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LIFE AND WORK
OF
MOHAN LAL KASHMIRI
1812-1877

HARI RAM GUPTA, M.A., PH.D.

*Professor Forman Christian College, Lahore, & Author of
History of the Sikhs from 1739 to 1799 in two
volumes, and Studies in Later Mughal
History of the Panjab, 1707-1793.*

WITH A FOREWORD

BY

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

LAHORE
MINERVA BOOK SHOP
1943

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"Human life is everywhere a state in
which much is to be endured and little
to be enjoyed."

SAMUEL JOHNSON. 1709-1784

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TO
THE MEMORY OF
DR. S. K. DATTA

Who wished this work to be published

FOREWORD

Many years ago—it is so long ago that I have forgotten where and when it was, in England or in India—I came across two battered volumes, heavy with age, as I was indulging in the pleasant pastime of browsing in a bookshop. They had been published in the early forties of the nineteenth century in England and the title attracted me. They were the *Memoirs and Journal of Mohan Lai Kashmerian*. The title was attractive and even more so the picture of a remarkably handsome young man which was given as a frontispiece. Who was this very attractive young Indian, I wondered, hailing from my old homeland of Kashmir, who had ventured so far, and, what is more, written about his travels in the English language, so long ago ? I had never heard of him. I was filled with excitement, as of a new discovery, and concluding my bargain with the keeper of the book-shop, hastened away with these volumes.

I read them and my interest and excitement grew. Here was a person full of the spirit of adventure, to whom adventure came in full measure before he was out of his boyhood. He did not shrink from it, but welcomed it, and wrote about it, so that others might share it a little with him. Danger and difficulty were his constant companions, and disasters sometimes overwhelmed his party. But he never seems to have lost his resourcefulness and his quick mind and soft tongue were equal to any occasion. He had an amazing aptitude for the ways and intrigues of diplomacy, and it is astonishing how he could win over even hardened opponents to his side. The British Power profited by Mohan Lai's ability fully. Often, as Mohan Lai admits sorrowfully, he gave definite pledges on behalf of the British authority, which were not subsequently kept

In a free India a man like Mohan Lai would have risen to the topmost rungs of the political ladder. Under early British rule, whatever he might be or whatever he might do he could not rise higher than the position of a Mir Munshi or at most a Deputy Collector. After his first exciting fifteen years or so, his life seems to have become dull and empty. There was apparently no place or activity suitable for him in India, and he must have lived largely in the past when he was the honoured guest of the Rulers of Asia and Europe, or when he was a central figure in a stirring drama of life and death. Probably this very prominence that came to him early in life became an obstacle in later years. His superior British officers were jealous of his ability and of his contacts with sovereigns and others, who were beyond their reach. Mohan Lai's later years are pathetic and depressing. Accustoming himself to an expensive standard of living, he was continually in debt and sending appeals to the British authorities for help or compensation for the moneys spent by him during the Kabul campaigns. These appeals were rejected.

When I first read Mohan Lai's Journal and Memoirs, I was eager to know more about him. I managed to obtain his Life of Dost Mohammed, but this did not help me much. I enquired from Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who is a repository of all manner of curious information and knowledge. Sir Tej Bahadur knew of Mohan Lai and his family but he could not enlighten me much. I was delighted to learn, therefore, from Dr. S.K. Datta that one of his students had undertaken to write a Life of Mohan Lai. Shri Hari Ram Gupta has evidently taken great pains over this work and he has done something that was worth doing.

This book, enables us to know something about a fascinating person. It gives us intimate and revealing glimpses of the

early days of British rule in north India, of the Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, of the British campaigns through Sind and in Afghanistan, of the disasters in Kabul, and of the prevailing conditions in Central Asia in the thirties of the nineteenth century. These glimpses are not flattering to the British.

For a student of history and of economic and social conditions, this book has importance. There is one thing, however, that I miss in it. There is very little about Mohan Lai as a man or about his personal life. That he was an adventurer there is no doubt, but he was something much more, and even his adventures have a high quality. Welcoming risk and danger, and facing death often enough, he was yet a lover of pleasure and the soft ways of life—a politician and scholar, with something of the poet and the artist in him, which peeps out continually from his *Memoirs and Travels*. In the middle of a narrative of political happenings and economic data, he begins to admire the charm of nature, or to describe the beauty of the women he saw in the market-place or drawing water from a village well.

I should like to know more about this unusual and attractive and much married man. I should like to know what happened to his daughter who was sent to England for her education. Perhaps now that attention is being directed to Mohan Lai by this book, more information will be forthcoming from various sources.

Allahabad,
July 13, 1940.

Jawaharlal Nehru

PREFACE

Mohan Lal was a great traveller, brilliant diplomat, reputed author, the first Kashmiri to learn English and probably the first Indian to educate his daughter in England. He commenced his travels at the young age of eighteen, and journeyed through the Panjab, North-West Frontier Province, Afghanistan Turkistan, Khorasan, Iran, Baluchistan, Sind and Northern India; and later on visited Egypt, England, Scotland, Ireland, Belgium and Germany. Thus in Asia alone his travels extended from Calcutta to Qochan and from Bokhara to Poona. Through all his wanderings he won the approbation of all his companions for* "displaying everywhere a rare union of zeal, tact and fidelity."¹ Wherever he went, a warm welcome awaited him by high and low, and rich and poor Dr. Gerard, one of his companions, wrote about him from Kabul:—"Shah Kamran of Herat was delighted with his accomplished Persian and unobtrusive address. At Kandahar he was much respected by *Sirdar* Raheem Dil Khan, who praised his acquisitions, and regretted that his sons could not partake of them. Here he is a favourite with the rulers. In truth, I know not of an exception in our long journey, to the uniform civility he has commanded."²

Mirza Abbas, the Prince Royal of Iran, created him at the age of twenty a Knight of the Persian Order of the Lion and Sun. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, the King of Afghanistan, granted him an Order of the Durrani Empire. Maharaja Ranjit Singh presented him with Rs. 500 and a robe of honour

¹ Havelock, i, 150.

² Asiatic Journal, July, 1834, pp. 171-2.

consisting of seven pieces. The Mughal Emperor, Muhammad Akbar Shah, conferred upon him a *khilat* "with some jewels on a turban which his majesty tied with his own hands."

Such honours were paid to him not only by the Oriental potentates; but he was "well received in England and other parts of Europe by the very first people, kings and queens not excepted." Queen Victoria invited him to a royal ball. Prince Albert called him for an interview at the Buckingham Palace. In Germany, Frederick William IV, the King of Prussia, and the Queen, entertained him at a dinner. The King also presented him with a portrait of himself, bearing an inscription in his own hand.

In diplomacy he was unsurpassed. Kaye calls him a "charmer"¹ of men. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru speaks of him as one, who in a free India "would have risen to the topmost rungs of the political ladder." His achievements during the first Afghan War, when he was only twenty-six years old, were most remarkable. His charm, his tact, his patience, his lucid intelligence, his incredible grasp of detail, and his clear understanding of the Afghan character, combined to give him an equipment, which was not found to that degree even in those officers who were in charge of the diplomatic affairs in that country; and who frequently depended upon him for advice in most delicate matters.

He was an author of no mean repute. On his return from Central Asia in 1834/he "published a Journal of his tour, which considered as the work of an Asiatic in a foreign tongue, may be reckoned a most creditable production.*" Twelve years

¹ History of the War in Afghanistan, 1, 459.

¹ Havdock, 1,150.

later this **work** was again printed with an additional account of his journey across Sind and Afghanistan and his visit to Europe. At the same time he published his *Life of Dost Mohammed Khan*, the Amir of Kabul, in two volumes. On reading his article on the Greek antiquities in Afghanistan, James Tod wrote that "this most intelligent Hindu ought to be made an honorary member of every Asiatic Society."¹ About his style of English, the Editor of the *Calcutta Englishman* remarks :—"He expresses himself with perfect clearness and intelligibility in English, though not with very idiomatic correctness."² His eccentric phraseology, however, is distasteful. He spoke "English with good accent and much idiomatic propriety,"³ and "with much fluency and readiness."⁴

Mohan Lai was obliged to retire at the young age of thirty-two on a pension of £ 1,000 per annum. There is no doubt that if he had been allowed to continue in the British service, he would have won much greater renown.

Most of my material is drawn from the Panjab Government Record Office, Lahore, and the Imperial Record Department, New Delhi. I also consulted Mohan Lai's works and various other books and journals which contained any reference to him. Besides, I tried, as far as possible, to compare and contrast Mohan Lai's statements with other contemporary authorities, and expressed their views in the foot-notes, which in many cases have become rather lengthy.

I have not had much access to material throwing light on his private life, and this work is, consequently, based on

¹ *Asiatic Journal*, May—August, 1835, vol XLV, p.g.

² Quoted in Vincent Eyre's *Journal*, Appendix E, p, 412.

³ *Havelock*, 1,149.

⁴ *Asiatic Journal*, October, 1835, Vol, XLIV, p, 88.

official documents. Agha Hyder Hasan of Hyderabad (Deccan) a grandson of Mohan Lai, stated that Mohan Lai had kept a regular diary from 1831 till his death. These volumes **were** taken away by a member of the family in 1922 to Calcutta, and disposed of to an American gentleman whose address is unknown.

In conclusion, I have to record my most grateful thanks to the late Dr. S. K. Datta, the Principal of Forman Christian College, at whose earnest desire and with whose unfailing support, I undertook, completed and published this work. The publication of this book would have given him genuine pleasure if he had lived to see it in the hands of the public; but unluckily he suddenly died of heart failure on the 16th June, 1942. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Professor Ross Wilson, Head of the Department of History, Forman Christian College, for a critical examination of the text. I am greatly indebted to Professor K. P. Shungloo, M. A. (Panjab), B. A. Hons. (Oxon), and to Professor Wilfred C. Smith for carefully revising the Manuscript. I acknowledge my obligations to Dr. S. N. Sen, Keeper of the Imperial Records, and to Dr. G. L. Chopra, Keeper of the Panjab Government Records, for facilities to consult the records under their charge. The University of the Panjab and the Forman Christian College generously granted a loan in aid of this publication.

Lahore,
13th April, 1943.

Hari Ram Gupta.

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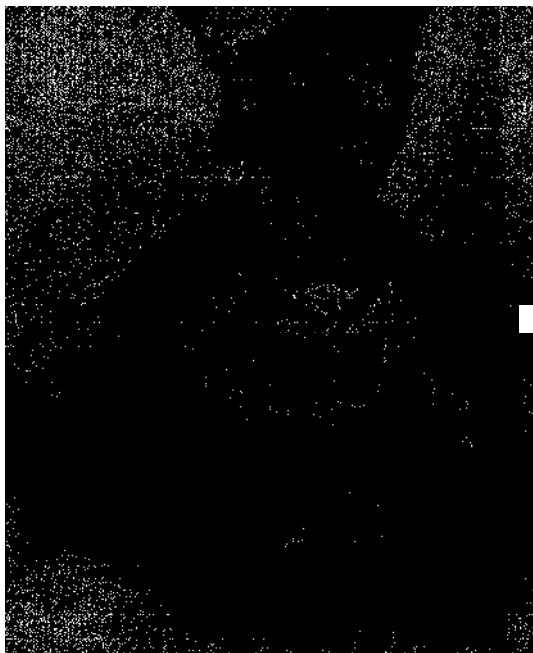
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MOHUNLAL KASHMIRI

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

1812-1831

I. Ancestry and Birth

In every person's life the factors of inheritance and environment play an important part. The first decides the destiny before one is born and the second soon after birth. This is clearly reflected in the career of Mohan Lai, the subject of this story. Mohan Lai belonged to a family of Kashmiri Pandits, a people noted for their fine physique and keen intellect. The European traveller Baron Hugel was fascinated by their "white skin, their clear though colourless complexion, their long, projecting, almost Jewish features, with dark brown or black hair and beard."¹

The Pandits till recently formed the entire bureaucracy in every successive Government of Kashmir, and wielded appreciable influence in the courts of many princes, including the Mughal Emperors and Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Justice Campbell painted the following picture of them —

"They are almost all educated and exceedingly clever.... They rule by the brain and the pen, and not by the sword. It is this character which has gained them the favour of so many rulers of a different faith — The Kashmiri Pandits are known all over Northern India as a very clever and energetic race of office-seekers. As a body they excel in acuteness the same number of any other race with whom

¹ 1 travels in Kashmir and the Panjab, 55. "They are a handsome race of men with fine well-cut features, small hands and feet, and good eluvi figures." cf Imperial Gazetteer of India, Kashmir and Jammu, 1909, p. 39.

they come in contact...«Almost all the secular Pandits use the Persian character freely ; they are perfectly versatile, and serving abroad, will mount a horse, gird on a sword, and assume at a push a semi-military air.”¹

Mohan Lai's family was an offshoot of the Zutshi sub-caste [Ratrabhag Gotar].^a The exact date when Mohan Lai's ancestors migrated to Delhi is not known; but it is certain that the family's fortune was at its height during the time of his great grand-father Pandit Mani Ram,⁸ who enjoyed a high rank with the title of Raja at the Mughal Court⁴ in the reign of Emperor Shah Alam I I⁵ (1759-1806). He possessed a considerable estate worth about Rs. 14,000 a year.⁶

¹ Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, Supplementary number, 1866, pp. 57-59.

* Gotar is a further sub-division of a sub-caste, meaning original family name.

³ Mohan Lai in his Journal calls Mani Ram his grand-father; but the detailed genealogical table of Pandit Iqbal Kishan of Jodhpur indicates him the great grand-father.

⁴ A Marathi letter dated the 26th September, 1783, gives some details of Raja Mam Ram's transactions in the Imperial Court, cf. D1111 Yethil. 1, 91.

* He was son of the Emperor, Alamgir I I. He was born on June 15. 1728, and was known as the Shahzada Ah Gauhar. On the death of his father in 1759, he assumed the title of Shah Alam. He was in Bihar at this time. He was routed near Patna in 1760 by Caillaud and Miran. He was taken prisoner by Major Carnac in 1761 in Bihar, but was allowed to retire to Oudh. After the battle of Buxar he accepted British protection, and granted the diwani to Clive in 1765. In 1771 he took protection with Mahadji Sindhia, who proclaimed him Emperor in Delhi. In 1788 he was persecuted and blinded by Ghulam Qadir Rohilla. He was again taken under British protection in 1803. He died on November 10, 1806.

* Journal, p. iii, footnote. Philip Egerton, Collector of Delhi, estimated it at Rs. 40,000 a year. cf. Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 25th August, 1855, Nos. 3-8.

Mohan Lai's father was Rai Brahm Nath *alias* Budh Singh. The latter name was given to him by the family nurse as he was born on Wednesday. The Rai was so strikingly handsome that in Delhi while riding on horseback through Sitaram bazar the shopkeepers and others left off their business to have a look at him. He was married into a Kaul family of Gwalior.¹

It is said that some enmity existed between Rai Budh Singh and the Nawab² of Ferozepur Jhirka. Once the Rai was riding home from Chandni Chauk when he met the Nawab in the Dariba. The Nawab who was riding an elephant passed some taunting remarks in the hearing of the Rai. The Rai was cut to the quick and the same night he organised an expedition to the Nawab's residence in which his favourite mistress fell into the Rai's hands. The unfortunate woman was retained as a concubine by Budh Singh. He had a daughter by her who was afterwards married to one Mr. Hodges, an Anglo-Indian.³

Soon afterwards the family fortunes began to decline. Budh Singh's estates were situated mostly in the territory of Ferozepur Jhirka, Loharu and Jhajjar. The Nawab seized some of his villages.⁴ Basti Ram, a cousin of Budh Singh,

¹ Pt. Iqbal Kishan's Manuscript history of the family.

² Pt. Iqbal Kishan's MS calls him Shams-ud-din Ahmad Khan (1827-1835), which is evidently wrong. At this time Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan was ruling, cf. Massy's *Chiefs and Families of Note*, 90-92.

³ Pt Iqbal Kishan's MS. history of the Family.

⁴ It will be interesting to note that the enmity between the two families did not last, long, and on the contrary great intimacy prevailed between the descendantb of the next generation. Khan Bahadur Mirza Shams-ud-din of Loharu informed me that his grand-father Nawab Mirza Ala-ud-din Ahmad Khan [1833-1884], ruler of Loharu State,

fearing the loss of his own share of the lands, filed a suit for the partition of the estates. Besides, the family had been living for a long time far above its income, and had consequently run heavily into debt. The creditors sued Budh Singh, and all the family lands were lost. "Poverty led to starvation, and matters came to such a pass that if the kettle was placed on the fire to boil there was no rice to put into it."¹

In this predicament Budh Singh sought temporary service under Mountstuart Elphinstone.² He accompanied him in the capacity of Persian Secretary to Peshawar. At this time he realized the advantages of the knowledge of English which opened new careers for young men.³ He retired from this position about the close of 1809, and his financial condition soon relapsed. It was in 1812, when the Rai was facing sore straits, that his son Ram Nath alias Mohan Lai was born.⁴

whose pen name was "Alai" wrote a poem in Persian in praise of Agha Hasan Jan [Mohan Lai]. He kindly supplied me a copy of this poem, which cannot be reproduced here for want of space

¹ Pt. Iqbal Kishan's MS history of the Family.

² Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779-1859), Governor of Bombay, joined the Bengal Civil Service in 1796. In 1801 he was appointed assistant to the Agent, Governor-General at Poona. In 1803 he became Resident at Nagpur in the Court of Bhonsla. In 1818 he was sent on a Mission to Kabul. He left Delhi on the 13th October, 1808, and passing through Bikaner, Bahawalpur, Multan, Leiah, Derah Ismail Khan, Kalabagh and Kohat, reached Peshawar on the 25th February, 1809. But his Mission effected little. The Afghan King did not allow him to pass beyond Peshawar, where he met Elphinstone, and engaged him in useless negotiations. Though unsuccessful as an Envoy, he supplied valuable information regarding Afghanistan. cf. Dictionary of National Biography, and Elphinstone's Caubul, pp. 1-44.

³ Trevelyan's Memoir in Journal, ix.

⁴ Mohan Lai was 22 years old in 1834. cf. Journal, v.

