time, retreated, leaving the victory in the Afghans' hands. This victory added much to the prestige of the Afghan army. Since then the Russians seem to have stopped their incursions on Afghan territory, and this was the last of the skirmishes.

In consequence of the Durand Treaty of 1893, several provinces which came under the sphere of British influence, fought hard against the Indian Government, and fortunately those who were considered my subjects stuck to their Treaty and submitted to my rule without any trouble, excepting the Waziris, who tried their usual tactics, but without doing any harm. But one nation which did fight against me were the people of Kafiristan.¹

I did not like to take by war the country of Kafiristan, which, by the Durand Treaty, was agreed to be part of Afghanistan. My idea was to make the people my peaceful subjects by kindness and clemency.

¹ This is a country or a series of mountain ranges lying towards the north and north-west of Afghanistan. Stan means "country" or "home," the word Kafiristan therefore means the home of the Kafirs, just as Afghanistan and Turkestan are the homes of the Afghans and Turkomans.

To accomplish this, I had several times invited many of their chiefs to come to Kabul, and sent them back overloaded with rupees and other rewards, so that they should go and talk about it with their countrymen. They were such savages, however, that they used to exchange their wives for cows from the neighbouring Afghans, and thus ensued many disputes whether the cow or the woman were of greater value. They did not appreciate my kindness, and with the money I had given them bought rifles to use in fighting against me.

About this time Russia, having taken Pamirs, drew near to Kafiristan from several points, and continued to advance. I considered it useless to wait any longer. The reasons that caused me to invade Kafiristan somewhat suddenly were as follows:—

(1) I thought that if the Russians took Kafiristan unexpectedly and suddenly, they would claim it as independent country, and would therefore say they were justified in keeping it, and I believed it would be difficult to force them to leave it after they had taken it.

(2) As many of the Afghan towns in the provinces of Panjshir Laghman and Jellalabad used to belong to the Kafirs in old times, the Russians might persuade them to reclaim their old possessions from the Afghan rulers. In this way it would cause the ruin of the Afghan Government, as it would give the Russians an excuse for interfering with the Afghans.

(3) That this warlike nation on the whole north-western border of Afghanistan, from east to west, would be the cause of great anxiety from the rear, at a time when my Government might be occupied in a war with any other country. It was also considered of very great importance to conquer them on account of commerce, trade, and the opening up of the roads

from Jellalabad, Osmar, and Kabul towards the north and north-western army stations of Afghanistan. The last, but not the least, reason for my conquering them was that they were always fighting with the neighbouring Afghans, many murders being the result on both sides; and the miserable system of slavery was also encouraged. They were such a brave race of people that I considered they would in time make very useful soldiers under my rule.

For the above reasons, I was determined to conquer Kafiristan. Before doing so, however, I had to consider the question of preparation and the best time for invading the country. The former was not a difficult matter; the latter, however, required grave thought. After some deliberation, I came to the conclusion that my army must make the attack in the winter, when heavy snows and frost cover the peaks of the mountains. My reasons for choosing the winter for attack were these:—

(1) I knew that the Kafirs would not and could not fight in the open field against my brave trained soldiers, but would climb to the tops of the mountains, where it would be very difficult to convey the heavy guns.

(2) I thought that if I attacked them when the passes were open, they might go over into Russian territory, to try and persuade the Russians to interfere on their behalf and get their country back for them; in which case Russia would claim suzerainty over the country, including the whole territory lying on the northern and western borders of my country.

(3) They are a brave nation, and if the attack were made in the summer, fighting would be severe. Now this would entail great loss of life on both sides; I therefore decided to descend upon them when they were shut up in their house during the winter months, without giving them the chance of much fighting.

(4) It is the habit of some Christian missionaries to interfere

wherever they have an opportunity, and I thought that they would make unnecessary trouble about my conquering Kafiristan; it was therefore necessary to lose no time in getting the fighting over and annex the country before the news could be spread abroad. In this last point those who have read the criticisms in some of the English papers will know that I was not wrong.

I accordingly made the following arrangements for invading Kafiristan. During the autumn I quietly massed a large number of soldiers, war materials, ammunition, and provisions at four stations. The main body was under several military officers of artillery, cavalry, and infantry, the whole force being under the command of Captain Mahomed Ali Khan. This column was to march through Panjshir to Kullum, the strongest and most central fort in Kafiristan. The second force was to march under the command of General Ghulam Haidar Khan, Charkhi, from the direction of Asmar and Chitral. The third force was to march from Badakshan under General Katal Khan, and a small force was to march from Laghman under the Governor of Laghman and Faiz Mahomed, Charkhi.

These four columns were all ready and waiting for orders to march at any moment. As the four stations at which the army was concentrated were on the borders of Afghanistan, and therefore at all times important military posts, nobody thought that there was anything peculiar in these preparations. Until the very moment of the attack no one had any idea that the object of all this concentration was the surprise and attack of Kafiristan. In the winter of 1895, therefore, orders were one day issued for the four

columns of the army to surround and simultaneously attack Kafiristan from all directions. This was successfully accomplished, and within forty days the whole country of Kafiristan was conquered, and the army marched back to Kabul in the spring of 1896. When the Christian missionaries heard of this, they made a great stir in England, saying that the Kafirs were their fellow Christians—though I did not find any Christians among them! Their religion, about which I have written in a separate book, was a curious mixture of ancient idol worships and superstitions.

I removed those Kafirs who had fought bravely and had been taken prisoners from their own country, and gave them a province called Paghman, near Kabul, where the climate is beautiful and the weather much resembles their own. I have opened several schools for their education, but, being a very brave nation, nearly all the young generation is being trained for military service. Kafiristan has been largely populated by retired Afghan soldiers and other warlike Afghan races, and I intend building strong forts all along the border to protect the northern frontier. When the Kafirs inhabited the country, this border was weak and entirely unprotected; it was therefore at the mercy of the Russians, who had taken Pamirs. I intend to make the fort of Kullum (which is situated in the heart of Kafiristan in the most impregnable part of the country, owing to its strong position) the military station for the main body of my army on the northern frontier. Here also will be large stores of war materials and ammunition. It will be interest-

ing to my readers to hear that a stone was found at the gate of the fort of Kullum, on which these words were engraved :

“The Great Mogul Emperor Timour was the first Muslim conqueror who vanquished the country of this unruly people up to this point, but could not take Kullum, owing to its difficult position.”

My commanding officer, Captain Mahomed Ali Khan, engraved the following inscription upon the same stone :

“In the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman Ghazi, in 1896, the whole of Kafiristan, *including Kullum*, was conquered by him, and the inhabitants embraced the true and holy religion of Islam, and engraved a verse from the Koran, which means: ‘Righteousness and virtue have come, and untruth has disappeared.’”

In this war, as in the war with the Hazaras, the Muslim community of Afghanistan offered their services voluntarily. I will also add that this was the last war in Afghanistan during my reign.

CHAPTER XII

REFUGEES AND EXILES

THERE is another matter that I consider as of very great importance during my lifetime, and which may prove to be one of vital importance after my death, in strengthening the claim of my son to the throne. I have tried by every possible means to increase the number of the rulers and chiefs of the neighbouring states of Afghanistan about my Court, as well as to gather together there the most influential followers of my rivals, either from India or Russia. Most of these men are, by my orders, the personal attendants of my son, and their association is of such an intimate character that many of them are his closest friends. These friends would prove useful to him, not only as experienced advisers in cases of emergency, but their influence is, and would be, of very great importance in increasing the number of followers of my family. I might class these chiefs under four heads :

(1) Those who were rulers on the north-western frontier of Afghanistan, and have sought protection at my Court, owing to their countries having been taken by Russia. Such are Mir Sorabeg, ex-King of Kolab, and his family ; Shah Mahmud,

ex-King of Darwaz, and his family; Tarah Ismail of Roshan, son of the King of Bokhara, and several others.

(2) Some Mirs and chiefs from the same neighbourhood, such as Mir Yussif Ali's family, Mir Jahandar, Mir Hakim's family and relatives, whose countries were annexed by myself in the early years of my reign.

(3) Those who, having fought either with Great Britain, or, being discontented with the friendship of Great Britain, have come under my protection, such as Omra Khan, Mir Murad Ali, and other frontier chiefs.

(4) Those who were either in exile from Afghanistan, or who were companions and supporters of certain rivals of my family. These last I may mention under five headings:

(i.) Those who had their own separate parties, such as Sirdar Nur Ali Khan and other sons of Shere Ali Wali of Kandahar, who are now with me, having left India; Sirdar Mahomed Hassan Khan, who fought against robbers (he was also in India, but now at my Court); Sirdar Ibrahim Khan, son of Amir Shere Ali, who is still in India (he is my friend and pensioner); Syad Ahmad Khan of Kunar, who is also with me now; Sirdar Ali Mahomed Khan and other sons of my uncle, Sirdar Wali Mahomed Khan, etc.

(ii.) The second class are those who were supporters and companions of Ayub Khan, who had the strongest number of followers of all my rivals. I need not mention them one by one, but they have all deserted him except a few, and amongst them there are not many who are not in my pay and discontented with him.

(iii.) Those who were supporters of Yakub Khan, some of whom have entered my service. Practically no man of any importance is with him. In the same way, the followers of Sirdar Hashim Khan have also deserted him, excepting a few servants of no consequence.

(iv.) The fourth class consists of those people who lived

in exile in India, Russia, or Russian Turkestan, who had no parties of their own, nor did they belong to any other party. They had either run away from Afghanistan for some reason, or had been sent out of the country by me on account of misbehaviour. There are very few of this latter class who, when they applied to me, were not forgiven and invited to come back to their own country and homes.

(v.) The fifth class are those who ran away with the disloyal Ishak after his rebellion in 1888, as before mentioned. His own brothers are at present in my service. The rest of his followers are receiving my full attention, and will return to their homes and become peaceful subjects in the future.

In this way no rival to the throne of Kabul exists to disturb my son's peace. It is an obvious fact that even if the greatest warrior were induced by any great Power to fight against Afghanistan, he could not do anything single-handed, without army or followers. I can quite understand the tactics of diplomatists in keeping the rivals of the neighbouring sovereigns in their own hands as hostages to hold them in check in case they do not agree to their concessions. But the tree whose roots have been cut off cannot stand any longer, nor can a building stand without foundation. I hope my sons will follow my example and advice in this policy also, and give a home to all men of any importance from neighbouring countries who seek protection in their dominions. Such people will always be of use in supporting them, as well as in opposing their enemies.

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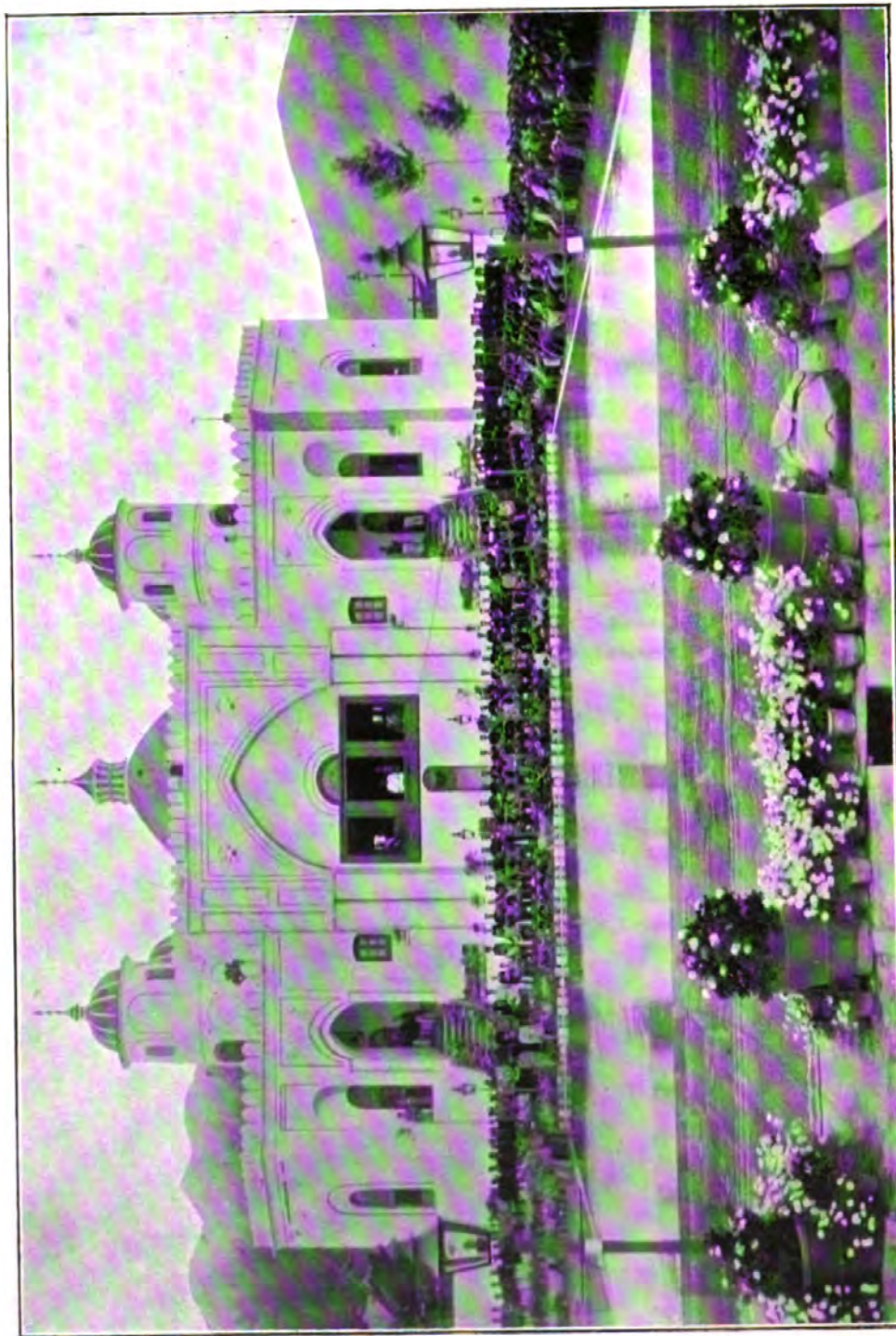
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THE LIFE OF ABDUR RAHMAN

AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN

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[Frontispiece. *Voi. II.*

DURBAR AT THE BAGH-I-BALA, KABUL.

The Amir is in the window dressed in white.

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THE LIFE OF
ABDUR RAHMAN

AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN

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WITH PORTRAIT, MAPS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES

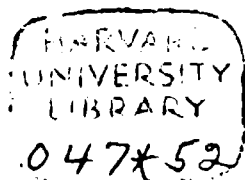
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THE AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN

CHAPTER I

MY SUCCESSOR TO THE THRONE OF KABUL

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THERE is much criticism and difference of opinion as to who will be my successor to the throne of Kabul; many guesses are made, and people wonder why I do not openly and publicly declare my successor. On this question, however, not only are foreigners kept in the dark, but even my own countrymen and relatives have not been told my intentions. Some people conjecture that my eldest son, Habibullah Khan, whom they consider the rightful heir, will be the fortunate person; others mention Nasrullah Khan, my second son, because he was chosen by me to go to England upon a visit to Her Majesty, Queen Victoria; this, they say, is a clear sign that I shall appoint him to succeed me. Others, again, held the opinion, before the death of Hafizullah, my dearest and most beloved son, who was so handsome and such a favourite, that he was the heir in my mind. Others say, No, Mahomed Omar, whose mother is one of my most influential wives, will be the heir. I have reasons for not making any public declaration on this question to

ignorant uncivilised people, but for the information of those who are gifted with wisdom, diplomacy, and common-sense, I have given out very plainly and publicly who is to be my heir, by my actions and the practical work of administration of the public affairs of the kingdom. There are numerous reasons why I do not wish to make any public declaration. I will mention a few :

(1) It has frequently happened in the past that the life of the heir has been endangered; and, consequently, I prefer to conceal my intentions as long and as far as I can.

(2) The troubles that came to my predecessor, Shere Ali, who appointed Abdullah Jan as his successor, are quite sufficient to deter me from following his example; for his other sons rebelled against him.

(3) Of course the throne is the property of the Almighty King of kings, our Creator, who appoints kings as shepherds to guard His flock, and into whose care He confides the creatures of His hands. I therefore leave it unto Him to elect that one of my sons to be the future Amir who proves by his merits to be the most worthy of the honour.

(4) To those who are acquainted with the history and affairs of Afghanistan, it is well known that the kingdom is ruled on constitutional principles, namely, the people have full authority to choose their king; and kings, who have been forced upon the people against their wish, have lost not only the kingdom but their heads as well! It would, therefore, be ridiculous to force one of my sons upon them against their wish; it is better to leave it to the people to decide who shall be their ruler.

(5) Examples are not wanting in history where heirs, after being nominated as such by the reigning monarch, have tried to put an end to the lives of their own fathers to hasten on their own time for ruling. Though I am proud of the good disposi-

tion of my sons, at the same time I know the bad disposition of the people of Afghanistan, who have so often stirred up brothers against brothers and sons against their fathers.

(6) I do not like to cause disputes, quarrels, and annoyances amongst my own family during my lifetime ; if they will only be wise, and stick to one of my sons and be united and one-hearted amongst themselves, there will be no fear of the public peace being disturbed. But if they do quarrel it will be just as well that they should be punished for their bad behaviour in not listening to my advice.

I need not give any more reasons for not publicly nominating my successor ; I will only mention here that I have shown very plainly to the Afghan people, and others outside Afghanistan, which of my sons I consider to be the rightful heir to my throne. Before proceeding further, however, I must contradict the statements of those who, either from ignorance or selfish and mercenary motives, are trying to get money from my wives and sons by flattering them that they will be the heirs to my throne. I should think it unwise to give full details on this point, on which it is more politic to be as guarded as possible. But all these people who spread such rumours abroad are simply ignorant of my intentions in this respect.

The policy which I have adopted concerning my successor requires that some reference be made to the history of Afghanistan, and although this has been treated more in detail in another part of my book, I will give a few words here relating to such policy.

The first King of the Durani dynasty, to which I belong, was Ahmad Khan, better known as Ahmad Shah Durani, or Abdali, who succeeded to the throne of

Afghanistan in A.D. 1748, corresponding to 1061 Hijira (the year of Mahomed's flight). He was a constitutional monarch, and was proclaimed king by the chiefs and representatives of various tribes who, being tired of the troubled state of the country, wanted to have one king at their head for the sake of peace. Ahmad Shah, acting on the advice of the representatives of these tribes, was a very popular ruler. He also conquered India and became one of the greatest Emperors in the East. After Ahmad Shah's death, history records in full detail how his sons, owing to discords between them and their endeavours to break down the constitutional system of Government, lost the kingdom. The last King, named Shah Shujah, whom the English wished to force upon the people against their wish, was killed by the Afghans together with many English also who supported him.

My grandfather, Dost Mahomed Khan, himself found that the principal cause which led to the ruin of Ahmad Shah's dynasty was that Timur, in his lifetime, divided his kingdom into provinces, appointing his sons to be Governors of the various provinces. Each son had his separate revenue as well as his own army, and after the death of their father, which happened in 1793, they fought amongst themselves, thereby greatly reducing the strength of the kingdom. I need not relate in detail here, how my grandfather, Dost Mahomed Khan, succeeded to the throne, owing to the quarrels between Timur's sons. He also made the same mistake by dividing the kingdom of Afghanistan among his sons, and giving to every one of them a separate army. In consequence of this policy the sons were placed by their

own father in the position of being able to fight against each other. For instance, my father was the Viceroy of Turkestan, and had the largest and strongest army, second only in force to that of the King. My grandfather appointed Shere Ali Khan, his other son, to be the head of the army that was with him at Herat at the time of his death. My uncle Azim had the provinces of Kuram and Jaji with the forces there as his inheritance. Shere Ali's own brother, Amin, had Kandahar together with its soldiers. Sirdar Aslam Khan was placed over Hazara and Bamian, and so on, the rest of the provinces with their soldiers being divided among all the other sons. When my grandfather died, therefore, they were all prepared to fight against each other. This condition of things caused a great deal of weakness and bloodshed in the kingdom from the constant quarrels.

Having before my eyes these examples as an object lesson, I am not going to follow in the footsteps of my predecessors, thereby causing my own sons to fight between themselves. I therefore keep my sons in my capital of Kabul, and they are all under the orders of my eldest son; I have arranged matters in this way.

At the commencement I gave my eldest son very little work, but gradually added to his duties, and also to his dignity and authority, as he advanced in years and experience, placing many matters connected with the administration of my kingdom under his care. So far have I proceeded in this policy, indeed, that I do not myself now hold the public audience (or durbar), which all the Kings of Afghanistan, including myself,

have always attended in person; I leave this duty entirely to my eldest son. I have appointed my second son, Nasrullah (Habibullah's own brother), head of the Accountant-General's and Revenue Offices, under his eldest brother's orders. He takes all instructions from and gives in all his reports to him. My other sons, Aminullah, Mahomed Omar, Ghulam Ali, etc., will be appointed in their turn to various official posts, also under the orders of Habibullah, their eldest brother. The heads of every department, whether civil or military, send in their despatches and reports of the work done to my eldest son; they also attend his durbar with the same ceremony and state that is observed at my own.

Upon all matters connected with instructions to the Governors of provinces, to Generals and other military officers, stationed at various points in my kingdom, my eldest son acts according to my instructions. These instructions are either in the form of a written code of law, in which case he is not obliged to ask me any questions; or he receives them directly from me in particular cases that arise during the course of the day, and consults me personally. But every official is instructed to look upon my son as the person whose commands must be obeyed. In addition to this, since the year 1897, I have given my son authority over the State Treasury and Exchequer, which until then had been entirely under my own control. All orders for Treasury payments are issued by my son. He also has authority to appoint or dismiss Government officers, whether civil or military; he may increase or decrease their salaries. This authority, be it under-

stood, is not quite absolute; everything is subject to my approval; but he exercises his powers in such a way that the people are taught to look upon him as fully empowered by me to act.

He is also the Supreme Court of Appeal; he is above all the ecclesiastical courts, the revenue and commercial courts, and the criminal courts: there is no court over him, with the exception of my own *durbar*.

Various writers have made a grave mistake in stating that the succession to the Kabul throne depends on the rank of the mother of the claimant.

At one time they discussed the chances of Shere Ali's title to the throne of Kabul, on the ground that his mother was a lady of the royal family. Upon this account, said they, he was better entitled to the throne than my father, Amir Afzal. This is a mistake. In the first place, my mother was a lady of the *old* royal family, descended from Shah Tahmasp, while Shere Ali's mother belonged to a clan called Salimzai, a branch of Populzai, and none of her ancestors had sat upon any throne.

On the other hand, Amir Dost Mahomed's mother was a Kazil-bash, a family quite foreign to Afghanistan, but for all that he was made Amir.

In the first place, the Mahomedan religion, by the laws laid down by God's Holy Book, the Koran, and by Mahomedan traditions, looks upon all the children without any distinction between their mothers, as having equal rights of inheritance. So much so, that if the meanest and lowest born slave gives birth to a child, this child is entitled to claim equal rights with

the children of the royal wife. Such a slave is considered as much a wife to her master as is any other married wife. There is no such thing, according to Mahomed's law, as superiority and inferiority or legal rights of one over the other. Therefore it is not right that one should be called the queen and the others nothing at all: if their husband is a king they are all queens, and if he is a beggar they are all beggars. Of course, there are favourites amongst them, but that does not mean that through their influence the king should ruin his reputation, as Amir Shere Ali did, by appointing as his heir his younger son, Abdullah Jan, a step that resulted in his other sons rebelling against him.

Leaving the religious side of the question, the Afghans are a brave nation of warriors, who do not select a king on account of his mother, but for his own merits and fitness for the post, as well as for the reason that he is the son of a king.

Mr (now Lord) Curzon was the first European who found out what my views on this subject were. In a humorous conversation in 1895 he began his remarks by a joke, and ended them with a most important political question as to who would be my successor. I, having already committed myself in a joke, could not refuse to give my views on the matter more fully than I originally intended. Luckily, however, the conversation took place in a small private room, where there were not more than two or three persons present to hear what I said, and therefore mischief could not be made by reports getting abroad.

It is quite clear by our religion, as well as by our customs, that the eldest son succeeds to the throne, provided he is fitted for the post, and is also approved and selected by the nation. There have, however, been instances where younger sons have been nominated by fathers who were so weak as to allow themselves to be influenced by the mothers of such sons. The result has invariably been to plunge the country into civil wars, struggles, and failure. The wisest policy, in my opinion, is to act as I have myself done, and keep the royal family and princes under the influence and power of my eldest son. More than that, I have given him as much power and experience in the administration of the kingdom during my lifetime as the son of a king could ever expect under such circumstances. He scarcely requires a fresh nomination to the throne after my death, for at that moment he would be prepared to fulfil all the duties he had been practising under my instructions and advice. He will not have to struggle and fight in order to establish his authority, nor are any of his brothers in a position to oppose him, they being his servants as are other officials in the kingdom. They are brothers by ties of blood, but servants in the administration of the kingdom.

My subjects ought to learn a lesson from Queen Victoria, who sent her son, the Duke of Connaught, to India, where he served most attentively and willingly under the English Generals who were servants of his mother, the Queen.

There are some outside enemies of my family to

be considered, but I will only mention in a few words my views respecting my own sons. I will deal elsewhere with the people who lay claim to the Kabul throne. It is a curious thing that even well-informed and responsible Englishmen, holding high official positions, regard the Afghanistan of to-day in the light of twenty years ago. In illustration of this, it is just as if a person were to say: "Oh! the English Government is a very cruel Government, because it has such a cruel law as to hang a man for sheep-stealing!" It is quite true that men were hanged for this fault at one time, but now that the people are more civilised and better educated, the laws are more lenient and more adapted to suit the needs of the nation. Just so with Afghanistan. The country has made more rapid progress during the last twenty years than many other countries in fifty years. People, therefore, who are ignorant of the great progress and changes that have been brought about, and the circumstances which led to those changes since my accession to the throne, should not assume a knowledge they do not possess. They will then avoid the mischief of misleading the British public by their writings.

Sometimes misleading articles appear in the English papers, giving the names of people as claimants to my throne, when such people either died years before the articles were written, or never existed at all. If they did exist, they never dreamt of such ridiculous nonsense. I hope that my people are wise enough and strong enough to choose for their king that one of my sons who is worthy of such a high responsibility,

without the interference of any foreigners in their private home policy.

As the throne is practically in the hands of the representatives of the nation, I have tried to unite some of the most important families in the kingdom to my eldest son in the ties of blood-relationship, by marrying him to the daughters of some of the highest men in the land, and by engaging his sons to other daughters of a suitable age. Some of these marriages are as follows :

The first wife, and perhaps the most important, is the daughter of Mahomed Shah Khan, chief of the Taghab and niece of General Amir Mahomed Khan, the Senior General and head of the Kabul forces. This marriage unites my son to the most powerful Ghilzai Taghab tribe. The greatest danger as well as the greatest security of the ruler of Kabul depends upon the loyalty of the army, and the army of Kabul, I may say, is bound to obey its most popular officer, General Amir Mahomed Khan, in a case of emergency. My son's eldest son, named Inatullah, is the son of this first wife.

The second wife, and perhaps of equal importance with the first-named, if not even greater, is the daughter of Kazi Syadud-Din Khan, my officer at Herat; she is the grand-daughter of Abdur Rahman Khani Ulum (the head of the Church of Afghanistan). This wife also has a son. The uncles and cousins of this lady are the heads of the ecclesiastical courts at Kabul, Jellalabad, Kandahar, Herat, and Balkh, the largest towns in the kingdom.

The third wife, who has one son and one daughter, is the daughter of Shagasi Sarwar Khan, my former Gentleman Usher, holding the same post as that now filled by Sirdar Abdul Kudus Khan. He was afterwards appointed Viceroy and Governor-General of the whole of Turkestan, in the place of my cousin Ishak. He has been compelled to retire, unfortun-

ately, on account of ill-health. Being a distinguished statesman, however, and still young and active, he will be of very great service to my son, if circumstances should require it. This lady is the step-daughter of Shagasi Sarwar Khan ; her own father was the late Loi Naib, once in the service of Amir Shere Ali Khan. Her brothers are the only useful men that Ayub possesses.

The fourth prospective wife, to whom my son is betrothed but not yet married, is a most influential lady, even more so than the three already mentioned, so far as family is concerned. She is the grand-daughter of the late Amir Shere Ali Khan, and daughter of his eldest son, Ibrahim Khan, at present in India. This is a marriage which might unite the two royal families to the Kabul throne, namely, the late Shere Ali's family and mine. This union will put an end to the perpetual wars and troubles that were always taking place owing to the misunderstandings between my father and Amir Shere Ali and their descendants.

The fifth wife is also of a very noble family, and unites my son with Usbeg chiefs, as the daughter of Mir Sorabeg, ex-King of Kolab and niece of Sirdar Kudus Khan on her mother's side.

The sixth wife is a daughter of the chief of the Mangal and Khost provinces. Her son, named Hayatullah, is second in age.

The seventh wife is the daughter of Akbar Khan, the Momand Khan of Lalpura. This alliance unites my son with the most powerful tribe of the Momands on the Indian frontier.

Habibullah's eldest son, Inatullah, is engaged to the daughter of Omra Khan of Bajaur ; the other children are also engaged to members of noble families.

It is quite clear that if these important men are united to my family by such strong ties, it is to their own interest to support my son, who will thus

be protected from internal as well as from external troubles.

My second son, Nasrullah Khan, is united to the following families. His first wife is a daughter of my only living uncle at Kabul, Sirdar Yussif Khan. The second wife is a daughter of the late Sirdar Fakir Mahomed Khan, whose brother Nur Mahomed Khan is the Colonel of my body-guard. The third wife is the daughter of my most trusted Commander-in-Chief at Herat, named Faramurz Khan.

In this manner, and in various other ways which do not concern this chapter, I have attempted to unite the representatives and chiefs of the various important positions and tribes to my son and family.

CHAPTER II

THE MEANS I TOOK FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PROGRESS IN COMMERCE, INDUSTRIES, AND ARTS

Foreigners in the Afghan Service.

THE Creator of the world set an example to teach us that we are all dependent upon each other as follows—that in the person of every individual the members of the body depend on each other, *e.g.*, the head without the body, or the body without the head, arms without hands and hands without fingers cannot be of any service at all. Therefore, the system of this world has been founded in such a manner that every human being stands in need of the help of some other person. The greatest sovereigns can learn a lesson from the thought that the mightiest among them is dependent for his comfort and needs upon menials, such as the cook, the shoemaker, the tailor, and so on. They must therefore not think that they can do everything themselves without help from others. They must also bear in mind that Almighty God took a week to make this world, as it is taught by the Bibles, to show us that patience is required for the completion of all projects and plans. We must not be too hasty, nor must we lose courage.

The strength and force of every Government depends upon the elements of which it is composed. The more learned, experienced, clever, and useful men there are in the Government, the stronger, more progressive, and more flourishing that Government will be. It is for this reason that Governments employ, and appreciate, the services of able men.

Kings stand to their countries as the vice-regents of God. Either directly, or through their ministers, they exercise the rights of Fortune or Misfortune—of life and of death—over those who are placed under their rule. But they must always remember that the Almighty King of kings, whose viceroys they are, expects them to treat all His creatures with equal kindness and justice, without distinction of colour (be they black, fair, or red), no matter what their religion may be (whether Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, even those who do not believe in the existence of God Himself). Arguing from this point, kings must act without partiality, and give equal rights and privileges to those who enter their service, or who take up their abode in his country, just as if they were his own subjects, irrespective of nationality or religion, to carry out the example of that Almighty King whose assistants they are in temporal affairs.

It is a curious thing that we are all very keen in discovering the faults of others and seeing our own virtues; but we are short-sighted in seeing our own faults and the virtues of others. A careful and attentive observer of modern life in various countries and kingdoms can easily judge for himself, whether it is the custom with all highly civilised and boastful

powers to give the same rights, rank, and appointments to all their servants and subjects without distinction as to nationality, colour, creed, or religion. I am proud to say that people who have taken service in my kingdom have been raised to higher positions than even my nearest relatives. Such posts are those of Mir Munshi (Secretary of State), Quartermaster-General, Chancellor of the Exchequer, First Lord of the Revenue, personal doctors to myself and my family. This proves that I set more value upon merit and ability than upon the claims of relationship and personal friendship.

Insha'allah (God willing), if my sons and successors follow my example in employing able officials in their service without prejudice against nationality or religion, their country will always prosper. They must persuade their own people and relatives to work by giving them every assistance in the shape of allowances, etc., and they must work for all they get. Sadi says in a popular poem :

“Without any pains there are never any gains,
That person only gains who takes pains.”

Having now introduced the subject of this chapter, and having said a few words of advice to my sons and successors, I will proceed to state the steps I took to procure the services of clever and capable people from many different nations. I rewarded them for their services to me, and my nation benefited by their work and instruction, becoming skilful themselves in many crafts taught them by the foreigners. I continue to work upon the same principles, and I trust that my successors will do the same.

It is impossible for me to give the names of all the men who have done me service, but I will mention a few of them who have not only executed work themselves, but have left something permanent behind them in the progress made, by which the Government has benefited. Some have established entirely new departments in the country, others have taught the Afghans various trades and arts so well and thoroughly, that they are able to carry out the works entirely alone in the absence of their teachers.

Of the people from other countries who were and are employed by me, some have resigned and some have left my service on the expiration of their agreements, some are still working for me; others, again, have been dismissed, owing to their own fault. I will not mention the names of these people, as I do not wish to injure them in their future career wherever they may go. Of course if the world finds this out for itself I am not responsible. "Reveal not thou the errors of others, and so mayest thou expect the Almighty to overlook thine errors in return."—KORAN.

My policy of introducing foreigners into the country is sometimes criticised. People wonder why I do not send my own people to Europe, instead of having teachers for them in Afghanistan. My reasons for this policy are as follows :

(1) To the question : Ought I to have sent my people to other countries to learn the different manufactures and industries? I will answer, in the first place, this would have entailed heavy expense, which expense the parents of the youths were neither willing nor able to pay, and my Govern-

ment was not rich enough to pay the money out of the Treasury.

(2) I have frequently asked my hakims (physicians) and workmen to bring their sons to me to be sent abroad and educated as doctors, engineers, and so on, but my request only met with the answer of silence !

(3) My subjects do not know foreign languages, and if they were to go abroad it would take a long time before they could do any practical work, as they would first have to learn the language so that they could understand the subjects written in it. I accordingly opened an office, under the superintendence of Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan, through whom also all the English and other foreigners employed in the various factories, etc., were instructed to send their reports to me. There the books on manufactures, mathematics, chemistry, physics, etc., are translated into Persian. A branch of this office is also to be opened in India. Several books have been already translated, and some are published as helps to the studies of the young men.

(4) It is my opinion that some of the Orientals who go to the West to be educated, instead of acquiring the abilities and merits of the Western peoples, import Western vices into their own country, such as drinking, gambling, etc. Many, too, lose all belief in faith and religion. I therefore consider it wiser to have the young people educated under my own supervision.

(5) No science has a solid foundation in a country unless it can be studied in the actual language of that country.

(6) In the present case, I keep on urging my people to learn their work properly and quickly, as well as insisting that the foreign instructors shall teach as quickly and thoroughly as possible, so that in case of their ever going away, they need not have any fear of me. In making agreements with Englishmen, Indians, and other foreigners, I insert a clause to the effect that they will not get leave to go to their own homes until the pupils are able to carry on their work without any supervision from their instructors. This clause has a wholesome effect on the

foreign instructors, keeping them up to their work, so that on its completion they can go in peace to their own homes. I am glad to say that my country has greatly benefited by this scheme ; various departments that were under the instructions of foreign teachers are now entirely worked and carried on by my own Afghan people.

Manufactures and Industries

I know that it is a very unwise policy to purchase an elephant without first preparing food and stabling for him. In the same way, it is not wise to buy machinery for making war materials and ammunition, and for articles of commerce, without first making arrangements for procuring the raw material to be worked up by the machinery, and so keeping it constantly at work. I wished to get out of the mines and from the natural products of my own country as much as possible. "Necessity is the mother of invention," and hunger does not give one patience to wait for luxurious food when ordinary food can be had. I was in the most urgent need of the arms and ammunition for the wars which were taking place in my own country from time to time, and were expected to break out at any moment. I also wanted to buy machinery suitable for getting iron, coal, lead, copper, and other minerals out of the mines in Afghanistan. These, however, required a much larger sum than I could spare from the other necessities of my Government. I therefore first bought machinery for making guns, rifles, and cartridges, before establishing the more expensive machinery required for mining operations, and for providing

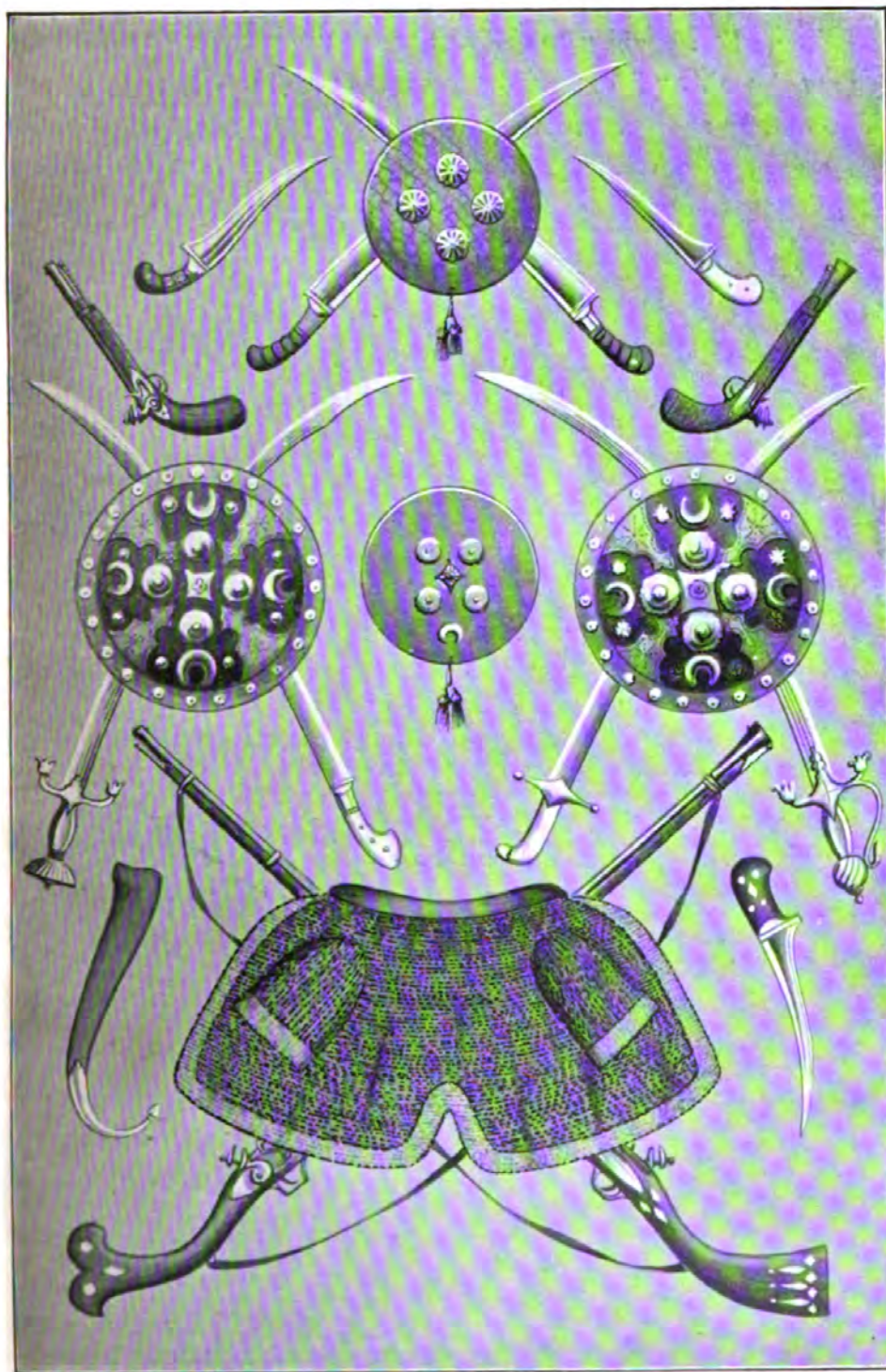
the raw material for the daily consumption of the machines.

I am, however, gradually stopping the import of such raw materials from abroad, and bit by bit making use of the natural resources of Afghanistan, minerals as well as other products. These will be particularised in their proper place.

I have mentioned elsewhere the fact, that when I was a boy I hated reading and writing, and devoted myself to working with the other workmen in my father's workshops. The earnest desire of my life at that time was only to learn the profession of architecture, rifle-making, casting, carpentry, blacksmith's and other kinds of work. All these I mastered thoroughly, and could make the articles with my own hands, without the assistance of other workmen, quite as well as any of those who had taught me. Two rifles that I made entirely from start to finish without help from any one are now at Kabul.

In short, I was not fond of any other profession but that of engineering in the early years of my life. When I resided in Russian territory, I occupied my leisure time in learning all I could about manufactures and industries. I learnt at that time goldsmiths' work, enamelling, gilding, and dyeing leather, etc. I may mention that three of the foremen in my present workshops, named Ghulam, chief of the filing department; Zaman, rifle-maker; and Najaf, head of the blacksmiths' shop, were amongst those who taught me to do these works. I cannot give the names of all my teachers for want of space.

After my accession to the throne, being forced



OLD AFGHAN ARMS AND ARMOUR. [To face p. 20. Vol. II.

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partly by scarcity of arms, and partly because I was so fond of manufactures and industries, I started hand-factories for making rifles and many other things. None of these works were carried on by steam power.

I was fully aware of the value and usefulness of steam power introduced by modern scientific men, and I knew that great and mighty empires, such as Great Britain, have attained their wonderful strength by the help of steam power and their world-wide commerce; otherwise, England is very small, and to my certain knowledge contains no diamond or gold mines. Their manufactures and commerce are the blessings and welfare of the nation and the strength of their kingdom.

But notwithstanding the fact that I appreciated the value of modern machinery, my external and internal troubles and anxieties did not allow of my giving sufficient attention to manufactures till 1885, when I went to Rawal Pindi to meet my wise and learned friend, Lord Dufferin, then Viceroy of India.

At this time a French engineer, named M. Jérôme, who was superintending the electric lighting machinery and engines, was introduced to me, as being a clever, well-informed man, and although he was only an electrical engineer, I found that he had a great deal of general experience about mechanical engineering. I therefore engaged him in my service, with the idea and intention of starting workshops at Kabul on the modern European system. My engineer brought with him another Indian who was clever at Electric Lighting works, named Karim Bakhsh, who is still at Kabul at the present time.

M. Jérôme was the first European who entered my

service in the capacity of engineer. He was at Kabul for a short time, and during his stay I looked at catalogues of various mechanical machinery, marking out a few lathes, drilling, shaping, punching, cutting, and cupping machines, together with a casting foundry, and three, six, eight, and ten horse-power engines. I also ordered a few other small machines to make a start. The whole of the machinery and engines required to start this small factory amounted to 141,000 rupees of the Indian coinage. I gave M. Jérôme leave to go to India for the purpose of buying the machinery, and also to employ some other assistant engineers and Indian workmen well practised in work of the kind, to set the machinery in place, and put it into working order.

On M. Jérôme's arrival at Calcutta, he engaged twenty-two Indian foremen, mistris, and other workmen, and sent them to Kabul along with the machinery. The workmen and machinery reached Kabul, but M. Jérôme did not himself appear, and up to the present day I have not heard a word about him, neither have I been able to find out what happened to him nor why he did not return.

The machinery and goods were lying at Kabul, but there was no engineer. I was sorry, not only on account of the money which was lost in buying the machinery, but because I was the laughing-stock of my people, who thought I should be unable to start my small factory. "In Allah ma'al sabrin" = "Allah is beside those who do not lose patience."—KORAN.

I was not, however, a man accustomed to change my mind after once having fixed upon doing a thing. I

accordingly wrote to my envoy with the Indian Government, General Amir Ahmed Khan, to find out and employ another engineer at any price. The General employed and sent, through Sultan Mahomed Khan, now Mir Munshi, an English engineer, named Mr Pyne (now Sir Salter Pyne). Mr Pyne arrived at Kabul in the first week of April, 1887, and I wrote to the General to employ another Secretary for the work of his office in the place of Sultan Mahomed Khan, whom I kept in my own presence.

A piece of land, named Alam Ganj (the Treasury of Knowledge) was selected by me as a fitting site for erecting manufactories and workshops, because it was outside the city of Kabul and still quite close to it. It was larger than any other piece of land in the neighbourhood, and in addition was considered very healthy. The site commanded a beautiful view, and on one side was a canal to convey water for use in the works for the engines, boilers, etc., and on the lower side was the river of Kabul to carry away all waste water.

I ordered Mir Munshi to take Mr Pyne with him to report to me if they thought the piece of land was suitable for the erection of the works. In short, in a happy moment, after having consulted my astrologers and fortune-tellers, the foundation-stone was laid on the 7th of April, in a lucky hour, after the usual ceremony of distributing alms and sweet-meats to the poor.¹

¹ There are several professional astrologers employed by the Amir, who give him advice on every occasion : what time to start on a journey ; what hour and lucky star is for the foundation of a new building ; in fact, nothing is done without their permission. Even when the Amir is to cut

Mr Pyne started a few lathes with the drilling, shaping, cutting, and cupping machines, together with the portable engines which had been bought by M. Jérôme. After a few months' stay he asked permission to go to England, leaving the machines under the charge of the Indian workmen. He returned to Kabul after seventeen months' absence, during which time he was busily employed in finding out all particulars about the new machines to be erected at Kabul. I also at that time engaged the services of two English engineers. From this year I commenced to employ Englishmen in many ways under my Government. My object was twofold: first, to have my people taught engineering and other works by Englishmen experienced in such things; secondly, to bring my people and the English in contact with each other, so that the old hatred that existed between these two nations should be removed from their minds, as our Governments were friendly with each other, and the interests of both Governments were identical. I was also desirous that the English people should hear of the progress made under my Government from their own countrymen. The friendly treatment shown by the Afghan nation to all the English men and women who visited

his nails or take a bath must be settled by the astrologers as a lucky hour for the undertaking! When Nasrullah returned from London, though both father and son were longing to see each other, he was kept outside the city of Kabul, because the astrologers said it was not a lucky hour for him to see his father. Sirdar Mahomed Hassan Khan, who was one of Nasrullah's companions in London, says in a joke that his wife had put on her best new dress the day that they were to enter the city, and as they were detained outside for nearly a week, the dress got dirty and needed washing again before she could show it to her husband.

Kabul proves that we only killed them when we looked upon them as our enemies. When they were employed in my service for the benefit of the nation of Afghanistan, they received every hospitality and courtesy, and were treated as our friends.

The second Englishman who visited Kabul, after Mr Pyne, was named Mr O'Meara, a surgeon-dentist. He came for the purpose of making a set of teeth for me, and at the end of 1887, on his return to India, he related all that he had seen at Kabul with great surprise and satisfaction. He said :

“One of the most surprising things was the way in which the Amir worked ; nothing seemed too hard or too difficult for him to master. He was always ready to listen to the complaints of his people and to redress their grievances. For instance, one day when he was out riding, an old woman met him on his way to Paghman ; she held out her petition, and he at once stopped his horse and beckoned her to approach him. He then read her petition through and asked her many questions, talking to her for some time in the most affable and kind manner. The old dame went away quite comforted and happy. Another day the Amir was talking to me about his financial bothers, he said : ‘Only one-fourth of the revenue of my country is paid into my Exchequer ; another fourth I can only manage to get by fighting for it ! The third fourth comes out of the pockets of my people, but it never reaches mine, while as to the remaining fourth, people do not know to whom to pay it.’”

