UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY
OU_218345
UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

218345

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Call No. 954.18/D25W Accession No. 21369

Author Davies, C.C

Title Warren Hastings and

This book should be returned on or before the date last marked below. Oudh 1939

WARREN HASTINGS AND OUDH

WARREN HASTINGS AND OUDH

BY

C. COLLIN DAVIES, M.A., Ph.D.

READER IN INDIAN HISTORY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO
1939

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
AMEN HOUSE, E.C.4
London Edinburgh Glasgow New York
Toronto Melbourne Capetown Bombay
Calcutta Madras
HUMPHREY MILFORD
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY

MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN

TO
MY MOTHER AND FATHER

CONTENTS

		PAGE
PREFACE	. . . . .	xi
CHAPTER		
I.	HASTINGS'S DIPLOMATIC INHERITANCE . .	1
II.	THE ROHILLA WAR	41
III.	THE REVERSAL OF HASTINGS'S POLICY BY THE HOSTILE MAJORITY	62
IV.	THE HISTORY OF OUDH FROM 1775 TO 1781 .	86
V.	HASTINGS AND CHAIT SINGH . . .	110
VI.	THE TREATY OF CHUNAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES	155
VII.	BRISTOW THE UNCROWNED KING OF OUDH .	194
VIII.	HASTINGS'S FINAL VISIT TO OUDH . .	218
IX.	CONCLUDING REMARKS	241
APPENDIX A.	A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY . . .	251
APPENDIX B.	(I) COPY OF THE PERSIAN TEXT OF THE FINAL SANAD GRANTED TO CHAIT SINGH ON 15 APRIL, 1776 . .	257
	(2) TRANSLATION OF THE FINAL SANAD GRANTED TO CHAIT SLNGH ON 15 APRIL, 1776	259
MAP I.	INDIA UNDER WARREN HASTINGS . .	261
MAP II.	OUDH UNDER SHUJA-UD-DAULAH . .	263
	INDEX	265

PREFACE

VERY serious gaps exist in Oriental research In many fields there has been no critical examination of the original sources. For this reason the interpretation of Oriental history, perhaps more than any other history, has been marred by false generalizations and by conclusions based on insufficient data or on inaccurate translations of the Oriental texts. General histories of India there are in plenty, some of which embody the results of the scientific researches of the last twenty years. The time has now come for another twenty years of scientific research by a band of trained Orientalists and historians who will produce a series of monographs and fill in the existing gaps. To any student of history with the necessary equipment who wishes to be certain that untapped sources will be at his disposal the history of British rule in India affords a unique opportunity, for the historian of British India cannot complain of a paucity of records. On the contrary, he is apt to be overwhelmed by their superabundance. This is especially the case with the records of the East India Company which form very valuable historical material. The distance of the Court of Directors in London from the Company's settlements in India, combined with a trading concern's natural desire to make its ventures a financial success, necessitated a close and constant supervision of its servants' activities in the East Indies. Political entanglements with the 'country powers', together with the intrigues of hostile European trading bodies, alarmed the Directors and led to a still more jealous supervision of the actions of their subordinates. Finally, the fact that the three chief settlements were administered by councils has provided the student with excellent historical records in the form of minutes and dissenting minutes.

In this country interest in India is spasmodic. Nothing short of a frontier war or a revision of the Constitution is able to

awaken the average Englishman from his apathy. Public opinion on Indian affairs has only been deeply disturbed over imperial problems which have tended to become party questions. For this reason the student must be on his guard against published selections of the original sources which have often been deliberately garbled in order to suppress undesirable evidence. The same is true of many of the secondary works relating to India and especially the vast pamphlet literature. It is difficult to take up any history of India which does not exhibit in some form or another either unconscious or deliberate bias. Thus we have the bias of the Political Department in Lee-Warner's work on the Indian States; the British official bias in the writings of retired administrators; the Hindu or Muslim point of view; and, finally, the modern nationalist cult which has a tendency to hark back to the days of Asoka or the glories of the Guptas and to underestimate the real benefits of British rule.

So much is known about the career of Warren Hastings and so many books have been written about him that it would be an insult to the reading public to produce any general work based merely on the printed excerpts from the manuscript sources which were used at the Impeachment. Selections from documents are aids to the weary and traps for the careless. This is especially the case with the career of Hastings, for the reports of the various Select Committees were based on garbled selections, produced by packed committees, the members of which were interested in blackening his reputation. There is, therefore, no short cut through the woods. Moreover, a close study of the political institutions of the Mughal Empire, its revenue administration and judicial arrangements, is an indispensable preliminary to any true understanding of the problems facing Hastings in 1772. No fundamental study of Hastings's governor-generalship is possible until further monographs have been published. Strachey's *Rohilla War* and Miss Weitzman's *Warren Hastings and Philip Francis* are exhaustive studies. Professor Dodwell's account in the *English Historical Review* of Hastings's Carnatic policy and Mr. Das Gupta's volume on *The Central Government in India, 1773-84,* are based on the manuscript sources. What is still needed is a

detailed examination of the influence of the Home Government upon Indian administration during Hastings's term of office. It is hoped that this study of his foreign policy will be welcomed as a contribution to this period.

This volume opens with a discussion of Hastings's diplomatic inheritance and then proceeds to describe his efforts at strengthening by means of a subsidiary alliance the British connexion with the important buffer state of Oudh. This involved Hastings in questionable transactions such as the Rohilla War, the spoliation of the begams of Oudh, and the coercion of Raja Chait Singh of Benares. The author has been able to show that during the Impeachment the Prosecution in many instances relied on faulty translations of the original Persian correspondence upon which their charges were based. In the case of Chait Singh, the principal document produced at the Trial was one which the Company had cancelled at the raja's request. Other topics discussed are the reversal of Hastings's policy by the hostile Majority on his council; the deplorable condition of Oudh under Asaf-ud-daulah; the Company's relations with the Mughal Emperor; and the difficulties Hastings experienced in attempting to control the English Residents in Oudh. It is hoped that the whole volume will fulfil the purpose for which it was written and throw new light on early British policy towards the Indian States.

Future workers in this field may discover that Hastings indulged in the profitable pastime of shaking the pagoda tree, for this was the rule, not the exception, before the reforming zeal of the incorruptible Cornwallis purged British administration of much of its venality. The ghost of Nandakumar may mock at them. But the fact will remain that Hastings preserved the British Empire in India—that, under his inspiring guidance, what Francis dubbed 'frantic military exploits' became armies marching to victory across the Indian peninsula. Even the most hostile critic will be forced to admire his courage and to have some sneaking regard for his tenacity when he exclaims : 'My antagonists sickened, died, and fled.' Few will refuse to admit that he had a tremendous task to perform just at a moment when British prestige was at its lowest all over the world. To look at his work is like examining a piece of tessel-

lated pavement. Here and there blemishes may be detected but they do not impair the general effect. He was, it must be admitted, a man of his age and his conduct was not always above reproach, but in the words of Achille Biovès: 'II reste très grand malgré des fautes indéniables.'

The outstanding characteristic of Warren Hastings was his foresight, for he undoubtedly possessed this one great quality which distinguishes the great statesman from the mere administrator. It was Hastings who steadfastly refused to believe that Sindhia would play him false, for he realized that the Maratha leader was in no position to become a serious menace to British interests. It was Hastings who prophesied that the Sikhs would become a great power if a leader ever arose to unite them. He realized that Oudh was destined to become, because of its geographical position, a part of British India. It was he who foresaw that the only solution to the subsidiary alliance system was to have lands, whose revenues were equal to the subsidy, ceded in perpetuity to the Company. Events soon proved the truth of his contention that, if the French ever attempted to regain their power in India, it would be by a naval force acting in co-operation with the 'country powers'. Finally, he advocated, and this has a peculiarly modern ring about it, that the Indian princes should be directly under the Crown. All his prophecies were fulfilled and most of his suggestions were adopted later, for, in the sphere of internal administration and re-organization, it was on the foundations laid by Hastings that later governors-general built. To write impartially of Warren Hastings is no easy task. The author hopes that he will not be found guilty of fulsome adulation or of ungenerous criticism.

My attention was first directed to the need for a monograph on Hastings's relations with Oudh by Professor Dodwell to whom I owe more than can be adequately expressed in a short preface. To Sir Richard Burn, Mr. P. E. Roberts, and Mr. J. A. E. Mulgan, my thanks are due for reading the text of the book before it was in print and for some valuable suggestions. Mr. Ottewill of the Record Department of the India Office, Dr. Randle of the India Office Library, and Mr. Abdul Ali of the Imperial Record Office, Calcutta, have,

by their courtesy and kindness, considerably facilitated my researches. To Mr. K. S. Chaudhary of the Indian Civil Service I am indebted for the beautiful calligraphy which is to be seen in the Persian text of Chait Singh's *sanad*. Finally, I would again thank my wife without whose devoted collaboration nothing would ever be accomplished.

C. COLLIN DAVIES.

Oxford,
June, 1939.

CHAPTER I

HASTINGS'S DIPLOMATIC INHERITANCE

THE eighteenth century in India, witnessing as it did the decline of Muslim rule, the rise of independent 'country powers' owing little more than a vague allegiance to the enfeebled descendants of the Great Mughals, and at the same time the struggle of the French and English for commercial and territorial supremacy, may be described as a period of anarchy. The second battle of Panipat, in 1556, involving the defeat of Hemu by Akbar, is of outstanding importance in the history of India, for no Mughal empire had previously existed in spite of attempts to create one. The greatest of the Mughal rulers of Hindustan, Akbar, deliberately accepted compromise as the basis of his empire and by his policy of *Sulh-i-Kull* (universal toleration) and his abolition of the *jizya,* the detested poll-tax on non-Muslims, he strove to conciliate the subject Hindu population and to secure their loyalty to his rule. This policy was reversed by his immediate successors, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb; their gradual departure from the main principles of his rule culminating in the religious and political intolerance of Aurangzeb eventually produced a far-reaching Hindu reaction which provoked the Marathas of the Deccan and the Sikhs, Rajputs, and Jats of the north to raise the standard of revolt throughout the peninsula. A further basic principle of Akbar's administration had been to demand no more than one-third of the gross produce from the peasant. Under his successors the pressure increased until by the reign of Aurangzeb, if not earlier, the revenue demand had risen to one-half. At the beginning of his reign Shah Jahan did something to correct the inefficiency of Jahangir but his aggressive policy in Central Asia, his expeditions against Balkh and Badakhshan, and his attempts to recover Kandahar

brought the empire to the verge of bankruptcy. Aurangzeb's hopeless attempt to conquer the Deccan was a political miscalculation and a military blunder of the first magnitude. The expansion of the empire during the second half of Aurangzeb's reign proved fatal to its solidarity—conquest had not kept pace with consolidation. A general decay ensued in all branches of the administration, which was accompanied by a corresponding economic decline. Under the miserable puppets who succeeded Aurangzeb the Hindu reaction against Muslim predominance gathered strength until the Marathas overran almost the whole of India from the banks of the Chenab to the borders of Bengal, devastating the country and levying the blackmail known as *chauth*, a demand for a fourth of the standard land-revenue assessment.

During this turmoil the provincial governors began to throw off their allegiance to the central government and able adventurers carved out kingdoms for themselves. In the struggles of the three rival powers of the south, the Nizam of Haidarabad, Haidar Ali of Mysore, and the Maratha confederacy, there seems to have been little, if any, idea of a balance of power in the European sense; the efforts of the contending parties were directed, not to the just limitation but to the subversion of each other's power. Conquest and territorial aggrandizement were their declared objects. This, then, was the condition of India in the second half of the eighteenth century.

The territorial foundations of the British Empire in India were laid by Robert Clive. It was left to Warren Hastings to begin the creation of an efficient administration. Clive's defeat of the French and the conquest of Bengal had transformed the East India Company, a commercial concern whose Directors were chiefly interested in trade, into a power exercising quasi-sovereign rights. This in itself constituted a problem of great complexity, to which no adequate solution had been found when Hastings was called upon to take charge of the destinies of the rising British power in India. To understand and appreciate the difficulties facing Hastings when, in April 1772, he succeeded Carrier as President of the Bengal Council, it is essential to enter into a detailed exam-

ination of Clive's political settlement, particularly the policy adopted towards Shah Alam, the Mughal Emperor, and his chief minister Shuja-ud-daulah, the nawab-wazir of Oudh. For this purpose some knowledge of the previous history of Oudh is also necessary.

From very early times Oudh (Awadh),[1] which forms part of the great alluvial plain of northern India, has been the peculiar home of Hindu civilization. It corresponds roughly to the Middle Country, the Madhya-desha of the sacred Hindu writings, where dwelt the gods and heroes of the Epic Period whose deeds are recorded in the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. It was here too that there arose a number of religious reactions against the sacerdotalism and social exclusiveness of Brahmanism. Apart from marauding expeditions, such as Mahmud of Ghazni's attack upon Manaich and the doubtful exploits of Salar Masud Ghazi, it was not until the last decade of the twelfth century, in the days of Qutb-ud-din Aibak, that the Muslim invaders established themselves in Oudh and annexed it to the Delhi Sultanate. It formed a province of the extensive empire of Muhammad bin Tughluq, but towards the close of the fourteenth century was absorbed by the Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur, of which it remained an integral part until reconquered by the Lodi sultans of Delhi. In the reign of Akbar it was annexed to the Mughal empire. According to Abul Fazl it extended from the Ganges on the south-west as far as the Gandak on the north-east, and from the river Sai in the south to the Tarai of Nepal in the north.[2] Local traditions in Oudh, however, conflict with Muslim accounts and suggest that the Rajput chiefs maintained their authority practically intact throughout the Mughal period.[3] Oudh remained a province of the Mughal empire until the weakness of the central government under Aurangzeb's successors gave the nawabs of Oudh an opportunity of asserting their independence, although nominally they still acknowledged the authority of the Mughal Emperor. Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, the real founder of

[1] **Davies,** ***Encyclopaedia of Islam,*** **s.v. Oudh.**

[2] ***Ain-i-Akbari,*** **I I , 170-7. Jarrett, H. S.,** ***Bib. Ind.,*** **1891. It was divided into five** ***sarkars*** **and thirty-eight** ***parganas.***

[3] **Benett, W. C,** ***The Chief Clans of the Roy Bareilly District,*** **1895.**

the Oudh dynasty, was descended from a respectable Sayyid family of Nishapur.[1] During his nawabship (1722-39) he maintained internal order and also extended his dominions to embrace Benares, Ghazipur, Jaunpur, and Chunar. His successor, Safdar Jang (1739-54) was appointed wazir of the empire in the year 1748 and invited the Marathas to assist him against the Bangash Pathans of Farrukhabad, who on their side called in the Rohillas with results disastrous to these allies. The engagements entered into at that time formed the basis of later Maratha claims on Rohilkhand. Safdar Jang's son and successor, the nawab-wazir Shuja-ud-daulah, was the first ruler of Oudh to come into contact with the rising power of the English East India Company.

Clive's first period in Bengal (1756-60) was marked by his facile triumph at Plassey, which left the Company the *de facto* rulers of Bengal and the chief military power in the province. During his absence in England, Mir Qasim, the puppet nawab of Bengal and successor of Mir Jafar, after perpetrating the horrible massacre of Patna, fled across the river Karamnasa into the territories of Shuja-ud-daulah, who openly espoused his cause. This action by the ruler of Oudh could not be tolerated by the British in Bengal. To remain inactive would have been regarded as a sign of weakness. It was, therefore, very wisely decided to take the offensive, and, with this object in view, the Company determined to enter into an alliance with Raja Balwant Singh of Benares, the most important *zamindar* (farmer of revenues) under the authority of Shuja ud-daulah, whose territories, it was hoped, would prove a strong barrier and defence to Bengal.[2] The chastisement of Shuja-ud-daulah was at first entrusted to Major Carnac, whose dilatory tactics called forth a sharp remonstrance. from the authorities in Calcutta. In fairness to Carnac it should be recorded that he put forward as excuses for his conduct the rainy season, the mutinous spirit of his troops and the shortage of provisions.[3] It was not, however, until the arrival of the more enterprising Major Munro and after twenty-five of the

[1] ***Muntakhab al-Lubab*** **of Khafi Khan, I I , 902.**
[2] **B.5.C., Range A.5, pp. 112-13, 29 March 1764.**
[3] **ibid., pp. 316-27, 5 July 1764. See also Dodwell's *Dupleix and Clive,* Pp. 233-4.**

mutineers had been blown from the guns, that discipline was restored.[1] Munro's brilliant victory at Buxar, on 23 October 1764, over the combined forces of Shuja-ud-daulah and Mir Qasim, shattered the military strength of the only power which, at that time, might have proved a serious menace on the borders of the Company's possessions in Bengal. Oudh was now at the disposal of the English Company.

Before the battle of Buxar the Select Committee at Calcutta had approved of Carnac's proposal to protect and maintain the independence of Balwant Singh 'both now and hereafter'.[2] But, later we find them writing that 'the double part he acted in the beginning of the war sufficiently warns us to put no confidence in him, and therefore if he has not already been permitted to join you or you have entered into no engagements with him, we would have him dispossessed of his country and his person if possible secured.'[3]

Immediately after Buxar, Shah Alam, recognizing the importance of the defeat of his minister and over-mighty subject, of whom he was not greatly enamoured, accepted the inevitable; and since at that time no Maratha offers tempted him towards Delhi, threw himself upon the protection of the English Company. Far otherwise was the case with Shuja-ud-daulah, for, although the authorities in Bengal decided to reinstate him in Oudh, provided he ceded Benares to the Company and surrendered both Mir Qasim and the infamous Samru, the murderer of the English at Patna,[4] he stubbornly refused to accept the verdict of Buxar. Shah Alam, however, was only too willing to grant Ghazipur and Benares to the Company on condition that he should be placed in possession of Oudh.[5] This led to a futile attempt by Shuja-ud-daulah in conjunction with his Rohilla and Maratha allies to reverse the decision of Buxar, and it was only when the Marathas had been driven out of Kora that Shuja-ud-daulah, realizing his position, surrendered to the English.

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.5, pp. 495-502, 24 September 1764: Munro to Vansittart, 16 September 1764.
[2] ibid., p, 113, 29 March 1764.
[3] ibid., pp. 579-80, 6 November 1764.
[4] Forrest's *Clive,* II, 242.
[5] *B.S.C.*, Range A.6, pp. 75-7, 17 January 1765. Translation of the Emperor's *farman* **of 29 December 1764.**

Such was the state of affairs which faced Clive on his return to Bengal. His political settlement, which was a complete reversal of what had been previously contemplated, is to be found in the clauses of the Treaty of Allahabad, concluded on 16 August 1765, and in other arrangements with the Emperor.[1] Oudh was restored to Shuja-ud-daulah, with the exception of Kora and Allahabad, which were handed over to the Emperor as a royal demesne for the support of his dignity and expenses. By a special arrangement made between the Emperor and the Company on 19 August 1765, he was to receive a tribute of twenty-six lakhs of rupees yearly from the revenues of Bengal;[2] and in return for the grant of the *diwani*, that is, the right to collect and administer the revenues of Bengal, the Company agreed to be security for the regular payment of this tribute. Balwant Singh was to be maintained in the *zamindari* of Benares and Ghazipur, which was still to remain part of Oudh. Shuja-ud-daulah was to allow the Company to carry on a trade, duty free, throughout the whole of his dominions. Because of the Company's expenses in the late war he was further to pay an indemnity of fifty lakhs of rupees, and the payment of the last instalment of this indemnity was to be the signal for the withdrawal of all English troops from Oudh, with the exception of the garrison at Chunar and of any troops the Emperor might require for his protection in Allahabad. Finally, the Company entered into a defensive alliance with the restored ruler of Oudh by which he was not to grant asylum to Mir Qasim, Samru, or any European deserters.

It will be noted that Clive's settlement, in so far as Oudh was to be made into a buffer state, resembled the tentative policy of his predecessors, for we have seen that the first offer made to Shuja-ud-daulah after Buxar was his reinstatement on certain conditions. The later proposal, to hand over Oudh to a powerless puppet Emperor, had nothing to commend it, for under Shah Alam, Oudh could never have become strong enough to serve as an efficient buffer against Maratha encroachments. The policy adopted towards Balwant Singh

[1] **Aitchison, I, 89-91: *B.S.C.*, Range A.6, pp. 548-54, 7 September 1765.**
[2] **Aitchison, I, 229.**

appears to have been the repayment of a debt of gratitude since he had finally cast in his lot with the English. Benares moreover, was a wealthy, revenue-producing area, its *zamindar* was a Hindu raja, and although Balwant Singh was a subject of Shuja-ud-daulah it was indisputably to the advantage of the Company to recognize and protect a friendly Hindu neighbour whose power might serve as a check upon the Muslim ruler of Oudh. But Benares alone was too small and not sufficiently well placed strategically to serve as a buffer against such powerful foes as the Marathas. To protect Bengal it was also necessary to protect Oudh. We shall see later that Oudh itself, without Rohilkhand, possessed no strategic frontier. The weakness of Clive's settlement from a military point of view was the handing over of Kora and Allahabad to the Emperor. It would have been better if, from the beginning, these districts had been restored to Shuja-ud-daulah.

Clive has been praised for his decision to reinstate Shuja-ud-daulah, but it is difficult to imagine any other solution to the problem. Although merely the minister of a powerless Emperor he was, despite his recent reverses, a person of importance, a man to be placated rather than estranged, for there was more likelihood of peace with a subservient or friendly ruler of Oudh than with a fugitive from his dominions for ever fomenting disturbances on the borders of Bengal and possibly joining forces with the Marathas. There can be no doubt that Shuja-ud-daulah was the ablest of all the rulers of Oudh. Many favourable accounts of his character and abilities could be cited. Dow's prejudiced and untrustworthy description of this ruler originated in Shuja-ud-daulah's refusal to grant him a saltpetre monopoly.[1] Far more important evidence of his abilities exists in the records of the Bengal Select Committee and will be used when we come to deal with his military preparations and reorganization of Oudh between 1767 and 1768.

Was the recognition of Shah Alam as Emperor equally necessary? Here again Clive played for safety, for, although

[1] ***Five Letters from a Free Merchant in Bengal to Warren Hastings,*** **London, 1783.**

the Emperor was the weakest ruler in India, his recognition and sanction were not entirely valueless, since they served as a cloak of legitimacy. His sanction probably carried more weight at Paris than at Poona, the headquarters of the Maratha confederacy. Internationally this recognition served its purpose. There was yet another reason for Give's action. After Plassey, in a letter to Chatham, he had advocated the assumption of direct control by the Crown over the Company's possessions in India. This was not his opinion in 1765, for as a member of the Company, he foresaw that any assumption of sovereignty by the Crown would lead to interference by the Ministry at home in the Company's Indian affairs. This may also have been the reason why at this time he accepted the *diwani* rather than any territorial cession.

The alliance with Shuja-ud-daulah was purely defensive, the Company promising to assist him in any war waged for the defence of his dominions, but they were careful to point out that help would only be afforded in so far as it would be consistent with the security of their own territories. It should be noted in this connexion that, on the death of Mir Jafar in January 1765, the Company had entered into a new treaty with his son and successor, Najm-ud-daulah, by which the defence of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa was left entirely in the hands of the English.[1] The ruler of Oudh on his part pledged himself to assist the Company in the event of their possessions being attacked. The important point to remember is that the English were not bound to go to his assistance if he should wage war solely for the extension of his dominions. The stipulation which had proved a stumbling-block to an amicable arrangement with Shuja-ud-daulah after Buxar, namely the surrender of Mir Qasim and Samru, was modified to suit his convenience, and it was considered sufficient that he promised not to entertain these enemies of the Company.

This treaty was the germ of all subsequent subsidiary alliance with Oudh, for the extraordinary expenses of all troops supplied by the Company were to be defrayed by Shuja-ud-daulah himself. One of the first steps taken by Hastings was to alter this arrangement.

[1] **Aitchison, I, 222.**

' It is indeed stipulated by treaty that all extra charges are to be borne by the wazir, but this is very insufficient. The pay and common *batta* of such a force are enormous. These charges are the Company's, and their provinces are drained to defray them, while the country which we protect is enriched with so much additional circulation. The whole expense ought to be borne by the wazir.'[1]

In defence of Clive's foreign policy it may be maintained that it did provide the Company with a friendly buffer state against any attack from the Marathas, who had long been and were soon again to be the scourge of Hindustan. But to hold that it entirely removed the apprehensions of the country powers is to overestimate the value of Clive's political settlement, for the native princes of India had already been sufficiently alarmed at our conquests in Bengal and on the Coromandel coast. They regarded it only as a temporary respite. For the time being the English had signified their intention of remaining on the defensive.

One more clause in the Treaty of Allahabad calls for attention. Shuja-ud-daulah had very reluctantly agreed to the article which opened the markets of Oudh to the Company. So great had been his dread of the evil results which might accrue from a free trade with his dominions that he had been given to understand that this right would not be exercised without positive orders from England, and that, on no account, would English private traders be allowed to enter Oudh. To placate him the proposal to establish factories in Oudh had been expressly omitted. There is much to be said for his contention that the entry of the Company's agents would have led to endless disputes and even to the destruction of his power, for he had before his eyes the example and fate of Mir Qasim in Bengal. For some considerable time the Company refrained from exercising this right, but, when news of this reached London, the Court of Directors sent instructions to open the trade with Oudh. The Bengal authorities, in acknowledging the receipt of this order, hastened to point out that they had already decided upon this course since it had become obvious that the prohibition in

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 127: Hastings to Sir George Colebrooke, 26 March 1772.**

force had adversely affected their trade.[1] On 17 April 1771 it was resolved to issue proclamations to the effect that full permission was granted to all persons to transport their goods and merchandise beyond the Karamnasa but no *dastaks* (passes) could be granted exempting goods from the payment of duties after they had passed the boundaries of the Company's territory.[2]

When these orders were made public, Sir Robert Barker, the commander-in-chief, wrote to Cartier from his camp at Cawnpore that they did not meet with Shuja-ud-daulah's approval, for, although that ruler was convinced that a system of free trade would increase his revenues, he feared it might lead to endless disputes between his subjects and the *gumashtas* (agents) employed by the merchants. He further feared that the English merchants would erect factories inside his country for the preservation of their goods. For the defence of these factories they would employ servants and sepoys, who would assume authority on behalf of their European masters. It must be confessed that, if the conduct of the Company's servants and of Europeans in Bengal could be cited as a criterion of what might be expected, there was much truth in his contentions. He also asserted that the balance of trade would be unfavourable to him because of the exportation of specie from his dominions. Shuja-ud-daulah therefore proposed that no person should trade in Oudh without his special licence. This would enable him to ascertain who the traders really were and would also permit him to limit the trade if he so desired.[3] The Company replied that they allowed no *dastaks* to pass beyond their provinces, and that they considered all traders and their agents as answerable to Shuja-ud-daulah in cases of misconduct. At the same time they hoped he would encourage merchants to trade and not allow more than the established duties to be levied. Shuja-ud-daulah's protests counted for nothing, and, in order to make assurance doubly sure, Hastings received instructions in connexion with the Benares Conference of 1773 to form a

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 198. General letter to Europe, 9 March 1772.**
[2] **ibid., fol. 64.**
[3] **Add. MSS. 29, 198, fol. 66-8. Barker to Cartier, 3 June 1771.**

treaty which should contain a stipulation providing for free commercial intercourse with Oudh. We shall see later that Hastings was unable to effect this object.

The year after the conclusion of the Treaty of Allahabad it was considered desirable to formulate a scheme of defence in the event of a Maratha attack upon Oudh. For this purpose Clive, Carnac, Shuja-ud-daulah, and the Emperors minister met at the Conference of Chupra. At his own request Shuja-ud-daulah was authorized to negotiate with the Jats and Rohillas, but he was prohibited from concluding any definite engagements without first consulting the Company. At this conference Shuja-ud-daulah acknowledged the generosity of the Company in restoring Oudh to him. This declaration, combined with the knowledge that the indemnity had been paid in full, enabled Clive to place him in possession of Benares and to withdraw all troops from Oudh with the exception of one battalion stationed at Allahabad for the protection of the Emperor.[1] Towards the end of the same year some apprehension seems to have been entertained of a Maratha invasion, for Barker was ordered to proceed with the Third Brigade to the Karamnasa, which he was not to cross unless attacked by the enemy.[2]

Clive sailed for England on 26 January 1767 and was succeeded by Verelst, whose period of office extended to December 1769. The outstanding event during Verelst's governorship was a revival of the Afghan menace, for on two occasions Ahmad Shah Durrani invaded Hindustan. Although the advance of Ahmad Shah, who had inflicted a crushing defeat on the Marathas at the third battle of Panipat in 1761, caused a stir in Hindustan, there was no real danger. The most powerful Muslim ruler of northern India, the nawab-wazir of Oudh, backed by the forces of the English Company, decided to remain aloof.[3] The Sikhs of the Panjab could also be relied upon to harass his line of communications, thus rendering his retreat into the mountain fastnesses of Afghan-

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.7, pp. 49-59, 12 August 1766. Clive and Carnac to the Select Committee, 14 June 1766.**
[2] **ibid., pp. 174-5, 7 October 1766.**
[3] **For English assurances to Shuja-ud-daulah see *Persian Calendar*, II, 201.**

istan more difficult than ever before. To make matters worse for the Afghan invader, when news arrived that he had entered the Panjab, the Maratha chiefs, Raghunath Rao and Malhar Rao Holkar, who were once more ravaging Hindustan and waging war upon the Jats, called upon the native powers of India to combine against the foreign invader from beyond the passes of the north-west. Timely information of this must have been an additional incentive prompting his retreat.[1] Nevertheless, the English breathed more freely when, on 25 March 1767 Barker was able to report that the Abdali was retreating and that, although the chiefs of Hindustan had paid him twenty-five lakhs of rupees, not a cowry had been paid by, or even demanded from, the Emperor, Shuja-ud-daulah, or any chief in alliance with the Company.[2] Ahmad Shah's final invasion, in 1769, soon came to an end chiefly owing to dissensions in his army which left him no alternative but retreat.[3] Far more serious in the eyes of Verelst and his advisers were the military preparations and political intrigues of Shuja-ud-daulah himself.

It became obvious in 1767 that Shuja-ud-daulah was desirous of annexing Bundelkhand, which had formerly been in his possession, and which, if his word be accepted, had been promised him by Clive and Carnac.[4] The Company decided against helping him to recover his lost possessions and advised him to concentrate on the internal organization of his state rather than on the extension of his frontiers. They warned him that Bundelkhand, surrounded as it was by Maratha districts, had always been a favourite object of Maratha attention, and that its annexation would arouse their enmity and possibly lead to an open rupture.[5] It may be argued that the Company's refusal to assist him led Shuja-ud-daulah to increase the strength of his army preparatory to

[1] *Persian Calendar,* I I , I6A.

[2] *B.S.C.,* Range A.7, pp. 427-8, 9 April 1767. Barker to Smith, 25 March 1767. Barker wrote 'demanded', but this is not strictly correct for we know that the Shah did demand 19 lakhs from the Emperor, *vide Persian Calendar,* II, 261.

[3] *Persian Calendar,* I I , 1499.

[4] ibid., I I , 487. The records at the India Office throw no light upon this claim.

[5] ibid., I I , 524.

acting on his own initiative. He was also ambitious to control the Emperor as he had formerly done before Buxar, but found that his power as nawab-wazir was eclipsed by that of his *naib* or deputy at the court of the Emperor in Allahabad.[1] It is significant that his military preparations coincided with difficulties in the Deccan, where the English were engaged in a struggle with Haidar Ali of Mysore.

Shuja-ud-daulah had drilled and disciplined his infantry on the European model. He had improved his field artillery with the aid of French officers. So efficient was this artillery that Colonel Smith regarded it as a serious menace to the Company in Bengal. There had been a time when his troops could not, with any hope of success, have taken the field against the forces of the Company. His infantry at the battle of Buxar were an ill-armed, ungovernable multitude, and the only troops with any semblance of discipline were a few battalions under the command of Samru. This was no longer the case. His infantry now numbered nearly 20,000 well-armed men, regularly trained. His cavalry had always been greatly superior to that entertained by the Company. It is true that, realizing the greater importance of infantry, he had reduced his cavalry, but he was still steadily increasing his infantry, and, what was even more dangerous, his artillery and military stores. Of all the armies of the country powers, the Oudh forces were the only troops regularly paid.[2]

It is extremely difficult from the available evidence to decide whether Smith, who commanded the Company's forces at Allahabad, and the members of the Council, had correctly diagnosed Shuja-ud-daulah's intentions when they came to the conclusion that his intrigues and military preparations were a menace to the Company in Bengal. Following in the footsteps of Clive, their policy was to transform Oudh into a buffer state, but, like all buffer states, it was only to possess powers of intermediate resistance, so that the Marathas and other invaders could be checked while the Company's troops were being rushed to its assistance. It was never intended

[1] *Persian Calendar,* **I I , p. xvii.**
[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.8, 23 February; 27 July; 3 August; and 3 November 1768.**

that Shuja-ud-daulah should become so powerful as to render his state a menace instead of a bulwark of defence. So alarmed were the authorities at Calcutta that they appointed deputies to visit him to inquire into his intentions and to set some bounds to his military power, which would still enable him to maintain order within his territories and yet leave Oudh strong enough to serve as a buffer against aggression.[1] This alarm led to a fresh treaty, when, on 29 November 1768, Shuja-ud-daulah agreed to limit his troops to 35,000.[2] The deputies, Cartier, Smith, and Russell reported that they had found Shuja-ud-daulah full of protestations of loyalty. He undoubtedly had a good case when he reminded them that he was not bound by the Treaty of Allahabad to limit his troops to any particular number.[3]

One of the first actions of Hastings was to reverse this policy. His views were forcibly expressed in a letter to Sir George Colebrooke.

> From our earliest connexion with this prince we have always entertained a jealousy of his power, and a suspicion of his designs upon these provinces. Such of the measures with which I have been acquainted as respect him have been all formed on these prepossessions. I know not how well they may be grounded, but this I know that the sure way to make a man your enemy, whether in public or in private life, is to believe him one; and I know too that Shuja-ud-daulah is so little able to contend with the Company that he is unable to stand without them. What then have we to fear from him, that we should take every occasion to reduce his strength, and peck at his authority? I think among other curious instances of this kind it was gravely proposed to him, and insisted on, that he should keep only a limited number of sepoys, an impotent and wanton exercise of power which he could not fail to resent, which he might safely yield to, and yet maintain ten times the stipulated number without a possibility of its being proved against him. ... If he would keep up a body of good cavalry which we shall always want, and turn off all his rabble

[1] *Vide* instructions to the deputies, *B.S.C.*, Range A.8, pp. 637-51, 13 February 1768.

[2] Aitchison, I, 92-3. Cavalry, 10,000; Infantry, 10,000; *Najibs*, 5,000; Artillery, 500; Irregulars, 9,500.

[3] *B.S.C.*, Range A.g, pp. 1-11, 4 January 1769. Deputies to Verelst, 30 November 1768.

of infantry which he never can depend upon, he may then be of service to us, and not a mere suspected dependent.[1]

That this treaty was a sore point with Shuja-ud-daulah is evident from the following extract from the diary kept by Hastings while at Benares in 1773.

> He complained much of the hard terms which had sometimes been imposed on him, the intemperate behaviour of General Smith, and the injurious suspicions which had been propagated and believed against him against every show of reason; instanced particularly the treaty of 1768, in which it is expressed that on account of the rumours which had been raised of his infidelity to the Company the deputation had been sent to him, that they had found the reports to be false, and were satisfied that he had in no instance whatever deviated from his engagements. And yet this declaration is immediately followed with a restriction ... to keep only a limited number of troops, as if he had been guilty of such acts of treachery that he was not to be trusted even with the power of defending himself lest he should employ it to our hurt. My curiosity led me to examine the treaty immediately, and I found to my surprise that it actually contained the absurdity which he mentioned, and which I suppose had escaped my notice by not having read the preface of it, as I seldom read prefaces.[8]

On 20 December 1768[3] an *arzi* or petition was presented to the Emperor in which it was pointed out that for the previous three years the Company had kept a third part of their army at Allahabad for his protection. This, of course, was in accordance with Clive's policy and the Treaty of Allahabad, but it had cost the Company nearly eighty lakhs of rupees which had been remitted in specie from Bengal, to which, it was claimed, not a single rupee ever returned. The recent war with Mysore had been an additional strain on their finances, to such an extent that the supply of silver for the common currency was inadequate. Frequent requests had been made to the Emperor to allow them to withdraw these troops, for it was not the policy of the Company to station troops outside their own provinces. Shah Alam, realizing

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 127, 26 March 1772.**
[2] ***Benares Diary,* Add. MSS. 29, 212, 28 August 1773.**
[3] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.9, pp. 32-3, 25 January 1769.**

that his safety depended upon the presence of these troops, suggested that the expenses of the brigade should be defrayed from the revenues to be obtained by the annexation of the lands of Raja Hindu Pat of Bundelkhand which formerly belonged to the *suba* (province) of Allahabad. This suggestion was not acceptable to the Company inasmuch as to wage war solely for the purpose of territorial aggrandizement ran counter to the instructions of the Court of Directors. The probability that the Company's troops would be withdrawn, combined with the Emperor's fear that he would once more be beholden to his powerful nawab-wazir, may have prompted him to desert the English for the Marathas. These latter had sufficiently recovered from their defeat at Panipat to become once more the scourge of India, plundering and levying *chauth* throughout the length and breadth of the country. In January 1771 they invaded the Doab and captured Etawah, which at that time was held by the son of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, the chief Rohilla leader. In the following month they captured Delhi, and, contrary to the advice of the English, the Emperor accepted their invitation to proceed to Delhi, arriving there in December 1771.

This was the state of affairs when Hastings succeeded Carrier as President of the Bengal Council in April 1772. Financial and administrative confusion prevailed in the affairs of the Company, for, although the servants of the Company had in many cases amassed large fortunes, the Company itself was approaching bankruptcy. Tribute was being paid to the Mughal Emperor and money in the form of pensions and compensations to other Oriental potentates. The maintenance of a large standing army for the defence of their newly-acquired possessions also constituted a serious drain on the Company's financial resources. In addition the currency was in a state of utter confusion and there was an insufficient quantity of coin. While all Englishmen must acknowledge the military genius of Clive and the value of his services as a conqueror, it must be admitted that his administrative efforts were somewhat hastily conceived. Under his Dual System, which lasted from 1765 to 1772, the Company possessed power divorced from responsibility, an inherently

unsatisfactory form of government. His reforms were productive of little real improvement and much of his policy after 1765, both internal and external, was a source of weakness to his successors. From 1769 to 1770 the whole of Bengal and Bihar, with the exception of Dacca and the south-eastern districts, had been devastated by a terrible famine, during which the living fed on the dead and the streets of Murshidabad were choked with corpses. Despite the heavy mortality and the consequent decrease in the area under cultivation, the net collections for the year 1771 exceeded those of 1768. One of Hastings's first tasks therefore was to ascertain the actual productivity of the soil.[1] This, because the lands of Bengal had been impoverished by famine and because the *zamindars* and *qanungos* had entered into a compact to keep the English in ignorance of the exact amount of revenues the ryots were in fairness supposed to pay, meant years of experiment. Hastings's revenue reforms were consequently in accordance with the 'Rule of False'.[2] Hastings also found the administration of justice in a chaotic condition. When, therefore, the Directors decided 'to stand forth as *diwan'* and accept the responsibility for the revenue and civil administration of the country, he was forced to create some experimental system. Trade was hampered by internal restrictions. Innumerable *chaukis* or toll houses prevented the free movement of goods along the Indian waterways until abolished by Hastings, who was then able to boast that 'goods pass unmolested to the extremities of the province'.[3] In addition, by subjecting the goods of all traders, whether servants of the Company or Indian merchants, to a uniform duty of 2½ per cent, English and Indian merchants were placed on the same footing. This reform did not apply to salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, which still remained monopolies. The country was also infested with bands of dacoits and robbers masquerading as Sannyasis (Hindu religious mendicants).[4] Since an excellent account[5] of the early reforms of Hastings is already in existence we shall pass on to a detailed examination of his

[1] Gleig, I, 249. [2] idem, I, 316. [3] idem, I, 304.
[4] Ghosh, M. G., *Sannyasi and Fakir Raiders in Bengal.*
[5] Monckton-Jones, *Warren Hastings in Bengal,* 1772-4.

early foreign policy with special reference to the measures he adopted to preserve the Company's territories from Maratha depredations.

According to the commander-in-chief, the greatest difficulty had been experienced in preventing Shuja-ud-daulah from coming to terms with the Marathas in the hope of obtaining half of Rohilkhand. It is difficult to believe that Barker was well informed, for Shuja-ud-daulah should have realized that the Marathas were aiming at universal sovereignty, and, even more, at a Hindu sovereignty, for their recognition of the Mughal Emperor was simply a cloak to cover their aggressions. Whether Shuja-ud-daulah seriously entertained ideas of an alliance with the Marathas cannot be definitely determined, but we can be certain, that any ideas he may have had were abandoned when reports were received that they had put to death the butchers who provided the Musalman camp with cattle and that they had requested the Emperor to issue a proclamation prohibiting the slaughter of cattle throughout the empire because it was contrary to the tenets of their religion. It was this attitude of the Marathas and their desecration of Muhammadan corpses which so incensed Shuja-ud-daulah that he refused to treat with them and ordered their *wakil* (agent) to leave his dominions. This altered the whole aspect of affairs and Hastings found on assuming office that the question of the hour was to decide whether the Marathas really intended invading Oudh. So imminent did Barker consider this attack that he advocated an immediate advance. But the Select Committee would have none of it, for, although the Company's policy was to protect their ally, they did not wish to give the Marathas any reason for suspecting them of hostile designs. It was quite likely that any advance by Barker's troops would have been regarded as a threat and would have led to war. They decided therefore that the existing station of the Brigade was near enough to any possible scene of action.

At this time the conduct of relations with the ruler of Oudh was largely in the hands of the military. This had obvious disadvantages as will be seen later. Barker was a consistent advocate of the wisdom of an alliance between Shuja-ud-

daulah and the Rohillas. We therefore find that on 17 June 1772, an offensive and defensive alliance was concluded in the presence of Barker.[1] It was agreed that, if the Marathas repeated their attempts on the Rohilla country, Shuja-ud-daulah should aid the Rohillas in expelling the common enemy, in return for which he was to receive forty lakhs of rupees from them. On the very day that this treaty was signed Hastings received a letter from Shuja-ud-daulah asking for assistance in view of a threatened Maratha attack and pointing out that the Company were pledged to assist him.

'My enemy'—he wrote—'is situated close to me, nothing but the river Ganges is between us, and they call upon me to surrender Kora, Allahabad, and Benares, to give them my settlements with the Rohillas, to deliver them likewise the King's money which His Majesty has to pay them, and to unite with them against the country of the Jats and all their other enemies, and I do not in the least consent to these things.'[2]

These were the considerations which, according to Shuja-ud-daulah, had led him to ask for the assistance of the Company's forces to disperse the Marathas before they actually entered Oudh. This was a sound strategic contention on his part, but the problem facing Hastings was to decide whether the Marathas really intended crossing the frontier into Oudh. The Marathas were always a potential menace, but were they, as Shuja-ud-daulah professed to believe, actually making preparations to invade his country?

In order to bring pressure to bear on Hastings he craftily hinted that, if this help were not forthcoming, he would be forced to come to terms with the Marathas. In reply Hastings pointed out that the Treaty of Allahabad was a purely defensive alliance and, in so far as military assistance was concerned, came into operation only when one of the contracting parties was the victim of unprovoked aggression. The war apprehended by Shuja-ud-daulah was not one which would

[1] **Aitchison, I, 6-7.**
[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A. 19, 23 July 1772. By the 'King* is meant the Mughal Emperor.**

proceed from any direct hostilities on the part of the Marathas, but from causes which had their origin in the recent treaty with the Rohillas. Shuja-ud-daulah was therefore precipitating war by his own acts, and, if it were his intention to wage an offensive war against the Marathas, Hastings was not prepared to send the Company's forces on 'such endless enterprises .' Moreover he needed express orders from the Court of Directors to authorize the march of the Company's troops beyond Oudh. Notwithstanding this, if Shuja-ud-daulah were attacked by the Marathas, the English would march to his assistance. In fairness to Shuja-ud-daulah it should be remembered that at Chupra he had been empowered to form alliances with the surrounding powers provided that each alliance had been approved of by the President of the Council. That Barker witnessed the treaty with the Rohillas must have led Shuja-ud-daulah to infer that the Company had no objection to the arrangement.

The danger from the Marathas was intensified by internal dissensions among the Afghan chiefs of Rohilkhand, and by the defection of Zabitah Khan, who joined forces with the enemy at the gates. Towards the end of 1771, as we have seen, the Marathas occupied Delhi and forced the Emperor, who had placed himself under their protection, to cede the provinces of Kora and Allahabad. Shuja-ud-daulah, thoroughly alarmed at the trend of events, besought Hastings to defend these provinces. Events now moved more rapidly. Early in 1773, the Marathas marched in force to Ramghat, where the Ganges was fordable,[1] and demanded from Hafiz Rahmat Khan and the other Rohilla chiefs payment of the bonds for fifty lakhs of rupees given to them through Safdar Jang twenty years before.[2] Encountering no opposition they crossed the Ganges into Rohilkhand. It now remained for Shuja-ud-daulah to effect their expulsion, to which he was pledged by treaty. This forced Hastings's hand, for the Marathas were now definitely a menace. Barker received orders to join the ist Brigade in Oudh, where he was to obtain

[1] **In dry weather there were more than fourteen fords across the Ganges into Rohilkhand. Most of these lay between Anupshahr and Hardwar. Martin, M., *Wellesley's Despatches,* I, 673.**

[2] **Strachey, *Hastings and the Rohilla War,* p. 18.**

an immediate interview with Shuja-ud-daulah. He was also instructed to enter into a treaty with Hafiz Rahmat Khan for the protection of all Rohilla territories lying on the same side of the Ganges as Shuja-ud-daulah's dominions. For this the Company were to be fully indemnified by the Rohilla leader.[1]

It is obvious from these instructions that Hastings was chiefly concerned with the defence of the Company's possessions, for, even if Hafiz Rahmat Khan fell into the hands of the Marathas or refused to sign a treaty, Barker was still to regard the defence of Rohilkhand as of supreme importance. This was strategically imperative. Rohilkhand proper was separated from the Doab, on which the Marathas were now encroaching, by the Ganges, fordable only in the dry season, while the boundary between Rohilkhand and Oudh lay in an open plain with no natural defences. But Barker was not to cross the Ganges and wage war in the Rohilla districts beyond the river. Neither was he to assist Shuja-ud-daulah unless that ruler agreed to bear all extra expenses. Indeed, if Shuja-ud-daulah refused to pay, he was to be immediately abandoned. Barker was also instructed to recover the arrears due for the last campaign.[2] For the occupation and defence of the province of Kora, Barker was empowered to cross the Ganges, but he was studiously to avoid embroiling the Company in any offensive war with the Marathas and was to remain in peaceful possession of Kora unless attacked. If the Marathas appeared in great force, he was to call upon the 2nd Brigade at Patna for reinforcements, but, if it became obvious that the enemy were threatening Bihar, these reinforcements were to be sent back immediately.

Early in March the combined forces of the Company and Shuja-ud-daulah entered Rohilkhand and moved in the direction of Ramghat, where the Maratha main body was encamped. At this juncture Hafiz Rahmat Khan, in return for Maratha protection, deserted Shuja-ud-daulah. In extenuation of his conduct he later pleaded that he had acted under compulsion.[3] Barker believed that the presence of English

[1] *B.S.C.y* **Range A.25, 18 February 1773.**
[2] ***Persian Calendar,* IV, No. 105, 10 December 1772.**
[3] **Forrest's *Selections,* I, 60-1.**

troops had prevented the Marathas from crossing the Ganges, joining the Rohillas, and ravaging Oudh. Enraged at the perfidy of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, Shuja-ud-daulah for the first time broached the question of expelling the Rohillas from Rohilkhand. The situation was saved by a second defection of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, this time from the Maratha cause. He once more promised to abide by his agreement with Shuja-ud-daulah. Barker, disregarding his orders, now determined to cross the Ganges for the purpose of dislodging the Maratha main body. This was followed by the hasty retreat of the Maratha forces. Neither Shuja-ud-daulah nor Hafiz Rahmat Khan took part in this action, but, after the Maratha retreat, the Rohilla leader renewed his promise to pay the stipulated amount to Shuja-ud-daulah. The melting of the mountain snows in April rendered the Ganges unfordable and prevented any further Maratha invasion of Rohilkhand, while internal dissensions in the enemy camp soon led to the retreat of the Maratha cavalry from northern India.

One of the most important documents in the private papers of Hastings deposited in the British Museum is the diary in which he recorded his visit to Shuja-ud-daulah at Benares in 1773. Concerning the value of this diary Hastings wrote:

> The conferences held with the wazir are faithfully and exactly related, for it was a part of my daily occupation to write down, the instant we parted, everything that had passed between us, and as my whole attention, I may say, my whole heart, was fixed on the success of my commission, I scarce could have forgot a word of business that occurred on these occasions. I have left the whole uncorrected in its original dress with all my own defects, as well as His Excellency's, undisguised in it.

It seems an extraordinary omission on the part of previous writers that, with one exception, no reference has been made to this invaluable historical document. Attention was first drawn to it by Strachey, who used those portions which related to the genesis of the Rohilla war.

The opening pages of the diary record Hastings's chief reasons for proceeding to visit Shuja-ud-daulah, namely, the shortcomings of the Treaty of Allahabad and the inadequacy

of Clive's policy towards Oudh. Under Clive's system all advantages which could be derived from the alliance rested with the ruler of Oudh. Hastings wished to draw up a fresh agreement by which the alliance would be made more profitable to the Company. The existing arrangement was a severe drain on the Company's financial resources, for the failure of Clive to insist on an adequate payment for the assistance of the Company's troops had meant that every time Shuja-ud-daulah had requisitioned them monetary embarrassment had ensued for the English. Not only was the payment totally out of proportion to the services rendered but it had been paid in the past with great irregularity. This had been a frequent cause of discontent and friction. In the second place, the Emperor had deserted the English for their enemies the Marathas. By severing his connexion with the Company, who had granted him Kora and Allahabad, he had betrayed the only power that paid him tribute. That Hastings had made up his mind to reverse the system set up by Clive is apparent from the following expression of his views in a letter to Sir George Colebrooke.

> In the King we have another idol of our own creation to whom we have bound ourselves to pay an annual tribute, and most punctually have we paid it, even when he was in arms against us, for such I consider the cause he is now engaged in. His title, dignity, state, and the territory which he possesses, he holds by our bounty; and what has he given us in return? A piece of paper which acknowledges our right to the *diwani* of Bengal, a right which we can have no pretence to hold from him, because we denied his right to possess a single acre in either of the provinces. We hold the sovereignty of them by the best of all titles, power. He could not transfer what he never had to give;[1] and twenty-six lakhs of rupees, £325,000 sterling, are rather too much to give away annually for the purchase of a very flimsy argument, not intrinsically worth three halfpence. You have been deceived, if you were told that the powers of India set any value on the King's grants. They laugh at them. Not a state of India ever paid him a rupee, not one of his natural subjects offered any kind of submission to his authority, when we first fell down and wor-

[1] **Bengal had been virtually independent of Delhi from about 1740,** ***vide Cambridge History of India,*** **IV, 364.**

> shipped it. Yet for this idle pageant we have drained the country, which has a right to our protection, of its current specie, which is its blood; for him we continued to exhaust it of its wealth, while we wanted means to furnish the necessary expenses of the Company, while we draw on them for crores and run them crores in debt; and to this wretched King of shreds and patches are we almost to this day sending supplies of treasure to enable the only enemies we have in India to prosecute their designs of universal conquest.[1]

Hastings therefore hoped to reap some advantage from fresh arrangements necessitated by this change of policy on the Emperor's part and by the altered political situation.

During the conquest of a country great power must of necessity be vested in the military. Even when the conquest has become an established fact there is for some time afterwards a marked reluctance on the part of generals and other military officers to surrender their powers and to work amicably with the civilian administrators who come, after the fighting is over, to take charge of the conquered province. We have already observed how the management of the Company's affairs with Oudh had been left in the hands of the military commander. This meant that 'on every alarm, whether arising from real danger, or raised without foundation as a pretext for the ambitions of our ally, the army was hastily summoned to his assistance.'[2] An unfortunate result of this was that all problems were approached from the military point of view. Hastings hoped by means of a personal interview 'to abolish this partial influence' and 'to renew the connexion on principles more comprehensive of the general system'. There were many circumstances prompting Shuja-ud-daulah to enter into a fresh alliance on grounds more favourable to the Company. He needed English troops to defend Oudh against Maratha encroachments. It could be argued that, owing to the revolt of Raghunath Rao and internal dissensions, the Maratha menace had ceased for the time being, but this was no reason for indefinitely postponing any scheme for strengthening the defences of Oudh. It was also

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 127. Hastings to Colebrooke, 26 March 1772.
[2] Add. MSS. 29, 212. Hereafter referred to as the *Benares Diary*.

well known that Shuja-ud-daulah entertained designs on Delhi and hoped to obtain the help of the Company for the fulfilment of this ambition. He had even asked for a brigade to accompany him to Delhi but Hastings had been compelled to refuse this request.[1] Not only had he proposed the annexation of Rohilkhand, but he also wished to recover Kora and Allahabad. When it is remembered that he was in reality absolutely dependent on the Company, who, to quote the words of Hastings,

> stand in need of nothing from him but an equivalent for the succour which they afford him, and can safely cancel every article of the treaties between them without either present loss or other future hazard than of the consequences of his ruin, which is with them a remote, with us an instant consideration,[2]

it cannot be wondered at that Shuja-ud-daulah had repeatedly asked for a personal interview and cheerfully acquiesced in the proposed visit of Hastings. As a precautionary measure Lawrell, one of the Company's servants, was sent on in advance to take possession of Kora and Allahabad in the name of the Company, for it was only right that, the Emperor having abandoned them to the Marathas, these two provinces should revert to their original proprietors.

On 24 June 1773 Hastings, accompanied by Vansittart and Lambert, set out from Calcutta armed with the following instructions:[3]

(1) A conference was to be held with Shuja-ud-daulah for the purpose of effecting an alliance on grounds of reciprocal advantage.

(2) Hastings was to secure the regular payment of adequate subsidies for any troops employed in Shuja-ud-daulah's service at his own request. All expenses, not merely the extraordinary, were to be borne by the ruler of Oudh.

(3) Since the Emperor had proceeded to Delhi in opposition to the most strenuous remonstrances of the Company, all existing engagements with Shah Alam were to be considered as dissolved, so long as he continued to reside there.

[1] ***Persian Calendar*, IV, No. 265, 21 April 1773.**
[2] ***Benares Diary*, 1773.**
[3] ***B.S.C*, Range A.25, 4 October 1773.**

For this reason Kora and Allahabad would revert to the Company, to whom they belonged by right of conquest, for it was obvious that the Emperor was unable to hold them in accordance with the terms on which they had been ceded to him. But the Company did not wish to retain such distant provinces, difficult to defend, and a bone of contention with the neighbouring powers. They were prepared to dispose of them on advantageous terms and suggested that since these provinces were contiguous to Shuja-ud-daulah's dominions and since he was an ally of the Company, they would be willing to exchange them for the districts of Chunar and Ghazipur. On the other hand, if the Emperor were desirous of renewing his former connexion with the Company, his right to Kora and Allahabad could not be disputed. In such circumstances Hastings was authorized to restore these districts to the Emperor providing he renounced the tribute paid to him from Bengal and Bihar. Furthermore, this renunciation was to be retrospective and was to include all arrears, for there could be no question of continuing the payment of the tribute, since the Company's revenues were not equal to the demand.

(4) Hastings was to renew on behalf of Raja Chait Singh of Benares the stipulation formerly made with Shuja-ud-daulah in favour of the raja's father, Balwant Singh, in consideration of his services to the Company in the year 1764.

(5) Any treaty with Shuja-ud-daulah was to include a clause providing for a free trade with his dominions.

(6) For the effective protection of Oudh the Company's military plans were to include the territory of the Rohillas to the north of the Ganges.

(7) Lastly, Lawrell was to meet him at Benares and furnish him with the information collected regarding Kora and Allahabad.

On his way to Benares Hastings recorded in his diary his hope that no rumours of the outcry against the Company in England would reach the ears of Shuja-ud-daulah and impede negotiations.

> Whatever foundation in truth or probability these rumours may have, they come too strongly vouched for confutation, and, if

> they should unhappily reach the wazir, may render abortive all my endeavours, by dictating to him the too obvious policy of procrastinating, while he suspects that the engagements which I may enter with him may be soon cancelled by a superior power, or of extracting unreasonable terms in the hopes of obtaining them from the succeeding government, if they should be rejected by the present.

At Benares Hastings placed his case before Shuja-ud-daulah. He pointed out the inequality of the existing treaty and stressed the fact that ' no friendships between individuals or states could subsist but on grounds of interest'. Of little benefit to the Company, the Treaty of Allahabad had, on the contrary, proved a heavy financial burden. In the first place the connecting link between Shuja-ud-daulah and the Company was inadequate. Coming into contact solely with the military commanders and living at a great distance from Calcutta, he knew little of the real heads of the Company's administration. The interests of the military were necessarily circumscribed and bounded by their profession; in fact, their interests were in campaigns and conquests, and in the increase of their military reputations. Financial considerations rarely troubled them, for they were unacquainted with and had little interest in the general concerns of the Company.

After this had been explained to Shuja-ud-daulah he desired to be made acquainted with Hastings's proposals. Hastings's reply reveals his diplomatic gifts. Indeed, the whole diary is a revelation of his skill in this respect. He replied that it was his intention to withdraw the Brigade from Oudh, since the Maratha menace had temporarily ceased and Shuja-ud-daulah was well able to defend his own dominions. He would, however, leave a small force for the defence of Kora and Allahabad, which had reverted to the Company, for the Emperor had sent no responsible person to negotiate with him as requested. This reply naturally forced Shuja-ud-daulah to disclose his hand and display his anxiety for the recovery of these provinces, the very thing that Hastings desired. Shuja-ud-daulah argued that they had once belonged to him and were situated at a long distance from the Company's territories. Their retention by the Company would

lead to interminable disputes between his officials and theirs, for there was no real boundary between Oudh and these provinces. Many *parganas* and districts belonging to Allahabad lay on the north side of the river interspersed with the districts of Oudh. So it resulted that throughout the whole conference Hastings, knowing Shuja-ud-daulah's desire to recover these districts, held the trump card. Shuja-ud-daulah certainly scored a point when he drew attention to the difficulty the Company would experience in holding and defending these districts, but Hastings, ever equal to the occasion, admitted this and even added another objection, namely, that, in order to defend them, the Company would be forced to march their troops through Oudh.[1] Eventually, Hastings placed his cards upon the table—he was willing to part with Kora and Allahabad if Shuja-ud-daulah were prepared to purchase them. To make this clearer, Hastings impressed upon Shuja-ud-daulah that, if the Company retained these districts, they would be in possession of rich provinces, the revenues of which, under an efficient administration, could be considerably increased. Out of these revenues the Company would be able to provide for the maintenance of a large force, whereas the districts could be retained by a much smaller force. Shuja-ud-daulah retorted that this might be true in time of peace, but, if an enemy were approaching, even if there were only rumours of war, the ryots would refuse to pay their revenues. These districts, he continued, were much coveted by the Marathas, and Hastings knew as well as he that the day was not far distant when there would be war between the Company and the Marathas, who would assuredly attack Kora and Allahabad. 'This, I argued, would be the same whether he or we had possession, but that we were sure of an interval of peace, and of a valuable income during that interval, which was likely to last for a twelvemonth at least to come: that, if I gave it up, it must be for a consideration in land or money.'

Shuja-ud-daulah refused to agree to Hastings's next pro-

[1] Even to the present day communication by road between Bihar and Allahabad passes north of the Ganges through Benares, which then belonged to Oudh.

posal that Kora and Allahabad should be handed over to him in exchange for the territories of Chait Singh. What then was Hastings to do? To have retained these provinces would have been contrary to the express orders of the Company. If Shuja-ud-daulah refused to purchase them Hastings knew that the Company would find them both a troublesome charge and a financial burden, because the Company's troops would constantly have to be dispatched from Bengal for their defence. On the other hand, if they were restored to Oudh, the Company's troops would, in all probability, be still employed for this purpose, but at Shuja-ud-daulah's request and expense. Handing them over to Shuja-ud-daulah would be a wise diplomatic stroke, for they would form a subject of dispute between him and the Marathas, thus preventing the likelihood of an Oudh-Maratha alliance and strengthening the Company's hold on their ally. It was finally agreed that a lump sum should be paid for these two districts. After much wrangling over their revenues Hastings suggested a crore of rupees, but Shuja-ud-daulah concluded with the offer of one year's revenue. 'I answered that I had no occasion to give him the trouble of collecting for the Company so small a sum: I could do it myself.' After much discussion Hastings informed him that he would be prepared to accept 45 lakhs of rupees, but later, when Shuja-ud-daulah decided to postpone the Rohilla expedition, thus diminishing his financial responsibilities, Hastings raised his price to 50 lakhs, to which Shuja-ud-daulah eventually agreed. Hastings considered this 'a very advantageous compensation for a territory which perhaps ought to have been given to him, even though no return had been made for it.'[1] It is important to remember that when Shuja-ud-daulah requisitioned the Company's troops for the defence of Kora and Allahabad, an exposed part of Oudh, he was in effect paying for the protection of the Company's frontiers.

Under Clive's system, when the Company's troops had been marched into Oudh for its protection, only the extraordinary charges had been paid by its ruler. This had long been considered unjust, and two years before the Benares

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.25, 4 October 1773. Hastings's report to the Board.**

Conference, Shuja-ud-daulah had agreed to a monthly payment of 115,000 rupees. Hastings did not consider this sufficient, and contended that it was only just that Shuja-ud-daulah should bear all expenses, 'including pay, *batta*, stores, and all contingencies '. Shuja-ud-daulah then desired to know the amount of this expense and was told that an estimate was being prepared which would 'reduce it to a fixed sum for a brigade, for a battalion of sepoys, and for two guns, with the artillery, men, and stores', to be paid monthly, 'so that whatever force he might at any time want for his assistance, the charge of it might be exactly known .' Shuja-ud-daulah expressed his apprehension 'lest this should subject him in time both to a perpetual tribute for such a stipulated payment, and an obligation to retain our troops, whether he wanted them or not, on pretence of its being so settled by treaty'. Hastings removed this uncertainty by assuring him that this would be effectively guarded against in the wording of the treaty. Hastings also considered it essential that the treaty should contain a stipulation against the unrestricted use of the Company's troops in Oudh; that the troops should be confined to one station; and that, whether in the field or in cantonments, they should be kept in one body and not be posted in detachments throughout the country.