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Genealogical table prepared by Pt. Iqbal Kishan :—

Pandit Narain Das Mota

Rai Damodar Pandit

Raja Pt. Kanhiya Ram

Raja Pt. Mam Ram

Rai Moti Ram

Raja Shambhu Natli

Raja Pt Rhawani Das

liasti Kam Thakur Das

Bibhambar Nath
(died issueless)

Jwala Nath

Gopal Nath
(alias Abbaji)

Shib Ram

Rai lirahm Nath
(alias Budh bmgh)

Radhai Kishan

Karta Kishan

Kidar Nath
(died in
1855 at
Delhi)

Ram Nath
alias
MOHAN LAL

[Accompanied Mohan
Lai from Delhi and died
at Multan on the 20th
December, 1835 J

Iqbal Kishan

Suraj Kishan

Indar Kishan

2. Education

Mohan Lai was brought up under poor circumstances, the intensity of which was keenly felt by the young sapling as the family had recently been reduced from affluence to poverty. * He was taught Urdu and Persian at home, and in the latter language he acquired a proficiency that was of immense value to him in later life.

An opportunity offered itself to Budh Singh to give his sons an English education. The Persian College at Delhi, founded in 1792 and supported by voluntary contributions, was on the verge of dissolution on account of financial stringency. It was restored to its original position in 1823 by the support of the British Government. In 1828 an English class was opened in this College. The same year Lord Amherst, the Governor-General of India, paid a visit to this institution,⁸ and as a consequence the College gained greater importance. In 1829 it acquired a large accession of income by the munificent gift of Rs. 170,000 from Nawab Itimad-ud-daulah, formerly minister at Lucknow. The College was then divided into two departments. The English class was converted into a separate and independent institution, which came to be called the "Delhi

¹ Mohan Lai says .—" No man who like myself has fallen into poverty, with no place to reside in, and no money to live upon, can prosecute his studies with the requisite spirit But I ought not to conceal that during these unlucky days, I was always supported by Mr. C E. Trevelyan, who consoled me by friendly and encouraging speech, for which under my present more prosperous fortune, I feel deeply grateful " Journal, iii, f. n.

* Lord Amherst was the first Governor-General to visit the Old Imperial Capital and the new summer seat of the British Government at Simla

English College".¹ It was placed under the management of a committee consisting of Mr. T. T. Metcalfe,⁸ Dr. Rankin and Mr. C. E. Trevelyan ;³ while Mr. Rennell served as a teacher.⁴

¹ The particulars of this institution in 1840 were as follows :—

Members of the Committee •—		T. T. Metcalfe	
		12 Colvm	
		J. L. Mowatt	
		D i. Ross	
		Sayyid Ilamid Ah Khan	
Secretary—	J H Taylor		
Headmaster—	F. Taylor		Salary Hs. 200 p m.
2nd master—	I>. Taylor		" 110 "
3rd " —	Ram Kishan		" 60 "
4th " —	Shiv Prashad		" 20 "
5th " —	Jawahir I-al		" 20 "
Urdu Teacher—	Chatarbhuji		" 20 "
Writing master—	Taruknath Bose..		it 30 "
Librarian—	Ajudhia Piashad		" 10 "

The receipts for 1839-4" were equal to disbursements, viz , Rs. 7,504. In 1834 there were 181 students, and in 1835 the number was 188, of whom 128 were Hindus, 54 Muslims and 6 Christians. In 1836 the number fell to 103 owing to the abolition of stipends. At the commencement of 1838 there were 84 students, and at its close 123. cf Agra and Calcutta Gazetteer, 1840, part I I I , p. 314.

¹ Sir Thomas Theophilus Metcalfe entered the Bengal Civil Service in 1813, held various appointments in the Delhi territory, and was Commissioner and Governor-Gcnerl's Agent at Delhi from 1835 to his death in 1853.

³ Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan (1807-1886), Governor of Madras, joined the Bengal Civil Service as a writer in 1826 In 1827 he took up his appointment as assistant to Sir Charles Theophilus Metcalfe at Delhi, where he stayed for four years. In 1831 he was appointed Deputy Secretary to the Government in the Political Department at Calcutta. In 1834 he was married to the sister of Lord Macau lay, then a member of the Supreme Council of India. In 1840 he became Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, London, which post he held for nineteen years. In 1859 he was appointed Governor of Madras

⁴ cf. Trevelyan's Memoir, Journal, IX , Shahamat Ah, v—\ 111; C. F Andrews's Zaka Ullah of Delhi, 34 , Asiatic Journal, January, 1836, Vol. XLVII, p. 6 , Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, 22nd March, 1877.

Budh Singh availed himself of this opportunity, and admitted his "clever and promising"¹ younger son, Mohan Lai, to the English class. Shahamat Ali was another student who joined immediately afterwards. The number then increased to six, and continued so for several weeks. Some of these students were selected from the Persian classes of the College, while others were taken from the city on application.² The names of these students as they "stood in gradation" are as follows:—

- i. Ram Kishan, the cleverest and most intelligent student who "made the earliest and greatest progress of all his fellows."
2. Shahamat Ali.
3. Shiv Prashad.
4. Mohan Lai.
5. Jawahir Lai.
6. Hadi Husain.³

The introduction of the study of English evoked opposition from certain religious quarters, the story of which is vividly told in the pages of Shahamat Ali and Zaka Ullah of Delhi. The kindness and sympathy of the teachers and the managing

¹ Asiatic Journal, September—December, 1833, Vol. XL, p. 120

² The students in the English Class generally received stipends in order to enable them to prosecute their studies. "These stipends are their chief, very often their sole means of living, whilst absent from their houses, and to deprive them of these means is to banish them from the College" Asiatic journal, January—April, 1836, p. 3, cf Pt Iqbal Kishan's MS. history.

³ Ram Kishan, Shiv Prashad and Jawahir Lal became teachers in the parent institution, Shahamat Ali accompanied Captain Wade to Kabul in the capacity of a Munshi and later in life rose to the position of Prime Minister of Indore State, while nothing is known about Hadi Husain.

committee, however, won the confidence of the people with the result that the number of students began to increase rapidly.¹

Mohan Lai's instruction in the English language at the Delhi College lasted nearly thicc years^a He was not happy as a student, for the idea of belonging to «i respectable family sunk in poverty preyed upon his mind. He often thought that his poverty made it impossible for him to court higher society. But he possessed many qualities such as a handsome appearance a genial disposition, open mindedncss, dimming manners and sagacity,⁸ which won him several friends Among them was C. E. Trevelyan, who took the greatest interest in him and kept his dejected spirits buoyant and cheerful as is stated by Mohan Lai himself.⁴ Trevelyan had high opinion of Mohan Lai:—

"The hero of our tale pursued his studies here for upwards of two years during which he was principally distinguished for his amiable and gentle disposition, and unassuming deportment. Ram Krishan always kept somewhat m advance of him in the intellectual race, but none made such an

¹ C. F Andrews's Zaka Ullah of Delhi, 34 , Trevrlyan's Memoir, Journal, IX

²Journal, Preface, III Dr. Gcraid is in the wrong in sa\mg * - " Mohun Lai was not I believe moic than twenty months at school, certainly under two years." Pan jab Rcroids, Hook 105, Letter 30, dated the 20th March, 1834.

⁸ Asiatic Journal, May—August, 1835, vol. xlv, p. 9.

⁴ Mohan Lai writes — "lie gave me a document in which he promised to promote my prosperity in the world, as far .is lay in his power, such a thing was undoubtedly most gratifying to my broken heart, and proved the means of exciting my desire for learning" Journal, Preface, III. It may be pointed out that Trevelyan kept his promise as best as he could, as the following pages will reveal.

impression upon the hearts of all acquainted with him as Moban Lai. Other students might command in a greater degree the respect of visitors to the College, but Mohan Lai won their affections, and the natural grace of his simple and unaffected manners made him an universal favourite."¹

Mohan Lai was very much liked by F. Taylor, the head-master and his father J. H. Taylor, the secretary of the Academy, and they appointed him one of the assistant teachers, which job he held along with his studentship. Besides, he attracted the attention of other members of the managing committee, particularly of T. T. Metcalfe, who gave him every encouragement in the pursuit of his studies. He also received verbal instructions from J. Prinsep² in "various branches of science," and learnt from him "how to draw and take sketches of different views."⁸

¹ Trevelyan's Memoir, Journal, xi—xii.

"James Prinsep (1779;—1840), architect and orientalist, came to India in 1819 and was appointed assistant assay-master at the Calcutta mint under the famous Dr. H. H. Wilson, afterwards Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford. Soon afterwards Pnnsep was transferred to Benares as assay-master in the mint, and retained that office until 1830, when he was again transferred to Calcutta. It was during his occasional visits to Delhi that Mohan Lai came into contact with him.

* Journal, Preface, iv—v.

CHAPTER II

TRAVELS FROM DELHI TO BOKHARA

1831-1832

J. Preparation for Journey into Central Asia

In 1831 there arrived at Delhi Mr. Fitzgerald of the Bengal Civil Service, in the capacity of Secretary to the Delhi Residency. One day he visited the College, and was attracted by Mohan Lai's "congeniality of disposition." They soon became "frequent associates." On Sunday, the 18th December, 1831, Mohan Lai paid a visit to Mr. Fitzgerald, and there met Alexander Burnes,¹ Assistant Resident in Cutch, who was then about to undertake a journey through Central Asia. Burnes was on the look-out for a person who could serve him as a Persian interpreter. On meeting Mohan Lai he "became sensible of his peculiar qualifications," and asked for his services on a salary of Rs. 1,000 per annum⁸. Finding Mohan Lai inclined towards the proposal, he sent for his father and prevailed upon him to permit his son to accompany him during his travels promising to look after him "like his own son."

¹ Sir Alexander Burnes (1805-41) joined the Bombay native infantry in 1821. He devoted himself to the study of Indian languages and was therefore selected for the post of regimental interpreter, and shortly afterwards for that of adjutant. In 1825 he was appointed to the quartermaster general's department. In 1829 he was transferred to the political department as assistant to the political resident in Cutch. In 1830 he was sent on a complimentary mission to Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

¹ Imperial Records, Political Department, 21st August, 1836, No. 33.

Fitzgerald and Trevelyan also persuaded Budh Singh, **and** consequently Mohan Lai was appointed as a Munshi¹.

Alexander Burnes had already visited Lord William Bentinck at Simla and secured his approval of his journey, the Governor-General being of the opinion "that a knowledge of the general conditions of the countries through which he was to travel would be useful to the British Government independent of other advantage, which might be expected from such a journey." Burnes was instructed to appear as a private individual, but the terms of the passports, without showing him as an agent of the Government, indicated that it was

¹ Mohan Lai says that he took the job as a "Persian Munshi." Journal, z. Later on when Mohan Lai attained to a high position, he held the designation of "Munshi" in contempt, though in all correspondence and books relating to him he is referred to as such. Then he assumed the dignified appendage of "Esquire", and preferred to be addressed as "Mohan Lai Esquire." While reprinting his Journal in 1846 under the title of "Travels," he writes in a footnote on page 1:—"I was not Munshi of Sir A. Burnes, he had a Munshi from Bombay named Mohamed AH." But that Muhammad Ah was a Surveyor and Mohan Lai a Munshi will be clear from the following passage from Sir A. Burnes's *Travels into Bokhara*, vol. i, Preface, xi-xii:—"I was also attended by a native Surveyor, Mahomed Ah, a public servant, who had been educated in the Engineer Institution of Bombay, under Captain G. Jervis, of the Engineers; and who had entitled himself to my utmost confidence by faithful and devoted conduct on many trying occasions during the voyage to Lahore. I also took a Hindoo lad, of Cashmere family, named Mohun Lai, who had been educated at the English Institution at Delhi, as he would assist me in my Persian correspondence; the forms of which amount to a science in the East." In the certificate given by Burnes to Mohun Lai at Meshad dated the 24th September, 1832, while parting from his fellow travellers for Europe he says :—"Mohun Lai served with me in the capacity of Persian Moonshee." cf. Panjab Records, Book 140, Letter 20.

interested in his good treatment. Dr. Gerard,¹ of the Bengal Medical Service, had also joined Burnes in this perilous enterprise. Muhammad AH, a surveyor, educated in the Engineer Institute of Bombay, also accompanied the traveller. It was decided that Mohan Lai should join the party at Ludhiana.²

2. Journey to Ludhiana, 21st to 30th December, 1831

Mohan Lai was yet in his teens and had never been away from the parental roof. Many suspicions might have lurked in his mind about the hazardous journey, when travelling on horseback was the swiftest means of communication, and the roads and public highways were generally infested with thieves and robbers ; the more so, as they had to pass through lands of hostile people who were different in religion and culture. But his young and adventurous mind was jubilant over the prospect of the enterprise which might bring him great prizes.

Mohan Lai left Delhi on the 21st December, 1831, arriving at Panipat on the 23rd. On the road he met the Maharaja of Patiala⁸ who was on his way to Delhi to see Lord William Bentinck. The Maharaja sent for Mohan Lai, and alter

¹ James Gilbert Gerard, M. D. (1795-1835) was appointed assistant surgeon on the Bengal establishment in 1814, and became surgeon in 1826. He accompanied his brother Alexander Gerard, the famous Himalayan explorer, in several of his Himalayan journeys, and was the author of two brochures. He chiefly served with the 1st Nussereabad battalion in the hills. In 1831 he volunteered to accompany Alexander Burnes. His health was not good and this trip nearly killed him. He returned from this tour in 1834 in ruined health and died next year at Subathoo on the 31st March, 1835.

¹ Journal, 1; Travels, 1-2 ; Asiatic Journal, May, 1834. Vol xlii, p. 223.

¹ Maharaja Karam Singh, 1814-1845.

making enquiries about the Governor-General's camp he presented him with a dish of sweetmeats.¹

The journey from Panipat to Karnal was not without excitement. Mohan Lai was taken ill at Panipat, and he was obliged to travel on a small pony. It began to rain when he had hardly covered two miles from the town. Drenched to the skin he continued his march. He came across two French merchants. He galloped his pony as fast as his legs could carry him in order to reach Karnal to enable him to change. But his saddle broke when he was at Gharaunda, 20 miles from Panipat. He sent his servant to this village to get the saddle repaired. The servant did not appear for a long time, and Mohan Lai, being afraid of a possible encounter with robbers, rode on on the bare back of the pony and reached Karnal in the evening. Soon after, his servant also arrived. It was still raining and difficult to find shelter. Mohan Lai was refused room by an inn-keeper for want of accommodation, but his youth, pleasant manners and wet clothes attracted the notice of a young girl, who arranged a bed for him.* ,

The 26th of December found Mohan Lai at Thanesar where the Sikh lady ruler of the place treated all visitors "with rich and delicious victuals" at her cost. In the evening he went to bathe in a tank. Here a Brahmin, to his great astonishment, recited the names of all his ancestors, and was therefore rewarded with a rupee and a piece of cloth. The next day he reached Ambala, and was impressed by the neatness of the place. He dined with Kidar Nath, the younger brother of Dina Nath, the accountant-general of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. From Ambala he travelled in the rains, reaching Ludhiana

¹ Journal, 1-2 ; Travels, 2.

² Journal, 2-3; Travels, 3-4.

on the 30th December, 1831. Here he stayed till the and January, 1832, and met Alexander Burnes, Captain Wade¹ and Dr. Murray [Surgeon, 4th Regiment, Native Infantry]. Ludhiana failed to impress Mohan Lai in spite of its being a thickly populated British cantonment.¹

5. Ludhiana to Lahore, 3rd to 17th January, 1832

Having secured the permission of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to journey through the Panjab, Burnes and his companions left Ludhiana on the 3rd January, 1832, and marched along the left bank* of the Sutlej. At Sadra [about 25 miles] they were joined by a cavalry band of Ranjit Singh with a friendly letter from the Maharaja. The Beas was crossed on the nth January at Hari-ka-Patan [junction of the Sutlej and the Beas]

¹ Sir Claud Martme Wade (1794-1861), Colonel, son of Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Wade, joined as a cadet in the Bengal service in 1809. He obtained a commission as ensign in the infantry in 1812. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in 1815. From 1816 to 1819 he served in the Pindari campaigns. In 1820-21 he officiated as brigademajor to the troops in Oudh. In 1823 he succeeded to the office of political assistant at Ludhiana where he was required to take charge of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, the ex-King of Afghanistan. But his chief duty was to maintain friendly relations between the British Government and Maharaja Ranjit Singh who was at this time at the height of his power. In this task he succeeded most admirably. "He gained the confidence of Ranjit Singh to such an extent as to be permitted freely to visit the Punjab at a time when it was rigidly closed to British officials."

² Journal, 3-4 ; Travels, 4-6.

About the condition of the people Burnes wrote :—" On the banks of the river we passed innumerable villages, the houses of which were terrace roofed, and formed of sun-dried brick on a wooden framework. They had a clean and comfortable look, and the peasantry appeared well clad and happy. They consist of Juts, both Hindoo and Mahommedan, and a few Seiks." Travels into Bokhara, i, 3—4.

where Ranjit Singh had posted a strong body of armed men to protect the villagers from Akalis or Nihangs.¹ At Had they were warmly received by Sardar Sham Singh who presented them a bow and bags of money on behalf of the Maharaja.²

On the 12th January they were at Patti [10 miles from Hari] where they visited a stud of mares belonging to Ranjit Singh. There were a large number of mares of the Dhanni breed, all looking "smart and beautiful."³ On the 14th another letter and a bag of money were presented to Burnes from the Maharaja by Jawala Singh.⁴ On the 16th at Dohri, a small village, Mohan Lai found all the pools frozen, and the fields "ornamented with the pearls of hoar frost." On the 17th a few miles away from Lahore, they were received by

¹ Burnes remarks :—"These Akalis or Nihangs are not numerous, but commit the grossest outrages, and shield themselves under their religious character. They evince no greater hostility to those of another creed than to a Seik, and would appear to be at war with mankind. Their fanaticism borders on insanity." Travels, 1, 13

* Journal, 6-8, Travels, 7-9. cf. Burnes, 1,9 & 12-13.

³ Burnes describes an interesting incident:—"The horses at this stud were lately attacked with an epidemic disease, of which a Mahomedan, who resides in a neighbouring sanctuary, is believed to have cured them. Though a Mahomedan, the Seiks have in gratitude repaired and beautified his temple which is now a conspicuous white building, that glitters in the sun. The Seik people are most tolerant in their religion." Travels, i, 11.

⁴ Burnes portrays this chief thus:—"The chief had robed himself in a rich dress of brocade, and his retainers, were arrayed in tunics of yellow, which is the favourite colour of the Seiks. Juwala Singh has the reputation of a brave soldier, and possesses a suavity of manner and address which appear to great advantage in a fine soldier-looking person about six feet high." Travels, 1, 13-14.