Mr O'Meara left one remembrance behind him in Afghanistan. I placed a clever workman, named Sufi Abdul Hak, under his direction to be instructed in the art of making teeth. I threatened that if he did not learn his profession very quickly and well,

I should have him severely punished, as it was necessary that he should acquire this knowledge before Mr O'Meara left Kabul. It was not long before he thoroughly mastered the work, partly from fear of punishment and partly because Mr O'Meara did not wish his pupil to suffer, and so took pains to teach him quickly. Another reason may have been that Mr O'Meara himself did not wish to be detained in Kabul longer than was necessary! Sufi has taught several other men how to make teeth and how to extract them with instruments, and this is a very great convenience, as formerly people had to go to other countries when their teeth troubled them. When Mr O'Meara left me, I gave him the gold medal of honour in addition to other rewards.

During Mr Pyne's absence the Indian and Kabuli workmen kept the small factory going on. Year by year the workshops have been enlarged, new ones being erected as occasion required. Machines were bought and placed in these buildings for making Martini-Henry and Snider rifles and cartridges; also saw-mills were built together with machines for all kinds of carpenters' work. I also bought and started the following machines: for making cartridges for the Martini-Henry and other rifles; big lathes; gun boring and rifling; 100-horse-power condensing engines with boilers; steam hammers with boilers; boot-making and leather-sewing machines; powder-making manufactories; soap- and candle-making machines; stamps and dies for coining at the Mint; distilling apparatus for wine, etc.; tanning and dyeing leather; agricultural and gardening implements; furnaces for smelting ore

and metals for making heavy guns and for blacksmiths' work; machines for making swords, cartridge caps, and for loading and filling the cartridges; machines for casting and making shells for mortars and heavy guns and various other machines. I continue to increase the stock of machinery every year by buying new inventions as I find need for them.

The difficulties that I had to encounter on first opening the manufactories and workshops were enormous. My people knew nothing of modern inventions and appliances, and were consequently opposed to all these new ideas. I will give an example to show my readers to what extent this ignorance extended. About the time of my visit to Rawal Pindi, in 1885, one of the photographers had placed his camera in position to take my photograph, when one of my highest Court officials, the Kabchi Bashi (Assistant Usher), rushed up to the camera and placed both his hands over the lens. "Why do you do that?" I asked him. "Oh, your Royal Highness, you do not understand? This is one of the new-fashioned guns that this man is aiming at you!" I laughed heartily, and said: "Oh, Rish Safed (grey-beard), whose heart is dark with ignorance, leave the man alone to take my photograph!" The poor man had never seen a photographic camera before, and therefore could not understand what it was, though I tried to explain it to him, but had to give up at last.

When I first opened the workshops my people made all kinds of remarks; they said that I did not know that the work could be much better done by hand than

by machinery. They accused the officials who were working at the factory of being enemies of the Government, who wanted to send the money out of the country under the pretence of buying machinery. I was very tired of all this nonsense and opposition, but, all the same, I would not give up my determination to proceed on the road I had marked out for myself. For I knew well that unless I had the same sort of guns, rifles, and other war materials that were used by other nations, it would be impossible to keep the integrity of my Government intact, and to protect the country from the attacks of foreign aggressors.

There is no doubt that it took a very long time to reap the fruits of all this expenditure on machinery; all these large amounts had been paid out of the Government Treasury, and I could not help calculating the interest on the money which was paying nothing for years, being all sunk in the factory and workshops. But I did not lose heart. I continued to buy every year as much machinery as I could find the money for, and as the machines increased I had new factories built to receive them. This I continue to do year by year, so that my commerce and industries are very greatly enlarged and increased.

Praise be to God that I was always fond of machinery and manufactures, and knew their full value! I knew that it was a case of having steel to cut steel, and that if I wanted to fight an enemy on equal terms, I must meet him with weapons of the newest pattern and of the same kind that were used against me.

“If a gentle-armed person fights with an iron-arm,
It is sure that the iron arm will break the gentle arm.”—SADI.

For this reason, when my workmen were at a loss to know how to make a certain arm or weapon, I taught them how to make them, and by my instructions and their own exertions, they eventually succeeded. I could give many examples of this kind; I will give one or two by way of illustration.

In 1893, when Lord Lansdowne's Government stopped my Hotchkiss guns in India, my workmen said that it was impossible to make the guns without having models to copy from. I accordingly ordered Mir Munshi to translate the particulars, designs, and measurements of the pieces of the Hotchkiss guns from English into Persian in my presence; and he had to give me the length, width, thickness, and shape of all the various pieces of the gun written down in Persian. When he had finished his part of the work he explained it all to me in Persian, and I then had all the foremen of the Indian and Kabuli workmen brought into my presence. I then instructed them how to make all the pieces in wood; and then they were examined to see if the various pieces fitted properly. The gun was then tested by having wooden shells thrown from the barrel in the same way as would be done from a real gun. This having been satisfactorily demonstrated, I ordered that a gun should be made after this model, but of the same materials as those used in the real Hotchkiss.

In fact, we succeeded in making the gun exactly like the model, without having any other sample but this wooden one to work from. The gun was fired and tested, and stood the trial perfectly. I then thanked and praised Mir Munshi and the workmen,

and gave them 12,000 rupees in cash, together with the khilats (robes of honour). At the time when Sir Mortimer Durand and other officials of his mission arrived at Kabul they could not tell the difference between the gun made at Kabul and the European ones.

In the same way we succeeded in turning out Maxim, Gardiner, and Gatling guns from drawings and designs, the instructions and all particulars being translated into Persian; in this case we had, in addition, samples to copy from.

Praise be to Allah! At the present day there are about 100,000 men employed in Afghanistan in the work of road-making, building, manufactures, industries, mining, and many other branches of work, all of which were introduced by me. This demonstrates the great progress made in my country, and also that all these men are enabled to earn their livelihood, by being employed usefully instead of as formerly in burglaries, robbing and plundering the caravans. They had no other occupation in those days, and had to get their living as best they could. There is a saying that "Satan finds business for lazy hands," and our Prophet says: "El Kasib habib Allah" = "He who works is beloved by God."

My sons and successors must not consider that all the benefit that accrued to my country was in the making of war materials; these industries are the source of great enrichment to my country and in the promotion of trade. Money which would otherwise go to foreign countries is spent in Afghanistan. If my subjects are rich, it makes the Government strong

and powerful and secure, as many of the disturbances that occur are owing to want of money and occupation. Those people who possess property are naturally anxious that there should be no interference with them by wars and rebellions, and they see that it is much better to grow rich than to spend their time in plundering.

Many other kinds of machinery were also bought and put into use; for instance, a small portable engine and a few miles of railway line, and a traction engine for dragging heavy guns.

I have also established electric-lighting works and telephones, employing first some Indian and Kabuli workmen who had been taught this work in India. Mr Brown made afterwards more progress in these works in 1894, his most successful results being in the electric lighting.

Mint

At the beginning of my reign, the Mint was worked on the antiquated system existing for centuries, viz. casting and coining the rupees by hand without using any machinery.

The old rupee had on one side the words: "Zarb-i-dar ul sultana Kabul," and the year of coining (= "Coined at the capital of Kabul"), on the other my name was inscribed "Amir Abdur Rahman," but without any motto or coat of arms. In the year 1896, however, the nation of Afghanistan gave me the title of "Ziya ul millat waddin" (= "The light of the nation and of

religion"), and all money coined since then bears on one side the above words, and on the reverse my coat of arms. The copper coins are pennies and two-penny pieces; the silver coins are rupees (=12d.), kirans (=half a rupee), tangas (=one-third of a rupee).

Mr McDermot, who had worked at the Government Mint at Calcutta, taught my Kabuli workmen how to make these coins, and since he left, his pupils have carried on the work without any superintendence. From 80,000 to 100,000 rupees can be easily turned out every day in my Kabul Mint. Not only do my workmen coin the rupees, but they also make the dies and stamps; and since the first set of tools and dies was brought from England we have never had to buy fresh ones, everything is made in Kabul itself.

Martini-Henry Cartridge-Making

Originally these cartridges, as well as those for the Snider rifles, were made by hand before I introduced machinery for the purpose. These cartridges were few in number and of inferior quality. Having bought the aforesaid machinery, I engaged the services of Mr Middleton to make the cartridges, tools, and gauges. He pleased me very much by the way he set about and carried on the work, and he taught my workmen so well, that they can now make cartridges, tools, and gauges perfectly without any supervision. The modern cartridges are made of one solid drawn piece, and can be loaded and reloaded several times. For reloading the used cartridge cases we have made a special

machine at Kabul itself. The cartridge case, which is expanded and distorted on being fired, is by this machine compressed into its original size and shape; a new cap and fire-hole are then added, and the case is reloaded. Ten thousand cartridges can be turned out of my Kabul workshops daily, and in case of emergency this output can be doubled.

Snider Rifle Cartridge-Making Plant

These cartridges were also originally made by hand; but when I had bought a complete plant for making them I employed Mr Edwards to do for the Snider cartridges what Mr Middleton had done for the Martini-Henry. These works, too, are now carried on by the Kabuli artisans without any foreign assistance. The number of cartridges turned out daily in ten hours is 10,000, which number can be doubled if necessity arises. Mr Edwards also taught the men to make gauges for guns, shells, etc. I may say that the same cartridges as those used for the Martini-Henry rifle can also be used for the Maxim, Gatling, and Gardiner guns, as the barrels are specially designed to take the same size of cartridge.

Martini-Henry Rifle-Making Plant and Machinery for Making other Small Arms

Rifles were made by hand at Kabul before I introduced machinery for this purpose, but there

were the same disadvantages as those attendant on hand-made cartridges, viz., they were inferior in quality excepting those made by very clever workmen, and of these the number was very limited. I therefore bought a complete plant for making Martini-Henry rifles. I engaged the services of Mr Cameron, who had been employed in the Indian Government factory at Dum Dum. He not only carried out his work thoroughly and taught the artisans how to make everything, but he also made several improvements in the cartridge works; also in the gun works, and the various small arms factories. I believe he was the cleverest engineer in making guns and small arms who ever entered my service. My Government has benefited very considerably by his work. He taught the Kabuli men as much as he could, and took the greatest interest in doing so. He gave me a list of special books and treatises on making, testing, and using all sorts of war materials. These books could not be bought in shops, so the list was sent to my envoy in India with instructions to get them from the Indian Government. On my requesting the Foreign Secretary of India through my envoy, Colonel Wali Ahmad Khan, the books were obtained, and some of them have been translated into Persian.

By means of this new machinery fifteen Martini-Henry rifles can be turned out daily, all complete, and the number could be doubled if necessary. Though the machines can only be used for making Martini-Henry rifles, the same lathes, drilling, rifling, and turning machines can be used for making repeater rifles, Lee-Metford, and other guns and rifles, by

substituting new tools and instruments, just in the same way as in the coining process gold and silver coins of any size can be made in the same machine by changing the dies.

Engines, Boilers, Blacksmiths' and Gunners' Work

As above mentioned, guns were made by hand before the introduction of machinery, and the engines that I bought at first were small portable ones that did not require separate boilers. I was therefore obliged to buy a large condensing engine of 100 horse-power, together with its boilers, for the purpose of carrying on the workshops on a larger scale. I also thought it necessary to buy a large steam hammer and boilers at the same time as I bought the cartridge plant, the Mint machinery, and the soap and candle machines, as they all required boilers. For these needs, as well as for the gun-making furnaces and other blacksmiths' work, I employed an old experienced English engineer, named Mr Stewart. Mr Stewart was not only a man of very great ability and experience, he was also very hard-working, willing, and full of wit and humour; and, though an old man, he was very energetic and active about his work. He started all the above-mentioned works, and thoroughly instructed the Indian and Kabuli workmen in their use, and now, to my very great satisfaction, these artisans can make engines, boilers, and furnaces by themselves. One of the Kabuli foremen of the moulding department, named Salam, a carpenter, made a wooden condensing engine,

aided by a few other men. It was exactly like the English condensing engine, and when it was completed, and I found that it worked satisfactorily, I doubled the salaries of all those who took part in its making. I gave them in addition 6000 rupees in cash, with khilats (robes of honour). This reward from me encouraged another workman called Kasham, an engraver and draughtsman, to make another small engine, not in wood as the carpenter had done, but in the real materials—iron, steel, and copper. Fire and water were put to this engine in my presence, and it turned a small lathe. The maker of it was rewarded for his clever skill. All the furnaces for making heavy guns, for softening the cartridge metal and silver for the coins, as well as the steam hammer, casting furnaces and various other works coming under the heading of blacksmiths' work, are now carried out by the Kabul workmen by themselves. I am greatly satisfied with Mr Stewart's work in this department.

I will say a word or two to the credit of the Indian and Kabuli workmen for the way in which they carried out their duties and continued to keep the workshops going during the absence of Mr Pyne. More than half the time he was in my service he was out of the country, being obliged to go to England on account of the extreme cold of the Kabul winters. In addition to starting the workshops, Mr Pyne performed other services, which will be mentioned elsewhere.

Some people will wonder how we got these immense pieces of machinery, the heavy steam hammer, the 28-

feet-long lathes, large engines, and other heavy pieces of machinery, conveyed to Kabul, no railway being in the country. But though the difficulties of transit were very great, my determination was greater still.

Distilleries

The spirits required for making fulminate of mercury for the cartridge caps and other purposes used to be distilled by hand in small quantities, there being no machinery for the purpose. There were great quantities of grapes, raisins, and such like in Afghanistan, and I considered that it would prove to be a profitable business if I established a distillery for refining wines, etc. I therefore bought machinery and erected a distillery on a sufficiently large scale to produce 1500 bottles of wine in eight hours. I also opened a distillery for making brandy and other spirits: these wines and spirits were intended for export or for sale to such of my Afghan subjects as were not Muslims.

Before I established this manufactory, the distilling had been carried on by some Armenian Christians who resided at Kabul; after a time other people took up the work, and the nobility and chiefs followed suit, these last carrying on the process in their own houses. As neither the teachers nor their noble pupils knew anything whatever about wine distilling, the stuff they produced was such a vile mixture, that those who drank it were afflicted by various diseases, and their general health suffered. As it is against the Mahomedan religion to take wine, I inflicted severe

punishments on all who made, sold, or bought any wine whatever. These restrictions broke the people of the bad habits of drinking, into which they had fallen during the reigns of Shere Ali and Azim Khan.

I next appointed a few Kabuli workmen, who knew the old way of distilling, they having worked under the Armenians, to learn the newest and best methods, their instructor being an Indian distiller, named Ram Singh. This work also is now carried on by my people without any superintendence from foreigners.

Tannery

During the time that I was so busy in buying and establishing machinery for making guns and weapons for use in time of war, and for commercial goods, I was also paying much attention to the fact that the materials required for the daily consumption of the workshops and factory machines should be of native production, so that I should not be compelled to go to foreign countries for raw material to be worked up in my establishments. The money spent for this purpose every year would thus be kept in the country instead of enriching other nations, and any profits would go into my treasury chests for our own use. To attain this object I opened various works at Kabul for making and producing such materials for use in the workshops. I am considering this subject with the greatest attention at the present time, because at one time the Indian Government stopped all such materials as were required for making arms and ammunition being brought into Afghanistan from India. This taught me

the lesson that it was no use having workshops and factories for making these articles, unless the materials for making them were produced in Afghanistan itself. We are thus quite independent of other countries in this respect, and this is a great benefit to have secured ; because any of the great Powers could at any time stop the importation of steel, iron, copper, and brass, and the workshops would have to be closed. So I have introduced all the necessary machinery for digging out the minerals from the earth, and for iron, steel, and lead smelting, and for copper, brass and coal mining ; all these works are being improved as time goes on, and as I can avail myself of the new processes.

One of the most expensive items to purchase was tanned and dyed leather from India or from Europe. The consumption of leather was increasing day by day, as the workshops became more and more extended. Many articles were required for artillery purposes—boots, belts, leather belting for machinery, bridles and harness, and other miscellaneous requirements. To meet this want I bought all the necessary machinery and tools for tanning and dyeing all kinds of leather, and now, by the grace of Allah ! leather is tanned and dyed at Kabul by the various processes in use in England, India, Persia, and Russia. Among the foreigners, those who most distinguished themselves in this department were Mr Tasker, an English tanner. He taught Azim, the foreman of the Kabul tanneries, all the processes in leather manufacture, as carried on in England, and this industry has ever since been worked entirely by my native artisans. Another Englishman, Mr Thornton, taught Ghulam Haidar, the foremost among the

Kabul dyers, the use of all the English dyes; this work also is now carried out exclusively by Kabuli workmen.

For the Persian leather, specially tanned and dyed at Hamadan (a town in Persia renowned for its leather trade), I engaged two workmen from that place to teach their processes to my workmen. I followed the same procedure in the case of the Lahori leather, and in this the Kabuli workers are very clever, working quite as well as the Indian artisans. I knew how to make Russian patent leather myself, and I myself taught my workmen how to make it. I am very greatly pleased with all those who have taken so much pains in teaching the tanning and dyeing works to my men, and I am especially grateful to the Persian tanners of Hamadan in this respect.

Boot-Making and Leather Belting for Machinery

Although the leather was now tanned and dyed by my own workmen, there were no men capable of making it up into boots, leather belting, etc. I therefore employed a man named Ahmad, an Usbeg Russian subject, for the purpose of making and teaching the Kabuli men to make these articles on the Russian models. This man was on his way to Mecca, to which place he was making a pilgrimage; he therefore did not wish to stop at Kabul. I thereupon argued with him, and proved by all the traditions of Mahomed that to do services to other human beings was far better than going to Mecca; and I quoted the following sayings of one of the greatest saints, named Abdullah,

that "to say many prayers is to be lazy and escape business; to keep many fasts is to be economical and save the food; but to help each other is the worship of heroes,"—in short, he was persuaded to enter my service, and he has taught his trade to my workmen.

One of my own cousins, when living in exile in India, had learnt the trade of boot-making; his name was Sirdar Karim Khan. I persuaded him, after some reasoning and argument, that it is no disgrace for a member of the royal family to work with his own hands, as believed by the ignorant Afghans; on the contrary, it is a disgrace for a person who cannot work at all. I told him to join another man, a Hazara prisoner of war, who had learnt the boot-making trade somewhere else, and together they started this trade at Kabul. Many other shoemakers have learnt from them, and by the aid of the leather sewing and boot-making machines bought by me, thousands of boots are being made every day in the Kabul workshops, as well as in other towns, and they are now being sold in Bazaar as well as to the soldiers in my army. The money which was being sent annually abroad for the purchase of boots, leather belting, harness, and other articles, now remains in the country, which is a distinct advantage. I intend issuing an order that no boots or other leather articles shall be allowed to be imported into the country, and that people requiring these things must buy home-made goods. I must wait for a while, however, before issuing such an order, until a sufficient number of people have learnt how to make the goods, so that there may be a continuous

supply to meet the demands. I have given an order that no raw leather shall be exported from Afghanistan without having a special letter of permission from the officials of my Government. It was a ridiculous thing that the leather of my own country should be sold to the people at four times its proper value by having to be sent out to other countries to be tanned, dyed, and made up.

Soap and Candle Making

I started this industry in various provinces at first by hand. There is any amount of fat for the purpose, the people being all flesh-eaters, and especially in the cold parts of the country the fat of the animals does not waste so quickly as in hot countries, where the sheep and cows have very little fat as compared with those in cold countries. A large portion of the fat used to be thrown away as waste refuse before I introduced the soap and candle making. But both these articles made by hand were simply boiled fat without anything added to turn them into properly made goods. Now, however, I have all the proper plant necessary for making soap and candles, and this department is a source of considerable income to the Government, though it has not been extended and improved as much as I could wish as yet. I intend opening soap and candle factories in every important town in Afghanistan, to save the expense of freight and cartage from one town to another. I have for the same reason opened branch establishments for casting shells at various

places in the country, thus saving the heavy cost of conveyance. The hand-works for making soap and candles are carried on at present in all those provinces yet unprovided with machinery. Here, again, the money that used to be spent for foreign goods is now retained in the country.

Master of the Robes and Tailoring Department

In former times all the people of Afghanistan, from the King downwards, including all the military and civil officials and chiefs of the country, used to wear tremendously big trousers, and sleeves yards wide, so that for one pair of trousers fifteen yards of white calico were required. This was a great piece of extravagance; it was also very hideous and against the direct commands of Allah, who says: "Inallah la yahib el musrifin" = "Indeed the true Allah does not love those who are extravagant."—KORAN.

Besides being extravagant, this stupid fashion made the people lazy and unable to move about without dragging along yards and yards of stuff hanging behind them. To put an end to this I employed several Indian tailors who were formerly employed in the business of making English uniforms for the troops in India. I placed hundreds of tailors under their instruction, who made uniforms which I supplied to the soldiers as well as to the civilians; the price of these uniforms I deducted from their pay. I then gave orders that all people who appeared at their duties wearing these long ugly trousers should forfeit six months' pay. I was not quite

satisfied with the cut of the Indian tailors; I therefore employed an English master tailor, named Mr Walter, who gave the last finishing touch to the tailoring department. He and Mir Munshi together wrote a book giving all the designs and drawings of the various ways of cutting and sewing the suits and uniforms used in England. This book gives also all the necessary rules for taking measurements, and states the exact quantities of cloth required for soldiers of different heights and sizes, so that the tailors cannot steal the stuff because the accountants can calculate according to these rules how much stuff is required for men of various sizes.

All the civil and military officials of my Government can be easily distinguished, and the office or rank of each is indicated by his uniform. All civilians, for instance, chiefs, governors, officers, heads of various departments, secretaries, and courtiers, wear uniforms just as do the military officers of the same rank who receive the same monthly pay. In this way civilians wear the uniforms of a commander-in-chief, a general, a brigadier, a colonel, a captain, lieutenant, etc. At my durbar also they have their proper seats assigned to them in accordance with the pay they receive and the positions they hold in the Government service. A book especially treating of the rules and regulations attaching to the various uniforms, and of seats of the various civil and military officials at the durbar, according to their positions and rank, has been written; this book is in the possession of my son, Habibullah Khan, and it is a part of his responsibility to see that every person in his durbar, as well as in my

own, appears in his proper uniform, and takes his proper seat as appointed. For instance, any civilian whose pay is 12,000 rupees Kabuli a year, or above that, ranks with the commander-in-chief. For 8000 he ranks with a general and deputy commander-in-chief; for 5000, with brigadiers; for 4000, with colonels; and so on.

There may, perhaps, be some people, fond of finding out the faults of others and not noticing their own, who make the remark that I am a money-grabber! I have heard such reports more than once. They say that I collect every penny from every possible source, rightly or wrongly. I will say in answer to these remarks that I need not concern myself to reply to such nonsense. The safety and protection of the country depend largely upon the army and war materials being kept up to a proper strength. This cannot be done without money; and though I collect more revenue and money from the country than any former Amir, I also pay the soldiers better than any Amir who preceded me. I refer the people who pass these remarks to the poem quoted by our greatest religious saint and leader, Khwaja Ahrar of Herat, which runs thus: "Indeed no lover of God is a lover of money, but a lover of money for the sake of God is a lover of God."¹

¹ In this poem the Amir refers to a story written in the Eastern mystic books, that the above-mentioned saint was one of the richest men in Central Asia in those days, about 400 years ago. One of his disciples who had travelled a month's journey, believing him to be a saint, lost his belief in him as he thought that he was a lover of money. One day, however, a poor widow came to him and said that her only child was ill, and the only remedy to cure her, prescribed by the physicians, was to give the child the roasted liver of an Arab horse; this liver was also to have two white

The Press and Education

Before my accession to the throne there was no typewriting or printing press throughout the whole dominion of Afghanistan, and education was so neglected that I had to advertise all over the country for thirty clerks who could read and write their own language. I could, however, find only three to fulfil these conditions. Praise be to Allah ! thousands of my people can now read and write, and thousands of copies of various books furnishing information on various subjects, forms of papers, stamps, promissory notes, etc., are printed and published by the Kabul Press. Schools are being opened in all the towns, and in every regiment of the army, for the education of the people, and, God willing, a college will soon be established at Kabul for the teaching of various sciences and systems of education according to European methods. I have also ordered the people of Kabul to unite together and issue a semi-official newspaper at Kabul.

The man who deserves great praise for opening the press at Kabul was the late Munshi Abdul Razak, spots. Thereupon the Khwaja offered the woman an Arab horse of his own to be killed without charging any price for it, as she was so very poor. But when the horse was killed there were no white spots ; so the saint ordered another horse to be killed, but still no white spots ; and so on, until 101 horses had been killed, when at last he pleased the widow by giving the liver as required. This generous act of the saint caused the disciple to change his opinion, who now knew that he kept his money for the use of the poor and suffering. Then the saint, having been inspired about the feelings of his disciple, repeated the sentence quoted above to him, which made him more devoted than before to the saint, so impressed was he to find that the saint had been inspired to know what was passing in his mind.

of Delhi; he died of fever, but the printing and press work are being carried on by many Kabuli men taught by him, and in remembrance of his services I give his full pay to his sons and widow.

Miscellaneous Manufactures and Industries

If I were to give a detailed list of all the works introduced by me it would take up a very great space. It will be sufficient if I give, in addition to the works already mentioned in this chapter, the following which have been, or are being, started in Afghanistan :—Hat-making, both European and Eastern models; machinery for making telescopes and distance-finders for the artillery; heliography and all the things necessary for the requirements of this art (nothing whatever was known about it before my time); powder and shot-making; for making gold wire machines, and gold lace; machines for making Persian and Indian carpets; curtains and chairs; for weaving and making turbans; for tents; for electro-plating and gilding; for war materials of all kinds other than those before-mentioned, such as sword-making and percussion-caps and fuses; revolvers; lances; enamelling and paper-making; acid-making machines; book-binding; biscuit and cake-making; lanterns; glass-making; machines for needles and tailors' work; casting furnaces for silver, copper, brass, steel, and iron; furnaces for baking bricks and lime; for various works of architecture and carpenters' work; stone-cutting and making floors of stone after the Mogul designs on the Delhi buildings; oil-mills; machines

for making bag-pipes, bugles, and other instruments for military bands.¹

I have also made an arrangement whereby prisoners of war and prisoners for various serious offences who know how to do any kind of work connected with the industries and manufactures, shall be placed under the head workmen of their trade or profession; and when they have thoroughly learnt the work they shall be released from prison, and employed and paid for their services according to their merits and abilities. They are paid exactly the same money as an ordinary workman would be paid. By adopting this plan I contrived to collect a large number of workmen, as I could not force my subjects to accept the employment in my workshops. The prisoners were only too anxious to be released; they therefore learned their work quickly, and received their freedom and reward by being paid for their work, I, on my part, getting good and grateful workmen.

¹ In Kabul all the military bands are exactly the same as those used in every regiment of the British army, and the books on bands and military discipline have been translated from English into Persian. Every officer in charge of the various departments has to pass an examination before being admitted into the army or department, whatever it may be.

CHAPTER III

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

I DO not wish to trouble my readers with too much detail, but the book would be incomplete if I omitted any information as to the many ways in which progress has been made during my reign. The fact is, that so little really accurate information about Afghanistan is possessed by the world generally, that very much that I shall tell them will be perfectly new, and heard of for the first time. It is plain to me that some foreigners who have visited Kabul from time to time have given the world false impressions, by posing as great authorities on Afghan affairs, internal and external. I am very often amused by reading articles written by them, because it is quite evident that they have never approached the borders of Afghanistan nearer than 500 miles. It is therefore necessary that I should give true information, if not in detail, yet as much and as varied as possible. My time is very fully occupied, but I will spare a little for this purpose from my numerous duties and engagements.

Before my accession to the throne, the various departments of the Government were so mixed up with each other, that one could hardly say whether

there were any departments. For instance, there was one man, named Mustauf (he may be called Prime Minister, Paymaster-General, Accountant-General, or anything else). This man had a small staff of ten clerks or thereabouts, and he carried on the administration of the whole kingdom in his bedroom; there were no public offices at all. I sometimes hear people say: "Oh, that was a very good system, to have no public offices, and everything so simple that one man could conduct the whole business of the kingdom!" Such remarks show that the speakers do not know anything of the administration of Governments, and their utterances are not worthy of attention.

One thing is very certain, that the Government that could be so carried on must have been a very small affair, requiring as it did fewer clerks for working out all its details than are employed to keep the accounts in any wholesale shop. Another point is that great opportunities for swindling and giving arbitrary and unjust decisions were in the power of this one man; he could do rightly or wrongly without fear: his accounts were never checked. It is this sort of carelessness, owing to laziness and neglect of duty and the ignorance of rulers in the past, that is one great cause of the downfall of so many Eastern kingdoms. All men are liable to make mistakes, we all have our weaknesses as well as merits, but so long as a ruler or head of a department keeps himself informed of everything that is going on, and works himself as hard as any of his officials, if not harder than any, there is hope of him making some progress. In too many cases it happens, as with some of the

Indian ruling dynasties, that the princes and rulers are hardly to be seen outside their harems for months at a time; how, then, can their subjects bring their complaints before them to obtain redress for injustice and grievances? As the poem says :

“How can the cry of the sufferers reach thine ears ;
Thou who sleepest in high palaces where no cry can come.”

—SADI.

I must say that, to my very great regret, Afghanistan has not yet been properly organised into departments for carrying on Government business. Very often my troubles are caused by officials not knowing their own business, and mixing the work of one department with that of another, and trying to extend their jurisdiction to things quite foreign to their own special office. I trust, however, that as Afghanistan has made such rapid strides towards progress in so short a time, its public offices and works departments will soon be put into proper working order.

I have divided the departments and institutions of my Government under two headings: (1) Military, or *Nizami*; (2) Civil, or *Mulki*. Every person is practically a soldier, and Ghaza¹ (to fight for the truth and faith) is every citizen's bounden duty; every true Muslim must fight for his religion.

¹ Some people are ignorant of the meaning of the word Ghaza; they imagine that every true Muslim is bound to fight against infidels and those people who are not Muslims without any cause. True Muslims must understand that Ghaza means “to fight a defensive war in the case of any nation trying to take their country or stop their religion, and no Ghaza (religious war) can be fought except under the orders and instructions of the ruler of the country.”

The Military, or Nizami

Before giving the list of the various departments of the Nizam, I may say that all the industries and manufactures for making war materials and ammunition, mentioned in another chapter, are under the Military Department. The workmen and foremen take their pay from the Military Secretary's office. Most of the foreign employés and workmen, Indians, Englishmen, etc., take their pay from this office, the reason being that pay from the Military offices is given monthly, regularly, and in cash, paid out of the Treasury for this purpose. The pay of civilians, on the other hand, is generally given from the revenue of the country. An order is given to the civilian from the Exchequer, under the seal of one of the heads of the Revenue Office; my own seal is also attached to this order. Salaries are paid in this way perhaps only once a year, sometimes at the end of six months. They are paid for the whole year in advance. These orders are called Barats, and the civilians have to go and collect the money themselves from those who owe it to the Government Exchequer, either in taxes, customs duties, or land and property tax.

It would be undesirable to give the number of my troops in this book; I will merely give a short sketch of the various departments of my army.

The Departments of my Army.

(1) Artillery; (2) Cavalry; (3) Infantry, Police, Militia (called Khasadars), Khwanin Sowars (militia

cavalry attached to the chiefs of the country in proportion to the land possessed by them, or allowances paid to them by the Government), and Volunteers. The last-named heading includes every man over the age of sixteen and under seventy. It is arranged thus: The people themselves send one man out of every eight, and pay all his necessary expenses during the time he is occupied in learning drill and military training. After this he retires to his farm or other occupation, and another one from the eight men is placed in the training-school in his stead. This system was only instituted in 1896 at the request of the people themselves. I am myself bitterly opposed to enforced service; I do not wish men to do anything against their will, or be employed in the army unless they wish. The Afghan people are credited with being good warriors, and every one is a thorough soldier, but without proper drill and training and discipline, however brave they may be, they could not fight against the skilled and organised armies of modern European nations. I am therefore glad that this system has been introduced, and now that my people have a proper army to fight for the country, and money to buy provisions for the troops, I trust in Allah that they will not fail in defending their land from even the attacks of the greatest empires who might wish to possess themselves of it. They will thus prove that the Afghanistan of the past was a dream that is gone for ever. This reminds me of an incident that occurred at the time I was living in exile in Russia, and I will give a short account of it here.

The Russians had brought up a very heavy gun to practise the destruction of forts. I went to watch them, and a Russian officer told me that the gun was brought to attack, break, and take the fort of Herat. I replied: "If Providence has the kingdom of Afghanistan written in my Kismet (Fate), then the very place where this gun will fail will be Herat, but if I am not to be the ruler of Herat I cannot tell what will happen." The Russian answered contemptuously: "You live on the allowance of our Government, why do you say this?" I replied: "I have not accepted the allowance as a compensation to sell my country, nation, faith, and spirit of patriotism; I am not one of those cowards who can hear of the destruction and ruin of Afghanistan without giving an answer. If you do not want to hear the truth, it would have been better for you not to speak about this gun."

The Afghans, who are born warriors and accustomed to fight from their youth, in ancient times used to fight in the following manner: Every chief, landowner, Syad (descendants of Mahomed through his daughter Fatima), and eminent priest, had a number of followers who used to take a flag and a drum, called Dhul, and a flute, called Surnai, and when they beat this drum and played the flute, thousands used to join them and start for the war. These drums and flutes were their bands for the battlefield, and when these were sounded every true Muslim was bound to join under one flag or the other. Their drill consisted of nothing but a cry, "Allah Akbar" (= "God is great and powerful"), or "Ya

Chahar Yar" (=the Four Companions of Mahomed). This is how their wars were carried on. Their weapons were guns of brass or copper, muzzle-loading muskets, old-fashioned revolvers, Persian and Gujerat-made swords, Afghan sabres, called Sailabas. Every person was a Ghazi or soldier of the Faith. Even at the present day every Afghan prays when he goes to bed that the Almighty Allah will give him the death of a soldier on the battlefield, and not on his bed; that he may die fighting for his faith as a Shahid (= one who gives his life for his religion). It is our belief that all who die as Shahids go to Paradise without being asked for any account of their doings before the Almighty Judge at the Day of Judgment. Those who are Ghazis are considered innocent in the sight of God.

This old system of fighting lasted until the present century; before my grandfather's time the composition of the army was simply a mass of fighting men consisting of cavalry and infantry, but without any organisation into proper batteries, regiments, or battalions. My father laid the foundation for organising them into proper divisions, columns, batteries, cavalry, and regiments, under the orders and instructions of my grandfather. He was greatly helped by a European military officer, mentioned in another part of the book, named Mr Campbell, and other Indian military officers of the British and Mogul army, who had left that country at the time of the Mutiny and joined my father's army. This helped considerably in the organisation of the army. Amir Shere Ali Khan, at the time of his succession

to the throne, continued to keep and follow this system, and made some improvements which he got from certain books which were translated into Pushto; these books were in use in the British army. His army, however, was defective in certain respects, one of them being that the soldiers did not get their pay regularly, and had certain privileges granted them of extorting money from the subjects without any punishment being inflicted on them for so doing. The officers were lazy, steeped in indulgence and vices of all kinds, gambling, opium-smoking, Indian hemp-smoking, and other bad habits which cannot be mentioned in this book; my readers would be too disgusted. The worst thing of all was the enforced conscription which caused general discontent in the country. Through this enforced service and the bad behaviour of the officers, his army was in such a condition that it could not stand against the English army half so well as any ordinary chief.

Thanks be to God! now my army is properly organised upon the modern European military method, and my soldiers are paid regularly in cash every two months. Every cavalry regiment and battalion of artillery is complete with its sappers and miners for trench-work, engineers, bands, tents, medical corps consisting of hakims (physicians) and jarah (surgeons), chaplain, accountant, commissariat department, and so on.

My army is supplied with breech-loading guns of the most recent Nordenfeldt, Hotchkiss, and Krupp patterns, as well as English mountain battery guns, mule battery, Maxim, Gardiner, and Gatling guns. Their



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rifles are the same as those supplied to the British army, Lee-Metford, repeaters, Martini-Henry, Snider, together with modern breech-loading guns, such as are used in the German army, of the Mauser pattern. They have also one small breech-loading carbine, as used in the Austrian army, and certain Russian guns of modern designs. The percussion and time fuses of recent English invention are being made at Kabul by the same machinery that is used in England for the purpose. In fact, all the arms and war materials, including shells and cartridges, are ready for 300,000 soldiers, if necessity arises. The stores of food and provisions and money, as well as transport animals, are also ready for an immediate move. I am making every effort to provide myself with 1,000,000 fighting men, all armed with the most modern weapons and war materials, stores and provisions, and pay for two years, to carry on a war that should last for that time. Of course this large number of men is not difficult to find in Afghanistan at a fortnight's notice, but any one who knows anything about war must consider the difficulties of supplying transport, food, pay, and all the necessaries for war for such a large body. There is, however, one great advantage in my favour; the country is full of arms, every man and woman possesses a gun or a sword, and in certain Afghan tribes the brides take their dowry only in war materials. There is splendid transport in the shape of elephants, camels, horses, pack-ponies, mules, and donkeys, and the country is rich enough to supply food from its own resources. The only drawback is money, which I am struggling to accumulate day

and night. Luckily, we have no national debt, and two nations, namely, England and Afghanistan, whose interests are identical, are provided in this way: England wants soldiers to stand by her side; she has money and arms—Afghanistan has fighting men but requires money and arms, of which England has such an ample supply. However, no foreign power can bring a million soldiers to fight in Afghanistan, and provide such a large body to continue a war for a long period. The advantage that the Afghans possess is, that they are strong men, and can travel in their country as fast as any horse, carrying their tents, powder-belts, rifles, and thirty loaves of bread to last for a month on their shoulders.¹ I repeat that it would take a very long time before any aggressive power could arrange to move such a great army and plant it in the heart of Afghanistan, before Afghanistan is ready to supply everything that is requisite for a similar force. My arrangements are to provide every gun with at least 500 shells and every rifle with 5000 cartridges. All the rifles that I have bought from England and Germany, and that have been given to me by the British Government, are provided with 5000 cartridges each. In addition to the masses of war materials, which have been bought and given to me by the British Government since my accession to the throne, there are

¹ The Afghans bake a special kind of bread and prepare dried food, which can be kept from one year to another. There are two kinds of dried food, called Landi, one kind of food called Talkhan, a mixture of the dried mulberry fruit and powdered roast wheat. Another kind of powdered food is a mixture of sugar and roasted wheat called Satu. The Afghans sometimes live for months on these foods.

the arms and ammunition which are being made in the workshops, the immense stores of which increase day by day. Some of these are, 360 Hotchkiss and Nordenfeldt breech-loading guns every year, complete with shells, ammunition, carriages, and harness for the horses. What Afghanistan does require very badly is properly trained military officers, to supplement and make more useful its splendid stock of war materials. I am paying every attention to remedy this difficulty as time goes on.

First, I have instituted sham fights, the teaching of all kinds of drill and military tactics, military examinations, learning the use of distance finders for the range of the guns, and other useful hints on military practice. The men take to pieces and put together again all kinds of guns ; this is done both by officers and men without any help from artisans ; they are taught the proper measurements of powder and the proper application of percussion and time fuses, etc. The sappers and miners are taught, in addition to engineering work generally, to make roads, bridges, entrenchments, sangars ; also gunners' work and that of infantry.

As education is a most important branch of an officer's training, they have to prepare themselves for their profession, and become competent to perform their duties. This, as I have said, is tested by examinations. As the poet says :

“The mass of the army is not the only thing required,
Two hundred competent warriors are better than 100,000 noise-makers.”
—JAMI.

It has been suggested to me in the same way as I have elsewhere mentioned that the best and easiest

way of conveying the army from one quarter to another would be by railways; and I again insist on advising my sons and successors to remember that the principle on which most nations act at present proves that there is no consideration for *right*, but only for *might*; and therefore, as Afghanistan has not arms enough to fight against any great attacking power, it would be folly to allow railways to be laid throughout the country. My Intelligence Department keeps me supplied with information of the movements of the armies of my neighbours, and we could very easily bring any number of fighting men to the frontier before an enemy could reach it with half the number.

I have mentioned that the interests of Great Britain and Afghanistan are identical, which is perfectly true in effect, but as circumstances are liable to change the ideas of every nation, my successors must not relax any effort or vigilance. They should not place their entire confidence in the support and help of Great Britain, as it is possible that that country itself may think fit to change her attitude towards Afghanistan, or it may not suit her views at the moment to help them. My successors must follow the true philosophy taught by our religion, which is: "Prepare yourself to face any difficulty, and then place your confidence in God." It would be difficult for Great Britain to break the pledges and agreements which she has given to me to protect the integrity and safety of my country, but it is to England's interest and advantage that Afghanistan should be both independent and strong to act as a barrier between Russia and India.

Mulki, or Civil

Every other department, except those mentioned in the first section, come under the heading of Mulki or Civil, and it is not within the scope of this small book to give the full particulars and names of all the various departments. I will mention a few of the most important ones.

Treasury

The whole of the income of my dominions is paid into the Khazana (Treasury), and all the expenses are paid out of it. The Treasury is divided into two parts: the State Treasury, called Khazana-i-Amirah (or Public Treasury); and Khazana-i-Khâs (Special or Private Treasury). The latter is my own Private Treasury, in which only my private income, from lands, trade, etc., is paid. I take no cash payments from the Government Treasury for my personal expenses except for my food, clothing, etc. I again divide these two Treasury divisions into two sub-divisions, viz., the Khazana-Nakdi (Cash Treasury), and Jinsi (everything except cash). Both of these Treasuries are inside the inner circle of the fort at Kabul, called Arg, or Palace. In the outer circle of this building are the various Government offices and public audience or durbar hall. This palace has a garden nearly as large as the whole city of Kabul around it; neither palace nor garden existed before I came to the throne. The branches of the Treasury are in nearly every principal town and province of Afghanistan, and whatever is

left in these Treasuries at the end of the year, after deducting the expenses for working these provincial branches, is forwarded to Kabul. If the expenses of any provinces are greater than the income, more money is sent from Kabul to meet them.

To keep myself informed of the income and expenditure of my Government, I have made the following arrangement. Every evening an abstract is sent to me from the Treasury, which shows how much money was paid in during the day, and how much was paid out, and the balance in the Treasury at the time the abstract is made out. I thus know every night how much money I have in the Treasury, and I can also compare the expenditure of former years by this means.

The principal Treasury, as well as its branches, is governed by the President of the Treasury, called Khazanadar (Treasurer), and the Counsellors of the Exchequer. These officials are obliged to render their accounts to the Accountant-General. They give a receipt daily of what is paid into the Treasury, and they take a receipt for all moneys paid out. No money is paid out of the Treasury without orders under my own seal or the seal of my eldest son, Habibullah Khan, counter-sealed by the heads of those departments of the Government requiring the money for the expenses of their departments.

The principal sources of income from which money is paid are as follows :—Revenue on land and fruit-trees ; duties on export and import, including various items of customs money. Post-Office : the sale of various

kinds of stamps for promissory notes, forms for contracts, bills of exchange, etc.; Government trade and Commerce; revenue from the Government lands as well as hire of the Government shops, public-houses, etc.; fine money, for various crimes and offences; confiscated property or products of the Government minerals; annual subsidy given by the Indian Government amounting to eighteen lakhs of rupees a year. The last-mentioned item is generally spent in buying machinery and war materials from Europe.

The way in which the duties are collected is this: Orders are issued from the various departments informing the people about the amounts owing by them to the Government Treasury, and commanding them to pay such amounts by a certain date, or to any official appointed by the Treasury, and to take a receipt for the money paid. They must then show the receipt to the official from whose office the orders for payment were issued. A copy of this receipt is entered into the books of the particular department, and the original is given back to the payer to keep as testimony that he has paid.

For the army stationed in different provinces and for the Government transport animals, for keeping stores of corn and grass, for the Commissariat Department, and for the expenses of the royal family and other necessities, the subjects are allowed to give corn, grass, or wood for fuel, and to take a receipt for such things; these are deducted from their taxes according to the prices of the market of the day.

The old system of keeping offices in Afghanistan

was, that there were no books for entering any of the accounts, small sheets of paper, about eight inches long and six inches wide, being used. Each of these sheets was called a fard (single leaf). These small pieces of paper were half-filled by writing at the top, the name of the office, the year and date, and various other unnecessary things, and the other half contained three or four words, then the sheet was full. What could have been entered in two sheets of a book took 100 of these small scraps of paper. In consequence, when a certain item was required for reference, it was necessary to go through thousands of these scraps, which was a very great waste of time. The worst fault of all was that any official or accountant who had embezzled Government money, could easily take a few sheets or one sheet away, and either write another or tear them up altogether.

I have introduced books, and on the first page the numbers of each page or sheet are written and sealed with my seal to the binding of the book, so that no one can take a sheet out of the book without breaking the seal. At first some people played tricks, and tore out some sheets, for which their fingers were cut! Now every one, at the time of taking a book, writes on the first page with his own hands that he promises to have his hands cut if he cuts the book!

The following officers copy and manage all the accounts of the Income and Expenses of the Government. These are connected with the Treasury: Governor's office; Ecclesiastical offices; Municipality and Board of Trade; Kotwali or Criminal Courts office; Kafila Bashi or head of the Caravan office;

Chabutra or Custom House ; the Revenue offices, four in number—Northern, Southern, Western, and Eastern ; Post-offices ; Sakukat or offices for selling all kinds of stamps ; offices for entering all the daily expenses of the Government (Ikhrajat) ; office for entering all the income of the Government (called Tahwilat) ; the Record office, where all the Government papers are kept (Daftar-i-Shah or Royal Records) ; Rahdari or Passport office ; Roznamcha, the office where all copies of orders issued on the Treasury are made, both for paying and receiving money. Hisab Giri, the office for the final settlement of all the accounts (this may be called the Accountant-General's office). This office is governed by two counsels—one is an accountants' counsel, the other is the arbitrators' counsel—to see that the accounts are just and rightly made and paid.

The appeals from the provincial branches of these departments go to the principal offices at Kabul, where they are seen by my eldest son, Habibullah ; from him they come to me. There is another office which stands mid-way between the above-mentioned offices and myself, called the office of my Court Secretary, presided over by a Chief Secretary.

There is also the Military Secretary's office, Commissariat office, Nazir's office (the head of the kitchen of the royal household), Workshops offices, Public Works Department offices, etc.

Courts of Justice

All the departments mentioned in the first section are courts of justice as well, and have their respective

jurisdictions ; appeals are made in the same order as I have said before. I need not therefore repeat them ; I will say, however, that the courts of law are not the same now as they were before I came to the throne. In certain cases the decisions are according to the Mahomedan law, subject to my approval, but in various matters the law has been changed to meet the altered circumstances and customs of the country. For instance, I have already said that 300 rupees was the price of the life of a human being. I have abolished that law and instituted another, to the effect that a murderer is entirely at the mercy of the relatives and friends of the murdered person ; if they choose to forgive him, the Government still retains a right of granting or withholding pardon. But even if the State does pardon him as well as the relatives and friends of the victim, he has yet to pay 7000 rupees fine as a compensation, to ransom his life. If he cannot afford to pay the fine, his relatives and friends are allowed to pay the ransom if they choose. According to the old Afghan law, the wife was not only considered the property of her husband, but the property of his whole family—brothers and relatives ; if, therefore, she lost her husband, his next-of-kin had the right of marrying her against her wish. This was the law of the land ; a poor woman, therefore, who had the misfortune of falling into the hands of any family, had no possible chance of escape from them, and it was considered a disgrace to the family if she was allowed to go to her own parents or anywhere else after the death of her husband. The most curious idea was that it was considered to be following the law of Mahomed. This, however, was entirely opposed to

Mahomed's teachings. The law that I have made is that the moment a husband dies, the wife is free, and she cannot be forced to marry any one against her wish. Not only that, but by my law, a girl under the age of puberty, married by her parents, is quite at liberty, when she attains full age, to accept the marriage or not. Further, even after accepting the marriage, if her husband is cruel to her, or does not pay her expenses, she can sue him to give a sufficient alimony or to give her divorce. In the same manner, some important and influential families used to get their sons-in-law to sign such large amounts of dowry for their wives against their wish, that it was impossible for them to pay, even if his family joined together to help him. For instance, a man whose income was 10s. a month was made to sign that he would give 500,000 rupees to his wife as her dowry; in default of paying the poor man was made a slave. I placed restrictions upon this law, and settled that the princes of the royal family were to give from 1000 to 3000 rupees for dowry, and other people from 300 to 900 rupees. Of course, if they had private means, and of their own free will chose to give more than this to their wives, they were quite at liberty to act according to their inclinations.