'If allowed a boundless licence to go and do where and what they pleased, they would plunder, oppress, and depopulate his country. . . . This would make our alliance, even while he benefited by it, a thorn in his bosom, and our troops would lose their discipline and grow good for nothing.'

If Shuja-ud-daulah required the services of small detachments he should use his own troops. It was at last agreed that Shuja-ud-daulah was to pay for a brigade at the rate of 210,000 rupees a month. A brigade was to comprise two battalions of Europeans, six battalions of sepoys, and one company of artillery.[1]

Hastings had also been authorized to arrange for the defence of Oudh by taking steps with Shuja-ud-daulah for

[1] **Aitchison, I, 95-6. Treaty with Shuja-ud-daulah, 7 September 1773. A statement was attached to this treaty showing how the monthly expenses of a brigade had been calculated, *vide* Forrest's *Selections*, I, 55-6.**

the security of Rohilkhand. During the conference Shuja-ud-daulah once more broached the question of the Rohilla expedition. Not only had the Rohillas failed to pay him the 40 lakhs in accordance with their treaty engagements, but they had also acted treacherously by entering into negotiations with his enemies the Marathas. Hastings agreed to assist him against the Rohillas, and, after some discussion, it was decided that the monthly payment for a brigade should be 210,000 rupees, and that, in addition, 40 lakhs of rupees should be paid for the use of the Company's troops. Some time later Shuja-ud-daulah, fearing that his financial commitments were too heavy, changed his mind and decided to postpone the expedition, contenting himself with the purchase of Kora and Allahabad. To this Hastings agreed on the grounds that 'the Company would be better pleased that their troops were withdrawn to their own territories than employed in distant wars'. Indeed, in agreeing to the Rohilla expedition Hastings had taken a great risk, and, later in the conference, informed Shuja-ud-daulah that he had always felt a repugnance to a campaign of this nature, both on account of its uncertain duration and because of the distance of Rohilkhand from Bengal. Neither was he sure that such a plan would prove acceptable to the Company at home.

Hastings had also proceeded to Benares with instructions to renew on behalf of Chait Singh the stipulation formerly made with Shuja-ud-daulah in favour of the raja's father, Balwant Singh. Because Chait Singh's *zamindari* was a barrier to the British in Bengal, Hastings was prepared to exchange it for Kora and Allahabad, but Shuja-ud-daulah would have none of it, for Benares and Ghazipur comprised some of the wealthiest districts in Oudh. While negotiations were proceeding Shuja-ud-daulah's minister, Muhammad Elich Khan, proposed that his master should be allowed to take from Chait Singh ten lakhs of rupees and the forts of Bijaigarh and Latifgarh. The diary best illustrates the discussion which ensued.

> This was not a matter of negotiation, nor indeed within my province, A treaty had been formally ratified between Lord Clive

and the wazir including the rights of Balwant Singh, the present raja's father, by a special article, and at the same time the strongest assurances of perpetual protection had been given to him and his family. These engagements had been inviolably maintained by Lord Clive, Mr. Verelst, and Mr. Cartier. If I should break them, what faith would he himself place in my engagements with him, with so glaring a proof of my infidelity before him? A pretty business I should make of it after having travelled 500 *kos* to improve and confirm the Company's alliances, if I returned loaded with the shame of such a dereliction. The treaty had already been stretched beyond its due bounds in one point by the augmentation which he had made of 2½ lakhs to Chait Singh's stipulated revenue, and, in another, by imposing charges on him without allowing him credit for them in his payments. As to the former, it was an established act, and had taken place in the time of my predecessors. I would not dispute it. But I hoped that he would consider himself as bound by his treaty to allow the raja deduction for the expense of any troops employed on his service and on his summons, or for such expense as might be incurred on his (the wazir's) account, since these in effect were payments equal to money, whether delivered to his hand, or made for his use.

To all this the nawab replied by desiring me to look at the treaty, and to see in what article of it Chait Singh was included. He admitted his obligations to Balwant Singh, because he was expressly made a part of the treaty, but it was neither expressed nor even intended to include either Chait Singh or any of his family, nor to extend beyond the period of Balwant Singh's own life. 'Nay'—says he—'Lord Clive himself when we were at Chupra together, often alluded (as I also did) to this sense of the treaty, and I well remember saying ludicrously that I wished the old man dead that he might not remain a cause of contention between us, as he on his part desired me only to have patience till Balwant Singh was removed, and everything would revert to its former footing. It was also with his consent and concurrence that I laid the *izafeh* (augmentation) of 3 lakhs upon the 17 which was stipulated by treaty. Of these facts I have no proof, but Lord Clive, were he present, would confess every one of them.'

I assured him I required no evidence to believe whatever he might assert to me on his own bare word, but that I could not admit of any words of Lord Clive's, however direct to the point before us, to be more binding on me than those of the lowest

> individual. I could go by no authority but that of the treaty, which, it is true, did not mention Chait Singh by name, nor the family of Balwant Singh, but was certainly understood both by my predecessors in the administration, and by the Company themselves, as including the whole family and posterity of Balwant Singh; that such is the supposed tenor of all treaties unless the contrary is expressly declared by a limitation of their effects. It was, however, sufficient for me that such was the universal opinion, nor could I act contrary to it without exposing my character to reproach, and my service to forfeiture. In a word this was not a subject for debate. I had no power to change or meddle with it.

In the end Hastings carried his point, and, on 8 September 1773, he was able to give Chait Singh an agreement continuing him and his heirs in the *zamindari* on payment of a fixed revenue. At this interview Chait Singh requested that:

(i) No Englishmen or their dependents should seize coolies by force or exercise authority in his *zamindari.* Hastings replied that the raja was master in his own districts and could deal with such cases as he thought fit.

(2) No Englishmen should reside outside Benares as it would lead to altercations with his *amils.* This request was granted. In future the only Englishmen permitted to reside even at Benares were Fowke, Motte, and Scott, whose quiet behaviour the raja himself had commended. All others received orders to leave by 31 December 1773.

(3) Hastings should decide what Englishmen he should visit. It was arranged that he should visit only the commander of the army, a member of council, and the colonel of a brigade.

(4) He should not be obliged to visit Shuja-ud-daulah unless accompanied by an Englishman. Hastings rejected this proposal because Shuja-ud-daulah would be unlikely to harm a person under English protection. If, however, Chait Singh did not feel himself secure he could make excuses as his father had done before him.

It was during this visit that Hastings proposed that Chait Singh should maintain a force of 1,000 horse in a fit condition to be taken occasionally into the Company's service. While

thus employed all charges were to be defrayed by the Company. Chait Singh replied 'that his sole dependence was on the Company, that he should always be happy to be in any way useful to them, and that i,000 horse should be ready for their service whenever they might be called for, even without putting the Company to any expense for them.'

While at Benares Hastings failed to convince Shuja-ud-daulah of the benefits of free trade. He realized, however, that the same purpose could be effected by means of an agreement with Chait Singh, to whom the town of Mirzapore and all the intervening country to the borders of Bihar belonged, for Mirzapore was the mart from which not only Oudh but other parts of Hindustan were supplied with goods from Bengal. It was therefore agreed that broadcloth, copper, and lead sold by the Company should pass duty free to Mirzapore. 'I acquainted him that on all other goods he should collect the same duties from English gentlemen and *gumashtas* as from the merchants of the country, and I desired he would on no account make any distinctions as they are prejudicial to the fair trade.' An attempt was made to persuade Chait Singh that it would be to his advantage to open the trade in the opium produced in his country to all purchasers instead of farming it out to one person as was his practice, but Chait Singh 'wished rather to continue it on the present footing as he apprehended that a number of purchasers would occasion dispute with his *amils* and oppressions on his ryots, and prove a detriment to his revenue '.

In his conversations with Hastings Shuja-ud-daulah constantly expressed his fear of an Afghan invasion and declared that if they penetrated as far as Delhi, 'he could not trust his family to remain in any part of his dominions'. He hoped, therefore, that Hastings would see his way clear to granting them an asylum in Bengal. To this Hastings agreed. Shuja-ud-daulah then added that 'his own family would amount to 3,000, but that their departure would so alarm the rest of his country, that every person in it of consequence would follow his example, and that I might expect at least a lakh of guests whenever such an occasion should happen.'. On hearing this Hastings repeated his wish to receive all refugees,

but 'with less warmth than I might have expressed with sincerity, as an event of this kind, though doubtless it would be attended with inconveniences, would draw a considerable influx of money to our provinces, would add great credit to the strength and security of our government, and, by impressing on the minds of his people, but especially of the women, whose influence is very powerful exciting imaginary terrors, the strongest conviction of the insecurity of the wazir's dominions, confirm his dependency on the Company almost beyond the possibility of retrieving it.' Although professing little knowledge of military science Hastings refused to be alarmed by any rumours of an Afghan invasion.

> It appeared to me that the Abdali would become weaker the further he advanced from his own resources; that it required great abilities and an experienced understanding to provide against the want of provisions, and of a communication at such a distance from their own country; that he had represented their chief as a youth without practice or extraordinary talents of any kind; that therefore I saw no cause to dread any consequences from such an enemy who was as yet at Kandahar.

The factors underlying the decline of the Afghan menace have already been discussed.

What then were the results of this Conference at Benares? With two exceptions they are to be found in the treaty formed with Shuja-ud-daulah on 7 September 1773.[1]

(1) Kora and Allahabad were sold to Shuja-ud-daulah for 50 lakhs of rupees (20 lakhs in ready money, the remaining 30 lakhs in two consecutive annual instalments of 15 lakhs).

(2) Shuja-ud-daulah was to pay for the use of the Company's troops when required at the rate of 2 lakhs ten thousand (2, 10,000) rupees per mensem. By a brigade was meant two battalions of Europeans, six battalions of sepoys, and one company of artillery. The Company were also to pay for the use of Shuja-ud-daulah's troops if the necessity arose.

(3) Although Hastings failed to obtain his consent to free trade with Oudh, he was more successful in this respect with Chait Singh.

[1] **Aitchison, I, 95-6.**

(4) Shuja-ud-daulah agreed to receive a person of trust from Hastings to reside near his person.

(5) By a special agreement, not included in the treaty, Chait Singh was confirmed in his father's *zamindari.*

(6) There was also a verbal agreement by which Hastings agreed to assist Shuja-ud-daulah against the Rohillas.

(7) The Company were to cease paying tribute to Shah Alam.[1]

When the Emperor heard of this treaty he dispatched a letter to Hastings pointing out that for two years he had received no tribute from the Company and asking him to 'remit our tribute from Bengal and give up Kora and Allahabad'.[2] From Hastings's report to the Board at Calcutta it is obvious that he had never been enamoured of the tribute payment, for he states quite frankly,

> Whatever policy suggested the first idea of the tribute, and whatever title he may be conceived to have had to the payment of it, while he remained under our protection and united his fortune with ours, his late conduct has forfeited every claim to it, and made it even dangerous to allow it, even if the resources of Bengal and the exigencies of the Company could any longer admit of it. . . . It is unjust to argue in support of his pretensions on the Company, that the tribute is no more than a reasonable acknowledgement for the favour which they received from him in the grant of the *diwanů* They gave him all. They received nothing from him but a presumptuous gift of what was not his to give, but what they had already acquired by their own power, the same power to which he was indebted for his crown, and even for his existence.[3]

Hastings's measures at Benares, like most of his endeavours, became the subject of embittered controversy. Barker objected to the cession of Kora and Allahabad to Shuja-ud-daulah. In the first place, he argued that it was repugnant to the Treaty of Allahabad, contending that, in return for their cession to the Emperor by article four of this treaty, 'the Company were to hold the provinces of Bengal, Bihar, and

[1] Forrest's *Selections,* I, 59. [2] ibid., 57-8.
[3] Forrest's *Selections,* I, 51. See also Hastings's letter to the Emperor, 13 September 1773, ibid., I, 58-9.

Orissa in perpetuity'. Whether this was the intention at the time of Clive's settlement we have no evidence. What documents and evidence we do possess, namely the actual engagements and treaties themselves, do not bear out the general's statements. This declaration will not be found in the Treaty of Allahabad or in any other treaty. Therefore Hastings's categorical denial that Kora and Allahabad were given in exchange for the grant of the *diwani,* appears to have been well founded.[1] That Kora and Allahabad had been sold to Shuja-ud-daulah did not affect the grant of the *diwani.* These districts had been freely given to the Emperor by the Company for the support of his dignity and expenses. After first abandoning these provinces and then by a solemn grant bestowing them on our enemies the Marathas, the Emperor had placed a powerful foe on the borders of our ally the ruler of Oudh. In fact, these areas had been resumed not from the Emperor, who had annulled his rights to them, but from the Marathas. It is also unsound to contend that the Emperor had the right to grant them to whomsoever he pleased, for it could never have been the intention of the Company to allow him to surrender them to our enemies, and thus swell their revenues and facilitate their attack on Bengal. Barker's second objection, that enough compensation had not been obtained, is itself a reflection upon the honourable attitude at first assumed by him when he condemned the cession of these provinces as a breach of our treaty obligations. Hastings regarded the fifty lakhs as ample compensation. From Lawrell's estimate he knew their net revenues in time of peace to be approximately twenty-two lakhs. He also knew that the ryots of these districts paid their revenues only with a dagger held to their throats, that the least threat of a Maratha incursion found *zatnindars* and other revenue-farmers in arrears with their payments. Even the rajas of these two provinces had risen in rebellion. Actually we were well rid of a troublesome charge. Barker believed it would have been better to have obtained in exchange for these districts the lands of Chunar and that part of the *zamindari* of Ghazipur which

[1] **Hastings's reply to Barker's criticism will be found in Forrest's *Selections, I,* 70-5.**

lay to the south of the Ganges, but the lands mentioned by the general would have barely provided eight lakhs of revenue, and what the Company needed more than anything else was ready money. Neither did Hastings consider it a danger that the acquisition of these provinces increased Shuja-ud-daulah's power, for an ally too weak to help the Company was a useless ally.

Undoubtedly the acquisition of Kora and Allahabad increased the revenues of Oudh, but, because they in future intensified the friction between its ruler and the Marathas, they also increased his reliance upon the English Company. Lastly, Barker claimed that equal advantages might have been obtained from the Emperor for his reinstatement in Kora and Allahabad, as for example, the renunciation of the tribute money and the granting in perpetuity to the Company of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. But Barker forgot that the Emperor's *sanads* and grants were useless. Hastings's reply is characteristic of the man . 'The sword which gave us the dominion of Bengal must be the instrument of its preservation, and if (which God forbid) it shall ever cease to be ours the next proprietor will derive his right and possession from the same natural charter.'

Barker's objections to Hastings's proceedings at Benares were produced by pique arising out of his exclusion from the Conference: the Board at Calcutta had entrusted all negotiations to Hastings. Both Hastings and the Board had viewed with distrust the fact that Shuja-ud-daulah was inclined to place too little reliance on them and too much on the commander of the army. It was essential to convince him that ' in his concerns with the Company his immediate dependence was on the Governor alone'. Neither would the presence of the general have facilitated negotiations, because, as Hastings himself said,

> The conversation must have been broken by the interpretation of every word that was said on both sides for the general's information. His opinion must have been consulted on every new point that arose out of the debate, and arguments discussed on both sides till we should concur in the same determination, while the wazir was to sit patiently and wait the issue of our discussions, or

> catch the difference of our sentiments and apply it, as he easily might, to his own advantage. Who too should be the interpreter between us? I could not. A fourth person therefore must have been admitted to the conference to act in that capacity. The other members of the Board must of course have been called in, or they would have real cause to be offended; and, if the nawab had thought it necessary to support his part of the negotiation with an equal weight of numbers, our business would have been determined by a diet instead of a conference, and most probably concluded with nothing decided, or by compulsion instead of a free and amicable accommodation. . . . Every circumstance of the negotiation required that it should be managed by that familiar and confidential intercourse which can take place only between two persons unembarrassed by interruption and unchecked by the reserve which always attends a conversation held between strangers and before many witnesses. Fortunately too the habit which I had acquired of speaking the Indostan language, though imperfect, yet aided on the part of the wazir by a very clear and easy elocution and an uncommonly quick apprehension, greatly facilitated this mode of communication, and not only forwarded the conclusion of our debates but left him, I am persuaded, much better pleased with what had passed than if it had been conveyed to him through the doubtful channel of an interpreter.[1]

The Board also supported Hastings on the grounds that it was the correct procedure to invest the President with exclusive powers, because it was conformable to the orders of the Company that the conduct and execution of the ' Country Correspondence' should be the particular province of the President.

The sale of Kora and Allahabad formed the subject of the second of the charges brought against Hastings in the House of Commons on 4 April 1786. In his answer to the charge that, in violation of the Treaty of Allahabad, he had seized these two districts, sold them to Shuja-ud-daulah, and withheld the annual tribute, Hastings pointed out that, although after Buxar everything lay at the feet of the Company, Clive and his Council, by this treaty, had thought it proper ' partly I believe from humanity, and partly from political motives ,' to hand them over to the Emperor and to grant him an

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.25, 12 October 1773.**

annual tribute. Hastings never denied the validity of this treaty but held that 'by the terms of the treaty he [the Emperor] was under obligations to us rather than we to him'; and that it was repugnant to common sense to pay him tribute when he had left our protection for that of our enemies. He held that it was enough for his exculpation to show that he had acted in accordance with the orders of the Court of Directors.

> In their letter of the nth of November, 1768, they say, 'if he [the Emperor] flings himself into the hands of the Marathas, or any other power, we are disengaged from him, and it may open a fair opportunity of withholding the 26 lakhs we now pay him.' When he actually did fling himself into the hands of the Marathas the tribute was accordingly withheld. The Directors approved of its being withheld, and in a letter of the 3rd of March, 1775, written, I imagine, with the concurrence of His Majesty's ministers, ordered that 'no further remittances should be made to him, without their express permission'.

It should be noted then that this Treaty of Benares, which was a reversal of Clive's policy, was confirmed by the Company. Mill, in his quasi-scientific history, suppresses every fact favourable to Hastings in these transactions and stresses solely the expectation of money for the Company; and Macaulay's biased denunciation is based on Mill and on the utterances of Burke.

CHAPTER II

THE ROHILLA WAR

FOLLOWING the establishment of Muslim rule in India large bodies of Pathans or Afghans settled down in the country. So powerful did they become that they were twice able to establish their rule in northern India, under the Lodis in the second half of the fifteenth century, and under the Surs in the time of Sher Shah. After the death of Aurangzeb and with the decline of the Mughal empire Afghan settlements increased until in the words of the *Siyar-al-Mutakhkharin* 'they seemed to shoot up out of the ground like so many blades of grass'. Those Afghans who settled north-west of Oudh were Rohillas,[1] and the tract they occupied became known as Rohilkhand.

The real founders of Rohilla power were an Afghan adventurer, named Daud Khan, who arrived in India immediately after the death of Aurangzeb, and his adopted son, Ali Muhammad Khan, who succeeded him as leader of a band of mercenary troops. It was during the lifetime of Ali Muhammad that the tract formerly known as Katehr came to be called Rohilkhand or the land of the Rohillas. In course of time Ali Muhammad Khan became governor and was so powerful that he refused any longer to pay his revenues to the central government, in which course he was encouraged by the anarchy consequent upon the invasion of the Persian monarch Nadir Shah. The growth of Rohilla power so alarmed Safdar Jang of Oudh that he persuaded the Mughal Emperor to send an expedition into Rohilkhand, as a result of which Ali Muhammad Khan surrendered to the imperial forces and was taken prisoner to Delhi. After a time he was pardoned and appointed *faujdar* (commandant) of Sirhind. In 1748, according to the *Gulistan-i-Rahmat,* he was transferred to Rohilkhand, but it seems more probable that he took

[1] **Men of the hilly country *(roh).***

advantage of the invasion of Ahmad Shah Durrani to recover his former possessions. Two factors had contributed to the growth of Rohilla power: the weakness of the central government and the fact that they were able to take advantage of the internal struggles between the various Rajput chiefs and *zamindars* of Rohilkhand.

Ali Muhammad Khan left six sons, but the absence of the two eldest in Afghanistan, combined with the extreme youth of the other four, meant that all real power remained in the hands of a group of Rohilla *sardars*, the most important of whom were Hafiz[1] Rahmat Khan, and Dundi Khan. This naturally led to intrigues and disputes which eventually weakened the Rohilla power.

As related in the last chapter the Marathas, in 1771, turned their attention to the conquest of Rohilkhand, whereupon the Rohillas applied for aid to Shuja-ud-daulah, the nawab-wazir of Oudh. It was agreed that Shuja-ud-daulah should receive forty lakhs of rupees for his services, but the Rohillas later refused to abide by their pecuniary engagements. At the Conference of Benares in 1773, Hastings agreed to assist Shuja-ud-daulah in expelling the Rohillas from Rohilkhand, for which the Company were to receive forty lakhs of rupees.

While Hastings had been negotiating with Shuja-ud-daulah at Benares, the assassination of Narayan Rao, the fourth Peshwa,[2] had divided the Marathas into two hostile camps—the supporters of Raghunath Rao, alias Raghoba, uncle of the late prince and implicated in his murder, and the Court Party, who supported the claims of a supposed posthumous son of the late Peshwa. This occurrence had far-reaching effects on the solidarity of the Maratha empire and led to a temporary cessation of the Maratha menace. Rulers and chiefs, who had lived in constant dread of Maratha inroads, began to lift up their heads once more, and it is no exaggeration to say that even the English in Bengal breathed more freely.

Thus Hastings, soon after his return to Calcutta, received a letter from Shuja-ud-daulah, who proposed taking advantage

[1] **Here used *in* the sense of guardian and not as a man who knew the Koran by heart.**

[2] **Davies, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. Pishwa.**

of the confusion which reigned in Maratha affairs to possess himself of the Doab adjoining Kora and Allahabad, by driving out the Maratha forces which had been left behind in isolated forts. For this purpose he requested the loan of a British force. For a few years this tract of country had been in the hands of the Rohillas and what Shuja-ud-daulah dreaded was that the Rohillas, realizing the weakness of the Marathas, would forestall any attempt by him to acquire this fertile tract. When he heard that it was the intention of Hafiz Rahmat Khan and the other Rohilla leaders to seize Etawah, he determined to frustrate their endeavours, for they had not paid him the forty lakhs required to discharge their treaty obligations. He therefore called upon Hastings, in accordance with his solemn promise at the Conference of Benares, to assist him in overthrowing the Rohilla power in Rohilkhand. Hastings and the Select Committee decided that they could not, without breaking their word, refuse this help. The 2nd Brigade at Dinapore was accordingly ordered to hold itself in readiness to march to his assistance. At the same time it was resolved that Hastings should send a suitable reply to Shuja-ud-daulah and also demand from the Rohillas an explanation of their intentions with regard to the Doab.

Hastings advised Shuja-ud-daulah to refrain from waging aggressive wars beyond his borders, especially if they could not be carried on without the assistance of the Company's troops. He was already pledged to assist him in Rohilkhand, but the proposed operations in the Doab were an entirely different matter. Although, with the exception of Rohilkhand, Shuja-ud-daulah could only claim English troops for the defence of Oudh, Hastings nevertheless assured him that he could not remain a passive spectator of his danger without endeavouring to relieve him. This was a particularly dangerous promise and one calculated to encourage Shuja-ud-daulah in his warlike schemes. In support of Hastings it might be argued that an expedition to prevent the Rohillas seizing Etawah was a necessary corollary to an expedition into Rohilkhand, but it is evident from the letter under consideration that Hastings hoped he would not be drawn into the Doab dispute.

What Hastings feared most of all was a combination of the Marathas and Rohillas against Oudh. Rohilkhand added to Oudh would give Shuja-ud-daulah greater security strategically. By advancing his frontiers to within striking distance of the Marathas it would increase his dependence on the Company. It would also add to his revenues. Hastings refused to believe that this acquisition of Rohilkhand would give Shuja-ud-daulah any dangerous increase of power. In return for their services the Company were to receive forty lakhs of rupees; and, while the expedition lasted, one-third of their forces, that is, one brigade, would be maintained at Shuja-ud-daulah's expense. In addition, it would be valuable experience and training for the Company's troops. After a discussion lasting three days Hastings carried his council with him. Barker is sometimes erroneously quoted as being opposed to the Rohilla war on principle. This is not true, for, although he held that the acquisition of Rohilkhand, in addition to Kora and Allahabad, would make Shuja-ud-daulah too powerful an ally, he never regarded the expedition as unjust. Hastings, however, consistently refused to subscribe to short-sighted prophecies of this nature, and always advocated an increase of Shuja-ud-daulah's strength, maintaining that a weak ally would also be a useless ally.

It was not, however, until Shuja-ud-daulah had expelled the Maratha garrisons from Etawah and the neighbouring Doab districts that he decided to invade Rohilkhand. As a result of this Colonel Champion, who had succeeded Barker as commander-in-chief, received instructions, on 14 February 1774, to march to his support. Operations were to be confined to Rohilkhand and Oudh, for Champion was not to cross the Ganges where it formed the boundary of Rohilkhand, nor was he to go up the Doab beyond Kora and Allahabad. In short, the only place to which he could advance from Oudh was Rohilkhand, for the Company did not desire any action of Champion's to be construed by the Marathas as an act of hostility. A Maratha war was to be studiously avoided. It was therefore fortunate that Hastings had not been called upon in accordance with his promise to assist Shuja-ud-daulah in the Doab.

The military conduct of the campaign, in so far as the Company's troops were concerned, was left entirely to Champion, who was to cultivate a good understanding with Shuja-ud-daulah. It is important to note that Champion proceeded on this expedition in a disgruntled frame of mind. It is true that he had been appointed commander-in-chief, but the Board at Calcutta had not considered it within their powers to promote him to the rank of general, although he had been informed that his case would be placed before the Court of Directors in London. More galling still, the conduct of political affairs had been taken out of military control and had been placed in the hands of Nathaniel Middleton, the newly-appointed Resident at the Court of Shuja-ud-daulah. It is not our purpose to follow this campaign in detail. The story has already been told by Strachey[1] and need not detain us, except where it throws light on the policy pursued.

On 23 April 1774 the Rohillas were defeated and their leader, Hafiz Rahmat Khan, slain. Champion reported that Shuja-ud-daulah's troops had taken no part in the actual fighting, but had confined their activities to looting the Rohilla country after victory had been assured. 'We have the honour of the day and these bandits the profits.' Some days later he complained that Shuja-ud-daulah's behaviour towards the family of Hafiz Rahmat Khan would 'render our connexion with him reproachful to us'. These, and other reports of Champion, will be examined in detail when the question of atrocities is discussed.

On receiving Champion's report that the whole of the Rohilla country was in Shuja-ud-daulah's hands, the English demanded their forty lakhs, but Shuja-ud-daulah rightly contended, since Faizullah Khan, one of the Rohilla chiefs, was still at large, that this was contrary to his agreement with the Company. Hastings perceived the force of the contention and did not press the demand. About this time Faizullah Khan entered into negotiations with Champion and offered to pay the Company eighty lakhs of rupees in three years, if placed in possession of Rohilkhand. This, and other proposals of a similar nature, were naturally rejected by Shuja-

[1] ***Hastings and the Rohilla War,*** **1892.**

ud-daulah. Hastings also refused to listen to them because they were diametrically opposed to the principles on which the Rohilla expedition had been undertaken. It had been carried out, not merely for forty lakhs of rupees, but for strategic reasons as well. Its chief object had been to provide Oudh with an easily defensible north-west frontier. To have sold Rohilkhand to Faizullah Khan would have entirely defeated this intention and would, in addition, have been a breach of contract with Shuja-ud-daulah. The importance of the rejection of these offers by Hastings is that he clearly places it on record that the Rohilla expedition had not been undertaken merely for the sake of pecuniary gain. Facts like these have been suppressed as inconvenient by his traducers. Eventually Faizullah Khan, realizing the hopelessness of his position, concluded a treaty with Shuja-ud-daulah at Laldang on 7 October 1774.[1] Rampur[2] and certain other districts with a total revenue of approximately fifteen lakhs of rupees were transferred to Faizullah Khan, who was not to retain more than 5,000 troops in his service and was to expel all other Rohillas from his territories. When Shuja-ud-daulah went to war Faizullah Khan was to provide him with from two to three thousand troops; and, if Shuja-ud-daulah proceeded in person, he was to be accompanied by the Rohilla leader. Finally, Faizullah Khan was not to form alliances with any of the surrounding powers. This, however, did not preclude him from corresponding with the Company.

While these events had been taking place in the East, the English Parliament had made an honest but unfortunate attempt to improve the existing system of administration in the Company's Indian possessions by passing the Regulating Act of 1773. By it the Governor of Bengal was transformed into the Governor-General of Bengal. Hastings, who was the first to have this honour conferred upon him, was to be assisted by a council of four deciding by a majority vote. Of the four members of council only Richard Barwell was a supporter of Hastings, the others, Clavering, Monson, and Francis, have gone down to posterity as the hostile Majority.

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.24, 31 October 1774.**
[2] **Davies, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. Rampur.**

The shortcomings of this Act were many, but its greatest defect was the right of a bare majority to overrule the governor-general, for Hastings was unable to use his casting vote until the death of Monson in 1776. Another important defect of the Act, and one which hampered Hastings in the conduct of his foreign policy, was the loophole provided by the ninth section, which, although definitely declaring the supremacy of Bengal over the other presidencies, made two disastrous exceptions. In cases of imminent necessity, or where the subordinate council had received special orders from the Company itself, it was not considered necessary for the Bombay and Madras authorities to obtain the consent of the governor-general and council for the commencement of hostilities or for the concluding of treaties. An excellent account of the difficulties with which Hastings had to contend until the act of 1784 enlarged his control over the other presidencies is already in existence.[1] As one studies the history of this period one becomes convinced that the system proved unworkable because the supreme authority was not really supreme. But this was not the only factor militating against success and it would be unfair to lay all the blame upon the framers of the Regulating Act. Both at Calcutta and in Madras the chief actors on the stage were men struggling for power. Brooding in a sultry climate they refused to agree. Not only was there confusion on the supreme council at Calcutta but relations were strained between the central authority and the Madras government. If friction was possible under honest governors like Macartney, it became inevitable under corrupt governors like Rumbold and Whitehill. We are, however, more closely concerned with the work of the hostile majority on Hastings's council.

It was not until 19 October 1774 that Clavering, Monson, and Francis landed at Calcutta. No sooner had they seated themselves in the council chamber than they proceeded, without any adequate knowledge of Indian affairs, to attack Hastings's policy, in particular the Rohilla war.

To them this war was a violation of the Company's declared policy, which the late council had adopted only with the

[1] **Dasgupta's** ***The Central Authority in British India, 1774-84.***

greatest reluctance. The assistance given to Shuja-ud-daulah had not been based on any treaty, but had arisen from a verbal agreement at the Conference of Benares—an agreement to which there was neither witness nor signature and which had none of the requisites of a contract. In their opinion the Company had recently been engaged in an unjust war. Barwell, a staunch supporter of Hastings, defended the war on the grounds that it had provided our ally with an easily-defensible frontier, which he had not possessed before the acquisition of Rohilkhand. Indeed, before this war, he had been exposed to attack, not only from the Rohillas, but also from the Marathas, who could have entered Oudh through Rohilkhand, either by force or by previous agreement with the Rohillas. The Company's forces had therefore been liable to be called out at any time in defence of Oudh. 'This is not mere speculation,' wrote Barwell, 'for two successive years previous to the Treaty of Benares were we in the field to protect him from that quarter.' It was partly in order to secure himself from Maratha invasion that Shuja-ud-daulah had entered into a treaty with the Rohillas, a treaty which they had shamelessly broken. No one could therefore object to his natural desire to protect himself in this quarter by annexing the Rohilla country, so essential to his safety. The security of Oudh was one of the objects of the Company's alliance with its ruler, and the Rohilla war not only removed *a constant cause of uneasiness and disturbance to him', but, by extending his north-western frontier to the Ganges, enabled him to protect his dominions where they were most exposed to attack.

It was on 30 November 1774 that the Majority wrote to the Court of Directors denouncing the Rohilla war as an act of aggression, and drawing their attention to the barbarous and unnecessary devastation of the country by Shuja-ud-daulah's troops. Relying on the reports of Champion, which we shall see later were based entirely on hearsay, they denounced the brutal outrages offered by Shuja-ud-daulah to the wives and daughters of the Rohillas.[1] They informed the Directors that their policy was the preservation of peace in India, that war

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.24, 8 December 1774.

should only be waged in defence of the Company's territories and for the protection of an ally whose dominions had been guaranteed by treaty.

> On the other hand it excludes every idea of conquest either for yourselves or others. Adhering to this system we never can engage your army in any offensive operations for the aggrandizement of one Indian state at the expense of another, much less could we have suffered the little states, which at the same time formed your barrier, and looked up to you for protection, to be swallowed up by the great ones. Had we arrived in this country ten months sooner, we should have saved a nation.

This attack upon Hastings's Rohilla policy called forth a characteristic defence.[1] After tracing the causes leading up to the war, Hastings shows quite clearly, and this is corroborated by the diary he kept while at Benares, that the most important article of the Treaty of Benares resulted from our promise to help Shuja-ud-daulah against the Rohillas. It was with this promise before him that the nawab agreed to pay 210,000 rupees per mensem for the services of an English Brigade. It was absolutely incorrect to suppose, as the Majority did, that the Rohilla expedition had been cancelled: it had merely been postponed until a favourable opportunity presented itself.

'Although I had not engaged the Government by any express obligation to comply with any future application of the wazir to support his pretensions on the Rohillas, yet, as the most essential article of the treaty had originated from this design and had been yielded to in consideration of my agreement to engage in it, it would have been dishonourable to decline the undertaking.'

Hastings, who was a past master in the art of writing minutes, next proceeded to answer the other objections raised against the expedition.

In answer to the contention that 'it was contrary to the express, peremptory, and repeated orders of the Company', he gave extracts from the records to prove that this interpretation of the Company's orders was unsound. In their

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.24, 8 December 1774.

letter of 28 August 1771 the Company had recognized that their stationary policy of uneventful watchfulness behind their own frontiers would probably be insufficient to ward off Maratha attacks. Recognizing that the Marathas were a serious menace, they had stated that they were considering some plan whereby the Company's arms could be carried beyond their existing frontiers, not only for defensive purposes, but even for the prosecution of a war of aggression. The promised instructions, probably because of troubles in England, were never sent out to India. Hastings was, therefore, forced to admit that the main purport of the Company's instructions in the past had been the avoidance of any extension of territory, but, at the same time, he was truthfully able to claim that he had never attempted to acquire fresh territory for the Company.

> The prohibition of military expeditions, undertaken beyond the prescribed bounds of their own provinces and those of their allies on prudential or cautionary motives or other causes independent of territorial acquisition, is only to be inferred from the tendency and tenor of their reasonings on their former subjects. It is evident that it was not from inattention that their orders never expressed a prohibition of this kind, but that they rather avoided it from a conviction that it might *sometimes* be necessary, and because it would have been difficult to mark the limitations of it.[1]

It seems clear that, while it was the intention of the Directors to confine their policy to the security of the Company's possessions and those of their allies, in certain cases they envisaged the possibility of carrying their arms beyond those bounds. Hastings was in a very firm position when he contended that a certain degree of latitude in the interpretation of instructions had necessarily to be granted to those in authority in India, especially when they were so far removed from England and when the political situation might alter before any definite instructions could arrive.

In all empires there are two forces at work, a forward movement and a non-intervention policy which seeks to restrict or prevent expansion. It has been a characteristic of British policy in India that expansion has been favoured by

[1] **Forrest's *Selections*, I, 146-7.**

the local officials in opposition to the wishes of the commercially minded Directors at home. In the case of Hastings a certain latitude in the interpretation of instructions was essential, for grave dangers would have resulted from a slavish acquiescence in orders, which would have allowed the Marathas either to ally with the Rohillas or to establish themselves in Rohilkhand. Neither could they be allowed to possess themselves of Kora and Allahabad. Here they would have remained unmolested with their armies on the borders of Oudh until they had perfected their preparations for overrunning the country. A policy so pusillanimous would have guarded the characters of Hastings and the members of his late council against legal imputation, but, retorted Hastings, 'it is not by such cold and prudential cautions that the British name has acquired such a lustre in India, nor that the British Empire in Bengal is likely to be perpetuated\ He could not, however, deny that what he had done had been 'contrary to the repeated declarations and promises of the Board', for the Board had declared it to be their intention to confine their military operations to Oudh. But later, because the political situation had altered, they had been forced to change their minds and had agreed to the policy adopted. Hastings stoutly denied that the war had been unjust, for the Rohillas had broken their engagements to pay forty lakhs of rupees to the ruler of Oudh, who was an ally of the Company.

His reply to the objection that' it exposed the Company to the hazard of an indefinite or endless war' speaks for itself and calls for no comment: 'No political transaction can be mathematically demonstrated to be totally free from danger.' Neither did Hastings deny that 'it might have involved the Company in a war with the Marathas'. While recognizing that there was always danger to be apprehended from that quarter he believed that war was more likely to break out on account of his resistance to their designs on Kora and Allahabad. The policy which he had adopted was a bold one, but it produced increased security. A timid policy, and the policy of the Majority was always timid, would have allowed the Marathas to overrun Kora, Allahabad, and Rohilkhand, and would thus have exposed Oudh to their incursions. He

therefore unhesitatingly affirmed that his policy had led to greater security, 'and the better we are secured, the less will they be disposed to attack us\

At the time of the expedition, not only had there been no fear of any French invasion, but the Marathas had been paralysed by internal dissensions which had rendered them incapable of any combined effective effort. There was therefore no truth in the argument that ' by a removal of the third part of the whole military establishment to so great a distance, our own provinces were exposed to danger'. Two brigades were quite sufficient for the defence of the Company in Bengal. The third brigade was necessary to add to our influence amongst the powers of Hindustan and to support our alliance with Oudh, and Hastings candidly confessed that he hoped one brigade would always be employed by Shuja-ud-daulah.

Let Hastings's words speak for themselves in answer to the short-sighted objection that ' by aggrandizing the wazir it might render him a dangerous neighbour, and deprive the Company of the benefits of his alliance.'

> The.addition of territory acquired to the wazir, instead of raising him to be a dangerous neighbour, serves to render him more dependent upon us than before, as he has more occasion for our assistance to enable him to maintain it, and to support him against the claims of other powers. If his increase of wealth be an object of jealousy, let it be considered how largely the Company share in it. From September 1773 to September 1775 the sum we have to receive from him by our late engagements amounts to 130 lakhs of rupees.

Neither was it true to assert that the Rohilla war had been precipitately planned, for it had been thoroughly discussed at the Benares Conference, and had been finally resolved on only after ample discussion both in the Select Committee and in the Council. It was quite true that no formal treaty had been executed for this temporary engagement. Hastings had not considered it necessary. 'The multiplication of treaties weakens their efficiency, and therefore they should be reserved only for very important and permanent obligations.'

Finally, the Majority regarded Shuja-ud-daulah's insistence that the English brigade should not leave Oudh without his permission as an arrogant demand on his part, and as an instance of 'unbecoming submission in the late Administration*. But these conditions were neither arrogant nor unreasonable, for the success of the whole enterprise depended on the presence of the English brigade. At that time, because there had been no danger threatening Bengal, the brigade had not been needed for its protection. More than this, it was a highly convenient arrangement, entailing no cost to the Company, for under Hastings's system, which was a reversal of Clive's, all expenses of the brigade were paid by Shuja-ud-daulah. So advantageous was this arrangement to Shuja-ud-daulah that there was every reason to hope he would retain the brigade in Oudh. What Hastings dreaded was not the retention but the dismissal of these troops.

Readers whose knowledge of this period is confined to Macaulay's essay will be anxious to know whether atrocities were committed in this war, and, if so, how far Hastings was responsible.

The earliest report of Shuja-ud-daulah's methods of waging war, so far as can be ascertained from a careful examination of the documents relating to the Rohilla campaign, is a letter from Champion to Hastings, dated 17 April 1774.[1] In this letter Champion reports that Shuja-ud-daulah, when he reached the frontiers of Rohilkhand, detached bodies of troops for the express purpose of burning and destroying the adjacent villages. 'I have, however, signified my wishes that His Excellency would give orders to discontinue these wanton enormities/

It is strange to read of a soldier referring to the burning of an enemy's villages as wanton enormities. Measures of this nature are necessary in all wars in order to destroy the resources of the enemy and to impair his fighting efficiency. It is even stranger to read of Champion's fastidiousness, for the destruction of villages had been a marked feature of his military career. Proof of this is contained in one of his letters.

[1] **Add. MSS. 39, 874, fol. 38-9.**

> Two separate parties have been sent into the enemy's country, the one of which went as high up as Buxar, and according to the directions given me, there are destroyed upwards of a thousand villages. Had not the rain, etc., prevented us, which occasioned our return, we should have done very considerable more damage.[1]

On 19 April 1772 Joseph Fowke wrote to Hastings from Benares: 'My opinion is that there was not the least necessity for the march of Champion's brigade. Blessed is the country which never sees them, for whenever they move, they move for destruction and devastation.'[2]

To revert to the reports of the commander-in-chief. On 10 May 1774 Champion asked Hastings to relieve him of his command for the following reasons:

> The authority given to the wazir over your army has totally absorbed that degree of consequence due to my station. My hands have been tied up from giving protection or asylum to the miserable. I have been obliged to give a deaf ear to the lamentable cries of the widow and fatherless, and to shut my eyes against a wanton display of violence and oppression, of inhumanity and cruelty.[3]

Middleton, the Resident at the Court of Shuja-ud-daulah, also reported, on 5 July 1774, that Champion had received a multitude of letters from the family of the late Hafiz Rahmat Khan complaining in the most pathetic terms of the distress and misery to which they were exposed.[4] This appears to be the first report from the Resident that anything was amiss, and we shall find that his failure to send Hastings timely information led to an immediate inquiry and a mild reproof.

> I am much alarmed at the repeated complaints with which the letters of Colonel Champion are filled against the wazir, whose conduct in many instances appears exceedingly culpable, although I find it difficult in any one of them to reconcile it to the dictates of self-interest, supposing it to be the effect of a fixed and concerted design. Your silence on these subjects, with which I cannot suppose you to be unacquainted, confirms my embarrassment on this occasion, as I have only my own conjectures to oppose to the

[1] Forrest's *Selections*, I, 181. Champion to Henry Vansittart, 20 June 1764.
[2] Add. MSS. 29, 133. [3] ibid., 39, 874, fol. 59. [4] ibid., 29, 135.

letter of the informations received from the commander-in-chief. I rely implicitly on these as far as they respect facts, but I fear the influence of prejudice in his constructions upon them.[1]

To hold the view that Hastings condoned horrible atrocities on the part of Shuja-ud-daulah would be to ignore the evidence of the original manuscript sources, for, as soon as he became aware of what was happening, he took steps to inform Middleton that such conduct, if correctly reported, must cease.

The family of Hafiz have never injured him, but have a claim to his protection in default of that of which he has deprived them. Tell him that the English manners are abhorrent of every species of inhumanity and oppression, and enjoin the gentlest treatment of a vanquished enemy. Require and entreat his observance of this principle towards the family of Hafiz. ... If these arguments do not prevail, you may inform him directly that you have my orders to insist on a proper treatment of the family of Hafiz Rahmat, since in our alliance with him the reputation of our national character is involved in every act which subjects his own to reproach; that I shall publicly exculpate this Government from the imputation of assenting to such a procedure, and shall reserve it as an objection to any future engagements with him, when the present service shall have been accomplished.[2]

On the same day he replied to Champion:

I am extremely sorry that the line which was drawn to separate your authority from the wazir's has been productive of such grievous consequences as you mention. It never could have been suspected by the Board, that their orders to you would have tied up your hands from protecting the miserable, stopt your ears to the cries of the widow and fatherless, or shut your eyes against the wanton display of oppression and cruelty. I am totally at a loss to distinguish wherein their orders have laid you under any greater restraint than your predecessors. No authority which the Board could have given could be capable of preventing the effects you mention, since they could give you no control over the action of the wazir further than the weight and influence of your counsel and advice.

The orders under which you at present act leave to the wazir

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 134, 22 May 1774.
[2] ibid., 29, 117, fol. 25-6, 27 May 1774.

the power of directing the services to be performed, but leave you master of the means for performing them. This clear distinction of your respective powers was formed to prevent all disputes by removing every subject of doubt. If in the exercise of his authority the wazir is guilty of oppression and other excesses, he only, as the agent, is culpable of it. You have a right, and it is your duty to demonstrate against any part of his conduct which may either dishonour the service or prove prejudicial to the common interest: But, I protest I do not know what you could do more.[1]

Hastings had always striven to prevent excesses by the soldiery. He warned Champion, on 5 December 1772, that constant complaints had been made by the inhabitants of Bihar of the conduct of our troops, but more especially of the followers.[2] We also know that before proceeding on the Rohilla expedition Champion had received orders to pay the strictest attention to the behaviour and discipline of his troops.[3]

It is therefore obvious that specific instructions had been issued by Hastings, which were intended to restrain the actions of our own troops. As soon as he received Champion's reports of the excesses committed by Shuja-ud-daulah's troops, he took immediate steps to prevent any further atrocities. It should be remembered in this connexion that it was a far cry from Calcutta to Rohilkhand, a letter taking about three weeks to reach Hastings, and, for the same reason, an answer could not be received under six weeks. Had Hastings's opponents used even a small-scale map and checked the dates of the dispatch and receipt of communications, they would have seen how difficult it was for Hastings, so remote from the scene of hostilities, to control effectively the actions of our allies.

Two more points call for elucidation. On what evidence did Champion, the commander-in-chief, base his reports of the atrocities committed by Shuja-ud-daulah and his troops; and, were Champion and Shuja-ud-daulah on the best of terms?

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 117, fol. 50, 27 May 1774.
[2] ibid., 29, 114, fol. 36. [3] Forrest's *Selections,* I, 93.

The Majority, on their arrival, for reasons already given, found Champion nursing a grievance. They found the commander-in-chief a willing ally in their efforts to discredit the governor-general.

Writing from Calcutta on 22 May 1774, Hastings confided to Middleton that he regarded Shuja-ud-daulah's conduct as exceedingly culpable, if reliance could be placed on Champion's reports. It is quite clear that Hastings, from the very beginning, doubted the authenticity of the reports on which the commander-in-chief relied. He feared 'the influence of prejudice in his constructions upon them'.[1] Middleton informed Hastings on 2 June 1774[2] of the animosity existing between Champion and Shuja-ud-daulah, pointing out that they had quarrelled over minor differences from the beginning of the campaign. This estrangement increased when, after the defeat of the Rohillas, a party of Shuja-ud-daulah's followers was plundered by English troops. Although Shuja-ud-daulah complained to the commander-in-chief, and although a strict inquiry was made, the culprits could not be discovered. Thus the breach widened from day to day. In a letter written on 17 June 1774,[3] Middleton, without entirely exculpating Shuja-ud-daulah, considered his conduct to be far less culpable than Champion supposed or had been led to believe.

> To you, Honble. Sir, who are not unacquainted with the pride and haughtiness of the Nawab's demeanour it will not appear extraordinary that he should have more enemies than most other men—even his own servants are very frequently the first to asperse his character and to accuse him of actions which, with all his vices and imperfections, I am persuaded he is incapable of committing. The universal prejudice and dissatisfaction, which his denying the army a gratuity they had built with certainty upon, has raised against him in our camp, has laid open another source of unjust calumny. Hence, Sir, I am induced to hope that Colonel Champion, relying too implicitly upon the assertions of everyone who has thought it necessary to add to the popular prejudice, may have viewed His Excellency's conduct through a partial medium.

Middleton, in the same letter, proceeds to relate how the

[1] **Add. MSS. 29,134.** [2] **ibid.** [3] **ibid.**

rumour that Shuja-ud-daulah had entered the zenana of Muhibbullah Khan, the son of Dundi Khan, and wantonly violated the chastity of his daughter, who later sacrificed her life to testify her innocence, had led to a general clamour against Shuja-ud-daulah. But Middleton assured Hastings that this was not true, for the girl was still alive and it was well known that Shuja-ud-daulah had not perpetrated this crime. Although Shuja-ud-daulah made strenuous efforts to find the originator of this dastardly story, all his attempts had ended in failure. Referring to the treatment of Hafiz Rahmat Khan's family, Middleton wrote:

'They certainly have been improperly neglected and have suffered much distress and inconvenience for want of proper accommodations in camp, but my own knowledge does not furnish me with any instances of cruelty or violence wantonly exercised upon them.'

The record department of the India Office contains an interesting collection of intelligence reports relating to Shuja-ud-daulah's treatment of the families of the Rohilla chiefs. These accounts are based on the reports of trustworthy persons stationed with those families by order of the commander-in-chief, and contain long descriptions of the unsatisfactory arrangements and poor accommodation.[1] All persons found in the palace of Hafiz Rahmat Khan were stripped of their jewels and ornaments, and were allowed to retain only the clothes they were wearing at the time. The women, to the number of about four hundred, including their maid-servants and slaves, were packed into forty-five covered *hackeries* and carried prisoners to Shuja-ud-daulah's camp. At first the begams and daughters of the Rohilla chieftain had but little water to drink and were provided with insufficient food, as a result of which they became ill. The conclusion to be drawn from these reports, on which Champion based his accusations, is that the prisoners were subjected to great inconvenience and even hardships, but the report of the violation of one of the women appears to have been utterly unfounded. An examination of the inquiry made into these alleged atrocities and of the questions put to various officers who took part in

[1] ***B.S.C.y*** **Range A.26, 14 February 1775. No. 62A.**

the campaign leads to the same conclusion. The evidence of the violation of the daughter of Muhibbullah Khan was based on hearsay and proved to be entirely untrustworthy. Indeed, it was asserted by British officials that Shuja-ud-daulah at the time was not in a position to gratify his passion, for he seems to have been suffering from some complaint which incapacitated him.

There can be no doubt that the Majority's criticism of the Rohilla war was somewhat hasty. There is nothing in the documents and in the evidence handed down to us to warrant any other conclusion. They have condemned themselves by confessing that their views were based on public notoriety and opinion—in other words, on unsubstantial rumours. Far worse, they admitted that they relied implicitly on the reports of Champion. But he had candidly observed that 'he had no grounds sufficient to prove the accusation'. They also claimed that they accepted these rumours because they were consistent with the personal character of Shuja-ud-daulah, a most unfair statement since they had never met him and were unacquainted with Oriental customs.

To conclude, Champion, despite his promise to produce definite evidence, was never able to support his accusations by anything other than hearsay. We also know that on 3 May 1786, in the House of Commons, he defended himself by stating that he regarded his remonstrances at the time as sufficient. This, he confessed, had been his reason for not complying with the orders he had received to furnish the evidence. Hastings has recorded his opinion that the evidence was not forthcoming because there was none. He believed that the cruelties imputed to Shuja-ud-daulah by Champion had been concocted in order to compel the Board to grant him those powers the refusal of which he had strongly resented when proceeding to Rohilkhand.

The Majority finally charged Hastings with having entered into a compact with Shuja-ud-daulah at Benares to exterminate the Rohillas. This accusation, the truth of which Hastings emphatically denied, is based upon the English translation of certain Persian letters, for the Majority were unable to read the diplomatic correspondence relating to their

own foreign policy without the aid of written translations. An English translation of Shuja-ud-daulah's letter of 18 November 1773 is available, but unfortunately no copy of the original Persian is in existence.[1] The discovery of this would have enabled us to ascertain whether the original Persian word used in this correspondence was *ikhraj* (إخراج) or *istisdl* (إستيصال). Had the original word been *ikhraj,* a correct translation would have been, to expel or to drive out. If, on the other hand, it had been *istisal,* it could be translated in two ways, either as to exterminate or as to uproot, in the sense of uprooting the Rohilla power and destroying their government. In eighteenth-century manuscripts the word *istisdl* is frequently used in this latter sense. It must be borne in mind that the word occurs in Shuja-ud-daulah's correspondence and not in the letters of the governor-general. A close study of the *Benares Diary* of 1773 has led the writer to the conclusion that expulsion, not extirpation, was intended. To hold the view that Hastings contemplated wiping out every man, woman and child is absurd. It is nevertheless extremely unfortunate that the word 'exterminate' should have been used in translation. There is in the British Museum what appears to be a paper written by Redfearn, the Persian translator employed at the time.[2] Referring to the charge made by the enemies of Hastings in the House of Commons that he had entered into a compact with Shuja-ud-daulah to exterminate the Rohillas, Redfearn writes:

> I conceive that the Persian word, which is 'istesaul', never conveyed the meaning which has been affixed to it in this country of 'massacring' the whole body of the Rohillas, but merely that of destroying the power of these conquerors, or expelling them as a body from the country. ... I certainly never understood the Persian word in the sense which has been affixed to it in the charge; and with regard to the English word into which I rendered it, I might have been justified by the authority of Dr. Johnson, who explains it in one sense 'to remove'; at any rate I certainly understood the word in this sense and so applied it, viz., the total

[1] I wish to take this opportunity of thanking Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, the Superintendent of the Imperial Record Department at Calcutta, for his great kindness in instituting a search for the original letter.

[2] **Add.** MSS. 29, 225.

abolition of the power of the Rohillas and their expulsion from the borders of the country *(extra termtnos).*

Hastings undoubtedly made a great error in not immediately protesting when he read the English translation which had been made of Shuja-ud-daulah's original Persian letter. He should have made it quite clear to all concerned that the use of the word 'exterminate' was an incorrect description of the agreement made at Benares. Unfortunately nothing was done at the time and it was only when the Majority attacked the policy leading up to the war that Hastings declared that it had never been his intention to exterminate the Rohillas, and that he had merely contracted to expel them from Rohilkhand. But the most important document in this connexion,, and one which has been overlooked, is, not Shuja-ud-daulah's letter to Hastings, but the wording of the engagement by which Hastings agreed to help him against the Rohillas. A copy of this document will be found in the proceedings of the Secret Department of 26 November 1773.

> On condition of the entire expulsion of the Rohillas, I will pay to the Company the sum of 40 lakhs of rupees in ready money whenever I shall discharge the English troops, and until the expulsion of the Rohillas shall be effected, I will pay the expenses of the English troops, that is to say, I will pay the sum of R.2,10,000 monthly.
> A true translation.
> William Redfearn,
> Persian translator.

In all the discussions in council leading up to the war, in all the instructions issued, and in the letters to Shuja-ud-daulah, there is no reference to extermination. It is solely proposed to put him in possession of the country of the Rohillas. Of one thing we can be certain, the Rohillas were not exterminated, to the truth of which the existence of the Rohilla state of Rampur still bears witness.

CHAPTER III

THE REVERSAL OF HASTINGS'S POLICY BY THE HOSTILE MAJORITY

The meanest drudge, who owes his daily subsistence to daily labour, enjoys a condition of happiness compared to mine, while I am doomed to share the responsibility of measures which I disapprove, and to be an idle spectator of the ruin which I cannot avert.—GLEIG, I, 520.

ONE of the earliest decisions taken by the Majority was the recall of Middleton from the Court of Shuja-ud-daulah. To explain this we must give a short account of the institution of the English Residency in Oudh. The first proposal for the appointment of an English Resident came from Shuja-ud-daulah himself, who requested that a certain Captain Harper on temporary military duty in Oudh should be allowed to remain as Resident at his Court.[1] Although Hastings confessed that it might be necessary at times to depute an officer to visit Oudh, he rejected the proposal on the grounds that he considered himself the true channel of communication with the country powers. Shuja-ud-daulah was therefore informed that Hastings had no intention of stationing an officer at his Court, and that Harper, who had resided there for some time, was on no account to be regarded as his deputy. He was merely a captain in the Company's service, who, had it not been for Shuja-ud-daulah's request to allow him to remain, would long before have received instructions to rejoin his regiment.[2] The real reasons for Harper's recall however are to be found in a letter he received on 22 November 1772.[3] In this letter Hastings expressed great surprise that Shuja-ud-daulah should have insisted in such vehement terms on Harper's remaining at Fyzabad. 'Had there been no other reason for rejecting the demand, such peremptoriness yielded more

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A. 19, 30 September 1772.**
[2] ***Persian Calendar*, IV, No. 83.** [3] **Add. MSS. 29, 114, fol. 31-2.**

than a sufficient one. I will not suffer any servant of the Company's to avail himself of the interest of a remote power to support his pretensions, nor the authority of this Government to be intruded upon by encroachments of any foreign influence whatever.' Then follows the real reason for Harper's recall. 'From authority, too general to admit of doubt, the whole traffic of that province, which ought to be free and unconfined to all, is said to be entirely engrossed by yourself and those with whom you choose to participate it; not only by privileges and immunities which you derive from the indulgence of Shuja-ud-daulah, but by the ascendancy you have acquired in his country.'

Some time after Harper's recall Hastings changed his mind and considered that the appointment of a civil officer would be more dignified for the nawab-wazir of Oudh and more advantageous to the Company.[1] The reasons for establishing a Residency in Oudh are clearly laid down in the unpublished *Benares Diary* to which we have already frequently referred. 'The management of our connexions with the wazir had hitherto been left to the military commander. The effects were such as might naturally be expected to flow from such a source. On every alarm, whether arising from real danger, or raised without foundation as a pretext for the ambitious projects of our ally, the army was hastily summoned to his assistance.' This meant that the ruler of Oudh was in a state of absolute dependence on the military commander. It was this desire of Hastings to release Shuja-ud-daulah from military control which led to the formation of the Residency in Oudh. He therefore took advantage of his visit to Benares in 1773 to ask Shuja-ud-daulah whether it would be agreeable to him if a trustworthy representative of the Company were appointed to reside near his person, for this would tend to perpetuate and strengthen the good understanding already in existence, and would expedite the transaction of ordinary business which might otherwise be satisfactorily arranged only after a lengthy and laborious correspondence. On his return to Calcutta he was able to announce to the Board that Shuja-ud-daulah was favourably inclined towards this pro-

[1] **Gleig, I, 305-6. Hastings to Dupre, 9 March 1773.**

posal. We have seen how they acquiesced in his choice of Nathaniel Middleton as the first kesident at the Court of Shuja-ud-daulah.[1] Hastings looked upon the nomination and recall of the Resident as his own particular privilege and even regarded the Resident as his own private agent.

Before proceeding to Oudh, Middleton was furnished with a statement of all accounts between Shuja-ud-daulah and the Company, and received instructions to arrange for a speedy settlement of any outstanding debts.[2] It was his duty to study the character and gain the confidence of Shuja-ud-daulah. He was to impress upon him that the residence of Europeans in Oudh without the Company's permission was contrary to their wishes. While in Oudh his allowances were fixed at 1,000 rupees per mensem with an extra 12 rupees a day when in the field. 'These are to be in lieu of all pay, charges, and emoluments whatever, except the salary due to your rank in the service.' On no account was he to engage in trade. 'Not only', wrote Hastings, 'because I look upon such undertakings as inconsistent with the character and independence which I wish you to maintain, but also as I am confident that the public business which I entrust to your care will afford you complete occupation.' This injunction was not intended to prevent him from accepting any private commission from Shuja-ud-daulah for goods he might require from Calcutta, but Hastings was to be informed of the full particulars of each transaction and Middleton was to receive the money in advance. The very last thing Hastings desired was to be drawn into any altercation concerning the adjustment of accounts between Middleton and Shuja-ud-daulah.

Although Shuja-ud-daulah was bound by treaty to refrain from all claims on Raja Chait Singh of Benares, except the stipulated revenue for his *zamindari*, he had recently taken possession of some of the raja's lands in Jaunpur. Middleton was to see that Chait Singh was protected against any illegal exactions of this nature. Hastings provided him with a table of duties recommended by Chait Singh for all goods passing through his territories, and informed him that he had assured

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.23, 10 January 1774.
[2] Add. MSS. 29, 134, 28 January, 1774, fol. 276-82.

the raja of his protection against all dependents of the Company who should try to evade the payment of these duties. At the same time it was hoped in the interests of commerce that the raja's officials would neither allow any evasion of these duties nor err on the side of undue exaction.

The Rohilla expedition necessitated additional instructions for Middleton's guidance while the Company's troops were on active service.[1] Generally speaking he was to serve as the channel of communication between the commander-in-chief and the wazir, but this was not to interfere with Champion's military duties, neither was it to prevent Champion from employing his own agent' for the management of the concerns with which he was immediately entrusted'. At the same time Champion was instructed to prohibit all officers from approaching Shuja-ud-daulah without special permission. To this prohibition there was one exception. It was not to affect Major Polier, who had been deputed to Oudh on special duty.

On 26 October 1774, in accordance with their policy of obstruction, the Majority forced Hastings to recall Middleton and ordered Champion to treat with Shuja-ud-daulah in his stead. This resolution to replace Middleton by the commander-in-chief was vehemently denounced by the governor-general.

> It cuts off all communication between the Government and the wazir but through the channel of the commander of the army, which is contrary to the article of the Company's instructions, because it gives the commander of the army the power of deciding in all cases of difference between himself and the wazir, and by so declared a proof of the prevalence of the military influence inevitably tends to dissolve the alliance between the Company and the wazir, who can hope for no redress from an appeal to the Government, and must, therefore, either submissively acquiesce in every act of the military commander however violent, or seek for a remedy in other alliances.[2]

The weightiest argument against the Majority's policy was

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 134, fol. 382-3: 31 March 1774.**
[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.24, 26 October 1774.**

that it had failed in the past. It was his fear of the unrestrained powers of the military that led Hastings to propose the nomination of Frederick Stewart to the office of Resident.[1] He suggested Stewart not only on account of his abilities but also because he considered that the dignity and credit of Stewart's family would greatly impress Shuja-ud-ḍaulah, whose chief characteristics were pride and ambition. The Majority in supporting Bristow against Stewart offended the influential Bute family, for Stewart was a son of Lord Bute. They also rejected Hastings's recommendation that Sir John D'Oyley, because of his knowledge of Persian, the language of diplomacy, should be appointed to accompany Stewart as his assistant. Clavering proposed Bristow as Resident on the grounds that he was well qualified for the post 'from his general knowledge of business and his particular acquaintance with the Persian language'. Hastings opposed this because he did not consider Bristow qualified for the office, either by his knowledge of Persian or by any outstanding abilities. It was inevitable that his objections should be overruled and on 28 December 1774 Bristow was appointed Resident. He was a protégé of Francis and a brother-in-law of General Fraser, who had access to the Directors and the Ministry at home.[2]

When condemning the policy leading up to the Rohilla war, the Majority called upon Hastings to produce his original correspondence with Middleton and Champion. Hastings was prepared to disclose all extracts relating to the conduct of public affairs, but, since these letters contained many things of a private and confidential nature, he was not desirous of laying the whole correspondence before them. The refusal of the Majority to accept this reason was countered by Hastings's refusal to produce the correspondence. The recall of Middleton and their denunciation of the Rohilla war were not the only means employed by Francis and his satellites to bring discredit upon Hastings, but we are concerned only with those acts which have a direct bearing on his policy towards Oudh.