General Allard¹ and Diwan Ajudhia Prashad² on behalf of the Maharaja.³ They had an interview with Ranjit Singh on the 18th January. "In such a fine tent he held his darbar as if it was the tent of an angel and not of man." The Maharaja received them at the door, seated Burnes and Gerard in golden chairs and held conversation in a friendly manner for two hours.⁴

4. Observations about Lahore

Lahore was a fortified town with a deep ditch running round it. The streets were narrow and muddy and one could not pass through "without dirtying his trousers and shoes." Thieves were punished by having their noses and ears cut off,

¹ Jean Francois Allard (1715-1839), General, joined the French army in 1803. He served in Italy and Spain from 1804 to 1810, and received in acknowledgment of his services the Royal Spanish Order and Legion of Honour. He took service under Ranjit Singh in 1822, and "considerably improved the general efficiency of the Sikh Cavalry." He was a man of highly refined manners and always offered his generous hospitality to European visitors in the Panjab. He wore an immensely long beard and moustachioes. He died at Peshawar in 1839. G. L. Chopra's *Panjab as a Sovereign State*, 183-4.

² Diwan Ajudhia Prashad, son of Gangaram, was a Kashmiri Brahmin. He served under Ventura as Paymaster of Fauj-i-Khas at Lahore. During Ventura's trip to Europe, he was incharge of the entire administration of this brigade. On Ranjit Singh's death and Ventura's retirement he held the command of the French brigade. He was "eminently successful in performing all kinds of duties, administrative, judicial, military and diplomatic." *Ibid*, 172, f.n.

* Journal, 9-10, Travels, 9-11. On his arrival at Lahore Burnes was presented with "a profusion of the fruits of Cashmeer and Cabool" and "a purse of 1,100 rupees." Travels, i, 15-16

⁴ Journal, 10; Travels, 11-12. Burnes says that Ranjit Singh showed them shell practice. Monsieur Court, one of his French officers, exhibited shells "to him on the day of our arrival, and was presented with a purse of 5,000 rupees, jewels, and other gifts." Travels, i, 16.

while a murderer had to pay a fine of two or three thousand rupees. Mohan Lai experienced an earthquake¹ at Lahore in the night of the 22nd January. On the 24th they went on a hunting excursion in the company of the Maharaja, and were also joined by Captain Wade and Dr. Murray. On the 26th Diwan Ajudhia Prashad visited Mohan Lai and tried his utmost to dissuade him from undertaking the tedious journey into dangerous regions. The following day Faqir Aziz-ud-din* also hinted at the great risks involved in the journey. Mohan Lai was, however, firm in his resolution.

On the 28th, they accompanied Ranjit Singh on another hunting expedition.⁸ In half an hour's time several hogs

¹ Burnes says that this shock was felt by people over a vast country even across the Hindukush. "In the valley of Badukhsan, and the whole upper course of the Oxus, the greater portion of the villages had been overthrown, which had buried some thousands of people in their ruins." *Ibid.*, 18.

¹ Faqir Aziz-ud-din was engaged by Ranjit Singh as his medical adviser shortly after his conquest of Lahore in 1799. Ranjit Singh found him well acquainted with political matters of the day, and frequently sought his advice. In 1808 he was one of those persons who dissuaded the Maharaja from coming into conflict with the British Government. He was thenceforward mainly employed in diplomatic service. He was a member of the mission that waited on Lord William Bentinck at Simla in 1831. He generally served as a channel of communication between the Maharaja and his European visitors. He rendered most faithful services to Ranjit Singh even against Muslim chiefs. He died in 1845. G. L. Chopra's *Pan jab as a Sovereign State*, 176-8.

• Burnes gives a touching account of the Maharaja's hunting camp :—"The scene, as we approached, was magnificent. A large pavilion of red cloth surrounded by extensive walls of the same materials, marked the encampment of Runjeet, while his troops and chiefs were cantoned in picturesque groups around. The suite of tents which had been pitched for our accommodation was most elegant. They were

were killed, and many were entrapped alive.¹ In two hours the party came back to the encampment. On the 6th February fell the famous festival of Basant, which was celebrated with pomp and show at the shrine of Haqiqat Rai, nearly four miles from the town. The Sikh troops clad in yellow uniform lined the road on both sides. Then the Maharaja, dressed in yellow robes, and accompanied by Europeans, rode to the tents, which were made of yellow silk and adorned with pearls.²

made of scarlet and yellow cloth, and the ground was covered with the carpets of Cashmccr, and pieces of French satin. It was with some reluctance that I set foot upon such valuable materiials. In each tent was a cainp bed, with curtains of yellow silk, and coverlets of the same description. Such costly splendour was ill suited to men who had so little prospect even of comfort; but I must say that it was exhilarating at the moment " *Ibid* , 19-20.

They were assigned other tents on the following day. Burnes bestows still greater praise on them :—"They were made of Cashmeer shawH, and about fourteen feet square. Two of these were connected by tent walls of the same superb materials; while the intervening space was shaded by a lofty screen, supported on four massy poles, adorned with silver. The shawls of one tent were red ; of the other, white. In each of them stood a camp bed, with curtains of Cashmeer shawls, which gave one an impression of a fairy abode more than an encampment in the jungles of the Punjab." *Ibid.*, 22.

¹ The cruel fun enjoyed by the court is thus described by Burnes :—"The live hogs were then brought, tied by one leg to a stake and baited with dogs. The sport is a cruel one, and does not afford any great amusement; the courage and fire of the animals are renewed by dashing water over them. After witnessing it for a short time, an order was given to set all the live hogs at liberty." *Ibid.*, 25.

¹ Burnes's amazement again knew no bounds :—"Among them was a canopy, valued at a lac of rupees covered with pearls, and having a border of precious stones. Nothing can be imagined more grand." *Ibtd.*, 27.

5. *From Lahore to the Indus, nth February to 15th
March, 1832*

Ranjit Singh's reception left a deep impression on the mind of all the travellers and they took leave of him with a heavy heart.¹ Leaving Lahore on the nth February, they crossed the Ravi in a ferry boat and halted at Shahdara for the night. They had considerably reduced their baggage and servants for fear of attracting the attention of Afghan robbers. Mohan Lai was astonished to see Burnes and Gerard in Panjabi dress wearing heavy turbans, long shirts, loose trousers and slippers without socks sitting on the ground cross-legged, taking notes by placing the paper on their knees, and eating food with their fingers. On the 16th February they reached a village called Saharan near Ram Nagar [near the eastern bank of the Chenab] where Mohal Lai was struck by the

¹ Burnes remarks : — " I never quitted the presence of a native of Asia with such impressions as I left this man ; without education, and without a guide, he conducts all the affairs of his kingdom with surpassing energy and vigour, and yet he wields his power with a moderation quite unprecedented in an Eastern prince." *Ibid*, 33.

"I now look back on the few weeks which I passed at Lahore as some of the happiest days, of my life." *Ibid*., 39.

Masson, another English traveller, having journeyed through Afghanistan, Khorasan, Baluchistan and Sind, was deeply struck with the peace and prosperity prevailing in the Panjab — "Few scenes present in greater perfection the charms of placid beauty and repose, and amid the various feelings to which they gave rise in my mind was that of homage to the sovereign, whose protecting sway has enabled his subjects to till their lands in peace, and in a few years to change, as it were, the face of nature." *Journeys*, i, 404-5.

"At this day the operation of the laws is so effective, that there are few eastern countries in which the solitary traveller can pass with more safety than the Panjab." *Ibid*., 426.

beauty of women and carelessness of cultivators.¹ They crossed the Chenab on the 19th, when Mohan Lai came across "filthy" men, who seldom bathed or washed their faces.'

They were at Bhikhi [8 miles south of the Jhelum] on the 22nd February :—

" There is nothing remarkable except the beauty and cheerfulness which the women of this village possess. When I was measuring the water of this well, I beheld a crowd of women engaged in drawing water from it. They seemed to have masculine spirit; one of them was a perfect model of beauty, and had a very noble air and graceful deportment, her person was clean and unspotted, she charmed the spectators with her modesty, and her raiment being blue, added lustre to her beauty."³

The party visited the salt mines at Khewra on the 25th February. Mohan Lai observed that the country between Pind Dadan Khan and Jalalpur [both on the western bank of the Jhelum 24 miles apart] was barren and poverty-stricken, and the people were " often prompted to sell their daughters and sons to provide themselves with the necessaries of life."⁴

¹ He writes :— " It is celebrated for the beauty of the women who reside there. The soil is generally fertile, but not much cultivated. The farmers are careless in agriculture, because unjustly deprived of their privileges by the Maharaja's officers, who violate the chastity of their females." Journal, 19 ; Travels, 21

² Burnes noticed the people of this part of the country suffering from two ailments, cold—"running at the nostrils," and eye disease "caused by the nitrous particles on the banks of its different rivers." Travels*, 1., 47-8-

³ Journal, 21 ; Travels, 23.

⁴ Journal, 24 , Travels, 26.

He found Darapur a "very fine and richly cultivated village." The women of the place were beautiful, and "fond of indulgence/" After visiting Rohtas¹ on the 1st March and Manikiala [16 miles S. E. of Rawalpindi] on the 6th, they arrived at Rawalpindi on the 7th, and put up in the house¹ of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, the ex-King of Kabul. They further reduced their baggage, keeping only two mule loads. They put on Afghan dresses, pretending to be Durranis. They also changed their names; Burnes called himself Sikandar Khan and Mohan Lai adopted the name of Hasan Jan.⁸ At a village called Usman Khatar [5 miles N. of Taxila] inhabited by 2,000 persons, chiefly Hindus, they met a Hindu goldsmith who had travelled through Afghanistan, Iran, Turkistan and Russia, and who described to them the wonders of Bokhara, the dangers of the road, and the cruelty of the people, all of which excited Mohan Lai's zeal and curiosity.⁴

They passed through Hasan Abdal on the 12th March. Here a handsome Sikh boy, only 14 years old, held the reins of Mohan Lai's horse and asked to show him the Sahib-log (Burnes and Gerard). Mohan Lai pointed them out and

¹ It is an extensive fort situated six miles west of the Jhelum. Its interior is 2½ miles long. Its works are of immense strength, consisting of stone walls, thirty feet thick. It was built by Sher Shah Sun in 1540, to keep the Gakhars under control. It was in a rumous state at this time.

¹ "It was a miserable hovel". Burnes, 1, 68.

² The Journal (printed in 1834) p. 29, says: — "I was named Hasan Jan by an intimate friend." The Travels (published in 1846) p. 32, states: — "I was called Hasan Jan, as named on my birthday." That the assumed Muslim name was retained by Mohan Lai during the Journey is testified by receipts, one from Meer Ahmed a native of Kandahar, and the other from Muhammad, a native of Herat, both servants of Dr. Gerard, cf. Correspondence of Sir Alexander Burnes, pp. 159-60.

• Journal, 31-32 ; Travels, 34-35 ; Burnes, 1, 74.

the boy was lost in astonishment to find them in Afghan dresses. On the 14th March at Sirkika Bela, situated on the banks of the Indus, they were warmly received by Hari Singh Nalwa,¹ who resembled Ranjit Singh "in appearance, deportment, intrepid conversation, and morality." They reached Attock² on the 15th; but as the garrison was in mutiny, on account of long arrears of pay, they were not allowed to see the fort.⁸

6. From the Indus to Peshawar, 17th to 20th March, 1832

Having crossed the Indus on elephants, in which seven horses and their riders were swept away by the current, out of whom three men lost their lives, the party reached Khairabad [a village on the right bank of the Indus, opposite Attock] on the 17th, Akora [a town belonging to Khataks and situated on the right bank of the Kabul river, about ten

¹ Han Singh Nalwa, the most celebrated general of Ranjit Singh, was born in Gujranwala. He participated in almost all the noted campaigns, and won renown everywhere. In 1830 he held the post of the Governor of Kashmir. After some time he was transferred to Peshawar, and was given control over civil and military administration of trans-Indus territory. "His policy and methods were the cause of intense dread of the Sirdar's name so that the Afghan mothers still terrify naughty children thereby." In 1837 he built a fort at Jamrud. At this place he was soon after killed in a fight with the Afghans. Baron Hugel during his visit to the Panjab was deeply impressed by his personality. G. L. Chopra, 165-6

¹ There is a fort and a small town of this name on the left bank of the Indus, close to the place where it is joined by the Kabul river. The width of the Indus at this place was 537 feet, and the depth of water in the lowest state was 30 feet, and between 60 and 70 feet in the highest. The water ran at the speed of six miles an hour. There was a ford a little above the confluence of the Kabul river, but it was very dangerous owing to the coldness of water and rapidity of the current. Thornton, 1, 60.

⁹ Journal, 34 , Travels, 38 ; cf. Burnes, i, 78.

miles above Attock] on the 18th,¹ and Peshawar on the 20th. At Peshawar they were accorded a cordial reception * by Sultan Muhammad Khan, the Governor of the place. Peshawar was not a fortified town. Its streets were paved, and were wider and cleaner than those of Lahore. A number of brooks crossed over by bridges ran through the town. Mohan Lai gives the following picture of the ruler :—

"Sultan Mohammed⁸ Khan, the present governor of Peshawar, commonly called Sardar, is a man of middle stature. He has passed the meridian of life, and is fond of pleasure. He is notorious for his lewedness, and is always surrounded by females, both, married and unmarried. He is careless of his country and government, and always employed in adoring himself, with splendid and precious robes, on account of which

¹ It will be interesting to note the method in which Burnes carried money :—"A letter of credit for five thousand rupees was fastened to my left arm, in the way the Asiatics wear amulets. My polyglot passport was fixed to my right arm, and a bag of ducats was tied round my waist. I also distributed a part of my ready money to each of the servants, and so perfect was the *chocjc* that had been established over them, that we never lost a single ducat in all our journey, and found most faithful servants in men who might have ruined and betrayed us. We trusted them, and they rewarded our confidence." *Travels*, 1, 84-84.

¹ Burnes remarks :—"Never were people received with more kindness." *Ibtd*, 87. "Nothing could have surpassed the kindness of this nobleman." *Ibtd* ; 112.

¹ Burnes says:—"SooJtan Mahommed Khan was not the illiterate Afghan whom I expected to find, but an educated, well-bred gentleman, whose open and affable manner made a lasting impression upon me." *Ibid*, 91. "Everyone seems on an equality with the chief, and the meanest servant addresses him without ceremony. He himself seems quite free from every sort of pride or affectation, and is only to be distinguished in the ciowd by his dress, in which he is fond of nchness and ornament." *Ibtd*, 93.

he is called Sultan Bibi¹ (or lady) by Dost Mohammed Khan, the ruler of Kabul, who, I hear, is a very just and heroic man."*

7. From Peshawar to Kabul, 19th April to 1st May, 1832

After a stay of a month the party left Peshawar on the 19th April. They were joined on the way by numerous travellers till their number increased to 100. Near Haidar Khan³ village, an Afghan blocked their passage, saying in a loud and frightful voice that a man from his village had been robbed a few days before of a rupee in Peshawar, and as all of them came from the same town, he would revenge himself upon them. They argued with him, praised the nobility of his heart and valour, and were allowed to pass. At Hazar Nao [35 miles E. of Jalalabad] they found seven houses of Hindus who were "badly treated by the Afghans". On the 26th April they reached Jalalabad where they saw a magnificent Hindu temple, named Gorakh Nath, which was full of pigeons.⁴

They reached Kabul on the 1st May, and were taken as guests by Nawab Jabbar Khan,⁶ the eldest brother of Dost

'This is corroborated by Masson, 1, 130 — "His excessive love of finery exposed him to ridicule, and the pleasures of the harani seemed to occupy more of his attention than public affairs "

¹ Journal, 38-39 . Travels, 43-44

² A village of the Khybcrs, situated about a mile south of the Khybcr Pass, and four miles from its eastern entrance.

⁴ Journal, 51-56 , Travels, 57-66

* Nawab Jabbar Khan was known as the Farangi's friend, and he well deserved this epithet. His mother was a slave-girl in the harem of Payanda Khan. She was married to a water carrier, but Payanda Khan still continued his attentions to her. When Jabbar Khan was born, the waterman delivered the baby to Payanda Khan, saying "that he knew more about the child than he himself did " Vigne, 145.

Muhammad Khan. The following morning Mohan Lai met Mr. J. Wolff,* a missionary, who had travelled into many foreign lands. He had lost his horse in the deep snows of the Hindu Kush, and "was compelled to walk naked into Kabul like the faqirs of India." He treated Mohan Lai kindly, gave him a certificate and promised to recommend him "to his relation Lady W. Bentinck in Calcutta."⁸

Mohan Lai saw the town thoroughly and observed that the inhabitants were Sunnis, Shias and Hindus.⁸ The Shias lived

Burnes draws a remarkable portrait of him :—"Never was a man more modest, and more beloved, he will permit, but a single attendant to follow him; and the people on the high and by ways stop to bless him; the politicians assail him at home to enter into intrigues, and yet he possesses the respect of the whole community, and has, at the present moment, a greater moral influence than any of the Barukzye family in Afghanistan. His manners are remarkably mild and pleasing; and from his dress one would not imagine him to be an influential member of a warlike family. It is delightful to be in his society, to witness his acts, and hear his conversation." Travels, 1, 134-5.

¹ Joseph Wolff (1795-1862), the son of a Jew, adopted Christianity in 1812. He knew Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and in 1813 he started learning Arabic, Syriac and Persian. He became a member of the Church of England about 1817. He set out as a missionary among Jews and Musalmans in the eastern countries. Between 1821 and 1826 he travelled through Egypt and Syria and preached Christianity in Jerusalem. After journeying in Mesopotamia, Iran, Crimea and European Turkey he returned to England. He undertook a second expedition about 1828. In Khorasan he was reduced to slavery, but soon after was liberated. His misfortunes originated from his denominating himself a Haji, for which he had been plundered and beaten. Passing right across Central Asia and visiting Bokhara and Balkh, he emerged in Kabul in a state of nudity. Dictionary of National Biography; and Burnes, 1, 133-4.

² Journal, 59-63; Travels, 67-73.

³ There were also a few families of Armenians, Christians and Jews, cf. Masson, ii, 244-7

in a separate walled street, called Murad Khani. They were known as Qizalbash and numbered about 5,000*. About the inhabitants Mohan Lai records :—

"The people do not possess good features⁹, and are fond of pleasure. They drink clandestinely, and rave in search of women. The females⁸ both of high and low family avoid the choice of virtue, and pursue bad principles. The proverbial saying which follows and continues among the natives, confirms my explanation regarding the sex above mentioned."