There are some other great changes in the old ridiculous way of administering justice which would require a book all to themselves if I were to give all the details. I have introduced a system of registration of marriages, so that there shall not be any disputes for want of sufficient evidence. If the Registrar should allow any illegal marriage or enforced marriage to be entered in his book, he is severely punished.

Public Works Department

More attention has been paid during my reign to this department than ever before in Afghanistan. It shows clearly that there does not exist one building throughout the whole country which was built of Pukka bricks (baked bricks) and lime, or of stone. All the buildings were of mud. The only places where the old buildings can be seen are the ruins of the old city of Balkh, Ghazni, and the palace of Bala Hissar of Kabul, a few tombs scattered about the country, and half-a-dozen mosques or so. I am glad to say that during my reign fine buildings of brick and lime have been erected in nearly every one of the principal towns in my kingdom. Fine roads have been made, and are still being laid out, throughout the country. The principal roads are those from Kabul to Balkh, extending to Russian territory; from Kabul to Herat, from Herat to Kandahar, and thence to Ghazni and Kabul; from Kabul to Hazarajat; from Jellalabad to Asmar and Kafiristan; from Kabul to Peshawar, *via* Tang-i-Karun. The last-named road took ten years to make, thousands of people being employed in the work. The great advantage of this road is that travellers using it, avoid the difficult and tedious mountain peaks and passes between Jellalabad and Kabul. All these roads, as well as the bridges, are inspected annually and repaired, and trees are being planted on both sides of the roads. The people of every town and village through whose land the roads pass are responsible for the wanton destruction of the

Garu

trees and roads, so far as they pass through their land.

In the same manner, the people of every village and town are responsible for the safety of the travellers and strangers journeying through their province. For instance, if a traveller is killed, or his property is stolen in the vicinity of a town or village, the people of that village are either to find the wrongdoer or answer for the injury themselves. Therefore a man of loose character does not find room anywhere in the whole country, because wherever he goes the people say that they cannot answer for his misdeeds, and he must go to another place further away! This is the reason why all the roads are now so safe for travellers throughout the whole of my dominions, though there (are no people to look after the safety of the caravans.) Of course I must give credit to my Detective Department, and various other arrangements, which have put an end to the everlasting danger which travellers and strangers had to suffer.

I have also built round some of the principal towns strong forts and defences—for example, the fort of Dehdadi near Balkh, commanding the road leading from Russia to Balkh; this is the largest and strongest fort that has ever been built in Afghanistan.

I have started several furnaces for baking bricks and kilns for burning lime; the public works improvements are a credit to all the officials who have taken a part in them. Some of these officials are Abdur Rahman Khan, overseer; Abdur Rahim Khan, overseer; Abdur Subhan Khan, surveyor; Mir Imrad (head of the Public Works Department); Munshi Nazir;

Munshi Mahomed Bakhsh, who was the head draughtsman of the Punjab Government before he entered my service, and taught drawing to several Kabul draughtsmen by my instructions.

Medical Department

This department has two branches, the old one called Yunani or Greek system of treatment; the other for the doctors practising according to the European methods. In every town both the civil and military departments are under the care of both classes of doctors. The first dispensaries for issuing English medicines were opened in Afghanistan by an Indian hospital assistant, named Dr Daim Khan, and Dr Abdur Rahim Khan. These gentlemen had worked under English doctors, and they entered my service shortly after my accession to the throne. These dispensaries were the only establishments opened by the doctors, hospitals not being started for several years. Government provided food as well as medicines and treatment for the military patients in cantonments.

The first hospital was established in 1894 by my Court doctor, Miss Lillias Hamilton, M.D. This lady was helped by several assistants and a qualified English nurse, named Mrs Daly, whom Miss Hamilton brought with her from England. In addition to opening the first hospital carried on in the English style, Miss Hamilton introduced vaccination, and the taking of vaccine lymph from the calf. This proved a great blessing to the children, of whom large numbers used to die of small-pox, those who recovered being greatly

disfigured by the pitting following this dreadful disease. Several native hakims were placed under Miss Hamilton's instruction to study the method of vaccination, and how to obtain the vaccine lymph from the calves, and a pamphlet on the subject was compiled by my orders, copies of which were distributed throughout the country to all my people. Hakims from the most distant parts of my dominions have been invited to learn the practice of this work under the instructions of Miss Hamilton's pupils. Mr Pack, one of my commercial agents, when visiting Kabul, fell seriously ill; he was successfully treated by Miss Hamilton, and as a substantial token of his gratitude, he opened a temporary hospital at Kabul, entirely at his own expense. I earnestly hope that, now the first hospitals are doing so much good, the movement will go on progressing all over the country, until there is plenty of accommodation for the sick to be properly treated under qualified doctors. Miss Hamilton's name may be mentioned here in connection with another service, namely, in that she went to England with my son Nasrullah, as his medical adviser, in 1895. On that occasion she had the honour of being presented to Her Majesty Queen Victoria.¹

¹ Afghans, unlike the Indians, are better contented to put themselves under the care of European doctors, rather than go to their own native hakims, partly because the taste of the native drugs is so horrid, and partly because the native treatment is so long and tedious. The patients are forbidden to eat any meat or other strong food; partly, also, because the Afghans are fond of innovations and learning. I have seen people go to Miss Hamilton and ask for some pills, and on being asked what they were suffering from, they would answer: "Oh, I am not ill at present; but I might become so in the future!" They then swallow the pills and walk off.

Minerals

There are so many mines in Afghanistan that it ought to be the richest country in the world; but, according to the saying, "that to a person who is not a jeweller, a diamond and a crystal are of equal value," none of the Afghan rulers or people have been able to reap any benefit from these rich mines. During my reign several mines have been opened, including a ruby mine, a lapis lazuli mine, gold and silver, lead, iron, copper, coal, asbestos, stone, and salt mines. I am accumulating various kinds of machinery for the proper and effective working of all these mines. Mr Middleton, one of the English mining engineers, did good service in the working of the Jellalabad ruby mine and the Ghorband lead mine. I would most strenuously advise my sons and successors not to give the monopoly of their minerals to any foreigners, nor to let their mines be worked by any foreign companies; otherwise they will be immersed in many complications, thereby giving an excuse to foreign nations to interfere in the affairs of the country, for the sake of greed, which is growing unbearable from day to day. I think it would be unwise to give any details, but there are instances where the destruction of a weak nation has been caused by a strong one, under the excuse of fighting for the rights of their subjects, who were interested financially in that weak country. A hint from me on this point should be sufficient to warn my sons and successors never to put themselves into a false position with other nations.

They should not only refrain from giving any sort of contracts to foreigners in their country, but more especially, they should not allow Europeans to live in the country permanently ; the moment that a European servant or workman or teacher has finished the work for which he was engaged, and has taught the native people how to carry the work on without his further instruction, he must be allowed to go to his own land again.

Commissariat Department and Stud Horses

Though it is possible to hire as many pack-ponies, camels, and other transport animals as may be required at any time, yet, none the less, as a necessary precaution in case of emergency, and from considerations of economy, I keep 24,000 Government horses for riding and loading purposes, together with a large number of elephants, mules, and camels. The elephants are for the special purpose of dragging the heavy guns, road-engines, and large pieces of machinery that cannot be transported by camels or other animals. I also keep 2000 mares for stud purposes, together with about 80 stud-horses, which are from English studs, some being from the Prince of Wales' stables, others from Arab studs, others from Walar, Turkoman, Indian, and other races of the best horses. To look after the health and condition of all these horses several veterinary surgeons have been placed under the stud groom. There were also some native veterinary surgeons, called paitars, who, however, did not know the

system of treatment practised in modern European countries. I therefore employed an Englishman, Mr Clements, in this capacity, who not only looked after the sick horses and the breeding of different kinds, but also taught the work of his profession to twenty other young men of Afghanistan. Mr Clements also brought a few English sheep with him; and I added to these by buying a large number of Australian sheep for the purpose of increasing the wool trade of Afghanistan, from which trade a large proportion of the income of the country is derived.

Education

I have opened various schools for the education of members of my family, my personal attendants, and page-boys; for prisoners of war; for the army, and for the children of my officials and other subjects. Besides this, the people themselves have opened voluntary schools for the education of their children everywhere. Every official, no matter what his duties may be, has to go through an examination; even the clergymen and priests, who used to look upon themselves as equal to prophets, cannot be appointed to any post, or admitted to perform the duties of the Church, without first passing an examination, their success in which entitles them to a certificate from the Council of Examiners. As I have mentioned under their various headings, education is extended to every profession and department, and I need not repeat them here. My eldest son has learnt

English, history, geography, mathematics, drawing, surveying, and astronomy.

Commerce and Trade

In this department, in addition to the old systems carried on in various parts of the country, I have devoted much attention to the improvement of commerce, and I am struggling hard to improve still further the conditions of trade, well knowing that in this lies the greatest source for enriching my country. In the past, as I have before mentioned, hundreds of foreign goods used to be imported into Afghanistan, for which money had to be sent out of the country; now these goods are manufactured at Kabul, and the money can be turned over again and again. Among other articles that were bought from abroad, for example, were vast quantities of salt; I have therefore ordered that no more salt was to be imported, and the people must buy salt from my newly-found mines worked by Afghan people. A large quantity of Astrakhan skins, rubies, gold, lapis lazuli, various kinds of fruits, wool, horses, wood for building purposes, and opium and other drugs, are exported; this also brings money into the country.

In the Agricultural Department vast progress has been made. Before I came to the throne there were scarcely any vegetables; now every kind of fruit and vegetable is grown. I have also introduced the sugar-cane into the provinces of Kandahar and Laghman; orange-trees, bananas, etc., have been imported from India.

The little trade that did exist in Afghanistan was also carried on by foreigners—Indians, Mahomedans, and Hindus. This impoverished the country, because these foreigners sent the money that they made, over and above what they required for trading purposes, to their own lands. In place of this I have encouraged my own people to carry on trade, by lending them money from the Government Treasury, without charging them any interest on the capital. It must not be forgotten, however, that I am not the man to give my money without calculating the interest: I know that I get on such money double interest—namely, the paying of custom-house duties of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on everything imported and exported, and this amounts to more than the usual rate of interest. The same money comes and goes back over and over again in the year, each time paying the duties. The second interest is, that my subjects are occupied in getting a peaceful living, and so they have no time for rebellions and discontent.

I may mention that, notwithstanding my being so busy in the great affairs of the kingdom, I do not neglect the smallest matters, so much so, that I learned how to tune a piano from an Englishman, called Mr Riches. I afterwards taught some of my own people how to tune pianos. I may also say here that I bought a special kind of Sindh fowls and hens, rearing the chickens myself first; I then introduced them to other people.

I introduced hundreds of different stamps and forms of papers for contracts, deeds, promissory notes, marriage settlements, passports, which bring in revenue,

and were never even heard of before my time in Afghanistan. The richest source of income to the Government, however, is the many manufactures and industries and mines for obtaining minerals that I have set to work and introduced. After military affairs, I devote the greatest part of my daily life to these trade and commercial matters.

Many of my officials who think themselves very wise keep on advising me to introduce railways and telegraphs, saying that it is impossible to get the full benefit of the minerals and other products. But I again advise my sons and successors not to listen to these people. Of course, I know myself that what they say is quite true, but, at the same time, they do not consider that by making the country easily accessible, foreign powers would not find so much difficulty in entering and spreading themselves over our country. The greatest safety of Afghanistan lies in its natural impregnable position. Allah has given us every peak of the mountains for a fortress of nature, and foreigners know that the Afghans, being born warriors, can go on fighting for ever and ever, as long as they can hide themselves behind the stones and do not have to face the enemy on the open field. There is no doubt that the day will come when railways and telegraphs will be most beneficial, and when they will be welcomed in the country, and that day will be when we see that we have a great army, strong enough to fight our neighbours, but until we are strong enough to hold our own, we must not weaken the strength of our hilly country with our own hands. We must not make the mistake once made by the man who killed the goose that laid golden eggs

every day, thinking that he would get all the eggs at once, which he did not.

Post-Office

This department was nominally in existence before my accession, but only one road was open for the post from Kabul to Peshawar, and the time taken before letters reached their destination was very long and uncertain. At present proper arrangements are in force, and post-offices are open in every town in my dominions; the delivery is so expeditious, that it takes only thirty-six hours for letters to come from India to Kabul, and the posts run to all the neighbouring countries towards Russia, Persia, China, and India. The system of registering letters and taking the receipt, giving notices and sending parcels, issuing postal orders, etc., is quite complete, and modelled on the Indian post-offices. Sufficient income is derived from the receipts to pay all the expenses.

CHAPTER IV

A FEW DETAILS IN MY DAILY LIFE

FROM my childhood up to the present day my life is quite a contrast to the habits of living indulged in by nearly all other Asiatic monarchs and chiefs. They live for the most part a life of idleness and luxury, and it is thought by aristocratic people that the prestige of a prince is minimised by his being seen walking on foot or doing anything with his own hands. I myself believe that there is no greater sin than allowing our minds and bodies to be useless and unoccupied in a useful way; it is being ungrateful for the gifts of Providence. The readers of my book can judge for themselves from my history if I have not been, throughout my life, a thorough soldier, and perhaps more hard-working than any common labourer or workman. My way of living and dressing has always been plain and simple and soldier-like. I have always liked to keep myself occupied day and night in working hard at something or other, devoting only a few hours to sleep. As habit is second nature, it has become a habit of mine, that even when I am seriously ill, when I cannot move from my bed, I still keep on working as usual at reading and writing documents and various Govern-

ment papers ; at hearing the applications and complaints of my subjects and giving instructions and judgments. Those who have seen me at such times know how hard I work, and they have often heard me say that if my hands and feet cannot move from my bed, I can still go on moving my tongue to give orders to those about me, and tell them what I wish to be done. It is no trouble to me to work hard ; on the contrary, I love it, and I never feel tired, because I am so fond of work and labour. There is no doubt that every person has some sort of ambition, and this is my ambition ; all the hard work I do is to complete the administrative work of my kingdom. In the words of the poem :—

“ If the beloved should not encourage the lover towards her, the lover will neither have the heart nor the courage to approach her.”

This love for work is inspired by God ; it is the true ideal and desire of my life to look after the flock of human beings whom God has intrusted to me, His humble slave. Allah says through His Prophet : “ When the Almighty desires to do a thing He makes all necessary preparations for it ” (Koran). As God wished to relieve Afghanistan from foreign aggression and internal disturbances, He honoured this, His humble servant, by placing him in this responsible position, and He caused him to become absorbed in thoughts of the welfare of the nation, and inspired him to be devoted to the progress of this people, and to be ready to sacrifice life itself for their welfare and for the true faith of the Holy Prophet Mahomed—
May God bless him !

The more I see of the people of other nations

and religions running fast in the pursuit of progress the less I can rest and sleep; the whole day long I keep on thinking how I shall be able to run the race with the swiftest, and at night my dreams are just the same. There is a saying that the cat does not dream about anything but mice; I dream of nothing but the backward condition of my country, and how to defend it, seeing that this poor goat, Afghanistan, is a victim at which a lion from one side and a terrible bear from the other side are staring, and ready to swallow at the first opportunity afforded them. My courtiers know, for example, that years before the question of marking out the boundaries of Afghanistan was mooted, I had dreamed a dream that was published at that time and distributed throughout the whole country. Briefly, the purport of that dream was, that before my death I should finish and complete making a strong wall all round Afghanistan, for its safety and protection. This dream was interpreted by the astronomers to mean that the boundaries of Afghanistan should be so marked out by me that an end would be put to the everlasting forward policy of my neighbours, who used to keep on creeping nearer and nearer every year. Many other dreams of mine, like this, all of which I told to my courtiers, have come true, and they have seen that the boundaries have been marked out, and I am still alive, to the sorrow of those who seem so anxious to put an end to me, as they circulate false reports about my death once a week. I did not think that any man died so many times as they have killed me in their imagination.

It is a curious thing that the harder I work the more anxious I am to continue working, instead of getting tired. The appetite grows by what it feeds upon!

To those who would like to know some particulars of my daily life, I would say that I have no fixed time for sleeping nor any definite time for taking my meals; sometimes my meals are kept at the dinner-table in front of me for many hours, whilst I, being absorbed in my thoughts, forget all about them. So deeply do my thoughts take possession of me when I am planning various improvements and considering state affairs, that I do not see any of the people who are in my presence. Many nights I begin reading, and writing answers to letters, and do not raise my head until I see that the night is past and the morning has come. My story is just like the story of a lover, well known in the East, named Majnun, who was so much in love with a lady named Leila, that one day, seeing her dog, he followed the dog, and did not see the mosque nor those who were saying their prayers therein. When he was asked by the chiefs of the mosque to give an explanation, he said that he neither saw the mosque nor those who were saying their prayers therein, because his love to the dog of his lady was so great. They did not love God as much as he loved the dog, because their thoughts were occupied in looking at him and at the dog; so their prayers were of very small value.

My doctors and hakims tell me that this never-ceasing activity is the cause of all my illnesses, that I work too hard, and do not take my meals regularly

at fixed times. My answer is: "Love and Logic have never agreed together." And as I am a lover of the welfare of my nation, I do not feel my own pains, but the pains and the sufferings and weakness of my people, which I cannot bear for them, and those who have never been in love do not know how sore are the sufferings of lovers.

One of the poets says rightly: "A lover seems to find pleasure in the pursuit of his ambitions, as the dust that arises from the feet of the flock is a salve to the eyes of the wolf pursuing the flock." In my pursuit after the welfare of Afghanistan, the more that I see signs of change and progress, the faster I follow them, as a lover follows the traces of the footmarks of his ideal, which make him more eager to keep on the road. I pray God to help me in carrying out this duty for which He has selected me from among other men.

On many occasions I get quite discouraged on account of the misbehaviour of my people, who keep on rebelling, quarrelling and intriguing against each other, and making false reports of each other to me. I have then to make enquiries to find out the truth, and this wastes more than half of my valuable time; so that as I try to walk in the steps of progress they keep on pulling me back. I get very weary, and sometimes think that their position is unchangeable and their intrigues incurable, and that it is impossible to raise them to that standard which would make them equal to their neighbours in strength and character. I feel that it would be well for me to retire from this life of everlasting anxiety and struggle,

and take a quiet, peaceful life somewhere else, leaving my people to fight amongst themselves until they are ruined. But this would be a cowardly action and a refusal to fulfil the duties ordained by the real Almighty Master and Sovereign, for which He has created me. I believe that a true lover must never turn his face from the difficulties that constantly come in his way, and he must look upon all the naughty and mischievous play of his beloved, and the cruelties shown to him, as very pleasant pains and occupations. The pains of the lover are the luxuries of his love; and the difficulties and anxieties of a reformer only add to his enthusiasm, and spur him on to fresh exertions.

There is no fixed time and no proper programme for me throughout the twenty-four hours of the day and night in which I work; I go on working from morning until evening, and from evening again until morning, like any labourer. I eat when I am hungry; and some days do not remember that I have not eaten my meals—I forget all about it, and ask my courtiers all at once, raising my head from writing: “Did I eat my dinner to-day or not?” In the same way, when I get tired and sleepy, I go to sleep on the same bed which is my chair for work. I do not require any private room or bedroom, neither any room for secrecy or for grand receptions. There are plenty of such rooms in my palaces, but I have no time to spare, even to move from one room to another. Of course I love to go to my harem and spend an evening with my family, and they are equally delighted when I pay these visits, but my time is so full,

that there is none to spare except occasionally, when I make it!

As I have said there is no fixed time for meals or other personal needs, I may mention that my usual custom is to go to rest about five or six in the morning, rising again about two in the afternoon. The whole time that I am in bed my sleep is disturbed in such a way, that I awake nearly every hour, and keep on thinking about the improvements and anxieties of my country; then I go to sleep again, and so on. I get up between two and three in the afternoon, and the first thing I do is to see the doctors and hakims, who examine me to see if I require any medicine. After this the tailor comes in, bringing with him several plain suits made in the European style. I choose one for that day's use. After I have washed and dressed, my tea-bearer enters carrying tea and a light breakfast. During the whole of the time, from the entrance of the hakims until I have finished breakfast, the Usher, the Secretaries, the Nazir (or Lord of the Seal), and one or two other officials keep on looking at me, and saying in their own minds: "Oh, be quick, and let us each put our work before you!" I do not blame them for this, because the Secretaries have to take answers to all the letters and documents and despatches of the day; the Lord of the Seal has to seal all the orders for the daily expenses of the Government, and to put all the reports of the Intelligence Department which have been received since I went to sleep before me. The Usher has to introduce hundreds of people who have their cases or appeals to be tried by me, or who have to be appointed on certain duties and services, and so on. But no

sooner do I appear at work after finishing my breakfast than various officials, my sons, and household servants, step in to take instructions for their various duties. Every page-boy, of whom there are hundreds, and men of the Detective Department, walk in with letters in their hands from one or other suffering person, who requires my help and judgment. In this way I am crowded and surrounded by so many who all want to have their business attended to, as well as to show their zeal to me by giving me more work to do. None of my fellow-countrymen have a tenth part so much to do. I keep on working till five or six the next morning, when I resume the same routine, just keeping a few minutes for my meals. Even then, however, my courtiers and officials keep on asking me questions—and, in fact, there is no rest for the wicked!

Since 1891, when I appointed my son Habibullah Khan to hold the public durbars instead of myself, the work which I keep for myself and attend to every day is as follows: Foreign Office; Intelligence Department, political work, Treasury; criminals accused of high treason and other crimes and offences; hearing and deciding the appeals from the Court of my son and all the other inferior courts of the Governors; the work of buying and making all sorts of war materials and things for the workshops; making new courts and amending the law of the land and introducing reforms, or giving instructions to my son and other officials; household affairs of my own family as well as of all the foreign princes and chiefs who are under my protection, my guests, my officials, and page-boys.

The Courtiers.—The following people are always in attendance upon me from the time that I awake until I go to sleep.

Court Secretaries: Aishak Akasi (Gentleman Usher); Nazir (Lord of the Seal); head of the Intelligence Department; head of the Royal Kitchen, he has the duty of bringing all the petitions before me. There is no more honoured and confidential position than this. The name of the gentleman now holding it is Safar Khan. The British Agent's letters are also forwarded to the Amir through him. One hakím, one doctor, and a surgeon, as well as a dispenser; two or three officers of the body-guard, who, in addition to their being military commanders of the body-guard, are also executioners temporarily during the time they attend the Court. There are a few khansamans (footmen who look after the flowers in the rooms, papers, ink, and pens, etc.); a few peshkhitmats (personal attendants who serve the dinner); mewabardar (fruit-keeper who hands fruits to the officials of the palace); charibardar (tea-bearer, who hands tea to the Amir and courtiers); ab bardar (he hands drinking water); sakab (who brings the water from the spring); ghulam bachaha (page-boys); shatir (the grooms who keep the horses ready saddled and run on foot by the side of the horses to be in readiness to hold them when the riders dismount); the personal chest fund treasurer; storekeeper for the personal arms, gun-room, etc.; chilam bardar (hubble-bubble keeper); a few farashes (those who look after the furniture, carpets, bedding, and other household wants); a few tailors and valets, a librarian, a few door-keepers, and astrologer; arz

begi (a person who shouts out loudly anything that the complainers have to say); amla bashi (a person who gives notice to those who attend the Court); Mir akhor (the master of the horse).

In addition to these people, the following are always near the durbar room to be ready when required though not in personal attendance: Professional chess-players and backgammon players; a few personal companions; a reader of books to me at night; a story-teller. Some of the officials who bring reports before me during the day are invited to sit in my society in the evening when they have finished their work. At night a few other nobles and chiefs residing at Kabul come to see me. If I am free, those who are invited to come in to entertain me and have interviews with me are allowed to remain, the rest go away.

The musicians are of several nationalities—Indians, Persians, and Afghans; they also attend the Court at night, being paid for their services, and if I am free, they are allowed to come in and sing and play music. Though I am never entirely free, yet the courtiers enjoy the music, and I listen in the intervals. This second group of people is usually employed only for night duty.

There is a third class of personal servants who always keep in the rooms near my sitting-room, or, if I am travelling, in tents near mine, so that they are ready for service when they are called. These are: coachmen for carriages; dhooli bearers; gardeners; barbers and hairdressers; sweepers; storekeepers; draughtsmen; surveyors; sappers and miners; additional staff of medical men; engineering staff; runners on

foot as well as on horseback for taking messages. There is also a postal department and personal attendants; priests, Imam, or leader of the prayers; schools for page-boys, a band of music, a drum-carrier, umbrella carrier, and flag-bearer.

When I ride out in any direction every one of these personal attendants and servants starts with me, together with cavalry, infantry, and artillery of the body-guard. The riding-horses of my courtiers, several of the officials, page-boys, and other personal servants have gold and silver harness. When the whole cavalcade starts out, it forms a very pretty and brilliant picture. The retinue is arranged as follows, even though the ride is only from one building to another. I ride in the centre, surrounded by my courtiers and officials and special servants, page-boys, etc. These completely surround me on every side, talking to me in turn. The shatirs, or runners, with the horses, chaprassis, walk on foot near my horse or palanquin. This forms the inner circle. The outer circle is made up from the second class of personal servants; the tailors, farashes, hubble-bubble carriers, dispensers, etc. The third circle is formed of infantry of the body-guard, who also go before and behind. The fourth circle is formed of cavalry of the body-guard, riding in front and behind. The artillery is arranged according to circumstances, and the direction and time, etc.

Guards.—My own body-guard and those of my sons and wives are of two nationalities, first, of the royal nationality, called Risala-i-shahi Kandahari (Royal Cavalry), of the Kandahar Duranis, the other foot-

soldiers, which are also of the Durani tribe of Kandahar; the second guard are Risala-i-shahi Kabuli, cavalry body-guard, who are all sons of various chiefs of the hill-tribes of Afghanistan, and also a royal battalion Kabuli, who are also sons of chiefs of Afghanistan. I have added to these Kandahari and Kabuli body-guards a third class, the sons of the Turkoman chiefs, in the cavalry as well as in the infantry of the body-guard. The officers of the cavalry, infantry, and artillery, which form the force of body-guard, are selected chiefs of Afghanistan in whom I have full confidence, and the sons of my brothers and people who have been faithful servants of my father, also those of my followers in the earlier days of my life. The whole force of my body-guard as well as their officers are paid a little higher salary than the other ordinary troops, for the responsibility of being in charge of the lives of the royal family, as well as the royal palaces, treasury, and magazines. This force, together with a small artillery force consisting of Maxim guns, Gardiner guns, and a mountain battery, and one or two other light batteries, are always kept in readiness to start with me in any direction at any moment that I wish to march. I am always ready as a soldier on the march to a battle, in such a manner that I could start without any delay in case of emergency. The pockets of my coats and trousers are always filled with loaded revolvers, and one or two loaves of bread for one day's food; this bread is changed every day. Several guns and swords are always lying by the side of my bed or the chair on which

I am seated, within reach of my hand, and saddled horses are always kept ready in front of my office, not only for myself, but for all my courtiers and personal attendants, at the door of my durbar room. I have also ordered that a considerable number of gold coins should be sewn into the saddles of my horses when required for a journey, and on both sides of the saddles are two revolvers. I think it is necessary in such a war-like country that the Sovereign, and especially a Sovereign who is a soldier himself, should always be as prepared for emergencies as a soldier on the field of battle. Though my country is perhaps more peaceful and safe now than many other countries, still one can never be too cautious and too well prepared.

All my attendants go to sleep when I do, except the following, who keep awake in turn: The guards with their officers; the tea-bearer; the water-bearer; the dispenser; the hubble-bubble bearer; the valet and tailor.¹

My page-boys consist of the sons of the members of the royal family, sons of the nobility and chiefs, sons of the officials of my Court; in addition to these are my slave-boys, consisting of Kafiri, Shignani, Chitrali, Badakshi, Hazara, and various other tribes. In fact, these boys are more under my tutorship and training than any other of my servants. They are dressed like princes in velvets and most valuable uniforms; they have magnificent horses to ride; they have servants and personal attendants, pocket

¹ He is always at hand to do any repairs or take instructions when the Amir thinks of it.

money in addition to the dress, food, horses, houses, and servants from Government, and when they grow up, owing to their having been trained by me, they are appointed to the highest posts in the kingdom. For instance, Faramurz Khan, a Chitrali slave, is my most trusted Commander-in-Chief at Herat. Nazir Mahomed Safar Khan, another Chitrali slave, is the most trusted official of my Court; he keeps my seal in his hands to put to any document, and to my food and diet—in short, he has the full confidence of my life as well as of my kingdom in his hands. Parwana Khan, the late Deputy Commander-in-Chief, and Jan Mahomed Khan, the late Lord of the Treasury, two of the highest officials in the kingdom, in their lifetime were both of them my slaves.

To tell you the truth, the word slave is only a name; the real sense of the word slave in Afghanistan during my reign is this: they are more trusted and honoured than any other officials of the kingdom. When they are quite grown up I arrange their marriages with the daughters of the nobility and highly respectable families. I give them houses and furniture and all requirements of life better than those possessed by princes of the royal family. Their wives have separate allowances for their pocket money as well as Government personal attendants. In this way, I have cleared out and abolished the cruel system of slavery. The word slave is merely a remnant of the old times, otherwise there is no such thing as a slave in Afghanistan. The buying of slaves is forbidden by law, and male or female slaves in various families, who were always slaves in the old times, are treated as

members of the family by their masters. The offspring of slaves are called Khanah Zad (born in the family), and are just as kindly treated, and loved with the same affection as the other children of the heads of the family. If a person kills a slave, as they used to do in ancient times, the punishment is death. If a slave is badly treated, and the cruelty is proved, the slave has his liberty by my orders, because God has created all human beings children of one parent and entitled to equal rights. There is no reason why one should be a tyrant and the other the victim of his tyranny.

Usually the male and female slaves of Afghanistan are either the children of prisoners of war or of parents who have been killed in war, and they have no one to give them a living. The rich families and nobles give them the same privileges as their own children enjoy, and, like the royal page-boys, when they grow up they are well married, and get better positions than many poor people, through the influence of their patrons. They thus rise to very high positions, according to their education and merits and manners acquired by association with well-brought-up children.

When I conquered the country of Kafiristan in 1896 I ordered that no prisoner of war should be sold as a slave, and also that no one should be allowed to marry a Kafir woman against her will. I compensated by presents of money those people who had captured prisoners as their booty and thus were entitled to keep their gains of the victory, and I then released the prisoners and set them free.

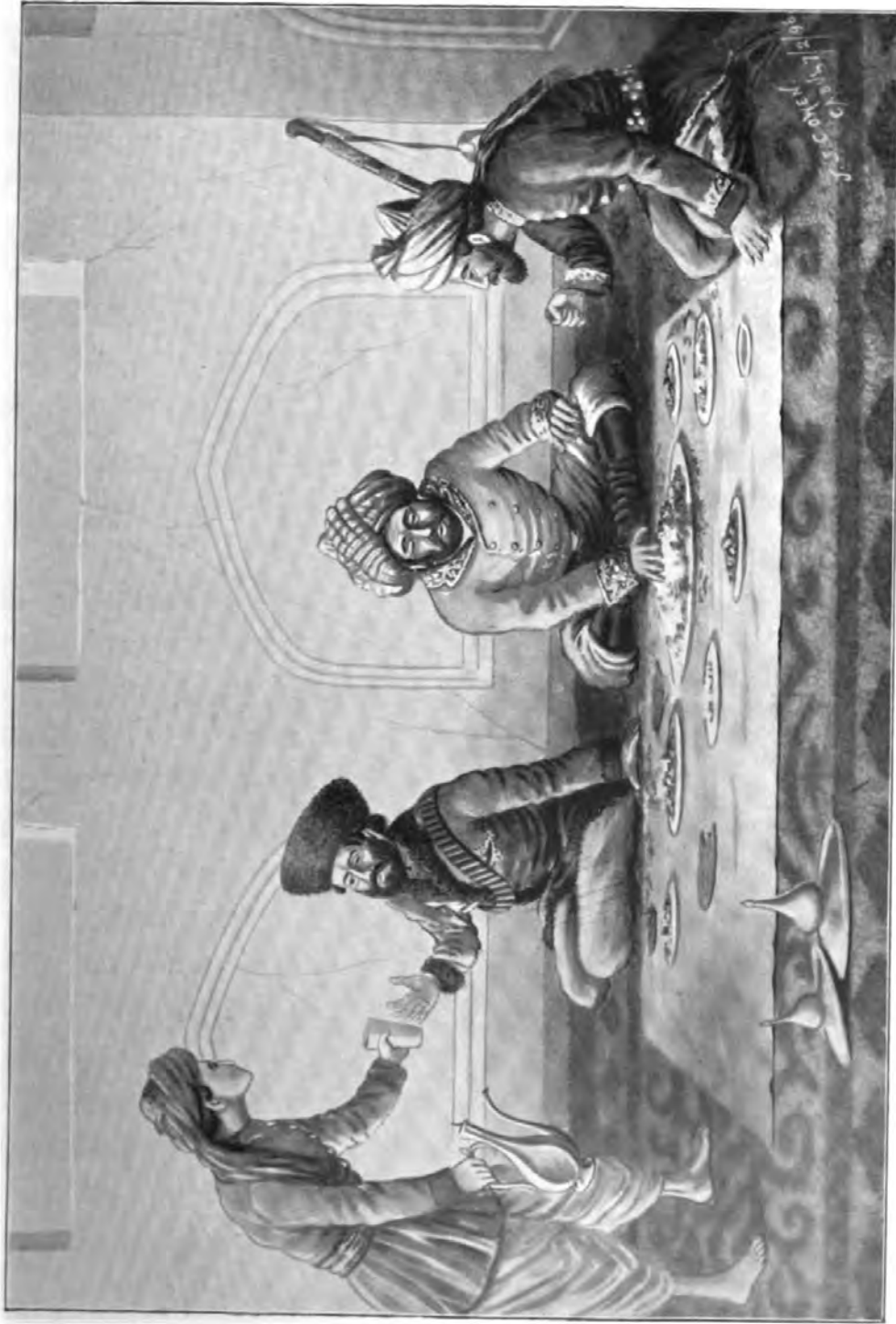
Food.—In my belief we eat to live, though too many Eastern chiefs act as if they believed that they live

to eat. I have strictly forbidden, under a penalty of severe punishment, the drinking of wine. I do not drink wine myself, nor do I allow any of my Muslim courtiers and attendants to drink wine, except in case of illness, when prescribed by a doctor. Ready cooked food is given from the Government kitchens to all the above-mentioned personal attendants. My wives and grandsons, together with their personal attendants, also get cooked food from the same source. Once a week all the military and civil officials attend a public levee, held by my son, Habibullah Khan, and lunch with him, in the grand durbar in the building of Salam Khana (a large audience hall for public ceremonies and functions ; it holds about 1500 people). I held these levees myself until 1891.

The expenses for food for the royal kitchen are paid out of the State Treasury and in all the other towns of Afghanistan ; also, the Governors of the provinces and towns give dinners to all the civil and military officers and chiefs who live there at the Government expense, as my deputies. This system of hospitality has always existed in Afghanistan, and though it is very expensive it must always be kept up.

The food cooked for myself and my officials, as well as for the members of my family, consists of Kabul cooking, namely Pillao (rice and meat cooked together), roast meat and various other dishes, Uzbegi or the food of the Turkomans, Indian dishes, European dishes of all kinds, so that every person may select the dishes he likes best, as people of so many nationalities are in my service.

Meals are served in the following manner. The



AFGHANS AT DINNER.

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first thing on awaking is a small breakfast, consisting of tea, fruits, biscuits, cakes, roast wheat and butter; then lunch between two and three in the afternoon; again fruits and tea near evening, and dinner between ten and twelve at night; though I myself only eat one full meal during the day, with occasional refreshments. My courtiers and other personal attendants, as well as my sons and my wives and their staffs of attendants, eat two full meals, with fruits and refreshments between times.

Such officials or servants as are allowed to sit and dine at my table and in the presence of myself and of my wives, sons, and daughters, do so; while subordinates and menials have their food in various other rooms, according to their position. Others, again, have rations of food, fruits, and tea given them to eat in their own houses. The food that is left is divided among the *farashes* and *peshkhitmats*.

The way the dinner is served is this: the dishes are placed upon the table, which is covered by a tablecloth; the table is large enough for all the invited guests to sit down at once. After this the *peshkhitmats* bring hot water to pour over the hands of the courtiers and officials, and when their hands are washed they sit down to the table, the table servants waiting upon them. When dinner is finished, servants again bring hot water, the guests wash their hands once more, and fruits are then handed round. They are thus saved the trouble of going out of the room to wash their hands.

In my sitting-rooms and bedrooms, as well as in those of my wives, sons, and daughters, all sorts of

beautiful flowers, plants, pictures, and pianos and other musical instruments are placed, together with choice pieces of china and other ornaments, Persian and Herat carpets, nightingales and other singing birds. Beautiful and valuable furniture and everything that I can think of, to add to the pleasure of those who associate with me, are to be found in my palaces. If any foreigners or Europeans are present at the time for meals, they are welcomed at our table, and dine with us as our guests, if they are Muslims; but if not, they dine in another room, or at a separate table. I have frequently heard Europeans say to me that they enjoy food cooked in the native method better than the European dishes. I cannot see what is in their heart, but I am very pleased if they really mean it, and do not say it merely out of compliment to me, their host; but as I generally see that they eat far more of our Afghan cookery than of the European dishes, I think it is clear that they speak the truth, because no man would eat very much of anything that he disliked just to pay a compliment.

For my wives, my daughters, my sons and their wives, my grandchildren and their servants, in addition to their food, clothing, horses, and houses, there is a special monthly cash allowance granted by the Government, in accordance with their positions and requirements. Both my eldest sons, Habibullah and Nasrullah, are paid 20,000 rupees a month each, for their pocket expenses, and their wives and other personal attendants are likewise paid separately. My wives (two of whom are the daughters respectively of Mir Hakim Khan and Mir Jahandar Shah, the latter

the mother of Habibullah and Nasrullah); the mother of Mahomed Omar Jan; the 'mother of Aminullah Jan; the mother of Ghulam Ali; the mother of the late Hafizullah and Asatullah; the mother of Fatima Jan, my daughter, have all their separate allowances paid monthly, for their pocket money, from 3000 to 8000 rupees Kabuli: their dresses are not to be paid for out of this money, neither are their houses, food, or other requirements. Their dresses are many, and of various fashions, some being in the European, others in the Oriental, style.

My youngest sons and granddaughters have also, in addition to their food and clothing, etc., a monthly allowance for pocket money.

On the great festivals of Id Barat and New Year's Day, my wives and children get their dresses and cash and jewellery as presents, just as is the European custom to give presents at Christmas. All the children of my courtiers, officials, and servants also receive presents from me on these days.

My sons, who work hard all day long, generally spend the evenings in their harems with their wives and children. In the early days of my reign, I used to pay visits to my harem about twice a week, but as I grew more and more preoccupied with affairs of business and state, these visits were cut down to one or two a month; but now my time is so full, that I only pay two or three visits in the year to my wives and family. The rest of the year I occupy the same rooms in which I work, both day and night. My wives, however, come and pay regular visits to me ten or twelve times in the year for a few hours at a time.

God has created me for His service, to care for the nation He has intrusted to my care, and not to spend my time in personal enjoyments and self-indulgence. My greatest happiness is always to continue working in His service.

My two sons, Habibullah Khan and Nasrullah, come to see me twice or at least once every day to take their instructions for arranging and doing their daily work. My youngest sons and grandsons visit me about twice a week for a few minutes, and as I am always busy, they sit down and play for a short time, or sometimes they wrestle with each other and sometimes with me, and then they are sent back to their own houses.

My children and grandchildren are brought up in this way. From the day of their birth nurses are appointed to give them milk, and to take them once or twice daily into the presence of their mothers, and occasionally to bring them to me, and from the very first year of their birth a chaplain, tutor, and guardian, servants, body-guard, and houses with small gardens, are appointed for their separate use. These houses are away from those of their mothers and my own, so that the children can always be under the care and tuition of their nurses and tutors and guardians. These guardians are always old, experienced, retired officials of the Government, and the children, instead of getting stupid and naughty under the spoiling of their mothers, are properly and carefully trained by those who are responsible to me. The children thus grow up good, well-trained, gentlemanly boys. I always keep a careful watch, and take the keenest

interest in their training, watching with an examining eye their manners, ways of life, and education.

When they arrive at full age, they marry and become masters of their own homes, then only paying visits to me and their mothers at certain hours of the day, when their daily work is completed. They are also instructed to call on their older relatives and look after them, and see they do not want anything. They are ordered to keep up the habit of reading and going out for fresh air and exercise, and make up shooting parties, so that they may not grow lazy or fall into a state of ill-health from lack of exercise and work.

My wives have permission to go out for horse-riding and driving; their palaces are fine modern buildings with gardens, situated outside the city; they and my sons' wives have their body-guard to escort them when riding or driving out. No duties or services are imposed upon my wives, except looking after the arrangements of the household, but my sons, like myself, must serve our country. The duties placed upon my sons at the present time are as follows :

Habibullah Khan, my eldest son, has the same duties to perform as I myself or other Amirs of Afghanistan have had to do, with the exception of some new offices, such as the Foreign Office, which I have kept for myself. This is the daily programme of Habibullah's work: he attends his durbar about ten in the morning, dismissing it at four or five in the afternoon. On Mondays and Thursdays the Secretaries of his durbar read to him all the applications and letters which come by the post or by runners from Herat, Kandahar, Balkh, Ghazni, Jellalabad, India, and

other parts of my dominions. Orders on the Treasury for the payment of the daily expenses of various departments, the reports from the Governors and military and civil officers, and heads of manufactories, magazines and public works, revenue offices, etc., are made out and given to the respective officials. They also get his signature and seal upon the answers, papers, etc., and despatch them by the post. After this work is finished he is engaged upon anything that comes to hand until he goes to rest, reserving a short time for riding and fresh air. He attends my Court before he goes to bed for a few minutes, and, if necessary, also when I awake in the morning. On Tuesdays he holds the military *levée*, and all the military officers lunch with him. He also engages new recruits for the army, and attends to all military affairs, gives decisions in cases of military offences, disputes, etc. On Wednesdays he holds a *levée* for the civil officers present at Kabul, when he decides any civil cases brought up to him. On Saturdays he tries and sentences prisoners and releases others; he listens to criminal cases brought before him by the Kotwali and from other sources, appeals, etc. On Sunday he inspects all the manufactories and industries and the various magazines in Kabul, listens to the requests of the workmen, and gives them leave, promotion, pensions, etc., according to their merits. Friday is his day of rest, to be spent with me or in hunting and shooting; he also attends the weekly services at the mosque; pays calls on his mothers¹ and relatives.

¹ In Afghanistan a son regards all his father's wives in the light of mothers, as in England stepmothers are regarded.

The procedure for trials in all the Courts of my kingdom is very easy and simple; every individual can see me or any of the responsible heads of my Government personally, and state his own case, without intercession or recommendation from any one; an impartial judgment is then given by me or by my son, according to the evidence and proofs of the case. If a person does not like to state his case in public, he can send it up in writing. There is much time wasted in reading these long, tedious applications of the people, and very little sense in them; but the people are too lazy to move their tongues, though they will waste time in writing yarns and yarns. I therefore ordered that everybody, excepting Court officials, who wished to make a complaint in writing, should buy a proper stamped form, valued at three rupees, and state his application thereon. This put a stop to the unnecessary trouble, and the Court Secretaries make short abstracts of these letters and answers. Complainants, bringing their grievances before my son, stand one by one behind a wooden fence, which permits of only one person walking up the aisle at a time; they are ushered in by the proper attendant appointed for the purpose. If, however, there are any old women or old men, or those who are too weak or nervous, or who from any other cause cannot explain themselves properly, these ushers speak loudly in the presence of the complainants to my son, who thereupon makes enquiries and gives the final judgment. There is no difference in the laws for rich men and beggars in our Courts; if a beggar and a prince have grievances against each other, they are both considered equal; they both stand

shoulder by shoulder in the presence of me and my son until the case is tried. There is no nonsense of the old times of Afghanistan, when the strong, by using the influence of his friends, had certain privileges and advantages over the weak.

In complicated and tedious cases which require looking through various counts or protracted evidences of proof, my son Habibullah first sends the cases to the Ecclesiastical, Criminal, Commercial, or Revenue office, as the case may demand, to make the preliminary enquiries; the case is then forwarded to me in the form of a short outline for the final judgment.

Habibullah's younger brother, Nasrullah, has been appointed the head of the Accountant's office (Daftar Hisab Giri), and after the accountants have decided that the accounts of the parties have been settled impartially and rightly, a counsel of arbitration affixes his seal, when he has approved all the details. The document is then signed and sealed by Nasrullah, and this stops all further dispute. But if the parties do not agree with the accounts as settled by the accountants, the counsel of the arbitration, in the presence of Nasrullah, re-examines the case and gives the final decision. In such cases as are beyond the jurisdiction, Nasrullah sends them to Habibullah or to me, as the case may be.

My other sons are not old enough yet to be appointed for any services.

Since the appointment in 1891 of Habibullah to the administration of all the above duties, there is no fixed day for me to do any kind of work; but from the time that I awake to the time that I go to

bed, I do my work and duties with so much ardour that whatever comes first is done then and there.

There is a leader of the prayers (Imam) appointed for the courtiers, who gives the prayers five times a day; and the Muhtasib (directors) are appointed throughout the whole country, who first advise the people to attend the mosque five times a day for their prayers and to keep fasts in the month of Ramadan, and then, if people will not listen to their advice, they administer a certain number of lashes, because a nation which is not religious becomes demoralised, and falls into ruin and decay, and misbehaviour makes people unhappy in this world and the next.

In my country the people who are believers in other religions are tolerated and treated without prejudice—more even than the people of my own religion; they are appointed to the highest posts under the Government, which is quite opposed to the law that people who do not belong to the Established Church of England are deprived of the right to hold certain offices. For instance, I am a Sunni Muslim, yet some of the highest offices are filled by Hindus and Shias.

Any person can put his claims before me in the following way: he comes to the door and reports that he wishes to see me, and is invited to come in and tell me himself, or to put his grievance in writing and give it to the Nazir, his assistant, or to one of my Court Secretaries, or even into the Post-office. He must write on the cover—"Not to be opened by any one except the Amir." I open such letters myself,

and, if necessary, I also write the answer with my own hand, and forward it to the petitioner by the same means by which it came to me. If he do not succeed in getting his letter put before me from any of these sources, there are my spies and detectives, both public and private, who are severely punished if the case is not reported to me. In fact, it is the belief in Afghanistan that every individual possesses a signature of mine, and in every house there is a detective. This is an exaggeration, I think!