[1] *B.S.C.;* Range A.24, 21 December 1774.
[2] Weitzman's *Warren Hastings and Philip Francis,* p. 27.

Although denouncing the Rohilla war as unjust, they did not scruple to accept what to them should have been the wages of iniquity. We therefore find them demanding the forty lakhs due from Shuja-ud-daulah. Refusal to comply with this demand was to be followed by the withdrawal of the Company's troops from Oudh. Even if Shuja-ud-daulah agreed to pay, the brigade was still to be recalled, unless he required it for the defence of Oudh, Kora, and Allahabad. It will be noticed that Rohilkhand and the Doab were expressly excluded. Shuja-ud-daulah was to be informed that the Company would strictly adhere to the treaties of Allahabad and Benares, until the decision of the Directors concerning the latter was known.[1] These proposals were severely criticized by Hastings.[2]

In the first place he considered that there was no necessity for enforcing the demand for the forty lakhs since it was clear from Middleton's letters that Shuja-ud-daulah had agreed to pay. He regarded the proposal to withdraw the brigade within fourteen days in case of non-compliance with this demand as too abrupt. Indeed, it would have been interpreted as an abrogation of the Company's engagements with Shuja-ud-daulah. While admitting that money was justly due to the Company he deplored the Majority's dictatorial severity as tactless and contrary to the delicacy required by the Directors in all transactions with the ruler of Oudh. It might even lead, by its abruptness, to the breaking of the very alliance which the Directors had insisted upon in all their letters. He totally disapproved of the proposal to withdraw the brigade, denouncing it as 'a breach of faith which would inflict an indelible dishonour on the English name .' But the protests of Hastings and Barwell counted for nothing.

Towards the close of the year 1774 Shuja-ud-daulah was stricken with an incurable malady, and, realizing that the end could not be far distant, he commended his son, Asaf-ud-daulah, to the care and protection of the English. His death early in 1775 removed one of the ablest rulers that ever sat

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.24, 28 October 1774. [2] *ibid.*, 31 October 1774.

on the throne of Oudh,[1] yet Francis, who had never seen him and who had only been in India about five months, writes thus to his friend George Chandler. 'I have the pleasure of assuring you that he died in torments equal to anything but what he deserved. Such a miscreant has not existed since the days of Nero.'[2] But Hastings, the experienced Indian administrator who had spent years in the country, thought far otherwise. 'I am afraid we shall experience great disadvantage in the change of our ally, as the new nawab is reported to be but ill qualified to conduct the affairs of so important a government. His father certainly possessed great abilities, although he had many defects, and would have proved a very useful ally to the Company.'[3]

The private papers of Hastings in the British Museum contain an undated and unsigned report entitled, 'Observations upon the family of His Excellency the nawab-wazir Shuja-ud-daulah, and upon the characters of the principal people about his court, and some of his civil and military sardars.'[4] If Hastings was aware of the contents of this report before the death of Shuja-ud-daulah, and he most probably was, it must have produced in his mind many misgivings and anxieties as to what would happen in Oudh when that crafty old warrior was succeeded by his degenerate son, who seems to have been remarkable only for the detestable enormities which he practised with great assiduity.

Shuja-ud-daulah had scattered his progeny throughout the land. By thirty-one women he had, all told, forty-nine children, male and female. His only legitimate son was Mirza Amani, who eventually succeeded him with the title of Asaf-ud-daulah. The anonymous author of the above-mentioned report writes of him as follows:

> He is about twenty-five years of age, his person extremely disagreeable, and his mind depraved beyond description. He is endowed with no capacity for business and abandoned to the

[1] **Strictly speaking, Ghazi-ud-din Haidar (1814-27) was the first ruler of Oudh to assume the title of King.**

[2] ***Francis Papers,* India Office: MSS. Eur. E. 13, Calcutta, 26 February 1775.**

[3] **Add. MSS. 29, 115, Hastings to Sir Edward Hughes, 3 April 1775.**

[4] **ibid., 29, 202.**

most unnatural passions, in the gratification of which I am assured he has indulged himself to such excess, that now no longer capable of performing an active part in the most detestable crime, his highest qualification consists in becoming the passive in it; and it is notorious he keeps men and boys for that and for other shameful purposes. His father is by no means a stranger to the baseness of his nature, and upon the detection of it would have put him to death, but for the interposition of the Bahu Begam, who, to save her son from the vengeance of an enraged father, who in the transport of his fury had drawn his sword to wipe off the dishonour he suffered in the degeneracy of his son, covered him with her body, and by that means diverted the impending stroke.

Shuja-ud-daulah owed much to this remarkable woman. He had married her in obedience to the will of the Emperor, but contrary to his own inclinations. Their marriage proved unhappy for many years and probably would have continued so but for an instance of her generosity and affection, which called forth his gratitude and established her unalterably in his confidence and friendship. After his defeat at Buxar his fortunes, were reduced to the lowest ebb, and, failing to obtain money from his mother, he turned to his wife, who handed over to him her money, jewels and valuables. This produced a change in his attitude towards her. She received his confidence and was entrusted with the keeping of his seal, treasure, and jewels. It is not to be wondered at that she had great influence over her lord and master, and that she was able to prevail upon him to invest her son with certain offices which clearly marked him out as the heir-apparent. It is unfortunate that such a remarkable wife had to champion the cause of so wretched a son, whose sexual perversities had rendered him impotent at an early age. 'So little are his passions liable to be excited even by a beautiful woman, it is confidently affirmed by very good authority, that his wife is still a maid, although she has been married to him several years, and is esteemed one of the handsomest, most accomplished ladies of Hindustan.'

Mirza Saadat Ali Khan, his second son, was in every respect the reverse of Mirza Amani. 'His person is graceful,

his manners gentle, affable and engaging. Nature has endowed him with a good capacity, and his education has been better attended to than that of any of his brothers.' Since he had acted as his father's representative when the Emperor resided at Allahabad, it seems that it was the influence of the Bahu Begam, the mother of Mirza Amani, which had prevented this child of Shuja-ud-daulah's affection from being declared and openly acknowledged as the heir-apparent. Mirza Saadat Ali Khan was also warmly attached to the English, fond of their company, and desirous of learning their language.

Shuja-ud-daulah's third son, known as the Nawab Bahadur, was under twenty years of age. Fond of pleasure, addicted to women, and a man of no ambition, he was altogether unqualified for public service. He had been placed in charge of his father's recent conquests in the neighbourhood of Etawah, but acquitted himself so badly that he had to be recalled. A fourth son, Mirza Jangali, a handsome young man, stood high in his father's favour because of his prowess in manly and military exercises. The remaining sons were too young at this time to enable any judgement of their characters to be formed.

Muslims have never been enamoured of the hereditary principle. In the absence of any definite rule of hereditary succession, Muslim monarchs have striven to ensure the accession of their favourite sons by means of nomination during their lifetime. But in the interregnum between the death of a sovereign and the accession of a new ruler the nobility and the ulema have been all powerful, and have usually exercised the right of election, even to the exclusion of the prince who had been declared heir apparent in the lifetime of his father. This absence of a well-defined rule of succession has caused countless wars to be waged within Islam. Among Shiahs primogeniture is to some extent recognized, as for example, in the Qajar dynasty of Persia, where each shah in succession transmitted the throne to his son. In Oudh, although Shuja-ud-daulah, a Shiah ruler, had eventually been persuaded to nominate his eldest and only legitimate son as his successor, this had not always been his intention.

It is not to be wondered at therefore that the news of Shuja-ud-daulah's illness seriously alarmed the English in Calcutta. What effect would his death produce upon the political stability of Oudh? Would Oudh become the scene of internecine struggles? Would his death be the signal for a protracted war of succession in this important buffer state, preventing the collection of revenues and holding out hopes of plunder to the discontented elements throughout the whole of Hindustan? These and many similar conjectures must have troubled those responsible for the safety of Bengal.

Immediately the Board became aware of the serious nature of Shuja-ud-daulah's illness, instructions were issued to Colonel Primrose Gailliez, who commanded their troops in Oudh, to take steps, in the event of his death, for the preservation of peace in Lucknow and the surrounding country, and for the prevention of any embezzlement of Shuja-ud-daulah's treasure.[1] With certain reservations the members of the Board were in general agreement that the Company should regulate the succession in Oudh. The question was then raised whether they were obliged by treaty to do so. Francis, Clavering, and Monson knew of no specific obligation. Hastings and Barwell, on the contrary, held that the first article of the Treaty of Allahabad authorized such intervention. 'A perpetual and universal peace, sincere friendship and firm union shall be established between His Highness Shuja-ud-daulah and his heirs on the one part and His Excellency Najm-ud-daulah and the English East India Company on the other.' Hastings argued that the union contemplated in this article would cease if the Company permitted the succession to be alienated from the heirs of Shuja-ud-daulah. He had recently received information from Middleton that Shuja-ud-daulah had declared Asaf-ud-daulah his heir.[2] In consequence of this he asked the Board to decide whether they should support Asaf-ud-daulah. The Majority decided that the Company should support him only if his right to succeed were legally established. Hastings's views will be given in full.

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.26, *2* February 1775. [2] ibid., 3 February I775-

> I am of opinion that in terms of the treaty this Government is bound to acknowledge the right of Mirza Amani to the succession but I think it necessary to add that I am of opinion cases may occur hereafter in which this Government may in like manner interfere even to the dispossessing of Mirza Amani of the government. The cases which I suppose are these. Violation of the treaties subsisting between the Company and him as the representative of his father, or an absolute or experienced incapacity to hold the government. In either case I think it incumbent on this Government to set aside Mirza Amani and to support the pretensions of the next lawful heir to the succession. I do not think this necessary to the question before us, but that the question answered too determinately might hereafter make it appear as an inconsistency to offer an opinion in apparent deviation from the answer now given.

From this it is clear that Hastings, knowing the character of Asaf-ud-daulah, envisaged the possibility of gross misrule, and believed that the Board should reserve the right to dethrone a weak or unsuitable ruler, especially if he violated the treaty existing between the Company and Oudh.

At this juncture, Middleton, who had arrived in Calcutta, was summoned before the Board and cross-examined on the condition of affairs in Oudh. Middleton knew of no written deed declaring Mirza Amani the heir of Shuja-ud-daulah, but during the latter's illness all public business had been transacted in the name of Mirza Amani. Middleton felt certain that this procedure was understood by the people of Oudh as a recognition of Mirza Amani as the next ruler. At the same time he was convinced that Saadat' Ali Khan would prove a better ruler than his brother. In his opinion there would be no opposition to the accession of Mirza Amani, with the possible exception of the Gossain rajas, who controlled Shuja-ud-daulah's possessions in the Doab and had command of a considerable army. After Middleton had withdrawn, Hastings asked the members of the Board to decide on the best policy to pursue, if it were discovered that Shuja-ud-daulah had nominated any other son in preference to Mirza Amani. Francis advocated recognition of the nominated successor, but qualified his remarks by proposing that it was their duty, should rival claimants arise, to establish the necessary quali-

fications entitling a person to succeed to the government of Oudh. It was eventually resolved to write to Colonel Gailliez ordering him to support the pretensions of Mirza Amani. The original draft of this letter, obviously prepared by Hastings, declared the Board's support of Mirza Amani to express their compliance with the wishes of Shuja-ud-daulah, but the paragraph was amended by the Majority, who announced their intention of acknowledging him whether he had been declared successor or not. Hastings refused to agree to this alteration but was overruled. This attitude of the Majority was clearly dictated by their intention to make a fresh treaty with the new ruler of Oudh.

Bristow, the new Resident, did not receive his written instructions until 3 February 1775. His first and most important task was to arrange for the payment of Shuja-ud-daulah's debts to the Company. He was to assure the nawab of the Company's peaceful intentions and to inform him that the new Government at Calcutta would strictly adhere to the treaty of Allahabad and that of Benares until the Directors' orders were received regarding the latter. In all his relations with the ruler of Oudh he was to treat him with the respect and deference due to his high rank, but was at the same time to preserve the dignity of his own appointment. With the exception of his communications to the officer commanding the Company's troops in Oudh, Bristow was to correspond with the governor-general and council only in their collective character. Hastings unsuccessfully attempted to ensure that this instruction would be put into practice by proposing that Bristow should not be permitted to correspond privately with any member of the Board, for he did not wish him to be merely the agent of the Majority. Although the Majority stood upon their dignity and took great exception to this proposal; and although Clavering protested that it was a grave reflection on both Bristow and the members of the Board, Hastings was thoroughly aware that he would be labouring under a serious disadvantage, for the Majority would be in possession of more detailed and earlier news of what was taking place in Oudh and on its frontiers. What Hastings feared became an established fact to which the

Bristow-Francis correspondence both in the British Museum **and** in the Francis papers at the India Office bears witness.

While these discussions were taking place in Calcutta news was received of the death of Shuja-ud-daulah on the morning of 26 January 177s.[1] He died commending his family to the protection of Hastings. 'If my days are near to a conclusion, God's will be done. I depend on your friendship that after my decease, considering my dear son Asaf-ud-daulah in my place, you will afford him your assistance and on every occasion act for his benefit and advantage.' A similar letter was received from his minister, Muhammad Elich Khan, reporting the death of his master and hoping that Hastings would respect his dying wishes.

The chief persons in authority under the late nawab-wazir had been Muhammad Elich Khan, Muhammad Bashir Khan, and the Bahu Begam's two brothers, Mirza Ali Khan and Salar Jang.

Muhammad Elich Khan, the diwan or chief minister, was a man of obscure origin. It is an extraordinary fact that from Safdar Jang's time to the reign of Asaf-ud-daulah the agents of the nawab-wazir's family had been men of this type, with the exception of Mukhtar-ud-daulah Saiyid Murtaza Khan, who was of noble birth. The following contemporary verdict on Elich Khan is worth recording, despite the false generalization it contains.

> He is so very little indebted to education that he cannot write, and scarcely even read, but he is perfectly versed in all that low cunning, falsehood, treachery, and deceit, which, according to the ideas of the inhabitants of Hindustan, constitute a man of abilities. He is avaricious, and consequently rich, notwithstanding the nawab sometimes lays him under contributions, an imposition which his principal servants are in general liable to, when he is in want of money.[2]

He had however been able to discharge his duties with the assistance of a well-educated shaikh. His outstanding characteristic was his loyalty to the late ruler, and, according

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.26, 6 February 1775: Gailliez to Hastings and Council, 26 January 1775.**

[2] **Add. MSS. 29, 202.**

to Middleton, he was well disposed towards Asaf-ud-daulah.[1] Elich Khan's deadliest enemy was his rival, Muhammad Bashir Khan, a faithful Abyssinian, who had long been in Shuja-ud-daulah's employ. He commanded a large detachment of troops and had been placed in charge of the northern division of the country recently wrested from the Rohillas.

The Bahu Begam's two brothers resided at Court, and had been entrusted with the administration of affairs during Shuja-ud-daulah's absence from the capital. Neither of them possessed any outstanding ability but they were respected by the inhabitants because of the justice and mildness of their administration. Mirza Ali Khan was a strict observer of the Koran. ' He maintains very little state . . . and prefers a retired life and the company of a few select friends to the busy pursuits of the world. His moderation, however, is supposed to proceed from prudential motives, as a different conduct probably would excite jealousy in the nawab, and render him less happy/ Salar Jang was also of an unambitious and humane disposition. Although Shuja-ud-daulah had at times left the administration of public affairs in the hands of these two men, it must be understood that he was not the person to hand over complete control of the government, even for a short period, to any man. On such occasions they only acted in accordance with his instructions and could make no important decision without his permission.

The most important military officer was Khwaja Basant Ali Khan, to whose military capacity and indefatigable industry Shuja-ud-daulah owed the good condition and discipline of his sepoys. He commanded seven of the best battalions of firelock infantry in Oudh with a suitable train of artillery. In command of the matchlock infantry were Latafat Ali Khan and Mahbub Ali Khan. Certain of Shuja-ud-daulah's battalions, which were composed of well-armed and well-disciplined troops drilled after the European fashion, were known as the Najib battalions. Holding minor posts in the army and revenue department, but soon to obtain promotion, were Murtaza Khan, Haidar Beg Khan, and Almas Ali Khan.

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.26, 6 February 1775.**

Oudh was always a troublesome charge and Middleton, as we have seen, had apprehended danger to the new ruler from Umraogir and Anupgir, the Gossain rajas, ambitious men whom Shuja-ud-daulah had placed in charge of his recent conquests in the Doab. They commanded a body of about 20,000 horse and foot, strongly attached to them by ties of religion and gratitude. The distance of the Doab from Lucknow, their local knowledge of this area, and their supposed connexion with the neighbouring Hindu rajas and with the Marathas, with whom they were reported to be constantly corresponding, only served to strengthen this view. Neither could it be forgotten that they had proved treacherous in the past and had deserted Shuja-ud-daulah during his conflict with the Company. These then were the most important persons in Oudh who might have taken advantage of Shuja-ud-daulah's death. '*Faujdars, zamindars,* and other petty officers may for a time withhold their allegiance and plunder the countries entrusted to their government, but such irregularities will naturally subside,' wrote Middleton, 'when the succession is properly settled. ' Middleton therefore, resolutely refused to believe that there would be any well-organized opposition to Mirza Amani.

> He is undoubtedly recognized throughout the subadari as the lawful heir, and affairs having occasionally been administered in his name has familiarized the people to the idea of his government. His want of abilities for the proper management of such a trust, every impartial person, even his own adherents, will without scruple acknowledge, but as this defect is remedied by placing proper ministers about his court, I have never heard his incapacity or the depravity of his morals urged as sufficient causes for his exclusion from the right of succession.[1]

The accession of Asaf-ud-daulah was not entirely peaceful. Gailliez reported that he was experiencing trouble from refractory *zamindars* who, although not in open rebellion, insolently refused to pay their revenues.[2] There was also a mutinous spirit among the troops, who were demanding their arrears of pay.

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.26, 6 February 1775.** [2] **ibid. 24 February 1775.**

Although it was already obvious what their attitude would be, Hastings, on 13 February 1775, asked the Majority whether they considered the treaties made with Shuja-ud-daulah, that is, the treaties of Allahabad and Benares, to be still in force. Hastings's view that they were equally binding on his heirs received scant consideration, for it was decided that these treaties were purely personal agreements with Shuja-ud-daulah. Clavering even went so far as to assert that the Treaty of Benares, which deprived the Emperor of Kora and Allahabad, constituted a violation of the Treaty of Allahabad. It was eventually decided that, if Asaf-ud-daulah asked for the Company's support, a new defensive treaty should be formed with him on the most advantageous terms which could be obtained for the Company. After an adjournment each member of the Board, on the same evening, delivered his opinion in writing on the form the new treaty should take.

Francis insisted on the inclusion of articles providing for an increased subsidy for the Company's troops; the transference of the *zamindari* of Benares to the Company; the protection of all Rohilla chiefs in Rohilkhand; aind the liquidation of Shuja-ud-daulah's outstanding debts by his successor, who should be guaranteed in the possession of Oudh both by the Company and by the Emperor. Francis meditated much more than the mere transference of Chait Singh's *zamindari* to the Company. He and his heirs were to be confirmed in this *zamindari* in return for a fixed annual tribute and a fine at each fresh investiture.

Barwell attacked both the proposal to acquire fresh territory and the recommendation to increase the subsidy. Because Benares lay between Bengal and Oudh, he advocated that every effort should be made to ensure that Chait Singh should prove friendly in case of any rupture between the Company and Oudh. To make him a tributary of the Company should defeat this object, for 'from the instant he becomes its tributary, from that moment we may expect him to side against us, and by taking advantage of the troubles and connexions that may arise attempt to disburthen himself of his pecuniary obligations.[1]

Monson, forgetting that the victory at Buxar had placed both Oudh and the Mughal Emperor at the mercy of the English, argued that, if the Emperor nominated any person to the nawabship of Oudh, any opposition to his wishes would be illegal. To support Asaf-ud-daulah without the Emperor's *farman* would be an act of rebellion. Monson was merely the mouthpiece of Francis, who had previously advocated that steps should be taken to obtain from the Emperor 'a regular confirmation of the nawab in his government according to the laws and constitution of the Empire'.

Clavering considered it highly improbable that so weak a prince as Asaf-ud-daulah would succeed to Oudh without the support of the Company. With that support withdrawn there would be as many claimants as there were powers in Hindustan. The Marathas, the Jats, the Rohillas, the Emperor himself, the brothers of Asaf-ud-daulah, and even the commanders of his troops would engage in intrigues and struggles for the possession of Oudh. There was, of course, much truth in this contention, but it is difficult to understand the reasoning behind Clavering's argument that it would not be to the interest of the Company to allow any other person to rule in Oudh. If ability was a qualification then Saadat Ali Khan would have proved himself a better ruler, for this was the opinion of all disinterested observers. It is probable that Clavering, influenced by Francis, had already decided that the weaker the ruler of Oudh the more opportunity there would be for increasing the subsidy. We have repeatedly referred to Hastings's policy, which was to strengthen and not to weaken this important buffer state. All that Clavering and the Majority seemed to desire was an arrangement with the greatest possible advantage to the Company.

After the other members had expressed their opinions in this way Hastings proposed the inclusion of articles providing for:

(1) A renewal of the treaties of Allahabad and Benares. It is very important to note that Hastings definitely refused to be a party to any increase in the subsidy. This was entirely the work of the Majority. Hastings argued that it would either discourage Asaf-ud-daulah from employing the brigade,

or, in the event of his employing the brigade, increase his debt to the Company, for he would most certainly allow the payment of the subsidy to run into arrears.

(2) The confirmation of Chait Singh and his heirs in the perpetual and independent possession of the *zamindari* of Benares and its dependencies subject to the annual payment of the revenue hitherto paid to the ruler of Oudh. No other demands were to be made upon him either by Asaf-ud-daulah or by the Company, nor any kind of authority or jurisdiction exercised within his dominions. Since this proposal was one of the principal weapons of his enemies during the impeachment, his remarks, appended to the article, must be quoted in full.

> The raja of Benares from the situation of his country, which is a frontier both to the province of Oudh and Bihar, may be made a serviceable ally to the Company whenever their affairs shall require it. He has always been considered in this light both by the Company and the successive members of the late council, but to ensure his attachment to the Company, his interests must be connected with it, which cannot be better effected than by freeing him totally from the remains of his present vassalage, under the guarantee and protection of the Company, and, at the same time, guarding him against any apprehensions from this Government by thus pledging its faith that no encroachments shall ever be made on his rights by the Company.

(3) An equal partition of the revenue of the *zamindari* of Benares between the Company and the nawab of Oudh. This was to be expressly declared as a pledge and acknowledgement of the equal relation in which the raja and his successors were to stand to both governments.

> I propose this article with some reluctance as contrary to my idea of the right of the nawab of Oudh in virtue of the treaty originally formed between his father and the Company, but it is conformable to the principle adopted by the Board in the resolution passed this morning, and may perhaps be attained without much opposition from the nawab at the same time that it contributes to fix the independency of the *zamindari* of Benares on the most permanent foundation.

What then was to be the future status of Raja Chait Singh?

Was it to be made a condition of the new treaty that he should exercise free and independent authority in his *zamindari,* subject to the payment of tribute, and should Asaf-ud-daulah cede the whole or only part of this tribute to the Company? It should be remembered in this connexion that Chait Singh as a *zamindar* was paying land revenue, not tribute, to the ruler of Oudh. Both Francis and Hastings, as we have seen, agreed that Chait Singh should be left free and uncontrolled in the government of his *zamindari,* but, whereas Francis held the view that the whole of the tribute should be paid to the Company, Hastings maintained that only part of this should so be paid, the remainder to be delivered to the ruler of Oudh. But Hastings would not have insisted on the transference of the *zamindari* at all and would not have allowed Asaf-ud-daulah's refusal to agree to this proposal to stand in the way of the contemplated treaty. While the *zamindari* remained in the hands of Asaf-ud-daula it was a security for the punctual discharge of his financial obligations. The knowledge that it could easily be annexed by the Company would be a trump card in the hands of the English. 'A conviction of this advantage and a dread of incurring so mortifying a penalty will at all times, except in a case of absolute insolvency, bind the nawab of Oudh firmly to his engagements.' Francis, however, would have made the transfer of the *zamindari* in perpetuity a preliminary and fundamental condition of any new treaty.[1] Although the Board agreed with Hastings that Asaf-ud-daulah's refusal should not prove an obstacle to the conclusion of a fresh treaty, it was resolved that the whole tribute should be demanded. It will be seen later that the *sanad* granted to Chait Singh contained no reference to tribute.

Against Hastings's advice it was also decided to demand an increased subsidy from Asaf-ud-daulah. Clavering seems to have been chiefly responsible for this. Since the existing subsidy did not cover the expenses of the Company's troops in Oudh, he argued that a demand should be made for at least an additional 70,000 rupees per mensem. Even this

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.27, 8 March 1775.**

would not cover the cost of bringing recruits from Europe and the price of military stores.

The Board, having resolved on the conclusion of a new defensive treaty with Asaf-ud-daulah, had now to determine what part of his dominions should be guaranteed in this treaty. Hastings insisted that his territories comprised the *suba* of Oudh, the districts of Kora and Allahabad, the country taken from the Rohillas, and the recent conquests in the Doab. To these could be added the *zamindari* of Chait Singh. Francis took his stand on the Treaty of Allahabad and refused to consider the Treaty of Benares until it had been ratified by the Court of Directors. He wished to guarantee Asaf-ud-daulah only in the territories recognized as belonging to his father in the time of Clive. The later acquisitions of Shuja-ud-daulah, namely, Kora and Allahabad, Rohilkhand, and the Doab were not to be included, while the *zamindari* of Chait Singh was to be transferred to the Company. Hastings naturally refused to agree to this reversal of his policy. That he knew he was fighting a losing battle is evident from his introductory sentence: 'My answer to the question is short, as it can be of no use.'

These discussions in council may seem uninteresting to the modern reader, but the student of the period who has to read the minutes of Francis will discover therein 'dark allusions, mysterious insinuations, bitter invective, and ironical reflections'. Now that passions have died down and party feeling no longer runs high on this question, the honest student is forced to sympathize with Hastings when he writes:

> My situation is truly painful and mortifying, deprived of the powers with which I have been invested by a solemn act of the legislature . . . denied the respect which is due to my station and character, denied even the rights of personal civility by men with whom I am compelled to associate in the daily course of official business, and condemned to bear my share in the responsibility of measures which I do not approve, I should long since have yielded up my place in this disgraceful scene, did not my ideas of my duty to you and a confidence in your justice animate me to persevere.[1]

[1] Forrest's *Selections,* I I , 279.

The results of these deliberations, which were an expression of Francis's views on foreign policy, were sent to Bristow in the form of additional instructions.

He was to inform Asaf-ud-daulah that he was not authorized to enter into any negotiations until the financial claims of the Company upon Shuja-ud-daulah had been fully adjusted. While the Company regarded him as an ally and acknowledged his right to succeed his father, the existing treaties were merely temporary and personal engagements with his late father, engagements which expired with him. If, like his father before him, he required the Company's support, a fresh treaty would be necessary. Although the Company were not prepared to enter into an engagement guaranteeing the whole of the dominions in his possession, for they could not be responsible for the defence of the Rohilla country or of the recent conquests in the Doab, they were ready to guarantee the rest of his dominions, though, even in this case, the future guarantee of Kora and Allahabad would depend upon the ratification of the Treaty of Benares by the Court of Directors. Neither were they prepared to enter into a defensive alliance without ample compensation for their support. They would however consider the transfer to them of the *zamindari* of Chait Singh as sufficient reward for their guarantee of protection. But this was not all. Since the subsidy paid by Shuja-ud-daulah had proved inadequate in the last campaign, on any future occasion, when the Company's troops would be required for the defence of Oudh, the monthly subsidy would have to be equal to the real expense. At the same time, Bristow was told, in the strictest confidence, that, provided Asaf-ud-daulah was agreeable to the complete transfer of Chait Singh's *zamindari* to the Company, they would not insist on an increased subsidy. On the other hand, if Bristow could obtain both these concessions as articles of the new treaty he would be conferring a great benefit on the Company. If Asaf-ud-daulah refused these terms, Bristow was to inform him that the Company's troops would be withdrawn from his dominions.

Early in April 1775 news was received from Bristow that Asaf-ud-daulah was desirous of entering into a fresh alliance

with the Company, and that he had promised an early payment of the money owing to the Company on account of the Rohilla war.[1] Bristow also reported that he had experienced the greatest difficulty in persuading Asaf-ud-daulah to dismiss all foreigners in his employ. The Company however insisted upon their dismissal as a preliminary to any treaty. Asaf-ud-daulah must make his choice between the French and the English, for friendship with the one could only be construed as enmity towards the other. Until he agreed to this Bristow was to suspend all negotiations. Orders were also issued to prevent Europeans without passports from proceeding to Oudh. These instructions to Bristow were reinforced by a letter to the nawab.[2] He was informed that the treaties between his late father and the Company were no longer binding. A new treaty clearly laying down the conditions on which the English were prepared to support him was essential. He was to understand that the brigade had been left in Oudh, not because of any engagement, but purely on account of the friendship existing between him and the Company. In fact, its presence in Oudh, at so great a distance from Bengal, constituted a serious loss to the Company. Unless he were prepared to compensate the Company for this, they would be compelled to withdraw the brigade, but they hoped he would listen attentively to Bristow's representations so that the negotiations could be brought to a speedy conclusion in such a manner as would provide for the security and interests of both parties.

It was not until 22 May 1775 that Bristow was able to report the final settlement of the treaty and submit a copy for ratification.[3] This treaty, which took the form of a defensive alliance, established 'universal peace, firm friendship, and perfect union' between Asaf-ud-daulah and the English Company. It contained the usual stipulation providing for the exclusion of Mir Qasim and Samru fom Oudh, and made the Company's consent essential to the employment of any Europeans. The draft treaty guaranteed Asaf-

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.28, 3 April 1775: Bristow to Council, 20 March 1775.**
[2] **ibid., 17 April 1775: *Persian Calendar*, IV, No. 1701.**
[3] **ibid, Range A.29, 6 June 1775. Aitchison, I, 97-9. Hereafter referred to as the Treaty of Fyzabad.**

ud-daulah in the possession of the *suba* of Oudh, and, until the pleasure of the Court of Directors was known, in the possession of Kora and Allahabad.[1] In return for this Asaf-ud-daulah ceded to the Company in full sovereignty all the territories dependent on Raja Chait Singh together with the mint and *Kotwali* (police jurisdiction) of Benares. The subsidy for a brigade of British troops was raised to 260,000 rupees per mensem, a brigade to consist of two battalions of Europeans, one company of artillery, and six battalions of sepoys. Bristow, who was not sure whether this increase of 50,000 rupees a month would be considered sufficient by the Majority, hastened to assure them that Chait Singh's *zamindari*, which was rented at twenty-two lakhs of rupees per annum, was, so he had been led to understand by Murtaza Khan, worth fifty lakhs.[2] The inclusion of an article pledging the Company to support Asaf-ud-daulah against the Emperor in case of disagreement was insisted upon by Asaf-ud-daulah himself, whose intention it was to use their influence to obtain the wazirate. He had also hoped for an article binding the Company never to intercede in favour of his brothers or servants. This, he believed, would prevent his refractory subjects from entertaining any hopes of English protection. But Bristow was able to persuade him that it would have served no useful purpose publicly to proclaim his jealousy of his brothers. Since the treaty related only to what was perpetual, Asaf-ud-daulah objected to the article in the draft treaty which referred to his responsibility for his father's debts to the Company. As a result of this representation the offending article was omitted and became the subject of a separate agreement.[3] He was also anxious, if the occasion arose, to assist the Company with his forces, but only on condition that the subsidy he received would be equal to that which he paid for the Company's troops. Bristow rejected this offer because the expenses of European troops were three times as great as those of the same body of Oudh sepoys. Neither was

[1] **The later confirmation of the Treaty of Benares by the Directors meant that this guarantee was no longer conditional. *Vide B.S.C.*, Range A.31, II October 1775; 8 November 1775.**

[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.29, 6 June 1775: Bristow to the Board, 22 May 1775.**

[3] **Aitchison, I, 100.**

any comparison possible between his troops and those of the Company in respect of discipline and efficiency. The nawab was greatly worried as to whether the Company would send troops to defend the unguaranteed parts of his dominions, namely Rohilkhand and the Doab. This was provided for in the final article of the treaty. In this manner then Hastings's policy towards Oudh was reversed by the Majority.

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORY OF OUDH FROM 1775 TO 1781

Jis Ko na de Maula
Tis Ko de Asaf-ud-daulah.
Who from Heaven nought receiveth,
To him Asaf-ud-daulah giveth.

His Excellency is juvenile in his amusements, volatile, injudicious in the choice of his confidants, and so familiar in his conversation as to throw aside the sovereign and admit his favourites to a freedom destructive to all subordination and a cause for the inattention paid by them to his commands. He frequently passes whole days in dissipation and is of late much given to liquor, for I have known him to make himself and his favourites and even his menial servants indecently drunk. By this mode of passing his time he can have little leisure for business and indeed he hardly attends to any excepting when I wait upon him on the Company's affairs, and then I am generally referred to his minister, to whom and other favourites he confides the entire charge of this government.—*B.S.C.*, Range A. 34, 26 February 1776: Bristow to Board, 12 February 1776.

THE accession of Asaf-ud-daulah was the signal for extensive changes in Oudh. The late ruler had taken a very active part in the administration of his country, but his son soon allowed the reins of government to slip from his grasp and relied entirely on his ministers and favourites. Elich Khan, the trusted *naib* or chief minister of Shuja-ud-daulah, was immediately superseded by Murtaza Khan, upon whom favours were freely showered. Not content with bestowing on him *ajagir* worth one lakh of rupees per annum, Asaf-ud-daulah entrusted him with the collection of the *sair* or land transit duties of Oudh, Kora and Allahabad, and promoted him to the rank of 7,000,[1] a rank far superior to any granted by Shuja-ud-daulah. It was not long before Murtaza Khan became the real ruler of the country, his royal master being merely a puppet in his hands. This state of affairs naturally produced great discontent among the supporters of the old regime.

[1] It was the custom in the Mughal imperial service that a man's rank should be stated in terms of so many soldiers. *Vide* Irvine, W., *The Army of the Indian Moghuls*, pp. 58-9, 1903.

Very early in his reign it became apparent that, even leaving out of consideration his father's outstanding debts to the Company, Asaf-ud-daulah's expenditure was far in excess of his revenue. Fortunately at this time his kingdom was not faced with foreign invasion. Since Afghanistan was disturbed internally there was no danger from Timur Shah. More fortunately still the Maratha confederacy was weakened by internal dissensions, for causes of war with the Marathas were not far to seek. Shuja-ud-daulah had cast covetous eyes on Bundelkhand. Asaf-ud-daulah, who needed more revenues to meet his heavy expenses, also turned in the same direction, but fortunately was dissuaded from embarking on such a foolhardy venture. The Marathas were still smarting under the loss of the Doab and the annexation of Bundelkhand would have exposed their territories to the danger of sudden attack and made war inevitable. But the real dangers to Oudh at this time were internal.

Although the revenues of Oudh were immense, only a very small portion ever found its way into the central treasury because the greater part had already been allocated as salaries or payments to the officials, servants, and creditors of the state. In other words, the bulk of the revenues had been assigned, the assignment being known as a *tankhwah.* For example, very few of the civil officials at Court received payments directly from the treasury. Instead of cash salaries they were granted *tankhzoahs,* that is, the right to receive the revenues of certain areas, the revenues being collected by their own agents. This, it will be remembered, was the general revenue system of the Mughal empire, except under Akbar, who attempted for a time to introduce a system of direct cash payments in the central provinces of his empire. The troops stationed in Oudh, merchants, contractors for military stores, and all persons having transactions with the government were paid in this manner. After all these claims had been settled the balance was paid into the central treasury. It was from this doubtful and fluctuating balance that Asaf-ud-daulah's household expenses and the subsidy for the Company's troops were paid. It is not therefore a matter for surprise that Bristow experienced the greatest difficulty in obtaining money in pay-

ment of the stipulated subsidy. When a demand was made for this money Asaf-ud-daulah frequently excused himself from payment on the grounds that the money intended for the Company had been used to pay his own mutinous troops.

Early in July 1775 Bristow proposed that the revenues of certain districts in Oudh should be appropriated for the payment of the monthly subsidy.[1] Districts assigned in this manner were to be exclusively reserved for the Company, that is, Asaf-ud-daulah was not to grant *tankhwahs* (assignments) in favour of anyone else in these areas. This proposal had one serious defect. The actual collection of the revenues was still to be in the hands of Asaf-ud-daulah's officials. It is true that districts producing revenues sufficient to cover the subsidy for the Company's troops could be assigned by Asaf-ud-daulah, but to ensure the collection of their revenues was an entirely different matter. To enhance the seriousness of the situation Asaf-ud-daulah's credit did not stand high in Oudh. 'I do not suppose,' wrote Bristow, 'there is one merchant in the nawab's whole dominions who would of his own free will make him a loan.' Eventually the Board decided to fall in with Bristow's proposals, but to ensure that the revenues would be promptly paid, arrangements were made for the appointment of trustworthy *amils* in the districts assigned to the Company. Bodies of troops were also to be stationed in these districts for the protection of the *amils*, for, more often than not, the collection of the revenues was only possible in the presence of an armed force. It was the knowledge of this which prompted the Board to insist that wherever possible the Company's *tankhwahs* should be in areas contiguous to the brigade or to Chunar. So that these *tankhwahs* should not be rated at a higher value than the real worth of the lands, Bristow was instructed to ascertain the total collections of all assigned areas, not from the estimated revenues but from the actual collections.

Asaf-ud-daulah experienced the greatest difficulty in enforcing his authority throughout the country, for a great part of Oudh was in the possession of *zamindars* who had acquired almost hereditary rights over their lands. These *zamindars*

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.29, 24 July 1775: dated 9 July 1775.**

could always count on the support of their tenants, whom they frequently induced to resist the demands of the government revenue collectors. This was a great disadvantage, for balances of revenue were rarely, if ever, recovered when the season for the collections was suffered to elapse without enforcing payment. Perhaps the most independent of his subjects were the Gossains of the Doab, Anupgir and Umraogir, who behaved more like independent princes than subjects. They * have ten thousand foot and nine thousand horse, men of their own caste, in their pay, whom they can depend on. They are, I understand, daily collecting together ammunition, entertaining new troops, using their best endeavours to attach the *Rana* of Gohad, the rajas of Bundelkhand, and all the petty rajas in the neighbourhood, to their interest.'[1]

The weakness of the new ruler was further reflected in the mutinous spirit which manifested itself in that ill-disciplined rabble which he euphemistically termed his army. Before the end of the year 1775 affairs had come to such a pass that he became convinced of the necessity for a drastic reorganization of his military establishment. With this object in view he asked for the assistance and advice of the Company, requesting them to furnish him with sufficient English officers to command and discipline six battalions of infantry, and to assist him in raising a corps of cavalry and artillery, because he realized that a well-disciplined force of this nature would serve as a check on his other troops and materially strengthen his government. He engaged to have the pay of this force regularly disbursed. At the same time a communication was received from his minister, Murtaza Khan, pointing out the chief causes of the confusion which prevailed in Oudh.

The danger from semi-independent *zamindars* was accentuated by the right they possessed of nominating their own *naibs* or deputies, who refused to obey the nawab's orders unless signed by their immediate superiors. This had always been a menace to the central government in India. Sivaji, the great Maratha leader, had, for this reason, retained in his own hands the appointment of the deputies of the ministers

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.31, 8 November 1775: Bristow to Board, 11 October 1775. See also Add. MSS. 34,287, Bristow to Clavering, 18 January 1776.**

on his council, known as the Ashta Pradhan, The strongest of the Mughal emperors, recognizing that the lack of good communications rendered control difficult, evolved an elaborate system of checks upon the powers of their provincial governors. In fact, the link between the central and provincial governments had been bureaucratic, not feudal. In Oudh these local officials or governors were allowed to maintain bodies of troops to enforce the collection of the revenues. But these troops were of little use to the central government. In time of war no reliance could be placed upon them and under a weak ruler they enabled the local officials to maintain a defiant attitude. A glaring example of this was the contumacious conduct of the Gossains of the Doab.

Owing to the absence of any regular judicial system great insecurity of property prevailed throughout Oudh. Because there was no check upon the powers and exactions of government officials and other powerful subjects, right was but little attended to when a person had force on his side. It was therefore essential to establish confidence in the powers of the central government. Retrenchment was also necessary, but this could not be effected so long as Asaf-ud-daulah's civil and military expenditure exceeded his revenues. The fear of exaction led rich bankers and merchants to secrete their property; and, since Asaf-ud-daulah's accession, many had fled the country, a clear proof, if one were needed, that the able personal rule of his father was much regretted. All this had an adverse effect upon the trade of Oudh. The structure of the central government was still based in theory on the system of Shuja-ud-daulah and a complete reorganization was necessary, for he had not lived long enough to make adequate arrangements to meet the increased size of his dominions. The worst defect of all was the absence of discipline in the army.

To remedy these evils a plan of reorganization was drawn up by Murtaza Khan and forwarded to Calcutta. According to the minister three reforms were required: the settlement of the revenues, on which the prosperity of the government depended; the regulation of the army, on which the government relied for its strength; and some scheme to counteract

the machinations of the enemies of the state, who were fomenting internal disturbances.

For the settlement of the revenue Murtaza Khan proposed that the country should be divided into four districts or *zilas* namely, Kora and Allahabad, the Doab, Rohilkhand, and the *suba* of Oudh, each under an experienced and trustworthy person. The officer in charge of a *zila* was to submit a weekly statement of the income and expenditure of his district to the *mukhtar* (superintendent) of the *Khalsa sharifa* (central revenue office). He was to be responsible for the prevention of disturbances, the restoration of plundered property, and the apprehension of dacoits, to facilitate which all *amils* and *zamindars* were to be answerable to him for any robberies committed within their limits. A duty of *2,* per cent was to be levied on the goods of all merchants and travellers. All other exactions were to be declared illegal. The chief trouble in the past had been that the orders of the central government had not been obeyed. In future this was not to happen. To prevent the forging of *parwanas,* copies of all these orders from the central government to *amils, zamindars* and others in the provincial areas were also to be sent to the *ziladar.* As a check on the *ziladar* a newswriter was to be stationed in his district to act as a spy and to furnish reports of any maladministration. A system of espionage has been found essential in all despotic governments and, it will doubtless be remembered, the Mughal emperors had appointed reporters *{waqia-navis)* to spy upon their provincial governors.

Excluding the Permanent Brigade or subsidiary force provided by the Company, there were two classes of troops in Oudh: troops directly under the central government who formed Asaf-ud-daulah's apology for a standing army; and the forces employed by local *amils* and officials, known as the *sihbandi* troops. Asaf-ud-daulah had little, if any, control over the latter, for, when the central government was weak or threatened by foreign invasion, the *amils* depending on these troops withheld their revenues and often broke out into open rebellion. Murtaza Khan recognized that *sihbandi* troops were required for the collection of the revenues, but advocated

that they should be reduced to the absolute minimum needed for this purpose. To overawe these local contingents he recommended that certain of the nawab's own battalions should be stationed in each *zila,* and that they should be relieved every two or three months. Since one brigade of the Company's troops was stationed in Oudh, Murtaza Khan considered that there was no necessity for Asaf-ud-daulah's maintaining large forces of his own.

He further denounced the assignment system, advocating that a stop should be put to the ever-increasing multitude of *tankhwahs,* and recommended that all revenues should be collected by the *amils* themselves and transmitted in specie to the central government to enable it to pay cash salaries to its servants. This plan met with the approval of the Board. Hastings however would have favoured an increase in the nawab's cavalry establishment, for ' it is by a respectable body of cavalry alone that he can render his alliance useful to the Company in our joint military operations'. Hastings also regarded the minister's scheme for the reorganization of the nawab's forces as too ambitious, especially when the deplorable condition of his finances was taken into consideration. But he was entirely overruled by the Majority, who accepted Clavering's proposal that the assistance given to Asaf-ud-daulah should be strictly confined to his request.

Towards the end of 1775 the mutinous conduct of Asaf-ud-daulah's troops gave ground for serious alarm, so much so that he was forced to ask for the assistance of the English brigade in disbanding them. This was effected by Lieutenant-Colonel Cummings, the commanding officer of the 2nd Brigade. The mutineers 'surrendered their guns, arms, and accoutrements to Lieutenant-Colonel Cummings without the firing of a single shot, upon the condition of his being security for the discharge of their pay, which was immediately issued to them'.[1] On 18 December 1775 the Resident was instructed to accede to Asaf-ud-daulah's request, the Board at the same time recommending the following establishment under British officers: six battalions of seven hundred sepoys,

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.32, 6 December 1775; Bristow to Board, 21 and 22 November 1775.**

each under a lieutenant in the Company's service, two battalions forming one regiment, commanded by a captain; one company of artillery consisting of one hundred men to be attached to each regiment,under the command of a lieutenant; and six regiments of cavalry, each consisting of six hundred men and commanded by a captain. It would serve no useful purpose to burden the narrative with the detailed composition of this force: it will be enough to record that its total strength was fifty officers and 8,100 men.[1] In a private letter to Francis, Bristow writes: 'I cannot explain to you how necessary the establishment will be to the nawab's existence, for both he and his minister are galloping post to their ruin. . . . Since our march and arrival at this place we have done nothing. Indeed the nawab and Murtaza Khan rendered themselves and the whole country incapable of business by getting drunk like beasts. . . . We have no money in the treasury.'[2] Every report from Oudh painted a darker and more melancholy picture. Of the administration of justice Bristow wrote, ' There are no *adalats* [courts] in this country, but the execution of justice rests with the *amil* and *kotwal.* There is generally a *kotwal* in each town or any village of consequence. He is totally subordinate to the *amil,* and, I am sorry to say, in the execution of justice there is hardly any decision made but what is biased by money.'[3]

Two events in April 1776 call for notice: the assassination of Murtaza Khan and the appointment of Asaf-ud-daulah as the Emperor's wazir, an empty title signifying nothing, since there was in reality no longer any Mughal empire. The assassination of Murtaza Khan encouraged Elich Khan, who had been the chief minister of Shuja-ud-daulah, to return to Oudh. He was appointed *naib* to Asaf-ud-daulah on 10 June 1776,[4] and immediately won golden opinions from Bristow.

I must do him justice to say that the short time he has been in

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.32, 18 December 1775. Apparently this establishment had been altered by the year 1777, *vide B.S.C.*, 8 July 1776: Bristow to Board, Range A.36, 13 June 1776, refers to 13 battalions of infantry, 2 regiments of cavalry, and adequate artillery under British officers.**

[2] **Add. MSS. 34, 287: Bristow to Francis, camp at Etawah, 10 January 1776.**

[3] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.35, 6 May 1776: Bristow to Board, 24 April 1776.**

[4] **ibid., Range A.37, 8 July 1776: Bristow to Board, 10 June 1776.**

> office he has been indefatigable and already settled the greater part of the province of Oudh, and fixed on the districts for the assignments of the army subsidy. Kora and Allahabad he has disposed of and called for the Doab and Rohilkhand accounts in order to adjust them as soon as possible.[1]

But death had marked Elich Khan for its own. The dropsy which he had contracted proved fatal and he died in August 1776.[2]

Towards the end of 1776 Hastings, who once more commanded a majority on his council, proposed the recall of Bristow from Oudh and the re-appointment of Middleton as Resident, subject to the orders and authority of the governor-general and council. Francis protested that to remove Bristow from a station he had filled with credit to himself and with advantage to the Company was an injustice. Barwell, who had no personal objection to Bristow, looked upon his retention as unfair to Middleton. Hastings brought no charges against Bristow. He accused him of no malpractices. He merely pointed out that as governor-general he was responsible for all public measures and because of this desired his own agent in Oudh. 'I have a greater confidence in Mr. Middleton,' wrote Hastings. That Bristow owed his position in Oudh to the obstructive tactics of the hostile Majority was a valid reason for his recall, but this was not the sole reason. The extent to which Bristow was a creature of the Majority has not been sufficiently recognized. An agent should have given the governor-general and his council timely information of what was taking place in Oudh, but the fact that the Majority had more accurate and more up-to-date information of the political situation had seriously hampered the governor-general's conduct of foreign affairs; and Hastings knew that Bristow had been in closer correspondence with Francis and Clavering than with himself. The private correspondence between Bristow and the Majority can now be read in the British Museum. This volume of letters, the use of a secret code, and other indications prove that Bristow was a tool of Francis and the

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.37, 8 July 1776: Bristow to Board, 13 June 1776.**
[2] **ibid., 26 August 1776: Bristow to Board, 11 August 1776. See also ibid., 23 September 1776: Bristow to Board, 25 August 1776.**

Majority, if proof were needed for so obvious a fact.[1] In a private letter on 9 March 1776 Bristow thanks Francis for his hint that his recall is imminent. 'If a sudden change takes place I am ruined.' He therefore pleads for a delay of three or four months to put his affairs in order. Further proof will be found in the Francis manuscripts now in the possession of the India Office.

> You cannot but be sensible—writes Francis—of the extreme danger of engaging in any enterprises which cannot be adjusted within three months at most from the receipt of your recall. My anxiety for Livius[2] and yourself is serious and better founded than I think safe to explain by letter, and, since we are not immortal, I entreat you to provide even for the possibility of your own death. Take particular care that the cyphers be destroyed or kept sealed up, with written directions for their being delivered into my hands.[3]

From this it is certain that Francis and Bristow were engaged in questionable transactions which they could not allow to become public knowledge. It may also explain the fortune made by Francis.

Middleton received the usual instructions to strive to cement the alliance between the Company and Oudh; to report on the political condition of the neighbouring powers; to recover from Asaf-ud-daulah the money still owing to the Company; and to insist on the regular payment of the monthly subsidy for the brigade. Chandler and Bathurst were appointed as his assistants.[4] Hitherto no definite evidence has been produced to prove that the Resident's post was worth more than the authorized salary. Evidence of the Resident's perquisites is to be found in the private papers of Hastings in the British Museum. Middleton having heard that certain persons would shortly approach Hastings for a government contract to supply the Oudh troops with muskets and carbines wrote as follows:

> If such a proposal be encouraged by you, the demand from me of rough materials, particularly iron and steel, for the wazir's

[1] Add. MSS. 34, 287.
[2] Brother-in-law of Wheler, a later member of Hastings's council.
[3] MSS. Eur. 15, fol. 351-2: Francis to Bristow, 5 March 1776-
[4] *B.S.C.*, Range A.38, 23 December 1776.

use must be considerably diminished and the principal source of my expected advantages, which are confined to a very few articles, be most materially affected. The supplying of these articles has ever been the province of the Resident and I rely on your friendship, Sir, for the continuance of such indulgence to me.[1]

Before handing over his office to Middleton, Bristow placed on record an excellent account of the condition of Oudh at the beginning of the year 1777.[2]

Although Asaf-ud-daulah's ministers had often drawn his attention to the fact that his expenditure exceeded his income by an enormous sum, their representations had been of no avail. Not only was the nawab himself a spendthrift but his ministers were opposed by Imam Bakhsh, Tapar Chand, and the Tellinga rajas, favourites who, in their own interests, opposed every measure for introducing order and economy into the administration.

It is important to note, in view of Bristow's later utterances, that he considered Haidar Beg Khan to be a man of ability who was prevented, because of the opposition of the nawab's favourites, from reforming the administration of Oudh. 'I know his attachment to the Company has exposed him to the enmity of all the Court, but I humbly hope the Honble. Board will regard Haidar Beg Khan as a man to whom their countenance and protection are necessary as well to support the wazir's government as the Company's interests.' It is also equally important to remember that at this time Bristow held a very favourable opinion of Almas Ali Khan, 'the best man I ever saw in the country, who pays his rents in advance and does justice to the inhabitants.'[3]

It is evident from Bristow's report that all public administration in Oudh was carried on in a dilatory fashion, the nawab himself paying no attention to affairs of state. All ministerial attempts at reform were thwarted by Tapar Chand and Imam Bakhsh, both of whom were intensely anti-English, the latter

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 138: Middleton to Hastings, 27 March 1777.**
[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.40, 17 February 1777: Bristow to Board, 22 January 1777.**
[3] **Add. MSS. 34, 287: Bristow to Francis, 21 April 1776.**

having great influence over the mind of Asaf-ud-daulah. Bristow complained that Tapar Chand had constantly opposed his efforts to secure funds for the payment of the nawab's troops under British officers and for the Company's subsidy. 'I conceive it an impossibility,' he wrote, 'that the assignments granted either for the payment of the subsidy or balance can be realized on the present system.' He therefore advocated the employment of vigilant agents to prevent the revenue collections of the Company's assignments from being misappropriated.

Bristow's report on the condition of Oudh was corroborated by Middleton,[1] who also found the ministerial party thwarted by powerful favourites. He had not been long in Oudh before he reported a plot to assassinate the minister, Hasan Riza Khan, and his *naib,* Haidar Beg Khan, and to replace them by Tapar Chand and Imam Bakhsh. But he did not believe the nawab to be privy to this plot, for, although these favourites were the companions of his orgies, the nawab had 'a real confidence in Hasan Riza Khan and Haidar Beg Khan, both men of family and among the oldest of the late wazir's dependents.' Like Bristow, Middleton found the country of Gorakhpur, especially that part contiguous to the mountains of Nepal, so unsettled that it could scarcely be regarded as part of the nawab's dominions.[2] Although its estimated revenues were 560,000 rupees a year it was doubtful whether half of that amount could be actually realized. Numerous *zamindars,* secure in their mud forts, withheld their revenues until extorted by force. It was the trouble in this province which furnished Asaf-ud-daulah with an excuse for not accepting the invitation of the emperor Shah Alam to pay him a visit.

Before Middleton arrived in Oudh Bristow had received an assignment on the revenues of the Doab amounting to thirty lakhs of rupees for the payment of the nawab's army under British officers, and an assignment on Rohilkhand for twenty-eight lakhs, four of which were for the same purpose, and the remaining twenty-four for discharging the balance due to the

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.40, 26 February 1777: Middleton to Board, 9 February 1777..**

[2] **ibid., Middleton to Board, 11 February 1777.**

Company. It was a well-known fact that these two provinces produced more than this amount. A clear proof of this was the alacrity with which the *amils* had undertaken the task of being responsible for the collection of these revenues. But both Bristow and Middleton failed to collect through these two *amils* the stipulated revenues, for which reason Middleton proposed the dismissal of the *amils.*[1] This state of affairs was not peculiar to the Doab and Rohilkhand, for the nawab's revenues were in arrears throughout the whole of his dominions. Middleton therefore proposed that Asaf-ud-daulah should be asked to regulate his expenses 'either by a reform in his military establishment or a retrenchment in his civil disbursements, so as to bring them more upon a footing with his probable income'.

In May 1777 Hastings submitted a plan for a new military establishment in Oudh to replace the existing one under-British officers in the service of the nawab. Reorganization was necessary in order to control these troops, who lacked discipline and whose mutinous spirit rendered them of little value. The fault was not so much in the sepoys as in the system under which they lived. They were not regularly paid and this bred mutiny. Hastings contended that Covering's original plan had produced dangerous consequences. The superior pay and emoluments enjoyed by officers in the nawab's service were a cause of dissatisfaction to the officers in the Company's forces and tended to a general relaxation of discipline. Again, the pay of the nawab's sepoys was greater than that of the Company's sepoys, who only received similar pay by means of increased allowances when on service in the field. This naturally discouraged recruiting in the forces of the Company when better pay could be obtained in Oudh.

Although the nawab was responsible for the payment of his troops under British officers, it was imperative in the interests of the Company to control the demands made by these officers upon him and to check their military expenditure. In support of this Hastings quoted a recent example of the indifference of these officers to the authority of the Board. The greatest

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.41, 21 April 1777: Middleton to Board, 9 March 1777.**

difficulty had been experienced in obtaining from Lieutenant-Colonel Goddard an account of this expenditure, notwithstanding their repeated and peremptory commands.[1] They had waited seven months for these accounts, but they had waited in vain. Eventually abstracts of some of these accounts were received 'expressing in gross sums the advances and disbursements, but without a voucher, without any specification of time, or of numbers, or of ranks, or of the circumstances under which contingencies were incurred.' This had led the Board to appoint an officer of Audit and Control, but, when Hastings produced his plan, this official had not entered upon his duties. Hastings therefore condemned the existing system, that is, Clavering's system, as defective because no provision had been made for the control of the Company's officers in Oudh. The distance between Calcutta and Oudh, combined with the fact that these officers were exempt from the Articles of War, also prevented any adequate supervision.

Hastings therefore proposed that from the nawab's troops under British officers the following establishment should be transferred to the service of the Company: nine battalions of infantry, three companies of artillery, and six regiments of cavalry, that is, three battalions of infantry, one company of artillery, and two regiments of cavalry should be attached to each of the Company's three brigades. It will be noticed that Hastings recommended six regiments of cavalry. Two regiments were already in existence in Oudh and maintained at the nawab's expense. A third was to be formed immediately, but the raising of the remaining three cavalry regiments was to be postponed until the decision of the Court of Directors arrived. He confessed that one great objection to the addition of a body of horse to the Company's military establishment was that it had been prohibited by his predecessor, probably on the grounds of economy. But this was no longer a valid reason why the money lying idle in the Company's coffers should not be more usefully employed in raising cavalry and in ensuring the safety of the Company's possessions. The need for cavalry was warranted by the opinions of many of the

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.38, 2 December 1776.

best officers who had served in India, and by the experience of every campaign in which the Company's forces had been engaged. 'Our armies have formerly lost many opportunities of improving advantages and of giving decision to their successes, and they have frequently been exposed to insult and distress from the want of a body of horse capable of opposing those of the enemy.'

Francis objected to the proposals of the governor-general on two grounds: first, because Clavering, the commander-in-chief, had not been consulted; and secondly, because there was no need for any increase in the forces of the Company. The existing establishment, in his opinion, was not only enough for the defence of Bengal, but also large enough to spare one brigade for the defence of Oudh. His views on foreign policy are clearly laid down in this minute, where he advocates non-intervention.

> I know not in what designs we are to succeed, unless it be in depriving the nawab of the government of his country, or in schemes of conquest, in which I never shall concur. With respect to the nawab, the injustice is manifest, if he is to pay an army without being allowed any share in the command or any judgement in the disposition of it for the defence of his dominions, a considerable part of which cannot be defended by the Company's army without a breach of their orders: I mean the Doab and Rohilkhand.[1]

Neither did Francis agree that the balance in the treasury justified the raising of regiments not necessary for the defence of Bengal.

> Augmenting the standing force of a country in order to promote circulation is a new idea. . . . Instead of squandering money because we have it, I conceive that a more beneficial and benevolent use might be made of it by applying it to current services and by granting a proportionate remission for a few years in the taxation of the country. In this way, whatever we sow we should reap, whereas an increase of the standing army in the first instance absorbs the saving in hand, and leaves the country burthened with an additional establishment.

Both Francis and Clavering argued that the defects in the

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.41, 19 May 1777.**

existing system could be remedied without having recourse to the sweeping changes contemplated by Hastings. To quote from Clavering's minute: 'The reasons for which the Board unanimously agreed to the allowance of such superior pay were because the officers were to enjoy superior commands, viz., lieutenants to command battalions, and captains, regiments of two battalions. Therefore their pay was made adequate to their commands, not to their ranks in the Company's service.' He was prepared, if it were true that this arrangement had produced the stated effects, to assent to a reduction of pay.

Clavering's contention that the increased pay was based on the command held and not on the rank of the officer was no answer to the arguments of Hastings, for it was the superior position and the consequent increased pay of that position which produced discontent. Clavering denied that the existing establishment in Oudh for which he had been responsible hindered recruiting in the forces of the Company, and refused to acknowledge that the governor-generars plan offered any remedy. But Clavering forgot that, to all intents and purposes, the newly-organized Oudh forces would be part of the Company's army. He also attempted to defend the military officers in Oudh responsible for the non-production of accounts by claiming that sufficient time had not been allowed for this purpose. There can, however, be no doubt of the irregularity of their conduct, and we have it on record that many of these accounts had been destroyed. Goddard himself confessed that the only accounts he had been able to collect had been abstract accounts. Clavering put forward as excuses the unsettled condition of Oudh, its distance from Bengal, and the fact that applications had been made to military officers little versed in the keeping of accounts. He asked his colleagues to remember that similar difficulties had also been experienced in Bengal, where the accounts of the paymasters were four months in arrears. When it was realized that contrary to orders full *batta* had been paid since the year 1772 to the troops stationed in Chunar, what could they expect of a distant service in Oudh but a certain amount of irregularity?

The existence of these abuses was no argument against Hastings's plan to reform the military administration of Oudh. Indeed, Clavering's arguments were a candid confession of his own maladministration as commander-in-chief, for, during the period when the hostile Majority had been in power, there had been ample opportunity for putting his own department into proper order. Finally, Clavering contended that the new military plan for Oudh would reduce Asaf-ud-daulah to the position of the nawab of Bengal, for to deprive a prince of his army was tantamount to dethroning him. Moreover the plan would violate the positive orders of the Court of Directors to reduce all expenditure both civil and military. Despite all these objections Hastings, by the use of his casting vote,was able to secure the adoption of this plan, the details of which were communicated to Asaf-ud-daulah.

He was informed that two years had elapsed since, at his own request, British officers had been placed in command of his troops. Time had shown that this system had grave defects. Because these officers had been released from the Company's authority without being properly subjected to his control, the discipline of his troops was daily growing worse and his expenses which were not controlled by the Company were increasing by leaps and bounds. The new force was therefore to be transferred to the Company and formed into one brigade devoted entirely to his service. Although this force was to be subjected to the authority of the Company, by whom its pay was to be issued and its accounts regulated, all expenses were to be defrayed from the revenues of Oudh. Asaf-ud-daulah's consent to this plan was received on 17 June 1777.[1] Two months later, on 30 August, Clavering died.

About this time it became necessary to take drastic steps to intervene in the internal affairs of Oudh where, owing to the intrigues and influence of the nawab's favourite, Imam Bakhsh, the lives of the minister, Hasan Riza Khan, and of his cousin and deputy, Haidar Beg Khan, were in danger. Hastings, a firm believer in intervention, feared that the influence of Imam Bakhsh would expose the nawab's affairs

[1] **Full details of this brigade will be found in *B.S.C.*, Range A.42, 4 August 1777, and ibid., Range A.43, 1 September 1777.**

to ruin and by weakening this important buffer state imperil the safety of the British dominions in India. He therefore proposed to protect the minister and to support his authority. Notwithstanding the opposition of Francis it was agreed that a letter of remonstrance should be sent to Asaf-ud-daulah.