"Arad-i-Peshawar be Jawar nest, Wa zan-i-Kabul be yar nest."

[The flour of Peshawar is not without the mixture of barley, and the women of Kabul are not without lovers.⁴]

The inhabitants spoke Persian, but Pashto was the common language in the country.⁵ The Hindus numbered nearly 2,000, and had large families and were "allowed to keep all the

¹ Just about this time their number was estimated at between 10,000 and 12,000. Thornton, i, 312.

* On the other hand Kennedy was struck by "their tall figures, dark black eyes, marked features, and western complexion" *Ibid*, 313.

* They possessed "both beauty of face and elegance of form." *Ibid*

* Journal, 64 ; Travels, 73 , cf. Burnes, 1, 100. An Englishman of the Political Department quotes the following two proverbs *—

(1) "The wives of the Afghans are no longer true" ,

(li). "No Cabul fair one pines alone,

Her love, soon lost, is lightly won." cf. Dry Leaves from Young Egypt, 171.

* Pashto was not only spoken by the people, but it was also the language of the court. "In the Durbar there is more Pashtu than Persian spoken, and more Persian than Turki." Vigne, 355. cf. Burnes, i, 143-4. "The higher orders in Kabool speak Persian with fluency and purity, Pushtoo, the vernacular dialect, being for the most part spoken only by the lower classes." Thornton, i, 314.

privileges of their religion." They were treated "very tolerantly" by the Muslims, and had their shops in all streets and bazars.¹

6*: *From Kabul to Bamian, 18th to 23rd May, 1832*

The party left Kabul⁸ on the 18th May for Bokhara "under the protection of a highly respected man, the Naz.r^a of the ruler of Kabul." On May 21 they passed through a hilly country situated at an elevation of 11,000 ft. Snow lay scattered on all sides, to a depth of about five feet and their route was intersected by various channels which they crossed by means of the snowy arches.⁴ Bamian⁵ was reached on the 23rd May. This place was famous for its colossal idols. Three images, cut out of a solid rock, stood on the hard face of the mountain. The idols were about 100 ft. in height.⁶ On one side of the idols there were a considerable number of caves

¹ Journal, 64, Travels 73-4 "The members of that community in Afghanistan form the backbone of the finances of that country." Ikbal Ah Shah's Afghanistan of the Afghans, 212

* Burnes changed his method of carrying cash "Gold"ducats were carefully sewed up in our belts and turbans, and sometimes even transferred to our slippers, though, as we had to leave them at the door of every house, I did not always approve of such stowage." Travels, 1, 169-70.

* Named Daulat. cf. Burnes, i, 167.

* "By noon it became so soft that our horses sunk into it, threw their burdens and riders, and in several places were, with the utmost difficulty, extricated" Burnes, i, 176.

⁶ Bamian situated on the route from Kabul to Turkistan is of very great importance, being the only known pass across the Hradukush practicable for artillery or heavy carriages. It is also the great commercial route. Thornton's Gazetteer, i, 68

* The male figure was about 120 ft. high. Burnes, i, 185.

with many rooms. Nearby was a stone, about 50 ft. in length. From a hole in it water bubbled forth with a great noise and immediately froze.¹

9. *From Bamian to Khulaln, 24th to 30th May, 1832*

Leaving Bamian on the 24th May and escorted by Haji Khan's men, all mounted and armed, the party made its way through the lofty range of the Hindukush. Some of the Indians of the party had been frightened at the passage of the Hindukush, and had retraced their steps ; but Mohan La], "who exhibited a wonderful buoyancy of spirit and interest in the undertaking, and who was a general favourite wherever he appeared, remained."* After crossing the pass of Akrabad, 10,500 ft. high, they entered the territory of Turkistan. On the 25th they passed through the village of Kamard, where Mohan Lai was fascinated by the beauty of women of the place :—

"The women of the village possessed great beauty, and such charming features as I had never beheld, since my departure from India. A few of them, who had delicate complexions, stood by me, and asked what I was, and which was my native country. At my reply they laughed at once, and said, 'It was a great pity indeed, that you did not choose the Mahammadan faith, and marry a bonny girl in this village. In a word, they joked with me in such a way, as I cannot describe here '"*

The following day they were attacked by robbers, but were spared on account of their guide, the son of Rahmatullah Khan, the ruler of Kamard, who was held in great respect by them.

¹ Journal, 75-77, Travels, 86-88.

² Asiatic Journal, September-December, 1834, Vol. xlii, p. 42.

³ Journal, 80, Travels, 92.

On the 27th May, Mohan Lai's servant, a Kashmiri Brahmin from Lahore, was cooking food in the open field of a mosque. The Muslim urchins, observing his Hindu way of cooking, threw stones and horse dung at him, thus polluting the food. The servant flew into a rage and ran after the boys with a drawn sword in hand. Mohan Lai checked him from pursuing them, otherwise, he says, "we had all been destroyed."¹

At Haibak,² a village in the territory under Mir Murad Beg, he saw many Hindu shopkeepers, speaking Persian and dressed like Muslims. On the 31st May at Khulam they received a message from Chiman Das, a Hindu from Multan, to the effect that they should not leave the place without the orders of the Mir and his prime minister Atma Ram. On the 1st June Chiman Das invited Mohan Lai to dinner, and on learning "that I was a pure Brahman, he instantly kissed my feet, and washed them with water, which he drank with great respect." He then inquired of Mohan Lai what had brought him thither. Mohan Lai replied that he had come in search of his elder brother. Chiman Das laughed and told him that he knew he was "a Munshi attached to Farangis," but that he need not fear.³

The inhabitants were Uzbegs, given to cruelty and slavery, and devoid of pity, justice and wisdom. The local chief

¹ Journal, 82-83 ; Travels, 95 ; cf. Burnes, i, 197-8.

¹ Burnes praises the beauty of the women of this place : "The ladies seemed to select the gayest colours for their dresses, and I could now distinguish some very handsome faces, for the Mahommedan ladies do not pay scrupulous attention to being veiled in the villages. They were much fairer than their husbands, with nothing ungainly in their appearance, though they were Tartars. I could now, indeed, understand the praises of the Orientals in the beauty of these Toorkee girls," Travels, 1,205.

• Journal, 83-5 ; Travels, 95-8.

Muhammad Beg was in the habit of compelling boys either with money or by force "to satisfy his lust." Mir Murad Beg, the ruler of the country, and the persecutor of Moorcroft,¹ was a man of short and thin stature, having "very small and gloomy eyes," without a beard "except a few hairs on his chin." He had many slave girls and boys, and "never leaves the caravan, which is accompanied by a boy of any caste, whether he is handsome or ugly, until he has satisfied his mean pleasures."² His Diwan Begi or prime minister, Atma Ram,⁸ a Hindu

¹ William Moorcroft (1765-1825), veterinary surgeon and traveller, had a very lucrative veterinary practice in London. He lost his ample fortune over patents, and in 1808 accepted the post of veterinary surgeon to the Bengal army and superintendent of the East India Company's stud at Pusa, near Cawnpore. In 1811-12 he accompanied Hyder Young Hearsy in the Himalayan tour and examined the sources and upper courses of the Sutlej and the eastern branch of the Indus. In 1819 he again set out on an exploring expedition, taking much merchandise with him. He visited Maharaja Ranjit Singh and then went to Ladakh. He came back to Kashmir and was the first European to follow the Pir Panjal route. Then by way of Attock and Peshawar he went to Kabul and Bokhara. On his way back from Bokhara he died at Andkhui in 1825.

²"He was an ill-looking man of debauched habits." Burnes, i, 203. Masson says that "the Uzbek Chieftain, sufficiently rude and barbarous, is nevertheless, the most able and energetic ruler in Turkistan." Journeys, 11, 318.

"Moorcroft who was in this region seven years earlier (1825) states *—"The trade with Yarkand is almost monopolised by Atma Ram. He buys up the sheep and furs of Kunduz, which are exchanged at Yarkand for tea, disposed of in Turkistan at an advance of six hundred per cent."

Moorcroft then gives the prices of some articles :—

Mutton	..	2 pice per pound.	Wheat flour	..	J pice per pound
Beef		1 " "	Oil	..	6 " "
Sheep butter	10	" "	Rice	..	1½ " "
Cow butter	8	" "	Barley	..	½ " "
(Travels, ii, 451-2.)					

of Peshawar, possessed great influence over him and managed all the business of the country. He also kept a large number of boys and girls as slaves ; but this privilege was not extended to any other Hindu.¹

10. *The Slave Market at Khulam*

On their way to Khulam they "never changed clothes till they disappeared under filth and vermin" to pretend extreme poverty. They often slept in dark rooms, full of dung, and ate stale bread. The sleeves of their shirts served as towels, and finger nails as combs for the hair². At Khulam Mohan Lai witnessed the market day where slaves were placed for sale in an open and large shop. He found there 19 women, seven boys, all below 10 years, and some old men. The boys were crying, the girls were weeping, and the old men were in a sad and dejected mood. The merchants were shouting, "this is the lad or girl for so much money." A man came to buy a slave girl, and took her behind the wall of the shop to examine her body. "When her veil was lifted up by the seller, and gradually her cap and sheet, the woman, turning her face towards the sky, began to rend the air by her screams." She was sold for Rs. 310³

¹ Journal, 85-87 ; Travels, 98-101.

* Journal, 89 ; Travels, 102-3. But we must admire 'the spirit of the travellers:—"These are," says Burues, "but the petty inconveniences of a traveller , which sink into insignificance, when compared with the pleasure of seeing new men and countries, strange manners and customs, and being able to temper the prejudices of one's country, by observing those of other nations " Travels, 1, 206.

' Journal, 156-7. Conolly, 1, 183 quotes a story of the same nature : "At the head of the bazaar I again stopped, to watch a bargain that an Oosbeg was driving for a very beautiful Persian girl, so beautiful, I beg leave to state, that I have not seen her like. A neck a cubit long,—eyes, large as a cup; her tears fell like the rain in spring, and she was altogether

On the 2nd June intimation was conveyed to the party that they should appear before Murad Beg in his camp at Khanuabad near his headquarters at Qunduz 70 miles away. This alarmed them greatly, because the ruler was not well inclined towards the English travellers. Mohan Lai visited Chiman Das and stood before him with tears trickling down his eyes. This trick easily succeeded. Chiman Das smiled, put his right hand on his head and told him that as he was a Brahmin, he would do his utmost to save them from any molestation. Consequently, he accompanied Burnes to Khanuabad where he did not allow Burnes to speak even a word with the Mir and himself answered all the questions.¹

II. From Khulam to Bokhara, 9th to 27th June, 1832

Khulam was quitted on the 9th June in the company of a body of horsemen provided by Chiman Das. On the following day, they halted at Mazar, "and put up in the same place where Mr. Trebeck died of fever." They were at Balkh* or Bactria on the nth June. At this place an Uzbek officer of the custom house tried to debauch Mohan Lai:—

"He looked at me, with an aspiring eye, and sent a message by the Qdfila Bashi to me, saying, if I stopped at Balkh in his

so lo&t in gnief that she appeared bereft of her senses. Her master treated her with the grossest brutahTV, making her rise and uncover herself, that her intended purchaser might see the beauties of her person. Once he rudely snatched the veil from oft her, and God is witness, that when from shame she crossed her arms over her bosom, he cut her on the back with a whip to make her withdraw them "

¹ Journal, 89 , Travels, 102-3

² "The fruit of Balkh is most luscious, particularly the apricots, which are nearly as large as apples. They are almost below value ; tor 2,000 of them were to be purchased for a rupee , and with iced water, they are indeed luxuries." Burnes, 1, 239.

Here they visiUd Moorcroft's grave *Ibid.*, 243.

office, he would be happy to give me a salary of 400 rupees per month; but I civilly refused him. At evening he came himself to the sarai on horseback, and sat near my lodgings. First he made me the compliment of Daulat Ziad, a respect paid to Hindus in this country. Then he called and gave me a piece of paper, which contained two or three Persian verses. The first of them was the following :—

'Gar bar saro chashm-i-man nashini, Nazat bikasham
keh naznini.'

[If you sit on my head and eyes, I will bear you pleasantly,
because you agreeable]

"I stood up immediately, and did not speak with him at all though he often told me to sit."¹

The Oxus was crossed on the 17th June by boats dragged by horses, and no rowing was done. Then they journeyed on camels through an arid desert devoid of drinking water. It was extremely hot. They were cooped up in camel baskets about four feet long and three feet wide and covered with blankets which were little protection against the glare of the sun and the flying sand. They suffered much from thirst. "My tongue stuck to the palate of my mouth," says Mohan Lai, "and my parched lips burnt with the heat of fire. My throat had dried up, so that I could not speak."²

On the 21st June they observed a few tents of the Turkomans who possessed large herds of cattle. Their food generally consisted of bread, curd and meat.⁸ Their chief

¹ Journal, 95-6 ; Travels, 110-11.

² Journal, 102 ; Travels, 118 ; cf. Burnes, i, 249-51.

³ Mohan Lai remarks that they fed their horses on flesh, which fact I could not corroborate any where else. cf. Journal, 102 ; Travels, 119.

occupation was plundering the caravans and capturing Qizalbash slaves, who in many cases "become attached to their wives", and secured their liberty.¹

On the 22nd June they reached a village named Qarshi. Here Mohan Lai heard of slaves for sale, and out of curiosity explored the place for himself. He saw the merchant, posing himself as a customer. He sent for three girls, and asked him to choose. Mohan Lai selected the youngest "who had regular features, was mild and attractive, her stature elegant, though below the middle size ; her wit and vivacity exceeded even her allurements." Then they were sent to a separate room to talk to each other. The girl agreed to accompany Mohan Lai, and the merchant asked Mohan Lai to examine her body which was "crystalline." She told him that she came from Badakhshan, and was a member of a large family. She was seized by the ruler of the place and was ravished by him. Then she was sold to the present merchant who had placed her

¹ Fraser relates the story of a young man who secured his freedom through "an attachment with his masters' daughter " pp 328-9.

Further on Fraser says that a Turkoman always purchased his wife. A young girl could be bought for a sum from two to four hundred rupees, while a widow fetched a far higher price, viz. as many thousands. Five camels was a common price for a girl and from fifty to a hundred for a woman. The reason assigned for this singular practice is that a Turkoman preferred household experience to beauty and youth. He observes that polygamy did not exist among them. Their women were very prolific. "I can myself assert, that out of every camp we passed through, such crowds of children issued, that one of my servants, in amazement, cried out that it was like an ant-hill. They were stout, healthy, hardy little creatures, almost quite naked, and it was admirable to see the courage and unconcern with which infants, that seemed scarcely able to walk would splash and plunge through streams that would have made an European mother scream." Fraser, 280-1. cf. Conolly, 1, 179-82.

for sale in the market. As Mohan Lai had no intention of buying her, he quietly slipped away from there.¹

12. Observations about Bokhara

They arrived at Bokhara on the 27th June. Two days later Mohan Lai saw two Muslims mounted on camels, guarded by four sepoyes and being flogged by the Qazi for sleeping after sunrise and thus missing their morning prayer. The people were also daily chastized in public for smoking, snuffing and drinking. Smoking was prohibited, but there was no restriction on the sale of tobacco. The Hindus could smoke in the caravanserai.²

On the 30th June he visited the quarters of the Jews, who numbered about 3,000. Their pleasant features drew great admiration from Mohan Lai.—

"On my return I passed through the famous street of the Jews, where I scarcely saw either men or women in want of beauty of charms. All of them were handsome, and delicate, and attractive. Their eyes were alluring, and their persons enticing. Saturday is their holy day and every one looked half sottish, which in reality had kindled the beauty of the virtuous ladies. They were gazing out of the door at those who passed through the street. They are the most delicate of any people I have seen between Delhi and Bokhara. I am sure if any Indian, who chiefly adores the picture of beauty, should come to Bokhara, he would undoubtedly, be a sacrifice to the Jews street. Their dress is of a curious fashion calculated to entice the heart of the men who visit them."³

¹ Asiatic Journal, September-December, 1833, Vol xl, pp. 120-1 ; cf. Journal, 105-6 , Travels, 122-3

² cf. also Burnes, i, 283-4

³ Journal, 109, Travels, 127. The Jews are "chiefly employed in dyeing cloth." Burnes, 1, 275.

Mohan Lai's observations regarding the customs, manners and other practices of the people of Bokhara are very interesting. He found them good riders, able to stand hunger, cold and fatigue. They wore two or three cloaks and white turbans. "They never use water to clean themselves, but a piece of clay", and could go straight to their prayers. They cleaned their hands and mouth with loose thread tied together. "The males generally avoid the society of their wives, and prefer the company of boys either handsome or ugly." The women were handsome,¹ elegant and charming, having "but little virtue." They wore a gown, a thin veil and a white turban.²

The majority of the people were Sunnis who treated the Shias "with indignity," and often molested and reduced them to slavery. The Jews and Hindus³ were ill treated, but not sold as slaves as none bought them, regarding them "base and unpurified." They were not allowed to ride on horseback or to wear a shawl or a piece of cloth round their waist, but were obliged to use a rope instead and a black cap on the head.⁴ Every Hindu had to pay a poll tax of half a rupee.

¹ Humes remarks about a pretty Turki lady.—"The house in which we lived was exceedingly small, and overlooked on every side, but we could not regret it, since it presented an opportunity of seeing a Toorkee beauty, a handsome young lady, who promenaded one of the surrounding balconies, and wished to think she was not seen. A pretended flight was not even neglected by this fair one, whose curiosity often prompted her to «teal a glance at the Firingees. Since we had a fair exchange, she was anything but an intruder, though unfortunately too distant for us to indulge in the sweet music of speech." Travels, 1, 287.

² Journal, 100-10; Travels, 127-9.

³ There were about 300 Hindus in Bokhaia. Humes, i, 286

⁴ Burnes and Gerard also suffered from the same restraint.

If a Jew or a Hindu fell in love with a Muslim girl, he applied to the King. Thereupon he was converted to Islam, and the girl's parents were ordered to marry her to him.¹

A thief was sentenced either to be thrown from a parapet on the hard ground, or cast in a dark dungeon. At dusk a drum was beaten when all business was suspended, and nobody could stir out. Though it was June, the mornings and evenings were as cold as in winter in India.⁸

Bokhara was the largest, wealthiest and most populous town in Tartary. It contained 360 mosques and colleges where students learnt Arabic and Persian. The houses were dirty, but the shops were clean.⁸

Mohan Lai admires the justice of the King and his chief minister and relates an incident in this connection :—

"The elder son of the Qosh Begi (the wazir), in a fit of drunkenness, entered a house, and violated the chastity of a respectable man's daughter, and presented the door-keeper with a small sum of money, for the purpose of avoiding the effect of her father's indignation until he was out of the house. The heinousness of the crime was no longer kept in secrecy, and even produced a spirit of passion among the people and in the King. He insisted that the guilty must be tried by the court of the Shariat, headed by the Qazi, and punished according to the book of faith. After receiving 75 lashes (durrahs), he was ordered to be mounted on back of a thin camel. His father, the wazir, on foot was with him. In this low and base procession the wazir made his son pass

¹ Journal, 111,119; Travels, 129-30; cf. Burnes, 1, 285.