All my residential palaces are built on sites that command a beautiful view, and in a bright, breezy place. They are surrounded by gardens and flowers, and they are built in such a style that it is possible in the same building to have warm rooms for winter use, and open verandahs with large windows for the summer. The rooms are so arranged that the spring blossoms may be watched as they break from the trees, and the gorgeous yellow hues of the autumn, and the dazzling falls of the winter snow and the moonlight nights are enjoyed by all the inmates of my palaces who take the trouble to sit at these windows. As a rule, I spend my summer, spring, and autumn outside the town, living for weeks in tents pitched in these positions where all the beautiful blossoms can be seen, glowing sunsets, and the yellow autumn tints. I have always loved beautiful scenery, flowers, green grass, music, pictures, and every kind of natural beauties.

My daily uniforms are very simple, made in the European style; on great occasions, however, I wear military or diplomatic uniforms. At night, or in my

leisure moments, I wear loose robes of Chinese and Japanese silk, made in the Arab or Turkoman or Mongolian fashion. I also wear a small cap with a very small silk or muslin turban. This last loose dress is very easy to put on and off; it is therefore comfortable, especially when I am ill and suffering pain.

Wherever I happen to be, travelling or at rest, there is always a school arranged for my page-boys. Here they learn their religious duties, history, geography, mathematics, and modern languages, aiming and shooting with rifles. Whilst one portion of them is in attendance upon me, the others are practising their studies, and when at last they finish their education and grow up, they are given their posts.

In the military service there is one battalion called Khana abadi (the foundation of the home) made up of small boys, sons of the various military officers and chiefs of the country; they are drilled and trained in military tactics, and afterwards appointed to various regiments and battalions.

I myself and some of my officials smoke cigarettes, others smoking the hubble-bubble.

My entertainments are very simple; throughout the whole of the time I am working, at intervals of a few minutes after I have finished answering a letter or a piece of work, I stop for a moment and chat and talk with my officials and courtiers. The professional chess players and backgammon players play their games before me in the evenings; I watch them sometimes, and sometimes I will play myself, though this is not often. Musicians keep on playing and singing for the

pleasure of those who are present, and sometimes I also steal a minute or two to listen to them. I love music, and the best pianos, guitars, violins, bagpipes, and other musical instruments are always to be found in my palaces. I know music myself well, and can play the violin and rubab.¹ It must therefore be a luxury and pleasure for my officials to be in my presence to enjoy all the various pleasures that I provide for them, and those who serve me sincerely and honestly are treated as my personal friends, sometimes being playfully teased by me, and sometimes teasing and joking with me; there is always laughing and joking going on, but with those who are insincere and hypocritical I am very severe and harsh :—

“To treat those kindly who disturb the peace,
Is being an enemy to those who love peace.”—SADI.

I do not go to sleep directly I lie down in bed, but the person who is specially appointed as my reader, sits down beside my bed, and reads to me from some book, as, for instance, histories of different countries and peoples; books on geography, biographies of great kings and reformers, and political works. I listen to this reading until I go to sleep, when a story-teller takes his place, repeating his narratives until I awake in the morning. This is very soothing, as the constant murmur of the story-teller's voice lulls my tired nerves and brain.

I myself have written several books, which have been printed at the Kabul Press. There are certain ad-

¹ A musical instrument, something like a banjo.

vantages in the custom of reading books aloud to me, viz., that in my lifetime thousands of books have been read to me, and this means that I have had a daily lesson in progress and learning. One also remembers better what is told in the form of a story when read aloud. The stories are mostly full of exaggeration and superstitions, yet even in these I learn much of the old habits of thought and ideas of ancient peoples, and I think of the progress that the world has made since those old times. There is another advantage in sleeping through the droning noise of the story-teller's recitations, namely, that one gets accustomed to noise, and I can sleep soundly on the battle-field and under similar circumstances.

I can speak and read the following languages : Pushto, the language of the old Afghan tribes ; Persian, the language of the Court and of literature—this is also the official language ; Turki, the language of my Turkoman subjects ; Russian, Arabic, and Hindustani. The last-named two tongues I do not know thoroughly, but I understand them. I like to know something about all subjects, and never neglect an opportunity of acquiring fresh knowledge. When, therefore, any foreigners or my own countrymen come into my presence, I ask them all kinds of questions, especially upon those subjects on which I know they are qualified to speak. In this way I learn something from every body.

Festivals and Holidays.

In Afghanistan, there are five days set apart for festivals; these are as follows: two Id festivals—one is the Id after the Month of Fasting; the other is fixed two months and ten days after the first-named feast-day. This is called the Id of Pilgrimage to Mecca. These two festivals being fixed by the moon, keep on changing in the different seasons. The third festival, that of Barat, is also fixed by the lunar month, forty-five days before the Id of Fasts. The fourth feast is the Nauroz, or New Year's festival, falling on the 21st of March every year. On all these occasions I give rewards and robes of honour to some of my officials and servants, as well as to my family and relatives. On the days of Id also the merchants bring presents to me.

The day of Nauroz is devoted to a general inspection by me of various goods and war materials and weapons, ammunition, etc., which have been made throughout the whole year in my Kabul manufactories and workshops, excepting those placed in the stores. The workmen who made these things are either rewarded or fined, according to the quality of the articles made by them. Instructions are then given for the coming year, and faults pointed out that more care may be taken in the future. Such guns, rifles, cartridges, etc., as pass my inspection are tested by being fired, and finally are stored in the Government arsenal and magazines; those found defective being returned to the workshops to be set right.

The fifth festival is in remembrance of the title bestowed upon me by my nation, namely, "The Light of the Nation and Religion." This title was offered me on the day of the Id of Pilgrimage, 25th May 1896, but as the confirmation of this title from all the provinces and other towns of Afghanistan, other than Kabul, reached me in the month of August, corresponding to the 24th of the solar month, called Asad, which does not change like lunar months, this festival and the illuminations are always held on the 24th of Asad.

The orders and decorations bestowed by my Government on various officials are the following: Hurmat (Reputation or Personal Distinction); Izzat (Honour or Glory); Shujat (Bravery); Amanat (Confidence or Honesty); Sadakat (Sincerity); Khalusyad (Faithfulness); Khirkhewah Islam (Defender of the Faith, or Well-Wisher of the Faith). There is only one case of this last-mentioned distinction being given, and that is the one granted to Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan in 1893, the day when Sir Mortimer Durand's Treaty with my Government was sealed and signed. All these orders are made of gold, some of them being further enriched by precious stones. There are also silver medals, of which there are a large number; these are given on the occasions of great victories on the battle-field to brave military men who distinguish themselves. The name of the place where such victories are obtained is always engraved on the silver medals.

Though I do not believe that our Holy Prophet, may God bless him! ever ordered that wives should be shut up in their houses,—and this matter has indeed been always disputed,—yet it has always been the custom

among the nobility and richer classes of people, from ancient days, to keep their wives in the harems (harem means sacred); places set apart in houses or palaces for these ladies to live in. For these ladies who do not leave their houses it is necessary that some means of communication with the outer world should be arranged. In every one of my harems, therefore, are several page-boys and some women servants. Over these, for all the harems together, there is a Sirdar, who is a young lady, but dressed like a man. All these people take and bring letters and messages. I have abolished the old system of eunuchs, which class of men used to be employed in the harems for this purpose. In addition to these people, my wives have their own personal attendants and departments, such as Ushers, Door-keepers, Treasurers, Masters of the Horse, Masters of the Robes, etc. My wives travel about when they wish to do so, driving in their carriages or riding on horse-back, always being covered by veils to hide their faces.

CHAPTER V

ANGLO-AFGHAN RELATIONS

“Be faithful and true to your oaths and promises.”—**KORAN.**

“All the happiness in the world consists in these two words :
kindness to friends and politeness to enemies.”—**SADI.**

THOUGH the heading of this chapter might seem to require that I should mention all the communications, intercourse, and relations between Great Britain and Afghanistan from the very beginning, as well as their boundaries, which keep on changing on various occasions : and should also give some expression of my opinion as to the future relations between these two nations, I shall leave these points to be separately discussed in two separate chapters, under the headings of “Boundaries of Afghanistan,” and “The Future Policy.” In this chapter I will confine myself to the most conspicuous and important points that have arisen between my Government and that of Great Britain during my reign, and I will try to put it as briefly as possible ; for to say all that is in my mind would be unwise, even were it possible, to put it in writing.

I will not attempt to settle and discuss that one point upon which, from the very first day I ascended

the throne until the present time, there has been so much criticism and conflict of opinion between the British and Afghan public: I leave these two peoples to decide and judge matters for themselves, and their disputes do not concern me. The point under dispute is this. Many of the English newspapers and British public say:—"We granted the throne of Kabul to Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, and he is our paid servant." The Afghans in reply say:—"Did the English invite Amir Abdur Rahman Khan to come from Russia and accept the throne of Kabul? No!" "Did the British Government release him from the Russian guardianship, or did they request Russia to let him come to try his claims for the throne? No!" "Did the British Government inform Amir Abdur Rahman Khan in Russia that he could press his claim to the throne if he wanted, as they were looking for a claimant to the throne? No!" "Did the English give him any pecuniary or any other kind of help for his travelling expenses from Russia to Kabul, or any other assistance in any shape or form before his accession? No!"

The Afghans continue: "A few months after his arrival on the Afghan borders and his entrance into the country, Mir Sultan Murad Beg, and other Mirs of Kataghan and Turkestan detained him, and would not let him go to Kabul, because the English officials who were at Kabul, thinking that Abdur Rahman Khan was sent by Russia, or had come by the permission of Russia, did not wish him to come to Kabul. They were offering the Kabul throne to Musa Jan and other candidates, as they could not keep the

country themselves, because the people were brave warriors, and the country was considered neutral between England and Russia. But," the Afghans go on to say, "having seen that by the help of Allah and the force of his own strong hands, Abdur Rahman Khan broke down all these obstacles that were placed in his way, all the Mirs (rulers) submitted to his rule. He conquered the whole of Turkestan: he entered Kunduz, and thousands of Ghazis, together with all the army, now joined him, and Musa Jan did not accept the throne from the hands of the English. Neither did anybody else. And throughout the whole of the country arose a warlike spirit, expressed by gatherings of the Ghazis, who grew stronger and stronger in their anti-English feeling. Ayub was leaving Herat to attack the English forces at Kandahar at that time, and the English were obliged to open their communications with Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, and make friends with him, so that they could quit the country with safety and credit. It was we, the nation of Afghanistan, who invited Abdur Rahman Khan to come from Russia, by sending our deputations and representatives. He acceded to our request to be our ruler, and left Russia. If any one takes the trouble to read the communications which took place between Sir Lepel Griffin and Abdur Rahman Khan, they will easily see for themselves that the Amir wrote in plain words that he would not, and could not, accept the throne except by the consent and from the hands of his own Afghan people. We had announced him King at Charikar before he entered Kabul, and before Sir Lepel Griffin's visit

to the Amir. This announcement of ours was, of course, confirmed by Sir Lepel Griffin and the British officials at Kabul, and they parted on friendly terms with him. He proved himself to be so true and faithful in his words, that the English army, which was in a more critical condition than in 1840, were enabled to leave the country in safety at the time when the news of the disaster of the English army at Kandahar reached them. The monthly subsidy which the English Government pays him, of course the Indian Government would not pay if it were not to their own advantage and interest. The Amir spends all this money, and more even, in buying arms and war materials from England, to be used for the protection of the Indian frontier line. The Amir has refrained from claiming certain places, as well as from communicating with various foreign powers, without the knowledge of the Indian Government, and until he has consulted with them. He has also refrained from joining with any of the enemies of India, feeling himself bound by every sacred bond of faith and by his promise; and if England did not consider his friendship worth having, they would not pay him this subsidy. Why did they not pay other rulers, princes, and Nawabs and Rajahs of India, some of whom, as the Nizam of Hyderabad, have greater dominions than the Amir's? Besides, this subsidy was paid to all the Afghan rulers, from the time of the Amir's grandfather, because, by ensuring the strength and safety of Afghanistan, the safety of India is also ensured from foreign aggression."

I do not concern myself with these utterances

of the common people: I leave criticisms to the people themselves to decide according to their judgment. It is to the interest of England and Afghanistan to be united in the bonds of friendship, and in so doing they will be friends to their own separate interests at the same time. I pray and strictly advise my sons and successors, and those of Her Majesty the Queen, always to continue to cement this friendship on foundations more and more solid; as the safety of India and Afghanistan are bound up together — their strength lies in union — their weakness in disunion.

I cannot pass away from this subject without trying to remove any impression that there may be in people's minds that Sir Lepel Griffin and the British officials at Kabul only confirmed the announcement of my Amirship made by my people; they did the greatest service to both the British Empire and to the Afghan nation, by bringing their communications to a close in a shrewd and statesman-like manner. I myself believe that Sir Lepel Griffin, in his communications with me and with the Afghans, by bringing this matter to a condition of such friendly union, played his cards very wisely in the interests of his Government, and that he has not been sufficiently requited for his services. I think that he deserves the title of "Lord of Kabul," just as much as Roberts did that of "Lord of Kandahar."

Ali, the fourth apostle of Mahomed, says: "Do not seek *who* did or said, but appreciate *what* he did or said." It is of no consequence upon which side the obligations are stronger; the one main point to re-

member is that the interests of the two nations are identical.

Considering the above point carefully, I began from the first day of my reign to cement this friendship; I am thankful to the Marquis of Ripon, who greatly encouraged me by giving me every assurance of friendship during his Viceroyalty. My first envoy, under his administration, was General Amir Mahomed Khan, who had been my most confidential servant from my childhood; he was a most clever and experienced statesman. A Mahomedan envoy was also appointed to my Court, as a further proof of the friendly disposition of the Indian Government towards me. The Marquis of Ripon wrote to me on the 16th June 1883, fixing twelve lakhs of rupees as the annual subsidy for my Government, for fortifications on its border line, and for strengthening its army.

It would not be out of place to say a word or two on the character of this most liberal-minded Viceroy, who had no prejudices against caste, colour, or creed, believing that it matters very little what colour people are when they shall stand before the Almighty Judge to answer for their doings. He followed this principle throughout, that we are all equal in the eyes of God, and therefore there was no reason why there should not be equal justice meted out to all alike in the courts of His deputies, the sovereigns of this earth. He tried to give the Indian subjects of Her Majesty the Queen the same rights enjoyed by her white-skinned subjects. This displeased some of the said white-skinned ones, but this broadness of policy left an impression on the people, and awoke in their minds and hearts an intense

devotion and affection towards him. Throughout the whole period of his Viceroyalty, the relations between myself and the Marquis of Ripon were of the most friendly and cordial nature.

There is a saying that that which takes years to spread requires years to fold up again. Therefore it was not possible that the hostile feelings, the enmities, the hatred, the mistrust and suspicion which had existed between the English and Afghans for about fifty years past—which had caused friends and kinsmen of the two nations to fight against each other and to be killed by their hands—could be forgotten all at once. Both nations had written narratives and books, calling each other treacherous, unreliable, and breakers of their oaths. To put all these feelings and differences of opinion right, and to wash from the minds of the two nations all remembrance of the past, and to enable them to trust each other fully at a time when all friendly assurances were looked upon with suspicion, was no easy task, if not altogether impossible. There were many reasons against this friendship; it was very difficult to make the friendly relations as strong as was desirable. The Indian Government had neither the authority to give me so much help, or to promise me so much help as was necessary; neither have they trusted my sincerity and truth and friendship sufficiently to desire to do so. On my part, I was unable to show my friendship publicly to the extent that was necessary: because my people were ignorant and fanatical. If I showed any inclination towards the English, my people would call me an infidel for joining hands with infidels, and they would proclaim a re-

ligious holy war against me. I knew that so long as I did not clear out of my country these fanatics and rebels, I could neither show my friendship fully, nor carry it out to its fullest extent. I was not a fool like Amir Yakub, who before the consent of his people had been obtained, and before making himself strong enough to protect Sir Louis Cavagnari, accepted his Mission at Kabul, in order to show his friendship. But it was more than he could carry out, the result being that Cavagnari was killed, and he himself de-throned and taken prisoner to India, and hundreds of thousands of people were killed.

The Indian Government had made a treaty with me not to interfere in the internal difficulties of Afghanistan, and therefore, even if the people of Afghanistan should have announced a holy war against me on account of my friendship with India, I had no pledge from the Indian Government of India to help me in my internal and home troubles.

Besides this, I did not want to utter such flattering words to the British Government for the sake of this friendship as would place me in the list of flatterers and cowards. I have shown during my reign that self-respecting pride which is the hereditary characteristic of my nation ; I have never parted with it, even at a time of much difficulty and emergency.

I felt, however, that not knowing each other fully is a cause of misunderstanding, and a chronic misunderstanding results in quarrelling, and chronic quarrelling results in wars and fighting, which means ruin. For this reason I have been very anxious, and I am still anxious, that the English and Afghans

should see more of each other, thereby coming into closer contact and more intimate relations; for, the more they trust and place confidence in each other, the better it will be for both nations.

I tried to attain the above-mentioned object as soon as possible, but the Indian Government were full of scruples, such as: "Is the friendship of Afghanistan of any use or not? If so, are the Afghans to be trusted as friends or not? If they are to be trusted, will the benefits resulting from their friendship compensate for the responsibility of their protection or not?" If all these questions were answered satisfactorily, the all-important one still remained: "Would the Parliament at home authorise them to carry out the negotiations or not? If it did authorise them to enter into such pledges and to face Russia, is it possible or not? If possible, will the gains be equal to the risks or not? And when the next Party comes in, will they agree to the arrangements of the Government that preceded them or not?" In short, their philosophy was just like the philosophy of an unwilling servant who was in attendance on his master, who was ill. The master said to his servant: "I am suffering; go fetch the doctor." The servant replied: "Perhaps the doctor will not be at home at this time." The master said: "I know he is at home." The servant replied: "If he is at home, perhaps he might or might not come." The master said: "He is sure to come." The servant said: "He will not have medicine, perhaps." The master said: "He has the medicine." The servant continued: "Sir, you know

that death is certain, and perhaps, also, the medicine may not have any effect to cure you, after so much trouble; so what does it matter whether it is in your Kismet that you die a few days earlier or later?"

I do not blame the Indian Government, because they had seen no benefit from the friendship of the Afghan nation, as that friendship had always ended, through the mistakes of one party or the other, in troubles, war, and the loss of life, without any gains whatever; and after the behaviour of Amir Shere Ali and Yakub Khan, they could not place very much confidence in an Amir of Afghanistan.

In addition to these doubts, there were many other obstacles in the way of our coming to a better understanding with each other. It is a well-known fact that the Eastern ideas, views, and ways of looking at matters are very different from the light in which the same matters appeal to the Western mind: they are as widely separated as east is from west. There were so many people trying to make mischief that had it not been, on the one side, for the far-seeing wisdom of the Marquis of Ripon, Sir Alfred Lyall (Foreign Secretary), Sir Donald Stewart (Commander-in-Chief), Sir Lepel Griffin and several other English officials of the Indian Government—and on the other hand had I not been fully aware of the Russian promises to Amir Shere Ali, and the ruin of Shere Ali and Yakub—the mischief-making people would certainly have made a quarrel between us.

Amir Shere Ali Khan, his family, friends, and

partisans, and many other people of Afghanistan who were in exile in India, were trying to poison the minds of the British Government officials against me. And in addition to this, some Afghan chiefs who were accustomed to plunder the country and fight against each other, could not bear my punishing them for their misbehaviour. They therefore kept on repeating tales to the Indian Government, that the Amir was killing all those who had served the British, and who were friends to the British and the foreigners; and it was natural that these reports should make some impression on the minds of the Indian officials. Though the Marquis of Ripon, his counsellors and myself, were all anxious to avoid these misunderstandings, yet still I thought it necessary that an interview should take place between me and the Viceroy of India, which would clear up any suspicions from the minds of both of us. At such an interview we could discuss verbally important matters which could not be settled by writing. But a favourable opportunity for the meeting did not occur until the Marquis of Ripon left India, and was succeeded by Lord Dufferin.

At this time certain other matters came to the front which made it necessary that such a meeting should take place between the Viceroy of India and myself immediately; not only to give and take friendly assurances, but for other matters of a very grave nature, which required deliberate consideration. These were the following :

(1) The Russians were circulating rumours through the Press that the English had not left Kabul on account of their friendship with the Amir Abdur

Rahman Khan, but had run away from that country. I therefore wished that by going myself to India, and having a cordial and friendly meeting with the Viceroy, the facts should become known by the public and the world generally. They would see that these two nations were great friends and trusted each other entirely, if the Amir of Afghanistan, an independent ruler, had himself gone out of his way and had left his own dominions, accompanied by only a small body-guard, to see the Queen's representative and the Queen's son, in India. Such a course would contradict all these false rumours, and prove what a true and real friendship existed between my Government and that of England, and add to the prestige of the British Government; the safety and strength of India and Afghanistan resting on the fact of their mutual friendship being publicly known.

(2) Before this year, 1885, there were four great obstacles and strong barriers in the way of Russia's aggressive designs upon India; namely, the Desert of Khiva and Bokhara, the Pamirs, Persia, and Herat. Now I who knew all about the Russians' plans, plots and schemes towards India, having been associated with them for so many years, persisted in urging the Indian Government to take precautions against Russian aggression, and warning them about the schemes and plots of the Russian advances towards India. I asked them to pay most serious attention to fortifying the North-Western frontier of Afghanistan, including Herat. Nobody, however, took the trouble to carry out and follow my advice; indeed there were some officials who doubted the fact of the Russian

advances, placing their full confidence in the Russian promises and treaties.

At this time the Russians having crossed the desert of Khiva, occupied Merv and Sarakhs, which are the gates of Afghanistan, and there was thus opened communication between Turkestan and St Petersburg, both by railways and steamers. After they had fortified Merv and Sarakhs, for the purpose of reinforcements, they were exhibiting much activity in the direction of the Oxus.

The relations between France and Great Britain were in rather a critical condition at this time, owing to the fact that Great Britain had occupied Burmah and Egypt; the Russians, therefore, who were seeking an excuse to march towards Afghanistan, found this a suitable opportunity for their plans. To decide upon and consider such complicated matters, and to fortify the frontiers of Afghanistan, so as to be prepared for a Russian attack, it was necessary that no time should be wasted in written communications, and that matters should be settled verbally between me and the Viceroy without a moment's loss of time. Notwithstanding my warnings, however, the Russians took the province of Panjdeh, which belonged to my dominions, in 1885, as has been mentioned before. Had I not marked out a hard and fast boundary line between the Russians and myself, they might have taken some other places as well.

I think it necessary to mention here that the Russian policy of aggression is slow and steady, but firm and unchangeable. If they once make up their minds to do a thing, there is no stopping them,

and no changing their policy. It is not the case with them, as with some other countries, that every party that comes into power can undo the work that has been done by the party before itself. Their habit of forward movements resembles the habit of the elephant, who examines a spot thoroughly before he places his foot down upon it, and when once he puts his weight there, there is no going back, and no taking another step in a hurry until he has put his full weight on the first foot, and has smashed everything that lies under it. Russia has moved and marched towards India during the last sixty years very slowly but firmly. She has not occupied a place without being first certain of success. And after taking a place she makes announcements and a great noise about keeping the peace; and signs new treaties and agreements, swearing all vows and oaths that she will never proceed any further. These vows last until, but no longer than, the time when the newly-annexed place is strongly fortified for reinforcements, and the Russian influence has spread all over it. After this Russia takes another place that may be lying near to the first without either going very far or retreating again. When this place is in its turn properly absorbed, she moves on to another, treaties or no treaties!

I do not go so far as to say that she breaks oaths and treaties without making some explanation and excuse. There is a saying that "treaties are made to be broken."

When any strong nations desire to break a treaty they do not think very long about finding an excuse.

They urge that they were justified in their action by the misbehaviour of the weak nation. This reminds me of a story which runs as follows: A hungry bear employed a lamb to guide him to all the places where other animals were living, and made a promise that he would not eat this lamb, who was his guide and counsellor. All the other animals of the jungle having been eaten by the bear, there remained nothing but the lamb. Thereupon the bear said in an angry voice: "I must eat you, because you have insulted me and thereby broken your treaty." The poor lamb looked at him, and said: "My lord, how should I dare to insult you?" And the bear replied: "Your father insulted my father." But the lamb said: "There is no evidence about that, as both of our fathers are dead." The bear answered: "So - and - so told me." The lamb replied: "He told you a lie." The bear now got furious, and said: "Now you really have insulted me by calling my friend a liar before my face." And he fell upon the poor lamb and ate him up.

(3) The other matter which led to this meeting was as follows: I had promised the English Government that I would not communicate with Russia or any other Foreign Government without their knowledge and advice; the English on their part had given me a promise that they would protect my country against any foreign aggressor. This my promise to the British Government, and my having broken off all connection with the Russian Government — who looked upon me as being under an

obligation to them for having eaten their salt for so many years, and as having given me notice and permission to come to Afghanistan—ended in my taking the throne of Kabul. The Russians had sent me to Kabul as their candidate, and, personally, I am under great obligations to them, and shall never forget their kindness, because ingratitude is the very worst sin. But, notwithstanding this, I am not entitled to sell my country and my people to the Russians in compensation for my personal gratitude towards them. The nation and the country have been delivered into my hands by God for protection, and I have been appointed only as a guard to save this human flock for Him. It would be a very great disgrace for any sentry or guard to hand over to his friends any property entrusted to his care to watch over; and no guard, of course, would ever do it so long as he was alive, and had cartridges for his rifle and the blade of his sword to cut with. It was therefore natural that the Russians should be offended with me for joining the English.

What keeps treaties and promises is only the sense of honour and conscience implanted in all of us by God: without this, treaties have been and can be broken; examples of this are not few. If a treaty means only to be honest and to keep one's word, then the promise, written as well as verbal, which was given me on the 20th of July 1880, by Sir Lepel Griffin, to the effect that the British were responsible for protecting Afghanistan against any foreign aggressor who should attack the country unprovoked by the Afghans, was sufficient.

Some of the officials, however, were of opinion that this promise was not given in the form of a treaty or formal official document. I therefore had the same document confirmed officially by the Marquis of Ripon, in 1883. But, notwithstanding that, I was anxious to get a confirmation of the same promise in the most emphatic language and plain words from the Viceroy of India himself, and to have that promise declared and ratified in public audience, for the knowledge of the world in general. For this purpose I wanted to have an audience with the Viceroy, with a view to clearing away any suspicions and doubts upon this point.

Russian had never had any wars with Afghanistan, and these two nations, Russia and Afghanistan, have never killed each other; there was therefore no enmity between them, and I hope that this is still the case. Russia has, consequently, no reason for attacking Afghanistan, or for interfering in Afghan affairs, beyond the fact that Afghanistan is friendly with Great Britain; that she has no connection now with Russia, and that she lies as an obstacle between Russian territory and India, thus barring the way for Russian aggression upon India. Considering, therefore, that the only reason that could be given by Russia for attacking Afghanistan is the friendship existing between that country and England, justice demands that, treaty or no treaty, England should be responsible for the safety and protection of Afghanistan, and that both these nations should stand or fall together; that at the time of difficulties England should protect Afghanistan, and keep her

word without discussing the interpretation of the words "if" and "but," in the pledges given by them!

Hence Lord Dufferin (who was such a statesman, that a wiser and more clever ruler than he has never ruled in India) perceived the necessity for such a visit as I had proposed immediately after he had taken over the government of the Indian Empire into his hands. He selected the town of Rawal Pindi as the place of meeting, and accordingly invited me to visit him there. I could desire nothing better than this, and hurried off to India without losing any time. I arrived there on the last day of March. A very cordial and grand reception was given me: the Viceroy, with Lady Dufferin, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, with many of the most eminent officials of the Indian Government and the Indian ruling princes, received me very warmly. The visit was most successful, and, having completed the objects of the visit, I left Rawal Pindi for Kabul on the 12th of April. All the conversations which took place between me and the Viceroy were published in a small pamphlet for the information of my people on my return to Kabul. It is not therefore necessary for me to give any details; I will, however, give a few points.

This visit cemented our friendly feelings so much, and cleared away all doubts so far, that during Lord Dufferin's viceroyalty there were no misunderstandings between him and me. All the lies which were repeated to the Indian Government against me were washed out, and the friendship of the two nations

was publicly announced to the world. The matters which could not be put in writing were decided in personal conversations; these referred to the fortifications of the North-West frontier of Afghanistan. The Viceroy gave me a heavy battery, rifles, and cash, and promised to give further assistance when required.

A restriction was thus placed upon the further advance of Russia; I reminded the Viceroy that, notwithstanding my warnings and prophecies of the Russian advance, either owing to precaution or owing to party disputes, no action had been taken, and the Russians had broken down one of the four obstacles which were in their way, namely, they had crossed the desert of Khiva and Bokhara, and taken possession of Merv and Sarakhs. "Not only that," I continued, "but they have taken Panjdeh, which belonged to me, during my stay in your camp. The next thing they will do will be to take the Pamirs; the third will be that they will take Persia under their influence; and fourthly, they will attack Herat or any other Afghan town which may suit them at the time. We must therefore take the Pamirs before they do." But, alas! nothing was done, and to-day the Russians occupy the Pamirs, as I had prophesied. Lord Dufferin replied: "For the protection of Herat and your North-West frontier, every sort of assistance in the shape of money, arms, war materials, as well as engineers or other English official help, shall be given to you. And in case of an attack from Russia upon Herat, Great Britain is prepared in every way to meet the difficulty. We have

made preparations for this purpose." His Lordship further promised in plain and clear words to defend and protect the integrity of Afghanistan, and to repel any unprovoked aggression by any foreign power.

I refused the offer of the engineers or other English official assistance, with thanks—this kind of help would not be received by my people very warmly—and I accepted all his kind offers and kind promises, I myself promising in return that as long as the British kept their word they would find me true.

On the 8th of April the public audience or Durbar was held, when, on one side of me, the deputy of Her Gracious Majesty the Queen, the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, was standing; on my other side being Her Majesty's son, the Duke of Connaught. I then and there declared and announced this promise of the British Government to be responsible for the safety and integrity of Afghanistan to the public at large. I did this that every one present at the Durbar, and the world, should know about the pledges which Great Britain had given to me, that they would take upon themselves the responsibility of expelling any foreign power making aggressive attacks upon my country; and I added that in return for this I also would be true to my promise, and faithful in my friendship to Great Britain. To this Lord Dufferin assented. I might mention here that on the 6th of April a parade of the army was arranged for my inspection, and I, who have been a soldier throughout my life, could not help admiring the splendid army which the British Govern-

ment possesses. A nation which possesses such an army has very little to fear. The same night at dinner the Viceroy proposed to drink a toast to my health, in responding to which I said: "I pray for the long life of the Queen-Empress of India, her Government, her family, and all the well-wishers of her kingdom, in which, to my belief, lies the safety of Afghanistan." I emphasised again and again this one point, that Russia would certainly take the Pamirs, and the same point I mentioned in 1886, when the boundary line to the North-West of Afghanistan between that country and Russian territory was being marked out. I then urged that this line should be carried further from Khwaja Salar up to the Pamirs and Chitral, before Russia could take possession of the Pamirs. But this was not done, and the Russians took the Pamirs. Now, at this time, my third prophecy is being fulfilled, namely, the Russians have taken Persia entirely under their influence, and the result will be that they will take a concession from the Shah of Persia to make a railway line through the Seistan Desert towards Kandahar and Quetta, and also will put their foot on the Persian Gulf.

In 1889, when I was in Turkestan, I informed Lord Lansdowne, the then Viceroy of India, that it was a very suitable opportunity to fortify the North-West frontier of Afghanistan, by erecting forts and placing guns all along the frontier, to protect it from Russian aggression. I had a very plausible excuse to offer, if Russia should make any objection, because at that time my country was in an unsettled condition, and I was there myself. My warnings, however, took

no effect as usual, and now it is too late, because the Russians will say: "Why are you gathering your army on your frontier and placing guns?" It is very sad that I, who know all the schemes and plans and plots which are secret in the hearts of the Russians, about their future movements in the East, should have my warnings disregarded; that nobody takes any notice of what I say. I do not know whether the British officials are ignorant of the fact, or whether they are too cautious to give it out.

It was a great delight to me to meet Lady Dufferin, who was the cleverest woman I had ever seen, and the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, to whom I found that the hearts of all their Indian subjects were devoted. The Duke of Connaught is a very kind-hearted, gentle-natured, honest, straightforward, smart soldier, and it is only natural that all the army should worship such an officer. There was one sad point that I noted in this my visit, which left a melancholy impression on my mind, and grieved me very much. It was the condition in which I saw the ruling Nawabs and Rajahs of the Punjab. The poor things were all dressed like women, wearing diamond pins in their hair, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, and other pieces of jewellery usually worn by women. The straps of their trousers were jewelled, and little bells were hanging in front of their trousers as low as their feet. They were sunk in ignorance, laziness, and indulgence. They did not know what was going on in the world nor what was in it. They were quite unable to walk, because they have never been in the habit of walking, thinking it minimised their

prestige. They spend their time in drinking or smoking opium. I pitied these poor things, upon whom I looked as effeminate men, and I pitied the poor subjects who were to expect justice and administration at their hands.

I learned another lesson also from this visit, which was that the more chances I myself, my sons, and my officials have of seeing and knowing the British people, the better it will be, because I discovered that such officials as, for example, Lord Dufferin and many others whom I had seen from time to time, soon became good friends, and that the more we knew of each other, the higher was our opinion of each other, and this made matters run smoothly. I also thought that such visits cleared away and dispersed the old hostile feelings which once existed between these two nations, so that our friendship would be recognised more and more, and people would not have any ground or opportunity for saying things against us. I also discovered that it is best to settle certain matters verbally.

I made up my mind to visit England myself, as well as to send my representatives there from time to time; also to engage the services of English men and women for the Government of Afghanistan, so that intercourse between London and Kabul should be constant. This would bring the two nations into closer touch than they had been in hitherto. But alas! the more I try to bring England and Kabul near each other, the more some of the English officials seem to try to keep them apart and separate them.

Towards the end of Lord Dufferin's Viceroyalty

certain matters arose that required to be settled personally by myself with the Mission that was invited to Kabul for that purpose; the opportunity, however, did not occur, and in November, 1888, Lord Dufferin left India, to the great sorrow and regret of all the subjects and friends of the Indian Empire. The people had never seen such a wise statesman as their Viceroy, and the regret at parting with him was universal and deep, and Lady Dufferin's residence in India was of hardly less importance than that of her husband. She was the first founder of the noble institution of the family hospitals for the Indian women; and for this act alone, if for no other, her name will always shine in the history of India for ever, as one of the noblest of ladies, whose sympathies did more for her sex than any other of her predecessors.

Lord Lansdowne succeeded to the Viceroyalty of India. From this date the period of difficulties and misunderstandings between Afghanistan and Great Britain recommenced. The details connected with there I will not give in this book; first, because the book is not large enough, and secondly, because it is not expedient to give them out publicly. It will be sufficient to say that at this time those great men and lovers of peace, who used to be the advisers of the Viceroy, such as Sir Donald Stewart, Commander-in-Chief, and others whose names I will not give for fear of being looked upon as a flatterer, had left India. General Amir Ahmad Khan, my envoy with the Indian Government, who had managed, by his wisdom and experience, to strengthen the ties of friendship during the reigns of three Viceroys, had left this world for

Paradise. Lord Roberts had succeeded to the office of Commander-in-Chief, and he was in favour of the "Forward Policy." The Indian Government began to interfere with the chiefs on the borders of Afghanistan, and having cut a tunnel through the Khojak Hill, pushed their railway line towards New Chaman, right on the borders of Afghanistan, from which direction they moved their forces nearer to the borders of Afghanistan, and began to make fortifications and preparations to such an extent that the ignorant and uneducated Afghans gave out that the English railway was going to enter Kandahar, and the English army was making a Charhai (an attack) on Kabul. It was necessary, therefore, that they should all be ready for starting a holy war. At the time I received letters from Lord Lansdowne, addressed to me in a tone that I was not accustomed to; and very different to that adopted by other Viceroys of India, for he wrote in a dictatorial manner, advising me upon matters of internal policy in the administration of my kingdom, and telling me how I ought to treat my subjects. This I could not submit to, because, if I had not retaliated, the English Government would have thought they had a right to interfere in my internal policy, which would be quite against the terms of our treaty.

At this time I was occupied in making the fort at Dehdadi, which commands the roads from Russia to Turkestan as well as fortifying other North-Western frontier positions. I also purposed visiting Herat to see about the fortifications there, and to arrange for volunteers from the Durani and Ghilzai tribes, lying between Herat and Kandahar. At this time I re-

ceived letters from Kabul and Kandahar to the effect that the English were pushing their railway line right into Afghan Territory, and were massing their forces near the borders of my country; they also stated that the Afghan border chiefs, who were independent and had kept aloof so far, were beginning to interfere. Some people went so far as to say that the English intended to keep Kandahar and Kabul. These reports, added to the strange letters of the Viceroy, alarmed me. My presence on the spot was urgently needed, and, notwithstanding the fact that I was immersed in the important business of fortifying my North-Western frontier, I was obliged to hurry back to Kabul, where I arrived in the summer of 1890. I dismissed and recalled to Kabul Sirdar Mahomed Khan, my Governor of Kandahar, who had not opposed this railway line being brought into my territory, nor had he given me any information about it. He also owed money to the Government Treasury. During the time he was putting his accounts in order, he died at Kabul.

The Government of Lord Lansdowne was not satisfied with creating unpleasant anxieties for me, but went further still, even so far as to stop the guns which I had bought with my own private money in India, not allowing them to be brought to Kabul. More than that, it was reported to me by my merchants, that the frontier officials stopped the private goods of the Afghan merchants—iron, steel, copper, etc.—on the excuse that such goods were required to make war materials, and so long as they were not certain about the friendship of Afghanistan, they said they could not allow such things to be imported into Afghanistan.

There could not have been a greater insult offered to me ; I was humiliated in the eyes of my own subjects, my own guns were stopped, and the goods of private merchants also, which was a new thing in the history of civilized nations, between which trade is free everywhere. Had I been a hasty inexperienced Amir, like Shere Ali Khan and some others of the former rulers of Afghanistan, war would have been certain, or I might have fallen back upon Russia for support, which would probably have resulted in my ruin and fresh trouble for the Indian Government. I might also have written such a letter in reply to the Indian Government that it would have ended by their making war against me. But I was far too shrewd to give them any excuse for laying their hands upon. Not only did I refrain from any of the above-mentioned steps, but I also appeared to be perfectly indifferent. The Indian Government were so satisfied with my conduct that they took a further step at a very critical time when I was anxious about the Hazara rebellion in my country ; a rebellion that was so far-spreading in its influence all over Afghanistan, that even my own personal attendants had joined the rebels, after deserting me. Some people from the city of Kabul and from Dehmazan, a suburb of Kabul, also joined the rebels. The Hazaras throughout the whole country had taken up arms against me, and there was a fear that a general rebellion would take place. At such a time as this, all the help I received from the Indian Government was a sort of ultimatum, saying that the Government of India could not wait for my indefinite and uncertain promises about inviting the British Mission

to Kabul, and therefore Lord Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief of India, would be sent to Kabul with a large force as his body-guard. I considered the position very critical, to receive 10,000 soldiers, whom I was expected to receive as my guests. I had therefore to prepare 100,000 to receive them! I saw that the Indian Government was bent upon making trouble, so, without letting a single official of my Government, except my chief secretaries, know of my intention, I wrote a letter to Lord Salisbury, the then Prime Minister of Great Britain, and sent it to England by a friend. At that time Sir John Gorst was Under Secretary and Lord Cross Secretary of State for India; to these I am thankful for putting my letter before Lord Salisbury, and though all the requests made in my letter were not granted, luckily the war was avoided. The misunderstandings, however, which existed between my Government and that of Lord Lansdowne were not quite settled until Lord Roberts left India, and General Sir George White succeeded him as Commander-in-Chief in India, and Sir Mortimer Durand's Mission's visit to Kabul in 1893. After this, I am glad to say, Lord Lansdowne and myself parted on friendly terms, to my great satisfaction.

In considering the past history of Afghanistan, I could not help noting the fact that any Viceroy who chose to make war could do so, as he had a free hand to deal with the Government of Afghanistan; and as the Parliament in Great Britain heard only a one-sided story from the Viceroys, they naturally gave a one-sided decree in the matter, and in favour of the Viceroy. This was owing to the fact that the rulers of Afghan-

istan had no representatives, nor any means whatever of letting the Government in England know the other side of the question. I was therefore very anxious to have my representative at the Court of the Viceroy, as had always been the case, and, at the same time, to be able to communicate with the Government in England as well.

The necessity for such a step was forced upon me by the recent treatment of me by Lord Lansdowne's Government, which treatment had brought us to the verge of war. Any other Amir but myself would have either leant back upon Russia, which would have resulted in his own ruin, as in the case of Shere Ali, or would have given such promises to the Indian Government, as did Yakub, which could not possibly be fulfilled. Such promises would undoubtedly have brought ruin to them. All these instances in the past were a lesson to me; my predecessors had suffered from adopting such a line of policy, but I benefited by the lesson their mistakes taught me. It was not pleasant to me to think that the Government of Afghanistan was to a certain extent under any Viceroy of India who might be appointed, and that I, the Amir of Afghanistan, should be merely a tool and a puppet to be made to dance by a Viceroy. I am still anxious to relieve Afghanistan from this everlasting danger, because it is an independent kingdom, and there is no reason why it should not be treated as an independent kingdom. I also knew that by having my representative in London, the Afghan people, who know so little about the good-nature of the British people in England, and the power of the

British Empire, would be better informed by their own countryman and representative who would be living in London; and the residence of an Afghan official in London would certainly inspire friendly feelings in the minds of the Afghans, and instruct them in the industries and sciences and civilisation of Great Britain, which would promote the ties and bonds of mutual friendship, and the two nations would come into closer touch with each other.

To attain this object, and for certain other reasons of which I thought it well to inform the authorities in England, and to pay my respects to the noblest lady that ever succeeded to any throne on this earth, I intended to visit England myself. I saw what advantages would accrue from opening my own channels of intercourse by visits to the English nation.

To my great pleasure this my desire was fulfilled by my receiving an invitation in the spring of 1894, after Sir Mortimer Durand's return to England from Kabul. The official invitation was endorsed by Sir Henry Fowler, then Secretary of State, and the gist of it was, that Her Majesty was kind enough to invite me, or one of my sons, to go to England to visit her. I received other friendly letters also from their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, and other State officials of Great Britain, expressing their desire to have the pleasure of seeing me. But, unfortunately, I fell ill at the same time, and my illness lasted so long and became so serious, that there was very little hope of my surviving. All my Court doctors, including Miss

Hamilton, M.D., under whose treatment I was at the time, were alarmed by witnessing my sufferings.

Before I answered the invitation I received a letter from the Right Honourable Mr George Curzon (now Lord Curzon), saying that as he was travelling towards Chitral and the Pamirs, and was anxious to make my acquaintance, he would wait for my permission to come and see me. I accordingly invited him, and he was my guest at Kabul for a few days. Several friendly conversations took place between us, for though he did not understand Persian, and I did not understand English, we were able to communicate through Mir Munshi. From these conversations he appeared to be a very genial, hard-working, well-informed, experienced, and ambitious young man. He was witty and full of humour, and we often laughed at his amusing stories. Though Mr Curzon's visit was a private and friendly one, and not in any way in an official capacity, yet still we touched upon and discussed all the important affairs of my Government. The special topics of conversation were as to the North - West frontier of Afghanistan, and as to my successor to the throne. My sons, Habibullah Khan and Nasrullah Khan, also invited Mr Curzon to their houses, and they all passed very pleasant evenings. I was so pleased with his visit that it still further added to my desire and anxiety that I, my sons, and officials, should see other members of the English aristocracy and officials as often as possible.

But to my great disappointment and sadness, my illness deprived me of this pleasure; and my eldest

son, who was well endowed with the gifts for such a visit, being able also to speak a little English, could not go, for fear of anything happening to me during his absence, and, besides, the whole burden of the Government rested upon his shoulders at that time. The only other grown-up son I had was Habibullah's full brother Nasrullah, and he was appointed accordingly to visit England on my behalf.

In addition to the letters that were given to him addressed to Her Majesty the Queen, and to the other princes of the Royal Family and Government officials of Great Britain, he had a book of instructions given him by me, which he was ordered to follow throughout the whole of his journey.

My son left Kabul in April 1895, arriving in London in May. He left London in the month of August, and returned to Kabul, by way of Karachi and Kandahar, in the winter of the same year.

To my great disappointment, however, this visit caused a great deal of unnecessary expense to the Governments of both countries, for it proved a complete failure.

It is the custom, not only among the aristocracy, but among our poorest people as well, that a guest should never return in despair at his request being refused, even if he be an enemy; and it is considered impossible that any one should enter the doors of his host's house without expecting kindness. But my son, who was the son of a sovereign,

and the guest of another illustrious sovereign, was returned with a dry but polite refusal to my request.

I think that the request that I had made, namely, to have my representative in London, or at least to allow of my communicating direct with the Government in England, as well as with India, was not put before the House of Commons in a proper light, otherwise many of the most experienced members of Parliament would have realised the advantages of this course in cementing the friendship of these two nations, and in strengthening and civilising Afghanistan. But I will dilate a little more fully upon this point in a later chapter, on "Future Policy." It must suffice to inform my readers at present that the usual communications are being carried on between India and Afghanistan in the old way, through the medium of their Mahomedan representatives at Kabul and Calcutta. This means that the whole world may make progress, and the circumstances and the positions of these countries may change, but in the old system of communication no improvement is to be made.

I will say a word or two to thank the Queen and all the members of her royal family, the nobility, and the British public for their kindness shown to my son as my representative, and, of course, the cold treatment of a few officials does not make me forget the obligations that I am under. I have been much pleased by the kindness shown to my son by the Queen, one proof of which is, that she bestowed the honour of G.C.M.G. on my two sons, Habibullah and Nasrullah.

My son wrote a book telling of his travels and experiences of English life; this was printed at the Kabul Press, but was not publicly published, as I did not think it wise.¹

¹ Miss Hamilton, M.D., has made, I believe, a translation of some portions of Nasrullah Khan's book of "Travels," as well as of the book of "Instructions" given him to follow throughout his journey.

CHAPTER VI

THE BOUNDARIES OF AFGHANISTAN AND THE DURAND MISSION

THE readers of my book will by this time have formed an idea of the way in which I had made a kingdom of Afghanistan, which before had been divided into so many independent States ruled over by separate chiefs ; and how I had extended my dominions, which, at the time of my accession, were no more than the city of Kabul and Jellalabad, together with a few other places. They will have learned how I took possession of the Kandahar and Herat provinces in 1881, and those of Roshan and Shignan in 1883 (though the last-named was under dispute up to 1893, when it was officially settled by the Durand Mission). In the same year I appointed my own governor, named Ghafar Khan Kirgiz as governor of Wakhan, instead of Ali Merdan, the native chief of Wakhan. This was a hill state to the south of Shignan ; on the south of Wakhan lies Chitral. My readers have also seen how I extended my dominions by occupying Maimana in 1885 ; Hazarajat in 1893, and Kafiristan in 1895 ; though I had to subdue the last-named after the Durand Mission, by which it was decided to belong to my Government.

At the same time when I was occupied in breaking down the feudal system of Afghanistan and moulding the country into a strong consolidated kingdom, I was not unaware nor neglectful of the necessity of defining my boundaries with the neighbouring countries. I well knew that it was necessary to mark out the boundary lines between my dominions and those of my neighbours, for the safety and protection of my kingdom, and for the purpose of putting a check on their advances, and getting rid of misunderstandings and disputes.