> The heavy arrears which I understand are at this time due to the brigade appointed for the protection of your person and dominions, the balances of your general account with the Company and the pay of your own forces which are under the command of British officers, which must ultimately fall on the Company if your means are unequal to discharge it, are circumstances which impress me with the greatest alarms both for the security of your affairs and of the Company's property which is involved in them. ... I proceed to inform you that it is in the mouths of the whole world that your country is in a state of unbounded disorder and want; your revenues sunk and anticipated; and your treasury exhausted, not on the services of your state, but in embezzlement and dissipation. These calamities are universally ascribed to the want of a regular authority in the administration of your affairs and to the treacherous and ungrateful abuse which is made of your confidence by those on whom you have unworthily placed it. At the head of these is Imam Bakhsh, who is notoriously represented as a wretch of so mean extraction and of so vile a character that your credit and honour suffer by your countenance of such a man. To him the world imputes the enormous expense with which you are burthened of a military establishment consisting nominally of more than 50,000 men, and the waste of your collections which are all in the possession and at the mercy of his creatures and dependents, men of characters base, rapacious, unfaithful, and devoid of understanding like his own.

The outcome of this was that Asaf-ud-daulah agreed to dismiss Imam Bakhsh from his Court and to proclaim to his subjects that he had entrusted Hasan Riza Khan with the administration of his affairs.[1]

It was in the same month that Middleton reported that he could not really be held responsible for the balance owing to the Company so long as the money for this purpose was collected by means of the *tankhwah* (assignment) system.

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.43, 8 September 1777: Middleton to Board, 6 June 1777-

He therefore begged that he might be empowered by the Board to demand from the nawab exclusive assignments of the total revenues of certain provinces 'to an amount equal to the demands upon him\ All revenues were to be paid into Middleton's hands, the *amils* to be completely under his authority and free from any interference on the part of the nawab's officials. Neither were the troops stationed in these areas for the protection of the *amils* to be dismissed without Middleton's consent.

Having obtained the Boards assent to these proposals Middleton approached the nawab, who agreed to assign the revenues of the Doab and Rohilkhand exclusively to the payment of the Company's demands, that is, after deducting the charges of collection, the payment of the troops stationed in these provinces, and the unadjusted claims of the previous year. All *amils* for these areas were to be appointed by Middleton or with his approval, and were to pay the revenues directly to him on pain of their immediate removal from office. In addition to these two provinces the districts of Allahabad, Kora, Shahrah, and Jagdispur were to be assigned in a similar manner. The nawab also handed over to Middleton three battalions for the purpose of assisting the *amils* in the maintenance of their authority. This was sanctioned by the Board, but it must be admitted that there was much truth in the protest of Francis that Middleton's powers now made him the uncrowned king of Oudh.

Towards the end of 1777 we find Middleton complaining of Colonel Leslie's reluctance to assist him with his troops in the collection of the revenues of the Doab, where the *amil* was involved in serious difficulties. Leslie seemed to consider the brigade under his command more as an instrument to protect the nawab's unguaranteed dominions from foreign aggression than as a force for reducing his rebellious subjects.

> He [the nawab] has been influenced to reduce his own army much below the establishment which the exigencies of his civil government actually require, under the expectation that the troops he transferred to the Company's service were to be in every respect as much at his service and command as they were when they were a part of his own establishment under the com-

mand of British officers. This declaration I made to him by your authority when I obtained his assent to the new establishment, and your own assurances since immediately to himself have confirmed it.[1]

Since the revenues of the Doab could be collected only in the presence of an armed force the assistance of Leslie's troops was essential to enable the nawab to liquidate his debts to the Company. Middleton also advocated the destruction of all forts possessed by *zamindars* in the Doab. It may be noted that Almas Ali Khan, the ablest of the nawab's officials, refused to become an *amil* in the Doab unless these forts were razed to the ground.

About this time another gross abuse came to light, for the nawab of Oudh was not only under the influence of favourites but also in the hands of European creditors. Middleton wrote privately to Hastings that the nawab's debts to Europeans in Oudh amounted to an amazing sum.[2] This news greatly astonished the Board, who hastily informed Middleton that they looked upon it as a grave irregularity. 'In the first place we do not understand with what propriety the nawab's debts are brought into a public account of his military disbursements. In the second place we totally disapprove of money being lent to the nawab by any individuals in the service of the Company, nor will we suffer the Company's influence to be misused for the recovery of such debts.' This gross irregularity was traced to Bristow, who was forced to confess that he and other officers had made these loans to the nawab at a time when he urgently needed the money to suppress a mutiny of his troops.[3]

It is necessary at this stage to distinguish between four different types of troops in Oudh. In the first place there was the Permanent Brigade or subsidiary force, composed entirely of soldiers enlisted in the Company's army. This must not be confused with the Temporary Brigade consisting of the nawab's troops under British officers and under the control

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 139: Middleton to Hastings, 5 December 1777-
[2] ibid., 5 September 1777: and *B.S.C.*, Range A.43, 8 September 1777.
[3] *B.S.C.*, Range A.43, 3 November 1777: Bristow to Board, 15 September 1777.

of the Company. In addition there were bodies of the nawab's troops under Major Hannay and Captain Osborne, and the nawab's bodyguard under Captain Mordaunt. Lastly, there were the nawab's ordinary troops, an ill-disciplined, mutinous rabble, not under British control at all.

Towards the end of 1779 the nawab complained that the expenses of the Temporary Brigade and other forces under British officers had, during the previous three years, caused his household much distress, so much so that the allowance made to the seraglio and children of his late father had been very considerably reduced. He claimed that the attendants, writers, and servants of his Court had received no pay for two years. 'There is at present no part of the country that can be allotted to the payment of my father's private creditors, whose applications are daily pressing upon me.' To obtain money he had farmed out his revenues at too high a rate and this had been followed by deficiencies in the collections. The situation had been aggravated by an excessive drought which had compelled him to grant remissions of many lakhs of rupees. After a long recital of his grievances the nawab came to the point and refused to grant assignments to the Company, except for the expenses of the Permanent Brigade. He therefore demanded the recall or reduction of all other troops under British officers.[1] Hastings, who had no doubt of the nawab's ability to furnish the sums required, refused to give his consent.

> These demands, the tone in which they are asserted, and the season in which they are made are all equally alarming and appear to me to require an adequate degree of firmness in this Board in opposition to them. ... In the present circumstances of his government and ours, to disband any part of the troops that we maintain for his service is a measure no less improper for him to suggest than it would be for us to adopt. He stands engaged to our government to maintain the English armies which at his own request have been formed for the protection of his dominions and it is our part not his to judge and determine in what manner and at what time these shall be reduced or withdrawn. But were it otherwise this is not the time to propose it, when we are threat-

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.52, 13 December 1779.

ened with external dangers common to both which require rather an augmentation than a diminution of the means which we possess for repelling them.

Francis acquiesced in these measures on the ground of necessity, but, at the same time, lamented the steps which had induced the Company to renounce the principles of justice and good faith. 'I have not been long enough in the habits of dominion to see anything offensive or alarming in the demand made by an independent prince to be relieved from the burthen of maintaining a foreign army, which, it is notorious, have devoured his revenues and his country, under colour of defending it.'[1]

When Hastings recorded his opinion that the nawab's demands were repugnant to his engagements with the Company, Francis desired to see those engagements. According to Francis the Treaty of Fyzabad (1775), that is, the treaty forced upon Asaf-ud-daulah by the Majority, compelled him to pay for the Permanent Brigade whilst stationed in Oudh. This had been approved of by the Court of Directors on the understanding that it had been done with the consent of the nawab. But there was no dispute about this brigade, for the nawab did not desire to have it recalled. What he did demand was the recall of the Temporary Brigade and the battalions under Hannay and Osborne. Hastings, as we have seen, had claimed that the Company possessed the right to decide how and when these troops should be reduced or withdrawn. Francis, however, questioned the Company's right to keep an army in Oudh without the nawab's consent. 'I believe there is no precedent of a treaty of subsidy formed on such a principle. The state, that could submit to it, must, by the same act, renounce its own political existence.' In this case the nawab had been informed that he would have to provide for the expenses of the Temporary Brigade only so long as he required it. As an abstract principle Francis's doctrine of non-intervention will find many supporters, but this should not be so when it is considered in relation to practical politics, the dangers threatening both the Company and Oudh whose interests were so closely connected. Neither should it be

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.52, 15 December 1779.**

forgotten that this disagreeable situation really resulted from the work of the hostile Majority, when Hastings and Barwell were mere cyphers in the administration. Francis further contended that Hastings's proposal to compel the nawab to maintain these troops and permit the Company to collect the revenues necessary to pay them was equivalent to placing Oudh under military rule. 'Thus one necessity produces another, and will continue to do so, as long as the Indian states possess anything that can tempt our avarice, or gratify our ambition.' He emphatically denied any responsibility for the system which had created the difficulties with which the Company were faced, although he felt compelled to participate in the measures which Hastings proposed because they were unavoidable. This was immediately attacked by Hastings. * To the assertion that the system which has created our present necessities does not belong to Mr. Francis, I must beg leave to reply that it belongs to the administration of this Government, which formed the existing treaty with the nawab Asaf-ud-daulah and created a new military establishment for the defence of those parts of his dominions which were interdicted to our troops by the positive orders of the Company. Neither Mr. Barwell nor myself were efficient parts of that administration. Mr. Francis was.' A whole chapter has been written to prove this assertion and to show how the hostile Majority by the treaty of 1775 and their later measures reversed Hastings's policy towards Oudh.

The treaty which was concluded with the nawab Shuja-ud-daulah placed him on the most respectable footing as the sovereign of an independent state, and left all his rights untouched with a provision for their security against eventual encroachments upon them; and the duration of his alliance with the Company depended yet more upon the reciprocal and equal advantages which it held out to both parties than on the formality of a written compact. This treaty was broken at his death and a new one, constructed on far different principles, was made with his son and successor by which the latter eventually and necessarily became a vassal of the Company, and their interests bound by such strong and intricate ties as must render it dangerous at any time to separate them and fatal to both at such a time as this.

It must not be imagined that Hastings was blind to the defects of the subsidiary system by which a native state subsidized a British force for its protection. On the contrary he promised that it would be his constant endeavour gradually to discover methods for relieving the nawab's distresses. But whereas Francis held that the condition of Oudh was produced by the burden of having to provide payment for these bodies of troops, Hastings believed the origin of the disorders in Oudh and of the wastage of its revenues was to be found in the nawab himself, not so much in his incapacity as in his deplorable choice of ministers. Referring to the nawab's demand for the disbandment of the Temporary Brigade, Hastings remarked, 'I for my own part do not attribute the demand to any conviction impressed on the nawab's mind by the necessity of his affairs, but to the knowledge which his advisers have acquired of the weakness and divisions of our own government.' Francis has left it on record that in his opinion the only danger to Oudh was from enemies the nawab had formed because of his connexion with the.Company. The history of Hindustan at this time bears witness to the falsity of this belief, and shows clearly that Francis not only lacked political foresight but had also failed to grasp the real significance of the Maratha power.

The outcome of all this was the Company's refusal to comply with the nawab's request. It was, however, only after great pressure had been brought to bear upon him that Asaf-ud-daulah gave his consent to the assignments necessary for the upkeep of the Temporary Brigade.[1]

This was in January 1780. In the following year the wretched condition of Oudh and the entreaties of its ruler forced Hastings to visit Lucknow for the purpose of restoring order. At the same time he was invested with full power to form arrangements with Raja Chait Singh of Benares for the better government of his *zamindari.*

[1] ***B.S.C.y*** **Range A.54, 24 January 1780: Coote to Board, 6 January 1780.**

CHAPTER V

HASTINGS AND CHAIT SINGH

This rich capital, and the surrounding tract, had long been under the immediate rule of a Hindoo prince who rendered homage to the Mogul emperors. During the great anarchy of India the lords of Benares became independent of the court of Delhi, but were compelled to submit to the authority of the Nabob of Oude. Oppressed by this formidable neighbour, they invoked the protection of the English. The English protection was given; and at length the Nabob Vizier, by a solemn treaty, ceded all his rights over Benares to the Company. From that time the Rajah was the vassal of the government of Bengal, acknowledged its supremacy, and engaged to send an annual tribute to Fort William. This tribute Cheyte Singh, the reigning prince, had paid with strict punctuality.—MACAULAY.

ACCURACY characterizes practically no statement in Macaulay's celebrated summary of the history of Benares. It is erroneous to assert that Hindu princes had long ruled over Benares, for Chait Singh's father, Balwant Singh, was the first of his family to hold the rank of raja or to have any claim to the somewhat misleading title of prince. Neither Mansa Ram nor his son, Balwant Singh, can be regarded as independent rulers. They were in the first place local heads of their clan in the Bhuinhar caste, and later subordinate officials of the ruler of Oudh, to whom they were responsible for the good administration of a tract of country round Benares. They were originally established at Narhan in Bihar. Macaulay, therefore, presents an entirely false impression when he affirms that the rajas of Benares had been compelled to submit to the nawab of Oudh, for it was these collectors of the nawab's revenues in Benares who had arrogated to themselves a semi-independent position by means of insubordination and intrigue. Neither was the transfer of Benares to the Company in 1775 in response to Chait Singh's complaints against the ruler of Oudh. It was the work of the hostile Majority who, greedy for territorial aggrandizement, forced Hastings's hand. It is also incorrect to suppose that Chait Singh had made his payments with strict punctuality.

By the fifth article of the Treaty of Fyzabad in 1775, the

sovereignty of the *zamindari* of Benares and its dependencies was ceded in perpetuity to the Company by Asaf-ud-daulah. It therefore became necessary to take immediate steps to determine how this right was to be exercised and how the regular payment of Chait Singh's revenues could be best assured. Hastings, although he refused to accept responsibility for this treaty, immediately submitted a plan to the Board, which he hoped would prove acceptable, subject to the approval of the Court of Directors. He was also prepared to accept any other plan which would more fully provide for the Company's interests, without encroaching on the just rights of the raja and the engagements actually existing with him.

He proposed that Chait Singh should pay into the Company's treasury at Patna, in equal monthly instalments, £ yearly revenue of 22,48,449 sanawat rupees, the sum settled with the late Shuja-ud-daulah in his presence at Benares on 6 September 1773. On acknowledging the sovereignty of the Company Chait Singh was to exercise uncontrolled authority over his *zamindari,* both in the collection of the revenues and in the administration of justice. *Sanads* (charters) were to be granted to Chait Singh empowering him to appoint officers in charge of the *Kotwali* (police department) and the Mint,[1] the latter to be subject to any regulations that the Council might think proper to enforce. In return for these concessions Chait Singh was to pay and maintain a body of 2,000 cavalry to which the Company would grant additional allowances when employed in their service. On such occasions the Company reserved the right to appoint their own officers. But an arrangement of this nature would most certainly have produced an inefficient body of horse in the day of necessity, for, to ensure efficiency, the cavalry should have been trained and disciplined in the European fashion and placed under British officers from the outset. Hastings, however, brought forward this proposal more for consideration than as a definite recommendation.

[1] **Coinage was an imperial prerogative, but with the decay of the Emperor's powers local officials continued to strike coin in his name and to the imperial standard. Benares had been a mint since 1734 or even earlier.**

So long as Chait Singh remained faithful to his agreements, that is, was loyal to the Company and punctual in the payment of his revenues, no further demands were to be made from him and there was to be no interference with his authority. This was intended to give confidence to the raja. Otherwise he would have expected additional demands with every change of government. 'By proper encouragement and protection he may prove a profitable dependent, a useful barrier, and even a powerful ally to the Company; but he will be neither if the conditions of his connexion with the Company are left open to further variations.'[1]

In support of this plan Hastings contended that Chait Singh could well afford to pay the stipulated revenue as his *zamindari* was one of the richest revenue-producing areas in India. By treaty and by the custom of the country the Company had an undoubted right to this revenue which the raja would not be likely to contest. Hastings suggested Patna as the most convenient place for the receipt of this payment because it was the nearest Company station to Benares. Moreover, by this arrangement their intention of rendering the raja independent would not be frustrated. What Hastings meant was that, if Chait Singh was to be uncontrolled, subject to certain conditions, in the administration of his *zamindari,* it would be a mistake to appoint a Resident at Benares to collect the revenue, for the Resident, because of his position, would certainly acquire power over the raja and this might end 'in reducing him to the mean and deprived state of a mere *zatnindar'*.

Hastings further claimed that Chait Singh would derive great advantage from these concessions and attain a power and dignity unknown to any of his ancestors, since, with certain essential restrictions, he would have control of the Mint and of the administration of justice. The interference previously exercised by Shuja-ud-daulah in his affairs by means of deputies in charge of his interests at Benares has never been sufficiently stressed. Although the *Kotwali* and the Mint had been considered as marks of sovereignty in Hindustan, for this was Shuja-ud-daulah's pretext for retaining them in his

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.29, 12 June 1775.**

own hands, Hastings assured the Board that this would not be the case in future. It was true that they would be handed over to the raja, but they would only be granted under the sovereignty of the Company; and, while the Company had three brigades and a full treasury, there was no reason to suppose that the sovereignty of the Company would be impaired by Chait Singh's regarding them as implied symbols of sovereignty. Regulations which could be altered from time to time were to be drawn up respecting the Mint. Chait Singh would be told that he held the Mint on condition that he faithfully observed the regulations laid down and did not alter the weight of the coins or the amount of alloy.[1] Great precautions would also have to be taken to ensure that these coins were not debased, as this would entail a serious loss of revenue to the Company.

These proposals of Hastings were used by his accusers at the trial to prove that it had been his intention to render Chait Singh independent. He defended himself in the following memorable words:

> ' The-minute in question does undoubtedly contain my sentiments at that period, but those sentiments went for nothing. General Clavering and his Majority decided against my opinion. The measure is strictly and exclusively their own. I, therefore, have nothing to do with it. But when, by the death of two who composed that Majority, I became somewhat more than a mere pageant in the administration, I necessarily resumed the business where they had left it. I considered Chait Singh precisely what they had made him, a tributary landholder; not what I would have made him (but was overruled) an independent prince and a powerful ally, placed as a barrier between the Wazir and the government of Bengal. I would have caused the Company's tribute to be received at Patna within the Company's provinces. They caused it to be received at Benares. I would have renounced the sovereignty of his country; they assumed it.'

After Hastings had put forward these proposals it became necessary to ascertain exactly how Chait Singh had discharged

[1] ***Sicca*** **was the term applied to rupees during the first year of their circulation. After this they were charged with a** ***batta*** **(discount) varying from 2 to 3^ per cent according to their dates and were known as** ***sanawats.***

his obligations to Shuja-ud-daulah. For this purpose Chait Singh's *wakil* or agent was cross-examined by the Board[1] The revenue laid down in the agreement of 1773 had been 22,48,449 rupees,[2] but, according to the *wakil,* his master had paid annually to Shuja-ud-daulah the sum of 23,72,656 rupees. All bankers' expenses had been borne by Shuja-ud-daulah, who had appointed the two chief *shroffs* (bankers) of Benares to act as his receivers, the revenues being transmitted to them in monthly *kists* (instalments). On being asked whether he thought his master would be prepared to pay punctually into the Company's treasury at Calcutta the same annual sum as had previously been paid to Shuja-ud-daulah the *wakil* objected on the grounds that the risk and expense would be too great because of the distance between Benares and Calcutta. Similar objections were raised to a proposal that the revenues should be paid at Patna.

More than a month passed before the question was again brought before the council.[3] In the interval Clavering had been busy collecting information concerning the Mint and *Kotwali* in order to discover the exact amount of money paid by Chait Singh to the nawab of Oudh. According to Clavering, Shuja-ud-daulah had received from the Mint-master at Benares between 36,000 and 40,000 rupees a year in the form of duties collected on gold thread, jewels, elephants' teeth, lac, lead, and a kind of light wood used in the making of boxes and baskets. He had also levied a duty on all Hindu places of worship in the course of construction. From his *kotwal* at Benares, whose duty it was to take cognizance of all misdemeanours committed in the city, Shuja-ud-daulah had received about 12,000 rupees per annum. A small duty had also been collected on grain, salt, oil, and spices, and a tax levied on brothels, gaming houses, and on all pilgrims bathing in the Ganges. These duties were so small that they seem to have been levied more with the object of preserving the nawab's authority than for the profits they brought him, since on most articles he did not receive one-twentieth of what Chait Singh himself collected. There was also a *kotwal*

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.29, 5 July 1775.** [2] **Aitchison, I, 58.**
[3] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.30, 16 August 1775.**

stationed at Jaunpur. Although Chait Singh had frequently begged Shuja-ud-daulah to remove these *kotwals,* thus making him answerable for the sums they collected, the nawab had repeatedly refused to comply with this request.

On being questioned as to the authenticity of Clavering's information Chait Singh's *wakil* replied that the *darogha* (superintendent) of the Mint, who had held the office for fifteen years, had never paid to Shuja-ud-daulah more than 16,000 rupees, but Asaf-ud-daulah had raised this sum to 25,000 rupees. The total profits from the *Kotwali* could not have exceeded 5,000 rupees unless illegal duties had been levied. The *wakil* denied the existence of any taxes on grain, oil, spices, and brothels, but admitted that for fifteen days in every year a small revenue was received from gaming houses. Furthermore, the duties on pilgrims bathing in the Ganges were collected by Chait Singh and not by the nawab. The important point to note in all these discussions is that Chait Singh paid the nawab of Oudh for the privilege of the Mint and *Kotwali* and was prepared to pay the Company similar compensation for this concession. All that mattered was the exact amount of revenue that Chait Singh should in future pay into the Company's coffers. From the information given by the *wakil* it appears that the net revenues received by Shuja-ud-daulah from the *zamindari* of Benares had been 23,72,656 rupees. Extra revenues from the *kotwal,*the superintendent of the Mint, the controller of weights and measures, and the clerk of the market brought the total to 24,04,806 rupees.

Hastings, who had previously ascertained from the *wakil* that it would be acceptable to his master, proposed that this should be the amount payable by Chait Singh. The Majority, however, ignored Hastings's views and resolved that Chait Singh should pay to the Company at Benares the exact amount he had formerly paid to Shuja-ud-daulah and that further inquiries should be made to ascertain the extra income which had been derived from the *kotwal* and the Mint. This led to an acrimonious discussion. Hastings pleaded for an immediate settlement with Chait Singh, but it was determined that a representative should be sent to

Benares for the investiture of the raja and for the purpose of obtaining more information. It was even hinted that Hastings would benefit from a speedy settlement. Insinuation followed insinuation. Barwell accused Clavering of underhand dealings with the *zvakil* and suggested that the Majority would profit from a settlement based on the report of their own specially selected agent. In answer to Clavering's heated denial Barwell retorted that no person's integrity was vindicated by mere denial.

The next step was the selection of a person to carry out the necessary investigations in Benares. Barwell proposed Colonel Muir, the officer commanding Chunar, as being well qualified for the task because of his local knowledge. This was an unfortunate proposal, for Chait Singh had recently complained that Muir had been illegally collecting duties in his *zamindari.* The Majority's decision to send Francis Fowke to Benares was a direct insult to Hastings because Fowke's father had been the tool of the Majority in the Nandakumar scandal. Indeed, after their failure in this case, the Majority readily grasped at every opportunity of wounding Hastings.

Fowke proceeded to Benares with instructions to deliver to Chait Singh his *sanads* of investiture and to make the inquiries referred to in the above discussion.[1] Chait Singh was to be notified that the Company possessed sovereign rights over his *zamindari,* in acknowledgement of which he was to swear an oath of allegiance and present the Company with a *nazrana*[2] of 10,000 rupees. After the raja had issued a proclamation explaining his altered position to the inhabitants of his *zamindari* Fowke was to bestow upon him in his palace, with all the customary formalities, a *khilat* or robe of honour. The raja was to be assured that the Company had no intention of increasing his tribute so long as he adhered to the terms of his agreement, but any negotiations with the enemies of the Company would lead to the forfeiture of his *zamindari.* All that was required of him was the payment at Benares by equal monthly instalments of the exact sum he had formerly paid to Shuja-ud-daulah. In order to ascertain the fixed annual

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.30, 24 August 1775.**
[2] **Present, or due paid on succession.**

compensation to be paid by Chait Singh for the privilege of coining, Fowke was to submit a detailed report on the Mint, and determine what Chait Singh should pay for the privilege of the *Kotwali.* This was of immediate importance, for without it the tribute to be paid by Chait Singh could not be settled.[1] The sum to be paid was eventually fixed at 22,21,745 sicca rupees.[2] As representatives of a body of merchants they naturally required a report on the trade of the *zamindari)* especially of the commercial intercourse with Bengal. For the protection of his territories it was recommended that the raja should raise and maintain a body of 2,000 cavalry, disciplined and equipped after the European fashion.

It was not until 15 April 1776 that the proposed agreement with Chait Singh was laid before the Board. English translations of this agreement are to be found in the Bengal Secret Consultations preserved in the India Office.[3] It was an inaccurate translation of this agreement which was used by the Board at Calcutta, for Francis and the other members of the Majority were unable to read the text of the agreement in the original Persian. They were, in fact, conducting the Company's foreign affairs by means of imperfect translations, for all diplomatic correspondence with the 'country powers' was written in Persian, the diplomatic language of the Mughal empire. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that Fox and Burke during the impeachment, ignorant of Persian, drew their conclusions in many cases from faulty versions of the original documents. Mill, Macaulay, and even Aitchison, the mouthpiece of the Government of India, have fallen into the same error.[4] Not only was the evidence at the trial inaccurate, but the whole attitude of the prosecution towards Hastings

[1] Fowke's report on the Mint and *Kotwali* will be found in *B.S.C.*, Range A.32, 13 December 1775; Range A.34, 1 February, and 26 February 1776. For an excellent history of the Benares Mint see *J.A.S.B.,* 1893, Vol. lxii, 52-84.

[2] Aitchison, I, 59.

[3] *B.S.C.*, Range A.35, 15 April 1776. See also ibid., Range A.36, 24 June 1776; and Range A.37, 29 July 1776.

[4] The writer has to thank the Superintendent of the Imperial Record Office at Calcutta and the Government of India for their courtesy in allowing him to purchase certified copies of the relevant Persian documents.

resulted from a false interpretation of the exact position of Raja Chait Singh.

No exact definition of a *zamindar* is to be found in the Persian histories of India, for the Muslim conquerors seem to have applied the term to a variety of persons differing widely in their status and in their relationship to the central government, the one common feature being their recognition of the Emperor's suzerainty. It was applied to Hindu rajas or rulers with claims antecedent to the establishment of Muslim rule, who after the conquest enjoyed varying degrees of autonomy.[1] The term *zamindar* was also used in Northern India for the head of a clan or caste settled in a definite area well within the Mughal dominions, as for example the head of the Ujjainiya Rajputs in the neighbourhood of Buxar.[2] We also know that in Shah Jahan's time the Bundela Rajputs of Bundelkhand had 'heads' who were termed *zamindars.* Like the Ujjainiya Rajputs they were on the borderland between semi-independent chiefs and regular subjects. Under the English in Bengal the term was used to denote any kind of landholder, from a collector or farmer of revenues to rulers with an hereditary position. Where the *zamindar* was a farmer of revenues he was charged with the superintendence of certain lands, the protection of the cultivators, and the realization of the government's share of the gross produce, either in money or in kind. Out of this he was allowed a commission of about ten per cent that might include the produce of certain lands for his subsistence, called *nankar.* This appointment was often renewed and confirmed in the same person, and even continued to his heirs, so long as they conducted themselves to the satisfaction of the ruling power.

Even the *Ain,* the chief authority for Akbar's administrative system, is silent regarding the precise definition of a *zamindar,* but there are passages in the chronicles of the period which mention the *zamindar* as subject to the authority of the *faujdar,* the executive head of a *sarkar* or district. Instances of the expulsion of *zamindars* are not infrequent in the history of Hindustan. Shah Jahan, for example, sent an army to reduce a raja and *zamindar* of Bundelkhand, who was obliged

[1] **Moreland, p. 279; and Ch. V I I , section 2.** [2] ***C.H.I.*, IV, 172.**

to pay a fine of fifteen lakhs of rupees, surrender the whole of his country, with the exception of a small portion allowed him for his support, and serve in the Imperial army then engaged in attempting to reduce the Deccan. After the decline of the Mughal empire, when the provincial governors became virtually independent, as was the case with the nawabs of Oudh, they adopted the same policy towards refractory *zamindars.*

> From conversation with the natives, I have always understood that a *zamindar* was liable to pay what revenue the sovereign thought proper to fix for the *zamindari;* except certain portions of land allotted rent free for the support of his household. The rent was generally easy, in order to enable him to assist the sovereign with troops in his wars. He was not allowed to erect forts or repair old ones without leave. He was not to keep more troops without permission than necessary for the collection of the revenue, or use the people aggressively, or harbour robbers or banditti in his *zamindari.* For these offences, rebellion or non-payment of rent, he was liable to such punishment as the sovereign thought proper, generally fine, imprisonment, or expulsion.[1]

After the British conquest it was possible to distinguish four types of *zamindars* in Bengal.[2] There were *zamindars* descended from the old Hindu rajas and Muslim chiefs who had ruled in Bengal before Akbar's conquest of the province in 1576. The second class of *zamindars* were the great rajas and landholders dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The third and most numerous class comprised persons whose families had held the office of revenue collectors for several generations, and who had acquired certain prescriptive rights during the decline of the empire. The fourth class of *zamindars* were the farmers of revenue created by the Company after the grant of the *diwani* in 1765.

When inquiries were set on foot between 1787 and 1790 as to the status of the *zamindars* of Bengal, it was therefore possible to arrive at two different conclusions: that they were merely government agents for the collection of land revenue, or that they were the actual hereditary possessors of their

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 233. Hastings to Pitt.**
[2] **Hunter, W. W., *Bengal MSS. Records,* I, London, 1894.**

estates,[1] subject of course to the payment of land revenue to the government. Grant, the chief Record Officer in Bengal, believed them to be contracting farmers of revenue. In his opinion the *zamindars* were merely temporary officials and the right of property in land was vested absolutely in the State.[2] Another official devoted a whole volume to proving that 'a general state of hereditary property existed in Bengal and was vested in the *zamindars*'.[3] A discussion of the famous Grant-Shore controversy will be found in Ascoli's *Early Revenue History of Bengal,* where he contends that, during the decline of the Mughal empire, all offices had tended to become hereditary and that the *zamindar's* position was greater than that of a temporary official. There is much truth in Ascoli's contention, but he forgets that independent provincial governors, like the nawabs of Oudh, invariably exercised the power of removing and punishing refractory *zamindars.*

For our purpose it is important to note that all classes of *zamindars* in Bengal paid land revenue or tribute to the Muslim government, and their heirs deemed it prudent to obtain official acknowledgement of their succession to the *zamindari. Zamindars* of this type held a dual position: under their *sanads* with the Mughal government they occupied the position of revenue collectors; by custom and prescriptive right they were hereditary territorial magnates.

What then was the position of Raja Chait Singh under the nawabs of Oudh ?

The chief Persian history of Benares is the *Balwantnama,* or *Tuhfa-i-Taza* of Khair-ud-din Muhammad. According to this account Mansa Ram, the grandfather of Chait Singh, was a Brahman[4] landholder in the *pargana* of Kaswar in Benares. Born towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign, he entered the service of Rustam Ali, who was governing Benares on behalf of the nawab of Oudh. By means of intrigue and by pre-

[1] Some *zamindars* were heads of powerful castes occupying a tract of territory.

[2] Appendix XIII of the Fifth Report.

[3] Rouse, C. W. B., *Dissertation concerning the Landed Property of Bengal.*

[4] He belonged to the caste known as Bhuinhar in Benares or Babhan in Bihar. Some members of the caste call themselves Brahman and others Kshattriyas.

ferring his own interests to those of his master, Rustam Ali, he was placed in charge of the three *sarkars* of Jaunpur, Chunar, and Benares for which he paid to the nawab of Oudh an annual revenue of thirteen lakhs of rupees. According to Hastings in his reply to the Benares charge at the trial, Mansa Ram was never a *zamindar.* But evidence exists elsewhere that Mansa Ram received *zamindari sanads* from nawab Safdar Jang of Oudh and he was certainly the head of the local Bhuinhars.[1] It appears that Mansa Ram's son, Balwant Singh, was the first member of the family to receive the title of raja from the Mughal Emperor.[2] On the death of his father, in 1738, he was recognized by the Emperor, Muhammad Shah, as raja and *zamindar* of Kaswar and three other *parganas.* Until the year 1748 he faithfully and punctually paid the revenues of his *zamindari* to the nawab of Oudh. Some time afterwards he rebelled against Safdar Jang and though forced to flee the country, was eventually reinstated in his former position. It was after this that he acquired five important forts, whereupon he began once more to assume a defiant attitude; and it was not until 1763, when Shuja-ud-daulah was preparing to attack the English in Bihar, that Balwant Singh paid homage to his overlord, the nawab of Oudh. Chait Singh was an illegitimate son of Balwant Singh by a Rajput woman. Before 1773, when Hastings procured for Chait Singh a *sanad* placing him under the protection of the Company, he was merely an official liable to be ejected at any moment, and, had it not been for the intervention of Hastings, he would, in all probability, have been expelled from his *zamindari* by Shuja-ud-daulah.[3]

During the impeachment the Benares charge was based on the independency of Chait Singh. We have seen how

[1] *Persian Calendar,* V, No. 1407.

[2] This point is of no great importance. Wilson, in his edition of Mill's *History of British India,* IV, footnote, p. 361, states that Mansa Ram received the title of raja from Muhammad Shah of Delhi in 1730, but unfortunately does not quote his authority for this assertion.

[3] Even if he had been ejected from the charge of his *sarkars* he would have still retained any land in his actual possession and would have remained a *zamindar,* probably paying on behalf of his clan all the land revenue due from them and from him to whomsoever the charge of the collections had been entrusted. But had he refused to do this the local official would have been ordered to seize, kill, or eject him and recognize some other head.

Hastings's proposal to make Chait Singh independent in 1775 was frustrated by the Majority. The agreement between the Majority and Chait Singh on 15 April 1776 was the customary type of agreement made with *zamindars.*[1] All *zamindars* received a *sanad* and gave a *qabuliyat,* the one being the counterpart of the other. The *sanad* (charter) prescribed the revenue to be paid in monthly instalments and indicated the duties the *zamindar* was expected to perform. It was on these conditions that a *zamindar,* in this case Chait Singh, was confirmed in the possession of his *zamindari.* The *qabuliyat* (agreement) was the pledge or engagement on the *zamindar's* part to perform these duties. A glance at Chait Singh's *sanad,* issued in 1776, shows that he was expected to behave with moderation and kindness to the ryots, to promote cultivation and encourage settlers, to preserve peace and punish the guilty. In addition, Chait Singh received the right of coining money under certain restrictions, together with *Kotwali* or police jurisdiction of Benares.

The private papers of Hastings in the British Museum contain abstracts of the Bengal Secret Consultations relating to the appointment of Chait Singh to the *zamindari* of Benares. Their importance lies in the fact that they are supplemented by remarks in Hastings's handwriting which do not appear in the same Consultations at the India Office.

It is true that Hastings proposed on 3 March 1775 that Chait Singh should exercise a free and independent authority in his dominions, subject only to the payment of his tribute; and that this should be made a condition of the treaty with Asaf-ud-daulah. 'But,' writes Hastings, 'this resolution was purely speculative.'[2] It was intended as a restraint on Asaf-ud-daulah; nevertheless the Majority, who were responsible for the treaty with Oudh in 1775, ignored this resolution and 'instead of rendering Chait Singh independent his dependency was confirmed, though transferred.' Before the impeachment Hastings drew Pitt's attention to this.

I cannot dismiss the subject without taking notice of a very

[1] **Aitchison, I, 59-63, except that the translation is an inaccurate version of the original Persian text.**
[2] **Add. MSS. 29, 199.**

false and sophistical reasoning used in the charge, from a proposition made by me when Raja Chait Singh was not a *zamindar* of the Company, to prove the rights which he possessed when he became such. The fact is this. On the death of the nawab Shuja-ud-daulah, the Majority of the Council, consisting of General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, deeming themselves warranted to declare the treaty concluded with him void by that event, compelled his son, Asaf-ud-daulah, to relinquish his sovereignty of the *zamindari* of Benares to the Company, as one condition of the new treaty of alliance to be formed with him. I objected to this demand as an act of injustice and breach of faith, but I was not regarded. I next proposed as a qualifying measure that the *zamindari* of Chait Singh should be converted into an independency, and placed as a barrier between our provinces and the dominions of the nawab of Oudh. The Majority would not agree to this, but chose to annex the *zamindari* as a dependency to the other dependencies of the Company, and to receive the raja into the number of *zamindars* and vassals of the Company. Yet Mr. Francis himself, who was one of the Majority, and who, if he was not concerned in framing the charge against me, is at least the most vehement of its supporters, now maintains Chait Singh's right of independency on the ground of the proposal made by me for giving it, though he himself opposed the proposal and prevented it from taking effect. Had my proposal been supported by Mr. Francis, Chait Singh would have ceased to be a *zamindar*, and I should have yielded him all the rights that were due to any independent prince in whatever intercourse I might have held with him. Mr. Francis, with the other members who constituted the Government of the time, chose to receive him as a *zamindar* and in that character only I could regard him, nor could I without a breach of trust allow him to assume other privileges, or affect pretensions which were injurious to the rights and dangerous to the safety of the Company/[1]

Hastings's traducers argued that Chait Singh enjoyed certain inherent rights. This was never the opinion of Hastings. In the Secret Consultations of 16 August 1775, as we have already noted, it was resolved to require from Chait Singh in payment of his annual revenue at Benares the exact sum that he had previously paid to Shuja-ud-daulah. Fowke was deputed to Benares to report on the Mint and

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 202.

Kotwali and to fix the compensation to be paid before the Board could come to a final settlement with Chait Singh. This is a clear proof that the Board had no fixed principle by which his revenues were to be determined. Neither did they hold that he had any inherent right. ' They thought, as I did,' wrote Hastings, 'that whatever was yielded to him above the customary rent was *concession'* The instructions issued to Fowke to warn Chait Singh that he would forfeit his *zamindari,* if he allied with any foreign power, are a clear refutation of any such inherent right.

It has often been asserted that an agreement was made with Chait Singh which definitely stated that no demand in excess of the stipulated tribute would be made. It is true that the agreement of 6 September 1773 between Shuja-ud-daulah and Chait Singh confirmed the raja in the *zamindari* of his father and fixed his revenue payment in perpetuity.[1] During the impeachment Fox contended that, even after the *zamindari* was transferred in full sovereignty to the Company by the Treaty of Fyzabad (1775), the agreement of 1773 still bound the Company to exact no more than the stipulated revenue. Hastings denied the truth of this assertion.

> The engagement which I exacted from the nawab Shuja-ud-daulah in 1773, that he should never increase the tribute then paid by Chait Singh, is construed by the charge as the admission of a right inherent in Chait Singh. It was so argued by the Managers. In reply we deny it, and say that it was a right conceded to our government and ceased to have any force when the *zamindari* of Benares was transferred to the sovereignty of the British government.'[2]

The Majority, when forcing the Treaty of Fyzabad upon Asaf-ud-daulah, declared all treaties with the late wazir to have been personal engagements which expired with him. In the discussions leading up to this treaty various views were expressed as to the exact status of Chait Singh, but none of the members alluded to Shuja-ud-daulah's grant to Chait Singh in 1773. As Hastings pointed out: 'They considered the obligation of Shuja-ud-daulah as appertaining to him

[1] Aitchison, I, 57.
[2] Add. MSS. 29, 219, pp. 30-2.

only, and not as extending in any event to the Company.'[1] The instructions of the Board to Fowke clearly state that Chait Singh's tribute is to be fixed and never exceeded, but in Hastings's opinion this was not a definite engagement. It was simply an indication of the intentions of the Board to their own agent, to which Chait Singh was not privy. At the same time as these instructions were issued Fowke also received a letter from the Board which he was to deliver to Chait Singh.[2] Hastings later contended that this letter contained no reference to the Board's intention to fix the tribute in perpetuity, but this is mere quibbling, for the letter did state that the *zamindari* was to be conferred upon Chait Singh 'in as full and ample a manner', and upon the same terms, as he had held it from the ruler of Oudh, that is, in accordance with the agreement of 1773. ' What the Board may have intended,' wrote Hastings, 'I know not, for I was not in the secret. I know that no such engagement was positively made with him, nor anything like it expressed in his *sanad,* or charter.' That Hastings was quite correct in asserting that neither Chjait Singh's *sanad* nor his *patta* (rent-roll) contained any exemption from future demands has been corroborated by reference to the Persian text. It is difficult to decide from the actual wording of the final *sanad* granted to Chait Singh in 1776 whether his payment to the Company is to be regarded as tribute, land revenue, or merely a sum of money in monthly instalments.[3] But it makes no difference whether the term was revenue or tribute as long as it is admitted that Hastings was entitled to make an extra demand in time of war. There can be no doubt that the agreement with Chait Singh conformed to the usual type of *zamindari sanad.* The grant of the Mint and the *Kotwali* are special concessions which make Chait Singh a very important *zamindar,* but do not raise his status to that of an independent prince.

There is, however, an important difference between the translation of the original *sanad,* recorded in the Bengal Secret Consultations, and the Persian text in the author's

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 199. But it was discussed in 1776 when Chait Singh objected to the clause cancelling all former *sanads, vide* p. 126.**
[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.30, 24 August 1775.** [3] ***Vide* Appendix B.**

possession, for the translation in the Consultations has a clause declaring all former *sanads* to be null and void. Since the raja objected to the insertion of this clause on the ground that it was contrary to the usual practice, Fowke was instructed to make the necessary alteration in the original *sanad,* but the raja refused to accept the corrected *sanad* because erasures in a public document of this nature were totally unprecedented.[1] The Board therefore prepared a new *sanad* the receipt of which was acknowledged by the Resident on 4 September 1776, when he returned the original *sanad.* Apparently the new *sanad,* which corresponds to the Persian text in the author's possession, was, like the original *sanad,* dated 15 April 1776, the only important difference being the deletion of the clause cancelling all former *sanads.*[2] This must have given Chait Singh reason to suppose that the 1773 *sanad,* which fixed his revenue payment in perpetuity, was still in force. But no clause exempting the raja from further financial demands was inserted in the 1776 *sanad.* It is difficult to conceive the reason for the omission of this guarantee, since it was contrary to the avowed policy of the Majority. The resolutions of the Board should have been incorporated in the *sanad.* But, even if it be accepted that the 1773 agreement still remained in force, it simply meant that no increase of revenue could be demanded from Chait Singh. This would not have precluded the Company from demanding an extra subsidy in time of emergency, and this is the only material point at issue.

The final *sanad* granted to Chait Singh in 1776 merely appointed him the *zamindar, amin,* and *faujdar* of Benares and certain other districts, all these terms implying delegated and subordinate offices. The grant of the Mint and the *Kotwali* added to Chait Singh's importance as an official, but the functions connected with them were exercised by many other officials elsewhere, and by no stretch of imagination can be made to give him the status of an independent prince.

[1] *B.S.C.,* Range A.37, 29 July 1776: Fowke to Board, 17 July 1776.

[2] The translation appended to Hastings's *Narrative of the Insurrection in Benares* published at Calcutta in 1782 contains the offending clause and is a translation of the original *sanad* which Chait Singh refused to accept. It looks very much as if Hastings deliberately suppressed the second *sanad* in this publication.

Towards the end of 1776 Hastings once more commanded a majority on his council. One of his first steps was the recall of Bristow and Fowke, creatures of the late Majority.[1] Fowke was recalled on the ground that the reason for his presence in Benares, the investiture of Chait Singh, no longer existed. This was immediately followed by the appointment of Thomas Graham as Resident at Benares, with Daniel Barwell, the brother of Richard Barwell, as his assistant.[2] Some time later Fowke was again appointed Resident against the wishes of Hastings, but he was removed for the second time and Markham was appointed in his stead. In both cases, Fowke was removed on political grounds, for it was essential that the Resident should be a man enjoying the confidence of the governor-general. It also served as a proclamation to the Indian world of the restoration of the governor-general's authority.

On 7 July 1778 news that war had broken out with France reached Fort William.[3] Two days later Hastings proposed that Chait Singh should be called upon to contribute his share to the war by consenting to the establishment of three regular battalions of sepoys, to Be raised and maintained at his expense.[4] Francis agreed on the supposition that Colonel Leslie, who had been ordered to proceed to the support of the Bombay Government, would not return for some time; and, on condition that Chait Singh was informed that this additional charge would not be imposed on him beyond the duration of the war. But Hastings adhered to his original proposal ' deeming it a right inherent in every government to impose such assignments as it judges expedient for the common service and protection of all its subjects'—a right from which the Company were not precluded by any agreement with Chait Singh.

Chait Singh immediately instructed Ali Naqi, his *wakil* at Calcutta, to discuss the matter with Hastings and to represent his inability to maintain these battalions. It is obvious from these instructions that Chait Singh was pre-

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.38, 2 December 1776.
[2] Graham's instructions will be found in *B.S.C.*, Range A.40, 13 January 1777.
[3] H.M. 212, fol. 476. [4] *B.S.C.*, Range A.48, 9 July 1778.

pared to take advantage of the factions inside the governor-general's council-chamber, for he ordered his *wakil* to ascertain from certain members of the Board what would be the attitude of the authorities in England to this demand. Colonel Dow even sent a letter to Chait Singh assuring him that all his affairs would be settled satisfactorily, and asking him to await the arrival of Sir Eyre Coote from England.[1] The *wakil* fought hard to have the subsidy fixed at three lakhs of rupees, but was informed that it could not be less than five lakhs. He finally agreed to this sum for one year only, pleading that he had no authority from the raja to consent to any longer period. Hastings, who computed the expenses of three battalions of sepoys on double *batta,* exclusive of tents, arms, and contingent charges, at 4,76,000 rupees, proposed that he should pay five lakhs annually while the war lasted. It was agreed that a demand should be immediately made for the first payment. A year later the question was once more raised and the Board agreed to a second demand,[2] but Graham reported that Chait Singh professed his inability to provide this sum.

> As this was similar to the answer he gave me, when I demanded payment of his subsidy for the last year, I did not consider it as a definitive one, and therefore continued in renewing my demand every second day. Finding, however, that he holds to the terms of his first reply and seeing no probability of a speedy change in his sentiments, I am unavoidably reduced to the necessity of applying for your Honble. Board's further instructions on this head. Until they arrive I shall follow the orders already sent me by repeating my request for payment every second or third day.[3]

This was followed by a letter from Chait Singh pleading poverty and complaining that the demand for five lakhs was in excess of the amount expressed in his *patta.* He also ventured to assert that, when paying the first demand, he had been assured that he would not be called upon for any further contributions. Hastings immediately pronounced him contumacious and proposed that two battalions of sepoys should

[1] *Persian Calendar,* V, No. 1067. [2] *B.S.C.,* Range A.52, 19 July 1779.
[3] ibid., 26 August 1779.

be held in readiness to march to Benares, the whole expense of the expedition to be borne by the raja. Graham was ordered to repeat his demand, a refusal of which was to be the signal for the march of the Company's troops. Although Francis and Wheler did not agree to this proposal, Hastings, supported by Coote and Barwell, was able to carry the day. In September 1779, four letters were received in rapid succession from the Resident.[1] The first, dated the 10th, simply stated that he had demanded the money from Chait Singh in accordance with instructions. The second, dated the 12th, informed them that Chait Singh, while still expressing his inability to do so, had agreed to pay. With the third letter, of the 16th, came the raja's instalment of his annual revenue, but, in spite of his promise to pay the extra levy of five lakhs, no money was received for this purpose. The fourth letter, dated the 17th, informed the Board that a letter had been received from Chait Singh stating his willingness to pay the five lakhs within four months. 'I have,' wrote the raja, 'for this time agreed to pay,' implying that this should be the last demand. Hastings, who believed that Chait Singh's ability to pay the full amount could not be doubted, decided to coerce him into payment and proposed that orders should be issued for the march of Camac's troops. Since Francis was indisposed at this time, Wheler's objections to these coercive measures were of no avail. This had the desired effect, for, on 22 October 1779, Graham was able to report that Chait Singh had paid the subsidy in full.[2]

For two years therefore Chait Singh had, at the requisition of the Board, and, in the second year, only under threat of military execution, contributed the sum of five lakhs of rupees towards the cost of the war. A third demand was made in 1780 which received the support of Francis and Wheler.[3] By this time even Francis had realized the gravity of the situation, for, early in November 1780, both he and Wheler, without one word of dissent, authorized Hastings to write to Chait Singh requiring him to furnish all the cavalry he could spare for the service of the Company. He was to be assured

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.52, 29 September 1779. [2] ibid., 1 November 1779.
[3] ibid., Range A.55, 22 June 1780.

however that this cavalry would be required only for the duration of the war.[1]

From this it appears that the Board were unanimous in their resolution of July 1778, to require an additional subsidy from Chait Singh during the war with France. It is also evident that it was the danger from France to the Company's possessions which gave birth to the idea of demanding an extra subsidy. The next demand, a year later, was no new requisition; nevertheless two members of the Board, without any apparent reason, departed from the previous year's decision, and Francis carried his effrontery to the extreme of contending that he had never approved of the measure. In the interval between the first and second requisition, Sir Eyre Coote arrived in Bengal; and, when he became aware of the precarious position of the Company, he heartily concurred in the demand, considering it an essential measure for the protection of the Company's possessions.

That Chait Singh's plea of poverty was merely a pretext to cover his contumacy will be readily accepted by all serious students of the Bengal Secret Consultations, for, in 1775, Asaf-ud-daulah had resisted the cession of this *zamindari* to the Company on the ground that it was one of the richest parts of Oudh, worth fifty lakhs of rupees per annum.[2] Indeed, the minister affirmed that it had been rented at twenty-eight lakhs below its real value. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is that even allowing for exaggeration on the part of the nawab, the Company's limitation of the demand to twenty-two lakhs had enabled Chait Singh to secure a considerable margin. He could not therefore reasonably plead poverty. We are thus forced to admit that Hastings's demand for a small temporary subsidy in time of war was not unjust. On the contrary it was sound policy. One fact cannot be explained away; the Company were defending their possessions and Chait Singh's *zamindari* formed part of those possessions. What one fails to understand is why Francis agreed to the measure in the first instance

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.56, *2* November 1780. This does not occur in Forrest's *Selections*, and its omission from a work which has long been considered authoritative is regrettable.

[2] ibid., Range A.29, 6 June 1775.

in 1778, and later, when we were at war, reprobated the measure as improper and unnecessary in July 1779.

We have seen how the Company's demand for a war subsidy had been received with procrastination and excuses on the part of Chait Singh. The march of troops to his *zamindariy* however, seems to have brought him to his senses, for, in 1780, when the demand was made for the third time, he sent a confìdential agent to Hastings asking forgiveness for his past conduct and assuring him of his future compliance with his orders. At the same time he attempted to bribe Hastings by offering him a present of two lakhs of rupees, naturally hoping that, if accepted, this would be an end to the third demand for five lakhs. At first Hastings refused this offer but later, being in need of money to equip an expedition against Sindhia, accepted the gift; and much to the consternation of the raja promptly renewed his demand for the subsidy. It must be granted that this transaction was exceptionable in many respects, but there can be no doubt that the money was expended in the Company's service. The subsequent allegation that Hastings intended to appropriate this sum to his own use may be dismissed as groundless, because although he còncealed it at the time from his council, he communicated all the circumstances relating to this present to the accountant-general, who transferred the money to the Company's treasury.

When making the demand for the third time Hastings explained to the agent that it was the practice of all states in time of emergency, and' assured him that though he must expect a repetition of it every year so long as the war lasted, yet it could not be justly drawn into a precedent for exacting an increase on his regular and stipulated rent.' Chait Singh, we are told, unreservedly acquiesced in this demand. Placing full reliance on this promise Hastings ear-marked the amount for the payment of the detachment then in Malwa under Lieutenant-Colonel Camac. Indeed, no other provision was made for the payment of this force. But Hastings's trust was misplaced.

> You deceived me, and, after having made the first payment of a few rupees, either consulting the temper of the times, or con-

> forming to a premeditated design, you, by shifts and pretexts, withheld the remainder, until the army, for whose use it was intended, was reduced to the last state of distress. Many hundreds deserted, and, had an enemy at that time appeared against them, their total destruction had been inevitable. In all this time daily applications were made to you by the Resident, and I wrote repeated letters to you, but you paid no regard to either.

But this was not all. Chait Singh also refused to supply the Company with a body of cavalry for service in the war. It would have been an entirely different matter if Chait Singh had possessed no troops at all, but his offence was aggravated by the fact that the strength of his cavalry alone had been estimated at 2,000.Their value was well known to Hastings, who remembered the useful service they had performed for the Company against plundering bands of Sannyasis. The original demand had been for 2,000 cavalry. To meet the evasions of Chait Singh this was later reduced to 1,500 and later still to 1,000, but not a single horseman ever joined the forces of the Company.

According to Hastings, and he was correct in his assumption, Chait Singh's conduct towards him was a reflection of the dissensions inside the council chamber at Calcutta. At first Chait Singh manifested great reluctance to meet the demands made upon him, but prompt payments followed the news that Hastings once more commanded a majority on his council. But, when he believed that power to be waning, or, when he listened to rumours that Hastings's period of office was shortly to be terminated, he took refuge behind excuses, delays, and evasive replies. Evidence of the truth of this assertion must now be produced. Early in 1779, Sambhunath, Fowke's *munshi,* wrote to Chait Singh that 'the sahib' was ready to fight his case in Calcutta and even in England, if the necessity arose; that representations had been made to the Prime Minister in England, and that all the councillors, except Barwell, were leagued against the governor-general.[1] At the same time, Ali Naqi, Chait Singh's *wakil,* reported to his master that he had secretly taken service under Francis, who was shortly expected to succeed Hastings as

[1] ***Persian Calendar,* V, No. 1338.**

governor-general.[1] In February, 1779, Ali Naqi informed Chait Singh that he had gained the patronage of Mrs. Hastings and had induced her to exert her influence in his master's affairs.[2]

These examples of contumacy and disobedience were aggravated by the crisis through which the Company was passing. Hastings regarded Chait Singh's conduct as 'a deliberate and systematic conduct, aiming at the total subversion of the authority of the Company, and the erection of his own independency on its ruins.'

> This had been long and generally imputed to him. It was reported that he had inherited a vast mass of wealth from his father, Balwant Singh, which he had secured in the two strong fortresses of Bijaigarh and Latifpur, and made yearly additions to it; that he kept up a large military establishment both of cavalry, of disciplined and irregular infantry, and of artillery; that he had the above, and many other fortresses of strong construction and in good repair, and constantly well stored and garrisoned; that his *amils* and tenants were encouraged and habituated to treat English passengers with inhospitality and with enmity; that he maintained a correspondence with the Marathas and other powers who either were, or might eventually become, the enemies of our state . . . and lastly, that he was collecting, or had prepared, every provision for open revolt, waiting only for a proper season to declare it, which was supposed to depend either on the arrival of a French armament or on a Maratha invasion.

Hastings also contended that Chait Singh had no right to maintain forts in his *zamindari.*

> A dependent on the Company guaranteed, maintained, and protected in his country by the Company's arms, had no occasion for forts, had no right to them, and could hold them for no other than suspected and rebellious purpose. None of the Company's other *zamindars* are permitted to maintain them, and even our ally, the Nawab of the Carnatic, has the Company's troops in all his garrisons. Policy and public safety absolutely require it. What state could exist that allowed its inferior members to hold

[1] *Persian Calendar,* V, No. 1336. [2] ibid., No. 1356. See also No. 1362.

forts and garrisons independent of the superior administration? It is a solecism in government to suppose it.

Since it is generally accepted that the insurrection at Benares in 1781 was entirely unpremeditated and that Chait Singh was driven into open rebellion by the highhanded action of Hastings himself, evidence must now be produced to show that Chait Singh was by no means a loyal subject prior to 1781.

As far back as 1774 Champion had reported that he was less disposed to forward the Company's service than he should have been.[1] On 8 March 1777 Graham, the Resident at Benares, wrote that Chait Singh had been visiting his forts for the purpose of repairing them and stocking them with provisions. Graham's suspicions were increased by the knowledge that Chait Singh had issued orders for the manufacture of gunpowder and was collecting his forces and moving his guns under cover of night. By July 1778 Graham considered it his duty to express the doubts he entertained of the raja's attachment to the Company. This belief was not merely founded upon his backwardness in assisting the Company against their enemies, but upon authentic information that he had, on more than one occasion, offered to restore his former minister, Ausan Singh, to the office of *diwan*, provided he solemnly swore to break off all connexion with the English. Graham had also learned from good authority that Chait Singh was carrying on a correspondence with the Marathas, whose agents he received with every show of civility. It was this knowledge which convinced Graham that Chait Singh would be the first to join the enemies of the Company, the moment the Company's forces met with any serious reverse.[2] Even Fowke was forced to report, on 10 August 1780, that Chait Singh was busily assembling his forces and industriously concealing their number from him. Sir Eyre Coote, while on a tour of inspection, complained of Chait Singh's lack of respect, and reported that the raja had raised a force of 30,000 men and was fortifying important

[1] Add. MSS. 39, 874: Champion to Select Committee, 31 March 1774.
[2] Add. MSS. 29, 141: Graham to Hastings, 23 July 1778. See also *Persian Calendar*, V, No. 1336.

places inside his *zamindari.*[1] Hastings's reply to this letter affords clear proof of the fact that he was genuinely convinced that Chait Singh could not be trusted. What Hastings feared was not the unholy liaison between Chait Singh and Francis, but the danger that lurked in the possibility of Chait Singh's using his influence in England to create mischief there. 'He will do yet more mischief by exciting the spirit of discord there than by secret machinations or even open revolt here. He has more than one example to lead him into that road.'[2] It is also evident from this letter that, had it not been for the incompetence of Asaf-ud-daulah, Hastings would have found a remedy in placing Chait Singh once more under the ruler of Oudh. Nine months before the insurrection broke out Captain Eaton reported that the insolent and rebellious spirit of the inhabitants throughout Chait Singh's *zamindari* rendered it unsafe for travellers either by land or by water. Eaton had written to the *zamindar* of Narainpur requesting him to send grain to Captain Crawford's detachment, but the *zamindar* had trampled his letter underfoot and had treated his messenger with the greatest contempt. Not content with this the *zamindar* had announced that he could raise 400 men; and, if the *Feringhi* wanted anything, they could fight for it.

Exasperated by the attitude of Chait Singh, Hastings determined to show the Indian world that the governor-general could not be trifled with, and decided to make the raja pay for his past delinquencies. The internal condition of Oudh also called for drastic treatment at this time. In July 1781 Hastings set out on his northern tour invested with the power to form arrangements with Chait Singh for the better government of his *zamindari.* Chait Singh advanced to Buxar on the frontiers of his *zamindari* to pay his respects to the governor-general, but, contrary to custom, he came attended by a great fleet of boats manned with two thousand armed men. This was a breach of etiquette. Although Chait Singh professed his loyalty and regretted that Hastings was displeased with his conduct, Hastings refused to give him any answer until his arrival at Benares, when he transmitted to

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 144: Coote to Hastings, 2 December 1779.
[2] ibid., 115: Hastings to Coote, 18 December 1779.

Chait Singh through Markham, the Resident, a recapitulation in writing of 'the several instances of his conduct which for some time past' had 'repeatedly drawn upon him the severe reprehensions of the Board'; and demanded an immediate answer. In addition to the charges already referred to, Hastings accused him of maladministration, 'by suffering the daily perpetration of robberies and murders, even in the streets of the city of Benares itself, to the great and public scandal of the English name, and in violation of one of the conditions on which you received the confirmation of this *zamindari'*. Chait Singh replied that he had never deviated in the slightest degree from the professions of loyalty he had made through his confidential servant. He contended that, far from delaying the payment of the five lakhs, he had shown the greatest readiness to comply with the order. But he gave the lie to this assertion when he confessed that he had paid by instalments. He also insolently pointed out that he could not be held responsible for the delay which had occurred in the payment of the detachment for which this sum had been ear-marked. 'The remittance of this to the army/ wrote Chait Singh, 'did not depend upon me. If any delay happened on this head, I could not help it. If, besides the payment of the money, the remittance of it also to the army had rested with me, a delay of this kind should not have happened.' Hastings regarded this reply as 'unsatisfactory in substance' and 'offensive in style'. It was, in his opinion, 'less a vindication of himself than a recrimination upon me'.

> It expresses no concern for the causes of complaint contained in my letter, or desire to atone for them, nor the smallest intention to pursue a different line of conduct. An answer couched nearly in terms of defiance to requisitions of so serious a nature, I could not but consider as strong indication of that spirit of independency which the raja has for some years past assumed, and of which indeed I had early observed other manifest symptoms both before and from the instant of my arrival there.

This letter, coming as it did at the end of a long series of evasive replies and delays in complying with the orders of the Board, was, in Hastings's opinion, enough to warrant the

removal of Chait Singh from his *zamindari.* At first, however, he hesitated to take so drastic a step and contented himself with placing the raja under arrest. Chait Singh quietly submitted and was left in the charge of two grenadier companies belonging to Major Popham's detachment. The receipt of a letter of abject submission from Chait Singh prompted Hastings to write him 'a letter of some encouragement, informing him that Markham would visit him to explain his intentions. 'Set your mind at rest,' wrote Hastings, 'and do not conceive any terror or apprehension.' But before Markham could set out news arrived that large bodies of armed men had crossed the river and were proceeding in the direction of Chait Singh's place of confinement. Either because of gross mismanagement or by some unaccountable oversight Popham's detachment had not been provided with ammunition. Reinforcements were therefore rushed to the support of these two companies but found their advance opposed by bodies of armed men. The two unarmed companies were cut to pieces by the infuriated mob, Chait Singh escaping in the confusion. Later, when Popham arrived on the scene he found the place entirely evacuated by the raja's supporters and the bodies of the three English officers, Stalker, Scott and Simes 'lying within a small distance of each other shockingly mangled and without any signs of life'. Three days after this massacre, that is, on 19 August 1781, a large force of insurgents returned to Ramnagar. Orders were immediately issued for a joint attack by the forces of Popham, Blair, and Mayaffre. Unfortunately, Mayaffre, contrary to orders and without waiting for Popham's detachment, marched precipitately into the narrow streets of the town, where he was killed and his troops decimated.[1] Preparations were then made to attack Hastings in Benares and multitudes flocked to the raja's standards from all parts of the country. The rash action of Mayaffre and the small number of troops around Hastings, combined with the knowledge that the enemy were preparing to attack in overwhelming force, necessitated a retirement to Chunar. This is the origin of the local saying:

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.61, 18 October 1781: Hastings to Wheler, 27 August 1781.**

'Ghore par howda, hathi par zin,
Jaldi bhaggaya Warren Hastin.'[1]

In the days that followed the rebellion swiftly spread from Benares to Fyzabad and the extensive territory north of the Gogra, from Gorakhpur to Bahraich. In Fyzabad the begams of Oudh, that is, the mother and grandmother of Asaf-ud-daulah, openly espoused the cause of Chait Singh. Middleton believed that the rebellion was 'part of a larger and more extensive plan which was by the good fortune' of Hastings's arrival ' prematurely brought forward before all the parties to it were united and properly prepared for action.'[2] Of the widespread nature of the revolt Colonel .Hannay's letters afford ample evidence, but this evidence is of the state of the country ten days after he had received Asaf-ud-daulah's orders to march to the assistance of Hastings. According to Hannay, the whole country on the east side of the Gogra was in rebellion; even messengers could not pass from place to place, and Hannay was unable to receive any intelligence of the other detachments belonging to his force. 'This town of Fyzabad,' adds Hannay, 'has more the appearance of belonging to Chait Singh than the wazir.' While Chait Singh was allowed to raise troops at Fyzabad, Hannay's agents were prevented from entering the bazaar. The begams' servants even attempted to prevent Hannay from obtaining boats for the transport of the Company's horses and guns.