² Journal, 112; Travels, 130-31; cf. Burnes, 1, 279.

³ Journal, 121; Travels, 140.

through the bazar, and conducted him to every large place, with a great noise of drums, and through a mob of people, who scoffed at him, and praised the justice of his father, who was crying in the following manner.—' This is the punishment for the man who commits adultery'¹.

¹ Journal, 121; Travels, 140.

CHAPTER III

JOURNEY FROM BOKHARA TO LUDHIANA 1832-1834

I. From Bokhara to Meshad, 21st July to 14th September, 1832

Having accomplished the chief object of their travel, Burnes and his companions decided to follow another route to study different people and countries. Besides, Burnes wished to go to England via the Caspian Sea. They had to pass through Khorasan and then to reach Meshad, an important town in the north of Iran. They obtained the King's passport through the kindness of the Wazir,¹ and left Bokhara in the evening of the 21st July. The party had thinned considerably, and Mohan Lai had made the deepest impression on the mind of the leader of the expedition. Burnes writes:—

"Our party had considerably diminished since I last described it on the Indus ; one of the Indians had retraced his steps from Cabool, and the chilling blasts of Hindoo Koosh had frightened the doctor's servant, who was a native of Cashmere. Otherwise we had to bear the most ample testimony to the

¹ Burnes thus describes the farewell visit to the Wazii — "He now summoned the Cafilabashee of the caravan, and a chief of the Toorkmuns who was to accompany it as a safeguard against his tnbc. He wrote down their names, families, habitations, and looking to them, said, •I consign these Europeans to you. If any accident betall them, your wives and families are in my power, and I will root them from the face of the earth. Never return to Bokhara, but with a letter containing an assurance, under their seal, that you have served them well.'" Travels, i, 32b.

patience and perseverance of those we had chosen. Of these the most remarkable was Mohan Lai, the Hindoo lad from Delhi, who exhibited a buoyancy of spirit and interest in the undertaking most rare in an Indian. At my request he kept a minute Journal of events; and I venture to believe, if hereafter published, that it will arrest and deserve attention. On his route to Bokhara his tale had run that he was proceeding to his friends in that country, and, as we had passed that city, he was now joining his relatives at Herat."¹

When they were at Mirabad on the 14th August, they received Indian newspapers² from M. Allard. Having crossed the Oxus on the 17th August, they entered Khorasau. On the 21st August, they met on the road seven persons being taken to Bokhara for sale. Two of them were beautiful boys*. They were all walking barefoot in the fiery desert. Their hands and necks were fastened together with an iron chain. They were completely exhausted with hunger, thirst and fatigue. They were crying and begging for something to eat, and Burnes gave them a melon.³

On the route they saw at various places numerous huts of Turkomans,⁴ while herds of their camels, horses and sheep

¹ Travels, 1, 3478

² The packet took three months in aiming, and they had not seen a newspaper since crossing the Indus in the middle of March. Burnes, i, 355.

³ "They were weary and thirsty, and I gave them all I could,—a single melon, a civility, little as it was which was received with gratitude." Burnes, a, 12.

⁴ Turkomans are a handsome race of people. They wore a conical black cap, about a foot high. Their clothes were of gayest colours, generally light shades of red, yellow, and green. Their women wore a lofty turban and a long gown reaching the ankle. Burnes, 11, 28-9.

grazed under the care of slaves. The Turkomans cultivated just sufficient land to satisfy their needs. They grew wheat, maize, millet and melons. Their women folk were handsome and of good size.¹ Their clothes and bonnets resembled those of European ladies. The Turkomans did not possess much money, but had a considerable number of rams, horses and camels, which formed their sole property. Each family possessed from 200 to 300 animals.²

After bearing various hardships⁸ while passing through the Turkoman desert in the company of a caravan,⁴ they arrived at Sarakhs, a village, on the 4th September. There they saw

¹ Abbott in his Narrative of a Journey from Herat to Khiva recorded on the 15th March, 1840:—"Heie I saw many Toorcumun women, engaged in various occupations about the camp, one of them appeared beautiful, the generality, comely, decidedly European; and often with features almost English." P. 202.

¹ Journal, 136-7, Travels, 158-9*

⁸ The travellers suffered much in this land of burning sand. Burnes mentions many incidents. Once three persons travelling together lost their way, and their supply of water came to an end. Two of their horses fell dead owing to thirst. The men opened the vum of their surviving camel, and thus managed to reach a place of safety. In some parts of the desert wells were situated thirty-six miles apart. The water was bitter in taste. It was carried in skins which were oiled to prevent from bursting. The grease mixed with the water which became very tainted and hence undrinkable. Many people were attacked with inflammation of the eyes due to sand, dust and glare. Burnes, ii, 17-18, 25-26.

⁴ Burnes gives an interesting account of this caravan: "A caravan is a complete republic; but I do not believe that most republics are so orderly. Of our eighty camels every three or four belonged to different individuals, and there were four Cafila—bashees. Still there was no disputing about the arrangement or order of the march; and it is a point of honour, that the one shall at all times wait for the other. If a single camel throws its load, the whole line halts till it is replaced; and one feels

3,000 Turkoman tents, 50 Jews, one Hindu, 1500 Qizalbash¹ slaves, and 1,000 slave girls.² They were still there when on the 9th September, a party of Turkomans brought 115 slaves from the territory of Meshad. The same day Burnes's pony was stolen in the night.⁸ On the 13th, they passed through

pleased at such universal sympathy. These feelings make it agreeable to travel in a caravan, for the detentions are much fewer than would really be imagined. The more I mingled with Asiatics in their own sphere, and judged them by their own standard, I imbibed more favourable impressions regarding them. One does not see in civilised Europe that generous feeling, which induces the natives of Asia, great and small, to share with each other every mouthful that they possess. Among Mahommedans we have no distinction of gentleman and villain, - at least so far as hospitality is concerned. The Khan fares as simply as the peasant; and never offers to raise a morsel to his lips till he has shared it with those near him. I myself frequently have been partaker of this bounty from rich and poor, for nothing is enjoyed without society. How different is the feeling that besets the sots of lower society in Britain! Nor is this good fellowship among the Asiatics confined to the travelled merchant, it is to be found in the towns as well as the country." *Travels*, 11, 19-21.

¹The Turkomans were Sunn by religion and looked "upon a Sheah in a worse light than a Jew or a Christian" Conolly, 1, 156.

* The beauty of the slave girls exposed "them to the cruelty and rudeness of every Turkman and their guests." *Journal*, 138; *Travels*, 161. At this place Burnes saw a young Persian girl, 15 years old who was captured by a Turkoman and detained by him as a slave. She possessed "exquisite beauty." But avarice overcame his cupidity, and she was sold to a merchant of Tehran who accompanied this caravan for seventy-seven gold tillas. "She had changed her character from slave to wife." *Travels*, ii, 67.

⁸ "I regretted this loss," says Burnes, "more than I might have done a more serious misfortune. The sturdy little creature had followed me from Poona in the centre of India, had borne me in many a weary journey, and I cannot tell how much it vexed me to leave him in such a country and in such hands." *Travels*, 11, 54.

a village named Tibris, many persons of which had been captured by Turkomans. On seeing the Qafilah the villagers came to them crying and enquiring about their dear ones whom they had lost.¹

On the 14th September they reached the holy city of Meshad,* where they stayed as guests of Mrs. Shee, an Armenian lady whose husband was away at Qochan in the battle-field. Mohan Lai attempted 'to examine a bath of Meshad, exclusively reserved for Muslims. He was almost detected as there were many men of the Qafilah who knew him to be a Hindu. His Persian costume, however, saved him. Then he visited the tomb of Imam Raza. He imitated the Muslims in prayer and saw all over the tomb.'⁸

On the 23rd September, the party left Meshad for Qochan, 100 miles distant, to see Captain Shee and Abbas Mirza, the Prince Royal of Iran who was fighting there. They reached Qochan on the 25th September.

2. Alexander Burnes Leaves for England, 29th September, 1832

On the 29th September, Alexander Burnes, having accomplished the main object of the journey, bade farewell to the other members of the party and left for the shores of the Caspian Sea on his route to England. Dr. Gerard and Mohan Lai decided to return to India via Herat. Burnes granted to Mohan Lai a certificate, an extract from which is quoted here:—

"He is a young man of great promise and bids fair to distinguish himself among his countrymen.

¹ Journal, 141, Travels, 165

* It is the burial place of Nadir Shah who was murdered on the 9th June, 1747.

* Journal, 143 ; Travels, 167.

Mohan Lai served with me in the capacity of Persian Moonshee. His caste as a Hindoo subjected him to numerous difficulties and inconveniences among the Mahomedans, but his conduct was that of the most conciliatory, faithful and trustworthy description. With great opportunities for intrigues he shunned them and by his mild and unassuming behaviour relieved from vexations in which almost any other native would have involved me."¹

1

3. From Meshad to Herat, 5th to 30th December, 1832

From Qochan the party came back to Meshad where they stayed for about two months. Mohan Lai found the people of this place "fair", but not "handsome". Their dress was made of fine and delicate material. They were "clean, polite, ceremonious, and much more genteel than the rude Afghans and Uzbegs." They were fond of keeping boys in their service.²

They left Meshad on the 5th December. Snow had been falling there for some time past and on the way the snow touched their stirrups. On the 26th they arrived at a village named Fareznah. Its gates were closed, and some persons ascended the wall, declaring that they would not allow them to enter as they might be Alamans. The members of the party were fatigued and shivering with cold. Mohan Lai instantly climbed up the wall and opened the gate, while their Irani companion whipped the people severely.⁸

•

The party reached Herat on the 30th December, and were given a warm welcome by the wazir. Din Muhammad Khan

¹ Panjab Records, Book 140, Letter 20.

² Journal, 184-5 ; Travels, 211.

³ Journal, 184-5 ; Travels, 211.

sardar was their host. Mohan Lai stayed here till the 3rd February, 1833, when he was called upon to go to Meshad to get money and medicine. During this time, the King of Herat granted several interviews to Dr. Gerard and Mohan Lai, and appeared to them to be always intoxicated with opium and bhang.¹

4. *The Imperial Darbar at Meshad*

Mohan Lai left for Meshad on the 4th February by a different road on which he saw a number of serais built by a Hindu merchant.⁸ He arrived at Meshad on the 17th February. Soon after there was the famous 'Id festival.' The ruler of the place Abbas Mirza Prince Royal of Iran invited him by special invitation through Mr. Borowskie to visit his court. It was a grand court attended by men of all ranks. When the first ceremonies were over, and the nobles, after presenting their offerings, had retired to their respective places, His Royal Highness turned towards Mohan Lai and said, "O Mirza ! Khush amdi" (you are welcome), and asked whether he was a Sunni or Shia. Mohan Lai replied that he was a friend of the Panj tan (meaning thereby a Shia). He asked him many questions about Turkistan. The Prince then made inquiries about Ranjit Singh's politics and power and asked :—

"Whether Ranjit Singh's court could vie in magnificence with what he now saw before him, or whether the Sikh army

¹ Journal, 189-90 ; Travels, 216.

* • On the 14th February, Mohan Lai halted at a place called Qilah Hindu, the fort of which was built by a Hindu. Its door bore the following inscription :r- "O travellers I I conjure you, by Almighty God, and by the soul of your parents, whenever you pass by this place, come and eat of my bread and give my barley to your horses , as God has given me riches only to feed travellers, and not to bury them in the ground." He was killed by the Turkomans cf. Journal, 195 , Travels, 922-3.

could compare in discipline and courage with His Highness's Sirbaz.¹ To this Mohan Lai modestly, yet firmly replied, that Maharajah Ranjit Singh's darbar tent was made of Kashmir shawls and that even the floor was composed of the same costly material, and as for his army, if Sardar Hari Singh (Ranjit's Commander-in-Chief) were to cross the Indus, His Highness would soon be glad to make good his retreat to his original government of Tabriz. The terms in which this reply was conceived, and the tone of voice in which it was delivered were so indicative of good nature that the idea of any impropriety having been committed never so much as occurred to anybody, yet the free expression of sentiment was a thing so unheard of at the Persian court, that the entire audience stood waiting in silent expectation for His Highness's reply. This was not long delayed ; and as nearly as the recollection of our informant serves, it was as follows:—"Wonderful, wonderful!" said Abbas Mirza, drawing the attention of the court towards Mohan Lai, 'see the effect of English education', and after a short pause he continued, 'how inscrutable are the decrees of Providence, which has conferred so much power on a Kafar (infidel); but if Ali, the Lion of God, favour us, we will yet plant standard in Kashmir, and put all our Sirbaz in shawl pantaloons.' On his departure from Meshad, Mohan Lai was distinguished by His Royal Highness by the gift of a gold medal of the Order of the Lion and the Sun."*

¹ Irani regular troops.

¹ Trevelyan's Memoir, Journal, xiv-v ; Travels, xv-vi. Mohan Lai says :—" He presented me with a gold medal upon which I begged of him to engrave my name, and he agreed to do so, and called me Hasanjan. This medal is now with Agha Hyder Hasan Mirza of Nizam College, Hyderabad.

5. *From Meshad to Herat, 28th February to 26th March, 1833*

Mohan Lai left Meshad for Herat on the 28th February. On the 20th March, at a village called Rui, he met a Hindu named Paras Ram, a resident of Shikarpur. He reached Herat¹ on the 16th March. There were seven* caravanserais, one of which was exclusively occupied by the Hindu merchants of Shikarpur.⁸

Mohan Lai had a poor opinion about Shah Kamran,⁴ the King of Herat, who was addicted to drinking, opium and bhang and enjoyed the company of handsome boys. "When he was at Qandahar, he used his authority to get possession of beautiful boys and girls of different people to satisfy his mean pleasure."⁶ Though he possessed vast amount of riches, yet he extracted 100 rupees a day from the people, and in times of war money was extorted from them to meet the expenses.⁶ He was "hard hearted, and the most unmerciful man in Afghanistan."⁷ His abominable example was followed

¹ Conolly condemns the city for its dirt - "one of the dirtiest in the world," but he praises its bread and water - "The bread and water of Herat are a proverb for their excellence. It really never in England even tasted more delicious water than that of the Herat." Journey, 11. 3 & 5.

¹ Conolly puts the number at 17. Journey, li, 3.

* Journal, 237; Travels, 263-4. There were about 1,000 Hindus settled there. Conolly, 11, 2-3.

* Shah Kamran, the ruler of Herat was the son of Mahmud Shah, the son of Timur Shah, the son of the celebrated Ahmad Shah Abdali. On the death of his father in 1829, he succeeded him on the throne.

* "Kamran is now a slave to wine and the harem." Conolly, 11, 50.

* cf. Conolly, li, 48.

⁷ One incident mentioned by Mohan Lai is quoted here:—"The King ordered the bellies of nine men to be torn open, on account of their selling people, one of them had sold his daughter to a Hazara, as he had

by his sons, most of whom were also given to paederasty and drinking.¹

The people, though oppressed by the Government, indulged in pleasures. They went daily to the meadows, and spent their time in firing from horseback, racing, joking, singing and drinking. Women also went out for a stroll unveiled and enjoyed jokes with the passers-by. Both men and women possessed handsome features. Silk was manufactured there in a large quantity.*

< 6. *From Herat to Kandahar, 20th July to
25th August, 1833*

The party left Herat on the 25th July, 1833, after a stay of seven months, on account of their diplomatic negotiations between Herat and Iran.* On the 5th August near a village called Hauz, the party was attacked by robbers, who succeeded in seizing two camels loaded with goods including all of Mohan Lai's papers, the Journal, and some English articles brought as presents for the Kandahar Chiefs. Mohan Lai was very much

no money to feed himself, and was starving with hunger. They were tied to camels, while their heads were banging down, and dragged through the bazar, coloured with blood, and showing their intestines." Journal, 209; Travels, 239.

¹ Jahangir, a prince 32 years old, "roasted in the flame of fire his beloved, a beautiful boy of 12 years, in consequence of suspecting him to have been violated by Adam Khan, the brother-in-law of the king " Journal, 242.

• Journal, 245-7 ; Travels, 271-4 ; J. A. S. B., 1834, pp. 9-18.

* Journal, 224; Travels, 233. In a letter dated Peshawar, January, 1834, Mohan Lai stated that they had been detained both at Meshad and Herat for eleven months, because they were taken for Russian spies and Dr. Gerard had been attacked by fever. Asiatic Journal, September, 1834, p. 14.

worried at the loss of his Journal, which, in his opinion, **was** the only means of bringing him to the notice of the Governor-General. Mohan Lai, in spite of his sufferings from heat and want of water, hurriedly reached Parah, 30 miles away, [140 miles south of Herat] and lodged a complaint with the chief of the place, who declined to take any notice of the incident. He then sent two men to the robbers with offers of money to restore him his papers. He halted at Farah for about a week, and was glad to get back his Journal and the papers, though the English articles were not returned.¹

On the 12th August, they were informed that the road was infested with thieves and consequently Mohan Lai concealed his papers round his waist. The next day they were at Siyah Ab, where Shah Vali Khan, the famous wazir of Ahmad Shah met his death at the hands of Timur Shah's men. Here they were warmly received by the villagers who presented them with milk and melons. Mohan Lai found that pure butter was sold there at the rate of two annas per seer of Indian weight, and a large sheep for a rupee.⁸

They arrived at Kandahar* on the 25th August, and they were given a cordial reception by Sardar Rahamdil Khan,

¹ Journal, 259-61 ; Travels, 287-9*

¹ Journal, 263;. Travels, 292. "For six needles we got bread for as many persons, and for a few tinsel rings chopped straw* for our horses." Conolly, ii, 64.

• Kandahar was enclosed by a wall thirty feet in height and one mile and a half in length. Outram, 86. *

Kandahar was noted for the quality of its fruits, yet they were very cheap. For a piec several seers of grapes could be purchased ; and figs, plums, apricots;peaches, pears, melons, pomegranatesr and. almonds.were nearly as cheap.