I know that it has become a custom in this century for great Powers to absorb small countries; and to carry out their desires of annexing the weak countries they adopt various modes and schemes. For instance, the first is by the partition of the weak nations, by which every one of the strong usurpers takes his share, and the justice given to the weak nations by these strong Powers reminds me of the story of a poor man, whose watch had been taken by a robber. He went to one of the chiefs of the robbers, who called himself a magistrate. But this magistrate said: "I cannot get your watch back, but what are you going to give me for my share?" The poor man cried hard for justice, saying that he did not come to give more, but to get back what had been already taken from him. The answer was: "There is no reason that you should give your watch to a weaker person than myself, and I not have my share?" He thereupon demanded the chain as his share. The man went to a higher judge, who took the man's ring in the same manner. Whereupon the poor man thought that if he went to the Lord Chief-Justice there would be no jewellery left at all, and

his share would only be his turban and clothes, leaving him without a stitch of clothing to cover him. He therefore went home, contented with half justice. I believe that if the readers of my book will compare the story of this justice with the case of China, they will find that I am not very far wrong. The second mode is this: That the great Powers enter into underhand intrigues and understandings with each other, which they call statesmanship and policy, and agree with each other that "if you take such-and-such a country, and I take such-and-such, we will not interfere with each other."

The third mode of their taking these countries is this: That at a time when they are defining their boundaries with another Government, certain countries or provinces on which they have cast their eye they leave undecided; these they call neutral; and they say to the neighbouring Power: "Now this must be left independent; neither must you interfere nor we interfere." By these pretences of calling such countries or provinces neutral, they cancel the claims of the neighbouring weak Governments to these provinces, which either wholly or in part belong to them. This being done, they begin to play their game in this so-called neutral country in such a manner that they give to the chief of the neutral territory an old worn-out riding horse, some old uniforms, and so many guns or revolvers, saying to him: "We will be friends with each other, and our friendship will be sufficient to save you from the attacks or aggression of your neighbour; and you are to be our friend and independent ally." The poor fellow thinks that there is no harm in being friends, so long as they acknowledge

his independence ; and that, on the contrary, it is to his advantage that they should take the responsibility of his protection against foreign aggressors. But very soon after, they easily find some excuse to accuse this neutral chief of having broken his promise of faithful friendship ; or sometimes they persuade his own subjects to appeal for justice against his cruelties to these illustrious judges. And after listening to one or other pretence like this, they take possession of his country. If the neighbouring Power says that this is against the treaty, and they must leave this territory neutral, they answer : “ Ah, yes ! it was left neutral at the time, but the ruler himself made a subsequent treaty with us, by which he placed himself and his country under our protection and our sphere of influence. This bars you from having any right to interfere in the affairs of the country which has been so many years considered under our influence and included in our sphere of Government, therefore you have no right to interfere with our belongings ! ” And there the matter ends.

In this manner the Russian Government took all the kingdom of Bokhara and the provinces lying to the North-West of the Oxus on the borders of Afghanistan under their influence and protection, and this influence and protection ended in their swallowing all these countries. On the other hand, the Indian Government took all the provinces lying to the South-East and North-East of Afghanistan, which used to belong to the Afghan Government in early times, under their influence and protection. They gave them the name of “ independent,” and having called them the neutral states between Afghanistan

and India, went on taking them under their influence day by day. The chiefs of these bordering tribes were in the habit of coming to the Afghan rulers in the summer, when it was hot in their country, and obtaining money and robes of honour from the Amirs of Afghanistan by saying that they were their friends; and in the winter they used to go to the Indian officials and take money from them, so that both the neighbouring Governments looked upon them as being under their protection, and, in fact, they were under the protection of these few robes!

Neither the Kings of Bokhara nor the Amirs of Kabul could ask Russia or England to keep away from occupying these independent provinces; nor did Russia or England, on their own parts, poach on each other's share, because the answer would have been that "this country is under our sphere and protection, and therefore you have no right to interfere."

Seeing that every Government was trying to get hold of as much as it possibly could, I also tried to take as much share as possible in these provinces which formerly belonged to Afghanistan and were now under independent chiefs, by making friends with them. At the same time I also took steps to define my boundary lines with my neighbours before their further advance.

In the matter of marking the boundary lines, it was no trouble to settle these questions with the Persian and Chinese Governments, because they had neither power nor intention to occupy any piece of land within the sphere of Afghanistan; so without

any difficulty or dispute the boundary lines were marked out between Afghanistan and Persia, taking the line from Koh Malik Siyah to near Zulfikar; and in the same manner a small corner of Afghanistan near Wakhan and Roshan which joins with the Chinese frontier. This was also settled without any dispute.

*The Division of Boundaries between Russia
and Afghanistan.*

The most difficult and most important boundaries to be divided and marked out were those between my Government and the Governments of my two most powerful neighbours, England and Russia, the two greatest Powers in Asia, if not indeed in the world. They are the greatest absorbing nations upon the earth, and though the Eastern countries they have already conquered are dying of perpetual famines they, for reasons best known to themselves, go on taking as much more every year as they can, constantly crawling forward. My country is like a poor goat on whom the lion and the bear have both fixed their eyes, and without the protection and help of the Almighty Deliverer the victim cannot escape very long.

I first took steps to settle my North-Western frontier with Russia through the medium and intervention of Great Britain, and after the usual communications with the Indian Government on the subject, a joint Commission of the Indian Government officials and my officials was appointed in the

month of July 1884, to settle this question. The head of the English Commission was General Sir Peter Lumsden, and the head of the Russian was General Zelenai.

In reply to a letter from the English General, I wrote to him that "during my stay in Russia, I did not give them any promise or pledge which they could put forward against me at present, and therefore I am not afraid of them in any way; and as long as I have power I am not going to leave one fragment of the land of Afghanistan to the Russians. You must therefore carry out and mark the boundary lines between Russia and my country with vigour and courage." But alas! the result was not satisfactory.

The Russians were irritated by my fixing the boundaries between us, which meant putting a check to their further advance, and especially because I was settling these boundaries through the medium of the English. In consequence of this they kept advancing towards the borders of Afghanistan as quickly as possible. As I had seen through their motives in taking Panjdeh, I tried hard to persuade the English to give me permission to send further armies to fortify Panjdeh, and I argued that if there were no war, there would be no harm in my armies being stationed in my own territory. But the English Government did not listen to my advice, and the consequence was that many lives were lost and Panjdeh was taken by the Russians in 1885, as has been mentioned before.

In the month of May 1885, the Viceroy wrote to

me that the Russians had consented to evacuate and leave Zulfikar for me, instead of Panjdeh, the frontier line running North of Gulran and Maruchak, and the Viceroy wrote that this plan was accepted by the Russians. I answered the Viceroy's letter accepting this decision, and asking him to send me a copy of the understanding as mentioned above.

On the 9th of May 1885, Colonel Sir West Ridgeway was appointed in place of General Lumsden. It was reported to me at first that Sir West Ridgeway was not satisfied with all the Sanads (charters) which my subjects could produce to defend their claims for their land, and he still insisted on asking for further Sanads, which irritated the Afghans, and I was displeased about it; yet in the end I found that Sir West Ridgeway's inquiries and requests for further charters was a proof of his far-seeing wisdom and his friendly feelings towards my subjects, in that he wished to get as much evidence as he could to make the Afghan claims stronger. He succeeded in settling the whole Boundary Question without any further fighting or trouble, and after settling the Boundary Question, he, with his companions, visited me at Kabul, on their way back to India in October 1886. I was so pleased with their services that I showed them every hospitality in my power, and gave Sir West Ridgeway, Kazi Aslam Khan, Colonel Holdich, Colonel Yate, and several other members of the Mission, gold medals of honour. I know that Sir West Ridgeway is a very clever statesman who has a great future before him in whatever office he may be appointed to. I hope he will carry all his undertakings through with success.

On the 22nd July 1887, the final protocol was signed at St Petersburg, and on the 1st of August, Lord Dufferin having written me a letter about it, received my warm thanks for the help which the British Empire had given me in marking out my North-Western boundary.

In 1893, again, a dispute arose between the Afghans and the Russian subjects about the irrigation of their lands near Chaman-i-bed (Meadow of Willows). For the settlement of this dispute Colonel Yate was appointed by the Indian Government, and he decided the question without any serious conflict.

Sir West Ridgeway's Mission had decided the Boundary Question from Zulfikar to Khwaja Salar only; and though at the time I requested the Indian Government to carry this boundary line up to the Pamirs, it was not done. And though according to the Treaty of 1873 the Russians had agreed that Badakshan and Wakhan should be included in Afghanistan, and Roshan and Shignan formed a part of Badakshan, yet as Roshan and Shignan command the roads from Russia towards India, the Russians were planning to take possession of them. But I had foreseen their policy, and had appointed my governors to occupy these countries before the Russians could enter them. I had a double right (1) because they were included within my dominions according to the above-mentioned Treaty of 1873, and (2) because the King of Bokhara had occupied one portion of Darwaz towards the left bank of the Oxus, which justified me in taking possession of those parts of Shignan which lie on the right bank of the stream flowing from Lake Victoria, or Wood's Lake. This

occupation of the above-mentioned territory by me led to a skirmish between Colonel Yanoff and my official, Shams-ud-Din Khan, at Somatash, on the 24th of July, 1893, which has been mentioned elsewhere.

This matter was settled in the month of November 1893, between me and the Durand Mission, after which I recalled my troops from the above-mentioned provinces in 1894, and occupied Darwaz instead. In the month of March 1895, this agreement was settled between Russia and England, that the Cis-Oxus portion of Darwaz should be ceded to Afghanistan by Bokhara, and the Afghans should evacuate those portions of Shignan and Roshan which lie on the right bank of the Punjab and the Oxus. The stream issuing from Lake Victoria, or Wood's Lake, being a second time held, the boundary line of Afghanistan was fixed, and, thank God! since that time up to the present day, I have been relieved from the perpetual quarrels and disputes about my North-Western frontier, and up to this day there is peace. I hope God will keep this peace for ever to save the lives of His human flock.

*The Division of the Boundaries between India and
Afghanistan and the Durand Mission*

Having settled my boundaries with all my other neighbours, I thought it necessary to set out the boundaries between my country and India, so that the boundary line should be definitely marked out around my dominions, as a strong wall for protection.

I requested the Marquis of Dufferin, and afterwards the Marquis of Ripon, to send some of their most

experienced officials as a Mission to visit me at Kabul, for the purpose of discussing certain matters, and also I thought it better to exploit this question of the boundary with such a Mission. The Viceroy himself was not unaware of the advantages of a Mission, and I requested that Sir Mortimer Durand, the Foreign Secretary, might be appointed as the head of it; but unfortunately, in the first place, I fell ill, and afterwards Ishak's rebellion took place in Turkestan. This postponed the Mission question, and I left for Turkestan. On my return from Turkestan in 1890 my relations with the Indian Government were the same as I have mentioned before; in consequence of which I sent a letter to Lord Salisbury, who pointed out that I should settle the misunderstandings then existing between my Government and the Government of India with the officials of the Indian Government.

At this time Lord Lansdowne again wrote a letter to me, telling me that he had appointed Lord Roberts to be the head of the Mission. I was busy at this time in the Hazara war, and it was also against the opinion and desire of the people of Afghanistan to invite Lord Roberts with a large force to enter Afghanistan. I was afraid of some serious trouble arising out of this Mission. Many of the relatives and friends of the Afghan people had been killed either in fighting against Lord Roberts, or in being punished by him at the time of the last Afghan war, a circumstance which made it unwise to allow him to enter Afghanistan with such a large force. I also thought that Lord Roberts was a

soldier; and that for discussing the most complicated State affairs and foreign policy a statesman was required, and not a soldier; especially not a soldier whom I believed to be in favour of the "Forward Policy." It is only natural that a soldier should be fond of fighting and making war, just as statesmen and sovereigns are fond of making peace and avoiding war. More than that, some people told me that Lord Roberts' time in India was over, and he was anxious to continue as Commander-in-Chief in India if his time was prolonged. But this could not be without some trouble occurring on the North-West frontier of India, on which he was considered a great authority. It was to his own advantage to end the matter rather by war and trouble than by peace; I do not believe in this report myself; I think it is nonsense. But in any case I thought it an unwise and unsuitable time for the Mission to assemble, and accordingly postponed it.

The Viceroy was so insistent on this matter that he addressed a letter to me, which was practically an ultimatum, to the effect that "the Indian Government cannot wait for your indefinite promises of uncertain date, and therefore after such-and-such a time, will draw its own conclusions." I was seriously ill at the time, and I asked Sirdar Abdullah Khan Tokhi and Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan to select one Englishman out of those who were in my employ to be sent from Kabul to see the Viceroy, so that the matter should not become serious and irremediable. In short, I succeeded in delaying the matter in this way, and I immediately posted a letter

to the Viceroy on this subject, saying that "Mr Pyne is going to see your Excellency, taking with him my letter, to make all the necessary arrangements about the Mission." This message was intended to satisfy the authorities in India, and to prevent their taking any serious steps in the matter. After posting this letter I gave Mr Pyne one letter for the Viceroy and another addressed to Sir Mortimer Durand, the then Foreign Secretary; and bade him, Mr Pyne, go to India, with instructions to travel slowly, and if possible to postpone or delay the Mission for a few days, so that Lord Roberts, whose time for leaving India was very near, should leave for England. I requested the Viceroy to send me a map, having marked out the boundary lines as they proposed to decide them approximately, to show me which parts of Yaghistan (the land of the unruly) they proposed to take under their influence and sphere. I succeeded in this plan; Lord Roberts left India after writing a letter to me, expressing his regret at not having the pleasure of seeing me, and I at once invited the Mission to visit Kabul.

It is necessary to mention here that in the map sent to me by the Viceroy all the countries of the Waziri, New Chaman, and the railway station there, Chageh, Bulund Khel, the whole of Mohmand, Asmar, and Chitral, and other countries lying in between, were marked as belonging to India. I accordingly wrote to the Viceroy a long letter of predictions about the frontier tribes; the abstract of the letter is as follows:

"As to these frontier tribes known by the name of Yaghistan, if they were included in my dominions I should be able to make them fight against any enemy of England

and myself, by the name of a religious war, under the flag of their co-religious Muslim ruler (myself). And these people being brave warriors and staunch Mahomedans, would make a very strong force to fight against any power which might invade India or Afghanistan. I will gradually make them peaceful subjects and good friends of Great Britain. But if you should cut them out of my dominions, they will neither be of any use to you nor to me: you will always be engaged in fighting and troubles with them, and they will always go on plundering. As long as your Government is strong and in peace, you will be able to keep them quiet by a strong hand, but if at any time a foreign enemy appear on the borders of India, these frontier tribes will be your worst enemies. You must remember that they are like a weak enemy who can be held under the feet of a strong enemy, as long as he is strong; and the moment he ceases to be strong enough to hold him, the weak one gets out of his hold and attacks him in return. In your cutting away from me these frontier tribes who are people of my nationality and my religion, you will injure my prestige in the eyes of my subjects, and will make me weak, and my weakness is injurious for your Government."

But my advice was not appreciated, and the Indian Government was so anxious to get these frontier tribes from me, that they expelled my officials from Bulund Khel and Wana Zhob by force and threat of arms, saying that if they did not leave by such-and-such an hour, they would be compelled to leave. As I was not desirous of making war and enmity with Great Britain, I had instructed all my officials to leave the place immediately after receiving such notice from the Indian officials then in residence.

Timur Mirza Shah, ruler of Asmar, gave me the oath of allegiance in 1887, and put himself as well as his

country under my protection against an expected attack from his powerful enemy Omra Khan of Bajaur ; and he being killed by one of his slaves, General Ghulam Haidar Khan, my Commander-in-Chief, occupied Asmar in December, 1891, which caused great indignation to the Indian Government, who had their eye on all these so-called neutral provinces : Yaghistan (Chitral, Bajaur, Swat, Buner, Dir, Chilas, and Waziri : all these countries are included in Yaghistan). The Government of India insisted upon my leaving Asmar ; but as this was the gate of Kunar, Lamkhan, Kafiristan, and Jellalabad, provinces of my dominions, and it commanded the Pamirs and Chitral roads, the keeping of such an important gate of my dominions was as necessary as keeping Herat, Kandahar, and Balkh on the three other corners of my dominions. In the same manner they insisted upon my leaving Chageh.

In Kafiristan, throughout the whole of Yaghistan, of Baluchistan, and towards Chaman, also, the Indian frontier officials were making constant interference. The only thing that surprised me was, that on the one hand the Indian Government said : " We do not require any more country towards Afghanistan ; we only desire to see Afghanistan a strong independent kingdom," and on the other hand having cut a tunnel through the Khojak Hill they were pushing the railway line into my country just like pushing a knife into my vitals, and rumours that they intended making a railway line up to Kandahar with or without my consent, were being circulated everywhere and discussed in Parliament, about which I was constantly

informed by my agents, who send me all the cuttings concerning Afghanistan. In addition to this, Russia was making troubles with me about Roshan and Shignan.

It was in order to settle all these misunderstandings and troubles that I invited a Mission, under Sir Mortimer Durand, who being a clever statesman, realised that confidence begets confidence :

“Hearts have intercourse with hearts ;
Affection creates affection, and hatred creates hatred.”—SADI.

He, trusting his safety and protection under my care, started for Kabul.

He left Peshawar for Kabul on the 19th September 1893, accompanied by Colonel Ellis of the Quarter-Master General's Office, Captains MacMahon and Manners-Smith, Mr Clarke of the Foreign Office, acting as political assistants, Major Fenn (the Viceroy's doctor), and Mr Donald, and a few other Indian accountants, clerks, and officials. The Mission was met by my General, Ghulam Haidar Khan, on their entering Kabul; and I arranged Indaki, the building and residence of my son, Habibullah Khan, near Kabul, for their residence. After the first ceremonial Durbar, we soon started discussing matters. Durand, being a very clever statesman as well as a good Persian scholar, all the discussions were soon put right; but, to keep a record of every word which was uttered by Sir Mortimer Durand, myself, and other speakers of the Mission, I had arranged for Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan to sit behind a curtain without being seen or heard, or his presence

known of by any one else except myself, to write down every word they spoke to me, or among themselves, either in English or Persian. He wrote in shorthand every word uttered by Durand and myself, and this conversation is all preserved in the record office. The short outcome of the whole conversation was this, that the dispute which was opened between my Government and that of Russia about the provinces of Roshan and Shignan was settled as mentioned above.

The province of Wakhan, which had come under my dominion, I arranged to be left under the British for protection, as it was too far from Kabul, and cut off from the rest of my country, and therefore very difficult to be properly fortified.

The boundary line was agreed upon from Chitral and Baroghil Pass up to Peshawar, and thence up to Koh Malik Siyah in this way that Wakhan, Kafiristan, Asmar, Mohmand of Lalpura, and one portion of Waziristan came under my rule, and I renounced my claims from the railway station of New Chaman, Chageh, the rest of Waziri, Bulund Khel, Kuram, Afridi, Bajaur, Swat, Buner, Dir, Chilas, and Chitral.

Two agreements were sealed and signed by me, and by the members of the Mission, relating to the boundaries agreed upon, and also saying that as the Government of Afghanistan had in a friendly spirit renounced its claims to certain provinces, as above mentioned, the subsidy paid annually would be 18 lakhs of rupees instead of 12 lakhs as heretofore. In addition to this, the Indian Government under-

took to give them arms and war materials as a friendly assistance, also agreeing that in future the Afghan Government should be allowed to buy and import any arms and war materials that they wished.

Two days before their departure all the English members of the Mission, together with Abdur Rahim Khan (their Oriental Secretary), Afzal Khan (British Agent at Kabul), and Nawab Ibrahim Khan, were invited by my son Habibullah to dine with him in the Baber Gardens. They were there received by my sons Habibullah and Nasrullah, and by Ghulam Haidar Khan (Commander-in-Chief), Mir Munshi, and two or three of my officials.

On the 13th of November a public Durbar was held in the Salam Khana hall where all the civil and military officers of Kabul, together with the chiefs of various tribes, were present, as well as my two eldest sons. Before the audience I made a speech to commence the proceedings, in which I gave an outline of all the understandings which had been agreed upon and the provisions which had been signed for the information of my nation and my people, and all those who were present. I praised God for bringing about the friendly relations which now existed between the two Governments and putting them on a closer footing than they had been before. I also thanked Sir Mortimer Durand and the other members of the Mission for their wise way of settling the disputes. After this Sir Mortimer Durand made a short speech, at the end of which he mentioned that he had received a telegram from the Viceroy of India, expressing his great pleasure and satisfaction

about the newly completed agreements and our friendly understandings. He also mentioned that Lord Kimberley had expressed his satisfaction in the House of Lords.

All the representatives and officials of my kingdom who were present received a copy of the address of the deputation to which they had all set their seals, and in which they expressed their satisfaction and consent to the agreements and understandings, and their great pleasure and rejoicing at the friendship between the kingdoms of Great Britain and Afghanistan.

I again rose to my feet a second time and read this paper to the members of the Mission and the other members of the audience. This day Mir Munshi was not ordered to hide himself, but to write down all these three speeches, of which 2000 copies were published the next day and circulated in the country.

I will mention one example, showing what a high value is put upon the friendship of the British nation by my people, and the affection existing in their hearts and those of my officials. Two days before Sir Mortimer Durand left Kabul, I wanted to send the decorations and orders to him and the other English gentlemen who were members of his Mission; and there was a friendly contention as to who should be the favoured messenger to take these orders. My Commander-in-Chief, Mir Munshi, and a Kotwal, were every one of them anxious to take the medals and deliver them to the members of the Mission, as they all considered it a special honour to be allowed to perform this service, and that the British members

should receive their orders from their hands. I sent Mir Munshi with the medals, instructing him to present them with his own hands, together with my thanks for their distinguished services. After delivering these medals to their recipients, Mir Munshi brought back their letters of thanks and gratitude, and the Mission left Kabul on the 14th of November, having greatly enjoyed their visit. The misunderstandings and disputes which were arising about these frontier matters were put to an end, and after the boundary lines had been marked out according to the above-mentioned agreements by the Commissioners of both Governments, a general peace and harmony reigned between the two Governments, which I pray God may continue for ever.

Perhaps it would not be out of place to mention that though Lord Lansdowne made a speech in June 1894, at the time of his leaving India, in which he stated that he had heard that this arrangement was made in order that the frontier tribes should not trouble the Indian Government any more; yet, contrary to his prophecy and in accordance with my prophecy, the Chitral war, Bajaur war, Malakand war, Waziri war, and the Afridi war, have all taken place since then, with these same frontier tribes who came under the British sphere; because they have no further hope of coming under the rule of an Islamic ruler, and do not like to submit to British rule.

CHAPTER VII

THE FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN

“To God alone are the gates of the hidden mysteries open; no man can know what is to happen in the future except the All-Knowing Allah.”—KORAN.

No man can know what may happen to-morrow, and therefore I cannot be held responsible for what I shall say about the future of Afghanistan, whether it will come true or not; and if I did claim that I knew what was to happen in the future for certain, then my utterance would be in direct contradiction to the teachings of the Holy Koran. Yet still a shrewd observer can judge from the circumstances and signs of the times which way the wind blows, without claiming either to be a prophet or inspired. The readers of my book must be aware that I have had a much wider experience of the world and mankind during my life than any previous ruler of my family, they will therefore, I hope, have patience with me while I give a few hints and suggestions for the use and benefit of my successors and my people.

I will divide this chapter, accordingly, into two main divisions. One of these divisions will deal with

the progress of the country itself, and will consist in giving counsels and advice concerning the policy of internal affairs, and the progress to be made in future in the various Departments and Institutions. As many of these points have been treated in detail, in previous chapters, I ask my readers to excuse unavoidable repetition of many matters concerning the progress and welfare of the country. I must bring forward these points in illustration of the close connection existing between many of the above-mentioned institutions and sources of progress, and the home policy of my Country. The success of the one depends upon the continued advance in the other. The second division will treat of the foreign policy of Afghanistan, and its diplomatic relations with the neighbouring Powers.

Future of Afghanistan.

(1.) *Home Policy and Internal Affairs.*

To the mind of the ordinary observer, Afghanistan may be in the condition described in the famous poem of Sir Alfred Lyall, where it is stated :

“The Afghan is but grist in their mill, and the waters are moving it fast,
Let the stone be the upper or nether, it grinds him to powder at last.

And the lord of the English writes: ‘Order and justice, and govern with laws,’

And the Russian he sneers and says: ‘Patience, and velvet to cover your claws;’

But the kingdoms of Islam are crumbling, and round me a voice ever rings

Of death, and the doom of my country. Shall I be the last of its kings?”

Yet, taking into consideration the condition of the country at the time of my accession to the throne, and the marvellous progress that has been made in such a short time, one cannot help thinking that there is every reason to hope and expect that Afghanistan will grow into a strong, consolidated, independent kingdom, by the help of the King of kings, the Almighty Allah.

In the teachings of Mahomed, which are the greatest legacy left by the Holy Prophet of Arabia, who made the sandy desert of Arabia into one of the most flourishing kingdoms in the world, the following phrase is found which is appropriate to my country. "When the Almighty Father wishes and desires to do a thing, the Divine Will changes the current of circumstances to suit the conditions to the necessity." Praise be to Allah! the means conducive to the future advancement and progress of Afghanistan are increasing every day.

There is no doubt that Afghanistan is a country that will either rise to be a very strong, famous kingdom, or will be swept altogether from the surface of the earth. This latter state of things would come about if the country came under the rule of an inexperienced and weak Amir. In this case the country would become divided, and the very name of the kingdom of Afghanistan would cease to exist. To illustrate my meaning, and make my statement clearer, I must say that it is impossible that Afghanistan should ever take a middle course. It is quite out of the question that it could ever exist as a kingdom if cut up into a number of small weak states. For

if the Government were not strong enough and wise enough to protect the kingdom from aggression, without help from outside, the country would surely and certainly be annexed by one or other of the aggressors. Neither Russia nor England could take and occupy the whole country alone; for instance, England could not allow Russia to take possession of the whole of Afghanistan, for in that case England could not retain possession of India without encountering a great many dangers and difficulties. And contrariwise, Russia could not sit still and allow England to take possession of the whole of Afghanistan without herself sharing in the booty.

If Afghanistan is fortunate enough to be under the rule of a shrewd, proud, strong, and far-seeing ruler, there is no reason against her rising to be a very strong kingdom, as the area and population of the country are equal to some of the great kingdoms. On the other hand, if she were to fall into the hands of such an Amir as the King of Bokhara or some of the ruling Princes of India, the ruler would give her away, by his own authority, to his neighbours, by one kind of treaty or another. And if he did not make the offer, the foreign neighbours or the petty chiefs of the country itself would force him to do so. I need not deal with this point in any detail here, because it is a fact well-known to all students interested in Eastern affairs.

Taking into consideration the matter discussed in the last paragraph, whether Afghanistan will be divided at some future date, and so lose her status as an independent kingdom, or will strengthen herself

sufficiently to be in a position to protect herself, I must deal with both these points fully, and give my advice to my nation.

In this section I shall suggest and advise how, in my opinion, Afghanistan may be consolidated into a strong and independent kingdom. A second point will be the steps which ought to be taken to prevent its being divided by its neighbours; this point will be specially dealt with in the second section, which concerns the Foreign Policy.

Afghanistan is a country which resembles a rich soil, capable of producing all sorts of flowers and fruits if placed under the superintendence of a good gardener; I mean, under the administration of a wise governor. For those countries which do not possess the products and means required to make them flourish are like a barren soil, which, notwithstanding the painstaking of the gardener, yields very few flowers and fruits. But Afghanistan possesses a great many sources of riches, strength, and prosperity; I will enumerate a few.

(1) *Minerals*.—The country is full of mines of the richest and most varied description, namely, rubies, topaz, lapis lazuli, gold, silver, lead, copper, iron, and coal; some of which, according to the reports of European geologists, are said to be the largest mines in the world. These mines most certainly are all capable of yielding splendidly, and paying the expense of working. But these precious stones and valuable mines, so long as they are not worked properly, are like hidden treasure—to the mind of a person who does not know anything about jewels, a brilliant diamond and a crystal are equal.

(2) *Commerce.* — The sources and products of Afghan commerce are numerous: in addition to large and productive coal and iron mines, like those which are called the black diamonds of England, and which have had a great part in making England what she is to-day, there are plentiful waterfalls available for driving machinery, and so fostering industries.

(3) *People.*—The people, both men and women, are very brave, intellectual, fond of learning and education; lovers of freedom and independence, physically strong and healthy, and free from the vices of intoxication and gambling. They are very ready to adopt modern reforms and education, and are free from silly and needless scruples and superstitions or prejudices against foreigners. They are not like Indians, who, notwithstanding the fact of being under British rule for over a century, are still strangers to European ideas, and think it is a sin to wear coats and trousers and boots like Europeans, but continue to wear their old slippers, in which they can scarcely walk, and to keep the straps of their trousers hanging down to their ankles. Afghans, on the contrary, in this short period, are so vastly changed that they are smartly dressed like their brethren the Turks and other European races; and they are ready to associate with foreign men and women, and try to learn everything that they can from them.

(4) *National Debt.*—The country and Government of Afghanistan has no National Debt, neither has it any war indemnities to pay; it does not, therefore, labour under the difficulties which those Governments

have to face who are burdened with a national debt, or with the payment of war indemnities to their neighbours. At any moment when they want to put a check on the war preparations or progress of their rivals, these neighbours put forward their claims to have their debts paid, arguing that "You must pay our debts before you spend money for other purposes, and before you buy any further war materials." Luckily, there is no such obstacle in the way of Afghanistan; in fact, there are no foreign ambassadors to intrigue in the affairs of my kingdom, and there are no treaties of International rights to warrant foreign Powers in interfering. Furthermore, there are no authorities given to any of the neighbouring Governments to demand concessions of railways, etc. Neither is there any English Resident with power to ask the ruling Princes, as in India, "How many cakes do you eat for breakfast?" or to dictate to them the administration of their own private affairs as well as that of the affairs of state.

(5) *Neighbours.*—On both sides of Afghanistan there are powerful neighbours, namely, England and Russia. Though these neighbours are the cause of much anxiety to Afghanistan yet, as they are pulling against each other, they are no less an advantage and protection for Afghanistan than a danger. Indeed, a great deal of the safety of the Afghan Government depends upon the fact that neither of these neighbours can bear to allow the other to annex an inch of Afghan territory. More than that, too, in my opinion and belief, both these strong neighbours do not think it worth their while to entangle themselves

in a war with Afghanistan. On the contrary, they think it is to their advantage that Afghanistan should be left alone. But this is a point which will be fully discussed hereafter.

(6) *Religion*.—Another great secret and cause of the strength of the Afghan Government is that the people have all one religion—that of Islam. There are no people of other religions inhabiting Afghanistan in large numbers, as in the case of the Greeks and Armenians in Turkey, whom the foreign Powers could instigate to fight against their ruler. The people of Afghanistan have such strong prejudices against being ruled by a sovereign of any other religion but their own, that they look upon the kings of all other faiths as infidels; and men and women take up arms to fight for their faith, believing that every one who is killed in fighting against infidels will go straight to Paradise. It is therefore a constant prayer of every man and woman in Afghanistan: “O Allah, give me the death of a Shahid” (martyr). In fact, they are lovers of freedom and independence and liberty, and they will hardly submit to the rule of the kings of their own faith much less will they submit to any other.

It is quite clear that the inhabitants of districts bordering on India, like the Khyber and other frontier tribes, have not become such peaceful subjects that any one can travel through their country without a strong body-guard. The country is so hilly that the peaks of the mountains are strong, natural forts for the protection of its born warriors, so that neither does the Russian Government consider it advisable

to attempt to cross over these hundreds of miles of inaccessible mountains against the wish of the nation and their ruler, nor does the English Government think it wise to spend enormous sums of money and lose many valuable lives in such a country, which if it was ever conquered, could never be kept. The expenses of administration for a civilized Government in keeping up the army and civil service would be far heavier than the income of the State could meet.

In its present condition, Afghanistan is of no use financially, to any foreign Government, except for military service. In this last it can be of some use in helping a foreign Government which may be crossing through Afghanistan to invade or attack another neighbouring country, and might be supported by the fighting men of Afghanistan. But to keep possession of Afghanistan itself would not be a good investment for any foreign Government for at least fifty or sixty years to come, if not more, when it may have risen to such a state of progress that by the proper working of its minerals and other sources of commerce and wealth, it may have become united with the civilized world by means of railways, telegraphs, and steamers.

England Anxious to see Afghanistan Safe and Strong

Though some short-sighted English officials and some other people absorbed in the mania of a "Forward Policy" have caused misunderstandings between Great Britain and Afghanistan on several occasions, and have annexed, or tried to annex, certain Afghan tribes, calling

them neutral or independent of Afghan rule, these people had not the sense to understand that taking and keeping under British possession all these barren lands on the borders of Afghanistan was a very unwise step, by which they burdened the exchequer of India with the heavy expense of keeping an army on the spot to maintain peace in these territories and also a Civil Service for administration. By taking upon themselves unnecessary responsibilities and heavier expenses than the income of the states will meet, they incurred greater anxieties than they were able to bear. But those short-sighted officials who are full of boasting and exaggeration of their almighty power and wisdom, believe that though God knows much, still they know more; and therefore if any body who knows better tries to give them advice, they simply ridicule him, thinking that it is impossible that any person should know half as much as themselves, the all-knowing and all-powerful missionaries of the "Forward Policy," and lovers of disputes and war. But, luckily, the English nation, its statesmen as well as its people, are better informed than these few above-mentioned all-knowing men, whose designs and desires are consequently meeting with the disapproval of British statesmen and of the public at large, who are really anxious to see Afghanistan a strong independent Government—a true ally and barrier to protect the Indian Empire of their noble Queen. I am glad to say that day by day the number of such lovers of peace and true friends of the interests of their own Government, as well as of mine, is outgrowing that of the minority, those who have been the cause of so many misunderstandings, fightings, and

bloodsheddings, between England and Afghanistan. The British are showing that they have the interests of Afghanistan in their hearts, not only by their words, but by their actions, in trying to use all the means that they can to give help in money, in arms, in machinery, and in several other ways, for the safety, strength, and protection of Afghanistan, in which they see that the welfare of their own Indian Empire is so closely bound up.

British Ministers have not only shown their willingness to help Afghanistan, but they have gone a step further in guaranteeing the safety of my kingdom against any foreign aggressor, which enables me and my successors to devote all our attention to the progress of the internal affairs of my kingdom, leaving the anxieties of its external dangers and responsibilities to its true friends in England.

Suggestions and Advice, with Practical Hints on making Afghanistan into a Strong and Prosperous Nation.

Having given above a short account of the means that are at hand to make Afghanistan a great nation, I will proceed to give a short sketch of the modes and system by which this object is to be attained. I will not, however, go into every small matter concerning the welfare of the kingdom, but will only mention a few of the more important points which are necessary for making Afghanistan a great nation in the future.

It is easy to understand that before furnishing a house one must think of making or finding a house

to furnish; and in case of building a house it must be surrounded by walls to keep the goods safe which are put in it; and if the house is full of holes, ditches, snakes, scorpions, etc., it is necessary to get rid of these before any one can live in it. In the same way, it was of the first and greatest importance to mark out a boundary line all around Afghanistan, so that we should first know what provinces really belonged to Afghanistan before thinking of introducing any reforms and improvements therein. Fortunately, I have succeeded in defining the boundaries of Afghanistan with the neighbouring powers, and putting an end to their gradual moving forward. This has also removed the causes of misunderstandings and put an end to all possibility of raising quarrels between my neighbours and myself or my successors on this subject, without breaking the existing treaties. This is a great basis for progress and peace for my successors, and on this score they will have no occasion to trouble themselves in communicating with their neighbours.

Taking into consideration that the boundary lines made a strong wall around the country, shaping it, as it were, into a house, it was necessary to clear that house of all the injurious scorpions existing in it, scorpions that formed a great obstacle in the way of peace and progress. To explain myself: I mean that I had to put in order all those hundreds of petty chiefs, plunderers, robbers, and cut-throats, who were the cause of everlasting trouble in Afghanistan. This necessitated breaking down the feudal and tribal system, and substituting one grand

community under one law and under one rule. Luckily I have succeeded fully in this respect, as also in shaping Afghanistan into one united kingdom. Many of the tribal chiefs have been transformed from bitter enemies into warm friends, and I have placed them in high positions and offices under my Government. Those who did not agree to submit themselves to my rule and keep the peace have been sent out of the country; and there is not a man, from a chief to a beggar throughout the whole country of Afghanistan, who has such power, or any idea of claiming such power, as to offer resistance to my Government, or after my death, to my successors. Perhaps it would not be out of place here to ask those people who criticise my policy in demolishing or punishing some of these tribal tyrants and robbers, to glance at the history of all such empires as have risen from a feudal or blood-feud system to become civilized powers; they will then be able to judge for themselves whether these civilized empires had any fightings and bloodshed before they rose to their present system of Government or not!

During the time when I was occupied inside Afghanistan in putting it into the form of a kingdom, with the help of the sharp blade of the sword, and outside the country in shaping it as a kingdom with the sharp blade of the pen by communicating with the neighbouring Powers, I did not neglect any of the possible reforms and improvements which required to be introduced into the country. These improvements have been mentioned in their proper places, so here I shall only say that

not one-tenth has yet been done to make Afghanistan what it ought to be, and what it will be in the future, if improvements are made continuously. I will therefore confine myself at the present moment to giving a few hints for the future progress of the nation.

The first and most important advice that I can give to my successors and people to make Afghanistan into a great kingdom is to impress upon their minds the value of *unity*; unity, and unity alone, can make it into a great power. All the royal family, nobility, and people must have one mind, one interest, and one opinion, to safeguard their homes.

From my childhood up to this hour scarcely one day has passed in which a portion of the history of some country and nation has not been read by me or to me; and all this study of history brings me to one conclusion, namely, that the downfall of many kingdoms, especially those of believers in Mahomedanism in the East, has been caused by disunion and home quarrels. Islam rose to its supreme height by following that blessed motto of the great organiser of Arabia, which runs:—"All Muslims are brethren." Islam fell to pieces and lost one kingdom after another owing to disunion among them, and to not following the precept contained in that beautiful motto of "Union." I pray my successors and my nation to be of one heart and one mind in the interests of their country and homes, and to follow my footsteps concerning this policy of union. They must keep before their minds the principle by which I have been governed in collecting about my throne members of the royal family, nobility,

and chiefs who were in exile in India, Russia and Persia, and, by so doing, turning them from being enemies into close friends. I have given a full account of this policy elsewhere, I need not therefore dwell further on it here. I sincerely hope that in the city of Kabul and in my own family and among my sons there will not be any family quarrels of a serious nature after my death. I have arranged matters during my lifetime in such a way, that all the members of my family and the Afghan people acknowledged the supremacy of my eldest son. I have carefully avoided making the mistakes made by my predecessors in dividing the kingdom and army amongst their sons, which would enable them to fight against each other in case of disunion. If, unfortunately, my sons and family should turn a deaf ear to my counsel and advice, and should fight against each other, then it will be just as well that they should be punished for their bad behaviour, and that they should suffer for not listening to my advice by losing their kingdom by the partition of Afghanistan, in which case Afghanistan would have no more existence as a nation. Should such a state of things happen, they will have themselves only to thank: as the Most Merciful Allah says: "God does not change the conditions of a people unless they change them themselves by their own actions."

But if my sons and successors are fortunate enough to continue united (which, so far as I can see, there is no reason to doubt, none of them being in a position to take up arms against that one who has absolute control over the army, treasury, and everything else),

there is still a second difficulty to be considered, viz., the disunion of those members of the royal family who are outside Afghanistan. These members all come under two categories, namely, those who are under British protection—the British parasites; and the second, those who are under Russian protection. The first of these two classes need not be regarded in a very serious light—for the following reasons. Nearly all their followers of any importance or consequence have either arrived at Kabul, having deserted their chiefs, or are about to leave them to come to Kabul, or they are still remaining with their former chiefs in accordance with my instructions, taking their salaries from me openly or privately. The greatest hero in the world could not face an army if he was single-handed and had no following behind him to back him up; therefore these poor creatures will follow the same course as the prince of the last royal family of Afghanistan (Suddozai), who died after growing old on British pensions in the hope of once more being placed on the throne of Kabul.

In addition to the fact that these princes are single-handed, being without followers, the British Government knows very well, as it has a good memory, what they did in maladministration as well as in breaking faith and intriguing with Russia; and I am sure that the memory of the British officials is so good that they will bear these things in mind, and so not be compelled to learn the same lesson a second time. I doubt very much whether these princes could ever be put in power, even with the help of the British, when once Afghanistan is such

a power as I hope it may one day become. I feel quite convinced that the British could not and would not take such a step in the face of the treaties now existing between my Government and that of Great Britain; such a breach of treaty could have only one effect, that of causing an open war with Afghanistan and with my sons and successors, which would be totally against their wish or desire. If the British are faithful to their treaties, they will never let any of the people loose who are now in their hands to give trouble to my sons. Taking all these things into consideration, there is no cause for anxiety about those who are under the guard, watch, and protection of Great Britain. Should the British officials, however, help the enemies of my family, notwithstanding the existing friendly treaties, in that case I advise my sons and successors to take the same steps which I took at the time when the Indian Government helped Shere Ali Khan against me, namely, from the first they must fight out like brave men at the cost of their lives, if need be, to expel their enemies, and in the case of their being defeated, which I hope will never happen, if they follow the policy which I am laying down for them, they must then lean back on some other power which may help them against the so-called British candidates. But I do sincerely hope and pray that such an occasion will never arise, and, so far as I can judge and so far as any man with common-sense can see into the future of Afghanistan in this respect, it is quite clear that the British interests and the safety of the Indian Empire lie in seeing Afghanistan a strong independent

kingdom, and not in weakening it by inciting a ram-fight between members of the royal family.

The other matter requiring the gravest consideration of my sons and successors is to think of the three enemies who are under Russian protection. This is the only source of real danger, though this may be either of an insignificant kind or of more importance, according to the circumstances of the time. One thing is quite certain—that there is a danger. The reasons which lead me to warn my successors are numerous. I will mention a few :—

The Russians, quite contrary to the English, want to see Afghanistan divided into pieces and very weak, if not entirely cleared out of their way to India. And, therefore, whilst it is to the advantage of the English, on the one hand, to keep the rival claimants to the throne under control, it is to the advantage of the Russians to let them loose to fight it out. They have every reason for this ; firstly, because it is to their interest that Afghanistan should not exist as a barrier in their way to India ; and, in the second place, because the British showed weakness by not opposing the Russians in Afghanistan with as much strength and vigour as they ought to have done at the time when the Russians intrigued with Shere Ali Khan, breaking all their promises made to the British Empire on several other occasions. The Russians believe that if they could succeed in making trouble in Afghanistan well and good ; and that if they failed, the British would never take any serious steps, and the matter would pass over after a short discussion in the House of Commons or in a few newspapers.

Another reason for being careful in this respect is that the followers of Mahomed Ishak, who is in the hands of Russia, are still very numerous, and are quite capable of doing some mischief, whether with or without success nobody can tell. My agents there have not succeeded in winning over the followers of Ishak to the same extent that they did in India, but I hope that by firm if slow working that success will surely come. There is, however, in the face of these dangers some reason for thinking that the risk is not so great, and that I have taken exaggerated pains for the sake of precaution. For it is a well-known fact that both Ishak and his father have always been, and still are, hated by every man and woman in Afghanistan. I have not sufficient space here to give a full account of the causes of this hatred ; but I may say in a few words that Azim, Ishak's father, was detested for his mischief-making, which caused all the bloodshed and fightings in our family, by setting my father and Shere Ali Khan against each other ; also for his unbearable cruelties, his constant drunkenness, and numerous other bad habits ; and, last and most despicable, for his cowardly nature—a thing which is hated more by the Afghans than anything else. His son, Ishak, is hated, not only for the same ill deeds as his father, but also owing to his breaking faith with me, to his disloyalty, and to his most idiotic and cowardly conduct in running away after his army had defeated my soldiers, and so leaving all those who had helped him to suffer for his weakness and cowardice. Besides this, he was never a fighting man, and there is no room for a ruler in Afghanistan who has no military merits whatever. The

good organisation of the army which was placed under him, and which, under his bad counsel and misleading, fought against me, was no credit to him, because I had appointed over it the best and cleverest military officers in Turkestan. His son it was who took an active part in the battle, otherwise the father would not have been able to conduct the war at all. As reference has been made to his son, I may mention that his name is Ismail, and that he is about ten years older than my eldest son, and though he is a man capable of fighting, which his father is not, yet there is no possible chance of his succeeding to the Kabul throne, because he is unknown to the chiefs and people of Kabul, and they have never seen him in their lives. The Afghans, who hardly place their confidence in a man whom they personally know, are the last nation to submit to the rule of a man unknown to them, as they are far too proud and brave warriors to do so.

There is another difficulty in the way of Ishak and his son, namely, that they are at least three months' journey from Kabul, even should they march to Kabul with their forces without being opposed at any point on their way (which is scarcely possible or likely). Hence, any person who succeeds to the throne of Kabul will be in a position to meet them on their way, and would give them a warm reception before they could gather any large number of followers. But supposing they were supported by the Russian army, in that case it would become a question of war between Great Britain and Russia, as is very easy to understand; and this point will be dealt with in the second part of this chapter. But though I am quite sure that there is hardly any

possibility of Ishak or his son succeeding in making trouble for my sons and successors, yet I would warn and advise them to watch my policy towards Russian candidates more keenly than towards those under the protection of the British Government.

But my son must not flatter himself that he will succeed to the throne if he does not make himself worthy of such an honour, or that after succeeding to the throne he will be able to keep it, unless he has the merits to keep it: he must therefore follow my advice and policy very keenly and strictly, otherwise it will be very difficult for him to maintain or even obtain the throne of Kabul. The first thing that he ought to do is to prove to the nation that he has a strong character, and is a self-reliant, hard-working, patriotic sovereign; for, in the case of failing in any of these three important points, he would not only lose his kingdom, but might put himself into still greater dangers. I do not mean to say that he must be so self-reliant as never to consult with any of his well-wishers, but I emphasise that no adviser or counsellor must make him into a mere mouthpiece: he must listen to all, but never follow any. He knows that every individual in the country (man or woman), from a beggar or a shopkeeper upwards, is now allowed to address a letter direct to the sovereign on any subject and on any matter that he likes to give information about; and if such information proves to be true, and in the interests of government or of any of my subjects, the informant, whether he be employed in the detective service or not, must be properly rewarded. If the report be untrue, inquiries are made whether he made it with good intentions or

from bad motives. In the latter case he is punished. I gather my knowledge from reports given me by the nobility, courtiers, officials, detectives, and any other subjects of my country who wish to give me information, in addition to reports brought me by my spies in foreign countries, who keep watch on the daily occurrences and circumstances. These last also send me newspaper cuttings concerning Afghanistan. So that, putting all these matters together, and reviewing them in my mind, I draw my own conclusions, never acting on the advice or report of anybody at all. My sons must not follow the policy of Amir Shere Ali Khan, whose advisers kept him at war with all his brothers, one after the other, through the whole of his reign, and at the end embarrassed him in a war with Great Britain, which ended in his ruin. Nor must they follow the weak policy of Yakub Khan, who, trying to please the English, made such promises and concessions, that he was unable to carry them out. One example of this was his inability to prevent the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari, after having invited him to the court of Kabul, for which mistake he also lost his throne. The British, too, who had placed their confidence in such a weak ruler, had to bear their share of the suffering as well. Nor must my sons follow the policy of my uncle, Azim, who, for lack of any patriotic spirit, or by doing any work at all in the administration of the kingdom, and by indulging himself in drinking and immorality, lost his throne and kingdom in the course of only a few months after I had placed him there. In like cases my son cannot help suffering in the same manner as the above-mentioned rulers of Afghanistan.