> I have before told you how violently the begams' people inflame the present disturbances, and, in addition to this, the principal *zamindars* and rajas have all certificates under the seal of Chait Singh that he will supply them with whatever money they may require for subsisting all the troops they can raise. In a very short time I apprehend the greatest part of the nawab's dominions will be in the state we are in here, and it is the general belief of every man in this part of the country that the conduct I have related is a concerted plan for the extirpation of the English. What may be the situation of the rest of the nawab's

[1] Howda on horse, saddle on elephant, swiftly fled Warren Hastings.
[2] *B.S.C.*, Range A.74, 28 July 1783 (Appendix): Middleton to Hastings, 17 October 1781.

> dominions I know not, but it is most certain that from Gonda to Manjhi and from Fyzabad to Benares district and across from Gogra to the Ganges the country is in the utmost ferment. . . . I hope to God a sufficient force is ordered for the reduction of Chait Singh, for the people who are daily sent to him, horse and foot, from Fyzabad is very great.

Although Hannay's letters refer to the state of the country after Chait Singh's arrest, they nevertheless form excellent evidence of the widespread nature of the revolt and of the guilt of the two begams. 'The old begam does in the most open and violent manner support Chait Singh's rebellion and the insurrection, and the nawab's mother's accursed eunuchs are not less industrious than those of the Burra Begam.'

Eventually, after the arrival of reinforcements, but only after a protracted resistance, the revolt was crushed. Before we proceed to the reorganization of Benares after the suppression of the revolt, certain points call for attention.

It has been contended that Hastings's hatred of Chait Singh blinded his sense of justice, and that, actuated by the desire for revenge, he persecuted the raja to his destruction. There can be no doubt that Chait Singh sided with the Majority against Hastings and took advantage of the dissensions inside the governor-general's council. Believing that Francis would once more command a majority and hoping to profit from the change, he delayed his promised payments. *When the report of Mr. Francis's return to Europe was current through the country, by which the raja's views were frustrated, he paid the money, but the mischief was already done, the forces being almost starved for want of assets to defray their expenses.'[1] Again, when Clavering attempted to assume the chair which Hastings had not vacated, Chait Singh deputed an agent with an express commission to compliment Clavering on his accession to the governor-generalship. Hastings afterwards contended that this attitude was 'a proof of the readiness which he showed to foment, or even to take part in any divisions of our Government; it

[1] **Markham's evidence at the trial. Letter produced from Markham to his father, the Archbishop of York, dated Benares, 3 January 1782. The reference is of course to Camac's detachment.**

always appeared to me indecent with respect to my office, unjustifiable with respect to his situation, and a proof of his rooted disaffection to the English administration.'

Now Warren Hastings was a loyal friend, to which fact volumes of private letters bear witness, but, at the same time, he was not the man to forget an injury or an insult. There can be no doubt that he looked upon Chait Singh's intrigues with the Majority as evidence of the basest ingratitude, for, had it not been for his influence with Shuja-ud-daulah, Chait Singh, in all probability, would not have been guaranteed in the possession of his *zamindari.* To some extent then his personal feelings must have influenced him in his attitude towards the raja. One example should make this clearer. The most influential minister of Balwant Singh had been his *diwan* Babu Ausan Singh, who had played no small part in securing the succession of Chait Singh to the *zamindari.* Some time later, having incurred the displeasure of his master, he had been forced to flee the country and take refuge in Murshidabad. Hastings took Ausan Singh under his protection, sent him back to Benares, and, after protracted negotiations, forced Chait Singh to provide for his support by granting him a *jagir* to the annual value of 50,000 rupees. It looks very much as if Hastings in championing the cause of Ausan Singh wished to humiliate Chait Singh as a punishment for his ingratitude in deserting him and intriguing with his enemies who composed the Majority. It is significant that Hastings, in his account of his transactions with Chait Singh in 1781, makes no mention of the compulsory grant of this *jagir.* When it is remembered that Chait Singh detested Ausan Singh as a servant who had defied his authority and refused to admit him to caste equality, it will be readily understood that the order directing his pardon and restoration to wealth and honour was the most bitter and degrading which could have been imposed on Chait Singh. There were apparently no reasons of public policy which justified this order on the part of the governor-general. Although Hastings was on sure ground when he demanded a contribution from Chait Singh while the war lasted, and although Chait Singh deserved to be punished for the delay and bad grace with which he

made his payments, nevertheless Hastings must have been influenced to some extent by the personal animosity which had apparently wholly influenced him in his interference on behalf of Ausan Singh. Furthermore, Hastings's attitude towards Chait Singh at Buxar and Benares, in 1781, gave the raja too much reason to suppose that repentance was useless and that Hastings regarded his offences as beyond forgiveness. Perhaps the worst thing that can be said of Hastings's conduct towards Chait Singh is that he was unduly precipitate in his demands, and that it was a blunder to proceed to Benares with so small an escort. Indeed, if Chait Singh had been for a long time meditating rebellion, he should have gone to Benares at the head of a force capable of reducing the raja to obedience. Ordering his arrest in his palace was also an error of judgement.

It is difficult to decide from the evidence whether Chait Singh intended rebelling against the Company. Even Hastings admitted before the Lords at the Trial that he did not believe this when setting out to punish the raja.[1] All the evidence we possess is that of intrigues, military preparations and recalcitrancy quite likely in the long run to produce this result. It is equally impossible to assert from the evidence that Chait Singh never intended to raise the standard of revolt.[2] Because Hastings believed there was no immediate danger in 1781 it is wrong to suppose that 'the idea of rebellion had never dawned upon the raja'. Hastings honestly believed that Chait Singh was hostile to the Company and had for years been making secret preparations to raise the standard of revolt immediately a favourable opportunity presented itself, such as the arrival of a French armament or a Maratha attack upon the Company's territories. But, whatever his errors of judgement may have been and however much he may have been swayed by his personal feelings, there can be little doubt that Hastings was justified in demanding a subsidy in time of war. He was also acting fully in accordance with his rights when he decided to fine Chait Singh fifty lakhs of rupees 'for the most flagrant offences'. Although

[1] **Minutes of Evidence, 1788, p. 27.**
[2] **For opposite view see Roberts, *Cambridge History of India,* V, 298.**

Pitt considered it a right inherent in every government to call upon its subjects for extraordinary aids in time of emergency, he was of the opinion that, in the exercise of this power, Hastings, in imposing so large a fine, had acted in a despotic and tyrannical manner. It was because of this excessive fine that Pitt voted for the impeachment. Pitt's attitude is difficult to explain and it surprised his contemporaries. It must not be forgotten that Hastings merely announced to Wheler his intention of inflicting this fine: no fine was ever actually imposed.[1]

As soon as news reached India that war had broken out between England and France it was Hastings's duty to place before his council proposals for the protection of the Company's settlements.

> **Every member of our Government felt the necessity of the measure, and we were for once unanimous. My propositions, which embraced every part of the Company's dependencies on that side of India, could not, without glaring and very suspicious partiality, have omitted the territories of Chait Singh. I allotted what I thought (and still think) a very moderate portion of the newly-incurred burthen of the war to him. Had my colleagues been of a different opinion, they might have proposed a modification, or a total exemption. They did neither.**

Charles James Fox contended at the trial that the Company's treasury was full, that Hastings did not really need the money, and that his sole object was to ruin Chait Singh.[2] **This contention will not bear examination, for Fox entirely underestimated the menace to the British power in India. In May 1779, Haidar Ali determined to invade the Carnatic,and a year later an army of 100,000 horse and foot was assembled in support of this enterprise. This coincided with the Maratha war and with the famine which raged in Madras and Bombay throughout 1781. It was at this critical juncture, when remittances to the other presidencies and the expenses of the war**

[1] Bond, I I , 493. Hastings's Defence, 2 June 1791. 'There certainly can be no crime in an unexecuted intention—an intention which the Raja knows not to this hour, and which I possibly might have altered upon the Raja's submission and promise of better conduct.'

[2] Add. MSS. 29, 220.

had exhausted the Bengal treasury, that Chait Singh delayed the payments of his subsidy and refused military aid.

> Mr. Hastings saw the Carnatic laid waste by Haidar Ali: he saw the conduct and views of Chait Singh. He saw the distracted state of the provinces of Oudh, the miserable condition of the army, and the helpless state of Madras and Bombay; and he foresaw that if some effectual relief was not speedily administered to the army and some decisive measures taken to counteract the designs of our enemies, the inevitable consequence would be the loss of our possessions in India.[1]

Hastings's defence, read on 2 June 1791, has never been disproved.

> We had at that period borrowed as much money upon bonds as we could borrow, for the bonds bore a considerable discount. Every letter received from Madras between November, 1780, and September, 1781, contained the most pressing applications for money and provisions. ... I am in possession of private letters written to me by the Governor of Madras in that period, in duplicate and triplicate, most earnestly pressing me to save them from sinking, by sending them ample supplies of money and provisions. Sir Eyre Coote depended upon me for seven lakhs of rupees a month for the pay of the armies in the Carnatic. The most pressing applications for money were received from Bombay, and from General Goddard, who commanded the army in Gujarat; and very heavy bills were drawn upon the government of Bengal in the first months of the year 1781. The troops in Oudh and in Bengal were many months in arrear. Colonel Muir's army in the province of Malwa, and Major Popham's at Benares were also considerably in arrears. A French fleet had appeared off Fort St. George in February, 1781, was expected to return in the ensuing season, and did actually come upon the coast of Coromandel in April, 1782.
>
> Sir John Macpherson, who landed in Calcutta in October, 1781, has truly described our situation at the moment: 'An empty treasury, and every resource for raising money so completely exhausted, that it was with the utmost difficulty that the Governor could raise a loan for a remittance of eight or ten lakhs, which he had solemnly pledged himself to make to Sir Eyre Coote, whom he had left at Madras in September in the greatest distress for money.'

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 222. Distress Brief.

> It is in evidence that Colonel Muir, after the separate peace which I concluded with Mahadaji Sindhia, could not recross the Jumna until he received a supply from Fyzabad in February, 1782. . . . Such was the distress of the troops in Oudh and in the Maratha country that the officers sold their plate for the temporary relief of their sepoys, as they did also upon the coast. . . . In this long period of thirteen years . . . while Great Britain lost one half of its empire and doubled its public debt, that government over which I presided was not only preserved entire, but increased in population, wealth, agriculture, and commerce; and, although your Lordships have been told by the House of Commons that my measures have disgraced and degraded the British character in India, I appeal to the general sense of mankind to confirm what I am now going to say—that the British name and character never stood higher, or were more respected in India, than when I left it.[1]

This is corroborated by a comparative account of the military charges, expense of buildings and fortifications, and remittances from Bengal to the other settlements, between 1776 and 1785.

The rebellion crushed, it remained for Hastings to make arrangements for the future government of Benares. A general amnesty was proclaimed on 29 September 1781, pardoning all those who had taken part in the revolt with the exception of Chait Singh and his brother, Sujan Singh.[2] In future, obedience to Chait Singh, who was declared to have forfeited all rights to his *zamindari,* was to be a punishable offence. The inhabitants were invited to resume their ordinary occupations and every *zamindar* or *amil,* who, within the space of a month, made submission to the governor-general or to Major Popham, the military commander, was to receive a full pardon. To this there were two important exceptions. The town of Gopiganj, where two soldiers, who had wandered from Major Crabb's detachment, had been murdered, was to be destroyed; and any persons who had taken advantage of the disturbances in Benares to commit murder or to plunder and oppress the inhabitants were to answer for their crimes in the due course of justice.

[1] **Bond, I I , 514 ff.** [2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.61, 29 October 1781.**

Year	*Military charges*	*Buildings and fortifications*	*Remittances*	*Total*	*Excess since 1776*
1776-7	C.Rs. 83,04,868	10,14,547	25,04,699	118,24,114	
1777-8	„ 104,70,572	9,22,777.	41,10,269	155,03,618	36,79,504
1778-9	„ 163,62,258	15,32,957	41,52,404	220,47,619	102,23,505
1779-80	„ 210,35,927	9,17,951	28,82,497	248,36,375	130,12,261
1780-1	„ 226,98,463	9*77*952	27,29,715	264,06,130	145,82,016
1781-2	„ 258,03,952	6,25,776	76,08,941	340,38,669	222,14,555
1782-3	„ 217,61,066	9,90,044	134,31,803	361,82,913	243,58,799
1783-4	„ 218,18,255	6,56,561	62,54,649	287,29,465	169,05,351
1784-5	„ 197,56,294	8,90,026	83,14,315	289,60,635	171,36,521

Total Excess	C.Rs.	12,21,12,512
All military arrears due on 30th April, 1785 ..	„	47,43,000
	„	12,68,55,512
Average Annual Excess	„	158,56,939

East India House,
23 May, 1792.

Errors excepted.
WM. WRIGHT,
Auditor of Indian Accounts.

Babu Mahipnarain, a youth of nineteen and a grandson of Balwant Singh, was proclaimed raja, but he was not more than the nominal head of the administration, all real power being in the hands of the *naib* (deputy), his own father, Babu Durbedgy (Drigbijay) Singh.[1] Two important changes were made in the new raja's position. The control of the Mint and the administration of justice were taken out of his hands, and the annual sum payable from the revenues of his *zamindari* was raised to forty lakhs of rupees. It will be remembered that the Company had left the *Kotwali,* or the superintendence of the police of Benares, in the hands of Chait Singh. But in reality, there had been no police system and no courts of justice. Law and order could scarcely be said to have existed under his regime. The inhabitants of Benares had been guilty of the worst crimes. The rights of respectable citizens had been set at naught and violated by the relations and dependants of the raja, and by the merchants whose credit enabled him to pay his revenue to the Company. Brahmans claiming a benefit of clergy had used their sacred character as a cloak to cover the worst enormities. 'The internal police of his own country was, beyond precedent, infamous. Murder, robbery, and rapine passed without inquiry. Neither the governor-general's positive orders, nor my most earnest entreaties, had any effect in procuring justice to individuals. His own debaucheries were notorious, even to crimes which we think degrading to human nature.'[2] This then was the problem calling for solution. Oppression of the unfortunate was the order of the day, justice had become a byword. In desperation the inhabitants of Benares approached Hastings, beseeching him to reform the administration under which they lived and suffered. That Benares was one of the holiest cities in India, a city to which thousands of Hindus flocked on sacred pilgrimages and retired in old age to spend their last days in prayer and meditation, rendered such a reformation all the more imperative. Large numbers of Muslims had also settled there. 'The reformation of the civil

[1] **The *Patta, Sanad,* and *Qabuliyat* of Raja Mahipnarain can be conveniently studied in Aitchison, I, 63-72.**

[2] **Markham to his father, Benares, 3 January 1782.**

government of the town of Benares,' writes Hastings, 'was one of the first objects to which I thought necessary to turn my attention.'

Briefly his plan was as follows. Three distinct departments for the police, criminal, and civil jurisdiction of Benares were established under the control of a chief magistrate, subject to the immediate orders of the Board at Calcutta. By this arrangement Hastings recognized the Company's responsibility for the judicial administration and for the preservation of law and order in all districts over which the English claimed sovereign rights. It had been his original intention to make the chief magistrate responsible for the collection of all the revenues and customs duties of the city, but he afterwards changed his mind, fearing that an arrangement of this nature might weaken the authority of the new raja, and, if enforced, might impair his influence in other parts of the province where the raja would be called upon to collect the revenues. As the first chief magistrate he selected Ali Ibrahim Khan, a man in whom he had implicit confidence, for on the efficiency and integrity of this official the success of his plan depended. 'It is chiefly from the reliance I have in him personally that I have ventured to delegate a degree of authority to him, which it would perhaps be unsafe to vest in a person of a less established character.' His trust was not misplaced. Ali Ibrahim Khan held office for twelve years until his death in 1793, and Duncan, a later Resident, considered him 'in point of purity and integrity of conduct, a kind of Phoenix amongst his countrymen.' Hastings, like Clive, realized that corruption could hardly be expected to cease while salaries remained low. High allowances were therefore granted to the chief magistrate and adequate salaries to his subordinates, in order to place them above the necessity of augmenting their incomes by corrupt practices.[1]

The chief magistrate was assisted by a *kotwal* whose principal duty was the apprehension of criminals. He also had the right to inflict stripes, not exceeding twenty, with a

[1] **The chief magistrate received 2,500 rupees a month and his deputy 400 rupees. Full details will be found in *B.S.C,* Range A.61, 12 November 1781.**

rattan, on any offenders. For the suppression of riots and other disturbances the *kotwal* was supported by a number of *peons* wearing distinguishing badges who patrolled the streets of the city after the manner of modern police. Arrested persons were handed over to a Court of Criminal Justice *(Faujdari Adalat)* consisting of a *darogka* (superintendent) and three *maulavis.*[1] At the end of every trial the proceedings and findings of this court were placed before the chief magistrate for inspection and revision, his confirmation being necessary for the promulgation of all sentences. He was also empowered to establish rules of procedure for this court.

For the decision of all cases relating to debts, property disputes, claims of inheritance, and rights of marriage, a Civil Court (*Diwani Adalat)* was established with a superintendent and three subordinate judges, all men of proved integrity, chosen from the citizens of Benares. There were in addition two learned Hindu pandits and two *maulavis* versed in the sacred law of Islam.[2] Disputes were to be decided according to the laws and customs of the parties concerned, and a right of appeal was allowed to the chief magistrate in cases exceeding 1,000 rupees. Records of all proceedings were to be kept and admitted as evidence in future cases.

Monthly reports of the proceedings of these three departments were to be transmitted to Calcutta by the chief magistrate. Although his authority was restricted to the city of Benares this did not preclude him from taking steps to procure the arrest of fugitives from justice, in the apprehension of whom all *zamindars* and officials were to assist. Mill erroneously states that the criminal jurisdiction of the whole country was taken out of the raja's hands. As a matter of fact the new court only concerned itself with offences committed within the city. For the rural districts and other towns of the province of Benares the raja's undefined authority was vaguely maintained.

Before fixing the revenue to be paid to the Company by the new raja Hastings instituted inquiries into the revenues and resources of the *zamindari.* 'I did what my duty to the

[1] **Interpreter of Mohammedan law.**
[2] **cf. Hastings's Plan for the Administration of Justice, 15 August 1772; Forrest's *Warren Hastings,* I I , No. xxiii.**

Company required of me. I fixed their amount upon the best information of the country's ability to pay it, and the annual payments of the same sum from that time to the present, with trifling balances in some years, which have since been realized, are a sufficient testimony of its not being overrated.'[1] Hastings has been blamed for raising the revenue demand to forty lakhs of rupees, almost double the amount paid by Chait Singh. It must, however, be remembered that Hastings's investigation into the revenues of the *zamindari* was attended by great difficulties, all authentic accounts and records having been destroyed or carried away by Chait Singh. Many of the chief revenue officers who could have given him valuable information had accompanied Chait Singh in his flight. The *naiVs* report to Hastings placed the gross revenues at approximately forty-nine lakhs of rupees, and Hastings felt justified in fixing the revenue at forty lakhs.[2] He also knew that under Balwant Singh and Chait Singh large areas had been leased out to influential revenue farmers who had collected four lakhs more than they had paid to the raja. It is interesting to note that at the time of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal, James Grant estimated the gross revenues of Benares at approximately seventy-three lakhs.[3] The fallacious character of Grant's reasoning, based as it was solely upon vernacular records, was exposed by Sir John Shore. Duncan considered Hastings's estimate too high, but even Duncan himself in 1787 made a settlement for forty-two lakhs of rupees. Hastings's estimate cannot however have been excessive, for forty lakhs continued to be the government demand under Cornwallis and was embodied in the agreement of 1794.[4]

It must however be conceded that under the settlement of 1781 the *naib* had no easy task to perform. Chait Singh had always been able to comply with the Company's financial demands because of his accumulated treasure. Far different was the position of the new raja and his *naib.* The revenue collections had been disturbed by the rebellion of Chait

[1] **Hastings's defence, 2 June 1791.**
[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.61, 19 November 1781: Hastings to Board, 5 November 1781.**
[3] ***Selections from the Duncan Records*, I, 17.**
[4] **Aitchison, I, No. xxx; *vide* also Ascoli, 190.**

Singh. An insufficient rainfall had been followed by a scanty crop. In addition he had to provide nearly eighteen lakhs more than the amount for which his predecessors had been liable. Unfortunately Hastings was mistaken, if reliance can be placed on his report to the Board, in his choice of Babu Durbedgy Singh as the *naib* of Raja Mahipnarain. Before the end of his first year of office it became evident that he was utterly untrustworthy," for, although he had collected the revenues, he had misappropriated the money. This misconduct led to his dismissal, Babu Jagger (Jagad) Deo Singh being appointed in his place.[1] The late *naib* protested in vain that the revenue demanded exceeded the resources of the *zamindari;* that these resources had been diminished by drought; and that, owing to illness, he had for two months been incapable of attending to his duties. But Hastings, like Pharaoh, hardened his heart. Not content with dismissing him from office, he stripped him of his *jagir,* threw him into prison, and even threatened to put him to death. Although he was later released from prison Hastings refused to restore his lands. In despair the wretched man went to Calcutta to lay his case before the council, but received peremptory orders to return to Benares. In 1784, when Hastings visited Benares for the last time, this man was once more thrown into prison, where he died. The balance of revenue which he had failed to collect, or had misappropriated, according to the view taken, was remitted by order of the Court of Directors in 1790. Jagger Deo Singh, the new *naib,* proved no better than his predecessor.

When Hastings visited Benares in 1784 he commented thus on the excellent administration of the city under Ali Ibrahim Khan.

> I have the happiness to find all men satisfied and happy in the excellent administration of the city of Benares. I have experienced what few men of the first station have known in their intercourse with the natives of India, if of any other country, the voice of adulation diverted even in my own presence from myself in the eagerness of bestowing a better merited praise on another. Such is the tribute which the wisdom and integrity of

[1] **B.S.C, Range A.67, 4 December 1782.**

Ali Ibrahim Khan have extorted from the hearts of those who have been subjected to his jurisdiction, and I dare trust to the result of your own inquiries, let who will make the report of him, for a confirmation of mine.[1]

But he was forced to paint an entirely different picture of the state of the rest of the *zamindari* of Benares. It was literally without a government, the *naib* disdaining to use even in official instruments the raja's name.[2]

The administration of the province is misconducted and the people oppressed, trade discouraged, and the revenue, though said to be exceeded in the actual collections by many lakhs (for I have a minute account of it which states the net amount including *jagirs* at something more than 51 lakhs), in danger of a rapid decline from the violent appropriation of its means. The *naib* or manager is unfit for his office. A new manager is required and a system of official control. In a word, a constitution, for neither can the Board extend its superintending powers to a district so remote from its observation, nor has it delegated that authority to the Resident, who is merely the representative of Government and the receiver of its revenue in the last process of it.

From Buxar to Benares Hastings found the inhabitants discontented. A severe drought intensified their misery. But this was not the chief cause of the prevailing dissatisfaction. According to Hastings this had to be sought in a defective, corrupt, and oppressive administration. A multitude of petitions testified to this.

It is affirmed that the *amils* and renters exact from the proprietors of the actual harvest a large increase in kind on their stipulated rent, that is, from those who held their *pattas* by the tenure of paying one-half of the produce of their crops, either the whole without subterfuge, or a large proportion of it by false measurement or other pretexts; and from those whose engagements are for a fixed rent in money, the half or a greater proportion is taken in kind. This is in effect a tax upon the industry of the inhabitants since there is scarce a field of grain in the province, I might say not one, which has not been preserved by

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range B.2, 20 April 1784: Hastings to Board, 2 April 1784.**
[2] **Add. MSS. 29, 212, Diary No. I, 1784: Hastings to Fowke, 14 March 1784.**

incessant labour of the cultivator, by digging wells for their supply, or watering them from the wells of masonry with which this country abounds, or from the neighbouring tanks, rivers, and nullahs. The people who imposed upon themselves this voluntary and extraordinary labour, and not unattended with expense, certainly did it in the expectation of reaping the profits of it, and it is as certain that they would not have done it, if they had known that their rulers from whom they were entitled to an indemnification would take from them what they had so hardly earned.

In the management of the customs the *naib* and his subordinates, by an arbitrary valuation of goods, exacted exorbitant rates. Duties were even charged twice on the same goods, first from the seller and afterwards from the buyer. This naturally discouraged foreign merchants from resorting to Benares. For all these abuses Hastings held the *naib* responsible, and advocated his immediate removal, denouncing him as rapacious, haughty, and vindictive. But the harshness of his administration must have been to some extent the outcome of his determination to avoid the fate of his predecessor. He appears to have acted on the avowed principle that the sum fixed for the revenue had to be collected. Nothing was to stand in the way of this. The consequence was that desolation pervaded the country of Benares, which only three years before had been so flourishing and highly cultivated. During this period the area of fallow land increased, the wells became disused, and large numbers of cattle perished. It seems impossible entirely to exonerate Hastings from all blame.

In reading Hastings's report on the condition of Benares at this time one cannot but be struck with that part which represents the inhabitants abandoning their villages at his approach notwithstanding all efforts to prevent a panic of this nature. The evidence points to the fact that the approach of all military forces and officials was dreaded like the plague. It is both a reflection on the national character at that time and evidence of a lamentable lack of discipline amongst the troops. As soon as Hastings became aware of this he made the commanding officers of detachments responsible for the conduct of their troops. He informed Major Eaton, the

officer commanding at Benares, that he had received many complaints of oppression. 'It was a constant practice for parties of sepoys to take by force the grain of the country at an inferior rate and carry it to the bazaars of the Ghazipur station and of Benares, where it was sold at a very advanced price.'[1] This practice was promptly forbidden.

Hastings's plan for the reorganization of the *zamindari* of Benares in 1784 aimed at bolstering up the authority of the raja, who had hitherto been a mere cypher in the administration. It provided for the regular payment of the revenues and also had for its object the happiness and well-being of the inhabitants. The most important changes made were as follows. To replace Jagger Deo Singh a new *naib* was appointed in the person of Babu Ajaib. In future the raja was to be associated with the *naib* in the administration. To secure this all documents of any importance were to be authenticated with the joint seals of the raja and his *naib.* Asa further check on the *naib's* hitherto unrestrained powers, Ali Ibrahim Khan, on whom Hastings felt he could implicitly rely, was appointed *amin,* or inspector, to advise the *naib* and to assist him in the selection of new *amils.* He was however to act solely in an advisory capacity.[2] The Board at Calcutta agreed to this plan which later received the approval of the Court of Directors.[3]

While at Benares in 1781 Hastings had abolished the pilgrims' tax on the ground that it had been merely a pretext for extortion. He had also introduced other regulations to protect the pilgrims from oppression. These regulations had been faithfully carried out with beneficial results by Ali Ibrahim Khan. The fact that thousands of devout Hindus flocked to the holy city of Benares was not its sole claim to importance. The *zamindari* of Benares was also an important trading centre. Mirzapur had formerly been a common mart for the merchants of the Deccan and the western provinces of India, where they sold their goods and purchased the products

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 212: Diary, No. I, 1784: Hastings to Eaton, 16 March 1784.**

[2] **Full details of this plan will be found in *B.S.C.*, Range B.2, 30 June 1784: Hastings to Board, 13 June 1784.**

[3] **Add. MSS. 29, 202: Court's letter to Bengal, 14 March 1786.**

and manufactures of Bengal, Nepal, and Tibet. The chief imports into Mirzapur were cotton and *curwahs* (yaks' tails). Its exports included silk, broadcloth, spices, and other commodities costly in proportion to their bulk. Since Bengal profited from the sale of its products in the bazaars of Mirzapur it was necessary to ensure that the customs duties were not oppressive. Under Balwant Singh a flourishing trade had sprung up, but in the days of Chait Singh this trade had declined in importance, merchants avoiding his territories on account of his exactions. The duties which, it will be remembered, Hastings had sanctioned in 1773, had been high, but they had been raised still higher by Chait Singh, who had exposed the merchants to 'insufferable vexations from the multiplication of *chaukis* or customs houses separately collecting duties in every part of the province.'[1] To remedy this Hastings had introduced a new system in 1781, but his regulations had been so little attended to that they had become almost obsolete. In October 1784 he therefore issued fresh regulations for the management and collection of the duties on the import and export trade of the province of Benares.[2] In the main they were a recapitulation of the measures introduced in 1781. The chief departure from the 1781 regulations, which had provided for the establishment of three *chaukis* for the collection of customs duties at Ghazipur, Benares, and Mirzapur respectively, had been the multiplication of *chaukis* all over the country. This practice was forbidden for the future. On no account were the customs at these three *chaukis* to be farmed out to the highest bidder. Instead they were to be placed under specially appointed *amils* who were not to delay the transit of goods, levy duties on the same goods more than once, or collect duties in excess of the established rate.

[1] *B.S.C.y* Range B.3, 23 November 1784: Hastings to Board, 21 October 1784.
[2] Add. MSS. 29, 116.

CHAPTER VI

THE TREATY OF CHUNAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Lucknow was a sink of iniquity. It was the school of rapacity. What will you say of beardless boys rejecting with indignation the offer of monthly gratuities of 3,000 and 5,000 rupees? What will you think of clerks in office clamouring for principalities, threatening those who hesitated to gratify their wants with the vengeance of patronage, and in the confidence of exhaustless resources gambling away two lakhs of rupees at a sitting, and grumbling that their merits were not attended to? What will you think of men receiving the wages of service from the nawab, and disclaiming his right to command it; and what of a city filled with as many independent and absolute sovereignties as there are Englishmen in it?—Hastings to Sir John Macpherson, 12 December 1781.

THERE were many reasons which prompted Hastings to visit Oudh in 1781. Not the least of these was the knowledge that he was once more a free agent, for after many years of dissensions he again commanded a majority on his council. Wheler, the only other member of the Board at this time, agreed with Hastings that it was essential for him to proceed to Oudh to create order out of chaos by means of personal investigation and consultation with the nawab. The time was also opportune, for no urgent affairs demanded his presence in Calcutta. 'The ships of the season for Europe are all dispatched, the business of the revenues is put into an easy channel and will not require much of the Board's attention and nothing of any consequence can happen after the setting in of the rains that can materially affect the tranquillity of the country or the general system of politics.'[1] But the condition of Oudh and the attitude of Chait Singh of Benares were not the only matters calling for attention. The Maratha state of Berar or Nagpur, like the country of Oudh, was of great strategical importance to the Company, for through both these states Bengal was exposed to attack. It was hoped therefore that Hastings would also be able to persuade Mudaji

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.60, 21 May 1781.

Bhonsle of Berar to form an alliance having for its object the mutual defence of Berar and Bengal. Since Mudaji Bhonsle's chief minister had long desired a conference for this purpose, great hopes were entertained of a successful negotiation. Concerning Bristow, Asaf-ud-daulah had written:

> He openly and publicly declares that he is in expectation of orders from Europe giving him entire authority over the affairs of this quarter; and that he has such connection and interest with the gentlemen in Europe that orders for his authority will most certainly be sent; and that he will not give up the post for ten, fifteen, or twenty years; that he now remains silent but will at last receive full powers and will then call me to an account for my behaviour to him.

This complaint had been considered sufficient to warrant the withdrawal of Bristow and the substitution of Middleton in his place.

The result of Hastings's visit to Oudh was the treaty of Chunar signed on 19 September 1781.[1] To relieve the nawab's finances all troops were to be withdrawn from Oudh with the exception of the Permanent Brigade and one regiment of sepoys, the retention of the latter being necessary for the protection of the office, treasury, and person of the Resident. This should have meant the withdrawal of the Temporary Brigade and all other troops under British officers, but unfortunately the weakness of the nawab's government prevented the reduction of his military establishment contemplated in this article. Since the military power and defiant attitude of the *jagirdars* of Oudh had caused the nawab great distress he was permitted to resume their *jagirs* with this reservation, that pensions equivalent to the annual collections from their lands should be granted in compensation to any *jagirdars* whose estates had been guaranteed by the Company. An article was also inserted authorizing the nawab to resume the lands of Faizullah Khan, the Rohilla leader, who, so it was asserted, had broken his treaty engagements and forfeited his right to the protection of the Company. According to another article the Resident was to be recalled from Farrukhabad. It

[1] **Aitchison, I, xli; *B.S.C.*, Range A.73, Appendix, 9 July 1783.**

will be necessary to explain the provisions of this treaty in detail.

In return for these concessions the nawab agreed to reduce his *sihbandi* troops to regular establishments which were to be paid in money from the treasury and not by assignments of revenue.[1] Of this class of troops no more were to be entertained than he could afford. To make this possible Hastings advised the nawab to separate his public and private funds. These recommendations were accepted by the nawab, who agreed to allocate no more than a fixed monthly sum for his personal and household expenses. The remainder of the net collections was to be placed in the public treasury to meet his civil and military disbursements. All public funds were to be under the management of his ministers and subject to inspection by the Resident. These efforts at improving Asaf-ud-daulah's financial position were approved of by Wheler, and, later, by Macpherson. 'Such an alliance being less oppressive to him may be more advantageous and honourable to the Company, and may remove that too general but dangerous impression which the different states of this country have received from the double character in which we have hitherto appeared in India—that of allies and conquerors.'[2]

The execution of the Chunar agreement was entrusted to Middleton, who received definite and detailed instructions.[3] He was informed that the chief purpose of the treaty was to relieve the nawab's financial burdens and to provide for the better administration of Oudh. Both these objects were essential, otherwise the alliance with Oudh would be 'a clog instead of an aid to the Company'. It was hoped that this agreement, if properly carried out, would enable the nawab to discharge his debts to the Company. To ensure this it was necessary to limit his personal expenses and to separate his private disbursements from the public funds, but on no account was this arrangement to interfere with the Company's assignments. A considerable increase of revenue was to be

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.65, 23 May 1782.**
[2] **ibid., Range A.63,14 January 1782: Minute by Wheler and Macpherson.**
[3] **ibid., Range A.73, Appendix, 9 July 1783: Middleton's instructions, 23 September 1781.**

expected from the resumption *oijagir* lands. 'I shall expect,' wrote Hastings, 'that the whole of the excess be appropriated to the discharge of the nawab's debt to the Company.' This accomplished he was to direct his energies to reducing and reforming the nawab's *muteyana* troops, which, if possible, were to be composed entirely of cavalry. No assignments were to be granted these troops and what assignments had been granted were to be taken away, for their pay was to be issued from the public treasury. The nawab was to appoint his own officers, but Middleton was to protest if improper persons were selected. If, after this, the nawab still refused to see the error of his ways, Middleton was authorized to denounce his attitude as a breach of his agreement with the governor-general. All *amils* and revenue collectors were to be chosen by the nawab's ministers with Middleton's concurrence. He was also to urge upon the nawab the necessity of gradually establishing courts of justice. Here again the various officials were to be selected by the ministers, subject to Middleton's approval. Because of the disturbed condition of Oudh consequent upon the rebellion of Chait Singh steps were to be taken to protect Middleton in the discharge of his duties. We have seen how a regiment of sepoys had been retained at Lucknow for this express purpose. In addition, Colonel Morgan was instructed in cases of emergency to assist the Resident with detachments of troops, either on the nawab's requisition or at Middleton's own request. But Hastings was careful to add, 'This power you are not to exercise but in case of the most urgent and manifest necessity.'

Hastings was disappointed in his choice of a Resident, for within a month we find him complaining of Middleton's inattention to his orders and demanding an exact statement of the nawab's financial position. Hastings also called for an estimate of the nominal and real value of all *jagirs* in the nawab's dominions.[1] Middleton excused himself on the grounds that it was a very difficult task to ascertain the real value of these *jagirs,* for it was to the interest of the *jagirdars* to conceal all revenues collected in excess of the nominal value

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.72, Appendix, 12 June 1783: Hastings to Middleton, 21 November 1781.**

of their *jagirs*. There was much truth in this contention, for Hastings himself in his land revenue experiments in Bengal had experienced the greatest difficulty in ascertaining the real value of the lands included in the various *zamindaris*. This was partly owing to the famine which had at that time devastated Bengal, but chiefly because of the compact between the *zamindars* and *qanungos* to conceal the real value of these lands, since the difference between the real and nominal values constituted their profits.[1] It was for this reason that the farming of revenues has been so popular in Muslim India.

It is necessary at this stage to retrace our steps a little in order to explain Hastings's policy towards the begams of Oudh. Strictly speaking there were only two begams with whom Hastings was brought into contact, the mother and the widow of Shuja-ud-daulah, known to history as the Burra (Bari) and Bahu begams. During the impeachment the prosecution made the mistake, probably intentionally, of giving the title of begam to every member of Shuja-ud-daulah's female establishment, extending its use to include even his concubines. But the inmates of the *khurd mahal* or little seraglio were often women of the lowest class, for it was Shuja-ud-daulah's custom, whenever he saw a female who pleased him, to acquire her for his collection of concubines. Often these unfortunate females were only privileged to see their lord and master once, and, after he had worked his will, they spent the remainder of their lives prisoners behind the walls of the seraglio closely guarded by eunuchs and women attendants. They were kept entirely apart from the real princesses, and women of rank disdained to hold intercourse with them. For what happened to these unfortunate women Hastings cannot be held responsible.

Shuja-ud-daulah, as we have seen, held both his mother and his wife in the highest esteem; and when he died, he left enormous treasure in the hands of the begams at Fyzabad. Besides this treasure the begams were in possession of rich *jagirs* and there can be no doubt that their position, backed as it was by armed forces, and the defiant attitude they

[1] **See *Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal* 1769-87, Ramsbotham, R. B., 1926.**

assumed toward the nawab, were injurious in the highest degree to the good government of Oudh. Soon after the accession of Asaf-ud-daulah they attempted to interfere in the administration, for, dissatisfied with the elevation of Murtaza Khan to the position of chief minister, they advised the nawab to put his trust in the ministers, officials, and servants who had been faithful to his late father.

When it is remembered that Shuja-ud-daulah had died owing large sums of money to the Company and that Asaf-ud-daulah's expenditure was greatly in excess of his receipts, it was only to be expected that before long the new nawab would turn his eyes towards the treasure, estimated at more than two crores of rupees, lying idle at Fyzabad. We therefore find him applying for financial assistance to his mother the Bahu Begam, and requesting Bristow, the Company's resident, to intercede with the begam on his behalf. She eventually consented to give her son thirty lakhs of rupees and to grant him in addition a loan of twenty-six lakhs, on condition that the Company guaranteed to maintain her in the full enjoyment of her *jagirs* and property.[1] Bristow was convinced that without the intervention of the Company the begam would not * have given a single cowry'. According to the begam, this agreement was violated by the nawab within the short space of one month, for she complained that her son still continued to pester her for money to pay his debts to the Company. She also asserted that Bristow was assisting the nawab in his demands.

> Mr. Bristow wrote me many letters desiring that I would furnish money or the nawab's affairs would be ruined. After a long correspondence Mr. Bristow went to the nawab and soon afterwards came to my house accompanied by Salar Jang and Murtaza Khan, and sent a message to me that if I would furnish the sums wanted quietly, it was well; if not, he would withhold provisions from me and take the money; that he would even beat my people and send men into my house to plunder whatever he found there.[8]

According to the agreement between the begam and the

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.31, 8 November 1775. See also Aitchison, I, 100-2.**
[2] **ibid., Range A.32, 21 December 1775.**

nawab she was to pay him thirty lakhs of rupees, nineteen lakhs in specie and jewels, and the remaining eleven lakhs in goods, elephants, and camels. She asserted that the nawab's agents had valued these goods at a fourth of their intrinsic value, and that the nawab claimed these goods as his own. She therefore asked for troops to protect her person and property. Bristow declared the charges relating to his own conduct to be utterly false.[1] Hastings expressed his views in the following words:

> All my present wish is that the orders of the Board may be such as may obviate or remove the discredit which the English name may suffer by the exercise or even the public appearance of oppression on a person of the begam's rank, character and sex. ... As the representative of our Government has become an agent for this business, and has pledged the honour and faith of the Company for the punctual observance of the conditions under which it was concluded, we have a right to interfere, and justice demands it, if it shall appear that those engagements have been violated, and an injury offered to the begam under the cover of the authority by which they were contracted.[2]

He therefore recommended that the nawab should be compelled to accept these goods as part payment of the eleven lakhs or allow them to be 'approved by persons appointed for that purpose by both parties'. Eventually the nawab agreed to take five lakhs in cash.[3]

Little more than a year after this settlement the Burra Begam complained that the nawab had deprived her of the allowance granted by Shuja-ud-daulah; that he had resumed her *jagirs;* and that he had not made adequate provision for the late ruler's women and children, the inmates of the *khurd mahal* at Fyzabad.[4] Shortly afterwards the Resident was once more forced to trouble the Board with a recital of the complaints of the Bahu Begam who accused the nawab of refusing to comply with the terms of the agreement which had been

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.34, 7 February 1776: Bristow to Board, 25 January 1776.**
[2] **ibid., 3 January 1776.**
[3] **ibid., Range A.37, 12 August 1776.**
[4] **ibid., Range A.46, 9 February 1778: Middleton to Board, 25 January 1778.**

guaranteed by Bristow.[1] In so far as the Burra Begam was concerned, Middleton, the Resident at that time, was informed that he was at liberty to remonstrate with the nawab, but that they did not feel justified in interfering except 'in cases that we shall deem of a nature so gross and enormous as to cast a reproach on the Company and to involve and affect the dignity of the British name'.[2] But the complaints of the Bahu Begam were on an entirely different footing. She was entitled to the Company's protection.

> We therefore empower and direct you to afford your support and protection to her in the due maintenance of all the rights she possesses in virtue of the treaty executed between her and her son under the guarantee of the Company and against any attempt that may be directly or indirectly made to infringe them.

We have now to consider the reasons which prompted Hastings after the insurrection at Benares to declare this guarantee to be no longer binding upon the Company. By the second article of the Treaty of Chunar, the nawab was empowered to resume any *jagirs* within his dominions, the resumption of which was considered necessary for the better government of Oudh. Included in this proposal were the *jagirs* of the begams, although the Bahu Begam had been guaranteed in the possession of her *jagirs* by the Company in 1775. Early in December 1781, Middleton reported that the nawab, in order to discharge his debts to the Company, was also desirous of seizing the treasure of his late father which the Company had unfortunately guaranteed to the Bahu Begam in 1775. The nawab therefore requested that his efforts at recovering what he termed his hereditary rights should not be frustrated by the intervention of the Company on his mother's behalf. It is obvious that he also intended seizing the treasure of the Burra Begam who had not been included in this guarantee. Hastings acquiesced in these requests on the ground that the begams had been implicated in Chait Singh's rebellion, and had forfeited all claim to the protection and mediation of the Company.

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.46, 9 March 1778: Middleton to Board, 3 February 1778.**

[2] **ibid., Range A.47, 23 March 1778.**

In less than three months after the Treaty of Chunar Middleton reported that the nawab was beginning to object to the proposal for a general resumption of *jagirs.* Middleton pointed out to him in the presence of his ministers that this attitude was a breach of his solemn agreement with the governor-general and that it would be construed as an unwillingness on his part to take steps to liquidate his debts to the Company. Thereupon the nawab consented to issue orders for the resumption of these *jagirs.* Even so he declared that he acted under compulsion. When the nawab appointed an *amil* to take charge of the Bahu Begam's *jagirs* she took immediate steps to defend them. She even went so far as to write a threatening letter to the Resident, who was obliged to call upon Colonel Morgan for a regiment to support the *amil* in the execution of the nawab's commands. At the same time Middleton warned Hastings that further military aid would probably be needed before the nawab would be able to resume all *jagirs,* and before Oudh could be restored to its former peaceful condition. In fact Middleton was convinced that a general resumption of *jagirs* would cause rebellions to break out in various parts of Oudh. He nevertheless agreed that the measure would be a much needed reform, for these *jagirdars* were a standing menace to the nawab's government and to the peace of the country. Many of them were so powerful that they maintained large armies superior to the troops of the *amils* and even powerful enough to resist the forces of the central government.

The Bahu Begam had entrusted her affairs to her two chief eunuchs, Bahar Ali Khan and Jo war Ali Khan. Bahar Ali Khan openly declared that he would lay waste the country of Gonda were any attempt made to resume the begam's *jagirs.* The Bahu Begam contended that these *jagirs* were not the grant of her son at all, but, according to the nawab there was no truth in this, for she had not received them until after his father's death. It must not be thought that the resumption of the Begam's *jagirs* was a special case, for it was only part of the nawab's plan for a general resumption. In this connexion it must also be remembered that, since her *jagirs* had been guaranteed by the Company, she was to be fully com-

pensated and to receive the annual value of her *jagirs* in the form of monthly cash payments. Threatening letters continued to pour in from the Bahu Begam. One quotation will suffice: ' Should the country be lost to me it shall be lost to all. I give you this intimation. Note it.' Notwithstanding the complaints and threats of his mother the nawab appointed his own *amils* in charge of her *jagirs,* and announced his intention of proceeding to Fyzabad to demand his father's treasure. He also declared his determination to imprison and punish her eunuchs, who were chiefly responsible for her attitude towards him.

We have seen how Middleton had been instructed to carry out the terms of the Treaty of Chunar and how his dilatory conduct had called forth a sharp remonstrance from the governor-general. Referring to the nawab's intention of depriving the begams of their 'ill-employed treasures', Hastings insisted that Middleton should prevent any abuse of the powers given to those employed in this business. For this purpose he was to proceed to Fyzabad. He was also to insist upon the immediate resumption of their *jagirs.* Then came the order which was afterwards used in evidence against Hastings.

> You must'not allow any negotiations or forbearance, but must prosecute both services, until the begams are at the entire mercy of the nawab, their *jagirs* in the quiet possession of his *amils* and their wealth in such charge as may secure it against private embezzlement.

The wording of this passage has been interpreted as meaning that Hastings countenanced the most tyrannical oppression of both the begams and their eunuchs.

' The reform of his army,' Hastings continued, 'and the new settlement of his revenues are also points of immediate concern, and ought to be immediately concluded.' But nothing was being done. Hastings therefore informed the Resident that if he did not feel competent to carry out his instructions he was prepared to proceed to Lucknow and enforce them himself. Three months had passed since Middleton had received his instructions, and all that had been accomplished

was the removal of the Company's forces from the Doab and Rohilkhand, and the dismissal of British officers and pensioners from the nawab's service. Finally, Hastings made it quite clear that he wished all the nawab's debts to be discharged.

In reply to these censures Middleton hastened to point out that the amount granted by the nawab exceeded that of any previous year despite the serious reductions in his revenue collections brought about by the misconduct of Raja Bhawani Singh, the insurrections in various parts of Oudh, and the heavy remissions he had been forced to grant on account of the drought. But this was not all. He informed Hastings that the nawab had been forced to borrow money in order to pay his debts. "The funds necessary for paying off and discharging his own military establishments under British officers and his pension list have been raised on the private credit of Mr. Johnson and myself from the *shroffs* of this place, to whom we are at this moment pledged for many lakhs of rupees.' He assured Hastings that his presence at Lucknow would retard rather than expedite the collection of the revenues, since it would be construed as the signal for drastic reforms. Neither did Middleton believe the time to be opportune for the introduction of the changes contemplated by Hastings. Powerful and turbulent *jagirdars* could not be removed at a moment's notice. Then followed the real reason why Middleton had not considered it necessary to enforce the measures recommended by Hastings at Chunar.

> I did not understand at the period of executing the agreement between you and the wazir that your intention was that the whole of the reform proposed was in its fullest extent to take place this year, nor indeed at all if the Company's debt became liquidated. I conceived your interference in the nawab's government tended solely to establish the means of the most speedy payment possible of the Company's debt, and that, whenever this should be accomplished, every shadow of interference was to be desisted from, which I stated to the nawab and the ministers; and, I believe, upon the faith of that assurance principally was His Excellency's acquiescence obtained.

Angered at the non-fulfilment of his plans Hastings

declared that he had been deceived, he was not sure by whom, but hinted that the culprits were to be found among the nawab's ministers and advisers. Nothing had been done as he had instructed. It was true that the Temporary Brigade had been withdrawn, but it was equally true that the Company had the additional burden of providing for its upkeep. English officers had been,dismissed, but they still had to be paid by the Company. This could not be done unless the Chunar agreement was carried out, for this was the sole method of enabling the nawab to discharge his debts to the Company. If the nawab required the Company's troops to enforce the resumption of any *jagirs* the cost of these troops was to be charged to his account. Hastings insisted that the Permanent Brigade was not to be used for this purpose. ' I will not hazard the Company's arms in scanty detachments for services to which they are declared to be unequal, nor will I break the strength of the brigade while the Marathas are yet on his borders, and the peace with them imperfectly concluded.' The nawab was informed, that, if he suspected the motives behind Hastings's interference, arrangements could be made for the withdrawal of both the Residency and the Permanent Brigade, but not before he had discharged his debts to the Company. Indeed, the sole object of the Chunar agreement was to relieve his distresses and enable him to pay his debts. When, however, Hastings received Middleton's assurances that he would carry out his instructions, he decided to return to Calcutta, leaving the Resident to put the terms of the Chunar agreement into force.

Middleton's reports of the nawab's attitude at this time are so conflicting and inconsistent that one is forced to agree with Hastings when he wrote:

> You in a former letter told me that the nawab had required the assistance of a regiment of sepoys to enforce the resumption of *the jagirs,* but that it was your opinion that a much larger force would be required for it as a powerful opposition was prepared against it. I in consequence ordered a strong detachment to perform this service. You then wrote that the nawab would not allow it, that you durst not communicate it to him, that you knew he would even oppose it by force, and the payment of the detach-

ment would be a breach of treaty. And now you write that the nawab's *sihbandi* alone are equal to this service, and that it will be but a fortnight's work to accomplish it. These are absolute contradictions.

What disturbed Hastings most of all was Middleton's misinterpretation of his instructions. According to Middleton these did not call for an immediate reformation of the nawab's military and revenue departments. But Middleton's instructions had admitted of no delay. Only the establishment of courts of justice had been left for future adjustment. So, before leaving for Calcutta, Hastings once more referred Middleton to the agreement at Chunar and to his instructions. 'These are to be your sole guide.'

As a result of these remonstrances the first weeks of January 1782 were spent in settling the dispute between the nawab and the begams. Eventually, after much delay on the part of the nawab, troops were dispatched to coerce the begams; the fort at Fyzabad was captured without loss of life; and the two eunuchs were arrested and placed in irons. By 28 January 1782 Middleton was able to announce that the nawab was in possession of most of the treasure and had begun to pay off his debts to the Company. While at Fyzabad Middleton was well supported by the nawab's ministers, so much so, that he requested Hastings to favour them with some special mark of his appreciation. Middleton was convinced that it was essential to support them, for the resumption of the *jagir* lands had created a powerful combination against them.

The spoliation of the begams formed the second charge brought against Hastings on his return to England. According to the prosecution his conduct was highly criminal, first, in assenting to the nawab's proposal for resuming *the jagirs,* and afterwards, in using a degree of compulsion to induce him to carry it out. In addition he was charged with having consented to the seizure by the nawab of the treasure belonging to his mother and grandmother; with having caused hardships and distresses to be inflicted on the women of the *khurd mahal;* and with having tortured the two eunuchs in order to force them to hand over the treasure, which they had secreted. Finally, he was accused of disobedience to the

orders of the Court of Directors in not making a full inquiry into the facts of the begams' rebellion.

It has been aptly said that no politician can make a situation, that his skill consists in well playing the hand dealt to him by fortune. In his relations with the begams Hastings was once more a victim of the short-sighted policy pursued by the hostile Majority. The fundamental error was the guaranteeing to the Bahu Begam by Bristow of her treasure and *jagīrs* in 1775, for it pledged the Company to protect her against the future demands of her lawful sovereign. In the first place it was an unauthorized act on the part of Bristow, acquiesced in by the Majority, despite the vehement protests of Hastings. It was a mistaken policy altogether to interfere between the nawab and his mother, for, left to his own resources, he would undoubtedly have found means of possessing himself of this treasure which he so badly needed and to the major portion of which he had a perfectly good legal claim. According to Muslim law Shuja-ud-daulah's widow was entitled by inheritance to one-eighth of his private property, and his mother to one-sixth.[1] Shuja-ud-daulah's widow was also entitled to her unpaid dower from the private estate, probably a very large sum; and she was also entitled to a lien on such of his private property as might without force or fraud be in her hands until the dower was paid. It should be noted in this respect that the dower, and not the right of inheritance, is the principal means of providing for Muslim wives. When it is remembered that under Shuja-ud-daulah there was no distinction between public funds and the private purse of the sovereign, that no will was ever produced, and that he died in debt to the Company, Asaf-ud-daulah's claim to this treasure is very much strengthened. The problem would hardly have arisen at all under a powerful ruler. We are therefore justified in drawing the conclusion that the Bahu Begam had no right whatever to appropriate state funds. Any assertion to the contrary has its origin in a complete ignorance of Muslim law. That a sovereign power like the Company could legally guarantee the subject of another ruling power

[1] Wilson in his edition of Mill's *History* makes the mistake of tracing relationship to the principal heir, not to the deceased.

against the lawful demands of her superior is, of course, absurd.

Although Hastings had opposed this guarantee in 1775, we find him supporting it in 1778 in the case of the Bahu Begam, for it was to her alone that the guarantee applied. What then was his reason in 1781 for refusing any longer to be bound by this agreement? The answer is that he was genuinely convinced of the begams' treachery during the rebellion of Chait Singh. The whole question hinges on the complicity of the begams in the 1781 insurrection. At the trial much capital was made out of the fact that the case against the begams was supported by affidavits taken in the presence of Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice, who, while Hastings was still at Chunar, had proceeded on a tour of inspection of the provincial courts. Mill states that the only evidence against the begams is based on rumour and hearsay, and that this evidence is in the form of affidavits taken after Hastings had decided to punish the begams by withdrawing the Company's support. Mill censures Impey because he declared at the trial 'what the affidavits contained I did not know; nor do I know at present, for I have never read them.' Impey also admitted that he had no means of knowing whether in the appendices to his *Narrative* Hastings had published all the affidavits that had been taken, or whether all affidavits unfavourable to Hastings's defence had been suppressed. But Mill suppresses Impey's own account of the transaction, for, according to Impey, he had suggested the taking of these affidavits to Hastings. Sir James Stephen, after a careful examination of all the evidence relating to the Lucknow affidavits and after laboriously wading through Sheridan's examination of Impey, made the following trenchant remarks:

> The criticisms made upon this transaction, both at the time and afterwards make it necessary to state two matters which are so familiar to every lawyer that I cannot understand how the managers of the impeachment of Hastings and those who tried to get Impey impeached could successfully affect ignorance of them. The first is that in the common course of business when an affidavit is sworn, even in a judicial proceeding, the person before whom it is sworn never knows its contents. He has as

> little to do with it as the attesting witness of a will or deed has to do with the contents of the documents he attests. To blame a man for swearing an affidavit in a language of which the person before whom it is sworn is ignorant, is as absurd as to blame a man for witnessing a will written in a language which he does not know. All that the judge or commissioner has to do is to satisfy himself that the deponent swears the contents of his affidavit, whatever they may be, are true. All that he need know of the deponent's language is enough of it to ask him if the matter of his affidavit is true and to give him the oath. Persian, and perhaps Hindustani, were all that was required for this purpose in regard of these affidavits, and Impey said before the House of Lords, "I understood the Hindustani language much more than for such a purpose, both Hindustani and Persian much more than for such a purpose." . . . The second fact to be mentioned is that till the year 1835 • • • the taking of voluntary affidavits, not in any judicial proceedings, but for the purpose of attesting matters of fact which anyone wished to authenticate was very common. For instance, Clavering, Monson, and Francis, made an affidavit . . . that they never had any intention to take Nuncomar out of custody by force. . . . I think indeed that the mere taking of the affidavits would not have been charged against him as an offence if it had not been regarded as an overt act of a conspiracy between him and Hastings to plunder the begams.[1]

It must be confessed that this intervention by the Chief Justice was unfortunate for Hastings. To say the least, it was a mistaken act of friendship. It is obvious that Hastings, fearing that his policy towards the begams would meet with a hostile reception in England and anxious to strengthen his case, readily agreed to Impey's suggestion regarding these affidavits. It would have been better for Hastings's reputation had his defence rested solely on his contention that he had been convinced of the begams' guilt.

Mill is also responsible for the assertion that the affidavits were useless because the evidence was collected after Hastings had given his consent to the resumption of *the jagirs*, that is, after the Chunar agreement. But on 8 September 1781, eleven days before the signing of the Treaty of Chunar,

[1] *The Story of Nuncomar and the Impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey*, II, 260-7; see also Beveridge, H., *The Trial of Maharaja Nanda Kumar*, Appendix C.

Hannay had reported that the town of Fyzabad had more the appearance of belonging to Chait Singh than to the nawab.[1] Mill also regards it as a most suspicious circumstance that these accusations against the begams emanated from Colonel Hannay and his officers, 'who were deeply interested in finding, for the disturbance of the country which they ruled, a cause different from their own malversations.' A defence of Hannay's administration occurs in the *Tafzihu'l Ghafilin* of Abu Talib, a subordinate of Hannay, who farmed the country of Sarwar. Haidar Beg Khan accused Hannay of oppressing the inhabitants of the province of Sarwar, and of embezzling public money. Abu Talib, in this valuable contemporary account, denies the truth of these charges. Under Shuja-ud-daulah the revenues of Sarwar had amounted to twenty lakhs of rupees, but later Haidar Beg's *amils* had been able to collect only twelve lakhs. Hannay, on the other hand, by efficient and strict management, had handed into the nawab's treasury twenty-two lakhs, even after deducting the expenses of collection. Abu Talib's account is a tribute to the efficiency of Hannay as a revenue farmer. Part of Hannay's policy had been the expulsion of refractory *zamindars* and the protection of the peasantry under his charge. Of the exiled *zamindars* Talib writes:

> During the disturbances at Benares they crossed the Ghagra (at the orders of Chait Singh and the begam's *khwajasaras)* and killed and plundered the colonel's *naibs* and agents, and exerted themselves to restrain tenants from obeying the colonel's orders for the extension of cultivation. Accordingly, two or three thousand tenants, and two or three thousand of the colonel's employees, were killed in this raid, and the country was again depopulated, and Haidar Beg's *naibs* were afterwards unable to collect as much as was then collected, owing to their own weakness and to this daring act of these outlaws. The conclusion drawn by the English on the insinuations of Haidar Beg Khan was based on these calamities. But the expulsion of these bad characters and of their agents, who were and are deserving of removal, and the famine which ensued . . . and the falling off of revenue, all happened after the colonel's time, and were in no way attributable to any fault of his.

[1] Other letters to the same effect will be found in Forrest, I, 246 ff.

> There is no doubt that the colonel amassed money, not, however, by embezzlement, but through firmness and knowledge of business on his part and on that of his associates, Dr. Blain, Major MacDonald, Captain Franklin, Captain Garden, Major Lumsden and others, for profits were realized after paying the income which had been stipulated for with Haidar Beg Khan, and collections were made in excess of the revenue realized in preceding years.'[1]

It is, however, obvious from the above excerpt that Hannay and his subordinates must have collected sums of money in excess of the stipulated revenue.

Hannay's accusations against the begams were confirmed by Middleton, but Burke argued that Middleton's charges were entirely unfounded and were invented to justify spoliation. It is, however, difficult to believe that every English official in Oudh and a host of other witnesses perjured themselves to defend Hastings.

Mill argues that the seclusion of the begams rendered it impossible for them to supervise the conduct of their servants and armed followers; and that they cannot for this reason be held responsible for what happened. This is an absurd contention and at variance with all that is known of the masterful and independent characters of these begams. In reply to Mill it will be enough to remark that if they were incapable of responsibility they were unfit to have power.

There can be no doubt that Hastings was firmly convinced of their guilt. ' Let this be an answer to the men of virtue who may exclaim against our breach of faith and the inhumanity of declaring war against widows, princesses of high birth, and defenceless old women. These old women had very nigh effected our destruction.'[2] At the trial Hastings resolutely maintained that from the information he had received he was convinced of their disaffection. ' That such was the general rumour and public opinion is evident from the affidavits already before your lordships, and, notwithstanding the ingenuity of the managers who laboured to

[1] *Tafzihu'l Ghafilin*, 56-7.

[2] Hastings to Laurence Sulivan, 21 February 1782, quoted in Gleig, II, **455-6-**

explain away their meanings, they still contain and afford ample proof of the hostile intentions both of the begam and her ministers towards our government.'[1] The available evidence points to the conclusion that the allegations against the begams were in the main true. They had always been disaffected towards the English and had opposed the transference of Chait Singh's *zamindari* to the Company. So insistent had the Bahu Begam been that Bristow, who was the Resident at the time, had been approached by Asaf-ud-daulah after the conclusion of the Treaty of Fyzabad (1775) with a view to having this altered. This information is important, for historians have been too apt to date the anti-British demonstrations of the begams to the year 1781. If, however, it were possible to disprove the complicity of the begams in the insurrection of 1781 then Hastings's conduct would be open to blame.

During the impeachment Hastings was charged with having neglected the Company's orders to institute a judicial inquiry into the truth of the begams' disaffection. An extract from the letter sent by the Court of Directors on 14 February 1783 will show that the passage in question was open to different interpretations.