"The apricots and plums of Kandahar were considered beyond praise." Kennedy, 280.

one of the chiefs of the place, whose hospitality they enjoyed for nearly two months.¹

*7. From Kandahar to Ghazni and Kabul, 20th October
to 5th November, 1833*

Leaving Kandahar on the 20th October,* they reached a village known as Khail Akhund* on the 22nd. Here Mohan Lai saw a Hindu cooking bread. He accosted him by offering the Hindu form of greetings, "Ram, Ram", which astonished him coming from a person dressed in Afghan costume. Mohan Lai found the people not of handsome appearance* They wore woollen clothes and ate meat and barley bread. The girls of the Ghilzais⁴ twisted their hair, and tied it like a cake, ornamented with gold and silver coins, and hanging over the forehead. This mode of wearing the hair was peculiar to maidens⁵ alone.

¹ Journal, 269 ; Travels, 209. Masson gives a graphic account of the greed of the three confederate brother rulers. From fifty to one hundred Hindu merchants "of respectability" were daily dragged along the streets of the city to the court, and were compelled to furnish money. He was surprised to find that these rich traders of "decent appearance" "submit so patiently to the indignities heaped upon them in every Mussulman country, from the prince to the lowest miscreant who repeats his kalmah." Journey, i, 287.

¹ Journal, 294 ; Travels, 324. On the 24th October they received a bundle of newspapers from India from M. Allard. Journal, 296; Travels, 325. Two days later they met a Sikh on the road.

³ A village containing the mausoleum of a Muslim priest, situated 29 miles north-west of Kandahar.

*The Ghilzais were wealthy in flocks but poor in manufactures, except a few rough woollen articles of daily use such as carpets, felts and socks. Contrary to Mohan Lai's opinion, however, Masson found them "a remarkably fine race of men," "unsurpassed in the mass, by any other Afghan tribe for commanding stature and strength". Masson, ii, 206.

¹ Regarding the method of wooing of Afghan maidens Masson's

Ghazni was reached on the 30th October, where they had to pay the customs duties on their caps, cloaks and tea-cups etc. amounting to Rs. 50. They reached Kabul on the 5th November, and met Mr. Masson,¹ the famous traveller, who had secured a large number of Grecian coins from an ancient

account will not be without interest'.—"Many of the Afghan tribes have a custom in wooing, similar to what in Wales is known as *bundhng-up*, and which they term *namsat ban*. The lover presents himself at the house of his betrothed with a suitable gift, and in return is allowed to pass the night with her, on the understanding that innocent endearments are not to be exceeded. The bands of the maiden's perjamas are very tightly secured, and she is enjoined on no account to suffer them to be unloosed. The precaution is not always effective, and whether from being inconveniently tight or from other causes, the bands are a little relaxed; and, from natural consequences, it is necessary to precipitate the union of the two parties, and not unfrequently the bridegroom when he receives his bride, canics home with her his first born in a *bakhawal*, or cradle.

"The Nawab Jabar Khan went on a *namtat ban* visit to the sister of Mahomed Shah Khan, and wishing to profit by the opportunity more than the lady's modesty permitted, received a severe chastisement from her slippers, which so disheartened him that, though often threatening to fetch her to his house, he has never summoned resolution to do so, and when I left the country she was yet pining away in celibacy and solitude at Mumjuma." Masson, iii, 287-8

Conolly, however, remarks that though the lover is privately admitted to interviews with his mistress frequently, even for two or three months, if not longer; yet "they profess the strictest morality, and so heinous a crime do they consider adultery, that they generally take the law into their own hands and punish the offenders with death." Journey, ii, 152.

¹ Masson travelled in Baluchistan, Khorasan, Afghanistan, Sind and the Panjab from 1826 to 1838. He led a most remarkably adventurous life, journeying mostly on foot, absolutely unarmed and unequipped, begging his food. He was frequently stripped of his clothes, beaten and maltreated. He posed as a Farangi, Mughal, Uzbek, Afghan and Hindustani, pretending to be a physician, Haji and charmer. These adventures are vividly described by him in three volumes

and ruined village named Bag Rom,¹ situated at a distance of two days' journey north of Kabul. They were invited to dinner by Dost Muhammad Khan, the King of Kabul. Mohan Lai visited Babar's tomb and was fascinated by the sight of it. The panoramic view of the square in which the tomb was situated, shaded by fruit trees of different kinds and washed by numerous crystal canals and its green bed and cool breeze, charmed him so much that "I stood without a motion meditating whether I was dreaming or roving in an unknown region".²

8. Trade of Afghanistan

Regarding the trade in Afghanistan, Mohan Lai observed that the English goods brought from Bombay to Kandahar through the Gulf of Cutch and Baluchistan, after the payment of all the expenses of the road including customs duties, fetched a profit of thirty per cent. He supplied the following schedule of prices —

	Bought in Bombay		Sold in Kandahar	
	Rs.	As.	Rs.	As.
1. Fine muslin per piece	3	0	6	8
2. Abreh or Jamavar	2	12	10	0
3. A pair of fine shawls	20	0	40	0
4. Saluu or Long Cloth, 35 yards each piece	12	0	27	0
5. Figured chintz, called Goolce, 35 yards a piece	13	0	28	0
6. Common chintz called Rahdan	1	0	18	0
7. Jandanec	3	8	7	0
8. Fine ulvan woollen	18	2	30	0
9. One piece of velvet	2	7	66	0
10. Velvet chintz, called Makhmah	60	0	120	0

[Kb. 0/8/- of Kandahar were equal to Rs. 5/- of Bombay.]

⁴ Gerard and Mohan Lai obtained here from excavations a marble sculptured slab, an account of which was published by Mohan Lai in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. September, 1834. cf. Masson, lii, 9**.

¹ Journal, 299-305 ; Travels, 329-35* "The place is peculiarly fitted for social enjoyment, and nothing can surpass the beauty of the landscape, and the purity of the atmosphere." Masson, i, 240.

Copper, steel, iron and lace were imported from Russia. Blue paper of Russia was used throughout Turkistan and Afghanistan. Bagoo, a Shikarpuri merchant, told him that every year English and Indian goods to the value of Rs. 30,000 were generally sold in Kabul, and those of Russia worth Rs. 200,000.¹

9. *Extract from Dr. Gerard's Letter about Mohan Lai*

Dr. Gerard in a letter dated at Kabul and published in the Asiatic Journal, July, 1834, pp. 171-2, spoke highly about the qualifications of Mohan Lai:—

" Shah Kamran of Herat was delighted with his accomplished Persian and unobtrusive address. At Kandahar he was much respected by Sirdar Raheem Dil Khan, who praised his acquisitions, and regretted that his sons could not partake of them. Here he is a favourite with the rulers. In truth, I know not of an exception, in our long journey, to the uniform civility he has commanded; but much of this is the offspring of his natural disposition, a chief feature has been his school education, (and by far from the least of that his knowledge of English), all of which collectively, have left an impression in favour of the British Government of the highest interest, and incited many to become acquainted with the structure and constitution of a power which is but vaguely comprehended in these regions. At Gerish, upon the banks of the Helmund, the Governor (eldest son of Kohundil Khan, chief ruler of Kandahar) was

¹ Mohan Lai's letter dated Peshawar, January, 1834, published in the Asiatic Journal, September, 1834, pp. 14-15.

" In addition to native wares, the bazaars, contained in abundance those of Great Britain. Russia, and India. Of these Russia supplied the laigest proportion." Thornton, i, 3x0.

so much struck with Mohun Lai's acquirements, that he begged of me to intercede with his father to allow him to visit India, and even England. At Kandahar, similar demonstrations were made to the credit of Mohun Lai personally." , ,

IO. Greek Antiquities at Jalalabad

At Jalalabad Dr. Gerard and Mohan Lai had to wait for some days for an escort to take them to Peshawar. This time was utilized by them in search of old remains which existed there in abundance. They opened a* tope after five days' hard labour at digging, discovering therein a small room two yards square. It looked as if it had been plastered with lime that very day. They also collected a considerable number of Grecian coins. On opening another monument nearly thirty feet in height, built of large stones and lime, they discovered another complete dome encircled by the outer one. They found in the centre of the dome a small "stone frame-work, containing five lamps, filled with pieces of bone.

They dug up another heap, and after five days' toil found an image cut out of black stone. The figure was beautiful and had two small mace-bearers on both shoulders. They had narrow waist and broad chest. The image had curling locks flowing over its shoulders, and both hands placed on the knees. Its forehead was mutilated.¹

¹This account in detail was originally published in the Delhi Gazette, and was reproduced in the Asiatic Journal, August, 1834, pp. 248-9. Remarking about Mohan Lai's description of Greek antiquities near Jalalabad, James Tod of Piazza Barbenna in a letter dated Rome, the 22nd March, 1835, says that "this most intelligent Hindu ought to be made an honorary member of every Asiatic* Society." Asiatic Journal, May-August, 1835, VOL. XLV, p. 9. , ,

11. *Peshawar to Luihiana, 7th January to 7th March, 1834*

After a time they left for Peshawar. On the 7th December near the Khyber Pass, a camel laden with Mohan Lai's goods and on which one of his servants was sitting was attacked by robbers who made good their escape with a bag containing sugar, tea and clothes.¹

They arrived at Peshawar on the 9th December and were generously entertained by Sultan Muhammed Khan. They left Peshawar on the 7th January, 1834. On the 28th, they reached a village called Dahmak near Rohtas, where General Ventura* and Court* lay encamped. The Generals received them warmly, and Ventura requested Mohan Lai to send him a student from the Delhi English College to serve in the capacity of Persian Munshi.⁴

¹ Journal, 322 ; Travels, 352.

¹ General Ventura, said to have been an Italian by birth, was an Infantry Colonel in Napoleon's army. After the battle of Waterloo he served for some time in Iran, but being dissatisfied resigned his post and came to Ranjit Singh in March, 1822. He was at once employed on a monthly salary of Rs. 2,500, and was asked to reform the infantry. After several years' patient labour he succeeded in making it "first in rank, discipline and equipment in the Sikh army." In 1823 he helped in defeating the Afghans, in 1831-33 he served in Multan, and later he was appointed Governor of Lahore. He retired in 1843, and passed the rest of his life in Paris. He died in April, 1858. G. L. Chopra, and Buckland's Dictionary of Indian Biography.

• Claude Auguste Court was born in 1793. He held a commission in the French army which he resigned in 1818. He served in Iran, and took service under Ranjit Singh in 1827 on Rs. 2,000 per mensem. He improved Sikh artillery greatly. He paid much attention to archaeology and coins. He retired from the Panjab in 1841, and went to France with his Indian wife and children. *Ibid.*

• Journal, 332-3 ; Travels, 365.

On the 25th January they were at Wazirabad where Diwan Ajudhia Prashad met Mohan Lai, and told him that his journey through Muslim countries had created some suspicion in the minds of his caste brethren, and that in order to remove their scruples he should pay a visit to the temple of Mansaram Razdan situated on the right bank of the Chenab. He did so accordingly. Next day they stayed in the camp of General Avitabile.¹

Lahore was reached on the 30th January, and they put up in the house of General Allard. They stayed in Lahore for a month, and received great attention from Maharaja Ranjit Singh whom they visited frequently. The Maharaja presented Mohan Lai with Rs. 500 and seven pieces of cloth, including three Kashmir shawls. They reached Ludhiana on the 7th March, 1834."

12. Dr. Gerard's Official Report Regarding Mohan Lai's Qualifications and Services

Dr. Gerard, before he proceeded to join his post with the 1st Nessiree Battalion at Subathu, addressed a letter, dated the 20th March, 1834, to Captain Wade, the British Political Agent, reporting his return to British India, and

¹ Paolo di Bartolomco was born in Naples in 1791. He served in the Neapolitan forces, 1807-9 ; and in the Artillery under king Joseph Bonaparte and Murat in the Imperial Army. He left Italy and served in Iran for six years, receiving the rank of a Khan, 1820-26. He was employed by Ranjit Singh in 1827 in the civil and military charge of Wazirabad. He was appointed Governor of Peshawar in 1837. He gave great assistance to General Pollock in 1842. He returned to Europe in 1843. In the Panjab he amassed a fortune of £ 50,000. G. L. Chopra and Buckland.

¹ Journal, 336.

also bringing to the notice of the Government the services rendered by Mohan Lai, and the high qualifications possessed by him:—

"In concluding this letter (which is probably the last I may have occasion to address upon the subject of my late journey) I only discharge an obligation of public duty in bringing to the favourable notice of Government, the highly satisfactory conduct of the Delhi student, Mohun Lai, for a period of eighteen months, during which he has been my sole associate. This is equally due to himself and to the service that has afforded him the gift of an English education, for it is his collegiate instruction chiefly, and an honest emulation in its advantages that have guided his deportment, and gained him so much respect throughout a journey which will be calculated to have provided a trial for people of maturer years and experience, but from which he has returned with a character and acquirements as honorable to his patrons, as it is creditable to himself and his relations. It must not be concealed that Mohun Lai's domestic tuition has been most respectable, and that his accomplished knowledge of Persian commanded the highest estimation and regard even in those countries where it is the vernacular dialect; lastly, and far from the least considerable of his merits, is his easy but unassuming manners, and mild conciliatory disposition, so eminently calculated to promote the objects of the journey for which he was selected.

"Future travellers in these regions will confirm the facts which I now only indicate, and disinterested individuals will make known the impressions which such acquirements have left among the rude population of Afghanistan, and the share they have had in raising a feeling of respect and friendship towards the British Government.

"It would be superfluous, perhaps indiscreet in me to particularize the various circumstances that occurred to analyse the character of this young man, but I may observe that on occasions of personal danger, or others that flattered his self esteem, or tried his honour at the intended expense of his integrity, his conduct was most exemplary, being guided as much by good natural principles, as the pride of approbation from his superiors.

"In my conversations with Prince Kamran of Herat especially, I found Mohun Lai's services not only most essential, but in the highest degree trustworthy, and I venture to recommend his intelligence as fully sufficient to satisfy enquiry upon any point connected with the situation and resources of the Afghan states, and to which, confidence is most justly due.

"His acquaintance with subjects which his capacity might be supposed unsuited for, and the propriety of which might seem questionable, having been partly the result of my own inexperience in the Persian language, it becomes incumbent upon me to state here that reliance was never better placed, and that Mohun Lal will be found free from the failings of the native character and fully deserving of confidence; his interests are inseparable from those of the service, and an honorable reputation to the exclusion of every other object, is his most anxious aim.

"Mohan Lai now leaves me to speak in his own person, and I cannot but feel assured that the expectations I have thus unreservedly stimulated, will be wholly realized ; in that case, I hope to be excused for expressing the gratification, that will accrue to me, that this, young and promising lad has earned a reward suitable to his abilities and disposition, his enterprise and trustworthy attachment to the source to which he is indebted for so many advantages. Mohun Lal

having been recommended by Mr. Burnes to the personal notice of the Rt. Honorable the Governor-General is now proceeding to Calcutta. I have at least this consideration to offer as an apology for imitating so respectable a precedent, especially as the return journey from Mished (in which the Delhi student has been my companion) has occupied so protracted a period. If I have any other excuse for intruding this subject upon Government, it is the conviction that Mohun Lai has not neglected under my charge, the education in which he has been so well initiated. For proof of this I beg to instance the superior style of his journal, in the latter part of the tour, the variety of his enquiries, and the improvement in oral conversation so evident to himself, and which I venture to predict will be considered satisfactory to his friends, and appreciable in the quarter that is ultimately destined to promote his future welfare; in which prospect it cannot be otherwise than regretted that the education, which his natural abilities are so well calculated to honor, had not been completed before he was drawn from his studies, [Mohun Lal was not I believe more than twenty months at School, certainly under two years.]; while at the same time reflection must always be gratifying that an opportunity which has so successfully terminated was afforded of proving the value of English instruction in the present instance, so creditable to the institution which has furnished the example, and which cannot fail to have the best influence upon the progress and efficiency of education throughout British India.

"Hoping that the objects of their communication will meet with your approval [especially with regard to the Delhi student of whom your personal experience at this place, however brief, is sufficient to warrant an opinion] and in that event begging the favour of its transmission to Government."¹

¹ Panjab Records, Book 105, Letter 36.

CHAPTER IV

COMMERCIAL AGENT ON THE INDUS

1834-1836

I. *New Appointment at Kandahar*

Dr. Gerard's report regarding Mohan Lal's loyalty, ability and achievements deeply impressed Captain Wade who determined to make use of Mohan Lal's services in the political department.

In January, 1834, Mir Karamat¹ Ali, the British newswriter

¹ Masson gives an interesting story of this man :—" A few days after my return to Kabul I was surprised by a visit from a person announcing himself as Saiyad Keramat Ali, agent of the Supreme Government of India. He informed me of his travels, as companion of Lieutenant Arthur Conolly, and of his adventures at Kabul. It appeared, that he had wished to preserve his incognito ; but a letter, destined for Herat, having been intercepted, his existence and the nature of his employment became revealed, and he was consigned to the *bandt-khana*, or prison, of Dost Mahomed Khan. The Nawab Jabar Khan embraced with alacrity the opportunity afforded of showing his good-will to Europeans, and to those connected with them, and urged to his brother, that he had a singular method of evincing his desire to cultivate a friendship with the Sahiban of Hind, by placing the first of their agents sent to Kabul in durance. The Chief smiled and admitted there was reason in the nawab's rebuke, while he called for the Saiyad that he might hear what he had to say for himself. His tale was that his sole business was to procure intelligence of Abbas Mirza and his movements. Dost Mahomed Khan observed, 'Very good, they interest me also; take care not to write anything about me.' The nawab joyfully carried off the Saiyad, and installed him in apartments of his own house, where, under that good man's protection, he securely and unreservedly prosecuted his vocation." Masson, iii, 1-3.

in Khorasan, applied for leave,¹ and Captain Wade recommended Mohan Lai as the 'most suitable candidate to fill the vacancy:—

"The knowledge and experience which he has acquired in his late journey of the countries and people on whose affairs he will have to report are of importance in a candidate for that situation, and when to these qualifications are added real intelligence and good temper together with a knowledge of the English language, he appears to me to be more eligible for the office of our newswriter in Khorasan than anyone else with whom I am acquainted."¹

This recommendation was accepted by the Governor-General and Mohan Lai was appointed to this post on a monthly salary of Rs. 250/-³

¹ Masson assigns two reasons for Karamat Ali's asking for leave. In the first place he had a "disagreement with Captain Wade," and secondly, he tried to bully Ranjit Singh who complained to Wade against him :—"When at Lahore, he rejected the presents tendered by Ranjit Singh, and commanded him to desist from his aggressions on the Afghans. Finding the Maharaja not perfectly compliant, he stroked his beard, and swore he would play the deuce with him when he got to Calcutta. The old prince, terrified, applied to Captain Wade at Ludhiana for protection against the Saiyad." Masson, iii, 322-3.