I must mention one more point here as advice to my son, and that is, that in addition to his daily duties as a ruler, he must keep a fixed time for improving his knowledge and information, as I have done throughout my life-time. The best system is that adopted by me, namely, in the evening when he is too tired to do any work himself, he must every night employ readers to read to him books of history, geographies of foreign countries, biographies of great kings and great men, without distinction of nation or country; speeches and articles spoken or written by statesmen of all the Powers of the day; and all such articles and cuttings from the newspapers as concern Afghanistan or the countries and nations in which she is interested by their having some connection with her or with her friends or enemies.

Though in every chapter of my book some advice or instruction has been given to my son and successors, I have thought it important to give the above hints as a guide and foundation for the principles which he is to follow. I will now proceed to discuss another matter, the mode of administering and ruling Afghanistan, which ought to develop gradually but steadily, so that the kingdom may become a strong, self-governed kingdom.

The foundation stone of a Constitutional Government has been laid by me; though the machinery of Representative Government has not taken any practical shape as yet. It is necessary that every ruler should observe and consider the various modes of Government adopted in various countries, not jump at conclusions in a hurry, but apply

the best modes of governing gradually, modifying them according to circumstances and the position of his country. In my belief, the best principle of governing was that laid down by the great lawgiver of Arabia, Mahomed, our Holy Prophet, may God bless Him. It was the system of a representative Government divided into two parties; the Muhagir and the Ansar. The Government was carried out on the principles of democracy; every member had the power of giving his vote and opinion; and the majority was to be followed. I have made the following arrangements for making Afghanistan into a Constitutional Government. There are three kinds of representatives who assemble in my court and audience for consulting with me about the supplies for war materials and various other state affairs. These three classes of people are called Sirdars (or aristocracy), Khawanin Mulki (Commons, or representatives of the people), and Mullahs (ecclesiastical heads and church representatives). The first of these take their seats in the court by hereditary right, subject to the approval of the sovereign. The second are elected from among the chiefs of the country who are chosen in the following manner. In every village or town there is one man elected by the citizens of that town who must have certain qualifications which I need not give here in detail. He is elected by the inhabitants of that village or town, and is called Malik or Arbab. These Maliks or Arbabs elect another man from among them, but one of greater influence and greater importance in their province or constituency, whom they call

their Khan (or chief). Our House of Commons is composed of these Khans. But in the matter of electing the Khans the final authority rests with the Sovereign who judges of the suitability of the election of these persons for the post of Khan by their merits, their position, their loyalty, their services or the services of their fathers: these facts are considered as well as the fact that the candidate has been already chosen by the people. The third party consists of the Khan Alum (the head of religion), the Kazis (ecclesiastical judges), Muftis (ecclesiastical heads of churches and inferior courts), and Mullahs (the priests). The last-named people are the ecclesiastical heads, and rise to the position of holding their seats in the Parliament by passing examinations in religious studies and in the laws of the country, and by serving in the religious departments.

This constitutional body has not yet attained the ability nor the education to qualify it for being entrusted with authority of any importance for giving sanction to Bills or Acts of the Government. But in time they will perhaps have such authority, and in this way the people of Afghanistan will be governed for their own safety by themselves. I must strongly urge my sons and successors never to make themselves puppets in the hands of these representatives of constitutional Government; they must always reserve to themselves the full power of organizing the army and keep it in their own hands, without admitting any right of interference by their constitutional advisers. And, further, they must keep the power of vetoing any reforms, schemes or bills

passed and sanctioned by their Council or Durbar, or Parliament, as this body may be called.

My sons and successors should not try to introduce new reforms of any kind in such a hurry as to set the people against their ruler, and they must bear in mind that in establishing a Constitutional Government, introducing more lenient laws, and modelling education upon the system of Western universities, they must adopt all these gradually as the people become accustomed to the idea of modern innovations, so that they will not abuse the privileges and reforms given to them.

In following the advice of any foreign Power, or courtiers of our own Durbar, who may possibly be bribed by some foreign Power, my sons and successors must always keep before their minds the wise and shrewd council given by Sadi in the following lines :—

“That shrewd young boy will save the purse of sovereigns in his pocket who looks upon every passer-by as a pickpocket and robber.”

To secure the crown and throne of Kabul for my son and successors from the foreign aggressors, the various claimants to the throne, and the rebels of Afghanistan, great attention must be paid to the military system of the country. Though I have dealt with this subject elsewhere, I will mention a few points for the consideration of my successor. It is of the utmost importance that the whole Afghan army should be armed with the best and most improved modern weapons. One million fighting men are more than enough for the protection of Afghanistan against any foreign aggressor. With the

above-mentioned number of fighting men available, Afghanistan need never fear any one of the greatest empires in the world. To secure this purpose the arrangements which I am trying to make are that each gun of modern improved design ought to have 500 shells, and each magazine repeater or Martini-Henry rifle 5000 cartridges, for the time of war. This quantity of arms and ammunition ought to be sufficient for 1,000,000 soldiers. These men I have divided into two classes: 300,000 regular army, and 700,000 volunteers and militia; the last-named must, however, be properly trained and drilled. In addition to the war material, there should be also ready for any emergency in the stores of the country itself provisions for the food of the above-mentioned force, sufficient for three years, together with elephants, camels, horses, pack-ponies, mules and other transport animals, for the needs of the army within the dominion of Afghanistan in the possession of the transport animal hirers including the Government transport animals. It is the case with many great and rich Powers that much difficulty is experienced in getting proper transport for moving their armies from one place to another; indeed, this difficulty is greater than that of finding the men to fight, or of supplying them with arms. But, praise be to God, the Afghans are such a strong, healthy, hearty people that they can run over the mountains of their country nearly as fast as horses, carrying, at the same time, their guns, ammunition, tents, and food, for a few days, on their backs. A very limited number of transport animals is therefore re-

quired for a considerable number of men. It would not be an exaggeration to say that 100,000 English soldiers require more transport animals than 1,000,000 Afghans, because they require so many kinds of provision, wine, soda-water, and other luxuries. Some critics will say that though an English soldier requires the comforts of a prince, he is a splendid fighting man also; I quite agree with these critics, for I have a very great admiration for the English soldier and his merits; I am only discussing here the pack-ponies, not the merits of the men. To supply all these arms, provisions, etc., for 1,000,000 fighting men requires money, and I am therefore only increasing the number of my army in proportion to the increase in the income of the Afghan Government. And though the regular army, paid by the Government, has required no more than 300,000 men, as mentioned above, the Government treasury ought to be sufficient to supply for keeping 1,000,000 fighting men for at least two years, for a war that might last that time, before we could think of counting upon putting such a large number of men in the field. This is not all; it would be necessary also to keep a sufficient sum of money in the treasury to maintain the manufactories for the supply of ammunition to the army in the field, and other war materials as required. It is also necessary that iron, lead, copper, and coal should be taken out of the mines of Afghanistan itself in sufficient quantities.

The arrangements upon which I have been, and am occupied, have proceeded so far that I can put this number of fighting men into the field to-day,



UNIFORM OF ROYAL CAVALRY.

[To face p. 192. Vol. II.

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though the regular army is not large enough, the fighting men are sufficient. I can also supply the above-mentioned number of forces with artillery, guns, ammunition, and swords from within Afghanistan itself. There is also an ample store of corn for their food, and transport in the country itself.

Two things are wanted, however; one is to raise the number of the regular army and military officers to the number of 300,000 as calculated. This, I am afraid, will take a considerable time. This is not a point to be anxious about, because the Afghans have shown themselves many times to be born soldiers and warriors on occasions when, as peasants, they fought with the most brilliant, gallant, and best-trained soldiers in the world.

The main thing that is wanted, and that very badly, is money in the treasury. Though, thanks to the Almighty Allah, there was never so much ready money in the treasury of Afghanistan in the reigns of former Amirs as there is at the present time, yet it has not risen to the extent I wish it to do.

Concerning the stores for the food and provisions for the army which I have built in every large and important town in Afghanistan, I advise my son and successors to follow my example in keeping these stores filled with corn by renewing the stores every year, giving the old corn to the army at a cheaper rate than they could get it elsewhere in lieu of their pay, selling the rest, and buying fresh barley and corn to replace that sold and given away. What is sold is generally bought up by the stable-masters for the pack-ponies, horses and transport animals. My son

and successors should not listen to inexperienced people who criticise my policy in keeping 48,000 horses and pack-ponies ready, and thousands of tons of corn. These critics say: "Why should the Government bear the expense of keeping so many transport animals, we can easily buy or hire them from the country at the time when necessity arises." These critics do not consider that at anxious moments there are so many things to think about and look after that there ought to be always things ready to begin with, as much time and many valuable opportunities are lost by having to make preparations afterwards. Besides, these transport animals are always employed, thereby saving as much money to the Government treasury as they cost to keep.

My sons and successors must not flatter themselves by merely looking at the large number of the army; they must keep in view that the most important point, one to be ever present to their minds, is to keep this army happy and satisfied. It is better not to have any army at all than to have a hostile and discontented one. To find out how to keep armies satisfied and contented will depend on the common-sense of their king himself; one thing is certain—they must not be drawn by conscription, and they must be paid regularly. Amir Shere Ali Khan, who took the army by force, and who did not pay them regularly, had the most discontented army in the whole kingdom, and they did not stand against the English force, which was marching towards Kabul, half so well as did the Afghan peasants. It is owing to this discontented state of the army that the fate

of Afghan kings has often been decided in one battle, because either the army is unfit to fight, or being taken by force they are anxiously waiting to see the enemy appear, and then, without any fighting of much consequence, they fly in all directions, in order to fulfil the desire of their hearts by ruining their king, who forced them to fight against their will.

The army should be regularly paid, as I have before said, and the pay should be in cash paid monthly from the Government treasury. They must not have orders on the revenue of the country given them to collect for themselves, as was the rule in former times. A soldier whose mind is anxious about his pay and the expenses of his family cannot devote all his attention to his duties. And if a soldier goes into the country to collect the revenue debts for his monthly pay, who is to fight in his stead?

“Give money to the soldier and he will give his head in return in fighting for you ; but if you keep your money away from him, he will keep his head away from you.”—SADI.

Soldiers are made into brave men, properly trained for fighting, and devoted to their duties, by brave, heroic, popular officers. And a handful of good soldiers under a brave military officer can do wonders.

“One brave wolf is never afraid of a mass of sheep.”—JAMI.

“The counting of numbers is of no consequence ; 200 brave warriors are better than 100,000 cowards.”—FIRDUSI.

In selecting the military officers, in their organization and promotion, great precaution should be used.

All the officers of the army ought to be most reliable, meritorious, devoted and loyal servants of the crown, and, if possible, belonging to good families. I do not approve of promotion by seniority, but promotion depending upon examination into their merits, their services, their bravery and administration in time of war, their good behaviour, their loyalty, and last, but not least, by their popularity among the soldiers. To my mind the last-mentioned is the most important of all.

All the officers of the army must learn the modern science of war from the books which have been translated into Persian, and are still being translated from English. My sons and successors must never forget my advice in this respect, that they must never accept offers of military officers if made by any of the Powers bordering on Afghanistan.

“Selfishness is next to madness” (Proverb).—MAHOMED.

A neighbouring Power by offering military officers from its army, under the pretence of teaching the Afghan soldiers British military tactics, might also teach them to attend to foreign interests. I hope that in a short time the Afghan people will get so much knowledge and common-sense that they will understand that the interests of their Government are identical with their own interests. They would then become as patriotic to their country as the people of many other nations are ; and might safely be sent out of their country to learn more from the European nations than would be advisable now, when they might be set against their own Government and country by the people with whom

they associated. When they look upon the enemies of their country as their own personal enemies, then will be the time for us to send out young officers to Europe to learn more about the science of war. On their return they could teach what they had learnt themselves to their fellow-officers. At present we ought to be contented with this, that, in the first place, our people all know how to fight on their own hills, and that, in addition, the necessary books on army drill and kindred subjects have been translated into Persian, and the Afghans have studied these books thoroughly, and continue still to progress by study in acquiring more knowledge. In the days when my people had no proper rifles, no officers, did not know drill, and were only a mass of peasants and farmers, they called forth the admiration of the British soldiers against whom they fought so bravely, as well as the admiration of other Powers in the world. Now they possess the best modern arms, and being led by my generals they could fight against equal numbers of the best armies, if not against double the number in their own mountains. The students of military history are aware that in the Saidabad war, I had 8000 soldiers under my command, who defeated 70,000 of Shere Ali's army in such a manner that they fled, leaving their dead and everything behind, which defeat ended Amir Shere Ali's rule, and placed my father, who had been a prisoner in the hands of Shere Ali, on the throne of Kabul.

“Subjects are like roots and kings like trees ;
Trees, O my children, cannot stand without their roots.”—SADI.

Another piece of advice I must leave for my sons and successors is this : the existence of every Govern-

ment and its continuance are greatly in the hands of the subjects; my sons and successors must therefore struggle day and night for the peace, happiness and welfare of their subjects. If the people are rich, the kingdom is rich—if the subjects are peaceful, the Government is at peace. If the subjects are learned and wise the statesmen and ministers of the kingdom who steer the ship of state are better fitted, being taken from the ranks of the subjects and being inspired by the people. The education of our subjects is, therefore, a matter of the very greatest importance in the future. In that future Afghanistan can never make full and complete progress unless its women are educated; the children take their first and primary lessons from their mothers, and the thoughts and ideas imbibed in childhood influence their characters and thought throughout the whole of their lives, and take a firmer hold upon the roots of their minds than any after education can ever do. It was owing to this wise policy that our Holy Prophet commanded that women, who under no circumstances ever leave their houses without the consent and permission of their husbands, should be allowed to do so for this one purpose, that of being educated.

If the masses of the people and their wives and womenkind are educated, the statesmen who are drawn from the people and selected by the people, are sure to be better judges, better informed, better advised, and better able to carry out the administration of the kingdom, for an educated and civilized Government is unsuitable for an uncivilized people, who can only be ruled by stern, rigorous, and martial laws. In the same way uncivilized and barbarous Governments are

quite unsuitable for learned and civilized nations. The result of such unsuitable conditions would be, that the king would lose his head, as happened in England in the case of Charles I. This calls to my mind an amusing story which I will give by way of example to illustrate my contention that the Government must be of the same class of people as the subjects they have to govern. In one of the kingdoms an astrologer informed the king that upon such-and-such a date a heavy rain would fall, and any people who drank of the water from that rain would lose their senses and turn into lunatics. The king ordered his servants to keep a few tanks of water covered for the use of himself and his ministers, so that the maddening water should not mix with the old good water. After the rain fell, subjects who had no reservoirs of good water were bound to quench their thirst by drinking the river and canal water, and in consequence turned lunatics. The results were disastrous: all the bills and schemes introduced by the Government ministers were rejected by the people, whose brains had gone wrong. Everything that the king and his ministers said or did appeared distorted to the unhinged minds of the people. The king informed his ministers that it was quite impossible for him to carry out any measures against the wishes of his people through their parliament: it was better, therefore, that they also should drink of the same water and so bring themselves on the same level as the other lunatics. This was done, and king and ministers also became infected with the same madness; a kingdom full of lunatics could not continue

for long, and their neighbours came and took possession of the country, turning the lunatics out of it.

A great deal of the happiness, peace, and prosperity of the subjects depends upon the justice and the laws by which they are governed. In the eyes of the law, king and beggar are equal; and my sons must not follow the example set by former Amirs, during whose reigns every official and every chief had his own laws, and there were no Courts at all. I must confess that I have not yet succeeded in completing the Courts of law, and in establishing and completing the proper system of administering justice in the Courts in that perfect and efficient manner which I should wish; there is still great room for improvement in this respect. For instance, in the beginning of my reign, when the people were rebellious, headstrong and uncivilized, my laws and punishments were very severe; but year by year, keeping pace with the education, the peaceful condition, and obedience of my subjects, I have modified many of these laws, making the punishments more lenient from time to time. My successors must continue this policy, and change and modify the laws to suit the growing advancement and progress of the nation in modern civilization. They must remember that legislative assemblies and parliaments in the various countries are only for this purpose: always to be making changes and alterations in the laws to keep pace with the progress of the world generally. I earnestly hope that my people will gradually, by the help of God, through education and the teachings of a wise Government, attain the level which will enable them to make their laws for them-

selves, by themselves, except as regards the divine laws which govern religion, divine worship, and moral life.

The Courts of Justice that I have established are far more numerous than those existing under former Amirs, yet there is still much scope for opening further Courts, as the Government finances come to permit of more expense being incurred for this object. With more Court-room in different provinces, people would not have to travel from the places where they live in order to have their cases tried and judgments passed.

But as more cases had to be tried than the Courts could decide, and there was not enough money in the Government treasury to spend upon opening further courts to meet the demand, in order that judgment might be hastened, many cases were decided verbally, without passing through any office or making any record. The whole procedure was over in a few minutes; for the plaintiff, the defendant, and all the witnesses were brought before the judge, who, when he had heard both sides of the question personally, without having them written down, passed judgment on them on the spot; and then the next case was gone into. In this manner several judgments were given in one day. Now all cases relating to hereditaments, property, and mercantile affairs, etc., are entered in the registries, and Government records of them are kept for reference. It is necessary that clerks should be appointed to the Courts and all matters recorded in writing, so that there shall not be any misunderstandings or wrong decisions: copies

of the judgments must also be kept for reference, as well as for purposes of Appeal.

It is most necessary that all these changes in the Courts of law, and in the administration of justice, should be made gradually, because if a mild or lenient policy be adopted before the people can appreciate clemency, it would seem like encouraging an unruly and rebellious people, and would injure the minds of the people.

“To let housebreakers loose is to encourage housebreaking.”—SADI.

For instance, the Intelligence Department, with its system of detectives and spies which has been introduced by me, is disliked by all the officials who were accustomed to take bribes, and by the chiefs who were in the habit of extorting money from their subjects, because these practices have been reported to me by the spies and detectives. I hear that these officials and chiefs speak bitterly to my sons against the officials of my Intelligence Department, so that the minds of my sons are poisoned against all the spies and detectives. But, none the less, I advise my sons and successors to keep this department always in a high state of efficiency, because it is a department which exists in all the most civilised countries: it is of vital importance for giving information to my Government upon all internal and external affairs, as well as for detecting treachery and intrigues among my enemies. There is no better means than this for learning the feelings and motives of neighbouring Powers, and for distinguishing friends from foes; by it I am

helped in keeping up a constant watch and a careful study of all my communications with foreign Governments, and the reports upon these are kept in my office. My son should also read very carefully the book, entitled "Anwari-Suheili." This, aided by a little common-sense and precaution, will be of very great use. But to foresee the feelings and motives of all neighbouring Powers, and to realise the difference between friends and enemies, requires, in addition to the intelligence department, and a study of the above-mentioned documents and book, a great deal of thought and consideration also. All the studies in the world will not make a ripe and clever statesman. These studies, if combined with a lack of natural merit, will have the result described in the following story :—

A king placed his son under the tutorship of a most learned astrologer, and told him that he would pay him more than the parents of all his other pupils, but in return, he must teach his son more than he taught any of his other pupils. After a certain period the king took a silver ring into his hand, and asked one of the pupils the following questions :—"What is in my hand?" The boy, drawing conclusions from his study of the stars, said, "It is something round." The king's next question was : "What is the colour of it?" "White," said the boy. "What is it made of?" "Silver," was the answer; "and it is hollow in the centre." The rest could be easily guessed, that it was a silver ring, and this the boy answered to the king's satisfaction. Now came the turn of the king's son who, by the

help of his studies, delivered the same answers, namely, that it was made of silver, and was hollow in the centre, but he had not the sense to know that an engine does not require a silver fly-wheel, and that the fly-wheel of a large engine cannot be held in a man's hand; therefore, after making his calculations, he answered that it was the fly-wheel of a traction engine that his father held in his hand. The king repeated this answer to the teacher, who replied: "The answers your son gave were correct so far as study was concerned, he only went wrong where common-sense was concerned."

For the maintenance of a kingdom, and the strength and prosperity of a nation, religion, too, is a very great factor: a nation without a religious belief would soon become demoralised, and begin to decline until it fell altogether. The Muslims are brave, because they have always been very strict in religious observances, and staunch in following the rules of their faith. I have written separate books dealing with the subject of the protection of our religion and its strict observance; I have also written upon Jihad (to fight for religion and truth, and to maintain it). Among the books and pamphlets I have written on this matter, which are published in Persian, those named Takwin din (the strong foundation of religion) and Pand namah (my advice), are of great importance, and every Muslim ought to read them. I need not say much about religion, but recommend my readers who are interested in this to read the above-mentioned ones. I advise my successors not to break down and do away with the

system upon which I have established the Muslim faith in Afghanistan. It is this, that all the land and property, as well as money, which used to support the Mullahs, is transferred to the Government treasury, and monthly fixed salaries are paid out of the treasury to the persons employed in the religious services, *e.g.*, Kazis, Muftis, Imams, Muezzins (those who call the faithful to prayers), and Muhtasibs (overlookers or protectors).

By adopting this system, the Muslim ecclesiastical law, and its administration, are vested in the hands of ecclesiastical officials selected and appointed by the Crown; and they hold their offices under the sole privilege of the Crown. They are therefore bound, willing or unwilling, to obey the Crown, which stops all divergences and innovations, substituting for these a general unity. Unity in Islam is the first cause or motto of its strength.

“Do not ye know what blessings the true faith of Islam has awarded to you; uniting your scattered tribes and communities into one brotherhood?”—KORAN.

By the very wisest policy, the aim of our Holy Prophet in introducing changes into the lives of the people, was to render them very closely united together; so as to be always in close touch and association with each other. For instance, he ordered people to dine together instead of dining alone; to say their daily prayers together in a mosque instead of saying them in private; and to say their Sabbath-day prayers in the principal mosque of the town or province, which means that all the people of the town or province, though they

do not meet each other at daily prayers, should assemble at the weekly service, as also in still larger numbers on the days of Id, which fall twice in the year. A further rule is that of going on pilgrimage to Mecca, which, naturally, brings Muslims from every part of the world, from every country, East and West, together on one day, and in one place. Some people remark that these large gatherings are a cause of disease and plagues. I am not now dealing with the question of sanitation; but I would ask how it is that the people of London and other large cities, who are more in number than the pilgrims at Mecca, do not die of plague. The reason is, that in those cities the very rules which the religion of Mahomed teaches more strictly than any other, rules tending to cleanliness and sanitation, are properly observed. The pilgrims who go to Mecca ought to obey Mahomed's laws, observing cleanliness, eating wholesome food, and drinking pure water: it is no use for Muslims to obey one part of Mahomed's commands, and to leave the rest unobeyed.

Lastly, I will say in conclusion, that if God spares me to live a few more years, or if, after my death, God spares Afghanistan from home disputes and foreign aggression, and if my sons and successors act in accordance with my advice and instructions, the Afghan nation has a very great future before it; and I hope it will be one of the great kingdoms of the world — Insha'allah (God willing). Considering the wide area of the country, the perfection of its climate and its many sources of wealth, the numbers

of the population, their bravery and physical strength, it is not far behind some of the great kingdoms of the world even now. The marking out of the boundary lines has put an end to the aggressions of its powerful neighbours, and the rebellions and tribal fightings have come to an end for ever, it is fervently hoped. The army, war materials, and Treasury have been set in order, and are to a certain extent perfected. Considering all these things, it must be admitted that now is the time for opening up the country for various enterprises: commerce, education, the working of the mineral wealth, the safety and encouragement of foreign capitalists, merchants, and travellers. Now is the time for cutting canals, building reservoirs for the irrigation of the land, and for collecting the water from the melted snows, so that they shall not be carried out of the country in the summer by the rivers. By keeping this water in the country, the barren lands and uncultivated districts, which are covered by most fertile soil, will be converted into valuable land and gardens. I have opened several canals, and several others are being cut; the trade in Astrakhan skins, wool, horses and sheep has considerably increased, and I have lent money out of the Government Treasury to the Afghan merchants to encourage trade, without charging any interest on such loans. (Instead of interest I charge export and import duties, which bring in more than the interest would, and leave a margin for the merchants themselves.) But it is necessary to communicate with foreign banks and bankers, and enter into arrangements that bank-notes should be issued

to the extent of the money which is in the treasury at Afghanistan. By doing this, the money which is lying idle may be circulated several times in the year for commercial purposes. I have also sanctioned and started the system of Hundis and Bills of Exchange.

Though I am not ignorant of the advantages of free trade, yet it is not at present the time for us to adopt the policy of free trade; we are obliged to place certain restrictions on the foreign goods that we import. It is necessary that we should stop foreign goods from being brought into the country for cash as much as we can; for we must try to make in the country itself such goods and articles as are required for the country. We must also try to make more than are needed by our own people, and sell them outside our country, that our people may be enriched by the foreign money coming into Afghanistan. The greatest exports for commercial purposes and for earning money are the corn of Kataghan and Turkestan, and the products of the mines of Afghanistan. There is also much fruit which we cannot consume for ourselves; but as we have no railways, no steamers, and no telegraphs, the lack of these means of communication and transport prevents us from counting fruit as among the most paying articles of commerce.

I advise my sons and successors to continue making new roads as I have done, but to postpone the introduction of railways, those most important means and necessary factors of trade, until such time as we shall possess a sufficient army for the protection of our kingdom. But the moment

that we see that we are strong enough to protect our country, and have organized the army as planned by me, then will be the time to make railways and introduce the telegraphic system, so as to enable us to benefit by our minerals and other sources of wealth. Then will be the time when Afghanistan (which with its beautiful climate and lovely fruits and fresh air is in the summer like paradise) will become a centre for travellers and rich people in search of health or amusement. Switzerland has the same climate as Afghanistan; but in its fruits and in the beauties of the mountains and Oriental scenery, Afghanistan would prove a greater attraction than even Switzerland to travellers. Travellers take money into a country and spend it there; they hire horses and carriages and buy goods and curios and articles of native manufacture. To encourage travellers to come to Afghanistan is one way to bring happiness and prosperity to my people.

What I wish to impress upon my sons and successors is never to give their railways or mines to any foreigners by concessions, but to make the railways and work the mines themselves, as far as they can find money for doing it. Railways ought to be opened, at first, in the interior of Afghanistan, quite away from the boundaries of the neighbouring Powers, and should run only between one town and another in the country itself. By-and-bye, however, when the country is strong enough to defend itself against all foreign aggression, then the railway lines may be joined on to those of the neighbouring countries in such a manner that the lines will be put in connection with whichever Power is

less hostile than the other. If it be considered necessary and advisable that concessions should be made to any foreigners, such concessions must be given in small portions and to nations whose countries do not touch the boundaries of our own dominions. For instance, to Americans, Italians, Germans, and so forth, whose possessions and countries are not in touch with Afghanistan. In my opinion, if a very large number of Europeans, such as engineers and the like, be required for the service of our Government, preference should similarly be given to the people of these countries already named. My sons and successors must hold fast to their promises, and avoid falsehood and breaking of faith, whether such promises are made to private individuals and merchants, or to Powers and Governments. For even if there be a loss in keeping a promise and an advantage in breaking it, still that temporary loss will bring more benefit to them by the credit and good reputation attendant on keeping good faith.

“Where truth stands untruth cannot stand ; truth is sure to overcome falsehood.”—KORAN.

We must keep the example of our Prophet always before the eyes of our mind. For our holy Prophet, Mahomed, even before he was announced to be a prophet and a reformer, used to be called by all the community of Arabia by the name of “Mahomed the honest.” This was the true reason for his success ; for when he claimed to be a missionary of God, even his enemies admitted that there was no doubt about his honesty, and being so honest, he would never say that he was a messenger from God if it were not the truth. It was owing to his honesty that

his employer, Khudija, who was the richest lady in Arabia, became devoted to the man who was only her servant and commercial agent, since in all his business transactions he was faithful and true. The result was that she not only placed her confidence in him, and put all her affairs and money into his hands for him to dispose of as seemed best to him, but she also placed herself at his pleasure and married him. She was his strong ally in his religious as well as in his temporal affairs, and though he was twenty-five and she a widow of fifty when he married her, he never married another woman in the twenty-five years of their married life. His truthfulness and faithfulness were so great that whenever after her death he was questioned by his devoted and beautiful young wife, Ayesha, whether he loved her more than his deceased wife, he always answered that he loved his deceased wife more. It is a favourite proverb : " Go straight, and you will find every difficulty smoothed before you," and Mahomed says : " Truth is the power of your souls, and untruth is their poison."

There is another suggestion for the progress of commerce and enrichment of the country of equal importance to the making of railways, if not indeed of greater importance. It is also one of very great political importance for keeping up the prestige of the nation and civilising it, by bringing it into touch with the world outside. I mean that Afghanistan ought to secure a footing upon the ocean, and have a port for its own steamers to load and unload at. The south-western corner of Afghanistan is very close to the corner of the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, and from this only a small, plain

plateau of ground between Kandahar, Baluchistan, Persia, and part of Karachi. Before I succeeded to the throne of Kabul, I always had a great fancy for a little piece of this sandy desert, unimportant at present, but of great value if annexed to Afghanistan in order to bring the country in touch with the ocean. But the time has not yet arrived for emphasising this point. If the friendship now existing between Great Britain and Afghanistan grows in strength and becomes properly cemented, so that England comes to trust Afghanistan thoroughly and look upon their interests as identical, and to be desirous of making Afghanistan a strong barrier between Russia and India, it would be very easy for her to give this little piece of land to the Afghan Government, in return for some services or in exchange for some other piece of country, or for some other concession, or perhaps for an annual payment of money as revenue, retaining, at the same time, her suzerainty over this piece of land. If Afghanistan had access to the ocean there is no doubt that the country would soon grow rich and prosperous, and it would never be wanting in gratitude to Great Britain for such a concession. If no favourable opportunity occurs in my lifetime to bring about this purpose, my sons and successors must always keep their eyes on this corner. They must also keep in view the idea of having small boats on the River Oxus, which will be useful for trade as well as for the protection of our north-western frontier. I hope and pray that if I do not succeed in my lifetime in the great desire for making railways, introducing telegraphs and steamers, working the mines, opening banks, and issuing bank-notes, inviting travellers and capitalists from all

parts of the world, and opening universities and other modern institutions in Afghanistan, my sons and successors will carry out these desires of my heart, and make Afghanistan what I desire it to become. *Amen!*

(2) *The Foreign Policy of Afghanistan and its Diplomatic Relations with the Neighbouring Powers.*

In this section, as reference will be made to the past, present, and future conditions in Afghanistan, as well as its connections with the neighbouring Powers, this object cannot be attained without giving a historical sketch of past events. I will therefore give a few outlines.

Afghans are all Mahomedans of the Suni sect, and according to the Afghan historians they are descended from the Israelites. They take their name of Afghans from the word "Afghana"; some of them being descended from the Afghana (Commander-in-Chief) of King Solomon, and others from Jeremiah the son of Saul. The Afghan people, like Scottish Highlanders and other mountainous people, are very brave, and are great warriors; they have always been fond of ruling and governing, jealous of their own liberty and independence. Various tribes and clans of Afghanistan and many of their chiefs have invaded and ruled India. For instance, Ghor, Tughlak, Ghilzai, and Durani. Indeed, whenever Afghanistan has fallen under the rule of a wise, hard-working, ambitious Muslim sovereign, the people have shown their bravery and brought victories to their country by

conquering territory and thus bringing honour to their sovereign's flag. Not only is the credit of the victories gained by the Afghan kings due to their brave warriors, but also the victories of the great Baber, the founder and first emperor of the Mogul Empire in India, and those of Persia. A kingdom or government that can count upon the support of Afghan fighting men is to be congratulated. If she can secure the aid of these heroes to fight by her side against her enemies, the victory is certain to fall to her share. And sorrow be to that Government, however strong a military power in the world, with whose enemies the Afghans are joined in battle against her. I claim it for certain, and every person who knows anything of the history of Asia and the fighting qualities of the Afghans will agree with me, that no power can fight single-handed against another neighbouring Power which has Afghanistan as its ally. The fate of that Power which attempts to fight against the allied forces of the other neighbouring power and Afghanistan can be nothing but utter defeat, disgrace, and regret. Though Afghanistan is not so strong yet that it can claim victory with certainty over any of its powerful neighbours single-handed, it could certainly do so aided by one or the other.

History proves that India, which has from time to time been at the mercy of the invaders from the West and Central Asia from the days of Alexander the Great to the commencement of this century, was quite safe from any attack from the West for about 200 years, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,

owing to the fact that the Mogul emperors had Afghanistan under their rule, the people of which nation supported them. After the decline of the Mogul Empire, Nadir Shah of Persia and Ahmad Shah Durani again invaded India, aided by Afghan troops.

As we are only concerned here with the period from the time of Ahmad Shah's rule in Afghanistan, I will take the historical narrative from the date of his accession, referring the readers of my book who wish for earlier particulars to other historians.

In 1747, after the death of Nadir Shah, Afghanistan had fallen into a state of anarchy out of which arose the present Durani kingdom, to which clan I am proud of belonging. Ahmad Shah, the first founder of this kingdom, was a chief of Suddozai, a clan of the Abdali tribe. In consequence of a dream of the famous Saint of Chamkani, he took the title of Shah Duri Duran (descended from the Duranis, or chamber of the chambers). My grandfather, Amir Dost Mahomed Khan, was of the Barakzai, another branch of Durani. The lines of Ahmad Shah (the first king of Suddozai Durani), and Amir Dost Mahomed Khan (the first king of Barakzai Durani) joined in this way: that Suddo and Barak, the first fathers of these two royal houses of the Durani family, were full brothers. Ahmad Shah was crowned in 1747 at Kandahar, and made Kandahar his capital. This is the year in which the history of Afghanistan made a start in having an elected king and constitutional government to govern the country. After Nadir's assassination

in 1747, the representatives and chiefs of the various tribes and clans of Afghanistan (named Haji Jamal Khan Barakzai, Muhsad Khan, and Sirdar Jahan Khan Populzai, Musa Jan, Ishakzai, better known by the title Dunki, Nur Mahomed Khan Ghilzai, Nasrullah Khan Nurzai, and Ahmad Khan Suddozai) held a Council at the sacred shrine of Sher Surkh Baba, in the vicinity of Kandahar, to elect a king from among themselves to rule over them; so that the country should live in peace under his rule. But, excepting Ahmad Khan, who was silent, every one of these chiefs insisted that his own claims to the throne were greater than those of the others, and that he would not submit himself to the rule of any of the others. After long dispute and discussion they were no nearer to the issue than when they started, but a holy man, named Sabir Shah, having taken an ear of wheat into his hand, placed it upon the head of Ahmad Khan, and said: "You need not quarrel, Ahmad Khan is the proper ruler for the kingdom." At this the attention of all the chiefs was turned upon Ahmad Khan; they declared that they could not find a more suitable man to be elected as their king, because his clan (Suddozai) was the weakest and smallest in number, and therefore concluded that if he did not act according to the counsel of the representatives of the country, it would be easier to dethrone him than a king from a strong tribe having a greater population. "Should he listen to our advice," they said, "we, who are the accredited representatives of the nation, will support him and give every help in the administration of the king-

dom." Having agreed upon this, they all took pieces of green grass in their mouths as a token that they were his very cattle and beasts of burden, and throwing around their necks pieces of cloth in the shape of ropes, as a sign that they were willing to be led by him, they submitted to his rule, and gave him the powers of life and of death. Ahmad Shah being the elected king by the choice of the country, had the support of the chiefs and representatives, and he was a man of strong will, clever-headed, hard-working, and impartial. He therefore rose to the position of one of the greatest emperors that ever ruled in Asia, his dominions and empire had Mashhad or Persia on the West, and Delhi and the countries in between in India on the East. He died of cancer in the face in June 1773.

His son, Timur Mirza Shah, succeeded him, whose character was marked by indolence (the usual disease from which nearly all the Eastern kings, princes, and nobility suffer, which ends in their losing their kingdoms and fortunes). This conduct rendered him incapable of keeping together the tribes which had been conquered by his father, and the kingdom began to decline. He made a great mistake in appointing his sons governors of different provinces of Afghanistan, in consequence of which, upon his death in 1793, which occurred at Kabul, a struggle for the monarchy ensued between his numerous sons, which was obtained by Shah Zaman. He, after a reign of seven years, was deposed and blinded by his half brother, Shah Mahmud, who had obtained the sovereignty by the help of Wazir Fatteh Khan,

brother of Dost Mahomed Khan, the first Amir of the present dynasty.

“This remarkable man, who occupies the most conspicuous position in the history of Afghanistan for the ensuing eighteen years, was far more deserving of the name of ‘King-maker’ than the celebrated Earl of Warwick, who bears the name in English history. His talents, courage, generosity, and statesmanship are equally acknowledged by all European historians who have written anything about Afghanistan, as well as by Afghans.”

In September 1801, Shah Shujah, the full brother of the deposed monarch Zaman, proclaimed himself king, and marched from Peshawar on Kabul. He was, however, defeated by Wazir Fatteh Khan, and fled to the Khyber Hills. After some struggles, Shah Shujah succeeded in taking the throne in 1802, deposed and confined Mahmud in prison, and soon after conquered Kashmir also. But it must be said, without going into details, that from 1793, after Timur Shah's death, the fightings, the misfortunes, and the violent deaths of the kings and chiefs were innumerable. The breakdown of the Constitutional Government, which had been founded by Ahmad Shah, was brought about by the kings' habits of self-indulgence and intoxication, and their partiality for one person or one clan to the exclusion of the others. These characteristics of the Suddozai kings resulted in their losing the kingdom, and turning Afghanistan into a petty state after its being a vast empire before it fell into their hands.

Shah Shujah, who succeeded to the throne in 1802, refused to make terms with Fatteh Khan, who defeated

him in 1809, and secured the throne for his old friend, Mahmud, once more. Shah Shujah threw himself on the protection of Runjit Singh, Rajah of the Punjab, whence he made several attempts to regain the throne but failed, because Wazir Fattah Khan and the people were supporting Mahmud. Runjit Singh subsequently treated Shah Shujah very cruelly and imprisoned him. He took by force the Koh-i-noor diamond (Mountain of Light, now in the possession of Queen Victoria). Historians give a very impressive account, describing how one king in parting with this valuable stone turned pale and felt unhappy, while the other, who was receiving it from his hands, appeared joyful and cheered by the unexpected prize; which shows that in this world the griefs of one half its inhabitants are the pleasures of the other half. One side is delighted at having killed others in battle, and rejoices in the victory, while the other side mourns the deaths of those who are killed, and its own defeat. Shujah, after a great many difficulties, escaped with his harem from his prison, and having entered into English territory lived on English bounty.

After the defeat of Shah Shujah, Fattah Khan ruled under the name and authority of Shah Mahmud; he took Herat from Haji Feroz for his sovereign, and repulsed an attack made on that city by the Persians, who had demanded that tribute should be paid, and that the money should be coined in the name of the Shah of Persia. In 1818, after the most loyal services, and keeping the throne for him, the ungrateful wretch, Mahmud, following the advice of his treacherous son, Kamran, and others who were jealous of Wazir Fattah Khan's influence and

position, most cruelly tortured and blinded Fattedh Khan, who had twice placed him on the throne. Finally, on Fattedh Khan refusing to betray his brothers, his limbs were cut off one by one, by the orders and in the presence of the king who had been made by him, and by him alone. Thus died this remarkable man, the "Warwick of Afghanistan." His talents and gallantry gave a certain ascendancy to whatever party he joined, and, further, his reputation for bravery, liberality, and nobleness of character did a great deal to help his younger brother, Dost Mahomed Khan in gaining the throne of Kabul. Fattedh Khan's father, Wazir Payandah Khan, who is called Sirdar Sar Faraz Khan, had left twenty-one able sons, namely, Wazir Fattedh Khan, Sirdars Mahomed Azim, Timur Kuli, Pur dil, Shere dil, Kohan dil, Rahim dil, Mihr dil, Ata Mahomed, Sultan Mahomed, Pir Mahomed, Said Mahomed, Amir Dost Mahomed Khan, Amir Mahomed, Mahomed Zaman, Zamar Khan, Haidar Khan, Turahbaz, Jummah, and Kheirullah.

The cruel murder of this hero and King-maker was the signal for his twenty brothers and the rest of the Duranis to take up arms against Shah Mahmud and his son Shahzadah Kamran, who had persuaded his father to kill his gallant friend. The result was that Dost Mahomed Khan, one of the youngest brothers of Fattedh Khan, defeated Mahmud's army, and made himself Amir of Afghanistan in 1826, which transferred the kingdom from the Suddozai family to the Barakzai family, and it has remained with them ever since, excepting for a short interruption caused by Shah Shujah and his supporters, the English. Shah

Mahmud, after losing his kingdom, as a punishment for his ingratitude, died heart-broken at Herat, and his wicked son, Kamran, who was the sole cause of the murder, was killed at Herat by one of his own officials, named Wazir Yar Mahomed Khan.

It is a well-known fact that as long as a country is under the rule of a strong man who can keep control over all the chiefs and subjects of his country, whether he govern rightly or wrongly, foreign Powers cannot find an excuse for interfering with him; but the moment that a Government falls into the hands of a weak ruler or becomes disunited by internal embroilments, or that the subjects lose all their affection and fear for their sovereign, then foreign Powers seize their opportunity to put the claims of one against the other; or they interfere under the pretence of claiming for the subjects equal rights and justice. Following this rule, from the time that Afghanistan fell under the sway of weak sovereigns, and became mixed up in family quarrels and disputes—from this time the history of Afghanistan is full of instances of interference on the part of England and Russia in the affairs of the country: and efforts to keep claimants and candidates in their hands, so that they could put them forward whenever a suitable opportunity presented itself. In the past, England was near, and Russia was far away from Afghanistan, and therefore England had more to do in this respect than Russia. Now, unfortunately, Afghanistan lies between two mill-stones instead of being under one only. History shows that England interfered more with Afghanistan and made more blunders in this respect, and for this reason England

suffered more ; but Russia interfered less and suffered less. Let us hope that England, for her greater sufferings, may reap greater benefits ; and I may say that if England, appreciating the friendship of Afghanistan, gained after the expense of millions of pounds and at the sacrifice of thousands of valuable lives, has learned even this single lesson, that to fight against Afghanistan, is to her disadvantage, and to be friendly is for her own interests and safety, then England will be richly repaid for her losses in the past.

After my grandfather, Dost Mahomed, succeeded to the Kabul throne, I cannot give the full account of historical events without being accused of partiality, and I will therefore quote the statements made by certain English historians, only giving as much as is necessary to explain our future policy.

“The Russians have, from very early ages, always had a desire to invade India in their heart. In 1791, the Empress Catharine had considered a scheme of invasion of India *via* Bokhara and Kabul. Again, in 1800, the Emperor Paul of Russia, and Napoleon, then First Consul of France, plotted out a plan to make a joint expedition against India. In 1807 the Emperor Napoleon and Alexander thought of the invasion once more, this time to be aided by the Shah of Persia : soon after this, however, the emperors quarrelled between themselves, which postponed their designs. In 1837 Russia and Persia joined together to attack Herat, with a view to invading India, but failed in conquering the strong fort of Herat. In 1855 again, Russia matured its schemes for the invasion of India, but, owing to European complications, could not carry out her schemes. The Russians also tried to turn Dost Mahomed Khan to their side but failed. From 1872 till 1878 they made a

public plot with Amir Shere Ali Khan against the English." "Abstract of Curzon's Russia in Central Asia," pp. 323-330.

"Dost Mahomed, the brother of Fatted Khan, became king of Kabul, and had the reputation of a just, enlightened ruler. Kamran seized Herat. Kandahar, after passing through various hands, became subject to the Sirdars. The Amirs of Scinde became independent, and Runjeet Singh took advantage of the general confusion to make encroachments on the disordered monarchy.

Things continued thus until it was forced on the Indian Government that Russian influence was gaining ground in Central Asia; and matters were brought to their height by the Russians besieging Herat in 1837. Endeavours were then made to detach Dost Mahomed from the interests of Russia and Persia. He declared himself willing to embrace the British Alliance if the British would protect him from the encroachments of Runjeet Singh, who had seized Peshawur; otherwise he must throw himself on the protection of Persia. In an evil hour it was determined that our relations with Runjeet Singh did not permit of our interfering with him; but still less could we allow Dost Mahomed to form an alliance with Persia; and the only remaining course was to dethrone him, and to reinstate Shah Shujah, who had been twenty-eight years a fugitive, in order to secure, as it was fondly imagined, our influence throughout Central Asia.

Accordingly, in 1838 and 1839, Sir John Keane's force marched through the Dooraunee Empire, meeting with little opposition, but at Ghuznee Dost Mahomed surrendered to Sir W. H. M'Naughton; Shah Shujah returned; all appeared prosperous; Shah's troops were raised; Dooraunee orders were distributed; Sir John Keane was raised to the peerage; addresses and congratulations were presented on all sides. Alas! how little the political universe—how little the world at large dreamt of the mine over which they were standing. In the beginning of November, 1841, it exploded, and the assassina-

tion of the British Envoy, the total destruction of a large British force, including Her Majesty's 44th regiment and several corps of Indian troops, the seizure of all guns, the capture of officers and ladies—a catastrophe, in short, almost unequalled in our annals, fearfully dispelled the vision of Afghanistan tranquil and of British influence established throughout Central Asia. In the spring of the year, our *protégé*, Shah Shujah Ool Moolk, was murdered by a party of Baurikzyes, while proceeding to his camp at Bootkhak, a miserable end to a troublous life.

The manner in which we were extricated from the ruins of our schemes of unjust aggression has been as merciful and unexpected as our punishment was sudden and appalling. God grant that His undeserved goodness may not be overlooked amidst our present triumphs, as it was totally forgotten amidst those of 1839, and may our rulers have grace to remember that it is righteousness, not conquest, that exalteth a nation; and that the sin of covetousness, as well as every other, is a reproach to any people.”—Allen's “Diary of a March through Scinde and Afghanistan” (1843, pp. 13 *et seqq.*).

“Caubul, Candahar and Peshawer, with the districts round these cities, were held by different brothers, who soon fell out among themselves. The Dooaraunees paid a partial obedience to the ruler of Candahar or Heraut according to the situation of their lands. The other tribes remained independent. During the decay of the Dooaraunee monarchy, Runjeet Sing was perfecting the discipline of his army by means of European officers. This circumstance which would have made him formidable to the Indian possessions of the Afghauns, even if that nation had been united, rendered him irresistible to their distracted government and denuded frontier. He took Cashmeer, Moultaun, Leia, Upper Sind, and the nearest part of Damaun, reduced the tribes south of Cashmeer into dependence, and he subsequently took advantage of a quarrel between the chief of

Caubul and his brother at Peshawer, accompanied by a successful expedition of Shauh Shujah against Candahar, to make a conquest of Peshawer itself and all the plain country to the Indus. The Ameers of Sind also seized on Shikarpoor, Bulkh threw off its nominal dependence, and the Prince of Belochistaun retained his in name only. Dost Mahommed, the Sirdar of Caubul, has the reputation of a just and enlightened ruler. Both he and his half-brother at Candahar are inimical to Caumraun, who has succeeded, by his father's death, to the possession of Heraut and the claims of the house of the Suddozye. The city of Peshawer has suffered greatly during these wars and revolutions, but there does not appear to be any decline in the rest of the country.

Besides the expedition in which he gained temporary possession of Candahar, Shauh Shujah has been engaged in other enterprizes in different parts of his dominions: but is now again an exile at the British station of Loodeana. In the interval he has gone through many romantic adventures of which he has written a narrative. He was at one time perfidiously seized and barbarously treated by Runjeet Sing, whose object was to extort from him the famous diamond called the Cobi Noor. These events, and his deliverance by the spirit and talents of his Queen, form an interesting portion of the summary of recent events in Afghaunistaun, by Sir A. Burnes, from which, and the fuller narrative of Mr Conolly, the substance of this note has been extracted. The most natural consequence of all these misfortunes would have been the subjugation of the Afghan's part of Khorassaun by Persia, but although repeated attempts have been made to take Heraut, and though the King of Persia has a regular army, disciplined by European officers, no impression has yet been made in that quarter. Caumraun himself seems to rival his father in feebleness and debauchery, but his power is upheld by the vigour and courage of Yaur Mahommed Khaun, his vizeer. . . . It is now a year since Heraut has been besieged by the King of Persia, and although by the last accounts he had just

failed, with heavy loss [the loss is stated to be 11 colonels, 45 other officers, and 1750 disciplined soldiers], in an attempt to storm, yet if the chiefs of Candahar and Caubul should be induced to join the common enemy, it is possible that his perseverance may still be rewarded by the conquest of the bulwark of the Dooranee country. Such an event would produce a serious change in the prospects of our Indian Empire, and might possibly not be without influence on the politics of Europe." (Oct. 1838), "Elphinstone's account of the Kingdom of Caubul."