> If therefore the disaffection of the begams was not a matter of public notoriety we cannot but be alarmed for the effects which those subsequent transactions must have had on the minds of the natives of India. The only consolation we feel upon the occasion is, that the amount of those *jagirs* for which the Company were guarantees is to be paid through our resident at the court of the wazir; and it very materially concerns the credit of your Government on no account to suffer such payments to be evaded.
>
> If it shall hereafter be found that the begams did not take that hostile part against the Company which has been represented as well in the governor-general's *Narrative* as in several documents therein referred to, and, as it nowhere appears from the papers at present in our possession that they excited any commotion previous to the imprisonment of Raja Chait Singh, but only armed themselves in consequence of that transaction, and as it is probable that such a conduct proceeded entirely from motives of self-defence under an apprehension that they them-

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 220, fol. 160-6: Hastings's defence, read 2 June 1791.**

selves might likewise be laid under unwarrantable contributions, we direct that you use your influence with the wazir that their *jagirs* may be restored to them, but, if they should be under apprehensions respecting the future conduct of the wazir and wish our further protection, it is our pleasure that you afford those ladies an asylum within the Company's territories and there be paid the amount of the net collection of their *jagirs* agreeably to the 2nd article of the late treaty through the medium of our resident as may be ascertained upon an average estimate of some years back.[1]

Both Wheler and Stables, who were members of the Board, interpreted this letter as a desire on the part of the Directors to have stronger proof of the disaffection of the begams.[2] But this was not the opinion of Hastings and Macpherson.[3] As Hastings afterwards asserted at the Trial, 'it would have been an act of insanity in us to have obeyed it in August 1783, when a perfect reconciliation had taken place between the nawab and his mother. Such an inquiry would most probably have thrown all the nawab's dominions into utter confusion. To have entered into an inquiry, if it had been ordered, which I affirm, and so did Mr. Macpherson, it was not, would have opened the breach again and perhaps have prevented it from ever closing.'[4]

It has been the fashion in some quarters to condemn both the seizure of the treasure and the resumption of the *jagirs* as equally culpable acts. Whatever one's opinion may be of the former the resumption of the *jagirs* was fairly defensible in the interests of both the nawab and the Company. In the first place, the order was general and not confined to the *jagirs* of the begams. They were also to be compensated by monthly cash payments equal to the annual value of their *jagirs.* Moreover the Company was not bound *to* stand in the way of the nawab indefinitely. Circumstances had altered and the reason why the nawab was permitted to resume the *jagirs* was because they had been found highly prejudicial

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.76, 22 September 1783. Eventually, at the nawab's request the *jagirs* were restored to the begams. *B.S.C.*, Range A.78, 25 November 1783.**
[2] **ibid., Range A.75, 28 August 1783; 22 September 1783.**
[3] **ibid., Range A.76, 13 October 1783.**
[4] **Add. MSS. 29, 220. Defence, read 2 June 1791.**

to the revenues of the state. Lord Thurlow, a staunch defender of Hastings during the impeachment, argued that the resumption of the *jagirs* on the payment of a proper equivalent was no breach of engagement. The Bahu Begam's contention that the *jagirs* had been the gift of her husband, Shuja-ud-daulah, cannot be accepted, for, at the time of his death, the districts which afterwards constituted her *jagirs* were only farmed by the begam under the management of her eunuch, Jowar Ali Khan. To her son, Asaf-ud-daulah, she was indebted for the principal part of her *jagirs.* It should also be noted that in the Mughal empire *jagir* property could not be inherited, for, in theory, it was a grant from the Emperor for the maintenance of the dignity of the office, and, on the death of the office-holder, it lapsed, with all unexpended balances, to the state.

Political expediency and the doctrine that the end justifies the means play an important part in eighteenth-century diplomacy. There will therefore be many who will readily defend Hastings on the grounds that at this time he was desperately pressed for money to carry on the war against Haidar Ali of Mysore and the Marathas. But a surer defence is to consider the treaty and agreement at Chunar, in 1781, as a bold attempt at reforming the nawab's administration, a reformation which affected the Company's interests as vitally as it did those of the nawab. Of this plan his policy towards the begams formed only a small part. This plan may, therefore, be looked upon as an entirely new departure cancelling, in the interests of both Oudh and the Company, all previous agreements.

Whatever one's opinion may be of the resumption of the *jagirs* and the seizure of the treasure, one cannot but censure the methods used to extort this treasure from the eunuchs. To cancel the guarantee and leave the nawab to his own devices was one thing, to spur him on and assist him in measures of coercion was an entirely different matter. It is here that Hastings and Middleton lose caste, and it is a particularly weak argument to place all the blame on the Resident. But there is no definite evidence that the eunuchs were tortured in the time-honoured Asiatic fashion, except that they

were denied food and loaded with irons.[1] It is sometimes asserted that their punishment was not the work of Englishmen but of the nawab and his servants. It must not however be forgotten that English support had made possible whatever punishments were inflicted.

FAIZULLAH KHAN

Towards the end of the Rohilla war Faizullah Khan, who was still in the field, concluded a treaty with Shuja-ud-daulah at Laldang.[2] By this treaty Faizullah Khan received *zjagir,* consisting of Rampur and certain other districts, with a revenue estimated at approximately fifteen lakhs of rupees. To prevent him from becoming a menace to Oudh he was not allowed to retain in his service more than 5,000 troops, and was forced to expel all other Rohillas from his territories. With the same object in view he was forbidden to form alliances with any of the neighbouring powers, but was permitted to correspond with the English Company. In time of war he was to provide Shuja-ud-daulah with from two to three thousand troops, according to his ability, and, if the nawab-wazir proceeded in person to the war, he was to be accompanied by the Rohilla leader. It should be noted that the number of troops to be provided depended upon Faizullah Khan's financial position.

The fact that this treaty was witnessed by Champion did not constitute a guarantee on the part of the Company.[3] Faizullah Khan however regarded it as a guarantee, but subsequent events proved that he was mistaken, for he found that Champion had merely attested the treaty in his private capacity as a witness and that his seal was no substitute for that of the Company.[4] After the death of Shuja-ud-daulah in 1775, Faizullah Khan was informed that his engagements

[1] On this point see Mr. P. E. Roberts's *Warren Hastings and his Accusers,* pp, 122-3, Journal of Indian History, March 1924.

[2] *B.S.C.,* Range A.24, 31 October 1774. See also Extracts from the Persian interpreter's journal, *B.S.C.,* Range A.26, 14 February 1775.

[3] Aitchison has fallen into error here, I. 2.

[4] *Persian Calendar,* V, Nos. 906 and 907. See also *The Answer of Warren Hastings* . . . House of Lords, Wednesday, 28 November 1787.

with the late wazir still continued in force with his son and successor, Asaf-ud-daulah.[1] About this time Faizullah Khan was perturbed by the report that designing persons had approached Hastings and spread false rumours that he had increased his military forces beyond the number allowed by the Treaty of Laldang. Hastings however assured him that these rumours had not reached his ears. During the year 1776 false reports were circulated that he was in league with the Sikhs and with Zabitah Khan, another Rohilla leader.[2] Towards the end of the same year the nawab of Oudh complained that Faizullah Khan had violated his treaty engagements by entertaining a huge force amounting to 25,000 men.[3] But this was stoutly denied by Faizullah Khan, who complained that he was in great financial straits, having exhausted the savings of forty years in maintaining 5,000 troops. While admitting that the revenues of his *jagir* had been estimated at fifteen lakhs of rupees he was careful to point out that his annual collections had amounted to only nine lakhs. The 25,000 troops which he was reported to be maintaining was of course an exaggeration, but it must not be forgotten in this connexion that practically every Rohilla in his territories was a potential soldier.

In February 1778 Middleton recommended that steps should be taken to ascertain the authenticity of these reports and of the rumour that he was giving protection and encouragement to fugitives from Zabitah Khan's defeated army. Daniel Barwell, a brother of the Barwell on the governor-general's council, was therefore sent to Rampur to make the necessary investigations. Although he found no evidence of disloyalty he reported that Asaf-ud-daulah's resumption of a number of *jagirs* granted by his father, and 'his oppressive conduct in general' afforded Faizullah Khan just cause for alarm. 'A late application from Faizullah Khan to obtain the guarantee of the Honble. Company to his engagements with the wazir,' writes Middleton, 'and his urgent solicitations to get this effected with all possible haste plainly evince his suspicions

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.28, 17 April 1775. Draft Correspondence with the Country Powers, No. 34.
[2] *Persian Calendar*', V, No. 275. [3] ibid., No. 287.

of the wazir.'[1] Eventually a new treaty was drawn up under the guarantee of the Company, Faizullah Khan receiving a copy bearing the governor-general's seal. When acknowledging the receipt of this copy Faizullah Khan promised that 5,000 horse and foot should always be available for the Company's service.[2] In return for this guarantee Faizullah Khan presented the Company with a gift of one lakh of rupees.[3]

When war broke out between England and France in 1778, Faizullah Khan of his own free will offered to send 2,000 horse to the assistance of the Company. This offer was accepted and 500 Rohilla horse did useful service under Major Biscoe.[4] In 1780 the Company needed additional troops and Hastings, with the full support of his council, urged Asaf-ud-daulah to demand from Faizullah Khan the 5,000 horse he had engaged by treaty to supply.[5] This demand for cavalry was an unwarrantable interpretation of the Treaty of Laldang for which no justification had ever been attempted. Hastings afterwards admitted that it was an error on his part and on the part of every member of his council.[6] In reply to this demand Faizullah Khan offered to supply 2,000 horse, the only cavalry in his service, and pointed out that the 3,000 infantry in his pay were for the collection of his revenues and the management of his *jagir*. Hastings, to his lasting dishonour, declared this to be a violation of the Treaty of Laldang. Slightly mitigating his demand he dispatched Richard Johnson to Rampur requiring the Rohilla leader to furnish 3,000 cavalry.[7] Faizullah Khan, while still maintaining his inability to comply with this order, stated his willingness to furnish 2,000 horse and 1,000 foot. When

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.46, 9 March 1778: Middleton to Board, 25 February 1776. In his *Answer* Hastings, despite Barwell's favourable report, refused to admit that Faizullah Khan had not violated the Treaty of Laldang. In all probability Hastings's opinion was based on a later report of Palmer which conflicted with that of Barwell, *vide* p. 182.

[2] *Persian Calendar*, V, No. 1372.

[3] *B.S.C*, Range A.47, 21 May 1778.

[4] *Persian Calendar*, V, Nos. 1248 and 1303.

[5] ibid., V, No. 2058.

[6] *The Answer of Warren Hastings*, 28 November 1787.

[7] *B.S.C.*, Range A.59, 15 February 1781, and Range A.60, 4 June 1781.

the news of Hastings's action reached England it evoked a stern reprimand from the Court of Directors.[1]

In June 1781 a letter was received from the nawab of Oudh proposing that he should resume Faizullah Khan's *jagir,* and leave him to join his ' faithless brethren that were sent across the Ganges'. Shortly after this the governor-general proceeded to Oudh and we find no further mention of this business until the Treaty of Chunar on 19 September 1781. The article relating to Faizullah Khan reads as follows:

> That as Faizullah Khan has by his breach of treaty forfeited the protection of the English Government and causes by his continuance in his present independent state great alarm and detriment to the nawab, he be permitted, when time shall suit, to resume his lands and pay him in money through the resident the amounts stipulated by treaty, after deducting the amount and charges of the troops he stands engaged to furnish by treaty, which amount shall be passed to the account of the Company during the continuance of the present war.

Although this article was founded on a breach of treaty, Hastings later observed that it was not an absolute breach, 'though evasive and uncandid'. We are forced to agree with the verdict of the Court of Directors: 'It is not by such a policy as this that we can ever hope to break the confederacies and regain the confidence of the several powers in India.'[2]

It must be confessed that it is difficult to fathom the depths of Hastings's policy towards Faizullah Khan. In March 1778 we find him pledging the Company's faith for the performance of a treaty between Faizullah Khan and the nawab of Oudh. In the following December, the thanks of the Company were extended to Faizullah Khan for sending troops to their assistance when war broke out with the French. In November 1780 he makes an unwarrantable demand upon him, and Faizullah Khan's refusal to supply the full quota of troops required of him furnishes Hastings with a pretext for depriving him of all his lands. Finally, in September 1781 an article to this effect was inserted in the Treaty of Chunar.

Fortunately this order was never put into effect. The exact reasons for this are not clear from the records before us. A

H.M. 219, p. 619. ibid., p. 621.

recent writer is of opinion that Faizullah Khan escaped ruin 'partly because Hastings, it is to be hoped with a sense of compunction, postponed for a time the execution of the decree against him, and partly because before it was put into fonfe the directors of the Company, much to their honour, sent a stern dispatch condemning the whole business and forbidding Hastings to go any further in the matter.'[1] Of one thing we can be certain, the orders of the Court of Directors did not reach India for another two years and Hastings had ample opportunity, had he been so inclined, to ensure the execution of this order. It was in January 1782 that Hastings instructed Middleton to prevent the nawab from attempting to carry out this decree because he considered it too difficult a problem for the nawab to deal with at the time It was therefore decided to try to persuade Faizullah Khan to commute the uncertain military aid which he had engaged to furnish into a subsidy. Middleton however was convinced that Faizullah Khan was disloyal to the nawab, and advocated his coercion by means of an expedition.[2] This did not meet with the approval of the Board and it was eventually decided to solve the problem by means of a fresh engagement.[3]

The jealousy between the nawab of Oudh and the Rohillas was of long standing.[4] In the case of Faizullah Khan and Asaf-ud-daulah their mutual distrust was aggravated by the vague wording of the Treaty of Laldang, which expressed Faizullah Khan's obligation to furnish a military aid to the nawab whenever required.

> This was certainly understood by both parties at the time of the negotiation to relate solely to a body of 5,000 horse, but the written terms of the condition are that he shall furnish that number of horse and foot by which the whole intention of the condition is frustrated, since foot can afford no service, and a single horseman sent with them will be a literal accomplishment of Faizullah Khan's engagement.[5]

To prevent future misunderstanding it was decided to

[1] *Cambridge History of India,* V, 305.
[2] *B.S.C.,* Range A.67, 30 September 1782. [3] ibid., 21 October 1782.
[4] *Cambridge History of India,* IV, 370 and 431.
[5] *B.S.C.,* Range A.67, 22 November 1782: Board to Bristow.

persuade the nawab and Faizullah Khan to enter into a fresh agreement. Bristow, who had replaced Middleton, was to advise the nawab to adopt this course, and at the same time Major Palmer, who was already in Oudh, was sent to Faizullah Khan in Rampur. Palmer's instructions were to bring about a lasting reconciliation between Faizullah Khan and the nawab; to convert the engagement to furnish military aid into a fixed subsidy; and to treat with Faizullah Khan for an annual tribute for the increased value of his *jagir* and for the revenue derived from the services of the nawab's ryots, to whom he had afforded an asylum.[1] If Faizullah Khan refused to discuss the proposal for a fixed subsidy and claimed the benefit of his original agreement, then the Board recognized that he possessed a right which they could not dispute. In that case all that Palmer could do was to fix the precise number of horse to be supplied, which had to exceed 2,500. Palmer was to demand the surrender of all ryots who had absconded from Oudh. and to whom Faizullah Khan had given protection and employment, or, failing this, an annual tribute in compensation of the loss sustained by the nawab in his revenue thus transferred to Faizullah Khan. The Board believed that Faizullah Khan would be disposed to yield to this demand if he were allowed to hold his lands in *altamgha* instead of as a *jagir*, that is, if his lands became hereditary possessions.[2] But permission for this change of tenure would, in accordance with Muslim custom, have to be purchased from his overlord the nawab of Oudh by a heavy payment known as *peshkash.*

Before Palmer proceeded to Rampur he was informed by Bristow that the revenues of Faizullah Khan's *jagir* had increased considerably, thus enabling him to entertain more Afghans than he was allowed by treaty. According to Faizullah Khan's own estimate his annual revenues amounted to fifteen lakhs of rupees; according to Bristow's agents a more accurate estimate appeared to be twenty-six lakhs. Armed with these instructions Palmer proceeded to Oudh. Although

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 115: Hastings to Palmer, 24 November 1782, pp. 153-4.**
[2] **This was the nearest approach to private property in the soil on a large scale in Mughal India.**

Faizullah Khan resolutely denied that he had violated his treaty with the nawab, Palmer was forced to report that there could be no doubt that the revenues of his *jagir* had greatly increased, and that the number of Rohillas in Rampur certainly exceeded that allowed by treaty.[1] After considerable discussion a fresh agreement was drawn up whereby the obligation to provide troops for the nawab's service was commuted, under the Company's guarantee, to a cash payment of fifteen lakhs of rupees. Faizullah Khan also agreed not to offer an asylum to ryots absconding from the nawab's dominions. It is difficult to understand his refusal to have his *jagir* changed into an *altamgha*, unless one accepts his excuse that he could not find the money to pay the *peshkash*.[2] It is interesting to note that in 1801, on the cession by the nawab of the rest of Rohilkhand to the British, Faizullah Khan's descendants were continued in their possessions as ruling chiefs.

THE NAWAB OF FARRUKHABAD

One more article of the Treaty of Chunar calls for consideration, that which authorized the recall of the English resident from Farrukhabad. Like Rampur, Farrukhabad formed part of the dominions of the nawab of Oudh, its ruler, Muzaffar Jang, paying tribute to Asaf-ud-daulah. Frequent complaints had been received from Muzaffar Jang of the hardships and indignities to which he was subjected by the conduct of the Indian *sazawal*[3] stationed in his country for the purpose of ensuring the payment of the annual tribute to the ruler of Oudh. This was really no concern of the Company but Hastings was forced to interfere because this tribute had been ear-marked for the liquidation of Asaf-ud-daulah's debts to the Company. To ensure the prompt payment of this tribute a *sazawal* had been stationed in Farrukhabad, the money received being remitted directly to the English Resident at Lucknow. To have withdrawn this *sazawal* and depended solely on the nawab of Farrukhabad for the punc-

[1] *Vide* p. 178, footnote i.
[2] *B.S.C.*, Range A.70, 6 March 1783; ibid., 24 March 1783; Range A.72, 30 June 1783. See also Aitchison, I, No. 3.
[3] Supervisor.

tual payment of his tribute would have afforded no solution to the problem, for Muzaffar Jang was a weak ruler who spent his days in riotous living.

> The country of Farrukhabad is become almost an entire waste, without cultivation or inhabitants. . . . The capital, which but a short time ago was distinguished as one of the most populous and opulent commercial cities in Hindustan, at present exhibits nothing but scenes of the most wretched poverty, desolation, and misery.[1]

It was therefore considered essential to replace the Indian *sazawal* by George Shee, one of the Company's servants, who was placed under the authority of the Resident at the Court of Asaf-ud-daulah. This arrangement remained in force until the withdrawal of the English Resident from Farrukhabad in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Chunar. When news of this decision reached the ears of the Court of Directors they condemned it in no uncertain terms and ordered that steps should be taken to protect Muzaffar Jang from the exactions of his sovereign, the nawab of Oudh. 'We conceive that this removal of our Resident was rather calculated to afford the wazir an opportunity of exercising his oppression uncontrolled.'[2] This of course was only an inference on their part, for Shee had been recalled from Farrukhabad because of complaints from both Asaf-ud-daulah and Muzaffar Jang concerning his conduct. After Shee's removal Almas Ali Khan had acted as *sazawal* for a time, but judging from Muzaffar Jang's complaints, he had reaped no benefit from the change. Hastings then decided to rely on Muzaffar Jang himself for the punctual payment of his tribute, but this arrangement proved a miserable failure, and once more he reverted to the original system of depending upon an Indian *sazawaL* On 16 February 1783, a letter was received from Muzaffar Jang beseeching Hastings to reappoint an English gentleman in the place of the *sazawal.* It should be noted that Hastings made no attempt to appoint an English agent until he had been censured by the Court of Directors for

[1] ***H.M.*** **219, pp. 544-5-**
[2] **ibid., p. 628: Company's Letter to Bengal, 14 February 1783.**

neglecting to protect the nawab of Farrukhabad. We therefore find Hastings, in October 1783, proposing Willes as Resident at Muzaffar Jang's court.[1] Willes was instructed to secure the regular payment of the tribute and to make inquiries into the revenues and resources of Farrukhabad. Since Muzaffar Jang had declared his intention of entertaining 1,500 horse and 1,000 sepoys for the service of the Company, Willes also received special instructions to ascertain whether this was possible. On the completion of these inquiries the Board felt that they would be in a position to decide whether Muzaffar Jang's tribute to Oudh should be increased or diminished. It was not until the time of Wellesley that the tribute previously paid to Oudh was ceded to the British, along with the sovereignty of the province of Farrukhabad.

THE CHARGES AGAINST MIDDLETON AND JOHNSON

It is now necessary to retrace our steps a little to explain the charges brought against Middleton and his assistant Johnson which led to their recall from Oudh. We have already referred to the fact that Hastings had been displeased with the way in which Middleton was carrying out his instructions with regard to the Treaty of Chunar. On 11 February 1782 Middleton wrote to Hastings claiming that the nawab of Oudh had fulfilled all the conditions of the Chunar agreement. Orders had been issued that in future all revenues were to be forwarded to the ministers of the central government, by whom the *tankhwahdars* and the *muteyana* troops were to be paid. The ministers had also reported a complete resumption of *jagirs.* Middleton concluded by hoping that Hastings would now consider all his instructions as fully performed. * I have every reason to hope for the most beneficial result, and that every part of his government will now be in a state of regularity scarcely ever before experienced.' The Temporary Brigade had been withdrawn and the nawab's *muteyana* troops reduced. In compliance with his orders and with the protests of Hastings Middleton had informed the nawab's ministers that the Permanent Brigade

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.76, 6 October 1783; Range A-78, 31 December 1783.

was intended solely for the defence of Oudh against foreign invaders, and that it was not to be employed in the form of detachments for the support of the *amils* and for the collection of the revenues. This practice had to cease, for the division of the Company's forces into small bodies weakened the strength of the brigade and adversely affected the discipline of the troops, especially when located in remote stations.

It was, however, found impossible to carry on the administration of Oudh and ensure the collection of the revenues without the support of the Company's troops. Since the nawab's troops were useless for this purpose, Middleton proposed that an establishment of the Company's troops, comprising three regiments with a full complement of artillery, should be raised to obviate the necessity of applying to the Permanent Brigade for detachments, and also to enable the nawab to make further reductions in his *muteyana* and *sihbandi* troops. The expenses of this force, which were to be defrayed from the nawab's *muteyana* funds, were calculated at 75,000 rupees per mensem. This proposal was finally sanctioned by Hastings. That it was supported by the nawab's ministers is a proof of the weakness of his government, which alone prevented the withdrawal of the Company's troops contemplated by Hastings at Chunar.[1] Strict orders were issued that no British officers seconded for this service were to claim from the nawab any money, either for themselves or for contingent expenses. All requisitions were to be made through the usual channels, that is, through the paymaster. The regiments detailed for this service were the 8th, 20th, and 23rd.

About this time mismanagement of the mint at Lucknow forced Middleton to appoint his own agents to check and examine every rupee issued. This interference with the nawab's officers was unavoidable for it was essential in the interests of the Company to maintain the standard of the coinage.

In answer to Hastings's complaints Middleton wrote a long defence recapitulating his former reports and contending that he

[1] **Cornwallis also found it necessary to retain the Temporary Brigade, *vide* Ross, I, 276.**

had carried out Hastings's instructions concerning the Chunar agreement. There had been, so Middleton claimed, a complete payment of all arrears; the Temporary Brigade had been withdrawn from Oudh; and the resumption of *jagirs* had been carried out, Middleton himself having taken charge of those belonging to the Bahu Begam, Salar Jang, and Latafat Ali Khan. Regarding *the jagir* of Faizullah Khan his instructions had recommended that the resumption of this should be postponed until circumstances were more favourable. The nawab of Oudh on his part had pledged himself to introduce order and economy into his finances by the reduction and regulation of his *muteyana* troops; by the separation of his private purse from his public funds; and by placing his public funds under the management of his ministers. Of these three reforms the last two had been put into effect, while great progress had been made in the first, so much so that the reduction of pay would, it was hoped, produce a fund equal to the establishment charges of the three regiments required from the Company's troops. He had further been ordered to liquidate the nawab's debts to the Company in the shortest possible time, and was pleased to report that he had been able to secure assignments adequate to the full discharge of all the Company's demands by the end of the *Fasli* year. He had also written a strong letter to the nawab recommending the introduction of Courts of Justice, but this reform, as was recognized and implied in his instructions, could only be effected gradually. Later, he had received additional orders to support the nawab in his efforts to obtain his late father's treasures from the begams. This had been done and forty-five lakhs of rupees had been recovered.

About this time the nawab wrote to Hastings that he had changed his mind and was dissatisfied with many of the stipulations to which he had given his consent at Chunar. This alarmed Hastings, who was unable to leave Calcutta, and caused him to send Major Palmer, his confidential secretary, with Major Davy as his assistant, to interview the nawab and ascertain his reasons for this change of attitude. In addition, Palmer was 'to endeavour to obtain from the ministers and from Almas Ali Khan such sums of money as

they* could 'spare from their own means, or raise by their credit upon loan, for the service of the Company'.[1] This is an extraordinary disclosure when one remembers Hastings's later condemnation of Bristow, who had made similar proposals. It should not be forgotten, however, that Hastings was the governor-general, while Bristow, in this case, was acting on his own initiative. In February 1782 the nawab had intimated to Middleton that he wished to make Hastings a present of ten lakhs of rupees. Palmer was ordered to inform the nawab that Hastings was precluded by the Company's orders from accepting this gift, which would be regarded as an attempt to bribe the governor-general. He was however willing to accept this sum of money to alleviate the distresses of the Company.[2] Palmer was also to assure Haidar Beg Khan, the nawab's minister, of the governor-general's support and protection. 'Let your stay with the nawab-wazir be short, and be careful to prevent its affecting the influence of the Resident.' Finally, Palmer was instructed to inquire into the condition of Gorakhpur and Bahraich; the *jagir* question; the attitude of Faizullah Khan; and the Farrukhabad business.

Although the ostensible reason for Palmer's mission was the nawab's change of attitude, it is obvious that the real reason was Hastings's distrust of Middleton, for he steadfastly refused to agree with Middleton that he had carried out his instructions, and we find him once more censuring the Resident.[3] Reports had also reached Hastings that Almas Ali Khan had fled from Oudh, taking with him immense treasure, the fruits of embezzlement and oppression. Of the truth of this charge Hastings, at that time, had no doubt. He was also convinced that the rest of the nawab's dominions were in an equally bad state. ' For this and every other failure in the instructions which I gave you in writing on the 20th September at Chunar you are totally responsible to this

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.76, 21 October 1783: Hastings to Palmer, 6 May 1782. See also Add. MSS. 29, 115.

[2] For a criticism of Hastings's share in this transaction see Mr. P. E. Roberts's 'Warren Hastings and his Accusers', p. 118, *Journal of Indian History*, March 1924.

[3] *B.S.C.*, Range A.66, 15 August 1782: Hastings to Middleton, 10 August 1782.

government as Haidar Beg Khan is to the nawab, for to your joint hands has the administration of his affairs been from that time entrusted.' Middleton had repeatedly assured both Hastings and the Board that the nawab's debts to the Company would be completely discharged by the close of the year. Hastings therefore threatened to call him publicly to account for this, if it did not come to pass. This was accompanied by a similar letter to Haidar Beg Khan, for, at Chunar, Hastings had prevailed upon the nawab to commit the charge of his revenues and the administration of his finances to his ministers. Relying upon the integrity and ability of Haidar Beg Khan and knowing full well that Asaf-ud-daulah was a mere cypher in his hands, Hastings had been confident that order would be restored in Oudh; that capable and trustworthy *amils* would be appointed to superintend the various districts; and that the past and growing debt to the Company would be completely discharged. He was doomed to disappointment, for incapable *amils* had been appointed. Some of these *amils* had been murdered by the very *zamindars* they were supposed to keep in check, and their murderers had not been brought to justice. 'The Company's debt/ wrote Hastings, 'instead of being discharged by the assignments and extraordinary sources of money provided for that purpose, is likely to exceed even the amount at which it stood at the time in which the arrangement with His Excellency was concluded.' Finally Hastings warned the minister that he could no longer remain a passive spectator of misrule. 'I now plainly tell you that you are answerable for every misfortune and defect of the nawab-wazir's government.'

On 7 September 1782, evidence was placed before the Board that Johnson, Middleton's assistant, was oppressing Haidar Beg Khan. Palmer wrote that Johnson's conduct was probably 'the result of a concerted plan between him and Mr. Middleton to drive Haidar Beg Khan out of the country that they may fix the entire blame of mismanagement upon him and suppress his evidence, which could not fail to criminate themselves'. Hastings informed the Board that he had no doubt of the truth of this report. Haidar Beg Khan also complained to Davy that Johnson's unfavourable reports

had led to his being reprimanded by the governor-general. He was convinced that Johnson was seeking to ruin him.

> In fact, he has, in order to render me contemptible, appointed the *amils* of his own choice, and in such a manner that no one either attends the presence of the nawab or comes to visit me. Sitting in his apartment he sends for whatever *sanads* or orders he thinks proper. Without remedy I write and deliver them. He moreover directs the *sanads* to be sent on his own part to the residence of the persons for whom they are made out as if such matters had no consequence with the *sarkar*[1] of the nawab.

The Board eventually consented to Hastings's proposal that Johnson should be immediately recalled to Calcutta.

The chief charge brought by Hastings against Middleton was that he had failed to carry out the peremptory orders and instructions given him at Chunar on 20 September 1781, the main purpose of which had been the reduction of the nawab's debt to the Company. That Middleton was fully aware of this is apparent from a perusal of his correspondence with Hastings. Constant reminders made any excuse impossible. Hastings, we also know, had even threatened to proceed to Lucknow himself to supervise the carrying out of these instructions, but Middleton had assured him that he was fully competent to put them into effect. Middleton had not only failed to fulfil his promises but he had also been guilty of giving precipitate and unwarrantable assurances to the opposite effect. Besides failing to comply with his orders he had neglected to transmit important information to the Board at Calcutta, and, by thus keeping them very much in the dark concerning his proceedings in Oudh, he had failed to carry out one of the chief duties of a Resident. It is true that he had met with rebuffs and had experienced certain difficulties, but these should not have prevented him from keeping the governor-general fully informed of the obstacles which had been placed in his path. Hastings, it will be remembered, had approved of the nawab's resolution to deprive the begams of their treasure and had issued strict orders to Middleton that he was to assist the nawab and was not to permit any

[1] Government.

forbearance or negotiation. But Middleton disobeyed these orders by allowing several days to be wasted in fruitless negotiations at Fyzabad with the result that the party hostile to the nawab had gained considerably in strength.

According to Hastings, Middleton, by taking, without the sanction of the Board, assignments for only half of what he knew to be necessary, had neglected to realize the whole of the nawab's debt to the Company. When the accountant-general wrote to Middleton of an additional twenty-six lakhs due from the nawab he had taken no notice of this information. He had also been guilty of anticipating the revenues of Oudh and of burdening them with an enormous load of interest by mortgaging assignments upon them to the *shroffs* at a usury of 2 per cent per mensem.

Hastings, relying on what he considered to be authentic reports, further charged him with attempting to conceal from the Board the rebellion and flight of Almas Ali Khan, and with afterwards taking steps to increase his power by procuring for him on his return to Lucknow a grant of additional districts. Middleton had also neglected to inform the Board of the unrest among the nawab's *amils*, although many detachments had been required from the Brigade to quell these disturbances and to prevent civil war in Oudh.

Middleton's defence of his conduct is to be found in a long letter which he wrote to the Board on 30 June 1783,[x] He agreed that he had pledged himself to put into effect the terms of the Treaty of Chunar, the chief object of which had been the liquidation of the nawab's debt to the Company, but he contended that he had been set an impossible task. Before the nawab could discharge this debt it had been necessary to introduce certain reforms into his revenue and military administration. These reforms, which included the regulation of his land revenues, the reduction of his troops, and the withdrawal of the Temporary Brigade, required time and, in addition, the support of the nawab's ministers. The balance he stood pledged to realize was the balance of forty-four lakhs of rupees in the Residents books at the date of the signing of the Treaty of Chunar. But afterwards it became

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.74, 28 July 1783.**

known that there was an additional balance of twenty-six lakhs extending over a period of seven years, chiefly on account of military stores supplied to the nawab from the Company's magazines. Eventually by raising a loan of ten lakhs on his own credit he had realized both these sums. Then a further claim of fourteen lakhs, also for military stores, came to light. This was more than he had promised to collect. Thus, originally pledged to realize forty-four lakhs, he had discovered the amount owing to be seventy lakhs, and later it had risen to eighty-four lakhs. These additional claims, not known at Chunar, had produced great opposition from the nawab and his minister. With reference to the charge that he had disobeyed Hastings's orders relating to the seizure of the begams' treasure, he pleaded that delay had been inevitable in face of the opposition of a faction at Court who had attempted to persuade the nawab that he was embarking on a dishonourable venture. To charge him with having withheld political, information from the Board was unjust, for he had reported the details of the insurrection fomented by Chait Singh, and the death of Najaf Khan.[1] He had been particularly blamed for not reporting the rebellion and flight of Almas Ali Khan, but Middleton insisted that this report had been merely a baseless rumour. He confessed that with the concurrence of the minister he had increased the revenue farms of Almas Ali Khan, but he had seen nothing wrong in this, for Almas Ali Khan had given timely proof of his attachment to the Company during the rebellion of Chait Singh. Finally, he did not deny employing detachments of troops from the brigade, but he gave details to show how few he had employed compared with former Residents.

There can be no doubt that in many respects Middleton's conduct was worthy of censure. Not only had considerable delay occurred in carrying out the regulations relating to the *muteyana* troops, but he had also omitted to furnish the Board with information which would have enabled them to judge how far this article of his instructions had been fulfilled. He had been too prone to leave the Board uninformed of

[1] *Vide* **pp. 230-2.**

points which merited their attention, and upon which he ought to have obtained their orders. It cannot be denied that he had disobeyed the governor-general's instructions by deviating from the plan laid down for the conduct of the business at Fyzabad. All this was aggravated by the fact that he had assured Hastings that he was capable of carrying out his instructions, thereby accepting full responsibility for putting the terms of the Treaty of Chunar into effect. For these reasons Hastings was justly alarmed at Middleton's procrastination and his complaints were well founded. Dismissal from office and the marked disapprobation of the Board constituted a punishment at least equal to his offence.

The charges against Johnson were of a somewhat different nature. Although he was only Middleton's assistant he was charged with having assumed an unlicensed authority in Oudh by interfering in the nawab's administration and by continuing to do so in spite of the remonstrances of the nawab's minister, Haidar Beg Khan.[1] Not only had he appointed *amils* of his own choice so that 'no one either attended the presence of the nawab or visited his minister', but he had also issued *sanads* on his own authority purporting to have proceeded from the nawab. Hastings accused him of * sending repeatedly to the wazir and to his minister, Haidar Beg Khan, to advise them against transferring the ten lakhs of rupees, intended as a present to the governor-general, to the Company's account, as it would be a precedent for future demands, which, if the wazir did not resist in the first instance, this Government would never cease to harass him for money'. For a time, when Middleton had been absent from his station, it had been Johnson's duty to report the state of affairs in Oudh to the Board. This he had failed to do. Although he had repeatedly applied to Colonel Morgan, commanding the Brigade at Cawnpore, for military aid to quell disturbances, he had not referred this to the Board at all. His particular offence in this respect was that he had detached a regiment from the Brigade in order to enforce Asaf-ud-

[1] **Abu Talib, who is prejudiced against Haidar Beg Khan and therefore not to be trusted in this connexion, states that the minister procured Johnson's recall by using his seal and producing forged letters as evidence. Hoey's *Tafzihu'l Ghafilin*, p. 71.**

daulah's demands on the nawab of Farrukhabad, despite the fact that the Resident's orders precluded him from any interference. It was also a breach of the Company's orders prohibiting the use of detachments from the Brigade except in cases of urgent necessity.

Johnson's defence, like Middleton's, consisted of excuses and denials.[1] He denied that he had interfered in the administration of Oudh to such an extent that he had appointed *amils* of his own choice. At the same time he made no attempt to deny that he had urged the minister to recommend certain persons to the nawab for this position. Neither was it correct to accuse him of having issued *sanads* without the nawab's seal and permission. He had, however, urgently solicited the nawab through his minister to grant *sanads* to the *amils* he had recommended, for it was obvious they could not have become *amils* without the nawab's sanction. He confessed himself guilty of having advised the nawab and his minister not to transfer the ten lakhs to the Company's account. He further insisted that he had reported all important events to Calcutta. Finally, he was unable to give any adequate explanation why his demands for detachments from the Brigade had not been referred to the Board for sanction and information.

Hastings was contented with the dismissal of Johnson from his post, for, as he pointed out: 'His faults sink to mere errors and inadvertencies when compared with those of his principal, and are wholly lost in the contrast with those of the present resident.' This, of course, was a reference to Bristow, who had been reappointed in September 1782. It seems that Johnson himself realized that he deserved to be recalled from Lucknow. At least this appears to be the purport of a letter which will be found amongst his private papers now deposited in the John Rylands Library, Manchester.[2]

[1] ***B.S.C.y*** **Range A.74, Appendix, 28 July 1783: Johnson to Board, 14 June 1783.**

[2] **Phillips MSS., 191, 16 November 1783.**

CHAPTER VII

BRISTOW THE UNCROWNED KING OF OUDH

There can be no medium in the relation between the Resident and the minister, but either the Resident must be the slave and vassal of the minister, or the minister at the absolute devotion of the Resident.—Hastings's instructions to Bristow, 23 October 1782.

IN September 1782 Bristow was ordered to proceed to Lucknow to take over the Residency from Middleton. His first task was to make certain that Asaf-ud-daulah discharged all his debts to the Company. 'On your arrival,' wrote Hastings, 'you will find either a large balance still outstanding of the last year's accounts, or that the whole has been paid off by encroachments on the current year's revenue/ Hastings therefore warned him to be on his guard against 'fictitious estimates', in other words, he was not to accept assignments in excess of the revenues the lands were capable of producing. If assignments of this nature had been granted, he was to insist on their being changed.

> You will observe a very considerable difference between Mr. Middleton's account and the corrected account I delivered to him by the accountant-general and now in the possession of your accountant, Mr. Womb well, a difference nearly equal to thirty lakhs of rupees. To the former, though made up with false calculations, gross omissions, and even balances falsely transferred from one month's amount to the other, Mr. Middleton pertinaciously adhered, affecting to call the difference a new claim on the nawab. I fear this may render it an unpleasant office to you to rectify his error, as I have no doubt that the same declaration, which he has made to this Government, will have been made as a concession to the nawab and his minister, and, of course, your demand for the difference treated as unjust and formed on false pretences. But, the real account is so clear and the difference so self-apparent that it will be impossible for the minister to

controvert or misunderstand them, however he may affect the latter.'[1]

This inquiry accomplished, Bristow was to submit a report on the government of Oudh, the distribution of the nawab's forces, the measures taken for the defence of his territories and for the preservation of internal peace, the revenues, the character of the chief *amils*, and the attitude of the *zamindars* towards the central government. A report was also required on Johnson's conduct, whether the sums that had been credited by him to the Company had been borrowed, drawn from the previous year's revenues, or obtained by anticipation of the current revenues. Hastings suspected that something like this had happened, as these sums had been received at a season when the regular collections were at a standstill. Bristow was therefore to ascertain in what manner and through what agents these collections had been made.

Since Haidar Beg Khan was later Bristow's chief accuser, it is important to grasp the exact purport of Hastings's instructions concerning the attitude Bristow was to adopt towards the minister. According to Hastings, Haidar Beg Khan's conduct had been deserving of censure. To further his own interests, Haidar Beg Khan, probably without consulting Asaf-ud-daulah, had dispatched letters bearing the royal seal to Calcutta. Sheltering behind this subterfuge he had given the Board the impression that his master no longer wished to be bound by the agreement executed at Chunar in 1781. In all this Middleton had been 'the faithful echo and support of the minister's pretensions'. Bristow was therefore to take steps to prevent any repetition of this. ' There can be no medium in the relation between the Resident and the minister, but either the Resident must be the slave and vassal of the minister, or the minister at the absolute devotion of the Resident.' This certainly provided Bristow with a convenient loophole, and, so far as words went, covered much of his subsequent actions.

Hastings believed that the defiant attitude of the minister had been largely the result of Middleton's acquiescence in his

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.71, 21 April 1783.

actions, that Middleton either had been the tool of the minister, or had entered into some compact with him. If Haidar Beg Khan could be persuaded to hold office under the conditions laid down by Hastings, all would be well, for Hastings preferred him, because of his ability, to any other man that could be nominated to the position. From these instructions it is clear that Hastings considered it essential to have a minister in Oudh favourable to the British connexion, otherwise the subsidiary alliance system could not be expected to work smoothly under a weak ruler like Asaf-ud-daulah. The only alternative was the dismissal of Haidar Beg Khan and the appointment of a minister more favourably disposed towards the governor-general. There can be no doubt that Bristow received definite instructions to control the minister, for Hastings impressed upon him that in future he would be held responsible for the minister's actions. As a restraint upon the unchecked powers of Haidar Beg Khan and for the better administration of Oudh, Hastings proposed the creation of a central department responsible for the collection of revenues, a central treasury, and courts of justice. That institutions of this nature did not exist in Oudh throws much light on the wretched condition of the country. But Hastings recognized that the creation of *adalats* (law courts) could only be effected gradually.

Great care was to be taken to ensure the loyalty and obedience to the orders of the central government of all persons appointed as *amils* in the outlying districts. Hastings drew Bristow's attention to the case of Almas Ali Khan, who had been allowed to acquire an independent status in Oudh. Middleton had been guilty of keeping back this information from the Board, who had for some time been unaware of this official's defection and flight. In Hastings's opinion the later engagements concluded between Almas Ali Khan and Asaf-ud-daulah bore more resemblance to a treaty between equal states than to a transaction between a sovereign and his subject. But Hastings insisted that these later engagements were to be scrupulously observed; and, if Almas Ali Khan violated any of the conditions, Bristow was to urge the nawab 'to punish him with death as a necessary example to deter

others from the commission of the like crimes'. An inquiry was also to be made into the conduct of the *zamindars* of Gorakhpur and Bahraich, who, during the insurrection of 1781, had aimed at the destruction of Colonel Hannay and of the English power in Oudh. After all the *zamindars* had been reduced to subjection Bristow was to ascertain the real value of the revenues of these two provinces. This was very necessary because Hastings by this time had come to the conclusion that the usual type of subsidiary treaty would not ensure the prompt payment of the subsidy. For this purpose it was essential to have lands, whose revenues would cover the subsidy, ceded to the Company in perpetuity. This meant 'a certain and improvable revenue instead of a precarious demand on account payable from a fund which I have said muft at some period prove insolvent.' Hastings also recognized that any lands ceded for this purpose should be easily defensible.

One of Middleton's duties, it will be remembered, had been the allocation of a certain monthly sum for the nawab's private expenses. Bristow was to make immediate inquiries as to how far this essential reform had been carried out, for Hastings feared that the money had been withheld from the nawab.

The nawab had repeatedly complained of the vexatious interference exercised by the Resident in the administration of Oudh, and had demanded that, whenever the Company's balance was discharged, he might be freed from this and might be allowed to pay his subsidy in ready money, for which purpose the assignments he had granted the Company should be restored to him. Hastings had encouraged this proposal, which emanated from Haidar Beg Khan, because he had thought it the best means of ensuring the regular payment of the Company's subsidy. But the subsequent misconduct of the minister had caused him to alter his opinion.

These then were Bristow's instructions, from which he was not to deviate except in cases of emergency, and even then only with Hastings's approval.

Bristow found the government of Oudh an inefficient despotism with arbitrary powers residing more in the pro-

vincial officials than in the nawab himself. In the outlying districts it was the *amil* and the *faujdar* who reigned supreme, with power of life and death over the inhabitants, for the central government had established no system for curbing these local magnates. Asaf-ud-daulah himself was very much to blame for this state of affairs because he paid little, if any, attention to the government of his country. 'I can/ reported Bristow, 'hardly quote an instance since the wazir's accession to the *masnad* of an *amil* having been punished for oppression, though the complaints of the people and the state of the country are notorious proofs of the violence daily committed. It is even become unsafe for travellers to pass except in large bodies. Murders, thefts, and other enormities shocking to humanity are committed in open day.'[1] He therefore recommended that every *zamindar* should be constituted the chief magistrate of his *zamindari* with power to collect the revenue according to certain established rates published throughout his charge. The *amil* as the controlling power between the ryot and the *zamindar* was to be responsible for the carrying out of these regulations and for the preservation of law and order. To facilitate the control of the *amils* it was to be clearly understood that in future every *zamindar* would be answerable for the disturbances, thefts, and murders within his jurisdiction. In important towns justice should be administered by means of a *kotwaL* Any reader with a knowledge of the position of the *kotwal* in Mughal India will realize how complete had been the decay of the once mighty empire of Akbar.

The efficiency of the administration depended upon the ability and integrity of the *amil,* but unfortunately this office had, more often than not, been farmed out to the highest bidder. As long as the *amil* paid his revenues promptly the nawab and his ministers did not trouble themselves about the methods by which these revenues were collected or how far the ryots were oppressed. This meant that in many cases the *zamindars* were left at the mercy of the *amils* or driven into rebellion. Weak *zamindars* were obliged to submit or forced

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.71, 12 May 1783: Bristow to Hastings, 12 December 1782.**

to take refuge in flight. On the other hand there were many cases of disgraceful collusion between the *amils* and powerful *zamindars.* The country of Oudh was studded with forts which served as a shelter for the more turbulent *zamindars.* There were no less than seven hundred forts in the districts for which Almas Ali Khan was responsible. It was therefore customary to seize hostages, a son, a brother, or a near relation, until the revenues had been paid. 'A great *amil* will sometimes have three or four hundred of these hostages whom he is obliged to confine in places of security.'

Despite Middleton's claim that he had introduced reforms into the nawab's military establishment, Bristow was able to show that tremendous savings could be effected in this department. To give detailed figures, pay was issued for 13,152 cavalry and 48,715 infantry, although this force was not actually in existence. It was extremely doubtful whether the nawab could have assembled an army of more than 10,000 men at this time. Not only had money to be found for a phantom army, but in many cases the pay of the existing troops was months in arrears. For example, the Turk *sawars,* the best of his cavalry, had been shamefully neglected and were on the verge of mutiny, not having received any pay for ten months. There was also a great shortage of stores and ammunition. Moreover the rebellions of *zamindars,* which were daily occurrences in Oudh, proved conclusively that the *muteyana* troops were unequal to the task of policing the country. Much less were they in a position to take the field against an invader.

The funds allotted for the nawab's personal expenses were administered in a disgraceful manner, for, notwithstanding the large sums appropriated for this purpose, there was great distress in his household. Some departments had been left entirely unprovided for, the servants' wages being many months in arrears. Since the nawab's revenues were managed solely by Haidar Beg Khan, to whom the nawab was on all occasions compelled to apply for the current disbursements of his household, he alone could be held responsible for this financial maladministration. * Had the immense sums appropriated to the wazir's personal expenses been applied to any

useful public service, either in provision for his family, in pensions to deserving servants of the Government, or to the pay of any part of the army, I should not be so anxious to represent the necessity of a reform. The whole is dissipated among the orderlies, a set of men of low birth and no pretensions, who are a burthen to the state, living in affluence whilst the army and every useful member of society are left in want of the necessaries of life.' Contrary to the Chunar agreement Asaf-ud-daulah objected to any interference in his household affairs, pleading that he would cease to be an independent sovereign if the Company's agents controlled his personal expenditure. Bristow hastened to inform him that the intentions of the governor-general had been misrepresented to him. His income was to be entirely at his own disposal. What the governor-general wished to avoid was that this money should be squandered without the nawab's knowledge. To prevent this it was necessary to appoint a treasurer in charge of his household funds. Bristow's proposal that Raja Tapar Chand should be appointed treasurer was strongly opposed by Haidar Beg Khan on the ground that the raja was his personal enemy. It was finally agreed that one of the nawab's nominees should be entrusted with this office.

Bristow had not been long in Oudh before he was forced to report his inability to comply with that part of his instructions which called for a liquidation of the balance owing to the Company. The chief reason for this was that he had been unable to procure assignments equal to the required amount. In other words, he had accepted fictitious assignments. But it must be admitted that there was much truth in Bristow's excuse that it was a slow process ascertaining the true value of these districts.

Bristow had been ordered to reduce the power of Almas Ali Khan, but, on his arrival in Oudh, he soon realized that the collection of the nawab's revenues would not be facilitated by Almas Ali Khan's dismissal from office, for the districts farmed by him yielded about half of the government revenues. He therefore proposed that this powerful revenue farmer, who now professed obedience to the nawab, should be left in charge of his districts until the end of the year. For the future

he recommended that the province of Etawah should be entrusted to at least three men, for, when one man was left in charge of so large an area, it ended in his acquiring a powerful territorial position which enabled him to resist even the demands of the central government. To prevent any assistance being given to Almas Ali Khan by hostile powers on the borders of Oudh, and to reduce his troops to obedience, the co-operation of the Company's brigade would be necessary. It would be also essential for the collection of the revenues to replace the troops of Almas Ali Khan by some other force, for his army amounted to 12,000 horse and foot and included six battalions of infantry. In addition he commanded a force of irregulars or *sihbandi* troops, entertained on his own authority, at least equal in numbers to the force he had raised with the nawab's consent. It is obvious that the reduction of Almas Ali Khan presented serious difficulties, for he was no ordinary person. Faced with a powerful revenue farmer who was wealthy, possessed treasure, stores and ammunition, and had a very strong fort at his disposal, Bristow did not feel equal to the task of reducing him to obedience. Bristow also made the extraordinary confession, that, on his arrival in Oudh, finding the treasury empty, he had been obliged to borrow money from the very man he was supposed to coerce. Taking all the evidence into consideration it seems that Almas Ali Khan was a man to be propitiated rather than subdued.

It was on 21 April 1783 that Hastings placed before the Board letters from both Asaf-ud-daulah and his minister, Haidar Beg Khan, complaining of the conduct of Bristow and his assistant Cooper. It was asserted that Bristow had assumed absolute power in Oudh, taking over the entire administration of the country, or, at least, attempting to do so; and that he had taken charge of all public accounts, dismissing and appointing the *amils* of the revenue department. Not content with this he had assumed the right to inspect and control the nawab's private expenditure and domestic arrangements. This had been done not only without the nawab's consent but against his entreaties and even against his vehement protestations. He had used his position to compel the minister

to write *shuqqas* (mandates) under the nawab's privy seal, a fact of which the nawab had been completely ignorant. He was accused of having used harsh and unbecoming language in the nawab's presence and of generally treating him with indignity and insult. On one occasion, so it was asserted, he had forcibly detained the nawab's *mutasaddis* (clerks) for eight days at his house where he compelled them to prepare muster-rolls of the nawab's *muteyana* troops as a result of which unauthorized investigation, Bristow had disbanded 4,000 horse and 7,000 foot. All this had been done without the nawab's permission. The most serious of all the charges brought against him was that, with the exception of the revenues assigned to the Company, he had prohibited the disposal of all other revenues in Oudh, thus leaving pensioners, *jagirdars,* officers, and servants of the nawab without the means of subsistence. Bristow, if the nawab is to be believed, openly declared that he had obtained the sanction of the governor-general and council for all these acts. Finally, he was charged with attempting to put into execution a plan for the administration of justice, investing his assistant Cooper with extraordinary and undefined powers and permitting him to receive complaints from the nawab's subjects and to super-scribe their petitions with orders in the style of mandates from the nawab. 'Not one circumstance,' wrote the nawab, 'which could be productive of indignity, contempt, or the annihilation of my authority has he left unperformed. He had strictly forbid my ministers from writing to you on the state of things, declaring that if anyone presume to write a single circumstance of the transactions to Calcutta, he would call him to a severe account. He threatens my ministers, telling them to act as he directs, otherwise he will cause them to be turned out of their offices.'

At the same time a letter was received from Haidar Beg Khan, who also complained of Bristow's misconduct. According to Haidar Beg Khan, Bristow had compelled him to deliver up all his papers for inspection.

> He examined them and, after an interval of some days, declared that he was to take all the affairs of this country, all the offices, household establishments, etc., etc., all the troops in the

> service of His Highness, under his own immediate management, and make the disbursements to each with his own hand. That as the military expenses, those of the household, of the *jagirdars* and the *tankhwahdars*, appeared to be very considerable, an addition to the ways and means would be wanting, and, therefore, I must give five and twenty lakhs of rupees from my own private property to enable him to pay the troops.

Lastly, according to the minister, Bristow had threatened to expel all the nawab's *amils* and appoint men of his own choice, from whom he would personally receive the revenues of the realm and issue to the nawab what he considered to be necessary for his expenses.

Hastings drew the attention of the Board to these complaints, pointing out that, if they were true, Bristow had certainly usurped the nawab's authority. He refused to accept Bristow's plea that he was acting in accordance with his instructions. ' I certainly did not mean to give Mr Bristow an authority to do what I never would dare to do myself, and am pleased that there are proofs on record of my principles with respect to the nawab-wazir, which are most repugnant to every species of violence and usurpation.' He therefore proposed that Bristow should be asked to reply to these charges, and that he should be required to revoke all appointments he had made and confine himself to his duties as Resident. But once more Hastings had to contend with a hostile majority on his council. Stables felt that he could not agree to the revocation of these appointments until Bristow's defence had been received. Since Macpherson and Wheler held similar views that part of the motion was negatived. This produced a protest from Hastings, who denied that his instructions to Bristow permitted him to exercise any control over the nawab, much less to usurp his authority. He therefore washed his hands of the whole business and requested the Board to draw up their own instructions for regulating the Resident's conduct.

In May 1783 Bristow complained of the defiant attitude adopted by Haidar Beg Khan. 'I endeavoured,' he wrote, 'by the frankest offers of my friendship and confidence, and by every art of persuasion to engage him to unite heartily

and cordially with me.'[1] One cannot help feeling that there was much truth in Bristow's explanation of the charges brought against him, that they were produced by the enmity of Haidar Beg Khan who realized that any reform of the nawab's administration would weaken his own position. Bristow also forwarded a letter from his assistant Cooper, reporting that the proposal for the institution of a *faujdari adalat* had been grossly misrepresented, and ridiculing the suggestion that Bristow had appointed him superintendent of this court. According to Cooper, Bristow's sole motive in recommending a *faujdari adalat* at Lucknow had been the restoration of peace and order in the capital, the inhabitants of which, in the absence of courts of justice, were exposed to assault and assassination. It should be borne in mind that Hastings, in his instructions to Bristow, had ' marked the want of proper courts of justice as one of the most disreputable defects of the wazir's government and a principal cause of the general licentiousness which prevailed throughout his dominions'. It was in accordance with these suggestions that Bristow had instructed Cooper to make an inquiry into the administration of justice and the police system. For this purpose Cooper had summoned to a discussion Maulavi Mubin *Sadru'l Haqq,* who assured him that there had never been any police system in Oudh, and that his own appointment as *Sadru'l Haqq* had been a mockery. The minister had placed every obstacle he could in the way of the institution of the *adalats,* at first housing the *maulavi* in a tent but later giving him a house in the middle of the palace, to ensure that he should be under the closest observation. When Bristow told Haidar Beg Khan of his intentions he was informed that the whole town was in a state of alarm, for it had been rumoured that everybody, even men of the first rank, and, it was whispered, even the nawab himself, would be subject to the arbitrary decrees of this court.

There can be no questioning the fact that disorder prevailed in Oudh, and nowhere was it more marked than in the administration of justice. In Bristow's opinion the only solution to the problem was the creation of a *faujdari adalat*

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.71, 29 May 1783: Bristow to Board, 13 May 1783.**

to whose jurisdiction all the favourites, servants, and ministers of the nawab should be subject. The decisions of this court were to be in accordance with both Hindu and Muhammadan law. Since serious complaints had been made to him with piteous appeals for redress of grievances, he had instructed Cooper to inquire into them and bring them to the notice of the minister. But all Bristow's efforts were thwarted by Haidar Beg Khan, in whom the executive duties of every department of the administration were vested.

An event which occurred on 27 May 1783 compelled Bristow once more to recommend strongly the immediate creation of an efficient *faujdari adalat.*[1] A band of robbers had plundered the house of Mr. Orr, a European living in Lucknow, killed several people and escaped. Although this had happened in the capital of Oudh the minister was deaf to all Bristow's remonstrances, 'pertinaciously adhering in spite of such fatal evidence to his original declaration of a regular and efficient magistracy'. In fact Haidar Beg Khan troubled little about the safety of the nawab's subjects, surrounded as he was day and night by a military guard. Once more Bristow stressed the minister's rooted objections to any reformation of the existing system. 'His attachment to the present system is very natural since it has hitherto afforded him the means of appropriating to himself unquestioned whatever part of His Excellency's revenue he might see fit, and left him at perfect liberty to squander the remainder among his worthless adherents with shameful profusion.' Further abuses were reported in Bristow's letter of 6 June 1783. The enormous proportion of one-third of the nawab's annual income was assigned for the purpose of securing the internal peace of the country and for the collection of the revenues. This was all the more remarkable because in the previous year practically all the Company's troops in Oudh, intended solely for the defence of the country against foreign aggression, had been employed in the business of the collections and for the subjugation of refractory *zamindars.* A crore of rupees had been dissipated in this way, but it was not difficult to discover the leakage. Bristow accused Haidar Beg

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.73, 9 July 1783: Bristow to Board, 28 May 1783.**

Khan of drawing pay for troops which did not actually exist. The administration of justice continued to be a mere travesty of any efficient system. 'Within the last three weeks,' so runs the Resident's report, 'near one hundred persons have lost their lives or been wounded either openly in broils or privately by assassination.' All officials, such as the *diwan*, the *Sadru'l Haqq*, the paymaster, and the muster-master, were but tools in the hands of Haidar Beg Khan. A total reform of the whole system was needed, but before this could be accomplished the dismissal of the minister from office was, in Bristow's opinion, an essential preliminary.

On 24 July 1783, Hastings raised the question of Bristow's indifference to the orders of the Board, demanding a reply to the charges preferred against him. Six weeks had passed since Bristow had acknowledged the orders of the Board but his defence had not been forthcoming. His attitude could be construed as either an insolent indifference or a culpable silence. Hastings suggested that Bristow hoped by this delay to avoid an inquiry into his conduct or to postpone it until the arrival of a governor-general more favourably disposed towards him. He therefore asked the Board to come to a decision without waiting for Bristow's reply. Four days later he moved the recall of Bristow for disrespect to the Board and for disobedience to their orders.[1] A strong argument in favour of Bristow's recall was that the request came from the nawab himself, for as the Company's ally he possessed the right to refuse as Resident at his court any person he considered objectionable. At the same time it must not be forgotten that he might have considered any Resident obnoxious who attempted to interpret Hastings's instructions in the same manner as Bristow. According to Hastings a stronger argument in favour of Bristow's recall was that the nawab wished to abolish the Residency altogether. To make this possible Asaf-ud-daulah had requested that he and his minister should be made jointly responsible for the payment of the money owing to the Company. During this meeting a letter from Bristow was read in which he pleaded illness as his reason for not replying to the charges brought against him. The

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.74, 28 July 1783.**

other members of the Board refused to condemn Bristow unheard and accepted his excuse.[1] They also considered the situation far too critical to admit of the Company's abandoning Oudh to the nawab and his minister.

It was not until 11 August 1783 that Bristow's reply to the nawab's charges reached Calcutta. Prior to this letter no connected defence of his actions had been received. The problem before the Board was to decide between two diametrically opposed views, Bristow contending that he had acted in accordance with his instructions, Hastings protesting that he had exceeded and misinterpreted those instructions. Bristow reminded the Board that he had predicted the opposition of Haidar Beg Khan, whose character he painted in lurid colours, drawing the Board's attention to the mischief he had wrought in Oudh. It is only fair to Bristow that the reader should now have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the more important parts of his defence.

> It is well worthy of remark that many whom the wisdom and justice of Shuja-ud-daulah had condemned to exile and to punishment have since the accession of his son been raised to the first honours and preferments. The choice of weak or flagitious characters to rule over the properties of the inhabitants of Oudh naturally begat terror and distrust in the minds of the people, and at length compelled many to the desperate resolution of quitting the country. Let any man travel through the wazir's dominions, he will see villages deserted, the lands uncultivated, the little property remaining transferred from the owners to their oppressors. Let him visit Rohilkhand, such a scene of misery and devastation will present itself as must satisfy all his doubts and render further enquiry superfluous. This noble province seven years since yielding an annual revenue of 60 lakhs of rupees is now unable to discharge the nominal *jama* of 45 lakhs at which it was settled last year. The author of its ruin is Haji Ain-ud-din, the intimate and bosom friend of Haidar Beg Khan. The other provinces are hardly in a more enviable situation. So rapid a decline is perhaps without example in the history of any country. If however we look back and reflect we shall find no representation of grievance from the prince, no complaint from the minister during the whole progress of the fall. Everything ran on to ruin

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.74, 31 July 1783.**

quiet and uninterrupted, and could I have been charmed to silence, might have continued to do so till the general destruction should at once proclaim both cause and effect. Regardless of my duty and your instructions had I not opposed the minister in his course of rapine and oppression, I might have commanded the lavish applauses of the man who now comes forward as my accuser.[1]

What Bristow really did recommend to the nawab is best told in his own words.

I represented to him that with a revenue of near three crores of rupees every department of his government was involved in confusion and beggary; that the animals of his stables were often in want of food, his army in arrears, the pensions to his relations unpaid, and even himself not seldom associated in distress and poverty which surrounded him. I observed to him that this general disorder was more extraordinary as his annual disbursements to the Company and the moneys appropriated to his immediate expenses did not exceed 140 lakhs of rupees, and I requested he would do me the favour to inform me how the remainder, a sum equal to a crore and sixty lakhs, was disposed.

Bristow claimed that he had endeavoured to regulate the nawab's affairs so that he should not be dependent for his daily needs upon the bounty of his minister. To save the lives of Asaf-ud-daulah's subjects and to secure their property, he had desired the appointment of magistrates. Thinking it most improper that all power should be in the hands of the minister, he had advocated a separation of the various functions of government, for some delegation of authority and a well-organized system of checks were essential. To correct these evils he had prescribed the remedies advocated in his instructions. He could not therefore be truly charged with having usurped the nawab's authority. In answer to Haidar Beg Khan's contention that he had always striven for the mutual benefit of the nawab and the Company Bristow replied: [1] The revenues of the nawab have in the course of this man's seven years' ministry fallen one-third in their annual value. The Honble. the Governor-General has repeatedly censured his conduct in the severest terms and threatened him with

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.75,11 August 1783: Bristow to Board, 30 July 1783.**

the heaviest displeasure if he did not instantly reform it.' One cannot however accept Bristow's statement that the agreement at Chunar had not answered a single purpose for which it had been concluded and had benefited neither the nawab nor the Company. The resumption of the *jagirs* had certainly been carried out and Bristow himself had included the resumed *jagirs* in his accounts where these *jagirs* had been granted as assignments to the Company.