"Panjab Records, Book 140, Letter 20, dated Ludhiana, 25th March, 1834.

³ Panjab Records, Book 140, Letter 94, dated 17th November, 1834.

The Delhi Gazette in its issue of 24th June, 1835, made the following comment regarding Mohan Lal's appointment:—"Mohan Lai, the companion of our celebrated travellers Messrs. Burnes and Gerard, intends shortly to start for Candahar, to commence his labours as a government agent at the court of Raheem Dil Khan. Beside* this native spy at Candahar, the government has a Hindoo emissary, acting in the same capacity, at Lahore. A Mr. Louis, *alias* Masson, watching

2. *Proceeds to Calcutta*

In the meantime, while the question of Mohan Lal's new post was to be decided, he availed himself of the interval by proceeding to Calcutta to have an interview with the Governor-General and to present his lordship with a copy of the Journal of his tour into Central Asia.

On his way he stopped at Delhi which was Mohan Lal's home. Here a storm of indignation was raised against him for having travelled through Muslim countries, and thereby breaking the rigid caste rules. He was considered a Musalman and was avoided by the Kashmiri Brahmins, so much so that they did not even allow him "to drink out of the same cup with them." Mohan Lal communicated this fact to the Government of India, saying that his caste brethren "have discarded me from their society as I have been travelling into Mahomedan countries, so I am now left without friends and without a place to reside in my native city of Delhi."¹

In Calcutta¹ where Mohan Lal arrived about the end of July, 1834, he was warmly received by Mr. Trevelyan who introduced him to Lady William Bentinck and Sir C. T. Metcalfe

and reporting the movements of Amir Dost Mahumed Khan at Kabul, Moonshee Keramat Ali at Kamran's durbar, at Herat, and Moulvee Auzamodeen Hossein [the quondam Mecer Moonshee of Lord William Bentinck] to report the intrigues and proceedings of the Sindian Chiefs stationed at Tatee, near the mouth of the Indus. A person will shortly be deputed, we understand, to Bokhara, to keep our government apprised of the politics of Naseer Olla Khan's court." cf. Asiatic Journal, January, 1836, p 19.

¹ Panjab Records, Delhi Cases, Letter 40, dated Calcutta, 22nd December, 1834.

* Mohan Lal's dak, boat and carriage expenses from Ludhina to Calcutta amounted to Rs. 743/11/-. Impenal Records, Political Department, 21st November, 1834, No. 262.

(Vice-President of the Supreme Council and Deputy-Governor of Bengal). Mr. Jackson and Captain Pemberton assisted him in publishing his Journal.¹

3. At (he Hindu College, Calcutta

In view of his new appointment it was considered advisable to give Mohan Lai some training in practical surveying. He was therefore furnished with surveying instruments from the Surveyor-General's office,* and Mr. Rowe of the Hindu College gave him special lectures at the Hindu College.⁸ Mohan Lai was busy every day from day-break till half past eight in the evening ; the mornings being spent out of doors in measuring and taking angles, and the evenings in committing to paper what he had done. He also received occasional lessons in drawing. Mr. Rowe stated that Mohan Lal had made as much progress in five months as his other pupils in the Hindu College had done in eighteen months.⁴

¹ Panjab Records, Delhi Cases, Latter 40, dated at Calcutta, 22nd December, 1834.

* Imperial Records, Political Department, 7th August, 1834, No. 63.

³Hindu College, originally called the Hindu Mahavidyala, the premier institution in Bengal for imparting English education, was founded on the 17th January. 1817, through the efforts of David Hare and Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The College was taken over by the Government in 1855, under the new name of Presidency College. *Calcutta Past and Present*, 50.

• Imperial Records, Political Department, 28th January, 1835, No. 47. Mr. Rowe was paid an allowance of Rs. 100 per mensem for giving lessons to Mohan Lal and Rs. 188 for supplying him with books and instruments. In addition Mohan Lal was provided with the following books:—

(i) Karabadeen Kahir, 2 copies price Rs. 150.
 (ii) Richardson's Persian and Arabic Dictionary, 4th Ed. „ Rs. 150.
 (iii) Anwar Suheli, 4 copies. „ Rs. 40.

[ct. Imperial Records, Political Department, 28th January, 1835, No. 48 and 24th December, 1834, No. 107.]

4 Receives a Grant of Land for Building a House in Delhi

While still in Calcutta, Mohan Lal applied to the Governor-General for a free grant of land to build a house in Delhi in "Jani Khan ka Katra." He stated that the place was situated inside the walls of the city near Kali Masjid. Originally it was the property of a Muslim gentleman, but on his dying without issue, it belonged to Government. The site was surrounded by a mud wall, and had a few huts and some shops of rope-sellers who paid to the Government, an annual rent of Rs. 12/12/-.¹

The Government of India made enquiries about this particular plot of land from the Civil Judge, Delhi, who intimated that it was "lawaris" property, paying to the Government an annual rent of Rs. 12/12/-. Its area was 513 square yards, and its estimated value was Rs. 672. It was tenanted by some rope makers, who, if ejected, would demand, by way of compensation for their houses, a sum of about Rs. 20.²

The matter was then referred to the Government of Agra, under which Delhi was then placed, and it sanctioned the transfer of this land to Mohan Lai.⁸

Mohan Lai left Calcutta in January, 1835, and arrived at Delhi in February. He examined the piece of land granted to him, but found that it was not entirely free from encumbrances. Consequently, he petitioned for another piece of land called "Ismail Khan ka Katra," situated in the Churi

¹ Panjab Records, Delhi Cases, Letter 40, dated Calcutta, 22nd December. 1834.

¹ Panjab Records, Delhi Cases, Letter 40, dated 22nd January, 1835

³ *Ibid* ; dated 27th February, 1835.

Walla Street; The Government of Agra referred him to the local authorities to settle all matters regarding the new site.¹

5. Seeks Government Assistance against his Caste Fellows

On Mohan Lai's return to Delhi, some of his caste fellows started a vigorous campaign against him for his having broken the caste rules not only while travelling through Central Asia, but also during his stay at Calcutta where he was the guest of C. E. Trevelyan. Mohan Lai was much annoyed at this, and tried to secure help from the Government to stop this agitation. He stated :—

"They have fabricated a story that I was accustomed to dine with the gentlemen during my sojourn in Calcutta.

"As I always observed the outward form of the Hindoo religion and have never dined with the Calcutta gentlemen, I asked those who have calumniated me either to prove their story or to desist from insulting me, but they remain deaf to my appeals and entreaties.

"If I had become a convert to Christianity there would be no necessity for me to conceal the fact, and on the other hand such a solemn act could never remain a secret.

"Notwithstanding all remonstrances, jealousy and ill will have so strongly wrought upon the above peoples' hearts that they have now made a combination to expel and eject me from my caste. I need not observe that this kind of usage will not only hurt the feelings of my old parents and mortify their hearts, but disgrace me before my equals. Therefore, I humbly beg that

¹ *Ibid*; dated Delhi, 25th February, 1835 ; and also dated Agra, 7th March, 1835.

your honour will send an order to the Magistrate of Dilhe to frustrate the evil designs of those people, by an authoritative interposition."¹

In a fortnight Mohan Lai received a reply to the effect "that the Government cannot interfere in the manner requested."⁸

6. Gets « *Khilat* from the Mughal Emperor

In Delhi, Mohan Lal was introduced by T. T. Metcalfe, Agent to the Governor-General, to His Majesty Akbar Shah, the Mughal Emperor. His Majesty mentioned the names of Mohan Lai's grandfather and other members of the family "who had held conspicuous appointments in that court when in power." He was granted a robe of honour, "with some jewels on a turban, which his Majesty tied with his own hands" on his head.⁸

7. At Ludhiana

Mohan Lai stayed in Delhi for nearly six months, but most of this time he lay confined to bed owing to a pain in the chest, for which he was bled several times. He reached Ludhiana in October, 1835, loaded with heavy baggage, about twenty maunds in weight, consisting of medicines, books, pen-knives, spy-glasses, surveying instruments, globes and beer,* most of which were to be given away as presents to various chiefs in Afghanistan and Khorasan.⁴

¹ *Ibid* ; dated Delhi, 25th February, 1835.

* *Ibid* ; dated Agra, 7th March, 1835.

⁴ Travels, 374. Jacquemont visited Delhi in March, 1830. when the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Akbar Shah conferred upon him a dress of honour and "with his imperial hands fastened a couple of jewelled ornaments to my hat." Letters from India, i, 190.

* Pan jab Records, Book 106, Letter 56, Mohan Lai to Captain Wade, dated at Ludhiana, 20th October, 1835.

Mohan Lal was placed in direct communication with Lieutenant Mackeson,¹ British Agent on the Indus, who was authorised to exercise immediate superintendence over him in the execution of his duties.

*8. Journey from Ludhiana to Bahawalpur,
26th October to Early December, 1835*

In accordance with Captain Wade's instructions, Mohan Lal started from Ludhiana on the 26th October, and marched along the left bank of the Sutlej. Passing through Ferozepur he reached Mamdot,¹ the chief of which place received him with consideration. His Minister, Fir Ibrahim Khan, tried to make his stay agreeable. Mamdot was a fortified town,⁸ commanding a view of the Sutlej, and was peopled by Muslims and Hindu Khattris.⁴

From Mamdot onward, Mohan Lai found the country almost barren, the cultivation being carried only along the

¹ Frederick Mackeson (1807—53), Lieutenant-Colonel and Commissioner at Peshawar, was appointed in 1825 an ensign in the 14th Bengal native infantry. He became a Lieutenant in 1828, and a Captain in 1843. In 1831 he was stationed at Ludhiana. The foreign officers in Kanjit Singh's service frequently visited Sir C. M. Wade, the British political agent, and on such occasions Mackeson's knowledge of French was turned to good account. In 1837 he accompanied Sir Alexander Burnes to Peshawar. In 1838—9 he secured facilities for the passage of the Army of the Indus, and in recognition of his services he was created a C. B. in 1842. He was assassinated by a Pathan at Peshawar in 1853.

¹ The estate of Mamdot comprised territories situated in Ferozepur, Muktsar and Fazilka tahsils. Nawab Jamal-ud-din Khan (1800—1848) was the ruler. The town of Mamdot was situated two miles south of the Sutlej. Imperial Gazetteer of India, xvii, 106.

³ Its walls rose to a height of 50 feet. *Ibid* ; 107.

⁴ Travels, 375.

banks of the river. He passed through Ramu and Khairpur, and in the last week of November he reported himself to Lt. Mackeson at Mubarikpur. Mackeson directed him to wait at Bahawalpur for instructions from Captain Wade, while he provided him with letters of introduction for Diwan Sawan Mai, the Governor of Multan, and Khub Chand, merchant of Shikarpur.¹

Mohan Lai reached Bahawalpur in the beginning of December, and stayed there for a few days. He was well treated by Nawab Muhammad Bahawal Khan whose agents attended upon him with sweetmeats and other necessities. He observed that the city was surrounded by numerous gardens and mango groves, and was "celebrated for its silk manufactures² and indigo³ plantations."⁴

9. *Subjects of enquiry*

On the 9th December he received instructions from Wade. He was informed that he was not to proceed to his ultimate destination for the present and that his services were required for some time in collecting commercial statistics. Consequently, he was asked to leave all letters and presents received from the Government for chiefs and others in Afghanistan in charge of Mackeson at Bahawalpur. Thus lightly equipped he was to go to Multan and stay there for fifteen days, then to visit Derah Ghazi Khan and remain there ten days, afterwards to proceed to Mithankot by the route of Dajal, Harrand, Asm

¹ Panjab Records, Book 106, Letter 63, Mackeson to Wade, dated Mubarikpur, 1st December, 1835.

² cf. Masson, 1, 4.

³ Travels, 381.

⁴ For Mohan Lal's account of the origin and growth of the Bahawalpur house see Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1838, i, 27-33.

and Rajanpur, and to stop there for five days, from there to repair to Shikarpur where he could remain for fifteen days, and then to return to Bahawalpur. He was asked to prepare a Journal of his route and make himself acquainted with the commercial resources of every place. It was required of him to indicate his route in a field book and to insert in his Journal whatever information he might be able to collect regarding the statistics of the country he traversed. He had to record the productions of the country, its principal marts, the different routes of trade, exports and imports, their probable annual amount, means of transport, the system and rate of duties, the merchants by whom the trade was chiefly conducted, the names of the places where their agents were established, and general rates of insurance. Besides, he had to make a special report on the routes which led from the banks of the Indus between Derah Ismail Khan and Shikarpur to Kandahar.

He was instructed to regulate his conduct so well as not to excite " the least jealousy or suspicion on the part of the authorities of the place " where he had to make enquiries. He was expected to " endeavour at the same time to give the merchants and anyone else who may evince a curiosity on the subject, the knowledge which you possess of the measures taken by the British Government to open the navigation of the Indus and the terms on which it is to be concluded and the commercial advantages which are held out to those who may be disposed to engage in trade by that channel."¹

JO. Journal from Bahawalpur to Multan, from the 10th to the 20th December, 1835

In view of the dangers of the road and to avoid exciting any suspicion in the minds of the people, Mohan Lal put on a

¹ Panjab Records, Book 102, Letter 75, Wade to Mohan Lal, dated Ludhiana, 1st November, 1835.

shabby appearance pretending himself a "poor traveller." He submitted detailed reports on the subjects of enquiry assigned to him, of which a few interesting points are given **here**.

Mohan Lai marched from Bahawalpur at dawn on the 10th December. The temperature was 52⁰. There was a beautiful garden of apple trees clothed in mats as a protection against cold. He observed that the water of the Sutlej was muddy, and its temperature was 54⁰. The river was about 300 yards wide and 12 fathoms deep. On the nth December he was at Miranpur [20 miles N. of Bahawalpur]. The people of this place praised the government of Diwan Sawan Mai. Indigo was cultivated here. The road was intersected by numerous water-courses, some of which were dry, while others had deep water. These channels were taken out from the Sutlej to irrigate the fields. The country abounded in *jal* and tamarisk¹ trees. There was plenty of game, especially deer. The people were poverty-stricken and generally lived on boiled turnips. On the 12th December at sunrise the thermometer stood at 48°.

Passing through numerous fields of cotton and indigo, he reached Shujabad* [20 miles N. W. of Miranpur] on the 13th December. It was surrounded by a high brick wall, mounted with three guns facing west, and a ditch which was dry and

¹ cf. Masson, i, 4.

¹ It is situated about five miles from the east bank of the Chenab and thirty miles south of Multan. Its considerable size and lofty fortifications gave it a striking appearance. The walls were mounted with a few guns, and defended by a small garrison. It was noted for the manufacture of cotton goods and wood-turnery. There were many extensive and luxuriant gardens, and the soil was fertile and highly cultivated. Thornton's Gazetteer, ii, 197-8.

filled with dung in some parts. Outside the city all round the wall were the quarters of poor and low class people. The town was built by Shuja-ud-din Khan, father of Muzaffar Khan, the last Muslim Governor of Multan. The people admired his sense of justice and love of building.

Mohan Lai tried to enter the town, but was prevented by the Sikh guards who suspected him as a spy of the British. Mohan Lai changed his clothes, and by putting on the dress of a low class man made his way in. He was impressed by the sight of the bazars which intersected each other. There were 360 shops richly provided with goods.¹ The houses were three or four stories high. The best building was the Nawab's palace, distinguished by a lofty cupola called Saman Burj. Shujabad surpassed Bahawalpur both in beauty and cleanliness. The Hindus formed the majority of the population. The cultivators were also Hindu Khatris, many of whom carried on a thriving trade in Khorasan and Turkistan.²

His path now lay through a forest, and on the 15th December he took a bird's eye view of the country by climbing

¹ "There is a good and well-supplied bazar." *Ibid.*, 198.

² Masson who visited this town a little before speaks with equal admiration about it:—

"Shujah Kot, or Shujabad, is a considerable fortified town, and its lofty battlements, irregularly built have a picturesque appearance. It has a very excellent bazar, and is the seat of some cotton manufactures, besides being famous for its turners in wood. There is a small garrison, and a few guns are mounted on the walls. Near it are several good gardens, particularly one bearing the name of Mozafar Khan. The town stands in a highly cultivated tract, and for two or three *cosses* to the south there were immense fields of sugar-cane. The cotton-plant is also abundantly grown." Masson, i, 394.

up the gate of Sikandarabad [8 miles north of Shujabad]. At this place he met Jannat, the mother-in-law of Bahram Khan Baluch, the head of the Mazari tribe. They were notorious *banditti*, and neither caravans nor travellers were safe in passing through their territory, lying between Mithankot and Shikarpur on the right bank of the Indus. They plundered numerous villages of Multan province, and had no fear of the Mirs of Sind, whose subjects they were. They had maltreated Ibrahim Khan, the ambassador of Shah Kamran of Herat, who was returning from Ludhiana with presents from the British Government. A fight had taken place between the Mazaris and the Sikhs five months before, and Jannat had been captured as a prisoner of war. Ranjit Singh demanded twenty-five camels as ransom, twenty of which had already been sent by Bahram Khan. She was being taken to Mithankot, where she was to be released on the receipt of five camels more. As Mohan Lai had to pass through the Mazari country, he tried to win the favour of Bahram Khan through Jannat. With the permission of the guards, he talked to her for a long time and sympathised with her in her misfortunes. He presented her with four rupees and a silken waist-coat.

On the 16th December, Mohan Lal reached Multan, but he was detained two miles away from the city, as he could not be allowed to enter without the permission of Diwan Sawan Mai who was out on tour. On the 20th December, on the arrival of the Governor's orders, his agent Daya Ram waited on Mohan Lal with an offering of Rs. 21 and a basket of oranges. He was provided with a house situated inside the Daulat Gate. The same day, his cousin Radha Kishan who had accompanied Mohan Lal from Delhi, and who had helped him in copying his Journal, was taken ill with cholera, and died. From the 21st to the 31st December, Mohan Lal observed the days of

mourning, and stayed at Multan till the end of January, 1836, busy in collecting information regarding the trade and commerce of the place.¹

II. *Observations on the trade of Multan*

Mohan Lal had frequent conversations with the Lohani and Shikarpuri merchants who carried on trade with Bokhara. He explained to them the contents of the Bombay price list and sent a copy of it to Diwan Sawan Mal. The merchants were delighted to learn that a market would be established at Mithankot, but they were anxious to know how they were going to be protected against robbers, while sailing up and down the river. They also wished to be informed of the price of indigo which grew abundantly in the districts of Multan.