"Since it was the British complications with Persia which mainly furnished what pretext there was for the invasion of Afghanistan by an Anglo-Indian army in 1839, some brief recital is necessary of the relations between Great Britain and Persia, prior to that aggression.

By a treaty concluded between England and Persia in 1814, the former state bound itself, in case of the invasion of Persia by any European nation, to aid the Shah either with troops from India, or by the payment of an annual subsidy in support of his war expenses. It was a dangerous engagement, even with the caveat rendering the undertaking inoperative if such invasion should be provoked by Persia. During the fierce struggle of 1825-7 between Abbas Meerza and the Russian General, Paskevitch, England refrained from supporting Persia either with men or with money, and when prostrate, Persia was in financial extremities because of the war indemnity which the treaty of Turkmanchai imposed upon her, England took advantage of her needs, by purchasing the cancellation of the inconvenient obligation at the cheap cost of about £300,000. It was the natural result of this transaction that English influence with the Persian Court should sensibly decline, and it was not less natural that in conscious weakness Persia should fall under the domination of Russian influence.

Fatteh Ali, the old Shah of Persia, died in 1834, and was succeeded by his grandson, Prince Mahomed Meerza, a young

man who inherited much of the ambition of his gallant father, Abbas Meerza. His especial aspiration, industriously stimulated by his Russian advisers, urged him to the enterprise of conquering the independent principality of Herat, on the western border of Afghanistan. Herat was the only remnant of Afghan territory that still remained to a member of the legitimate royal house. Its ruler was Shah Kamran, son of that Mahmoud Shah who, after ousting his brother, Shah Shujah, from the throne of Kabul, had himself been driven from that elevation, and had retired to the minor principality of Herat. The young Shah of Persia was not destitute of justification for his designs on Herat. That this was so, was frankly admitted by Mr Ellis, the British envoy to his Court, who wrote to his Government that the Shah had fair claim to the sovereignty of Afghanistan as far as Ghuznee, and that Kamran's conduct in occupying part of the Persian province of Seistan had given the Shah 'a full justification for commencing hostilities against Herat.'

The serious phase of the situation for England and India was that Russian influence was behind Persia in this hostile action against Herat. Mr Ellis pointed out that in the then existing state of relations between Persia and Russia, the progress of the former in Afghanistan was tantamount to the advancement of the latter. But, unfortunately, there remained valid an article in the treaty of 1814 to the effect that, in case of war between the Afghans and the Persians, the English Government should not interfere with either party unless when called on by both to mediate. In vain did Ellis and his successor M'Neill remonstrate with the Persian monarch against the Herat expedition. An appeal to St Petersburg on the part of Great Britain produced merely an evasive reply. How diplomatic disquietude had become intensified may be inferred from this, that whereas in April 1836 Ellis wrote of Persia as a Russian first parallel of attack against India, in the early part of 1837, Lord Auckland, then Governor-General of India, directed M'Neill to urge the Shah to abandon his

enterprise, on the ground that he (the Governor-General) 'must view with umbrage and displeasure, schemes of interference and conquest on our western frontier.'

The Shah, unmoved by the representations of the British envoy, marched on Herat, and the siege was opened on 23rd November 1837. . . . M'Neill effected nothing definite during a long stay in the Persian camp before Herat, the counteracting influence of the Russian envoy being too strong with the Shah, and the British representative, weary of continual slights, at length quitted the Persian camp, completely foiled. After six days' bombardment, the Persians and their Russian auxiliaries delivered an assault in force on 23rd June 1838. It failed with heavy loss, and the dispirited Shah determined on raising the siege. His resolution was quickened by the arrival of Colonel Stoddart in his camp, with the information that a military force from Bombay, supported by ships of war, had landed on the island of Karrack in the Persian Gulf, and with the peremptory ultimatum to the Shah that he must retire from Herat at once. Lord Palmerston in ordering this diversion in the Gulf had thought himself justified by circumstances in overriding the clear and precise terms of an article in a treaty to which England had, on several occasions, engaged to adhere. As for the Shah, he appears to have been relieved by the ultimatum. On the 9th September he mounted his horse and rode away from Herat. The siege had lasted nine and a half months. To-day, half a century after Simonich the Russian envoy followed Mahomed Shah from battered but unconquered Herat, that city is still an Afghan place of arms.

"Shah Shujah-ool Moolk, a grandson of the illustrious Ahmed Shah, reigned in Afghanistan from 1803 till 1809. . . . After his downfall, Afghanistan for many years was a prey to anarchy. At length, in 1826, Dost Mahomed succeeded in making himself supreme at Kabul, and this masterful man thenceforward held sway during the three years of the British occupation. . . . After years of varied fortunes, the young

warrior had worsted all his enemies, and in 1826 he became the ruler of Kabul. . . . He had a real regard for the English, and his loyalty to us was broken only by his armed support of the Sikhs in the second Punjab war.

The fallen Shah Shujah, from his asylum at Loodianah, was continually intriguing for his restoration. His schemes were long inoperative, and it was not until 1832 that certain arrangements were entered into between him and the Maharajah Runjeet Singh. To an application on Shah Shujah's part for countenance and pecuniary aid, the Anglo-Indian Government replied that to afford him assistance would be inconsistent with the policy of neutrality which the Government had imposed on itself; but it unwisely contributed financially toward his undertaking by granting him four months' pension in advance. Sixteen thousand rupees formed a scant war fund with which to attempt the recovery of a throne, but the Shah started on his errand in February 1833. After a successful contest with the Ameers of Scinde, he marched on Kandahar and besieged that fortress. Kandahar was in extremity when Dost Mahomed, hurrying from Kabul, relieved it; and then joining forces with its defenders, he defeated and routed Shah Shujah, who fled precipitately, leaving behind him his artillery and camp equipage. During Dost Mahomed's absence in the south, Runjeet Singh's troops crossed the Attock, occupied the Afghan province of Peshawur, and drove the Afghans into the Khyber Pass. No subsequent efforts on Dost Mahomed's part availed to expel the Sikhs from Peshawur, and in suspicion of British connivance with Runjeet Singh's successful aggression, he took into consideration the policy of fortifying himself by a counter alliance with Persia. As for Shah Shujah, he had crept back to his refuge at Loodianah.

Lord Auckland succeeded Lord William Bentinck as Governor-General of India in March 1836. In reply to Dost Mahomed's letter of congratulation, his Lordship wrote:—'You are aware that it is not the practice for the British Government to interfere with the affairs of other independent States'; an abstention

which Lord Auckland was soon to violate. He had brought from England the feeling of disquietude in regard to the designs of Persia and Russia, which the communications of our Envoy in Persia had fostered in the home Government, but it would appear that he was wholly undecided what line of action to pursue. 'Swayed,' says Durand, 'by the vague apprehensions of a remote danger entertained by others rather than himself,' he despatched to Afghanistan Captain Burnes on a nominally commercial mission, which, in fact, was one of political discovery, but without definite instructions. Burnes . . . reached Kabul in September 1837, two months before the Persian army began the siege of Herat. He had a strong prepossession in favour of Dost Mahomed, whose guest he had already been in 1832, and the policy he favoured was not the restoration of the legitimate dynasty in the person of Shah Shujah, but the attachment of Dost Mahomed to British interests by strengthening his throne and affording him British countenance.

Burnes sanguinely believed that he had arrived at Kabul in the nick of time, for an envoy from the Shah of Persia was already at Kandahar, bearing presents and assurances of support. Dost Mahomed made no concealment to Burnes of his approaches to Persia and Russia, in despair of British good offices, and being hungry for assistance from any source to meet the encroachments of the Sikhs. But he professed himself ready to abandon his negotiations with the Western Powers if he were given reason to expect countenance and assistance at the hands of the Anglo-Indian Government. Burnes communicated to his Government those friendly proposals, supporting them by his own strong representations. Meanwhile, carried away by enthusiasm, he exceeded his powers by making efforts to dissuade the Kandahar chiefs from the Persian alliance, and by offering to support them with money to enable them to make head against the offensive by which Persia would probably seek to revenge the rejection of her overtures. For this unauthorised excess of zeal, Burnes

was severely reprimanded by his Government, and was directed to retract his offers to the Kandahar chiefs. The situation of Burnes in relation to Dost Mahomed was presently complicated by the arrival at Kabul of a Russian officer claiming to be an envoy from the Tsar, whose credentials, however, were regarded as dubious, and who, if that circumstance has the least weight, was on his return to Russia utterly repudiated by Count Nesselrode. Dost Mahomed took small account of this emissary, continuing to assure Burnes that he cared for no connection except with the English, and Burnes professed to his Government his fullest confidence in the sincerity of those declarations. But the tone of Lord Auckland's reply addressed to the Kabul ruler, was so dictatorial and supercilious as to indicate the writer's intention that it should give offence. It had the effect, and Burnes' mission at once became hopeless. Yet, as a last resort, Dost Mahomed lowered his pride so far as to write to the Governor-General imploring him 'to remedy the grievances of the Afghans, and afford them some little encouragement and power.' The pathetic representation had no effect. The Russian envoy, who was profuse in his promises of everything which Dost Mahomed was most anxious to obtain, was received into favour and treated with distinction, and on his return journey he effected a treaty with the Kandahar chiefs which was presently ratified by the Russian minister at the Persian Court. Burnes, fallen into discredit at Kabul, quitted that place in August, 1838.

Burnes had failed because after he had quitted India for Kabul, Lord Auckland's policy had been gradually altering. Lord Auckland had landed in India in the character of a man of peace. That, so late as April 1837, he had no design of obstructing the existing situation in Afghanistan, is proved by his written statement of that date, that 'the British Government had resolved decidedly to discourage the prosecution by the ex-king Shah Shujah-ool-Mulk, so long as he may remain under our protection, of further schemes of hostility against the chiefs now in power in Kabul and Kandahar.' Yet

in the following June he concluded a treaty which sent Shah Shujah to Kabul, escorted by British bayonets. Of this inconsistency no explanation presents itself. It was a far cry from our frontier on the Sutlej to Herat on the confines of Central Asia—a distance of more than 1200 miles, over some of the most arduous marching ground in the known world. No doubt the Anglo-Indian Government was justified in being somewhat concerned by the facts that a Persian army, backed by Russian volunteers and Russian roubles, was besieging Herat, and that Persian and Russian emissaries were at work in Afghanistan. Both phenomena were rather of the 'bogey' character; how much so to-day, shows when the Afghan frontier is still beyond Herat, and when a descendant of Dost Mahomed still sits in the Kabul musnid. But neither England nor India scrupled to make the Karrack counter-threat, which arrested the siege of Herat; and the obvious policy as regarded Afghanistan was to watch the results of the intrigues which were on foot, to ignore them should they come to nothing as was probable, to counteract them by familiar methods if serious consequences should seem impending. Our alliance with Runjeet Singh was solid, and the quarrel between Dost Mahomed and him concerning the Peshawur province was notoriously easy of arrangement.

On whose memory rests the dark shadow of responsibility for the first Afghan war? The late Lord Broughton, who, when Sir John Hobhouse was President of the Board of Control from 1835 to 1841, declared before a House of Commons Committee in 1851, 'The Afghan war was done by myself; entirely without the privity of the Board of Directors.' The meaning of that declaration of course was, that it was the British Government of the day which was responsible, acting through its member charged with the control of Indian affairs; and further, that the directorate of the East Indian Company was accorded no voice in the matter. But this utterance was materially qualified by Sir J. C. Hobhouse's statement in the House of Commons in 1842,

that his despatch indicating the policy to be adopted, and that written by Lord Auckland, informing him that the expedition had already been undertaken, had crossed each other on the way.

. . . The scheme of action embodied in the treaty which in the early summer of 1838 was concluded between the Anglo-Indian Government, Runjeet Singh, and Shah Shujah, was that Shah Shujah, with a force officered from an Indian army and paid by British money, possessing also the good-will and support of the Maharajah of the Punjab, should attempt the recovery of his throne without any stiffening of British bayonets at his back. Then it was urged, and the representation was indeed accepted, that the Shah would need the buttress afforded by English troops, and that a couple of regiments only would suffice to afford this prestige. But Sir Harry Fane, the Commander-in-Chief, judiciously interposed his veto on the despatch of a handful of British soldiers on so distant and hazardous an expedition. Finally, the Governor-General, committed already to a mistaken line of policy, and urged forward by those about him, took the unfortunate resolution to gather together an Anglo-Indian army, and to send it, with the ill-omened Shah Shujah on its shoulders, into the unknown and distant wilds of Afghanistan. This action determined on, it was in accordance with the Anglo-Indian fitness of things that the Governor-General should promulgate a justificatory manifesto. Of this composition it is unnecessary to say more than to quote Durand's observation that in it 'the words "justice and necessity" were applied in a manner for which there is fortunately no precedent in the English language'; and Sir Henry Edwardes' not less trenchant comment that 'the views and conduct of Dost Mahomed were misrepresented with a hardihood which a Russian statesman might have envied.

'All men whose experience gave weight to their words opposed this preposterous enterprise.' Mr Elphinstone, who had been the head of a Mission to Kabul thirty years earlier,

held that 'if an army was sent up the passes, and if we could feed it, no doubt we might take Kabul and send up Shah Shujah, but it was hopeless to maintain him in a poor, cold strong and remote country, among so turbulent a people.' Lord William Bentinck, Lord Auckland's predecessor, denounced the project as an act of incredible folly. Marquis Wellesley regarded 'this wild expedition into a distant region of rocks and deserts, of sands and ice and snow, as an act of infatuation.' The Duke of Wellington pronounced with prophetic sagacity that the consequence of once crossing the Indus to settle a Government in Afghanistan would be a perennial march into that country." (Extract from "The Afghan Wars," by Archibald Forbes, pp. 1-13.)

"(The Simla Manifesto:) 'We had no hand in depriving the Shah of his kingdom, *whereas we ejected the Dost, who had never offended us, in support of our policy, of which he was the victim.*'" (*Ibid.*, p. 48.)

"Burnes and Macnaghten had met their fate because they had gone to Kabul the supporters of a detested intruder and the unwelcome representatives of a hated power." (*Ibid.*, p. 187.)

I cannot, however, write the full details of the history of Afghanistan or its wars with Great Britain: this would require a separate book in itself; and the subject has already been fully gone into by many English writers of great authority. But I must say that for no fault of Dost Mahomed Khan whatever, and against the instructions and advice of Burnes, Macnaghten, and all those who knew better, the Viceroy and the Indian Government deposed and imprisoned Amir Dost Mahomed Khan, and sent him to India as a prisoner in November, 1840. The result of this unjust policy was that a general

massacre of the English people at Kabul took place; followed by the murder of Shah Shujah and by Amir Dost Mahomed's being handed over to the Afghans: he succeeded to the throne of Kabul in 1843, and ruled until the 9th June 1863. He died a natural death at Herat, where his body lies.

After his death his eldest son, viz., my father, Amir Afzul Khan, being absent, Shere Ali Khan took the title of the Amirship. What followed upon this has been fully dealt with in previous chapters of my book; but this remains to be added, that during his reign the British Government, or rather, the Indian Government, blundered in allowing and encouraging him to communicate with the Russian Government, afterwards blaming him for doing so. On the other hand, Shere Ali Khan is also not free from blame for speaking rudely about Queen Victoria in public Durbar, and intriguing with the Russian Government against the English during the whole time he was pretending to be a true friend to Great Britain. This double mistake of both Governments (of India and Shere Ali's) caused the Second Afghan War, in which Shere Ali Khan's forces were defeated, and he ran away to Russia to bring Russian arms to support him. The Russian Government was too far away to be in a position to mass its army on the Afghan frontier, and, finally, Amir Shere Ali Khan died broken-hearted, and crippled by gout, on his way to Russia. Then the Indian Government made a third blunder, which caused the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his party. After the British complaint of the treatment they had received at the

hands of Amir Shere Ali Khan, they now entered into a treaty with his son Yakub. But worst of all, they sent Sir Louis Cavagnari with a handful of Englishmen to Kabul without sufficient body-guard to defend him, having confidence in Yakub's power to protect them. This they did, knowing what had been the fate of Macnaghten and Burnes, and *not* knowing whether Yakub was strong enough to ensure the safety of the English, nor whether Yakub had the consent of the representatives of the country to the admission of Cavagnari and his companions. This ended in Yakub's imprisonment and a general rising throughout the whole country, with much bloodshed and the expenditure of money for the Second Afghan War. Then I came away from Russia, and succeeded to the throne of Kabul, and I sent the British army safely out of Afghanistan.

Having given a short outline of the British relations with Afghanistan, I will now proceed to comment on this matter, and to give my views on the future policy of my country, so far as concerns England and Russia. Before commencing, I will call attention to the map attached to this book, and a little study of historical events bearing with the relations of England and Afghanistan in the past, which show clearly that at the time of the weakness of the kingdom under my grandfather, Dost Mahomed Khan, the British took advantage of this circumstance to cut certain states from the borders of Afghanistan, and bring them under their protection. Again in the days of Amir Shere Ali Khan and Yakub, they took from Afghanistan the Kuram

Valley, the Khyber Pass, a portion of Pishin, and certain other places. During my reign, notwithstanding my strong resistance, Lord Lansdowne's Government chased my officials out of Bulund Khel, Waziristan, and other places, with the threat of English bayonets being turned against me, and the new Chaman railway station was built in my territory without my permission or the permission of my people. Though Sir Mortimer Durand's Mission reconciled matters by giving me some sort of compensation, and I am quite contented and satisfied that I have gained more than I have lost by British friendship, I merely mention these facts to show the readers of my book that though England does not want any piece of Afghanistan, still she never loses a chance of getting one—and this friend has taken more than Russia has!

After the outline of historical facts given above, taken from the writings of some English historians and statesmen, I now give my opinions in the form of advice to my successors and nation. I do not want to enter into a controversy in order to prove that my statements are wiser than those made by some of the foreign writers, and I think that to give out everything that is in my heart to the world generally would be unwise as well as impolitic. I will merely give a few hints, and leave the rest for my successors to guess.

“A hint is sufficient for a sensible man to draw his own conclusions.”

On the opening of Parliaments and other Councils in foreign countries, it is customary for the Sovereign

to state in the Speech from the Throne:—"The relations of my Government with other Foreign Powers are most cordial and friendly," though, perhaps, all the while they are repeating these words they know that they hate some of them in their hearts with thousands of hatreds. This is, however, diplomacy!

I am afraid that if I were to follow the same example, and repeat the same sort of ambiguous phrases, my nation and successors would not have the cleverness and ability to read between the lines, and would, consequently, fall into a trap. I must therefore say a few plain words.

Praise be to Allah! who is the commander of all hearts, turning the hearts of enemies into those of friends when He pleases: the relations of *my* Government with its neighbouring Powers, *i.e.* England, Russia, Persia, and China, are satisfactory and friendly; there is no cause for enmity, and no fear of hostilities breaking out at the present time. Neither of the friends has any documentary or other proof by which it can accuse the Government of Afghanistan of having broken its faith and friendship; though I am not responsible for the rumours which circulate from time to time. Neither is there any excuse for a hostile power to accuse Afghanistan of having provoked her anger. (Though I do not admit that any Government is hostile towards my Government). From the day of my accession to the throne I have never shown any fear or timidity, neither have I humiliated myself and my nation by flattery towards any of my neighbours; nor have

I taken any unnecessary steps to show hostility or dislike to any other Power, by exhibiting partiality to one rather than the other. I have given no promises to my neighbours that were beyond my power of carrying out, as my predecessors had done. I have very strictly followed the advice, and walked in the footsteps of our Blessed Prophet, may Allah shower His rewards upon his holy soul! The best course to follow is the middle course, and to avoid extremes. If any Government, or officials of a Government, have treated me courteously, I have shown them equal courtesy in return: if I have been treated rudely and discourteously, I have not remained far behind in paying them back! I have, at the same time, been most careful to observe a dignified contempt without going beyond limits, or showing more discourtesy than I was justified in doing.

“To be too gentle makes a man lose his dignity ; as the bow does not become subject to the arrow until it gives way by bending.”—JAMI.

I do not wish to name any one Power in particular, but I give a hint for the information of my people that they must always try to know the difference between the characters of various Powers: some of them resemble a leech that goes on sucking the blood till a man dies without feeling any pain, while others are like a pinch which is very painful but does not kill—like a wasp of non-poisonous nature, where there is great pain but no danger of death. Some Powers take new countries by the force of their strength and victories; others take them by treachery,

fraud, and stirring up home quarrels between chiefs of the country, themselves keeping behind the curtain, and benefiting themselves at the expense of the folly of others. Such Powers are more difficult to deal with, and one ought to be more careful in dealing with them than with the Powers that attack openly. This is a very complicated and delicate point, and I advise my people to be very watchful in all their dealings:—"Forewarned is forearmed," and "Knowledge is power." My people must not be disunited, lest they fall victims to the treachery of their neighbours, by giving them chances and opportunities of being benefited by our dissensions.

Before proceeding any further, I must say that I am fully aware that people who do not know me well call me cruel, a lover of money and greed, and a man of most suspicious nature. My answers to these accusations have been given by many writers who have known me intimately. For instance, Sir West Ridgeway, Sir Lepel Griffin, and others who are well-informed officials, have made statements in this connection: they have said, and justly said, that though the Amir rules with an iron hand, it is justified, because he has to rule an iron people. Sir Alfred Lyall, in his well-known verses, gives a picture of the difficult position in which I am placed, in the following words:—

"But all His ways are warnings; and I, God's slave, must lead,
 How I bargain for help with the Káfir, or lean on a venomous
 reed;
 For never did chief more sorely need Heaven for his aid and
 stay
 Than the man who would reign in this country, and tame
 Afgháns for a day.

I look from a fort half-ruined on Kábul spreading below,
 On the near hills crowned with cannon, and the far hills piled
 with snow;
 Fair are the vales well-watered, and the vines on the uplands
 swell,
 You might think you were reigning in Heaven—I know I am
 ruling in Hell."

What would my critics say if I were to change my strong policy for a weak one? Would not the result be the same as in the case of the Khyber Pass, which the English have not been able to render safe for travellers without a strong body-guard, even after sixty years' rule. Travellers and caravans are still in fear of being killed. But throughout the whole of my kingdom there is no need for guards to travel with the caravans: men and women—even English women—go about day and night without the slightest danger and without body-guards.

When I collect the revenues of my Government I am accused of being greedy, but were I to leave this income to officials and other robbers to put in their own pockets, would my friends, the critics, give me something with which to pay my army and meet the Government expenses?

I cannot help being suspicious when I call to mind past historical events in Afghanistan; for instance, kings have been murdered, unjustly dethroned and treacherously taken prisoners by their internal and external *friends*, as I may call them. An Epilogue by Sadi runs as follows:

"One day, as I was in the bath, a friend of mine put into my hand a piece of scented clay. I took it, and said to it, 'Art thou musk or ambergris, for I am charmed with thy perfume?' It answered: 'I was a despicable piece of clay, but I was some time in the

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company of the rose ; the sweet qualities of my companion were communicated to me, otherwise I should be only a bit of clay as I appear to be !”

The above quotation from Sadi shows that I have been scented in the wrong way by the effect of the behaviour of my neighbours, as well as those in the country who love to be peaceful! It is natural, that a person should be suspicious when he finds himself surrounded by selfish people who are longing to snatch the first opportunity to take a slice of Afghanistan, just like robbers keenly watching the housekeeper. The moment that his eyes are closed they break into his house ; if by chance he awakes, and asks : “ What are you doing ? ” the answer is : “ Oh, I am your friend, I am only joking ! ” If the housekeeper’s eyes are turned away, the “ friend ” takes away his property—in a joke ! It is not a happy life to be always suspicious ; to be always in fear of being cheated, or killed ; but it is a condition of things that is inseparable from such a position as I hold. I often say to my personal friends among the courtiers : “ What an unhappy life we all lead ! All the time you are in my presence I keep on watching to see which of you, owing to your stupidity, may attack me. And, on the other hand, your anxiety is so great, that you leave your wives and children in suspense, anxiously wondering which of you will return to them safe and sound, and which of you may possibly be hanged for your own offences, or for intriguing with your colleagues and so-called friends.”

“ It is very sweet,” says Sadi, “ to sleep under the cooling shade of the trees in the jungle after

a hot day's march; but this remaining behind the main body of the caravan in a jungle haunted by lurking robbers brings danger to life." I will not waste time in further discussing this unpleasant subject; I will only add before proceeding that, though every Government has its good and bad points and weaknesses, and there is room for criticism, the greatest mistake that any one can make is never to make a mistake; yet still it is quite certain that every nation will be better ruled by a Government composed of members from among the people. Nations under foreign rule are liable to misunderstandings, because when ruler and ruled belong to two different nationalities their ideas and views of things are also different. I must say, therefore, that I understand my people better than could any ruler from another country.

*Foreign Representatives at the Court of Kabul, and
Kabul Representatives at Foreign Courts*

It is of the highest importance that Afghanistan as an independent kingdom, and one which has a great future before her, should have ambassadors and ministers at all the foreign courts; and that foreign representatives should be received at the Court of Kabul in return. But like many other things that must wait their time until Afghanistan is sufficiently advanced to adopt them, this is also a matter which must be patiently waited for. I advise my sons and successors and my nation to keep on trying to gain this point until they succeed, and thus fulfil the desire of my heart.

I will mention a few of the advantages as well as disadvantages of such a measure. In one sense Afghanistan is at present in many respects the most independent Muslim Power in the world. Unlike some other Muslim Powers, she is free from the troublesome domination of the Concert of Europe; she is not hampered by any capitulations with foreign Powers; she has no war indemnities or national debt to pay which might necessitate further concessions before allowing her to buy war materials. England is bound by her good faith to fight for the maintenance of the independence of Afghanistan against all aggressors; but for all that England herself is not allowed to interfere in the home policy of my country. England is also bound to send annually a Muslim Envoy to my Court, this Muslim Envoy must be an Indian by birth, and the appointment is subject to my approval. This authority has not been given by England to any other Muslim Court in the world, and no Power in the world has any treaty right to interfere in the internal or external affairs of Afghanistan, with this one exception, that Afghanistan must keep Great Britain informed about her communications with foreign Powers.

There is no reason why, when every other Muslim Power has its representatives at foreign courts, Afghanistan alone should be excepted.

My people must not jump at conclusions without first considering deliberately and carefully the words of my advice: for instance, I would, under no circumstances, allow foreign representatives to be at my Court at present — the time is not yet ripe for

such a step. In the first place, to invite foreign representatives to Kabul before we are strong enough to defend ourselves against foreign aggression, would be a great mistake. This is a question which must go side by side with opening up railways and instituting telegraphs, after adequate military preparations have been made. The second danger in admitting foreign representatives at present is that my people are not properly educated to understand what is for their own good and *vice versa*; they are not sufficiently patriotic to understand the value of having their own ruler. The foreign representatives, while on the one hand they persuade my subjects to spread false reports, and to lay complaints against my Government before foreign courts, will, on the other hand, step in to make themselves judges and settle disputes between me and my subjects—disputes caused by themselves in their own interests to divide up my country. The third danger in having foreign representatives at the Court of Afghanistan is that my Government would incur the danger of foreign intrigues in the country, for the purpose of causing disruption among the tribes, and so dividing up the country. And certainly there would be the danger of every one of the Great Powers claiming concessions and control of various matters, if we were thus to give them a chance for every sort of interference. It would be a great drawback to the progress of the country if such things happened before the people are properly prepared for innovations.

But, in the future, when Afghanistan shall have

arrived at a sufficiently high state of advance and progress, and when she can place an adequate force in the field against her enemies; when, too, her statesmen are educated up to the requirements of their high office, and have gained experience in diplomacy, so that they are able to cope with the intrigues of the foreign ambassadors, then will be the time for admitting foreign representation. The advantages of this course of action are numerous: at the same time, I may mention that, if the Powers were represented at the Court of Afghanistan, such representatives would not allow any one Power to make unjust encroachments upon Afghan territory, or to fight against her without good and sufficient cause being given to justify such a warlike policy.

On the other hand, the representatives of Afghanistan in foreign countries would profit immensely by their experiences at other Courts; this alone would prove of great benefit to the nation generally, and would bring the various communities of other countries into contact with my people. Such a measure if adopted would also open up trade and commerce; travellers would be attracted, capitalists also, to take an interest in the scenery and resources of my country. The larger the number of rich inhabitants that there are in a country the less danger is there of rebellions and tumults, because it is to the interest of a rich community to maintain peace, which means the protection and safety of their possessions and interests. The last but not the least advantage of mutual representation by ambassadors when the proper time comes, would be to add to the

dignity, fame, and reputation of my Government: Eastern monarchs especially value their prestige and dignity in the eyes of other sovereigns, more than they value anything else.

The world was not made in a day, and God by taking a week in the creation of the world set an example to us that we must have patience, working hard but firmly. The first step in the right direction has been to make arrangements with the British Government to allow their Muslim Indian Envoy to come to my Court, and in return to have my Envoy with the Indian Government, but there are now reasons why it is of the highest importance that as soon as possible we should have our ambassador at the Court of St James. I have made several attempts to succeed in this matter, the most important of which occurred in 1895, when I sent my son, Nasrullah Khan, to England with this special object in view. I was more than hurt by the failure of his mission. Before proceeding any further with this subject, however, I must advise my sons and successors not to take any serious offence on account of this refusal, for we must remember the story of that lover who used to get a sweet melon from the hands of his beloved every day. She used to take great pains to cut it into tiny little slices, and place it upon a costly porcelain plate before him when he visited her. One day it happened that she got hold of a very bitter melon by mistake, and as she had not tasted it herself, she put it before him as usual. The man went on eating it without saying a word about its bitterness. When the last

piece only of the melon was left upon the plate, one of his friends came in and took it up to eat, but finding it so bitter, asked his friend why he had not told his beloved of the bitterness of the melon. He answered that it would have been most ungrateful after having eaten a sweet melon every day for months to grumble about a bitter melon which he had only to eat once. This of course endeared him more in the eyes of his ideal! Among the many proofs of favour which Queen Victoria, her family, and Government have shown me and members of my family and Government, we must bear one bitter refusal.

Not only is it dangerous for Afghanistan to have no representative at the Court of London; it is equally dangerous for England herself, if not more dangerous, than for Afghanistan. It is a very great pity that England should attach so little importance to the safety of the Indian frontier; or, in other words, to India; which has made England into an Empire. It is well known to the world that it is only in this Queen's reign that the title of Empress was assumed, and that her Government became an Imperial Government. It was the possession of India which first gave to England a dignity greater than that of Holland or other small countries. The loss of India to Great Britain means the loss of what made her into an Empire: she should therefore take every precaution to ensure the safety of India against its invasion by any foreign Power or Powers. Still, there is so little known about India, and so little interest taken in Indian affairs in England, that one feels

inclined to think that there is some truth in the version of those people who say: "Oh, England does not think that India is worth the anxieties which it gives her at present, and therefore, if the worst comes to the worst, she will leave it." I do hope and pray that this is not the desire of the hearts of the British public, for, though if the British leave India they have other places to live in, yet other states and Powers which have severed their relations with other Powers, putting their confidence in the support of Great Britain, will have no other homes to go to in the event of their country being annexed by their neighbours. But if, unfortunately, England intends to leave India without fighting for its safety and protection to the bitter end, the sooner that she informs her friends the better it will be for them, because, in such a case, her friends can take any course they choose for their own safety. I do not believe that Russia has any enmity against Afghanistan, regarding it only as a rather serious obstacle in her way to India, and if Russia ever did attack Afghanistan it would be only upon this account. This point, I will, however, discuss in another place.

The articles which appear from time to time in many newspapers and magazines concerning Afghanistan, and the speeches that are made by some members of Parliament, show how little is known about my country and its relations with India, and the value of its friendship. For instance, Russia is doing everything in her power to come close to England in the East, on land, and to have all her frontier line joined with the frontier line of the Indian Empire. Some-

times I am amused and sometimes I am sad, to think of the ignorance displayed by Members of Parliament in their speeches. They say: "We must not let Afghanistan stand in our way; we must join our railway lines with those of Russia; we must clear out this uncivilized spot, taking ourselves up to Kandahar on one side of the Hindu Kush and leaving to Russia the other side of the Hindu Kush." These true friends of Russia and pioneers of peace, these wise enemies of Great Britain, do not understand that they are fighting for the interests and the desires of Russia at the expense of England.

It is a well-known fact that when two nations do not know each other well, and do not associate or come into touch with each other, frequent misunderstandings arise from this very cause, such misunderstandings being fatal to all friendly intercourse and friendly relations. Nothing can be done by diplomacy where suspicion exists, because every word that is spoken is looked upon with suspicion and distrust, and is in consequence misconstrued. How is it possible for the Afghans and the British to understand each other when politicians, or rather, the Indian Government, are always trying to keep them aloof by not appointing an Afghan Embassy?

It will be, as I have said, a long time before Afghanistan is in a position to allow the representatives of any other Power but England to take up residence at Kabul, as also for Afghan representatives to be appointed to any other Court but that of London. So far as England is concerned, however, such a measure would bring her into closer touch with Afghanistan

than at present; it would cement firmly the friendship which already exists; it would clear up many misunderstandings and suspicions; it would introduce a true knowledge of the power, the education, and the modern inventions of Great Britain to the Afghans in their own country. It would open up the way and encourage Afghan youths to go to England and Europe for their education; it would give true and useful information and knowledge of Eastern affairs and policy to the Government in England, and would contradict many false statements that cause distrust of our nation among foreigners; it would put Afghanistan into the position, in the eyes of the world, and especially in the eyes of other Muslim sovereigns, of a fully recognised independent kingdom, as it is acknowledged to be by Great Britain herself—in theory! There is no reason why it should not be so recognised in practice. As far as my experience goes, whenever I have managed with the greatest difficulty to get my letters laid before the proper authorities in England, the answer has always been to refer me, in polite but firm language, to the Indian Government, saying that I must lay my case before them. It is all very well to ask a person to put his case before a judge against whom he is making a complaint!

Though English writers and politicians are almost unanimous in their agreement that war with Afghanistan is a mistake, after such war has been brought about by their Viceroy, what is the use of trying to save the spilt milk when it is too late? Sadi says: "A fool does the same thing that a wise man

does; the only difference being, simply, that the fool does it after suffering for his mistake, and the wise person does it before he suffers." Instead of first taking poison, and then going to a doctor for an antidote, it is better not to take poison at all.

The changes that the English policy has undergone concerning Afghanistan show very clearly that the English have never grasped the full meaning of their relations towards Afghanistan. I will give a few of the more important changes without going into details. The first policy was at the time of my grandfather, Dost Mahomed Khan, when they interfered in the domestic broils of the ruling family of Afghanistan, putting one man on the throne, and dethroning the other. The English here tried to dethrone and imprison my grandfather, Dost Mahomed Khan, who had given them no offence—a step for which they had no justification. It was not an honest policy to place Shah Shujah on the throne against the wishes of the Afghan people by the force of English bayonets. This policy resulted in the terrible disaster to the English forces at Kabul. This taught them the lesson never to interfere in the domestic quarrels of the Afghan claimants to the throne of Kabul.

Then came the second stage—"a passive policy," or the policy of leaving Afghanistan alone, which policy, although called by the English strong, I call weak and timid: the putting of Amir Shere Ali Khan under the influence and into the arms of Russia, which resulted in the Second Afghan War. It is a curious thing that England did not ask Russia

for an explanation of her conduct in giving protection to Shere Ali, and for interfering with Afghanistan, in the face of her standing treaties with Great Britain, which were against any such measures, but they punished Shere Ali for this, though Lord Lytton himself had ordered him to write letters to General Kaufmann. I do not say that Amir Shere Ali was not guilty of breaking his faith with England, but I certainly say that it was caused by the so-called passive and inactive policy of the Indian Government: in other words, leaving Afghanistan to its own fate.

Then came the third policy — that of Lord Lytton, who tried to cut Afghanistan up into small pieces, dividing it up into parts, by leaving Kandahar and certain other provinces under the possession of Great Britain, the other parts being divided between other rulers. This also was disapproved, but the so-called “Forward Policy” is an offspring of Lord Lytton’s policy.

Then followed the fourth policy, namely, that of keeping Afghanistan as an independent kingdom and a strong barrier for the safety of the Indian Empire, owing to her position between Russia and India. I am happy to say that this is the policy which is at present wisely adopted by the Government in England as well as by the Indian Government. It is, however, somewhat disappointing to find that it is not carried out to the extent it ought to be.

The arguments brought against my having a representative in London are as many as there are mouths of Anglo-Indians, and perhaps even a few more, including the supporters of the “Forward

Policy" in England; I will deal only with the few. First, I am told that I cannot have a representative in London without having a representative of Russia at Kabul. I see no reason for this, when there is already my representative with the Government of India, and the representative of the Government of India at Kabul, and there is no representative of Russia at Kabul at the same time. And, besides, my treaty with Great Britain stipulates that I must have no relations with any foreign Power, except England herself, therefore neither Russia nor any other Power has any right to force me to have their representative on the mere argument of my having one in London. I have entered into no treaties with any foreign Power of any kind, and I have given no promises to the effect that I cannot have my representative in London without their interference. If I, of my own free will, desire to have relations only with Great Britain, what has Russia or any other Power to do with it? In short, I can do anything that I like in this respect without any Power having a right or justification for interfering with me.

I am also told that I cannot have my representative in London without having a Queen's representative at Kabul, and that this Queen's representative must be an Englishman! This definition of "Queen's representative" I cannot understand. There is no reason why this excuse should be made, as there is already a Muslim representative at my Court, who is officially addressed "British Agent at Kabul," and not "Viceroy's Agent at Kabul," which proves that this is merely an excuse. I daresay that the time will

come when an Englishman will be admitted as the British Agent at my Court, but at present the difficulty is this. Anglo-Indians have got into the habit of looking on the Indian Princes and rulers merely as tools in their hands and in the hands of the British Agents in the Indian states, named Residents. In my opinion, these Residents are the real rulers, the rulers themselves being entirely at the mercy of the arbitrary powers of these Residents, who give themselves the airs of sovereigns, and behave in a way that the proud Afghans will not stand. It would be far safer if the British Agent were a Mahomedan, and the excuse that the Queen's representative should be an Englishman can be easily put aside by the argument that all the British Agents are not Englishmen, nor are the British officials and politicians always Englishmen. This causes the other loyal subjects of the Queen, who are not Englishmen, to imagine that they are looked upon with mistrust, while they are quite as loyal as Englishmen, if not more so. I have no objection, personally, to an English Resident, if the English Government will be responsible for his safety and good behaviour. The English nation can understand the position better if I say that there are various commercial agents and the like, who have been in my service in different capacities, and who, though they never had any share whatever in the affairs of my Government, and in fact knew nothing about my internal or external policy, still call themselves in England my advisers and my right-hands and personal friends. On some occasions indeed, it has been brought to my notice that Englishmen have been

made to believe by these people that I was under their control. If, therefore, an ordinary shopkeeper or workman boasts in such a manner, what could not be expected from a Queen's political agent, if he was an Englishman ?

Another argument is : that I get 18 lakhs of rupees annually from the Indian Government, and therefore I must not have my representative in London. Now, I did not accept this subsidy on any such conditions ; it is given to me for various reasons, but not one of them mentions anything about this matter, either in connection with London or India. The payment of this subsidy does not minimise my dignity : on the contrary, it raises the value of my friendship, and England does not give her money in vain. History is full of instances where monarchs receiving subsidies from other sovereigns were also permanently represented at their Courts. Great Britain herself paid subsidies to more than one Continental prince in good old times, and her sovereign received the agents of the subsidised princes without hesitation.

Another argument is, that by admitting my representative, the British Government would be treating me as an independent monarch : but I am an independent monarch already ; I am officially announced on more than a dozen occasions as an independent king : I am addressed as the " King of the God-granted kingdom of Afghanistan ;" my own nation gave me the title of " King and Light of their Nation and Religion," to which the Viceroy responded most cordially.

Some critics say that if there were an Afghan Minister in London, directly communicating with the

Government, complications would arise between the Foreign Office at Simla and my Government. I myself do not think so. My agent, who is with the Viceroy, need never be withdrawn, but in the case of serious friction arising between my Government and the Viceroy, both he and my representative in London could put our case before the Secretary of State in London, which would enable the Cabinet Ministers to hear both sides of the question before giving their judgment, thus controlling that mistaken policy by which only one side is heard. As things are at present, Afghanistan has no chance whatever of explaining the true state of affairs.

I have been trying hard to persuade my people to give up their old hostile feelings towards the British nation, and to become true friends and allies with them. Under these conditions, if one of their countrymen should be appointed as Minister residing in the city of London, the communication and intercourse would inspire friendly feelings in the hearts of both nations, and the British nation would know a little more about the Afghans than they do at present, or are likely to do, under present conditions.

I do not agree with some English statesmen and generals, who say in their written articles that the less they see of the Afghans the better they will like them! On the contrary, the more that the English and the Afghans see of each other in a friendly manner, the more likely it will be for these plants of friendship to flourish, the seeds of which have been sown by me. But of course if the English writers mean by this that the less they see of the Afghans, with the intention of invading their

country, or with the design of interfering in their internal policy ; in that case, it is quite true that the less they see of us the better. But I do not think they will bite anybody without being troubled. However, my advice to my sons and successors is to draw in the ties of friendship with the British nation as soon and as closely as they will allow them to do. In the event of the British not receiving the overtures of my sons and successors favourably, the latter must not complain, otherwise they will lose even what they possess already, as exemplified in the story of a person who was dreaming that God offered him some pence. He said : " No, I want precious stones ;" then God offered him silver coins ; the man still insisted on precious stones. He was then offered a few gold coins, and he demanded more. All at once he awoke and found he had nothing at all, so closing his eyes again, he stretched out his hands, and said : " Give me whatever you like ; I will take it and be thankful." But it was too late—he got nothing !

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN

IN my opinion, this last portion of my book is the most complicated and difficult one to deal with; but everything that I shall say in this section is the outcome of an experience achieved by me during my whole life, which has been full of difficulties, anxieties, adventures, travellings and various kinds of responsibilities. From my childhood up to 1880, nearly forty years of my life were passed in Russia, or on the borders of Russia, or else in travelling near the Russo-Chinese and Perso-Russian frontiers. From 1880 up to the present day I have spent all my time in studying the policies and characters of my two strong neighbours—namely, England and Russia. It would be unwise as well as impolitic to reveal the sources from which I have derived my information, and which are still open to me. By means of these sources I am able to deal with this subject from the point of view of experience. I will therefore merely state facts, without giving reasons or full details of such a nature as would reveal the secrets of my Government. I do not take into consideration the opinions or writings of the statesmen,

travellers and literary people in various countries, and it is not my object to criticise their opinions or to invite criticism from them. I speak only what I think wise for my sons and successors and my nation to know and follow. In giving my opinion I shall try to be very impartial and frank, and will endeavour not to appear either as a Russophobe or a Russophile—neither pro-English nor anti-English.

*The Policy of Russia and Great Britain towards
Islamic Powers in Asia.*

The Russian policy in Asia is, that in any way, rightly or wrongly, friendly or unfriendly, with peace or war, the Islamic kingdoms should be washed away from the face of the Asiatic continent. They would be glad if Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan ceased to exist as kingdoms, but were maintained merely to be used as tools in the service of Russia herself, in which case it would be a matter of indifference whether they existed or not, and their duration would simply depend upon the length of time that Russia required them to serve her purpose. It is Russia's desire to absorb and swallow up Persia, Turkey, and Afghanistan, but in the event of this plan failing, she would then try to cut off the Islamic Governments from the friendship of England, and draw them towards herself, so that they might take up arms against England. In this case also the Islamic Governments would end by being absorbed into Russia. Russia thinks that having failed in either of the above policies, the third

policy to adopt would be to cause misunderstandings between England and the Islamic kingdoms, in such a manner that Russia might find her opportunity to arrange with England in the division of these Islamic kingdoms, and by the help of Great Britain to bring about a general disarmament of the Central Asiatic Muslims. The last, but not the least, matter of important policy that Russia has at heart is to keep the various Muslim governments and communities of Asia in a state of disunion among themselves, as well as to cut them off from England. Russia knows well that if at any time she were engaged in a war with any of these Muslim kingdoms, or with Great Britain, there would be a general rising throughout all her Muslim subjects; this would be a very serious matter for her, because, in the event of such a general rising, the whole vast empire would fall into pieces and be divided up into petty states—the usual end to all empires ruled by force and despotism. To prove the truth of my statement about Russia's desire to ruin or divide the Muslim kingdoms, or at least to weaken them, the recorded events in past history are sufficient for reference to scholars and students of politics and Asiatic affairs.

During the years of my residence in Russia I had the opportunity upon many occasions of discussing politics with General Kaufmann, the then Governor-General of Russian Turkestan, and other Russian politicians. I then became fully convinced and informed about the above policy towards the destruction of Mahomedan Powers. How very little Russia expected at that time that I should be king of

Afghanistan and the strongest opposer of this policy at some future date! One instance may be quoted to give a clear idea of the treachery of Russia, as well as the policy stated above. In 1875, when I was in the position of seeing General Kaufmann and of knowing his private and public plans, he wrote to his Government through the then Russian Minister in London, Count Schouvaloff, as follows :—

“Russia and England had in Asia one common interest and one common foe. Their common interest was civilization and the separating of the Christian religion, the faith of both countries; and their common foe was Islamism, the only danger to the British rule in India; the other dangers being merely imaginary. Islamism would prove a very real and dangerous enemy of England in India, and the Mahomedan subjects of India would make use of the first favourable opportunity to rouse up a general rising against England in India; it is a matter, therefore, of the very highest importance that England should be closely allied and united with Russia, and that Afghanistan, as well as other Central Asiatic Mahomedan States, ought to be divided between Russia and England, so that the frontiers of the Indian Empire and that of Russia should be closely in touch with each other. This would save England from every anxiety, because she would have her true friend the Christian Empire, Russia, near at hand to help her at times of risings in India, or in any other difficulties with which she might be embarrassed. England ought therefore to throw herself entirely on the friendly assurances and promises of Russian support,” etc.

During the whole time that the Russian Ambassador in London was trying to make Great Britain believe in the peace-loving friendship of Russia towards England, and her hatred to Afghanistan, Russia was, in an underhand

way, communicating with Shere Ali Khan, telling him the very opposite, by which smooth words they persuaded him to turn against England and enter into an alliance with themselves. In this way Russia succeeded in sowing the seeds of discord between England and Afghanistan, which resulted in a war in which great loss of men and money was suffered by England and Afghanistan. This story of the Russians reminds me of the story of an agent who used to take his commission from the housebreakers as well as from the householders, by telling the burglar; "You can go and steal as much as you like, as there is nobody awake at this moment," the burglar giving him his commission for the friendly advice. Immediately afterwards, the agent would go to the householder, awaking him, and warning him of the intended visit of the burglar, thus earning a commission from him likewise.