It will have been observed that the majority of the charges rested on the categorical statements of Haidar Beg Khan, unsupported by any definite evidence. Since Bristow replied in the same strain by equally categorical denials, the difficulty of discovering who was telling the truth will readily be appreciated. Bristow denied that he had forbidden Haidar Beg Khan to report his conduct to the authorities in Calcutta. He denied that he had suggested to the minister that they should run the administration of Oudh to their mutual benefit. Neither was it true that he had proposed to the nawab the dismissal of Haidar Beg Khan, although he was convinced that the salvation of Oudh depended upon it. Haidar Beg Khan had accused him of demanding twenty lakhs from his private purse to pay the nawab's troops and household charges. This was a false accusation. But he had proposed that the minister should give this as a loan in order to relieve the nawab's financial distresses. He agreed that he had made efforts and proposals to regulate the nawab's finances, but these had been in accordance with the Chunar agreement and were justified by both Middleton's and his own instructions. Not only had Haidar Beg Khan given a garbled account of their conversations but he had also been guilty of forging messages in his name. To the charge that he had forced the minister to write *shuqqas* without the nawab's knowledge Bristow replied that these *shuqqas* had been issued by Haidar Beg Khan and that both he and the nawab had been kept in ignorance of this. Moreover that Haidar Beg Khan should have issued these *shuqqas* was the normal procedure, for the minister had been for years the real ruler of Oudh.

Bristow had been appointed Resident to carry out the conditions of the Treaty of Chunar and he claimed that the

records of the Board bore witness to the reality of his exertions. Had these efforts been seriously seconded by the minister it was inconceivable that his labours should have proved abortive. No separation of the nawab's private and public funds had taken place. The *muteyana* troops had not been reformed. Neither a central treasury nor an office for revenue collections had been established, while the courts of justice were a mockery. In spite of this Haidar Beg Khan claimed that he had carried out all Bristow's orders even against the nawab's wishes. The truth of the matter was that the minister strongly objected to any reform in the administration of Oudh, regarding it 'as the annihilation of his office'. Finally, Bristow refused to believe that the charges against him had originated with the nawab, for he was but a puppet in the hands of his minister.

The receipt of Bristow's defence reopened the discussion in the Board.[1] Wheler very rightly contended that the charges were of such a nature as to render it almost impossible for Bristow to disprove them by any positive evidence. 'They chiefly consist of deductions from asserted facts which do not appear in some instances correctly stated.' Moreover, these accusations had been dictated by persons interested in Bristow's removal. Wheler, judging from the character of the minister, the influence he had long asserted over the nawab's mind, and his uncontrolled sway over the nawab's dominions, was inclined to believe that the letters which ostensibly came from the nawab were really dictated by Haidar Beg Khan.

> I am firmly of opinion that the charges against Mr. Bristow are neither proved nor established and that his conduct ought not to subject him to the censure of the Board. Indeed the principal accusations against him are founded only on his attempts to introduce sundry reforms which have not succeeded, attempts which do not appear to stand in contradiction to the spirit or even letter of his instructions.

Since these reforms had been thwarted by the minister, Wheler considered it highly unjust to condemn, much more so to remove, the Resident for endeavouring to carry out the

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.76, 4 September 1783.**

plans and measures which he had been instructed to adopt. Wheler was supported by Stables, who contended that not a single charge had been proved.

Hastings, since he was unable to recall Bristow, ventilated his grievances in a long minute.[1] He foresaw the ruin of a great dominion if Bristow were allowed to remain in Oudh. Whatever happened he would console himself with the knowledge that he had done his utmost to prevent it, and that in the annals of the nations of India who had been subjected to the British dominion he would not be remembered amongst their oppressors. He contrasted with appropriate sarcasm the attitude adopted by Macpherson in the case of Bristow with his attitude when Middleton and Johnson were the accused persons. It will be remembered that when Johnson had been accused of malpractices in Oudh Hastings had moved his immediate recall. 'I well remember with what promptness those sentiments were adopted by Mr. Macpherson.' Johnson had been ordered to leave Gudh within forty-eight hours on pain of arrest. Little more ceremony had been observed towards Middleton. Neither Johnson nor Middleton had been allowed any time to defend themselves before their removal. 'I moved, and Mr. Macpherson gave his hearty and unqualified voice for their dismissal, without allowing them an hour of grace for defence, or even for a reply. But when Mr. Bristow stood charged with the same acts and other accumulated offences, Mr. Macpherson, the patron of Mr. Bristow, recommended that on a principle of common justice he should be heard in his defence.' Macpherson was more inconsistent still, for, although he had refused to consider the evidence of Haidar Beg Khan against Bristow, he had not scrupled to accept it in the case of Johnson. History has proved Macpherson to be a man devoid of principle. The incorruptible Cornwallis has left it on record that 'his Government was a system of the dirtiest jobbing'.[2]

Hastings was fully convinced that Bristow had assumed

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.76, 29 September 1783. Only a very small excerpt from this important minute is printed in Forrest's *Selections*, III, 1017-21 whereas the original minute in the volume of the *Bengal Secret Consultations* preserved in the India Office occupies pages 143-310.

[2] *Cornwallis Correspondence* (edited Ross, C.), Vol. I, p. 371, 1859.

autocratic powers in Oudh. He had been asked to render an account of his stewardship but nine weeks passed without a reply. On the pretext of a few days' illness he had evaded answering the Board. Then rumours of an approaching change in the government of Bengal reached his ears. Bristow, if the evidence of Haidar Beg Khan can be accepted, had referred to these rumours in the course of conversation and had spoken of the advantages such a change would bring him. That he had hoped to evade an inquiry by this delay was in Hastings's opinion the real reason for Bristow's long silence for there could be no doubt that enough time had been given him to prepare his defence. One cannot but admire the courage of Hastings at this time, especially when he blames the Court of Directors in England for their lack of support.

> The liberties which have been taken with my character by my former opponents in office, the contumelious terms which have been used by the Court of Directors in almost all their letters written in a long course of years to this government, the wounds which have been inflicted on my official influence even by the same men, the trustees of the Company and of the national interests in India, and even in the most desperate state of their affairs, while they called upon me for my particular exertions for their retrieval, will afford Mr. Bristow a sanction in the opinions of many for every declaration or artifice used by him or imputed to him which had the destruction of my influence or authority for its object.

Hastings also asserted that Bristow's defence had been written by Macpherson, the style being too good for Bristow. This may have been true, despite Macpherson's denial,[1] but, after reading several volumes of Bristow's correspondence, this charge seems to be an unfair reflection on his literary powers, for he wielded a facile pen, as anyone acquainted with his vivid descriptions of the condition of Oudh will readily agree.

One of the charges brought against Bristow by Haidar Beg Khan was that Bristow had prohibited him from sending reports to Calcutta. Even Hastings agreed that it would be difficult to obtain proof of this. At the same time it was a

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.76, 21 October 1783.**

strange coincidence that Bristow's arrival in Lucknow was followed by a cessation of all intercourse between the Court of Oudh and the governor-general, 'unless it may be affirmed to have subsisted in a very few letters of mere form, or in an application for Brahmans to be sent to the nawab who were skilled in the art of inoculating*.

Bristow acknowledged, as we have seen, having requested a loan of twenty-five lakhs of rupees from the minister for the payment of the nawab's debts. Hastings denounced this as an improper suggestion entirely unwarranted by his instructions. 'I do pronounce it to be a most flagitious abuse of his public trust, aggravated by this concealment of it from the knowledge of the Board.' It seems that Hastings had one rule of conduct for his subordinates and another for himself, for he had to resort to this method of raising money on his next visit to Oudh.

Bristow defended his appointment of a Treasurer and Comptroller of the nawab's household by reference both to Middleton's and his own instructions. 'The plain design and express charge of both/ Hastings explained in answer to this, 'was that the sum allotted for the nawab's private expenses should be paid in equal monthly instalments, and be allowed a preference to every other demand.' This was part of a general injunction to treat the nawab with every possible delicacy and attention, and it was Hastings's intention that the nawab's personal share of his own revenues should be fully allotted to him, even though it meant that the Company's debt would remain unpaid. 'Let me be judged with candour'; added Hastings, 'our alliance has proved the extinction of his sovereignty, and the impoverishment of his country and revenue, and it was but just to allow him the means of subsistence, if no more remained of the resources of his inheritance.' But Bristow had interpreted this as a recommendation to control all the nawab's affairs. 'This control, which Mr. Bristow has assumed over the nawab Asaf-ud-daulah is such as no man living, however mean his rank in life or dependent his condition in it,' would permit to be exercised by any other 'without the want or forfeiture of every manly principle; and can only be equalled in insolence with his abetting a

young servant of the Company, his assistant, in dictating to the sovereign of the country the written drafts of his own mandates.' To this wretched condition had the Company's influence reduced one of its principal allies, and this was the example held out to the other princes of India who might 'be tempted to ensnare themselves in the same connexion*.

Finally, Hastings pointed out that the chief aim of his instructions had been the liquidation of the nawab's debt to the Company, for the Company had a right to interfere and use its influence for this purpose, a right which could be traced back to the Company's connexion with Shuja-ud-daulah. The treaty of 1773 left him absolute sovereign over his dominions and at liberty to dismiss the Brigade, but he had found it necessary in his own interests to retain the Company's troops. On the death of Shuja-ud-daulah the hostile Majority had forced a new treaty on his successor, increasing the subsidy, and later placing his army under British officers. These measures had reduced Asaf-ud-daulah to the position of a vassal of the Company. The princes of India, fully aware of what had happened, although they might wish for the Company's support, dreaded the consequences.

The other members of the Board, however, refused to agree with the governor-general, and Bristow remained at Lucknow. But Bristow was no longer the uncrowned King of Oudh, for Haidar Beg Khan, relying on Hastings's support, could not be persuaded to grant the Company the necessary assignments of land revenue.[1] Haidar Beg Khan further strengthened his position by using his influence with the bankers to prevent them granting loans to the Resident. It is therefore small cause for wonderment that Bristow complained of his lack of power at the nawab's court. This was not solely the result of the minister's obstructive tactics, but due in part to the presence in Oudh of Major Palmer, who was known to possess the confidence of the governor-general. It is clear from the documents that Palmer's reports on the condition of Oudh had profoundly influenced Hastings in his attitude towards Bristow, for Palmer had definitely accused

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.77, 10 November 1783: Bristow to Board, 14 October 1783.**

Bristow of malversation of public money in Oudh. If Palmer's evidence is to be accepted practically the whole of the administration had been in Bristow's hands. 'This is the most atrocious proceeding ever heard of, the wazir must be ruined to provide enormous fortunes for B[ristow] and his friends.'[1] Three months later he sent the following report to Hastings:

> His [the nawab V.] country is in a most alarming state of poverty and distraction. The universal distrust and dread, which all men of character entertain of Mr. Bristow, has thrown the collections generally into the hands of men of bad principles and desperate circumstances, and it is justly to be apprehended from this cause and the uncommon drought of the season that the revenues will fall so far short of any other period as to involve the wazir in a load of inextricable debt to the Company unless the most prudent and vigorous measures are instantly applied to prevent it.[2]

It has generally been held that the only evidence in support of the charges preferred against Bristow was that of his accusers, the nawab and his minister, but the truth of these accusations was corroborated, as we have seen, by Palmer, and also by Colonel Martin, an officer in the nawab's service.

Martin's evidence was in the form of answers to a series of inquiries concerning Bristow's conduct which the Board had decided to send to him.[3] It is obvious from these replies that Bristow had declared his intention of taking over the whole administration, for Martin confessed that he had acted as intermediary between Bristow and Haidar Beg Khan when Bristow attempted to persuade the minister to issue *shuqqas* in the nawab's name without his knowledge. So great had been Bristow's interference in the nawab's private affairs that Asaf-ud-daulah had even threatened to proceed to Calcutta to plead his case in person before the governor-general. But Martin could not definitely confirm the charge that Bristow had ordered a reduction of the nawab's personal establishment. At the same time he was convinced that this

[1] Add. MSS. 29, **160:** Palmer to Davy, 8 September 1783.
[2] ibid., 161: Palmer to Hastings, 19 December 1783.
[3] *B.S.C.*, Range A.77, 24 November 1783; Range A.80, 20 January **1784:** Martin **to** Board, **23** December 1783.

would have been a useful reform, for the nawab owned large numbers of superfluous animals and was reputed to have fifty barbers attached to his staff. The following contemporary account bears witness to the gross extravagance of Asaf-ud-daulah.

> A trifle only of this extravagance is incurred during the whole of Phagun at the Holi, in the wazir's carnival, and marriages and illuminations, and each year five or six lakhs are set apart for these customary celebrations; and similar expenses are incurred in the Muharram; and the expenditure on his elephants, his stables and kennels may be imagined when it is stated that he has twelve hundred elephants, two or three thousand horses and a thousand dogs to feed. Of these, 400 elephants, 500 horses, and a hundred dogs are fit for riding or the chase, and the rest are good for nothing. The others are kept by dishonest servants for purposes of peculation, so that if a dog die, they procure another from the streets and put a collar on him. The expenditure on the wazir's pigeon-house, cockpits, sheep-folds, deer park, monkey, snake, scorpion and spider houses, is so great that if they were carefully managed, the money would suffice for the maintenance of all the children of the late nawab and of his women, for 300,000 pigeons and fighting cocks are kept, and there are some snakes a pair of which eat a maund of flesh. All things are fondly cared for by the wazir save men, especially his relatives and old dependants. Another expense is the pay of the wazir's household servants, who number thousands, including 2,000 farrashes, 100 chobdars, and khidmatgars, and 4,000 gardeners, and hundreds of cooks. His cook-room costs Rs. 2,000 or 3,000 per diem, and the loose and idle characters whom he has with him on his tour carrying baggage, camp furniture, and tents, amount to a thousand, who receive their daily bread as wages. His expenses pass description.[1]

Whatever opinion one may form regarding Bristow's conduct in Oudh one is forced to accept two conclusions: that he had failed to collect the money owing to the Company; and that he had not acted to the satisfaction of the nawab and his minister. Even Wheler, Macpherson, and Stables had to recognize this. Bristow himself reported his failure, pointing

[1] **Hoey's *Tafizihu'l Ghafilin*, 37-8. For a later description of the curiosities purchased by Asaf-ud-daulah see Valentia's *Voyages and Travels*,** I, **155 ff.**

out that the obstacles placed in his path by the minister, had prevented him, not only from clearing the debt, but also from securing the money necessary to pay the Company's troops in Oudh. One of two things had to happen: either the Residency had to be withdrawn and the nawab held responsible for the payment of the Company's claims, or the Resident had to receive the united support of the governor-general and his council. Since the Majority had approved of the conduct of Bristow and Cooper, they could hardly have been expected to consent to their removal. Nevertheless they did agree to the withdrawal of the Residency, provided that the balance due to the Company was paid into the Company's treasury by bills on trustworthy bankers, and provided that the instalments for the Brigade and for Sir John Cumming's detachment were paid regularly by the minister to the Company's paymaster in Oudh. 'We shall agree to this arrangement on the express condition that the governor-general will hold himself responsible to the Company and the public for the faithful performance of these engagements on the part of the wazir and his minister, as well as for the security of the internal peace of the country.'[1] But Hastings at first refused to accept this responsibility, especially since an exact statement of the nawab's debts to the Company had not, at that time, been dispatched from Oudh.

While this discussion was taking place Bristow's statement of accounts reached Calcutta and it was discovered that the balance owing to the Company amounted to fifty-three lakhs of rupees. Hastings therefore agreed to be answerable for the payment of the balance, provided the nawab and his minister gave the security of trustworthy bankers and the Board agreed to withdraw the Residency. But Bristow still hesitated to obey the orders of the Board. This called forth a peremptory reminder,[2] and Bristow, finding further delay impossible, quitted Oudh, but he returned to Calcutta in an utterly unrepentant mood, prophesying the ruin of Oudh as the natural consequence of his removal from office.[3]

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.78, 31 December 1783.
[2] ibid., Range B.i, 17 February 1784.
[3] ibid., 24 February 1784: Bristow to Board, 8 February 1784.

CHAPTER VIII

HASTINGS'S FINAL VISIT TO OUDH

IN January 1784 Hastings, who had heard from Palmer that Asaf-ud-daulah was about to invite him to Oudh, offered to proceed to Lucknow for the purpose of adjusting the accounts between the nawab and the Company. But Stables, who appears to have been a man of considerable force of character, could not see his way clear to accepting this offer. ' In my opinion the executive member of government ought to remain at the Presidency and most particularly at this time when we are in daily expectation of receiving the news of new arrangements from home.'[1] Wheler, whom Burke has stigmatized as Hastings's ' supple, worn-down, beaten, cowed, and I am afraid, bribed colleague', was prepared to accept this proposal, if it could be proved that Asaf-ud-daulah genuinely regarded the governor-general's presence as essential for the regulation of his finances and for the liquidation of his debts to the Company; and, if Hastings himself believed that this could best be effected by his proceeding to Oudh. When the nawab's invitation arrived, on 14 February 1784, it was agreed, despite the opposition of Stables, that Hastings should proceed to Oudh for the above-mentioned purposes. To enable him to carry out this work he was vested with full power to regulate the affairs of Oudh and with uncontrolled authority over the Company's civil and military officers stationed there. Compared with the extensive powers given to Clive in 1765, and to Carder, Smith, and Russell, in 1768, there was nothing very extraordinary in this, for the authority granted to Hastings was confined to Oudh and Benares whereas Clive and Carnac had been empowered to enter into engagements with the neighbouring native states.

Two extremely disappointing diaries of Hastings are to be

[1] *B.S.C*, Range A.80, 3 February 1784: Minute dated 21 January 1784.

found among his private papers in the British Museum. They are disappointing because, although they contain transcriptions of his correspondence with the Board at Calcutta, copies of which are also to be found in the *Bengal Secret Consultations*, they throw but little light on the condition of Oudh and contain but little information concerning his conversations with the nawab and his ministers, reports of which would be of the greatest service to the student of this period.[1]

Hastings left Calcutta on the evening of 17 February 1784, and arrived at Lucknow on the 27th of the following month. The most important object of his visit was to obtain within a period of one year a complete discharge of the arrears and of the rapidly accumulating debt of the nawab to the Company. By restoring order to his finances Hastings hoped to enable the nawab to make his fixed monthly payments to the Company for the use of the subsidiary force, and to allow him to accumulate a reserve fund for the expenses of his administration. More than this, he proposed to withdraw all British agents and make the nawab responsible for his own financial administration without any intervention on the part of the Company.[2] This was what he meant when he wrote to the Court of Directors hoping that they would 'put a final period to the ruinous and disreputable system of interference, whether avowed or secret, in the affairs of the nawab of Oudh, and withdraw for ever the influence by which it was maintained.'[3] It must be confessed that this was a drastic change to make in his last year of office and one calculated unduly to tie the hands of his successors. He also announced his intention of inducing the nawab to appoint bodies of regular troops for the preservation of internal order and for the support of his revenue collectors. It was hoped that this would preclude any necessity for requisitioning the Company's troops and prove the means of releasing Asaf-ud-daulah from the subsidy he paid for Cumming's detachment in Rohilkhand. What Hastings aimed at was the withdrawal of all the Company's troops from Oudh with the exception of the Permanent

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 212. Diaries I and II, 1784.
[2] *B.S.C.y* Range B.3, 8 October 1784. Hastings to Board, 20 September 1784.
[3] Add. MSS. 29, 163: 30 April 1784.

Brigade, the retention of which he regarded as essential for the protection of the nawab's territories from foreign aggression. Finally, he proposed inquiring into the charges which Bristow had preferred against Almas Ali Khan. We shall deal with this first.

It will be remembered that Bristow had received instructions to reduce the power of Almas Ali Khan; and that, after his arrival in Oudh, Bristow had recommended the dismissal of this powerful revenue farmer from the nawab's service. This was approved by the Board, but Bristow failed to carry out his plan because of the opposition of Haidar Beg Khan.[1] It was, in Bristow's opinion, essential to crush this overgrown subject with his military establishment of 14,000 troops and 40 pieces of cannon. Bristow accused him of intriguing with the chiefs at Delhi and with Chait Singh, through whom he was reported to have negotiated a treaty with Mahadaji Sindhia. After making a careful inquiry into the alleged offences of this man Hastings discovered that Bristow's charges had been based upon insufficient evidence. Even before he found the time to inquire into the justice of these accusations he had been favourably impressed by the conduct of Almas Ali Khan who, on the receipt of a letter from Hastings, immediately repaired to Lucknow.[2]

As far back as October 1782, David Anderson, the English Resident at Sindhia's court, had reported to Bristow that messengers were passing between Almas Ali Khan and Chait Singh but that he was in possession of no definite information.[3] This was enough for Bristow and from this evidence he apparently fabricated his charge against Almas Ali Khan. But the *Bengal Secret Consultations* contain several letters which go far towards exonerating Almas Ali Khan from Bristow's charge. Colonel Ironside, writing to General Stibbert at the time, expressed the following opinion: 'I do not conceive the apprehensions regarding Almas Ali Khan

[1] *B.S.C.y* Range B.i, 17 February 1784: Bristow to Board, 4 October 1783.

[2] Almas Ali Khan denied the truth of Bristow's charges. See an interesting Oriental document ending, 'I was in this disagreeable state when your gracious letter, like the breath of Jesus, arrived.' Add. MSS. 29, 217: Almas to Hastings, received 23 April 1784.

[3] Appendix *B.S.C.*, Range B.i, 17 February 1784: Anderson to Bristow, 29 October 1782.

are become realized.'[1] Neither did Colonel James Morgan credit these rumours.[2] Many more letters could be quoted to the same effect. Sir John Cumming saw nothing untoward in his conduct.

> Neither could I think him so chimerical and weak as to flatter himself with hope of success in an attempt to oppose the arms of the Honble. Company, or to seize on the magazine at Cawnpore. The only thing in his power was to draw himself from His Excellency's dominions, and even that must have proved very prejudicial to his interest. He would have experienced an humiliating change in situation had he relinquished the rank and authority he holds in this country to become a dependent on the favour of Sindhia or any other chief in the neighbourhood.[3]

Cumming's views were strengthened by reports he had received of the strength of the force with Almas Ali Khan at the time, for 'it did not appear to be greater than what usually attended him, when he went on the business of the collections'. One final quotation should suffice to show the unreliable nature of the rumours and reports to which Bristow had given full credence. Lieutenant James Anderson wrote to Hastings from Sindhia's camp on 22 May 1784:

> I beg leave to inform you that since the period of Mr. David Anderson's letters to Mr. Bristow of the 29th October and 12th of November, no facts have come to my knowledge tending to corroborate the suspicions mentioned in them of the existence of any improper correspondence betwixt Almas Ali Khan and Mahadaji Sindhia or Chait Singh; and that as far as I am enabled to form judgement from circumstances that have fallen under my observation in this camp, I am of opinion that no improper correspondence or intrigue was maintained directly or indirectly by Mahadaji Sindhia with Almas Ali Khan in or about the month of December last.

There is ample evidence to prove that Almas Ali Khan was perhaps the most efficient revenue farmer in the service of the nawab of Oudh. His intimate knowledge of revenue affairs,

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range B.3, 13 July 1784: Ironside to Stibbert, 29 December 1783..**
[2] **ibid.: Morgan to Watson, 30 December 1783.**
[3] **ibid., 13 July 1784 : Cumming to Hastings, 20 May 1784.**

the flourishing condition of the districts in his charge, and his long career of honourable service won golden opinions from practically every English official with whom he came into contact, from Middleton, the first Resident, to Ives, who was Resident in the days of Cornwallis.[1] Middleton always spoke highly of him and once referred to his ' long experience of the integrity of the man'.

> I shall not pretend to maintain that his administration, when judged by the maxims of a mild and well-regulated government, has been either unexceptionable or uniformly just, but I must declare I neither know nor ever heard on creditable authority of his being guilty of a single act of severity to the subjects of his authority which was not indiscriminately applicable to every *amil* or farmer under the wazir's government. I do not mean to insinuate that the crimes and misdemeanours of one or more individuals justify the commission of them in another, or that the heinousness of a crime is lessened by being divided, but I would infer from it that Almas Ali Khan does not deserve to be made the object of a partial punishment nor to be judged by any other criterion than the laws and usages of his own government, the nature whereof, not ill-adapted in my humble opinion to the genius and turbulent spirit of the people, warrants proceedings which the mildness of ours would term cruelty and oppression. Almas was a farmer and I have no doubt made the most of his farm, and where is there one, my dear sir, that does not? . . . He always accounted for his rents, that is, what he was bound to pay, most punctually, so that his embezzlements must consist in his overplus collections from the country, and really the distinction between oppressive exactions and warrantable profits, not only in these but, I believe, also in our own provinces, is so nice, that it must be very difficult to prescribe a line to the farmer, or determine what portion of his collections comes fairly under the former description. I shall only further say of Almas Ali Khan that in the lifetime of Shuja-ud-daulah, who was not less observant of the conduct of his *amils* than he was allowed to be judicious in his choice of them, he was accounted without exception the best *amil* in His Excellency's dominions. He has preserved that character ever since.[2]

[1] *Bengal Public Consultations,* 15 June 1792: Ives to Cornwallis, 6 June 1792.

[2] *Middleton Collection, MSS.* Eur. G.9: Middleton to Impey, 22 August 1782, pp. 78-9.

On his arrival in Oudh Hastings discovered that Bristow had decamped, taking with him so many of his papers and records that insufficient material had been left behind to enable him to carry out his investigations. There was however enough evidence to prove that Bristow had misappropriated certain sums of money which should have been paid into the Company's treasury. This money had been collected from the nawab's *amils* by Bristow but had not been used to discharge the nawab's debts to the Company. It was therefore the duty of the Company to afford the nawab redress.

> But whatever satisfaction you may think it necessary to afford the wazir, the conduct of Mr. Bristow in respect to the Company must still be a subject of consideration. I will in this place merely recite the facts. Mr. Bristow was appointed Resident in behalf of the Company with the wazir and one of the duties of his appointment was to receive the subsidy and recover the balance from the wazir to the Company. In virtue of this appointment he collected from September, 1783, to the end of January, 1784, rupees of sorts 32,98,569. . . . But although the exigencies and distresses of the Company at that time were such as to threaten our very existence, Mr. Bristow, instead of bringing this sum to the credit of his employers, for whose account it was collected, appropriated without their authority 13,88,195. .. . to the payment of expenses which were not incurred on account of this Government and which had at no time received its sanction.[1]

When this question came up for discussion at the Board, Stables was absent, but Wheler and Macpherson immediately ordered Bristow to account for this sum and to explain by whose authority he had disbursed money intended for the use of the Company. By this time even Wheler and Macpherson were becoming disgusted with Bristow's studied indifference to their orders. He received a peremptory command to explain why he had not replied to their letters demanding satisfaction on certain points. But nearly two months were to pass before Bristow did reply. When his reply arrived, it was entirely inadequate, although he attempted a lame defence justifying his conduct on the grounds that he had acted in accordance

[1] *B.S.C.y* Range B.3, 2 October 1784: Hastings to Board, 25 August **1784.** See also *B.S.C.,* Range B.2, 20 April 1784: Hastings to Board, 5 April 1784.

with the practice of his predecessors, the orders of the Board, and the sanction of the nawab. Bristow must therefore be counted guilty on the charge of having received and appropriated to other purposes money intended for the payment of the subsidy.[1]

While the Board at Calcutta were trying to obtain satisfaction from Bristow, Hastings was striving by all the means in his power to secure the discharge of the nawab's debts. In addition to the scanty revenue collections which had just been completed, he received a voluntary gift of thirteen lakhs of rupees from the much-maligned Almas Ali Khan for the relief of the nawab's financial distresses. The first payments received were employed to discharge some of the arrears owing to the Company; to pay the Brigade and other troops in Oudh; and, with the sanction of the Board, in remittances to Bombay. At the same time Hastings introduced a very necessary reform by reducing the exchange on bills drawn at Lucknow. 'The exchange of the bills I have settled at 5½ per cent, at which I mean to fix it as the true and just standard at which it ought to be rated and which it should never exceed. The former exchanges upon bills drawn at this place I cannot revert to without expressing my astonishment at them. At the time of Messrs. Middleton and Johnson they were from 19 to 20 per cent and they were afterwards reduced by Mr. Bristow, if I recollect right, to 16 per cent.'[2] Other urgent matters demanding his attention were the revenue settlement of Oudh for the approaching year, and the retrenchment of the nawab's expenses.

For three years a succession of bad harvests had led to a serious decline in the revenues of Oudh. The whole country had suffered from a terrible drought. 'Even the beds of deep rivers, which I passed, threw up clouds of dust from their channels.'[3] Because of this drought another bad year was feared. In such circumstances no reliable *amil* was prepared to accept responsibility for the revenue collections, at least, not for a definite sum irrespective of a good or bad season.

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range B.4, 14 December 1784: Bristow to Board, 26 November 1784.**
[2] **ibid., Range B.2, n May 1784: Hastings to Board, 21 April 1784.**
[3] **ibid., 20 April 1784: Hastings to Board, 5 April 1784.**

Fortunately for Hastings the rainy season began on 10 July 1784, the rain falling incessantly from that date to the end of August. 'The rains have fallen most abundantly and promise a more plentiful harvest than this country has known for many years past. It would delight you to see the fields covered with a luxuriant verdure, that two months ago were all a barren dry sand.'[1] The prospect of a good harvest enabled Haidar Beg Khan to employ responsible men for the collection of the revenues. Indeed, he was able to farm out the revenue collections for a period of five years, and in some cases for six years, the settlement being based on an increasing *jama,* that is, rising from two crores of rupees at the end of the first year to more than three crores at the end of the fifth year. But so fearful were these new *amils* of outside interference that a clause had to be inserted in their agreements to the effect that they should be allowed to resign their positions in the event of an English agent again interfering in the revenue collection department.

Considerable savings were made in the nawab's disbursements, both public and private. The begams and Nawab Salar Jang, whose *jagirs* had been restored in accordance with the Company's orders and the nawab's wishes, made voluntary contributions to relieve the nawab's financial position, and Saadat Aii Khan was forced to submit to a tax of one lakh of rupees. The nawab's ministers also came to his aid by surrendering three-quarters of their *rusum,* the immemorial commission of eastern officials. This amounted to seven lakhs of rupees annually. ' The difference which yet remained to complete the payments of the year has been provided for by an accommodation with the *shroffs,* and may be considered as an anticipation of the next year's income.'[2] Nevertheless this anticipation of the forthcoming year's revenues cannot be defended except on the ground that money had to be provided by hook or by crook. With this important reservation one might agree with Hastings's conclusion: 'I have thus far attained the objects of my mission and provided in

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 121: Hastings to Wheler, 28 August 1784.
[2] *B.S.C.,* Range B.3, 8 October 1784: Hastings to Board, 20 September 1784.

ft

the means and course of one year for the complete discharge of a debt which has been the accumulation of many, notwithstanding the difficulties which I have had to surmount in the lasting effects of the failure of the natural rains in three preceding years, and in still worse from a cause which created a total suspension of all the springs of government during the course of the last.' On his return to England Hastings published, in 1786, his *Memoirs Relative to the State of India*, in which he was able to announce that the nawab of Oudh had faithfully complied with all his engagements. Not only had his debt been completely liquidated, but he was actually in advance with his current monthly payments.

While Hastings was in Oudh the members of the Board resolved to reduce the Company's military establishment by five regiments of sepoys. This decision was consequent upon the conclusion of peace with Tipu Sultan of Mysore. When Hastings heard of this he hastened to inform the Board that Asaf-ud-daulah wished to employ these five regiments as part of his own military establishment, because trained troops would be more useful to him than double their number of his own badly disciplined sepoys. But the Board had already decided to use these troops to fill up vacancies existing in their own regiments. At first sight it is rather perplexing to find Hastings advocating an additional burden on the nawab's finances at the same time as he was recommending that the services of the detachment under Sir John Cumming should be dispensed with.[1] What Hastings was really aiming at was to confine the Company's troops in Oudh to the Permanent Brigade at Cawnpore, and to revert to the subsidiary establishment provided for by his treaty of 1773. Presumably the pay for these five regiments was to be met by corresponding reductions in the nawab's ill-disciplined forces.

This raised the whole question of the subsidiary force in Oudh. Some reform was needed, because the subsidy paid by the nawab had been kept up at its original rate although the number of troops in the Permanent Brigade had been greatly reduced. The treaty of 1773 with Shuja-ud-daulah

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range B.3, 8 October 1784: Hastings to Board, 20 September 1784.**

had made provision for a brigade of the Company's troops consisting of two battalions of Europeans, six battalions of sepoys, and one company of artillery, at the rate of 2,10,000 rupees per mensem. At the time this treaty was concluded the number of sepoys in a battalion had been 640, so that the total number of sepoys in the Permanent Brigade should have been 3,840. Then came the days when Francis and his satellites controlled the destinies of the growing British power in India. At that critical period Shuja-ud-daulah died and was succeeded by his son Asaf-ud-daulah. Taking advantage of the new ruler the hostile Majority, in 1775, forced a fresh treaty on him by which the subsidy was raised to 2,60,000 rupees a month, the number of troops remaining the same. By the time Hastings proceeded to Oudh for the conference with the nawab at Chunar in September 1781, an alteration had taken place in the Company's military establishment, and, instead of battalions of 640 men, the Brigade was composed of regiments of 1,000. It was also agreed at Chunar that the nawab should pay an extra 25,000 rupees for an additional regiment to be stationed at Lucknow for the protection of the Resident. According to this agreement the number of sepoys stationed in Oudh should have been 4,840, the 3,840 provided for by the Treaty of Benares in 1773 and the additional regiment of 1,000 agreed to at Chunar in 1781. For some time after this the subsidiary force consisted of five regiments at Cawnpore and one at Lucknow of 1,000 sepoys each, making a total of 6,000 men, so that the nawab had a greater number of men during this period than the stipulated quota of 4,840.[1] The end of the war witnessed a general reduction of the Company's forces, each regiment being reduced from 1,000 to 700 men. After this process of reduction had been completed the number of Company's sepoys maintained in Oudh had been 4,200, that is, five regiments at Cawnpore and one at Lucknow, each of 700 sepoys. The result was that the nawab had only 4,200 sepoys instead of 4,840. This deficiency of 640 sepoys was exactly equal to the number of sepoys comprising a battalion in 1773, and only 60 less than

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range B.3, 1 November 1784: Hastings to Board, 1 October 1784.**

the full establishment of a regiment in 1784. Although the nawab and his ministers had not complained of this shortage, Hastings felt that it was the duty of the Company to take this deficiency into consideration.

In defence of the Company it could have been argued that, although the number of sepoys was less, the expenses incurred by the Company for their troops stationed at Cawnpore were greater than they had been in 1773. It might also have been pointed out to the nawab that, although the strength of the Permanent Brigade in 1784 was less than he was entitled to and less than he paid for, there had been a period when he had been provided with more troops than had been stipulated by treaty. But, if these arguments had been brought forward, it is quite conceivable that the nawab would have replied that all he was concerned with was a literal observance of his treaty rights. He might also have contended that, if for a certain period he had been provided with more troops than he was by treaty entitled to, it was the fault of the Company, and that he could not be held responsible for any mismanagement on their part. Worse than this, if the nawab had taken the trouble to probe beneath the surface he would have discovered that the number of European infantry and artillery in Oudh had always been less than it should have been. Indeed, the European infantry had never at any time consisted of more than half its proper complement. To rectify all this Hastings recommended that the regiment at Lucknow should be included in the troops for which the original subsidy had been settled, thus making the subsidiary force up to its full treaty complement. Hastings however had to contend with the opposition of Macpherson and Stables, whose dissenting minutes were forwarded to the Court of Directors.

They also opposed Hastings's proposal to recall Cumming's detachment from Oudh because reports had been received that large hostile armies were massing on the frontiers of Oudh near Agra. In reply Hastings contended that the question as to whether the detachment should be recalled or not was not really before the Board, because its recall had already been decided upon by him in conformity with the instructions and powers granted to him when proceeding to

Oudh. Neither did he agree that the political situation was of such gravity as to necessitate the retention of the detachment.

HASTINGS AND THE MUGHAL EMPEROR

While at Lucknow, Hastings received a visit from Mirza Jahandar Shah,[1] the eldest son of the Mughal Emperor, who had escaped from Delhi, where his father was an abject puppet in the hands of military adventurers. As a result of the prince's entreaties Hastings proposed to rescue the Emperor from his thraldom by means of a military expedition. To explain this change of policy it will be necessary to retrace our steps and give a short résumé of his relations with the Mughal Emperor.

After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 and throughout the eighteenth century the Hindu reaction steadily gathered strength. It is true that Ahmad Shah Durrani, the Afghan leader, defeated them at Panipat in 1761, but he made no attempt to consolidate his position in Hindustan and returned to Afghanistan. The Marat has, who were only temporarily crushed, rapidly recovered from this defeat, and, by 1771, were once more a menace to the peace of India. Three years after Panipat came Munro's brilliant victory at Buxar, which placed Oudh and the Mughal Emperor at the mercy of the English Company.

Clive's political settlement, as we have seen, aimed at the creation of Oudh into a buffer state. It is true that he recognized Shah Alam as Emperor and promised to pay him an annual tribute of twenty-six lakhs of rupees from the revenues of Bengal. But the very fact that he had to grant him Kora and Allahabad for the upkeep of his dignity and expenses is clear proof, if any were needed, that Shah Alam possessed no real power. Shah Alam, the ruler of the universe, as his title implies, was merely a puppet dependent upon a company of English merchant adventurers. To such a small measure had shrunk the once mighty empire of Akbar.

Hastings, when he became governor of Bengal in 1772, immediately determined to reverse this system, refusing any

[1] **Also referred to as Mirza Jawan Bakht.**

longer to pay tribute to the Emperor and depriving him of Kora and Allahabad. His chief reason for this was that Shah Alam had deserted the Company for the Marathas. To have continued this tribute and allowed him the revenues of these two provinces would have meant increasing the strength of the Company's enemies. Moreover Hastings refused to believe that the Company's rights in India were based upon the grants of an impotent emperor who was merely an *idle pageant' and an 'idol of our own creation'. The position which the Company had won in India was based upon the most natural and the strongest of all charters, the sword. But Hastings gradually changed his mind in so far as he came to realize the importance of controlling the Mughal Emperor in order to prevent his court from becoming the centre of anti-British intrigues, and in order to preclude the possibility of the Company's enemies seizing the Emperor and using his name and person to cover their aggressions.

During the summer of 1776 it was rumoured that a league had been formed by the Emperor, the Marathas, the Sikhs, and the Rohillas to invade Oudh at the end of the rainy season. Although Hastings could not vouch for the accuracy of these reports, he considered them alarming enough to warrant the serious attention of the Board, for it was obvious that the nawab of Oudh could offer but little resistance to an invasion of this nature unless supported by the Company. He therefore urged the necessity of forming an alliance with Najaf Khan, a military adventurer who had risen to prominence in the Emperor's service and who for some time after the battle of Buxar had received a pension of two lakhs of rupees from the Company.[1] Despite the protests of Francis it was decided to restore Najaf Khan's pension provided he dismissed from his service certain persons, such as Samru and Madec, who were obnoxious to the Company.[2] In fact, the dismissal of Samru was to be an indispensable condition of any future alliance with Najaf Khan. On Hastings's recommendation Major Hannay was deputed to visit him because he was well informed of the political state of affairs in that part of India

[1] *B.S.C.*, Range A.37, 28 August 1776.
[2] ibid., 29 August 1776.

and because he was personally acquainted with Najaf Khan. It was however resolved that Hannay should not pass the boundaries of the Company's dominions until Samru had been dismissed. These resolutions were embodied in Hannay's instructions. Najaf Khan was also to be informed that the growing coolness between him and the nawab of Oudh since the accession of Asaf-ud-daulah had been noticed with regret by the Company, who hoped for an immediate reconciliation and friendly alliance. Although Najaf Khan was to join the Company against the Marathas, he was not to expect military aid from the Company, who were precluded by orders from England from carrying their arms beyond the limits of Oudh. The confirmation of his pension and the payment of all arrears were considered enough of an inducement to Najaf Khan to renew his connexion with the Company. He was also in return for this to furnish the Company with information of the political condition of that part of Hindustan.

But Najaf Khan, who waṣ at war with the Jats, refused to dismiss Samru and Madec because he feared that they would in all probability join the forces of his enemies. He assured Hastings that he had no hostile intentions against Oudh and that he had merely given shelter to Saadat Ali Khan, the brother of Asaf-ud-daulah, who had fled to his territories after the assassination of Mukhtar-ud-daulah. This led Hastings to propose that Hannay should be instructed to urge Najaf Khan to prevail upon Saadat Ali Khan to leave his Court and that the Company should grant him an asylum in Bengal, for there was great danger that he might join the Marathas and induce them to espouse his cause. Steps were also taken to persuade Asaf-ud-daulah to grant his brother a pension. A somewhat reluctant consent was obtained to this proposal in 1777, whereupon Saadat Ali Khan was escorted to Bengal.[1]

Unfortunately for English prestige Hannay exceeded his instructions and advanced beyond the Company's frontiers before Samru had been dismissed. His excuse was that he had proceeded on the advice of Middleton, who had informed him of the presence at Lucknow of Mirza Khalil, a confidential

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.42, 28 July 1777: Middleton to Board, 29 June 1777.**

agent of Najaf Khan. Hoping to obtain more accurate information he had therefore exceeded his instructions.[1] But Hannay failed to persuade Najaf Khan to dismiss Samru, and despairing of accomplishing the objects of his mission, he proposed to return to Calcutta.[2]

After the death of Najaf Khan in 1782 Hastings judged it expedient to have a representative at the court of the Mughal Emperor and selected Major James Browne for this purpose. He was unable to give Browne any definite instructions because he had not been able to ascertain the exact state of affairs at Delhi and because all the information he had received had been through suspected channels. At the same time it was perfectly clear that the death of Najaf Khan had been followed by a struggle for power between the various Mughal chiefs who surrounded the Emperor. Browne's first task therefore was to ascertain the true state of affairs at Delhi, for which purpose he was to ' study the characters, connexions, influence and power of the several competitors for the possession of the King's favour or the exercise of his authority'.[3] He was also to report on the condition and political relations of the various powers in the neighbourhood of Delhi. Above all he was to avoid any discussion of the Emperor's ancient claims to the tribute of Bengal or .o the districts of Kora and Allahabad. But, if the question were raised and he found discussion unavoidable, he was to argue after this fashion. The English had treated the Emperor well, better in fact than any of his subjects had ever done, for, in the days when he had received the tribute from Bengal, they had been the only persons in his empire paying him any tribute at all. They had also handed over to him for the upkeep of his dignity the districts of Kora and Allahabad, but he had deserted the English and placed himself in the hands of their enemies, the Marathas, who were also the enemies of their ally, the nawab-wazir of Oudh. Worse than this the Emperor had actually transferred these districts to the Marathas. But, evenif the Emperor had not deserted the Company, the revenues

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.41, 14 April 1777: Hannay to Board, 10 February 1777.**
[2] **ibid., 19 May 1777: Hannay to Board, 1 May 1777. For evidence of Najaf Khan's intrigues with the French see *Persian Calendar*, V, No. 1276.**
[3] **Add. MSS. 29, 115: Hastings to Browne, 20 August 1782.**

of Bengal would have proved insufficient to continue the payment of the tribute. The English were once more prepared to help him, but no military force could be supplied for his protection until the Company had been informed of the service on which it was to be employed and the resources from which it was to be paid.

Lastly, Browne was to keep a watchful eye on any foreign agents at Delhi, especially on the agent of Haidar Ali of Mysore.

Browne was detained for a time at Farrukhabad by disturbances at Delhi between Afrasiab Khan and Mirza Shafi Khan, who were rivals for the position of chief minister. Eventually the emperor was persuaded to appoint Shaft Khan to the office of *Mir Bakhshi*[1] and to recognize him as the successor of Najaf Khan. But his triumph was short-lived, for by November 1782 he was a fugitive from Delhi. The fact that he was once more in power in December of the same year throws considerable light upon the miserable condition of the Mughal Emperor.[2] Eventually there was a temporary lull in the struggle for power at Delhi which enabled Browne to proceed to the Emperor's Court; and, in December 1783, we find him forwarding a request from the Emperor for help and recommending that he should be furnished with six regiments of sepoys and the usual complement of artillery.[3] The year 1784 witnessed the fall of Shaft Khan from power, his place being taken by Afrasiab Khan, who, as the Emperor's chief minister, desired to enter into an alliance with the Company and the nawab of Oudh. It was proposed that the contracting parties should be ready to assist each other when required, a subsidy to be paid according to the number of troops employed. Browne's letters to Hastings make it clear that he entertained strong suspicions of Mahadaji Sindhia, who, according to Browne, was attempting to form an alliance with the chiefs of Delhi and was trying to dissuade them from

[1] **For the duties of this official see Ibn Hasan's *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, Ch. VI.**

[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range A.67, 26 September 1782; 30 September 1782; 22 November 1782; Range A.69, 15 January 1783; and Range A.70, 3 March 1783..**

[3] **ibid., Range A.80, 20 January 1784: Browne to Hastings, 30 December 1783.**

allying with the English. So much did Browne distrust Sindhia that his chief aim in recommending a treaty with Afrasiab was to prevent him entering into an alliance with the Maratha leader. Browne even went so far as to assert that Sindhia, with the sanction of the Emperor and aided by the Rohillas, intended invading Oudh. He pointed out that pretexts would not be wanting for such an attack. In all probability Sindhia would demand the Emperor's tribute, revive the Maratha claim to *chauthy* and urge the restoration of Rohilkhand to the Rohillas and of Benares to Chait Singh. 'It is,' wrote Browne, 'in expectation of this diversion that Tipu Sahib delays to make peace.' Another argument brought forward by Browne was that this treaty would form a barrier between the Sikhs and Oudh.

Hastings raised many serious objections to these proposals. Referring to the danger from the Sikhs he reassured the Board in the following words: 'I have the pleasure to inform you that there is no immediate prospect of any disturbances from that quarter as the chiefs of the Sikhs who were some time ago expected to move this way have now returned to their own country.'[1] It must not however be imagined that Hastings underestimated the power of the Sikhs, who had rapidly grown from a mean sect of religious schismatics into a strong military power extending from the river Attock to the walls of Delhi. Even in Hastings's day they had dared to levy around Delhi a tax called *rakhi* similar to the Maratha *chauth,* the payment of which ensured immunity from their depredations. Although Hastings considered that there was no immediate danger from the Sikhs he prophesied that the day would come when they would be a menace to the Company. All that was needed was the rise of a great leader or military dictator—a prophecy which furnishes further evidence of his remarkable foresight.

Hastings resolutely refused to believe that Sindhia was playing him false. 'Sindhia does not at least deserve this character from us. In all his transactions with the English, I believe I might say, in all his transactions that have come to our knowledge he has shown an uncommon degree of

[1] ***B.S.C.*, Range B.2, 11 May 1784: Hastings to Board, 22 April 1784.**

steadiness and sincerity.' Hastings also doubted the authenticity of the letters purported to have passed between Sindhia and the chiefs at Delhi.

> The same reason throws a degree of distrust on every information communicated by Afrasiab Khan. I have no reason to credit what he has asserted of the Rohillas. Of the fidelity of Faizullah Khan I have received a strong proof in the deputation of one of his sons who is now arrived at this place; and of the allegiance of the rest of the Rohillas residing within the wazir's dominions, I do not find that the smallest suspicion is entertained. ... I am warranted in believing that Sindhia has firmly connected his interests with ours, and looks upon his alliance with the English as the surest means of preserving undiminished the power and independence which he now possesses.[1]

Much water had flowed under the bridge since Hastings had deemed it advisable, on the death of Najaf Khan, to rescue Shah Alam from the clutches of his ministers.

> Affairs are now much changed. Many successive revolutions have since taken place. One competitor has sunk after another. Some have fallen by the sword and others have retired with their armies to their own *jagirs* till at length the administration at the capital has fallen into the hands of Afrasiab Khan. In these various revolutions the Shah himself has had little share. Each successive minister has acted under his name and assumed his authority, and I have reason to imagine that if we were to enter into the treaty which is now proposed by Afrasiab Khan, so far from promoting the wishes of the King we should have to encounter the secret opposition of himself and his ancient servants and perhaps the declared enmity of many other factions.[2]

It is obvious therefore that Hastings was not enamoured of Afrasiab Khan or of any alliance which was likely to turn Sindhia from an ally into an enemy.[3]

The whole problem of the Company's relations with the Mughal Emperor was placed on a different basis by the complications which followed the flight from Delhi of Mirza

[1] **B.S.C., Range B.2, 11 May 1784: Hastings to Board, 22 April 1784.**
[2] ibid.
[3] **For Browne's correspondence with Hastings see *B.S.C.*, Range B.2, 11 May 1784.**

Jawan Bakht, the eldest son of Shah Alam.[1] This flight produced an urgent request from the Emperor that Hastings would compel his son to return to Delhi. The result was that both Hastings and Asaf-ud-daulah wrote to the prince advising him not to visit them at Lucknow because of the inconvenience it would cause them. In reply the prince pointed out that his father's letter had been written under compulsion, for the Emperor was in the hands of certain persons at Court who had completely usurped his authority. At the same time he professed loyalty to his father and announced that he had no intention of rebelling. All he desired was to see his father released from the clutches of the adventurers who surrounded him. Eventually the prince was allowed to proceed to Lucknow. In fact, Hastings believed that the Emperor had really been privy to the flight of his son.[2] When news of this reached Calcutta, the Board wrote to Hastings urging him to do his utmost to persuade the prince to return to his father. Hastings in reply pleaded that it would be safer to grant him an asylum in the Company's territories at Benares than to force him to return to the Emperor's Court at Delhi, where he would in all probability be exposed to the influence of factions hostile to the interests of the Company.[3] This did not meet with the approval of the Board, who still hoped that Hastings would prevail upon the prince to return to Delhi; for it was their firm belief that endless complications would ensue if he were allowed to remain in the Company's territories.

The daily indignities to which the Emperor had been forced to submit since he had left the protection of the Company had so lowered his prestige that the Mughal dynasty was on the verge of extinction. The end of this dynasty would most certainly have been followed by the fall of Afrasiab Khan. If this ever happened then Hastings feared the rise of an adventurer powerful enough to unite all the powers of Hindustan against the Company. 'And whenever this happens,' argued Hastings, 'our dominion, which subsists loosely

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 206 contains *A Narrative written by the Prince Jahandar Shah,* an interesting and detailed account of his escape and his adventures until he reached Lucknow. See also Francklin's *Shah Aulum,* pp. 154 ff:**
[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range B.2, 13 May 1784: Hastings to Board, 2 May 1784.**
[3] **ibid, 8 June 1784: Hastings to Board, 26 May 1784.**

on the weakness of our neighbours and on the illusion of popular opinion, at least as much as on our military strength, will be exposed to greater dangers than any which it has yet had to encounter, though it has been many times near the brink of destruction.'[1] Hastings therefore deemed it advisable to afford shelter to the prince, who as the Emperor's heir would probably in the future prove a useful ally to the Company. Shah Alam, because of his indolence and lack of spirit, was beyond all hope, but the prince was cast in an entirely different mould. 'I found him,' wrote Hastings, ' gentle, lively, possessed of a high sense of honour, of a sound judgement, an uncommonly quick penetration, and a well-cultivated understanding, with a spirit of resignation and an equality of temper almost exceeding any within reach of my own knowledge or recollection.'[2]

It seems that the whole idea underlying Hastings's later policy was to win back the Mughal Emperor as an ally or, what is perhaps nearer the truth; to make him a puppet in the hands of the Company instead of in the hands of their enemies. This was not really diametrically opposed to his earlier policy, for that policy had been dictated by the fact that the Emperor had deserted the Company and gone over to the Marathas. But the Board consistently refused to have anything to do with the prince and instructed Hastings to persuade him to return to his father. Hastings therefore decided to entrust the charge of the prince to Sindhia, and it was arranged that Sindhia should escort him back to his father's Court on condition that the prince received a *jagir* equal to that which had been granted him during the administration of Najaf Khan. Sindhia immediately prepared to set out for Agra but had hardly made three stages of the journey when he changed his mind and turned back. There were many reasons for this. His progress had been impeded by heavy rains, his Brahman astrologers had considered the time inauspicious, and his wife was in an advanced state of pregnancy. In the meantime Sindhia's wife gave birth to a

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 164: Hastings to Wheler, 9 June 1784.**
[2] ***B.S.C.*, Range B.4, 14 December 1784: Hastings to Board, 7 December 1784.**

daughter, whereupon the Maratha leader resumed his march.

In November 1784 Afrasiab Khan was assassinated and Sindhia's conduct after this certainly afforded grounds for the belief that he intended breaking his treaty engagements with the Company, for he immediately assumed control of the Emperor's forces and received from the Emperor the office of *wakil-i-mutlaq* (prime minister) on behalf of the Peshwa, the titular head of the Maratha confederacy. Browne, unnecessarily an alarmist, considered that Sindhia by this step had raised the Marathas above every other power in Hindustan; and that, because of this, Sindhia would receive the wholehearted support of the other members of the Maratha confederacy.[1] Hastings, on the other hand, felt sure that Sindhia would remain loyal to his engagements with the Company, and Hastings proved to be right, for we know that Sindhia did not turn traitor and that the Treaty of Salbai (1782) was followed by more than twenty years of unbroken peace with the Marathas. Hastings therefore refused to be alarmed by the grant of the wakilship to the Peshwa. It undoubtedly gave the Marathas the right to control the Emperor's administration, but this empty title meant no accession of military strength and no increase of revenues. The real strength of the Marathas lay in their own military power and strategical position in Hindustan. Although Sindhia's prestige was undoubtedly increased by this grant, it roused the jealousy of Holkar and Nana Phadnavis and thereby weakened the power of the Maratha confederacy.

While Afrasiab Khan lived Sindhia was prepared to re-establish the prince in order to counteract the influence of Afrasiab Khan. Hastings entertained similar views and this explains his rejection of Browne's proposed alliance with Afrasiab Khan. After the assassination of Afrasiab Khan, Sindhia acquired complete control of the Emperor and naturally did not exactly see eye to eye with the Company,

[1] Add. MSS. 29, 209: Browne's Memorandum on the state of affairs in Hindustan, January 1785: The complete correspondence between Browne and Hastings from 20 August 1782 to 14 February 1785, will be found in *H.M.* 336, 137-615. A narrative of the transactions with the Court'of Delhi from 1771-9, dated 15 August 1779, will be found in MSS. Eur. F.8, fol. 138-78.

for he did not wish to restore the prince if it meant the destruction of his own influence. Neither could the Company be a party to his return if it meant that the prince would be under Maratha influence. Hastings, who wished to remain on friendly terms with Sindhia, recommended as his last advice before leaving India that no further action should be taken.[1] After holding office for two years Sindhia was expelled by a new combination of Mughal chiefs; and the prince, after several vain attempts to obtain help from the Company, and after an unsuccessful effort to establish himself at Delhi by force of arms in 1787, died suddenly at Benares in the year 1788.

During the impeachment Burke insinuated that it had been Hastings's intention to betray the Mughal Emperor to the Marathas, but there is not a shred of evidence to support this assertion. On the contrary the charge is flatly contradicted by Hastings's instructions to Browne, the principal object of which was to bolster up the Emperor's power and protect him from the rival factions which surrounded him. Hastings did all in his power to assist the Emperor but found that circumstances were too strong for him. Not only did he fail to obtain the consent of the Board but he also received definite instructions from the Court of Directors not to interfere. It will be remembered that Browne's proposal for an alliance with Afrasiab Khan, which was based upon the supposed intrigues of Sindhia against the Company did not bind Hastings in any way. Hastings refused to countenance this proposal because he considered the alliance with Sindhia of paramount importance to the Company and did not wish to incur his enmity. When therefore Sindhia announced his intention of proceeding to Delhi, Hastings's determination not to interfere was confirmed. It is important to note that Sindhia's control of the Emperor did not affect his alliance with the Company. Neither can it be admitted that Hastings's conduct merited censure.

From 1782 until his death in 1794 Sindhia strove to consolidate his position in Hindustan and to control the Peshwa, prfmarily in his own interests, for his policy appears to have

[1] **Add. MSS. 29, 116: Hastings to Palmer, 12 January 1785.**

been more selfish than national. This necessitated undermining the Brahman ascendancy at Poona, since the aim of Nana Phadnavis was to preserve the Peshwa's supremacy over the Maratha confederacy. Towards the end of the first Maratha war Sindhia realized that his true policy lay in throwing in his lot with the English and his offer ' to interpose his friendly offices at Poona' eventually led to the Treaty of Salbai (1782). Despite Hastings's refusal to believe that Sindhia would play him false, there were times when his conduct certainly afforded grounds for the belief that he intended breaking his treaty engagements with the Company. When, after the departure of Hastings, Sindhia, in the name of the Emperor, demanded the *chauth* from Bengal, Macpherson not only flatly refused to consider the request but endeavoured to counteract his influence in the Maratha confederacy by making overtures to Mudaji Bhonsle of Berar and by appointing Malet as the Company's representative at Poona. Of two things we can be certain: that Salbai greatly increased his prestige; and that his ambition after 1782 was to build up a powerful state in northern India. But it seems probable that he was never in a position to become a serious menace to British interests, even had he been so inclined. With bands of warlike Sikhs on his frontiers and danger threatening from Afghanistan he found his territories in Hindustan a troublesome charge. The situation was aggravated by the refusal of the Rajputs of Jaipur to pay him tribute and by wholesale desertions from his army. He was apparently astute enough to realize his weakness, for he never openly flouted the authority of the Company after 1781.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUDING REMARKS

LIKE the Romans the British in India refused to recognize as equals the states contiguous to their frontiers and in self-defence were compelled to surround their territories by a chain of protectorates and buffer states. This explains the foreign policy of Warren Hastings who aimed at maintaining intact the territorial possessions of the East India Company, threatened as they were during his governor-generalship by the Maratha power, by a formidable coalition of the ' country powers', and by the arrival of a French naval force under the Bailli de Suffren. Hastings's relations with Oudh had for their object the strengthening of an important buffer state upon whose security the safety of Bengal depended. Similar motives influenced him in his attempt to form an alliance with the Maratha state of Berar which commanded the land route between Bengal and Madras. Although his plans for an alliance ended in failure these negotiations were not entirely fruitless, for the ruler of Berar took no active part in the anti-British confederacy organized by the Nizam of Hyderabad towards the end of the year 1779. Had Hastings been given a free hand he would have protected the Company's territories by a chain of allies stretching from the Jumna to Gujarat, for he aimed at weakening the power of the Marathas by extending the sphere of British influence.[1] Defence not aggression was the key-note of his policy, for he wished 'to extend the influence of the British nation to every part of India not too remote from their possessions, without enlarging the circle of their defence or involving them in hazardous or indefinite engagements, and to accept of the allegiance of such of our neighbours as shall sue to be enlisted among the friends and allies of the King of

[1] Phillips MSS., 173. John Rylands Library.

Great Britain.'[1] Shuja-ud-daulah of Oudh would have regarded direct relationship with the Crown as a great honour and at one time offered to coin rupees in the name of George III. Hastings would have permitted him to correspond directly with the Crown had not the dispute between the Crown and Company in Parliament rendered such a course inadvisable. Receiving no encouragement from home Hastings was unable to develop British sovereignty in India in place of Mughal sovereignty.

The idea underlying the subsidiary alliance system whereby an Indian state subsidized a British force for its protection was not new to India, for the French had already made use of it. It will be remembered that part of the Northern Sarkars had been assigned to Bussy for the support of the French contingent in the service of the Nizam. But its development, together with its advantages and disadvantages, can best be studied in Oudh from 1765 onwards. After Buxar, Clive, as we have seen, was in a position to dictate terms to Shuja-ud-daulah and by the Treaty of Allahabad (1765) preserved a Muslim state in Oudh. As developed by Hastings this system was a method of defence without expenditure, the protected state paying for its own defence and the Company, instead of defending its own frontiers, undertook the defence of the exposed frontiers of its ally.

The different types of subsidiary treaty are clearly visible in our relations with Oudh. The loosest and from the Company's point of view the most disadvantageous form of subsidiary alliance was Clive's system as embodied in the Treaty of Allahabad, for only the extraordinary expenses of the Company's troops were defrayed by the ruler of Oudh. Hastings promptly reversed this policy and by the Treaty of Benares (1773) all the expenses of the subsidiary force, not merely the extraordinary, were charged to the ruler of Oudh. But this was not enough. Under the weak and incapable Asaf-ud-daulah the Company experienced the greatest difficulty in ensuring the prompt and regular payment of this money. We therefore find Bristow proposing that the revenues of certain districts should be appropriated for the

[1] **Gleig, I I , 136-7; *vide* also idem, I, 508.**

payment of the monthly subsidy. Even when *tankhwahs* were granted to the Company the problem of collecting the revenues of these assigned areas and the appointment of trustworthy *amils* for this purpose proved no easy task. Great care had also to be taken that the revenues of the assigned lands were not based on false calculations and that the actual collections equalled the estimated revenues. Moreover, as often happened, the Company found that the assignments granted to them by Asaf-ud-daulah had already been ear-marked for the payment of his own troops. Bristow's plan was improved upon by Middleton who, with the Board's approval, obtained from the nawab for the payment of the monthly subsidy and other demands of the Company the exclusive assignment of the revenues of the Doab and Rohilkhand, together with those of Allahabad, Kora, and certain other tracts. Middleton became responsible for the appointment of all *amils* in these districts the revenues of which were paid directly to him. It was Hastings himself who foresaw that the only method of ensuring the prompt payment of the subsidy was to have lands, whose revenues were equal to the subsidy, ceded to the Company in perpetuity. Not until the days of Wellesley was this suggestion finally adopted.

The agreement by an Indian state to subsidize a force for its protection implied the right of the protecting power to intervene in the internal affairs of the protected state when financial disorder prevented the latter from fulfilling its treaty obligations. This explains the care the British took to ensure that the revenues of the ceded territories should be adequate to the maintenance of the required subsidiary force. Where, as in Oudh, the subsidiary state was also an important buffer state, a closer control became necessary. It was this close connexion between Oudh and Bengal which rendered non-intervention impossible. Intervention in the affairs of Oudh continued from Clive to Wellesley.

The Company, as the stronger military power, was from the beginning in a position to dictate terms. Hastings always held the trump card. The Majority, taking advantage of a change in the succession, forced the Treaty of Fyzabad (1775) upon Asaf-ud-daulah. Sir John Shore, in 1798, informed

Saadat Ali Khan that his succession to the *masnad* depended upon the readiness with which he subscribed to the agreement drawn up by the governor-general. It was under Wellesley that coercion reached its highest pitch in the negotiations leading up to the Treaty of 1801. Mill considered that 'a more monstrous proposition never issued from human organs'.[1]

Certain conclusions may be drawn from Hastings's conduct of the Company's relations with Oudh. He believed that the Company had the right to dethrone a disloyal or unsuitable ruler and his object was to prevent any development which would impair the efficiency of the buffer state and thereby weaken the Company's defences. The case envisaged by Hastings occurred during Sir John Shore's term of office. In 1797 Asaf-ud-daulah's miserable existence came to an end and Shore at first recognized as his heir one Wazir Ali, whom Asaf-ud-daulah had acknowledged as his son during his lifetime. Later, while on a visit to Oudh, finding that Wazir Ali was not the son of Asaf-ud-daulah's begam, but the son of a *farrash*, and that he was hostile to the Company, Shore dethroned him, replacing him on the *masnad* by Saadat Ali Khan, the brother of Asaf-ud-daulah. Mill contends that, according to Muhammadan law, it was quite enough that Asaf-ud-daulah acknowledged Wazir Ali as his son, and that this recognition removed all question of illegitimacy.[2] Shore, on the other hand, contended that for such an acknowledgement it was essential that the parentage of the boy should be unknown. Shore was right and Mill was wrong. Acknowledgement is recognized by Muhammadan law as a means whereby marriage and illegitimate descent may be established as a matter of substantive law, but it must be an acknowledgement, not merely of sonship, but of legitimate sonship. This being so, acknowledgement can have no legal effect for this purpose if the paternity of the child is established in someone else. The acknowledged person must not be known to be the child of another man. So, if it were proved, as Shore contended, that Wazir Ali was the son of a *farrash* that settled the matter: he could not, in spite of Asaf-ud-daulah's acknow-

[1] Mill, VI, 201. [2] ibid., 52.

ledgement, be his legitimate son. The important point to note is that Shore, like Hastings, claimed the right to dethrone a ruler hostile to British interests.

Hastings sought to control Oudh by supporting ministers on whom he could rely. His policy, and an essential one under a weak ruler like Asaf-ud-daulah, was to insist on ministers favourable to the British connexion. Haidar Beg Khan received Hastings's support only so long as he carried out his instructions. Cornwallis followed the example set by Hastings and it is wrong to suppose that his policy towards Oudh was one of non-intervention. In fact, Cornwallis declared that Haidar Beg Khan would get his support only so long as he governed the country justly and adhered strictly to the engagements existing between Oudh and the Company. Like Hastings, Cornwallis refused to interfere for the purpose of recovering the debts of the nawab-wazir's private creditors, even when these creditors were servants of the Company. He also sent specific instructions to the Resident that there was to be no interference as had been the case under Middleton and Bristow, an interference of which, as we have seen, Hastings had not approved.

The trouble Hastings experienced with both Middleton and Bristow illustrates the difficulty of formulating written instructions which could definitely bind down a Resident, or which were not liable to misinterpretation. Hastings's instructions to Bristow that ' either the Resident must be the slave and vassal of the minister, or the minister at the absolute devotion of the Resident' practically gave Bristow a free hand where Haidar Beg Khan was concerned. If this was not Hastings's intention, and it is difficult to imagine what other construction Bristow could have placed on these instructions, they were certainly very badly worded. Bristow interpreted his instructions as a recommendation to control all the nawab's affairs, but Hastings denied that his instructions gave Bristow the right to control the ruler of Oudh and usurp his government. Hastings should have foreseen that under a weak ruler like Asaf-ud-daulah the control of the minister "implied full powers of administering the country. His proposal to abolish the Residency and to deal directly with the

nawab and his ministers arose out of the misconduct of Middleton and Bristow. But the history of the British connexion with Oudh proves that it was almost impossible to enforce the regular payment of the subsidy without the presence of the governor-general's representative. The withdrawal of the Residency would have increased this difficulty. Hastings's proposal appears to have been a counsel of desperation. It seems to have been merely an argument to persuade the other members of the Board to recall Bristow; and there is much to be said for their refusal on the grounds that the political situation was far too critical to permit of this. Hastings's hatred of Bristow blinded his political vision. He had suffered so much from opposition that he could no longer brook any deviation from his plans. It is often difficult to determine from his minutes whether he is laying down general principles which he is prepared to support in every case, or whether he is merely using arguments to defend a particular action. This sometimes makes it difficult to approve of his policy.

Hastings has been blamed for the wretched condition of Oudh; but the country was no better under his successors, who failed to effect any internal reformation by remonstrances and advice. The fault lay far more with Asaf-ud-daulah himself than in the subsidiary system which had worked fairly smoothly under Shuja-ud-daulah. In fact, one is forced to the conclusion that Oudh under Asaf-ud-daulah could not have preserved its independence without the assistance of the Company. It certainly would not have been free from Maratha depredations. Eventually Cornwallis, like Hastings before him, realized that it was the apathy and indolence of Asaf-ud-daulah which lay at the root of the evils from which Oudh suffered. 'From the best information I have been able to get concerning Oudh, I hear that the wazir extorts every rupee he can from his ministers to squander in debaucheries, cock-fighting, elephants, and horses; he is said to have a thousand of the latter in his stables, although he never uses them.'

In the end Cornwallis's patience was exhausted and he felt compelled to write to Asaf-ud-daulah pointing out that, on

his arrival in India, he had understood that it was the condition of his finances which had prevented him from introducing an efficient administration. But, instead of diminishing, maladministration had increased and his finances were in a worse condition. Cornwallis insisted that the cause of this was not to be found in any unjust demands or undue interference on the part of the Company, but in the internal management of Oudh for which Asaf-ud-daulah was himself responsible.[1] Cornwallis, however, contented himself with recommending economy in his household disbursements. He should have realized by this time that a firmer policy was needed and that remonstrances were lost on Asaf-ud-daulah. Shore may also be quoted in support of the contention that the incapacity of Asaf-ud-daulah was the true cause of the wretched condition of Oudh. 'Disaffection and anarchy prevail throughout; and nothing but the presence of our two brigades prevents an insurrection. The nawab is in a state of bankruptcy, without a sense of his danger, and without a wish to guard against it. The indolence and dissipation of his nature are too confirmed to allow the expectation of any reformation on his part.'[2] While on a visit to Oudh in 1797 he recorded the following verdict: 'The amusements of Tiberius at Capua *[sic]* must, in comparison with those of their feasts, have been elegant and refined.'

The incapacity of Asaf-ud-daulah was not the only difficulty which Hastings experienced in the conduct of the Company's relations with Oudh. To a very large extent the policy he adopted was forced upon him by his diplomatic inheritance. Hampered by the hostile Majority on his council and exposed to criticism from the Court of Directors, he was never given a free hand. His Residents were recalled and his policy condemned or reversed. When, by the death of Monson, in 1776, he was able to use his casting vote, he was soon faced by a formidable coalition of the 'country powers' which was followed by the arrival of a French armament. To a certain extent the difficulties he experienced in Oudh were due to evils inherent in the subsidiary alliance system,

[1] *The Cornwallis Correspondence*, ed. Ross, I I, 549-52.
[2] *The Life of Lord Teignmouth,* I, 332.

the defects of which Hastings was not slow to recognize, for he frankly acknowledged that the Company's alliance, as developed by the Majority, had been the extinction of Asaf-ud-daulah's sovereignty and had led to the impoverishment of his country. Despite its defects an alliance with the important buffer state of Oudh was a strategic necessity, for the Company after Buxar had been in no position to annex Oudh. A subsidiary alliance appears to have been the only possible course between annexation and complete non-intervention, for a mere alliance without any payment for the Company's troops would have been ruinous. Hastings's final views are to be found in a letter written to the Earl of Moira on 12 November 1812.

'Our foreign dependencies and political alliances appear to be too much extended. Subsidiary alliances, it may be said with truth, contribute to the maintenance of an accessory portion of military strength without a charge on the parent state. They keep in dependence the states which employ them, and in check those that lie contiguous to them; and the dispersed bodies are a reservation for future emergency. On the other hand, the discipline of the corps so attached is liable to relaxation; the virtue of the officers commanding them is put to too severe a trial by their distances from the source of their authority, and by the multiplied incitements to corruption. They are exposed to danger from the jealousy of able princes who employ them, to share in all the evils of a neglected government with the weak and voluptuous, and to intrigue with either; and, in the event of their being wanted at home, the difficulties attending their recall will be greater in the ratio of the occasion requiring it. The dignity and apparent power of the sovereign state may be increased by the system of subsidizing; but its real strength will be enfeebled, like strong liquids in dilution; and, in every case requiring its abandonment, the faith of the government will suffer mortal discredit, and its honour be forfeited, if the subsidized prince, deprived of his adscititious support, should fall a prey to external invasion or intestine sedition.

'Remote provinces held in property will be liable in a great degree to the same evil consequences; and it will only be in times of confirmed peace, if then, that their revenues will be found equal to the expense of the force required for their protection^ The removal of the force will be subject to the same hazards as in

the former case. The fate of Baillie's detachment is a strong illustration of this. It was recalled by the Governor and Council of Fort St. George from the districts called the Northern Sarkars, on Hyder's last invasion of the Carnatic, intercepted in its march by a superior body of the enemy and totally destroyed. What makes this case the stronger is, that the event was virtually predicted by the Bengal Government in a remonstrance which it made to that of Fort St. George against the general dispersion of its military force; and that it took place under an officer of approved abilities.

* I do not mean by these objections to recommend the abolition of the provincial or subsidiary establishments, for neither would this in many cases immediately be practicable, and the responsibility would be too great in the cases of such as have been confirmed by orders from home. I only recommend the general subject for contemplation. . . .

'I except from the application of the preceding observations the dominions of the nawab of Oudh, which, from their contiguity and his absolute dependence on the Company, approach almost to an integral part of our own; and any calamity befalling them would affect our interests as much, or rather much more than if it befell our own; as in that case we should be charged with the necessity of repelling it by extraneous force, without the command of its constitutional authorities. It needs not the spirit of divination to foretell that the whole of that country, comprising with our own all the territory bounded by the north of the Ganges, will in process of time become the avowed property of the British nation. . . '[1]

[1] B.M. Add. MSS. 29, 234.

APPENDIX A

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. RECORDS (UNPUBLISHED)

INDIA OFFICE

(i) *Bengal Select Committee and Secret Committee Consultations.*

The proceedings of these two committees constitute the most valuable source for the foreign policy of Warren Hastings. Range A, vols. 5-11, throw light on Hastings's diplomatic heritage; in Range A, vols. 19-80, can be traced the Company's relations with Oudh from 6 January 1772, to 3 February 1784; while Range B, vols. 1-6, cover the period from 17 February 1784 to 22 March 1785.

(2) *Home Miscellaneous Series.*

This series suffers from one serious defect. As its name implies it lacks continuity and for this reason forms a dangerous source for the writer who has neither the energy nor the time to wade through the more important authorities which are arranged in chronological order. The following volumes have been useful in supplementing the information contained in the *Consultations:* 212; 219-21; 228; 235; 336. *H.M.* 235 contains the Farrukhabad correspondence, while *H.M.* 336 is important for Browne's mission to the Mughal Emperor.

(3) *The Francis MSS.*

A detailed summary of the 61 volumes in this series will be found in the *Catalogue of Manuscripts in European Languages* by Kaye, G. R., and Johnston, E. H., Vol. I I , Part I I , 1937, pp. 235-472. MSS. Eur. F. 8 contains a narrative of Delhi affairs between 1771 and 1779.

(4) *The Fowke MSS.*

The contents of these 25 volumes are summarized in Kaye and Johnston, Vol. I I , Part I I , pp. 61-234. MSS. Eur. G. 3 contains the Benares Residency Correspondence, 1775 to 1786.

•(5) *The Middleton MSS.*

In this collection which consists of one volume (MSS. Eur.

G. 9) is preserved the correspondence of Nathaniel Middleton with Sir Elijah Impey and Sir John Macpherson.

(6) *The Orme Collection (vide European Manuscripts in the India Office Library,* Vol. I I , Part I, Hill, S. C, 1916).

The following volumes have been consulted: Eur. MSS. Orme, 37-9; 69-70; 91; and 274.

IMPERIAL RECORD OFFICE, CALCUTTA

The author has purchased a certified copy of the Persian text of the final *sanad* granted to Chait Singh in 1776.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

(1) *The Hastings MSS.*

Add. MSS. 28, 973-29, 236 comprise 264 volumes of his official and private correspondence.

(a) 29,115-29,117 contain copies of letters from Hastings to the Residents and Envoys at the native Courts.

(b) 29, 120—copies of letters and papers sent by Bristow while Resident in Oudh from 12 December 1782 to 13 December 1783.

(c) 29, 121—private letters written by Hastings on his final visit to Oudh in 1784.

(d) Of the general correspondence between 1758 and 1838 the following volumes are of great importance: 29, 133-29, 139; 29, 141-29, 144; 29, 147; 29, 150; 29, 156; 29, 158-29, 164; 29, 166; 29, 170; 29, 193-29, 194.

(e) Miscellaneous political papers, 1759-1816. Of these nine volumes the following contain valuable information; 29, 198-29, 202; and 29, 206.

(f) Papers relating to Indian History and Geography in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. 29, 212 contains the invaluable *Benares Diary* of 1773 and the two disappointing diaries for 1784. 29, 209-29, 210 contain matter of interest.

(g) Papers connected with the impeachment will be found in volumes 29, 219-29, 222; and 29, 225.

(A) 29, 234 contains the famous letter to Pitt on *zamindari* tenure; Hastings's final opinion on subsidiary alliances; and papers relating to the Treaty of Benares (1773).

(2) *Supplementary Hastings MSS.* (Add. MSS. 39, 871-39, 904).

Only two of these volumes relate to Oudh affairs. 39, 871 contains the famous quills and letters sent to his wife from Chunar;

39,874 the correspondence with Champion on the Rohilla campaign of 1774.

(3) The correspondence of Clavering and Francis with Bristow between 1774 and 1777 is to be found in Add. MSS. 34, 287.

(4) *The Hardwicke Papers,*

35,918 contains correspondence relating to the Rohilla war.

(5) *The Windham Papers.*

37, 927 contains almost illegible drafts of speeches on the breach of treaty with Faizullah Khan which Windham was prevented from delivering owing to the curtailment of the trial.

(6) *The Liverpool Papers,*

38, 408 contains letters to Wheler and Macartney.

THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

East India Papers—Treasury. T. 49 (23 vols.). These volumes contain little of importance on Oudh. What material there is takes the form of duplicates noticed elsewhere, e.g., T. 49. 2 (copies of the *B.S.C.);* T. 49. 23 (copy of the *Narrative of Transactions at Benares in 1781).*

THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY, MANCHESTER ***(vide*** **Hand-List of the** Collection of English Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library —Moses Tyson, 1929).

The Phillips Collection chiefly comprises the papers of Richard Johnson while in Oudh and Hyderabad. With the exception of Eng. MSS. 173 and 179a, this forms an extremely disappointing collection.

THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY.

The Lawrence Papers: Nos. 30463-78 relate to the impeachment. MSS. Eng. Hist. C. 24 contains extracts from the *B.S.C,* and are concerned with the policy adopted by Cornwallis towards Oudh.

PRIVATE COLLECTION.

Manuscript Copy of Sheridan's Begams' Speech made the day after its delivery. This was formerly in the possession of Sir Edwin Arnold but is now owned by Professor Harold Temperley.

II. RECORDS (PUBLISHED)

Aitchison, C. U. *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads,* 1909.

Ascoli, F. D. *Early Revenue History of Bengal and the Fifth Report,* **1917.**

Bond, E. A. *Speeches of the Managers and Counsel in the Trial of Warren Hastings,* 4 vols. 1859-61.

Burke, E. *Speeches and Correspondence.* Bohn's Standard Library.

Calendar of Persian Correspondence, 6 vols. 1759-85. Calcutta, 1911-38.

Dodwell, H. *Letters of Warren Hastings to Sir John Macpherson,* 1927.

Firminger, W. K. *The Fifth Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company (1812).* 3 vols. 1917.

Forrest, G. W. *Selections from the State Papers in the Foreign Department of the Government of India, 1772-85.* 3 vols. 1890.

Hastings, Warren. *A narrative of the insurrection which happened in the Zemeendary of Banaris in the month of August 1781, and of the transactions of the Governor-General in that district; with an appendix of authentic papers and affidavits.* 1782.

— *Memoirs relative to the state of India.* 1786.

— *The Answer of Warren Hastings.* 1788.

— *The Defence of Warren Hastings at the Bar of the House of Commons.* 1786.

Hunter, W. *Bengal manuscript records.* 4 vols. 1894.

Minutes of the evidence taken at the trial of Warren Hastings. 11 vols. 1788-94.

Reports of the Select Committee: *Second Report,* 1782; *Supplement to the Second Report,* 1783; *Fifth Report,* 1782; *Eighth Report,* 1783.

Shakespeare, A. *Selections from the Duncan Records,* Vol. I. 1873.

III. SECONDARY WORKS.

Anonymous. *History of the Province of Benares,* 1882.

— *A History of the Trial of Warren Hastings,* 1796.

Albanicus. Letters on the partiality and injustice of the charges brought against Warren Hastings, 1786.

Auber, P. *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India,* 2 vols. 1837.

Baden-Powell, B. H. *Land-Systems of British India,* 3 vols. 1892.

Barbe\ E. *Le Nabob René Madec,* 1894.

Beveridge, H. *A Comprehensive History of India,* 3 vols. 1865.

— *The Trial of Nanda Kumar.* 1886.

Bioves, A. *Les Anglais dans l'Inde: Warren Hastings.* 1904.

Broome, R. *An Elucidation of the Articles of Impeachment.* 1790.

Curwen, F. *The Buhmntnamah,* 1875. (Translation of the *Tuhfa-i-Taza* of Khair-ud-din Muhammad.)

Dasgupta, A. P. ***The Central Authority in British India, 1774-84.*** **1931.**

Davies, A. M. *Warren Hastings.* 1935.

Davies, C. C. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam,* s.w. Oudh; Pishwa; Rampur.

— 'Warren Hastings and the Rohilla War.' *Army Quarterly.* July 1938.

Dewar, D. ***Handbook of the Records of the United Provinces.*** **1919.**

Dodwell, H. ***Dupleix and Clive.*** **1920.**

— ***Cambridge History of India,*** **Vol. V, Chs. ix and xv.**

Duff, Grant. ***History of the Mahrattas. 2*** **vols. 1921.**

Elliot, H. M., and Dowson, J. ***The History of India, as told by its own Historians,*** **Vol.** VIII.

Elliott, C. *The Life of Hajiz ool-Moolk.* 1831 (Abridged translation of the *Gulistan-i-Rahmat* of Mustajab-Khan Bahadur.)

Forrest, G. W. *The Life of Lord Clive. 2* vols. 1918.

— ***Selections from the State Papers of the Governors-General of India:*** Warren Hastings. 2 vols. 1910.

Francklin, W. ***The History of the Reign of Shah Aulum.*** **1798.**

Gleig, G. R. ***Memoirs of Warren Hastings.*** **3 vols. 1841.**

Grier, S. ***Letters of Warren Hastings to his Wife.*** **1905.**

Hamilton, C. ***An Historical relation of the origin, progress, and final dissolution of the government of the Rohilla Afghans.*** **1787.**

Hand, J. R. ***Early English Administration of Bihar.*** **1894.**

Hastings, G. W. ***Vindication of Warren Hastings.*** **1909.**

Hill, S. C. ***General Claud Martin.*** **1901.**

Hodges, W. ***Travels in India.*** **1793.**

Hoey, W. Translation of the *Tafzihu'l Ghafilin* of Abu Talib. 1885.

— *Memoirs of Delhi and Fyzabad.* 2 vols. 1888-9. (Translation of the *Tarikh Farahbakhsh* of Muhammad Faiz Bakhsh.)

Imperial Gazetteer of India, **s.v. Oudh. 1908.**

Impey, E. B. ***Memoirs of Sir Elijah Impey.*** **1811.**

Irvine, W. *Later Mughals. 2* vols. 1921-2.

— 'The Bangash Nawabs of Farrukhabad,' *Journal of the Asiatic* ***Society of Bengal.*** **1878-9.**

Irwin, H. C. ***The Garden of India.*** **1880.**

Lawrence, H. ***The Kingdom of Oude.*** **1845.**

Lawson, C. ***The Private Life of Warren Hastings.*** **1905.**

Luard, C. E. ***Cambridge History of India,*** **Vol. V, Ch. xiv.**

Lyall, A. ***Warren Hastings.*** **1891.**

Macaulay, T. B. *Essay on Warren Hastings.* 1841.
Mill, J. *History of British India.* Ed. Wilson, H. H., Vols. III-V. 1840.
Moir, J. *Transactions in India, 1756-83.* 1786.
Monckton-Jones, M. E. *Warren Hastings in Bengal, 1772-4.* 1918.
Moreland, W. H. *The Agrarian System of Moslem India.* 1929.
Morrison, J. *The advantages of an alliance with the Great Mogul.* 1774.
Oldham, W. *Historical and Statistical Memoir of the Ghazeepoor District. 2* vols. 1870.
Qanungo, K. R. *History of the Jats.* Vol. I. 1925.
Ramsbotham, R. B. *Studies in the land revenue history of Bengal, 1769-87.* 1926.
Richmond, H. *The Navy in India, 1763-83.* 1931.
Roberts, P. E. 'Warren Hastings and his Accusers.' *Journal of Indian History.* Vol. III, Pt. I. March, 1924.
— *Cambridge History of India,* Vol. V, Chs. xi, xii, xiii, xvi, xvii.
Sarkar, J. *Fall of the Mughal Empire,* 2 vols. 1932-4.
Scott, J. *The conduct of HM.'s late ministers considered as it affected the East India Company and Mr. Hastings.* 1784.
— *Narrative of the transactions in Bengal during the administration of Mr. Hastings.* 1782.
Stephen, J. F. *Story of Nuncomar and the Impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey. 2* vols. 1885.
Strachey, J. *Hastings and the Rohilla War.* 1892.
Srivastava, A. L. *The First Two Nawabs ofOudh.* 1933.
Thornton, E. *History of British India.* Vol. II. 1842.
Weitzman, S. *Warren Hastings and Philip Francis.* 1929.
Wraxall, N. *Posthumous Memoirs of his own time.* 3 vols. 1836.
Ward, V. *Hastings Bi-Centenary.* Select List of printed publications relating to Warren Hastings. 1932.

APPENDIX B

I. COPY OF THE PERSIAN TEXT OF THE FINAL SANAD GRANTED TO CHAIT SINGH ON 15 APRIL 1776

نقل سند عہد کمپنی و دستخط صاحبان کونسل بنام رفعت و عوالی پناہ راجہ چیت سنگھ بہادر زمیندار سرکار بنارس
وغیرہ مرقومہ ۲۵ شہر صفر المظفر ۱۱۷۹ مطابق پانزدہم ماہ اپریل ۱۷۶۵ انگریزی شرح آنکہ متصدیان
مہمات حال و استقبال و قانونگویان و مقدمان و رعایا و مزارعان سائر سکنہ و عموم متوطنہ سرکار بنارس
و غازی پور و چنادہ مضاف صوبہ الہ آباد بدانند چون قولنامہ کہ فیمابین کمپنی انگریز و نواب آصف الدولہ
یحیی خان بہادر ہزبر جنگ ناظم صوبہ مذکور بتاریخ بیستم شہر ربیع الاول سنہ ۱۱۸۹ ھ مطابق بیست و
یکم ماہ مئی ۱۷۷۵ء گذشتہ لمزہ اکومت و ریاست و مختاری سرکارات مذکور بعمدۃ الملہام کمپنی
انگریز از تاریخ چہارم شہر جمادی الاول سنہ ۱۱۸۹ ھ مطابق چہارم ماہ جولائی ۱۷۷۵ء انگریزی تقرر
یافت بنابر از اختیار کمپنی بر طبق قولنامہ مزبور خدمت زمینداری و امینی و فوجداری سرکارات
مرقوم حسب الضمن برفعت و عوالی پناہ راجہ چیت سنگھ بہادر مقرر و بحال داشتہ شد و
و نیز سائر کوتوالی جونپور و بنارس مقرر و دارالضرب بنارس از تاریخ مرقوم بدارالضرب
مذکور ہر رقم زر و نقرہ تکیک خواہد شد موافق مچلکائی تاریخ بیست و پنجم شہر
ذی حجہ سنہ ۱۷ جلوس والا راجہ مشار الیہ مسکوک می کردہ باشد باید کہ کما ینبغی بلوازم
مراسم ان پردازد دقیقہ از دقائق حزم و ہوشیاری مہمل و غیر مرعی نگذارد و با کافہ رعایا
و عامہ برایا حسن سلوک بکار برد در تکثیر زراعت و آبادی ملک و افزونی محصول
سعی بلیغ بظہور رساند و در اخراج دزدان و شبخونیان و قطاع الطریقان و تنبیہ
مفسدان از حدود متعلقہ خود بخوبی تقید بکار برد کہ اثرے از انہا نہ ماند و مبلغ
بیست و سہ لک و چہل ہزار و دو صد و چہل و نہ روپیہ ماہی دار بنارسی یعنی
سکہ کلکتہ بیست و دو لک شصت و شش ہزار یکصد و ہشتاد روپیہ مالواجب •

سرکار کمپنی عاید خواهد ساخت اگر زر مسطور بحکم حضور بمقام بنارس گرفته شود تا حساب
بیست و سه لک و چهل هزار و دوصد و چهل و نه روپیه های دار و در حساب فی
روپیه کم از وزن ده ماشه و زیاده ربح از دو رتی و دو برنج خواهد شد عاید خواهد نمود
اگر زر مذکوره کم وزن یا زیاده ربح خواهد گردید باقی آن از خزانه وضع خواهد شد چون
در بنارس زر مرقومات در سرکار کمپنی در کار نباشد بمقام کلکته بحساب سکه
کلکته که بیست و دو لک و شصت و شش هزار یکصد و هشتاد روپیه است
موافق قبولیت و اقساط ماه بماه باین حساب سالیانه سال بسال بروقت
و بهنگام در سرکار کمپنی ارسال نموده باشد و منجمله این هندویان فی صد دو روپیه که
بحساب چهل و چهار هزار و چهارصد و سی و چهار روپیه چارده آنه پنجکنده
سکه باشد مجرا خواهد یافت بود وضع هندویان مذکور مبلغ بیست دو لک
و بیست و یک هزار و هفتصد و چهل و پنج روپیه یک آنه پانزده کنده سکه کلکته بے
کم و کاست بمقام مذکور در سرکار کمپنی داخل خواهد ساخت و بعد مجمل آخر
سال موافق معمول مجرا بگیرد و از اخذ الواب ممنوعه درگاه جهان پناه
مجتنب و محترز باشد باید که آنها مومی الیه را زمیندار سرکارات
مسطور و امین و فوجدار آنجا مستقل دانسته لوازم و لواحق آن با او متعلق
شناسند و بنیاب تالید الید دانسته حسب المسطور بعمل آرند تحریر فی التاریخ الصدر

II. TRANSLATION OF THE FINAL SANAD GRANTED TO CHAIT SINGH ON 15 APRIL 1776

Copy of the sanad with the seal of the Company and the signatures of the members of the Council in the name of His Highness Raja Chait Singh Bahadur Zamindar of the Sarkar of Benares, etc., written on the 25th of the month of Safar-ul-Muzaffar, 17 Sun, corresponding to the 15th of the English month of April 1776.

Be it known to the present and future mutasaddis, qanungos, muqaddams, ryots, and other cultivators, to all the inhabitants and natives of the Sarkars of Benares, Ghazipur, and Chunar, in the Suba of Allahabad, that when the treaty between the English Company and Nawab Asaf-ud-daulah, Yahya Khan Bahadur, Hazabr Jang, Nazim of the above-mentioned suba, dated 20th of the month Rabi-ul-awwal, 1189 A.H., corresponding to the 21st of the month of May 1775, was concluded, the government and sovereignty and authority of the above-mentioned sarkars was ceded to the Madar-ul-maham [Governor-General] of the English Company from the 4th of the month of Jamadi-ul-awwal; 1189 A.H., corresponding to the 4th of the month of July A.D. 1775. By virtue of the authority of the Company in accordance with the above-mentioned treaty His Highness Raja Chait Singh Bahadur was appointed and maintained in the office of the zamindari, amini, and faujdari of the sarkars mentioned in the enclosure, and in the receipts from the kotwalis of Jaunpur and Benares; and in the Mint of Benares. From the above-mentioned date every denomination of gold and silver shall be coined in the said Mint. According to the undertaking dated 25th Zilhij in the 17th year of the Exalted Accession, by the aforesaid Raja coinage shall be carried out. It is necessary that performing the business in accordance with the requirements and obligations he should not cause the details of high resolve and intelligence to be worthless and unguarded; and that by treating the ryots and people with moderation and kindness he should do his utmost to encourage agriculture, the increase of the inhabitants, and of the produce of the lands, expelling thieves, night robbers and highwaymen; and in the chastisement of mischief-makers he should act with such excellence that no traces of these should remain; and he shall pay to the Company as revenue[1] due the sum of 23,40,249 Benares Mahidar rupees, that is, Calcutta sikkas, 22,66,180. Should he receive orders to pay the above-mentioned sum of money at Benares then he shall pay 23,40,249 Benares Mahidar rupees, each

1 مالواجب

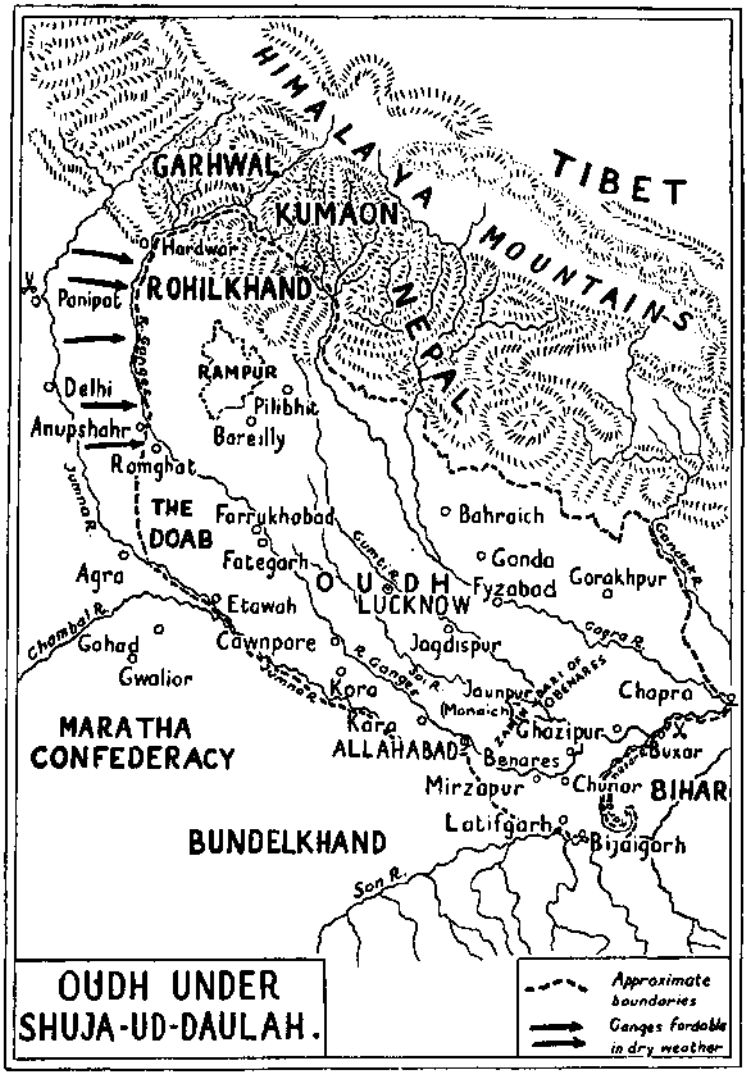
rupee shall not be less than ten mashas and the alloy shall not be more than two rattis and two grains of rice. If the above-mentioned money shall be less in weight or the alloy more, the deficiency shall be made up from the treasurer. When the above-mentioned money shall not be wanted at Benares, he is to remit the annual amount of 22,66,180 sicca rupees punctually in monthly instalments according to his agreement; and from this he shall be allowed a commission of two per cent amounting to 44,434 rupees, 14 annas and 5 gandas. After deducting the aforementioned commission he shall pay not less than 22,21,745 rupees, I anna, and 15 gandas to the Company at the above-mentioned place. After the settlement of accounts at the end of the year he shall in the customary manner receive credit for his payments and he shall abstain from collecting the cesses [abwabs] which have been prohibited by His Majesty's court.

The above-mentioned [mutasaddis, etc.] should regard the above-mentioned person [Chait Singh] as the permanent[1] zamindar, amin, and faujdar of those places; they should consider that their duties and obligations are due to him. These are strict orders and they should obey them accordingly.

Written on the above-mentioned date.

1 J&u^

HINDU KUSH
KASHMIR
TIBET
Kabul
Peshawur
AFGHAN SUPREMACY
Ahmed Shah Durrance
Indus R.
Jhelum R.
Chinab R.
Ravee R.
SIKHS
Lahore
Kandahar
Sulimanee Range
Multan
Sutlej R.
MUGHAL
Panipat
Rohillas
HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS
BAHAWALPUR
TERRITORY
Delhi
OUDH
RAJPUTS
Agra
Lucknow
Goomty R.
Ganges R.
Aravalli Hills
Ajmer
Jats
Kora
Allahabad
BIHAR
Gunduck R.
Soane R.
Nerbudda R.
MARATHA
Plassey 1757
BENGAL
Gujarat
Indore
VINDHYA RANGE
Baroda
Calcutta
SATPURA RANGE
TERRITORY
ORISSA
Surat
Tapti R.
BERAR
Aurungabad
Bombay (British)
Godavery R.
Bay of Bengal
Poona
NIZAM'S TERRITORIES
Satara
Krishna R.
NORTHERN CIRCARS
Arabian Sea
Goa (Portuguese)
Gunjur
WESTERN GHATS
Tungabudra R.
MYSORE
EASTERN GHATS
MADRAS
Warriawash
Trichinopoly
TANJORE
TRAVANCORE
CEYLON (Dutch)
INDIA
UNDER WARREN HASTINGS.
Approximate Boundaries
British
Hindu
Muhammadan


HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS
GARHWAL
KUMAON
TIBET
NEPAL
Hardwar
ROHILKHAND
Panipat
Ganges R.
RAMPUR
Pilibhit
Bareilly
Delhi
Anupshahr
Ramghat
Jumna R.
THE DOAB
Farrukhabad
Fategarh
Agra
Etawah
Chambal R.
Gohad
Gwalior
Cawnpore
Ganges R.
Jumna R.
Kora
Kara
ALLAHABAD
MARATHA CONFEDERACY
BUNDELKHAND
Son R.
Bahraich
Gonda
OUDH
LUCKNOW
Fyzabad
Gumti R.
Gorakhpur
Gogra R.
Jagdispur
Jaunpur (Monaich)
Ghazipur
Chapra
Buxar
Benares
Mirzapur
Chunar
BIHAR
Latifgarh
Bijaigarh
OUDH UNDER SHUJA-UD-DAULAH.
Approximate boundaries
Ganges fordable in dry weather

INDEX

Abdali, 12, 35.
Abu Talib, 171, 192 n.
Abul Fazl, 3.
Afghanistan, 11-12, 42, 87, 229, 240.
Afghans, 11-12, 34-5, 41, 181.
Afrasiab Khan, 233-9.
Agra, 228, 237.
Ahmad Shah Durrani, 11-12, 42, 229.
Ain, 118.
Aitchison, 117.
Akbar, 1, 3, 87, 118-19, 198, 229.
Ali Khan, Mirza, 74-5.
Ali Ibrahim Khan, 147, 150-1, 153.
Ali Muhammad Khan, 41-2.
Ali Naqi, 127, 132-3.
Allahabad, 6-7, 9, 11, 13-16, 19-20, 23, 25-9, 31, 35-9, 43-4, 51, 67, 77, 81-2, 84, 86, 91, 94, 104, 229-30, 232, 259; Treaty of, 6 ff., 14-15, 19, 22 ff., 36 ff., 71, 73, 77-8, 81, 242.
Almas Ali Khan, 75, 96, 105, 183, 186-7, 190-1, 196-7, 199-201, 220-4.
Anderson, David, 221.
—, Lieut. James, 221.
Anupgir, 76, 89.
Anupshahr, 20.
Archbishop of York, 139 n.
Asaf-ud-daulah, 68 ff., 86, 112, 130, 135. 138, 157, 160, 175, 177, 180, 198, 213, 218-19, 226-7, 231, 242-3, 245-8; accession of, 76, 86; Treaty of Fyzabad with, 83 ff., 227 ff., 259; cedes Benares to Company, 84, 110-11; condition of Oudh under, 86 ff.; character, 86, 93; and Temporary Brigade, 89, 92 ff., 106; appointed wazir, 93; favourites, 96 ff., 102-3; reform of military forces, 102, 164-5; creditors, 105; and Bristow, 156, 194-217; *sihbandi* troops, 157, 167, 185; *muteyana* troops, 158, 184 ff., 191, 199, 210; and begams* treasure, 168-9; and Faizullah Khan, 176-82; and Farrukhabad 182-4; and Middleton, 184-
Asaf-ud-daulah *(cont.):*
92; and Johnson, 192-3; extravagance of, 216; and Emperor's son, 236; and Cornwallis, 245-7; death of, 244.
Ascoli's *Early Revenue History of Bengal,* 120.
Ashta Pradhan, 90.
Attock, 234.
Aurangzeb, 1-3, 41, 120, 229.
Ausan Singh, 134.
Awadh, 3.

Babhan, 120 n.
Babu Ajaib, 153.
Babu Jagger Deo Singh, 150 ff.
Badakhshan, 1.
Bahar Ali Khan, 163.
Bahraich, 138, 187, 197.
Bahu Begam, 69-70, 74-5, 159-62, 168-9, 173-5, 186.
Baillie, 249.
Balkh, 1.
Balwant-nama, 120.
Balwant Singh, 4-7, 26, 31-3, no, 121, 133, 140, 146, 149, 154.
Bangash, 4.
Barker, Sir Robert, 10-12, 18-22, 177; excluded from Conference of Benares, 38-9; on Kora and Allahabad, 36-7; and the Emperor, 38; on Rohilla War, 44.
Barwell, Richard, 46, 48, 67, 77, 94, 108, 116, 127, 129, 132; and succession in Oudh, 71.
—, Daniel, 127, 177, 178 n.
Bathurst, 95.
Begams, 159 ff., 189-90, 225; and Chait Singh, 138-9; Court of Directors and, 173-4.
Benares, 4-7, n, 19, 26, 28 n., 31, 33, 36, 54, 61, 64, 77, 79, 109 ff., 136, 138-41, 150-6, 218, 236, 259-60; Treaty of, 30 and n., 40, 48-9, 60, 67, 73, 77-8, 81-2, 84 n., 214, 242; Conference of, 10-11, 29-30, 35 ff., 42-3, 48, 52; Diary, 15, 22, 24, 26-7, 49, 63; Insurrection, 137 ff., 162, 169-74; Mint, 84,

Benares *(cont.):*
in n., 112 ff., 259; *Kotwali,* 84, 112 ff., 146 ff.; charge at Impeachment, 121; revenues of, 149; Hastings's reorganization, 144 ff.; Barker and, 38-9.
Bengal, 2, 4-9, 13, 15, 23 and n., 26, 29, 3i, 34, 36-8, 46-7, 51-3, 7i, 77, 83, 100-1, 113, 118-20, 143-4, 154-6, 159, 229, 231, 241, 243, 249; famine in, 17; military charges, 144-5; Permanent Settlement of, 149; tribute, 232-3.
Berar, 240-1.
Bhuinhar, no, 120 n., 121.
Bihar, 8, 17, 21, 26, 28 n., 31, 34, 36, 38, 56, 79, no, 120 n., 121.
Bijaigarh, 133.
Biscoe, Major, 178.
Blain, Dr., 172.
Blair, 137.
Bombay, 47, 127, 142-3, 224.
Bristow, 62, 82-4, 87, 95, 98, 105, 127, 156, 161, 173, 181, 187, 193, 220-1, 223, 245-6; appointed Resident, 66; instructions, 73-4, 194 ff.; opinion of Haidar Beg Khan, 96; Almas Ali Khan, 96; on Elich Khan, 93-4; and Begams, 160 ff.; account of Oudh, 96 ff.; and subsidiary system, 242-3; in Oudh, 194-217; Bristow-Francis correspondence, 74, 94; Bristow-Clavering correspondence, 94.
Browne, Major James, 238-9; and Sindhia, 233 ff.; mission to Emperor, 232 ff.
Bundela Rajputs, 118.
Bundelkhand, 12, 16, 87, 89, 118.
Burke, 40, 117, 172, 218, 239.
Burra Begam, 139, 159 ff.
Bussy, 242.
Bute, Lord, 66.
Buxar, 5-6, 8, 13, 39, 54, 69, 78, 118, 135, 141, 151, 229-30,242, 248.

Calcutta, 4, 14, 25, 36, 38, 42, 45, 56-7, 63-4, 71-4, 90, 99, 114, 117, 127, 132, 143, 147-8, 150, 153, 155, 166-7, 186, 189, 193, 195, 202, 207, 209, 212, 215, 217, 219, 232, 236.
Camac, Lieut.-Colonel, 129, 131.
Carnac, Major, 4-5, 11-12, 218.
Carnatic, 142-3, 249; nawab of, 133.
Cartier, 2, 10, 14, 16, 32, 218.
Cawnpore, 10, 192, 221, 226-8.
Central Asia. 1.
Chait Singh, 26, 29, 31-5, 64-5, 77-82, 109, 149, 154-5, 158, 162, 169, 171, 173, 192, 220-1, 234; relations with Hastings, 110-54; 1773 Agreement with, 36, 114,121, 124, 126; cavalry, 33-4, 117, 129-30, 132; First *sanad* (1776), 117 ff.; Final *sanad* (1776), 125-6, Appendix B; under nawabs of Oudh 120-1; extra demand on, 127 ff.; attempt to bribe Hastings, 131; intrigues with majority, 132-3, 139-40; forts in *zamindari,* 133-4; hostility to Company, 133 ff.; and Ausan Singh, 134, 140-1; and Marathas, 134; *zamindari* ceded to Company, 84.
Champion, Colonel, 44 ff., 66, 134, 176; succeeds Barker, 44; and Rohilla war, 45 ff.; and Shuja-ud-daulah, 45 ff.; and Faizullah Khan, 45; and atrocities, 56 ff.; in House of Commons, 59; and Middleton, 65.
Chandler, George, 68, 95.
Chatham, 8.
Chauth, 2, 16, 234, 240.
Chenab, 2.
Chunar, 6, 26, 37, 88, 101, 121, 137, 169, 227, 259; Treaty of, 155-93-
Chupra, 11, 20, 32.
Clavering, 46-7, 66, 73, 77, 92, 94, 98-102, 113-16, 123, 139, 170; and succession in Oudh, 71 ff.; and Chait Singh, 80-1; death of, 102.
Clive, 2-4, 6-9, 12-13, 15, 37, 39-40, 53, 81, 147, 218, 229, 242-3; Oudh policy, 6 ff., 23 ff., 29-32; Dual System, 16-17; recognition of Emperor, 7-8; letter to Chatham, 8; leaves India, 11.
Colebrooke, Sir George, 14, 23.
Company, East India, 4, 6, 13-16, 23-6, 31, 38, 71, 83, 119, 156-7, 241; condition in 1772, 16 ff.; criticism of, 26-7.
Cooper, 201-2, 204-5, 217.
Coote, Sir Eyre, 128-30, 134/143.
Cornwallis, 185 n., 211, 222, 245-7.
Coromandel, 9, 143.
Country Powers, 1, 39, 117, 241-2, 247; and balance of power, 2.
Court of Directors, 2, 4-7, 9-12, 17, 20,40,45,48,51,66-7,73,81-4,99, 102,107, 111, 150, 153,168,173-4, 179-80, 183, 212, 219, 228, 239, 247; and Crown, 8; opposed to aggrandizement, 16, 50.

Crabb, Major, 144.
Crawford, Capt., 135.
Cumming, Sir John, 92, 217, 219, 221, 226, 228.

Daud Khan, 41.
Davy, Major, 186, 188.
Deccan, 1, 13, 119, 153.
Delhi, 5, 16, 20, 23 n., 25, 34, 41, no, 220, 229, 232-6, 239; Sultanate of, 3.
Dinapore, 43.
Diwani, 6, 8, 23, 36-7, 119.
Doab, 16, 21, 43-4, 67, 72, 76, 81-2, 85, 87, 89, 90-1, 94, 165, 243; revenues of, 97-100, 104-5.
Dow, Colonel, 7, 128.
D'Oyley, Sir John, 66.
Duncan, 147, 149.
Dundi Khan, 42, 58.
Durbedgy Singh, 146, 150.

Eaton, 135, 152-3-
Emperor, 3, 6-8, 11-13, 15-16, 18-19, 24, 26, 37-40, 69-70, 77-8; 84, 931 97, 121; and Hastings, 23-4, 229-39; and tribute, 6, 36, 234; grants *diwani,* 6; Clive's recognition of, 7-8; deserts English, 16, 23; and Kora and Allahabad, 20-5; and Benares Conference, 27.
Etawah, 16, 43-4, 70, 201.

Faizullah Khan, 45-6, 156, 176-82, 186-7, 235-
Farrukhabad, 4, 156, 187, 233; nawab of, 182-4, 193.
First Brigade, 20.
Fowke, Francis, 33, 116, 123-5, 132, 134; instructions, 125-6; recall, 127.
—, Joseph, 54.
Fox, 117, 124, 142.
Francis, Sir Philip, 46-7, 66, 72, 77, 81-2, 93-5, 100, 103-4, 117, 123, 129-30, 132, 135, 139, 170, 227; opinion of Shuja-ud-daulah, 68; and succession in Oudh, 71 ff.; and Chait Singh, 77 ff., 127; Bristow his agent, 94 ff.; and Temporary Brigade, 107; and subsidiary system, 109.
Franklin, Capt., 172.
Fraser, General, 66.
French, 1-2, 13, 52, 83, 127, 130-1, 133, 141-3, 178, 241-2, 247.

Fyzabad, 62, 107, 138-9, 144, 159, 161, 164, 167, 171, 190, 192; Treaty of, 83 ff., 83 n., 110-11, 122-4, 173, 243.

Gailliez, Colonel, 71, 73, 76.
Gandak, 3.
Ganges, 3, 20-2, 26, 28 n., 38, 44, 48, 114-15, 139, 179, 249; fords, 20 and n., 28 n.
Garden, Capt., 172.
George III, 242.
Ghazipur, 4-6, 26, 31, 37, 153-4, 259
Ghazi-ud-din Haidar, 68 n.
Gleig quoted, 61.
Goddard, Lieut.-Colonel, 99, 101, 143.
Gogra, 138-9, 171.
Gohad, Rana of, 89.
Gonda, 139, 163.
Gopiganj, 144.
Gorakhpur, 97, 138, 187, 197.
Gossains, 72, 76, 89, 90.
Graham, Thomas, 127-9, 134.
Grant, James, 120, 149.
Grant-Shore controversy, 120.
Gujarat, 143, 241.
Gulislan-i-Rahmat) 41.

Hafiz Rahmat Khan, 16, 20-1, 42-3, 54 ff.; deserts Shuja-ud-daulah, 21-2; deserts Marathas, 22; death, 45.
Haidar Ali, 2, 13, 142-3, 175, 233, 249.
Haidar Beg Khan, 75, 96-7, 102, 171, 187-8, 192 and n., 195 ff., 220, 225, 245-
Haji Ain-ud-din, 207.
Hannay, Colonel, 106, 138-9, 171-2, 197; and Najaf Khan, 230-2.
Hardwar, 20.
Harper, Capt., 62-3.
Hasan Riza Khan, 97, 102-3.
Hastings, Warren, diplomatic inheritance, 1-40; succeeds Cartier, 2; and Treaty of Allahabad, 8-9, 23 ff.; at Benares Conference, io-n, 22 ff.; and Treaty of Benares, 30 ff., 214, 226-8, 242; reverses Clive's policy, 14 ff., 23 ff., 29 ff., 229-30; *Benares Diary* quoted, 15, 22, 26-7, 31-3; early reforms of, 17 ff.; revenue policy, 17, 159; letter to Colebrooke quoted, 23-4; and the tribute, 23-4, 26, 36, 232-3; and Chait Singh, 26-7, 31-5, 64-5, 78 ff, 109-54;

Hastings, Warren *(cont.)*:
agrees to assist Shuja-ud-daulah against Rohillas, 31, 36, 42; and free-trade with Oudh, 34-5; on Afghan menace, 34-5; and Barker, 38-9; and County Correspondence, 39, 59-61; and the Doab, 42-3; and Regulating Act, 46 ff.; and Hostile Majority, 46 ff.; Rohilla policy attacked, 47 ff., 81; reversal of policy, 62 ff.; and Residents, 62 ff.; and succession in Oudh, 71 ff.; recalls Bristow, 94; military reorganization of Oudh, 98 ff.; on need for cavalry, 99-100; refuses to recall Temporary Brigade, 106-7; and subsidiary system, 109, 197, 248-9; visit to Oudh (1781), 109,155 ff.; letter to Pitt, 119, 122-3; and Treaty of Fyzabad, 122-3,227 ff.; *Narrative*, 126 n., 140, 169, 173; and Ausan Singh, 140-1; Impeachment, 39, 141, 159, 167 ff., 172-5, 239; Defence, 143-4; reorganization of Benares, 144 ff.; Final visit to Benares, 150 ff.; opinion of Lucknow, 155; and Middleton, 157 ff.; and Begams, 159 ff.: and eunuchs, 175-6: and Faizullah Khan, 176-82: *Answer* of, 178 n.: and Farrukhabad, 182-4: charges against Middleton and Johnson, 184 ff.: and Bristow, 194-217, 223 ff.: and Haidar Beg Khan, 195 ff.: final visit to Oudh, 218-40: proposal to withdraw Residency, 219 ff., 245-6: *Memoirs*, 226: and Company's troops in Oudh, 226 ff.: and Emperor, 23-4, 229-39: and Sindhia, 233 ff.: and Sikhs, 234-5: and Crown, 241-2: letter to Moira quoted, 248-9: Mrs. Hastings, 133.
Hemu, 1.
Hindus, 1-2.
Holkar, Malhar Rao, 12, 238.
Haiderabad, 2, 241.

Imam Bakhsh, 96-7, 102-3.
Impeachment, the, 39, 141, 159, 167 ff, 172-5, 239.
Impey, Sir Elijah, 169, 170.
Ironside, Colonel, 220-1.
Ives, 222.

Jagdispur, 104.
Jahangir, 1.
Jaipur, 240.
Jats, 1, 11-12, 19, 78, 231.
Jaunpur, 3-4, 64, 115, 121, 259.
Jizya, 1.
Johnson, Dr., 60.
Johnson, Richard, 165,178,195,211, 224 .'charges against, 188-9,192-3.
Jowar Ali Khan, 163, 175.
Jumna, 144, 241.

Kandahar, 1, 35.
Karamnasa, 4, 10, 11.
Kaswar, 120-1.
Katehr, 41.
Khair-ud-din, Muhammad, 120.
Khalil, Mirza, 231.
Khwaja Basant Ali Khan, 75.
Kora, 5-7, 19-21, 23, 25-9, *3h* 35-9, 43-4, 51, 67, 77, 81-2, 84, 86, 91, 94, 104, 229-30, 232, 243.

Laldang, 46, 176-8, 180.
Lambert, 25.
Latafat Ali Khan, 75, 186.
Latifgarh, 31, 133.
Lawrell, 25-6, 37.
Leslie, Colonel, 104-5, 127.
Livius, 95 and n.
Lodis, 3, 41.
Lucknow, 71, 76,109, 155,158,164-5, 169, 182, 185, 189, 194, 204-5, 213-14, 218, 220, 227-9, 231, 236.
Lumsden, Major, 172.

Macartney, Lord, 47.
Macaulay, 40, 53, 110, 117.
MacDonald, Major, 172.
Macpherson, Sir John, 143,155,157, 174, 203, 211-12, 216, 223, 228, 240.
Madec, 230-1.
Madhya-desha, 3.
Madras, 47, 142-3, 241.
Mahabharata, 3.
Mahbub Ali Khan, 75.
Mahipnarain, Babu, 146, 150.
Mahmud of Ghazni, 3.
Malet, 240.
Malwa, 131, 143.
Manaich, 3.
Manjhi, 139.
Mama Ram, 110, 120-1.
Marathas, 1-2, 4-9, 11-13, 16, 18, 20-3, 25, 29, 31, 37-8, 40, 43-4, 48, 50-2, 76, 78, 87, 109, 133-4, 141-2, 144, 155, 166, 175, 230-2, 237, 241, 246: claims on Rohilkhand, 4: defeat at Panipat, 11:

Marathas *(cont.)*
demand *chauth,* 2, 16, 234, 240: invade Doab, 16: capture Delhi, 16, 20: demands on Shuja-ud-daulah, 19: retreat from northern India, 22: covet Kora and Allahabad, 28: threaten Rohilkhand, 42.
Markham, 127, 136-7, 139 n.
Martin, Colonel, 215-16.
Maulavi Mubin *Sadru'l Haqq,* 204.
Mayaffre, 137.
Memoirs Relative to the State of India, 226.
Middleton, Nathaniel, 45, 54 ff., 64 ff., 71-2, 76, 98, 103, 105, 138, 156, 162, 172, 175, 180-1, 194-7, 199, 209, 211, 213, 224, 231, 245-6: appointed Resident, 45: recalled, 62, 65 ff.: instructions, 64 ff., 95 ff.: salary, 64: perquisites, 95 ff.: re-appointed, 94: and assignment system, 103 ff.: and Begams, 162 ff.: and Faizullah Khan, 177 ff.: and subsidiary system, 243: opinion of Almas Ali Khan, 222: and Chunar agreement, 157 ff.: charges against, 184-92: report on Oudh, 97 ff.
Mill, 40, 117, 121 n., 148, 168 n., 169-70, 172, 244.
Mir Jafar, 4, 8.
Mir Qasim, 4-6, 8-9, 83.
Mirza Amani *(see* Asaf-ud-daulah)
Mirza Jahandar Shah, 229 ff., 235 ff., 236 n.
Mirza Jangali, 70.
Mirza Jawan Bakht *(see* Mirza Jahandar Shah).
Mirzapore, 34, 153-4.
Moira, Earl of, 248.
Monson, 46-7, 78, 123, 170, 247: and succession in Oudh, 71 ff.
Morgan, Colonel, 158, 163, 192, 221.
Motte, 33.
Mudaji Bhonsle, 155-6, 240.
Mughal Empire, 1, 3, 41, 87, 117, 119-20, 175: decline of, 1-2.
Muhammad Bashir Khan, 74-5.
Muhammad bin Tughluq, 3.
Muhammad Elich Khan, 31, 74-5, 86, 93-4-
Muhammad Shah, 121 and n.
Muhibbullah Khan, 58-9.
Muir, Colonel, 116, 143-4.
Mukhtar-ud-daulah *(see* Murtaza Khan, Saiyid).
Munro, Major, 4-5, 229.
Murshidabad, 17, 140.
Murtaza Khan, Saiyid, 74-5, 84, 86, 89 ff., 93, 160, 231: proposals for reform, 90 ff.: assassination of, 93.
Muzzafar Jang *(see* Farrukhabad).
Mysore, 2, 13, 15, 175, 226, 233-

Nadir Shah, 41,
Nagpur, 155.
Najaf Khan, 199, 230-3, 235, 237.
Najm-ud-daulah, 8, 71.
Nana Phadnavis, 238, 240.
Nandakumar, 116, 170.
Nankar, 118.
Narainpur, 135.
Narayan Rao, 42.
Narhan, no.
Nawab Bahadur, 70.
Nawab-wazir *(see* Shuja-ud-daulah).
Nepal, 3, 97, 154.
Nishapur, 4.
Nizam of Hyderabad, 241-2.
Northern Sarkars, 242, 249.

Orissa, 8, 37-8.
Orr, 205.
Osborne, Capt., 106-7.
Oudh, early history, 3-4: restored to Shuja-ud-daulah, 6 ff.: free trade with, 6, 9-10, 26, 34: Clive's policy towards, 6 ff., 22 ff.: English private traders in, 9: Treaty of 1768, 14-15: English Residency in, 45, 62 ff., 94 ff., 194 ff., 217, 219 ff.: Europeans in, 9, 64, 83, 105: succession in, 70 ff., 244-5: from 1775-81, 86 ff.: revenue system, 87 ff.: Nawab's troops, 88-9, 91-2, 98,105ff., 157, i67:Temporary Brigade, 94 ff.: Bristow's report on, 96 ff., 197 ff.: Middleton's report on, 97 ff.: Treaty of 1775, 122-4, 227 ff.: Treaty of 1781, 155 ff.: Hastings's visit (1781), 155 ff.: *jagirdars* in, 156, 161 ff., 174-5, 186, 225: Wellesley and, 184: Bristow the uncrowned King of, 194-217: Hastings's final visit, 218-40: Treaty of 1773, 226 ff., 242: Sikh menace to, 234-5: Shore's policy, 243-5, 247: Treaty of 1801, 244: Cornwallis and, 245-7: nawab's creditors, 245.

Palmer, Major, 178, 181-2, 186-7, 214-15, 218.
Panipat, second battle of, 1: third battle of, 11, 16, 229.

Paris, 8.
Pathans, 4, 41.
Patna, 4-5, 21, 111-14.
Permanent Brigade, 30, 35, 91, 105-7, 156, 166, 185, 219-20, 226 ff.
Persia, 70.
Persian, 117.
Peshwa, 42, 238-40.
Pitt, 122, 142: India Act, 47.
Plassey, 8.
Polier, Major, 65.
Poona, 8, 240.
Popham, Major, 137, 143-4-

Qajar dynasty, 70.
Qutb-ud-din Aibak, 3.

Raghoba (*see* Raghunath Rao).
Raghunath Rao, 12, 24, 42.
Raja Bhawani Singh, 165.
Raja Hindu Pat, 16.
Raja Tapar Chand, 96-7, 200.
Rajputs, 1, 3, 42, 240.
Ramayana, 3.
Ramghat, 20-1.
Ramnagar, 137.
Rampur, 46, 61, 176-7, 181-2.
Redfearn, 60-1.
Regulating Act, 46-7.
Rohilkhand, 4, 7, 18, 20 and n., 21, 25, 31, 41 ff., 51, 53, 56, 59, 67, 77, 81, 85, 91, 94, 97, 98,100,104, 165, 182, 207, 219, 234, 243: boundary with Oudh, 21: importance to Shuja-ud-daulah, 44.
Rohillas, 4-5, 11, 19, 21-2, 26, 31, 36, 41-4, 48-9, 75, 77-8, 81, 156, 176-82, 230, 234-5: alliance with Oudh, 19-20: defeat of, 45: not exterminated, 59-61.
Rohilla war, 22, 31, 41-61, 65-7, 83, 176: object of, 46, 48: Majority's criticism of, 47 ff.: question of atrocities, 48 ff.
Rumbold, 47.
Russell, 14, 218.
Rustam Ali, 120-1.

Saadat Ali Khan, Mirza, 69-70, 72, 78, 231, 244.
Saadat Khan, Burhan-ul-mulk, 3-4.
Safdar Jang, 4, 20, 41, 74-5, 121, 160, 186, 225.
Sai, 3.
Salar Masud Ghazi, 3.
Salbai, 238, 240.
Sambhunath, 132.
Samru, 5-6, 8, 13, 83, 230-1.
Sannyasis, 17, 132.
Sarwar, 171.
Scott, 33, 137.
Second Brigade, 21, 43, 92.
Select Committee, 5, 7, 18, 43, 52.
Shan* Khan, Mirza, 233.
Shah Alam (*see* Emperor).
Shah Jahan, 1, 118.
Shahrah, 104.
Shee, George, 183.
Sher Shah, 41.
Sheridan, 169.
Shore, Sir John, 149, 243-5, 247.
Shuja-ud-daulah, 3-16, 20-3, 26, 42-3,48-9, 52-3, 56-7, 69-73, 75-7, 81-2, 86-7, 90, 93,108,111-12, I14-16, 121, 123-4, 140,159-61, 168, 171, 175-6, 207, 214, 222, 226-7: conduct after Buxar, 5: Treaty of Allahabad with, 6 ff.: on free trade with Oudh, 6, 9, 26, 34-5: character, 7, 68 ff.: military preparations of, 7, 13-14: and conference of Chupra, 11: covets Bundelkhand, 12, 87: wishes to control Emperor, 13, 25: Treaty of 1768 with, 14-15: and Marathas, 18-19: and Rohillas, 19-20, 29, 31, 42-3: and Balwant Singh, 26, 31: at Benares Conference, 27 ff.: and Kora and Allahabad, 27-9, 35: Treaty of Benares with, 30, 35 ff.: Clive and, 31-2: and Chait Singh, 31-4, 64-5: family and Court, 68 ff.: dread of Afghan invasion, 34-5: and Champion, 45 ff.: and Faizullah Khan, 45-6: Majority's criticism of, 47 ff., 67 ff.: and atrocities, 53 ff.: and English Resident, 45, 62 ff.: and Crown, 242: Francis on, 68: Hastings's opinion of, 68: death of, 67-8, 74.
Sikhs, 1, 11, 177, 230, 234, 240.
Simes, 137.
Sindhia, Mahadaji, 131, 144, 220-1 233 ff.: made *wakil-i-mutlaq,* 238: death of, 239.
Sirhind, 41.
Sivaji, 89.
Siyar-al-Mutakhkharin, 41.
Smith, Colonel, 13-15, 218.
Stables, 174, 203, 211, 216, 218, 223, 228.
Stalker, 137.
Stephen, Sir James, 169-70.
Stewart, Frederick, 66.
Stibbert, General, 220.

Strachey, J., 22, 45.
Subsidiary system, 242 ff.
Suffren, Bailli de, 241.
Sujan Singh, 144.
'Sulh-i-Kull, 1.
gurs, 41.

Tafzihu'l Ghafilin, 171-2, 192 n:. 216.
Tarai, 3.
Tellinga rajas, 96.
Temporary Brigade, 92 ff., 105-7, 109, 156, 166, 184, 185 n., 186, 190.
Third Brigade, 11.
Thurlow, Lord, 175.
Tibet, 154.
Timur Shah, 87.
Tipu Sultan, 234.
Tuhfa-i-Taza, 120.

Ujjainiya Rajputs, 118.
Umraogir, 76, 89.

Vansittart, 25.
Verelst, 11-12, 32.

Wazir *(see* Shuja-ud-daulah).
Wazir Ali, 244.
Wellesley, 184, 243-4.
Wheler, 95 n., 129, 142, 155, 157, 174, 203, 210-11, 216, 218, 223.
Whitehill, 47.
Willes, 184.
Wombwell, 194.

Zabitah Khan, 20, 177.
Zamindar, status of, 118 ff.; types in Bengal, 119-20.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY WESTERN PRINTING SERVICES LTD., BRISTOL