Amir Shere Ali Khan, who was foolish enough to believe in Russian promises and support, was left to his own ruin by the Russian Agent, who departed from Kabul the moment he had succeeded in making war between Shere Ali Khan and England. The English Government, on the other hand, could not make Russia pay for breaking her promise of non-interference in Afghan affairs. Instead of opposing the Russian policy of weakening Afghanistan, the English supported that policy by cutting off Kandahar, Kuram, Khyber, and other provinces, from the kingdom of Afghanistan. This of course brought the Indian frontier nearer to the Russian possessions in Asia, and weakened Afghanistan, which was the object that Russia had had in view all along, and was the desire of her heart. This

was the gist of General Kaufmann's policy, as quoted above.

In short, the policy of the Russian Government towards the Amir of Bokhara, the other Mirs of Central Asia, as well as towards Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan, has always been directed towards the prevention of their becoming strong Powers to oppose their everlasting aggression. Gradually, slowly, but firmly and constantly, Russia takes advantage of the difficulties and weakness of the Asiatic Powers, benefiting herself by the losses of others. She has taken some of the Islamic States entirely, others partially, into her possession, and she cannot bear the sight of any military preparations set on foot by any of the Islamic sovereigns. The one point which is quite correct in General Kaufmann's statement, above quoted, is this, that Russia has a dangerous foe in Islamism, and not without reason.

The English policy, on the other hand, towards Islam in general and all the Islamic Powers in Asia, is friendly, and her whole desire is that they should continue and remain strong and independent. But this policy is subject to occasional temporary fits and changes. The English policy is not like that of Russia—constant, firm, and permanent. The ideas and notions of any statesman or leader who is in power in England become, for the time being, the policy of the empire, and his instructions are followed by his Ministry. But when a sudden change occurs and clears him out of office, the policy of another person, whose views are the very opposite of those of the former leader, become, in their turn, the policy

of the Empire. It cannot therefore be said that such and such a policy of Great Britain is permanent, but so much is certain, that the general policy of Great Britain has been for a long time past to the following effect: namely, that the Islamic Governments, which are a barrier and strong wall between India and Asiatic Russia, should exist and have their independence strongly maintained, to continue as a strong barrier wall in the way of Russian advance towards India. On the other hand, the Russian policy is the very opposite, not only because she wishes to join her borders with those of India, but because she has the fear ever before her of general Mahomedan risings against her at times when she may be engaged in war with Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, or India.

There is no doubt that Mahomedans all over the world prefer the friendship of the British Empire to that of Russia; they consider that their friendship and peace rest in being on friendly terms with Great Britain. It is for this reason, therefore, that notwithstanding the fact that they may have more causes of complaint against England than against Russia, they will never be desirous of joining hands with Russia against England, and, if they ever do so, it will be because they have been forced into it.

Considering the above arguments, one matter is of very great importance as regards the interests of Great Britain and the Indian Empire, as well as for the interests of Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan. It is merely a suggestion which, if accepted by the statesmen of these Governments, would prove of very great

advantage to all of them. It is that Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan, which are three brother Muslim kingdoms and states of one faith, ought to be closely united with each other, and, if possible, to have their capitals connected by railways and telegraphs. This would make a strong wall in the face of constant Russian aggression towards India, and also protect the Islamic Governments themselves. As the foundation of such a triple alliance is for the benefit of Great Britain, and depends largely upon the desire and help of Great Britain, the sooner that the English Government takes steps to bring this about the better. Turkey and Persia are already trying to cement friendly feelings between themselves, but Afghanistan, having a treaty with Great Britain not to carry on any political communications with other foreign Powers without the knowledge and advice of Great Britain, cannot communicate with Persia or Turkey, though Afghanistan looks upon the interests of Persia and Turkey as her own. Of course the policy of the Sultan of Turkey, or of the Shah of Persia, or my own policy, is to keep and maintain our own independence and integrity, neither allowing Russia nor England to take any part of our dominions, and to stick to such one of our neighbours as will respect our integrity and independence, and to fight against those who try to weaken our power. And we, knowing that England does not want any of our dominions, but rather to keep as far away from Russia as possible, are naturally bound to keep on friendly terms with Great Britain as long as she holds to this policy of non-interference and supporting our dominions.

I must give one example to show that it is to the interests of Great Britain that the Muslim sovereigns of Asia should be closely united to each other. In 1877, when Amir Shere Ali Khan was proclaiming Jihad against the English, and was concentrating his troops on the Indian frontier, one of the Mahomedans who visited Amir Shere Ali's Court as a representative of the Sultan of Turkey, tried to persuade the Amir not to proclaim Jihad against the English. The Amir had also stopped the mobilisation of his armies on the borders of India; the Indian Government noticed this sudden change in the mind of the Amir in favour of the English, which had been brought about by the influence that the Sultan's representative had brought to bear upon the Amir. Unfortunately, however, the Amir having had no previous communications with the Sultan of Turkey, was rendered suspicious about this representative, as the friends of Russia who were at the Court of the Amir told him that he was nothing but a puppet in the hands of his advisers. They further said that this so-called representative of the Sultan of Turkey was a spy sent by the English to deceive him. The Amir was foolish enough to believe these stories without endeavouring to find out from the Government of Turkey if they were true. The mission of this representative was, therefore, a failure. Had there been a permanent means of communication between these two Islamic Governments, it would have been of very great advantage to the English as well as to Afghanistan.

In short, so long as England and Afghanistan are

friendly, and realise that their advantages and disadvantages are mutual, Russia will never dream of invading Afghanistan or India with any chance of success. Should Russia be so foolish as to attack Afghanistan or any other Islamic Power (though I believe she knows better than to do so), which should be honestly and truly supported by Great Britain, Russia would find herself in such difficulties from facing the Mahomedan Power in front and a general Mahomedan rising within her dominions behind, with perhaps an attack upon St Petersburg by the British Navy, or upon some other part of her European Empire, that this immense Empire, which is ruled not by love but by fear, would fall into pieces and become disintegrated.

It is very saddening to see that the British Empire, instead of supporting the Mahomedan sovereigns and making them strong enough to hold their own against Russia; or instead of stopping Russian aggression and interference in Asiatic States, contrary to her standing treaties, vows and promises, so acts that whenever Russia takes one portion of any of the Oriental countries to encroach near to the Indian borders, the English take another piece from the corner to shorten the distance from Russia. In this way, the Islamic Governments and States are being divided up day by day, and the frontiers of India and Russia which used to be thousands of miles away from each other, are now nearly touching.

In any case of the breaking out of hostilities between Great Britain and Russia, all the Mahomedan sovereigns and communities would support England.

Firstly, on account of the free exercise of their religion which they enjoy under the rule of the Queen, and more especially because they know that they are safe from Russian persecution and tyranny only so long as there is another great Empire like England to oppose Russia in the East. They know that the downfall of England in the East would end in the Muslim countries being absorbed by Russia. Those people who believe that the Persians are more under the influence of Russia than that of England, are wrong; they must know that it is the constant fear of Russian force which makes Persia obliged to keep quiet and to suffer under Russian influence. Should Persia ever see Russia in serious trouble with England, Persia would be the first Power to release herself from the bear's claws.

Having reviewed the relations of England and Russia towards the Islamic States and religious communities of Asia, I will proceed to mention a few points which especially concern Afghanistan, in addition to the points already given.

Russian Invasion of India and her Policy towards Afghanistan

In the last section I mentioned the Russian policy towards the Mahomedan States of Central Asia, in which, of course, Afghanistan is included. But in addition to what I have already said, I will mention a few more points here which concern Afghanistan particularly.

Russian invasion of India would be not only

difficult—but impossible, so far as one can judge from present conditions. It does not follow, however, that Russia has no intention of invading India ; there is not the slightest doubt that Russia is determined and certain in her heart to attack India whenever she finds an opportunity to do so. The ideas of English statesmen differ vastly in this respect, and there are not a few who hold the opinion that Russia has no intention of fighting England in India. People who say that Russia has no desire to attack India or the British Empire in the East, I classify under four headings: firstly, those who are not politicians. These people are so simple that having before the eyes of their mind dozens of treaties and vows broken by Russia, still go on putting their confidence in Russian declarations of peace and further false promises. They are unable to understand that the Russian policy is to break their treaties and oaths at any moment that suits their purpose. In taking a new country they enter into new promises, and are again believed by some English officials, who have very bad memories for the former promises of Russia.

Secondly, The second group is that which is directly or indirectly inspired by Russian policy to plead her cause.

Thirdly, This group consists of those who are proud of the great Empire of Great Britain, and, owing to their ideas of their own greatness, imagine that it is impossible for Russia ever to think of opposing their mighty power.

Fourthly, The group of people who call themselves lovers of peace. They see Russia swallowing up

Central Asia, province after province, and gradually encroaching on the borders of India: they see that on various occasions in the past Russian plans and plots for the invasion of India have been fully proved and found out. But knowing this, they still believe that if England maintained the policy of not opposing Russian aggression, and pretending that Russia has no intention of invading India—in that case Russia would never attack India. Firdusi, the author of “Shah Namah” (“History of the Kings”), says that if you will show to your enemy that you are not prepared to go to war and shrink from it, you will invite him to attack you. The example of the last-mentioned group reminds me of the pigeon who, seeing a cat coming towards him, closed his eyes, thinking that if he did not see the cat, the cat would not see him; but the cat did see him, and caught him and ate him up.

In addition to what I have said elsewhere to support my statement in this respect, I will add for the information of my readers that throughout my twelve years' residence in Russia I discovered that there is not the slightest doubt that Russia is always plotting towards one end, the invasion of India.

To give the full details of all the causes that would induce Russia to attack India would require a volume all to itself. It is sufficient to say here that the Russians are by nature an aggressive, grabbing and pushing race, fully aware that all the Asiatic States are too weak to resist their aggression single-handed, except Great Britain in India, and Great Britain alone; it is therefore natural that Russia should

regard Great Britain as her only formidable enemy and rival in Asia. Every one knows that were not Great Britain in the way, Russia would take little heed of the Powers of Persia, Afghanistan, China, and Turkey, nor would she respect their independence very long. No other European Power but Great Britain has any possessions in the East worth speaking of, and they would be quite satisfied to stand by and let Russia take her own course if she allowed them a small share of her booty. England has a larger population in her Eastern Empire than Russia, and it is to the interest of England to oppose Russian aggression upon the weak Powers of Asia, and to keep her away from the borders of India. That Russia hates the sight of a great Power like Great Britain in the East is quite natural. She cannot very easily forget what she suffered at the hands of Great Britain during the time of the Crimean war, and the opposition she has received on various occasions.

The Russian people look upon India as a great treasure-house for gold and looting, and I have often seen Russian soldiers jumping for joy at the idea that they might one day have a hand in plundering this rich country, and they longed for the day when fighting should begin between England and Russia upon the borders of India. The Russians are so hopelessly ignorant that they believe that Indians do not love the English, and are devoted to the Russian bear, and that they worship the ground upon which it treads. Even some of the great Russian statesmen believe that the moment Russia

glances down from the peaks of the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush mountains towards India, the Indians would rise like a swarm of wasps to sting and crush the English and support Russia. Indeed their ignorance is so profound that it is a common belief that directly Russia should make her appearance the English would flee away precipitately without striking one blow in self-defence. I am afraid the Russians will suffer for this stupid folly some day.

The Russians believe that they can go on breaking promises and treaties and advancing further and ever moving onward; on the other hand, the English show either indifference to this constant aggression or satisfy themselves by taking a corner for themselves, which is a definite proof of England's weakness and the terror with which she regards Russia. By thus allowing Russia to continue her constant advance without strong protest, the prestige of the latter is greatly increased in the eyes of Oriental monarchs, while that of England is decreased, as well as her influence being lessened. This constant increase in Russian influence makes the Russians believe that the Oriental States are sure to side with Russia, willingly or unwillingly.

The fifth and perhaps the only reasonable belief that Russia holds is that it is very difficult to fight with England upon the sea, but that on land England has not an army large enough to spare from other parts of her vast Empire to protect thousands of miles of frontier, as would be the case when Russian boundaries should touch those of England, from China up to Turkey; which day, according to the

Russian belief and their present activity in making railways and roads, is not very far off.

Having explained that Russia is determined to attack India sooner or later, when she can find a favourable opportunity, several questions arise for our consideration.

I am not a prophet, and the teachings of our religion are, that "God alone knows the hidden mysteries of the future, and to Him alone are the gates of the secrets of the future revealed." (Koran). No one can say for certain what is to happen tomorrow, but taking matters as they stand at the present time, I will give my views and opinion.

I do not believe in the word "impossible" when applied to any matter; in fact there is no such thing as impossibility, because if it is the Divine Will that a thing should happen, it is certain to do so, though it may appear impossible to us—nothing is impossible for God. If He does not wish certain events to occur, no earthly power can bring it about against the Divine Will. It is therefore not beyond the bounds of possibility that Russia may attack India. But she can never carry out this plan without the support and combination of some other Power, and as there is no likelihood of any other Power uniting with Russia to invade India, without, at the same time, some Power joining England also, these designs of Russia are nothing but delusive dreams which will never be fulfilled. It is possible that this Russian dream might be partially fulfilled, as was the dream of a doctor who, having cured a patient, was told to take as many gold coins out

of the treasury as he could carry on his shoulders. The greedy doctor overloaded himself to such an extent, that the heavy burden broke his shoulders; and, feeling a severe pain in that part of his body, he suddenly awoke and found that there were no gold coins, but that the pain was there. The Russians will take upon themselves as many unnecessary burdens and pains for the purpose of invading India, and plundering its treasure, as did the doctor in his dream, and the result will be failure in an attack on India, but the pains of the undertaking will remain.

But let us now examine the idea of another Power joining Russia in her invasion of India. There is not the slightest doubt that some of the European Powers view the greatness and strength of the British Empire with prejudiced and jealous eyes; this obliquity of vision makes them adopt an unnecessarily hostile attitude towards England. All the same I do not think that these Powers are permeated by any great love for Russia, and it certainly would not be to their interests to side with Russia against England, which country is less aggressive and less tyrannical than Russia. During the last few years the tendency of the French nation towards making friends with Russia has increased, while, at the same time, her hatred to England has also continued to grow. This makes me think that possibly France, in remembering her old differences with England in India and at Waterloo, might join hands with Russia, who has also some old debts to pay to England. It is, however, quite obvious to an attentive observer of the march of diplomatic events, that if France

supports Russia, Germany, on her part, will help England. It is equally certain that Germany and England together are much stronger than Russia and France, England being the first Naval Power in the world, and Germany having the greatest and most perfect military organization.

I believe that Austria, Italy, and America, though not openly hostile to Russia, and not particularly friendly towards England, and consequently looked upon as neutral Powers, yet have a decided leaning towards England, which would tell in her favour, and against Russia. Putting these considerations before our mind's eye, we cannot see how any of the European Powers or America could enter into any offensive alliance with Russia in the invasion of India without at the same time causing the rival Powers to join England in a defensive alliance; such a combination would result in one of the most terrible Continental wars the world has ever known—a war, indeed, which might extend all over the world. This has been prophesied by some authorities.

Now, leaving the question of combination between European Powers to support either England or Russia, we will consider such a combination of Asiatic Powers. Except Japan, every one of the Asiatic rulers are anxious to keep only their own territories; they have no desire to join Russia and fight against England, nor to join England in a war against Russia. They regard Russia and England as two more or less aggressive, powerful, absorbing Powers: they are, therefore, only anxious to keep out of their way and to maintain their own independence, integrity, and safety as long as they can.

For these reasons, none of them have a desire to join Russia in any projected invasion of India. More than this, they believe that their safety lies in both Russia and England being strong in Asia, so that they can oppose each other in aggressions upon the countries of weak Asiatic rulers, who regard the rivalries of these two Powers as their safeguard and blessing, and a preventative against their being partitioned off between the two—as every Pharaoh requires a Moses to keep him in check. One of the poets says : “ To catch the bear of the desert of Mazindran, the bull-dog of Mazindran is necessary.” The Japanese Empire is not in Central Asia ; it is, therefore, not in the way of Russian advance towards India : for this reason, Japan is not bound to join either Power in an invasion of India, as would be the case with Afghanistan. It is most certainly to the interest of the Japanese Empire to see the British naval power strong in the Asiatic seas ; it is their earnest desire that this should be so, and that friendly relations should ever exist between their respective countries, and that they should always fear Russian aggression in an easterly direction. All this proves that there is no likelihood of any of the Asiatic Powers joining hands with Russia in an invasion of India.

But the kingdom of Afghanistan is a growing Power, a Power which will be of the greatest importance, and which must always be reckoned with by Russia and England in their designs upon each other. To either of these two great and mighty neighbours the friendship or enmity of a strong Afghanistan is of far greater importance in Asia than that of any other great Empire in the world, for the reason that Afghanistan has a brave army

at her disposal, numbering hundreds of thousands of Islamic heroes, who are born warriors, whether trained soldiers or simple peasants, and who would all sacrifice every drop of blood till the last man was killed, in fighting for their God, their Prophet, their religion, their homes, their families, their nation, their Sovereign, their liberty and independence. The ruler of Afghanistan is also of great importance, on account of the political and geographical position of his country.

Should Afghanistan be in existence at the time of a war breaking out between Russia and England, that Power would certainly be victorious which could secure the support of Afghanistan. In fact, I consider that, so long as Afghanistan exists and remains united within itself and with Great Britain, it is impossible for Russia ever to attempt to attack India, or to go to war against England in Asia. Russia is perfectly well aware of this fact, and knowing the impossibility of attacking India so long as Afghanistan maintains her strength and independence, she desires either to draw Afghanistan into a friendly alliance with herself, or to put her out of the way by some trick or other. It is a matter of the most vital importance to watch this game of Russian politicians in trying to put Afghanistan out of the way, and constant and close observation, as well as far-sighted precaution, should be exercised by the rulers of Afghanistan and of the British Empire.

I may mention here that luckily Russia knows the difficulties that attend going to war against Afghanistan better than those whose sources of information are chiefly some almanacs or books, and articles written by authors, who, after flying through a country in a week

or a few days, ignorant even of the language of the people, write large volumes on the secrets and hidden policies, feelings, and motives of the people of the country. These books and articles are considered great authorities by the public, who should know better than to trust the information contained in them, for they do more harm than good, giving as they do utterly false ideas of the country, its ruler, its institutions, and its people.

It is most ridiculous, and I often laugh heartily at the ignorance of these writers. I will give an instance. During the last forty years many writers have given the number of the population of Afghanistan at 5,000,000 ; the fighting force at 35,000 men. These numbers neither increase nor decrease, according to their account, having stood at these figures for nearly half a century. I do not blame them for their ignorance, because they have no means of knowing the position of the country, or the changes it has gone through. But I do blame writers for pretending to know what they do not, and for deceiving the public by giving them wrong information. Still I am thankful to know that they do not reduce the population or the army, which they are quite capable of doing.

Afghanistan is not strong enough to stand alone, and is bound, for her own safety, to lean upon one of her two strong neighbours against the aggression of the other. A person who puts his feet on two boats to cross a river, is bound to fall into the water and be drowned ; he must, therefore, stand on one or the other, whichever he thinks the safer. But there is no reason why he should fire on the one while he is riding on

the other, unless necessity arises. How can a small Power like Afghanistan, which is like a goat between these two lions, or a grain of wheat between two strong millstones of the grinding mill, stand in the midway of the stones without being ground to dust? It is of the highest importance that one of her strong neighbours should support and protect her against the aggression of the other. Afghanistan is quite free and independent to choose whichever of her two neighbours she prefers, upon whom to bestow her friendship and support, so that the other should not attack her with impunity. I believe that though the railway lines and roads that Russia has made, and brought up close to my country, are the cause of much anxiety to us, and keep us wide-awake to whatever may happen, yet, in one respect, this close neighbourhood of Russia is to the benefit of Afghanistan, in that, should England, without good reason and without any fault on the part of Afghanistan, try to annex their country, she knows that Russia is close enough to advance upon her. For this reason, Afghanistan is not in the same position to-day as she was at the time of Shah Shujah and Amir Shere Ali, when Russia was so far off that it was impossible for her to bring her armies to the borders of Afghanistan through the deserts, where there were no railways and no water.

Having explained that Afghanistan is of necessity obliged to be united with one of her strong neighbours, there is no doubt that at present it is to her advantage and interest to choose England, and to lean upon the friendship and support of England.

Firstly, because England has no intentions of invading Persia or Turkestan, to compass which they might require a road through Afghanistan; while Russia does intend to invade India, hence she does require to pass through my country, and not only to pass through and to be anxious about her rear, but also to take Afghanistan if she can. Secondly, England is a great naval Power and does not wish to fight Russia on land unless obliged; it is therefore to England's own interest and advantage that Afghanistan should be a strong buffer state and barrier in the way of Russia, thereby keeping the two countries of Russia and England apart by land. It is consequently only natural that England desires to see Afghanistan strong and safe, to ensure her own safety and strength in India. Russia, on the contrary, being anxious to fight England on land, desires that Afghanistan should either be united with her and support her in the invasion of India, or be wiped out of existence altogether as a sovereign state. Thirdly, England has money and arms, but requires fighting men. Afghanistan has fighting men, but requires money and arms; it is accordingly to the mutual interest of Afghanistan and Great Britain that they should be combined, in which case England would have the services of the Afghans, and the Afghans would have money and arms from England. Russia can give no money to Afghanistan because she has none for her own needs, and she does not require any men from Afghanistan because she has already more than she can keep in order. Fourthly, the friendship of Afghanistan is of no service to Russia whatever, beyond allowing her to

pass through the country to India, which means placing Afghanistan under the feet of Russia.

Russia might promise to give the ruler of Afghanistan the Punjab, or some other portion of India, and she would make friendly treaties announcing that Afghanistan should always be left independent. But such a treaty would suffer the same fate that has overtaken all the other treaties and oaths made by Russia, namely, to die a natural death the moment it did not suit her to keep to it any longer. But suppose that Russia did not break this treaty (though this would be somewhat miraculous)? In that case, also, Russia could not rule India without having her armies, officials, travellers, and others constantly going through Afghanistan to India, or from India to Russia. In this way Afghanistan would always be under the feet of Russia, who would make use of all the resources of the country, transport, provisions and the like, for her own requirements. They would impress Afghan men for their own military service, and they would put them in front wherever there should be fighting, having a double advantage in view; firstly, by getting rid of the Afghans by their being killed; secondly, by taking possession of their wives and properties. Mahomedans, who are so strict about the reputation of their wives and families, would be unable to bear this kind of treatment, and to see the Russians making free with their country: the result of all this would be a war between Russia and Afghanistan. At such a time, not having the help of England, thousands of men would be killed, leaving widows and orphans and country to the mercy of Russia. I do not say that my sons and successors should be hostile towards Russia; on

the contrary, they must appear to be friendly, and, in fact, be friendly in their hearts, as Russia is a great Power, and might be of some service and help to them in the days of their trouble. It would be the very extreme of folly for the Afghans to provoke the Russians. The wisest policy to pursue is to avoid close relations with Russia, and to keep on the safe side by adopting a middle course.

If, unfortunately, the English were to change their policy and become aggressive, with the intention of annexing Afghanistan or interfering with her independence, in that case the Afghan nation would be compelled to fight against England ; and, in the event of their being entirely defeated, they would join Russia, because she is much closer to the borders of Afghanistan than England is at present, and therefore in a position to support Afghanistan, which was not the case in the time of Shere Ali, she being then too far away to render him any assistance.

In fine, the policy of Afghanistan towards her two strong neighbours should be friendly towards the one which is least aggressive, and hostile to the Power wishing to pass through her country or interfere with her independence. Afghanistan must not, however, by her actions, provoke either of her neighbours, neither must she allow either of them to enter her country under any pretence whatever, no matter what treaties or promises they make.

The policy of the Russian statesmen who guide the movements of Russia in Asia is worthy of great admiration. The advances of the Russian political circle are like the columns of an army moving under the com-

mand of a very capable commander-in-chief, who, having divided his army into four parts, carries on several campaigns at the same time. He arranges the four columns in such a manner that no one of the four seems to show any intention of fighting or attacking the enemy until a suitable opportunity occurs. He keeps the attention of the enemy from being concentrated upon any one point, and immediately he finds that they are becoming weak and neglectful, he attacks immediately, without giving them any time for preparations for defence.

The officials of the Russian Government are busy at the same moment at each of the four following places in the East:—Korea and China on the one side; towards Pamirs and Afghanistan on the other side; towards Persia on the third side; and Turkey on the fourth. They leave out of their calculations any other quarter, outside these four, which they see is wide awake and prepared to oppose their aggression, confining their attacks to those which are weak and neglected.

Jami, the poet, says:—"When Alexander desired to make an attack upon the East, he stationed guards at the doors of the tents of his camp, appearing to be moving towards the West." It was owing to these Russian tactics and policy that, in the time of Shere Ali, they were very actively working in Afghanistan. But during *my* reign, after having tried their games at Panjdeh, Kala-i-nau, and Murghab, they found that Afghanistan was wide awake, and ready to give them a warm reception, upon which they turned their attention in the direction of Pamirs. Directly they

found England prepared to welcome them on the Kashmir and Chitral frontiers, the Russians left that point to sleep, and turned towards China. No sooner did they find that England, Germany, and France were ready to oppose their further advance at this point than they made a *volte-face* towards Persia.

It is possible that the Russian officials imagine that the ruling powers in Afghanistan would stop their military preparations if they thought they (the Russians) would attack India from Pamirs, descending upon Chitral, Kashmir, and Punjab, through Persia, and Seistan, and the Persian Gulf on Karachi and Quetta, and, from the Chinese direction, on Burmah and Bengal, leaving Afghanistan alone. But the Afghan people should know that by thus leaving Afghanistan alone, the Russians are only waiting for my death or some other convenient time. I am sorry to have disappointed my Russian friends so many times, and made them take the trouble to advertise my death, when I was all the while alive and very wide awake to their goings on! But they must not blame me for this, it is not my fault; I cannot die to please them, death being fixed by the Divine Will.

The Russian forces, which are being massed near the borders of Afghanistan, might be intended to move towards Persia, or, again, they might be for the purpose of frightening me, so that I might join hands with Russia against England. Again, this massing of forces might be for the purpose of making English statesmen uneasy, and to stop the movements of the English army in

some other direction. Or, again, these warlike movements of Russia might be for the purpose of helping and bringing forward Ishak, to claim the throne of Kabul after my death. Further, they might be for the purpose of occupying Herat and Balkh at the same time that the English might be occupying Kandahar. In short, whatever their object may be in massing these troops on the borders of Afghanistan, no one can understand. I can only say that I am not a man to be frightened by any one. People who say that the Russians are going to take Herat know very little about the matter; Russian officials are not such fools. Their memory is not so defective that they can have forgotten how, in 1837, when Herat was in the possession of the drunken fool, Kamran, who only possessed this one town, and was not the King of Afghanistan, Russia and Persia together were unable to take Herat, and had to walk away in disgrace after a six months' siege—and Herat was not conquered.

At the present moment I can arrange to mass 100,000 fighting men at Herat within a week; and Afghanistan, being well furnished with the very best war materials and fighting men, is quite prepared to show what she can do. Throughout the whole of Russian Turkestan the Mahomedan chiefs, priests, and other heads of tribes can be stirred up by me if Russia goes to war against Mahomedan countries. Considering all these points, Russian officials must know that it is impossible to attack Herat during my lifetime, because I am prepared to give them a very warm reception.

At the other end of the North-Western border of Afghanistan the fort of Dehdadi, which I have built for the fortification and protection of Balkh, has been finished in twelve years, during which time thousands of men have been working every day. The fort is on the top of a high mountain, and commands the roads leading from the river Oxus towards the borders of Afghanistan. The fortifications of this stronghold are hidden underground, making it impossible for any heavy guns to damage the fort. The assertions of some military experts are quite true when they say that forts, no matter how strong they are, have no value in the presence of modern artillery and guns. But the naval quick-firing guns, Krupp and Hotchkiss and Nordenfeld, Maxim, and other kinds of war material which I have in these forts, are the best that can be found in any empire at the present day; and should there be any further improvements made, I shall be the first man to provide myself with them. I shall not remain far behind my neighbours in this respect.

The most probable point of attack by Russia is from Merv and Ashkabad upon Herat, which commands the road to Kandahar and Quetta, and from the direction of Tashkend and Samarkand on Balkh, which is on the road to Kabul and Peshawar, and from Badakshan on Faizabad and Kataghan. Should Russia, however, contemplate attacking both Afghanistan and India at the same time, their attack would be made from the Pamirs upon Wakhan, Chitral and Kashmir. It is also possible that at some future time Russia might find some loophole for attacking India through Burmah and through Persia.

When Russia approached near to Panjdeh I made the fortifications of Herat stronger than they were before. Upon this Russia showed more signs of activity towards Balkh, which place I had also strongly fortified. She then turned her attention towards Badakshan and Pamirs, to answer which challenge I conquered Kafirstan and, having cut roads from Jellalabad, Lamkhan, Kabul, and Panjshir, prepared myself to meet the Russians in that quarter also. In 1893 I told Sir M. Durand that I could not protect Wakhan against Russian aggression if the English intended cutting away Chitral and Bajaur from me: I accordingly left Wakhan to the responsibility and protection of the English. Now that the Russians are exhibiting activity in the direction of Persia, it is necessary that I should pay earnest attention towards the South-Western borders of Afghanistan, which lie between Herat and Kandahar. So in this way, no matter in what direction the Russian statesmen move their forces, I, having been informed by my spies, send double the number of soldiers to be ready for them whenever they come too near. I also pay, and keep at my Court, the former rulers of Badakshan, Darwaz, Kolab, Roshan and Bokhara, and I have appointed the sons of the Mirs and chiefs of the Turkomans as my special body-guard, thus winning their hearts and cementing the friendship between us. This policy will prove of the greatest service at any time of Russian aggression; though I am sure that, so long as I live, and Russia knows that Afghanistan and England are united, she will never attack Herat or any other part of Afghanistan. For all this, the

Russians continue to mass their forces near the borders of my country under the pretence that they are for the protection of their own subjects in the event of disturbances arising in Afghanistan at the time of my death! Just as if my death should be the signal for the Afghans to attack and invade Russia! It is therefore only reasonable to suppose that I also should continue to mass my forces near the Russian borders, so that if the Russian Mahomedans or other discontented Russian subjects disturb the peace in Russia by a general rising, my forces will be ready to keep the peace by the moral force which always attends upon the possession and exhibition of a strong army against a greedy enemy watching outside.

I say, with certain knowledge, however, that it is not the present policy of Russia to go to war with either England or Afghanistan, the Russian Government not being prepared for such a war. The Russian policy is to keep on moving forward slowly, firmly but constantly, taking one bit of country after another from those lands they find too weak to protect themselves from their encroachments. This is the policy that Russia intends to continue, for the purpose, by slow progress, of joining her borders with those of the Indian Empire, from one end to the other. This accomplished, she will go to war with England. Such being the case, many years must elapse before this Russian scheme can be brought to full fruition, and many things may happen in the meantime to prevent a war taking place between Russia and England.

It is only from the optimistic point of view that

it is argued that Russia could not and would not attack an united India or Afghanistan; so we must not lull ourselves into a false lazy security; it would be an unwise and near-sighted policy not to be fully prepared for any emergency that might arise from the Russian aggressive policy.

I could make many suggestions for stopping and putting an end to this aggressive policy of Russia towards India and Afghanistan, but I will confine myself to giving only a few necessary hints now. The first and most important one is what I have before emphasized, viz., that England and Afghanistan must be firm allies: while such an alliance continues Russia will never attack either of them. Englishmen who say, "Why should we go to war with Russia for the sake of Herat or any other part of Afghanistan?" do not know that to fight for Herat, which is the key to India, is in reality to fight for India itself. If Russia were to take Herat and Afghanistan, she need not trouble much about attacking India, because it would be very difficult for England to rule in India, when her borders should touch those of Russia, necessitating the presence of a very large army, larger indeed than the Indian Treasury and Exchequer could afford to keep. Many more grave complications and difficulties would arise from having Russia as a close neighbour of India. At a time, too, when the brave fighting races of Afghanistan and Turkomans were standing and fighting under the Russian flag, it would require an immense army on the part of England to defend herself and her possessions. If England has no intention of breaking her faith and

treaties (which I am sure she has not) that she has made with my Government to protect Afghanistan against Russian aggression, and if she does not desire to go to war with Russia merely upon the question of Herat, then Englishmen should not make public statements of this policy, because if Russia ever did attack Afghanistan it would be for the purpose of invading India. As long as Russia knows that the unanimous desire of Englishmen and that of the Afghans is to stand and fall together, she will never attack either the one or the other, knowing well that the two combined are too strong for her.

The second hint is: Russia will never stop moving forward till England stops her. If England wishes to put a stop to this aggressive policy, she herself must cease to practise a weak, apathetic, indifferent policy towards the movements of Russia, such as has been carried out by past English politicians. If Russia is once made to understand that any further aggression on her part would be the cause of war, she would be easily turned back by a strong protest. I know well that at the present moment Russia is not prepared, nor is she desirous of going to war against England, but so long as the English exhibit silence and indifference towards Russian aggression, so long will the Russians continue their slow movement forward. If Russia occupies or takes under her influence any one of the three countries—Afghanistan, Persia, or Turkey—it would injure the other two as well as affect India. Therefore her aggression should be opposed when it is turned against any one of these countries. Sadi says: “When a

spring of water first breaks through a small hole, it can be stopped by a finger being placed upon the hole; but it cannot be stopped by putting an elephant before it when it is too large to be stopped."

The third way of stopping Russian aggression in the direction of India is for England to make Afghanistan strong by giving her every help in the shape of money and war materials, and to show Russia in plain and unmistakable language that during my lifetime, as well as after my death, any interference in the affairs of Afghanistan, or putting forward claimants for the throne of Kabul, would mean war between Russia and England.

Afghanistan neither needs nor does she desire that the English army should enter the country at any time under any excuse of fighting against Russia, or the like, so long as we have sufficient money and arms. The only time that the Afghans would willingly admit the English army into their country would be when they had been decisively and officially defeated by Russia, and could not stop her from taking their country by any possible means. But as long as the Afghans can fight for themselves they ought not, and they would not, let one soldier of Russia or England put his foot in their country to expel their enemy, as it would be impossible to get rid of the army which they themselves had invited to help them, who would always have the excuse for remaining by saying that they were keeping the country peaceful. In such a case, if they found that the country was peaceful and the people contented under their rule, they would remain there. If the people rose against them they would say: "As you have broken the

peace, the promise we made that we would return the country to you does not hold good any more."

If England and Russia were to agree to divide up Afghanistan between them, they may make certain that this would be the foundation of a war between them in India, that would soon come to pass after such a treaty had been entered into. In the case of such a division, Balkh, Turkestan, Kataghan, Herat, and Farah, countries lying on the west of the Hindu Kush, would come under the Russian division; they are the richest and most fertile provinces of Afghanistan, whilst those of Jellalabad and Kabul, falling to the share of the English, are scarcely rich enough to pay their expenses. It is a great mistake that suspicions should exist in the minds of British statesmen about my friendship: when the English find that the ruler of Afghanistan is wise, strong, and loyal, it is their duty and interest to support him: a weak, inexperienced, and untrustworthy Amir on the throne of Kabul would be dangerous for Afghanistan as well as for India.

My fourth suggestion is that the English should not neglect Persia and Turkey, as they have done in the past few years; they must prevent both these countries falling into the hands of Russia, or under her influence: they must do their utmost to make Persia and Turkey strong, and endeavour to win their friendship. In accordance with my suggestion mentioned elsewhere, England must also take steps to help Persia, Turkey, and Afghanistan to enter into a triple alliance, which means erecting a strong wall in the face of Russian aggression, by the union of the whole Islamic world. This would result in a general and universal peace

throughout the whole of Asia where Russian aggression is going on, and which threatens a most serious war in the future. It is quite obvious that if these three Islamic Powers, who are bound to each other by ties of religion, and whose safety lies in their being friendly allies, were friendly to England, the whole Islamic world would be bound to look after British interests.

My fifth suggestion is, that it is necessary for both England and Afghanistan to maintain the strength of their forces: they should work towards making their subjects rich and contented, keeping an army sufficient to oppose the advance of an enemy; just as taking a tonic is better than taking medicine after falling ill. As one of the poets says: "Show preparations for war if you wish to keep the peace, and to educate, enrich and please the subjects makes the foundation of the kingdom strong, as the subjects are the walls on which the building of the Government stands."

The welfare of Afghanistan can best be achieved by promoting industries, and improving trade and commerce, and thus keeping the subjects well employed, whereby they can earn comfortable livings. Another means is bringing about social intercourse between the ruling nations and the ruled, and by studying the feelings of the people, redressing their grievances, and giving them all equal rights, without any distinction of nationality, caste, colour or creed. I admire one point in the Asiatic policy of Russia, that in Russian Turkestan their Russo-Oriental subjects also rise to the positions of colonels and generals, while intermarriage and social intercourse between the two races are much more frequent than

between the Anglo-Indians and the Indians in India, who are always aloof from each other. If an English person marries an Indian the whole English community looks upon the couple with prejudiced eyes and contempt. The result of this is, that the English and the Indians are not in the position of studying each others' feelings, and remain utter strangers to each other. There is another regrettable circumstance in India, namely, that the friendly intercourse that used to exist between the old English officials and the Indians in India is on the decline, because the newly-educated young civilians who come to India from England, having passed their exams., but having no experience of the world and of life, look upon their term of service in India as a temporary measure, and owing to the easy means of travelling between India and England, they can more frequently visit their friends in England, and therefore do not care about making friends in India. The old Anglo-Indians used, on the other hand, to settle down in India, looking upon it as their home, and so were bound to seek society and friends among the Indians themselves.

After having stated the probability of a Russian attack upon India and Afghanistan, and the means of stopping such a plan, I will try to explain how far the Russians are wrong in their ideas, and whether their invasion of India is possible or not.

In answering this question I am very sorry to disappoint my Russian friends, from whom I received much courtesy and hospitality; but I must honestly tell them that so long as Afghanistan does not join Russia, the invasion of India is impossible, and the

joining of Afghanistan with Russia in such an invasion is still more impossible. If the Russians would take my advice, as their true friend—and I really give them honest advice, as I am under heavy obligations and owe them a debt of gratitude—they must not try this game. The result would be the ruin of Russia, and is sure to end like the following story:—A man was very thin, and his wife was anxious that he should become a little stouter. This man was very fond of playing with wasps' nests, though his wife had often told him not to do so. It happened one day that the irritated wasps attacked him, and stung him most fearfully. When he reached home he was quite swollen, and stout and full in the face. His wife, who was very pleased at this change in his appearance all at once, asked him how he had managed it. He answered that he had been bitten by wasps, and that he was in terrible pain. His wife began to pray: "O Lord, make the pain go, but let the swelling remain!" But, unfortunately, the contrary was the result; the swelling soon went down, but the blood-poisoning remained. This will be the end of Russian attempts to invade India: that they will not be able to take India, and the pain and sufferings of the terrible war would remain to add to their sorrow.

If any future ruler of Afghanistan should join Russia in her plans of invading India, the friendship and support of such an Amir would be of far greater importance than that of any other Empire, for the reason that he is such a close neighbour of India. But as I have clearly explained above, such a combination is quite impossible, and is a most delicate and difficult problem. Should,

however, any future Amir be so foolish as to invite Russia or England to occupy his country or to pass through it, the result would be the same as it was in the time of Shah Shujah, when the Afghans killed the Shah as well as the English who had been invited by the Shah to enter into their country. The English Government, having tried two experiments, do not want to try a third; and if Russia is wise she will learn a lesson from the expenses and pains and sufferings of the English, and not interfere in Afghan affairs, even if the Amir of Afghanistan should invite them to do so.

By glancing at the map of Afghanistan, it will be seen that before 1816 and the reign of Shah Shujah, after which the English began to interfere in Afghan affairs, Kashmir and the other frontier districts which now form part of the Indian Empire, were all under the rule of my predecessors, and have been taken by the English bit by bit at times of difficulty and disputes, and deaths of the successive Amirs of Afghanistan. They never failed to get hold of some part or the other whenever they found a favourable opportunity. For example, the policy of Lord Lytton in separating Chitral, Yasin, and Kalat from the influence of Shere Ali was this, that Afghanistan should be cut up into pieces and divided up into small States, in order to weaken the country. Then the English took from Yakub, by the Gandamak Treaty of 26th May 1879, Pishin, Sibi, Kuram, Shinwari, Khyber, and Peiwar Kotal.

The whole of the most southern part of Afghanistan, which lies towards the south of the Upper Scinde boundary, has been taken by the English in the past years in carrying out their so-called "Forward Policy."

This has been done at a very heavy expense to the Exchequer of poor, starving India. This part is now called British Baluchistan, though 90 per cent. of the inhabitants are Afghans, and only 10 per cent. Baluchis.

The English, gradually crawling forward, have taken Bajaur, Dir, Swat, Nawaji, Bulund Khel, Chagai, Waziri, and New Chaman. The Indian Government was furious at me for refusing to leave Asmar, Mohmand, and Kafiristan also to them. They did not understand that, as much as the Indian territories and boundaries are pushed forward from the old wisely-marked boundary line called the "Lawrence" line, the expenses of keeping this long line safe are far heavier than the Indian Treasury can afford to pay. The line is in far greater danger in the case of foreign attack than was the former one.

The Russian policy of aggression is this: to attack the weak country, leaving the strong one alone. For instance, twenty-five years ago, finding a suitable opportunity, she fought with the Turks, after which she turned her attention to Afghanistan, and as soon as she found that that country was placed under a strong Amir, and that the corner of Kashmir and Chitral was neglected, she occupied Pamirs; when the English fortified Kashmir and Chitral in her face she then turned her attention towards China and Persia. Meanwhile, she is anxiously watching for an opportunity of attacking Afghanistan after my death or upon some other suitable occasion.

If Russia should make war against the combined forces of England and Afghanistan in the following manner, namely, sending columns of the Russian

army through Pamirs to attack Kashmir and Chitral, and through Badakshan to attack Faizabad and Kataghan, and through Samarkand and Tashkend to attack Balkh, or through Merv, Ishkabad and Kushk to attack Herat, or through Persia to attack Kandahar and Quetta; it is obvious that such a step would mean a long costly war, necessitating the dividing up of the Russian army into many portions. As Russia requires a strong force on the borders of China and Japan, Austria, Germany, and Turkey, as well as to keep her own country safe from general risings and disturbances of the Mahomedan Turkomans and other discontented subjects, a very small number of men would be available for each one of these campaigns to be carried out at so many different points, and so far apart from each other. For this purpose Russia has neither sufficient army nor sufficient money, provisions or transport.

We will suppose that Russia confines her attention to an attack upon Herat and Balkh and the borders of Afghanistan. In such a case, though I do not give the number of my army, yet I will say for certain that I do not require any English army to enter my dominions; I only know that if England bombarded and attacked Russia in Europe, the number of her army would not be sufficient to face mine, and at the same time to fight against the Muslim ex-rulers and chiefs of Kolab, Darwaz, Badakshan, Shignan, Roshan and Bokhara, who are at my Court; and who, through their relatives and friends and influence, would make it very hard for Russia to keep her own subjects quiet.

Let us suppose again that England, in the face of her standing treaties, refused to assist Afghanistan against a Russian attack upon Herat or Balkh. I think the Russians believe that (as happened on their occupying Panjdeh in 1885 when the English did not fight with them) the result would be the same if they occupied Herat or Balkh. But my Russian friends are mistaken in such a belief: the Afghans would not consent to leave Herat or one inch of their country to Russia so long as one man remained alive to fight; and in the event of their failing to expel the Russians, they would offer Afghanistan to England. Should the combined forces of England and Afghanistan be defeated by Russia at Herat and Balkh, they would make their second stand and line of defence at Kabul, Ghazni, and Kandahar, and their third line of defence would be from Quetta to Peshawar and Chitral. In all these cases the English and Afghans have the advantage of fighting in their own land; of bringing every soldier and every peasant and farmer of Afghanistan to fight against Russia. Russia would be under the same disadvantage as was Henry I. of France at the time of the war between France and Spain: if too large an army were sent the men would die from scarcity of food, and if they sent too small an army it would be conquered by the enemy. Another advantage on the side of Afghanistan and England is this: if they are defeated on their first line of defence they have their second and third lines to fall back upon, and there make a stand. It would be a very fatal step on the part of Russia to attempt to cross such an

immense distance, leaving her rear at the mercy of the Muslim population of Afghanistan and the Turkomans. If Russia were defeated, her vast Empire, the fibres of which are knitted together by force and not by love, would fall to pieces in such a manner as by pulling the thread of a necklace all the pearls fall apart from each other and are scattered. Russia, in fact, has no chance of continuing her fighting advance as far as the Scinde line, which would require thousands of millions of money and years of fighting. Russia could not afford this on account of the poverty of her country, and the difficulties which would arise within her own dominions behind her.

In any case, it would be to the advantage of the English for hostilities to commence at Herat, if they commence at all. In this case, the Afghans, supported by English arms and money, would fight in Asia, leaving European Russia to England. The policy of England should be to fortify, not only her Indian frontier against Russian attack, but to avoid such attack altogether, by fortifying and strengthening the Afghan frontier in the face of Russia.

Now, supposing, though it is not possible, that the English people were so foolish that, in the event of the Russians occupying Herat and Balkh, they should occupy Kandahar, Kabul, and Ghazni, without the consent and invitation of the Afghans, instead of expelling the Russians from Herat? Such a policy would be dangerous for Afghanistan and India equally, because Afghanistan would be cleared out of the way of Russia, and the Afghan people,

being offended by England breaking her faith with them, and forgetting her promise to help Afghanistan, would come under the influence of Russia. This would mean an offensive alliance between Russia and Afghanistan against England. Russia would have the advantage of occupying the most fertile and richest provinces of Afghanistan, which lie on the North-Western side of the Hindu Kush, *i.e.* Turkestan, Kataghan, Farah, and Herat, leaving the South-Eastern provinces of the Hindu Kush, from Peshawar to Jellalabad and Kabul in the English division, which are the most barren and uncultivated. If, in such an event, Russia and England made a treaty between themselves, agreeing to divide Afghanistan, the Indian exchequer would be unable to pay for the fortification and safety of these new lines of defence, and the treaty would be a foundation, laid by Russia, in order to gain time to prepare for further attack on India.

But praise be to Allah! both the English and the Afghans have sufficient sense to understand that their safety and strength lie in being united, and their danger lies in disunion.

In the history of every country there comes a stage when the old school of politicians finds itself in contest with the new and progressive. If the Government of such a country passes through the crisis safely, the country becomes stronger and more civilized; should, however the Government try to crush down all the efforts made by the people to obtain more freedom of thought, and action, and expression, the nation sinks into a condition of weak-

ness and discontent. Such a stage in her history has been faced and passed by England. India was in the same position a few years ago, which stage is now happily passed over. To-day the well-informed, intellectual Indian, educated on modern lines and according to the English methods, is keenly alive to the advantages of British rule as against that of Russia.

Whilst admitting that England has not such a large standing army as Russia has, I must remind my Russian friends of the words of a great General, Napoleon, who said: "It can never be known when the English are beaten." Why? Because the British subjects are so devoted and loyal, that no matter how many times the British army meets with reverses in which large numbers of their countrymen are killed, the more does their spirit of loyalty and enthusiasm and support of their Government, mingled with a desire to crush the enemy, increase in their mind. This feeling is not confined to the British Isles alone, it extends to every one of her colonies. They send one reinforcement of volunteers after another to support the Mother country, until at last the enemy is signally defeated and cannot recover himself to fight any more. So much may be said, that though the British Government has not a large standing army, yet every individual British subject is ready to fight under the victorious flag in her army. Therefore the whole population of the British Empire, which is ten times more in number than that of England, can be calculated upon as forming a reserve force to call up, or who will voluntarily

come forward to form part of the British army in time of war. The English could thus continue a war for which they have plenty of money, arms, and men, till at last Russia's resources for providing for her army are exhausted, and the victory would fall to the English, as has always been the case in every great battle that England has fought against Russia, France, or other foes.

THE END.

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