Turkistan especially the city of Bokhara, supplied Multan with silk⁸ of three kinds. Lab-i-Abi, Charkhi and Kolikari.

¹ Panjab Records, Book 107, pp. 17-35, dated Multan, 30th January, 1836.

² The silk manufactured at Multan could be had in all colours and was "less delicate in texture than the 'loongees' of Bhawalpoor". Ranjit Singh "encouraged their manufacture, since he captured the city; and by giving no other cloths at his court, has greatly increased their consumption, and they are worn as sashes and scarfs by all the Seik Sirdars. They are also exported to Khorasan and India, and the duties levied are moderate." Burnes, 111,111.

Regarding the trade of Multan Masson remarks:—"Multan is said to have decreased in trade since it fell into the hands of the Sikhs, yet its bazars continued well and reasonably supplied with all articles of traffic and consumption. There are still numerous bankers, and manufacturers, of silk and cotton goods. Its fabnes of shawls and lunghis are deservedly esteemed, and its brocades and tissues compete with those of Bahawalpur. It still supplies a portion of its fabrics to the Lohani

These silks were purchased in Bokhara at from 7 to 12 rupees per seer and sold at Multan at from Rs. 10 to 15. A camel load, weighing six and a half maunds, of the first kind of silk cost at Bokhara 440 *tillas* or Rs. 2837/8, one *tilla* being equal in value to about Rs. 6/7/- (Nanakshahi).

From Bokhara, 15 days' journey brought the merchants to Khulam, where they paid one and a half *tillas* as duty for each camel load. In two days the caravan reached Haibak [40 miles] and they were charged one *tilla* per load. Here they changed camels for ponies. In Ghori village they paid duties according to the *Shariat*—*Chihal Yak* or one rupee for goods worth forty rupees. At Doshi they were taxed at the rate of 8 annas per load and at Khinjan one *tilla* a load. Then crossing over the Hindu Kush they came to Kaushan situated in the territory of the Kabul Government. After paying a tax of two rupees a load they reached Sokhta Chinari where they were charged only four annas for a guard. After paying at Charikar at the rate of Rs. 2 per load, the caravan entered Kabul.

At Kabul and Ghazni they paid the town duties amounting to Rs. 200 on a camel load of silk and Rs. 11 on that of

merchants of Afghanistan, and has an extensive foreign trade with the regions west of the Indus." Masson, 1, 395.

Vigne says that Multan imported 700 maunds of raw silk from Turkistan every year. It was manufactured in 150 workshops. One man could finish an ordinary piece of silk 3 yards long and half a yard wide in six days; but a piece of fine workmanship required sixteen days. Vigne, 21-22.

The Imperial Gazetteer, xviii, 31, says:—"The manufacture of carpets has greatly fallen off. Multan is second only to Amritsar in the manufacture of silk, and over 40,000 yards of silk fabrics and 200,000 of silk and cotton mixtures are produced annually."

fruits. The caravan then came to Dand [about 40 miles]. Passing through Kotawaz or Naddi where a duty of one rupee and four annas per load of commercial articles was charged by Sulaiman Khail, they reached Kharoti. The caravan, marching along the bank of the Gomul, arrived at Kotki. After crossing the Sulaiman range the caravan got to Maujgarh,¹ ruled over by Sarwar Khan Lohani who charged Rs. 2/8/- a load, and who sometimes extorted large sums of money from the merchants. Travelling through Zarkani [40 miles W. of Derah Ismail Khan] they came to Daraband* [about 20 miles W. of Derah Ismail Khan] where they left their families under the protection of Omar Khan, until they returned from their commercial excursions.⁸

At Daraband the Lohanis were divided into three divisions. Those going to Hindustan pursued their path through Derah Ghazi Khan. Khangan, Bahawalpur, Bhatner, Hissar and Delhi; to Multan they came *via* Kohari and Leiah ; and to Amritsar through Derah Ismail Khan, Darya Khan [5 miles E. of the Indus, opposite D. I. Khan] and Asipur. At many places between Daraband and Multan, the caravan paid in all 9 rupees per camel load ; while going straight to Bahawalpur they were charged a total of customs duties at the rate

¹ Thornton calls it Majgurra, situated 29 miles north-west of Derah Ismail Khan at the foot of a difficult pass across the Sulaiman Mountains. Thornton, 11, 34.

¹ It was a small, ill-built place, and a rendezvous of Lohani and other caravans who spent their winter here in the mild climate and luxuriant pastures. Thornton, ii, 172.

² for various stages and their description from Ghazni to Derah Ismail Khan see the Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1844, pp. 541-2.

of Rs. 2/8/- a load. If there were no skirmishes on the road 20 marches would bring the caravan from Ghazni to Daraband and 10 to Multan.

Besides silk, many other cloths were manufactured in Multan.¹ Timur Shahi and Shuja Khani chintzes and indigo were annually exported from Multan to Khorasan and Turkistan worth Rs. 550,000. Sind imported from here carpets and silk cloth amounting to Rs. 20,000 a year. Silk articles to the annual value of Rs. 30,000 were exported to Amritsar, and chintzes worth Rs. 50,000 yearly to Hindustan.*

The imports of Multan from and through Afghanistan were silk, *isbang*, *majith*, *buzghung*, *qirmiz*, *gul*, *guri*, fruits, *asafetida*, *zira*, *mastgi*, *kahzaban* and vinegar ; from Amritsar English cloth, *haldi*, ginger, sugar and copper; from Hindustan all sorts of English and Indian cloth, *lakh*, *jast*, tin, copper, brass, *pot* and *kinati*; from Shikarpur pearls ; from Derah Ghazi Khan opium, *char as*, snuff, *hungu* and butter, and from Dajal oil. The total value of all these imports was about Rs. 15,000 in a year.

The principal marts in the province of Multan were Bahawalpur, Khairpur, Dcrah Ghazi Khan, Derah Ismail Khan, Leiah, Shujabad and Mithankot ; and they had commercial transactions with the merchants of Shikarpur, Kandahar, Herat, Bokhara, Kabul, Peshawar, Amritsar, Sind

¹ Mohan Lal gives a list of twenty kinds of cloth with their length, breadth and prices.

Multan was also noted for carpets and embroidery. Vigne, 22. Its principal manufactures were silk, cotton, shawls, lungis and brocade tissues. Thornton, 11, 60.

¹ Multan also produced 1500 maunds of tobacco every year. The best quality of it, red in colour, was sold for six annas per seer, and the inferior kinds were available from two to four annas a seer. Vigne, 22,

and Hindustan. The trade of Multan was chiefly carried on by Lohani and Shikarpuri merchants.¹ It passed through Talamba [25 miles E. of the junction of the Ravi and Chenab, on the banks of the Ravi] for Amritsar, and *via* Shujabad for Shikarpur, Sind, and Bahawalpur.

At Multan a customs duty on silk was charged at the rate of 8 annas a seer on goods going out and 12 annas on those coming in, on indigo Rs. 6/8/- per maund, on English doth 7 per cent of the value, on broad-cloth 10 annas a yard, on spices at the rate of 8%, on cotton cloth Re. 1/5/- per maund, on fruits from five to six rupees per camel load, Rs. 2/- on a camel and Rs. 5/- per horse.

The goods were carried on camels as they were cheaper than mules, while bullock carts were of no use in the desert. There was no practice of insurance. A *hundi*² system existed; but it was adopted only by the merchants of Multan and Amritsar. The *hundi* on silk cloth from Multan to Amritsar amounted to Rs. 50 per maund, and on raw silk to Rs. 17 a maund; while the owner paid the duties of both places. The person who took charge of the goods bore the expense of the road.³

¹ In Multan there were forty shroffs (money-changers) who chiefly belonged to Shikarpur. Burnes, iii, III.

¹ "Banking constitutes a large proportion of the business of Multan, in which it has in some measure supplanted Shikarpur; and the prosperity of the town is in all respects considered on the increase." Thornton, ii, 60.

² Panjab Records, Book 107, pp. 5-16, dated Multan, the 30th January, 1838.

On receipt of these papers Captain Wade in a letter to Lieutenant Mackeson wrote :—

"The papers exhibit satisfactory proofs of his attention to the duties prescribed by my instructions, but I request that when next

*12. Journal from Multan to Mithankot, 31st January
to 3rd March, 1836*

During his stay at Multan, Mohan Lai came into close contact with Ram Das and Darya Khan the leaders of the Shikarpuri and Lohani merchants respectively. These two persons entertained Mohan Lai with a dinner and a dance on the 30th January. The dancing-girls of Multan took greater pains than those of Delhi at their performance, while they were paid only one-third of the wages given in Delhi; but they were inferior to their sisters of the Mughal capital in delicacy of movement and the quality of dress and ornaments.

Mohan Lal left Multan on the 31st January, and put up in the garden of Lange Khan, one mile away from the city. He saw Diwan Sawan Mal on the 5th February at Quraishi, 14 miles distant. Mohan Lai remarks that "this part of the country was the place of robbers, but since the above person has been appointed the ruler of Multan, peace and tranquillity reign in its neighbouring districts." He further observes that the Governor "was very much pleased when I told him that the tranquillity which he has established in the territory of Multan surpassed that of Hindustan, which is governed by a body of law [i. e. Englishmen."]¹

writing to him you will inform him that adopting the designation of "Poor Traveller" in addition to his own name in his official reports is not consistent with that propriety which ought to be observed in official correspondence, and I desire therefore that he will disuse it in his future communications." Panjab Records, Book 103, Letter 13, dated Ludhiana, 21st April, 1836.

For a list of manufactures of Multan see Panjab Records, Book 208, iii, pp. 347-50.

¹ Burnes says that though the Muslims were not allowed in Multan to say 'azan/ they frequented the mosques, and suffered "no other

On his way to Mithankot, Mohan Lal visited Derah Ghazi Khan, where he stayed from the 6th to the 17th February.¹ Derah Ghazi Khan² was formerly under the government of Afghanistan. It was conquered by Ranjit Singh, but was farmed to the Nawab of Bahawalpur. These changes and "the

inconvenience from their new masters, who afford every protection to their trade." *Travels*, iii, 118—9.

Masson noted that all the villages "under Sikh rule were more flourishing in appearance than those under the Mahomcdan government, as well as being much more cleanly." Masson, i. 30.

Speaking about the villages exclusively inhabited by the Muslims, but placed under the Sikh rule, he says:—"The villages have an appearance of greater comfort than those of Sang Ghar, evincing at least the mildness and protecting influence of the Sikh government." *Ibid*; 37.

Referring to Sawan Mal he writes'—"He is a popular ruler, and many anecdotes are related of his liberality and indulgence even on matters connected with religion. The Sikh authority over the conquered provinces held by the Subahdar being firmly established, the administration is mild, owing partly, perhaps, to his personal character, and two Sikhs are located at every village and hamlet on the part of the government. The peasantry make over a third of the produce of their lands; neither do they complain." *Ibid*; 308.

"He is a thin man, with a good temper, and, for a native, a superior expression of countenance, and is said to have distinguished himself at the taking of the city. His government was well-spoken of by the Loham merchants who gave him an excellent character for justice in his dealings with them." Vigne, 23 "He was an oriental ruler of the best type." Quoted by Chopra, 130.

¹ A letter of Mohan Lai dated at Derah Ghazi Khan, the 10th February, 1836, giving an account of "Masud known by the name of Farid Shakarganj or Shakarbar," was published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1836, pp. 635-8.

² Masson, while crossing the Indus near Derah Ghazi Khan, observed numerous "tracks of tigers, which, from such tokens, must be very common, although they are seldom seen, and I learned, seldom do harm." Masson, i, 31.

avidity and extortion of Bahawal Khan"¹ had caused the decline of the trade of this place.¹ There were only' three Shikarpuri merchants, named Adah Das, Dwarka Das and Sewa Ram. They maintained commercial relations with Bahawalpur, Khangar,² Dajal,⁴ Mithankot, Shikarpur, Kandahar, Kabul, Sangar,⁵ and especially Multan.

Indigo was the chief product of Derah Ghajfi Khan. It was grown here to the quantity of 13,000 maunds. Twenty-five maunds of it was required for local consumption, and the rest was exported. When cheapest it could be Sought from Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 per maund, and when dearest it fetched Rs. 150. At the time of Mohan Lai's visit it was sold for Rs. 55 a maund. In the previous year 1500 camel-loads of indigo, each load being worth Rs. 500, had been exported to Khorasan, where it was sold at the rate of Rs. 60 per maund. The government took from the cultivators from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ of the gross produce.

¹ cf. Masson, i, 33.

² For a detailed account of the trade of Derah Ghazi Khan by Major Leech see Panjab Records, Book 108, lii, Letter 76, pp. 377-85. Regarding trade Masson remarks:—"The bazars, with no pretensions to appearance, or even cleanliness, were stiU capacious, and well supplied, and the merchants carried on good trade, Dera being one of the commercial marts visited by the Lohani merchants of Afghanistan, while it does good business with the immediately adjacent parts." Masson, i, 32.

"There are three villages of the same name; one on the right bank of the Chenab on the route from Shujabad to Derah Ghazi Khan . the other on the right bank of the Panjnad river 24 miles from its confluence with the Indus ; and the third in the desert 80 miles south of Bahawalpur. cf. Thornton, i, 378.

⁴ A fort, town and district, situated among the mountains of the same names on the route from Derajat to Baluchistan. Thornton, i, 154.

• A town in Sind situated 12 miles south-east of Rohri on the route to Jaisalmir. It carried on trade with Marwar. Thornton, i, 170,

The imports of Derah Ghazi Khan were English cloth such as cambric, chintz, long-cloth, muslin, *buk*, *nainsukh*, worth Rs. 1,000 a year. The merchants brought this cloth from Bahawalpur, and after paying the town duties, they had a net profit of Rs. 250. Mohan Lal, suggested that the English *atlas* which was sold at Delhi at two rupees a yard could easily beat the *daryai* of Derah selling there at Rs. 3 a yard, though it was inferior in quality.¹

On the 18th February, Mohan Lal passed through Bela, Dalana [20 miles W. of D. G. Khan] and Maujgarh, situated under the Sakhi Sarwar hill, all of which had the mines of the Multani matti. It was both white and yellow, and could be bought 15 maunds to the rupee. It was sold in Delhi at the rate of two rupees per maund.

On the 23rd February, near Rajanpur [65 miles S. of Dalana], Mohan Lal was passing through a desolate part of the country, when he perceived some Mazari robbers lying in wait for him. But on beholding five Sikh horsemen accompanying him, they immediately disappeared.

The Baluches generally fought with the sword and could not use guns on horseback like the Sikhs. They preferred mares for riding to horses. The reason assigned was that a mare did not raise an alarm by neighing when they went on plundering expeditions, and that it could bear greater heat.

¹ Panjab Records, Book 107, pp. 38-42. The bazars of Derah Ghazi Khan contained 1600 shops, of which 530 were engaged in weaving and selling cloth. The important manufactures were silk, cotton and mixed fabrics. Thornton, i, 163.

For a list of the manufactures of Derah Ghazi Khan see Panjab Records, Book 108, iii, pp. 341-2. Also cf. Imperial Gazetteer of India, si, 255,

Mohan Lai reached Mithankot [10 miles S. of Rajanpur] on the 26th February, and stayed there till the 3rd March. These days were passed in "extreme alarm ; all the inhabitants were ready with fear to receive the attack of the Biloches of the Bugti tribe; they were all armed as I heard and were 15,000 in number". The Bugtis had already attacked Amarkot [17 miles S. W. of Mithankot] defeated the Sikh officer, who had lost 50 soldiers, while the Bugtis lost only two men, and they had carried away 7,000 cows and sheep. There were only 10 Sikh soldiers at Mithankot, and on account of absolutely insufficient defence the people kept a watch the whole night sitting on the roofs of their houses. "We also did the same bearing the guns in our hands."¹

*13. Journal from Mithankot to Shikarpur, 4th to
12th March, 1836*

Mohan Lal journeyed from Mithankot to Shikarpur along the right bank of the Indus, passing through the territory of the Mazaris, and made interesting observations on its trade and products, and the manners and customs of the Baluches together with his reception by Bahram Khan, the Mazari Chief. He also described the difficulties to which he was exposed on the way on account of the predatory habits of these Baluches.

The dangers of the road compelled Mohan Lai to send his luggage and horses to Ahmadpur, and he left Mithankot in the disguise of a common beggar on the 4th March. At Amarkot he joined a group of 22 persons, and reached Rojhan, 11 miles distant.⁸ It was extremely hot, and no water was

¹ Panjab Records, Book 107, pp. 49-68, dated Mithankot, 3rd March, 1836.

⁸ Masson had visited this place a little earlier. He says :—"There were here two castles, or rather villages, enclosed within walls. Fields

available on the way except in the villages, of Badli and Derah Dildar. Mohan Lai passed on his way the site of the battle between Bugtis and Sikhs. He found the earth red with blood, and fingers and rags from the turbans of the Sikhs lying scattered here and there, and on bushes and twigs of tamarisk trees. The Bugtis, the most ferocious of the Baluch tribes, lived on the other side of a hill called Roh or Takkar.

Mohan Lai noted that multiplicity of wives did not exist among the Mazaris, and one could marry at a cost of only six rupees. Each family possessed many herds of cattle. They lived in small tents called Khirgabs, made of weeds and coarse blankets. They were skilled in fighting with swords. Their women were hospitable. "When they fight, the women run from the distant hamlets with jars of water which they give to the warriors both of the enemy and of their own side." The men were addicted to drinking bhang.¹

On the 12th March Mohan Lai approached the seat of government of Mir Bahrain Khan, the Mazari chief. He was afraid lest he might be attacked or detained, so he wanted to play a trick on him. He wrote to him that he was a Brahmin from Hindustan, and in the service of an Englishman. He drew a salary of Rs. 20 per mensem, and was on six months' leave. Four months he had already spent at Multan where he

of *bajara* and cotton were around them. The water, of very indifferent taste, was procured, and in small quantity only, from a series of shallow wells, or pits, under the walls of one of the castles. The inhabitants, or the chief of the village and his clansmen, were not disposed to be very civil, and on a slight occasion seemed anxious to pick a quarrel with the men of the Kafilah." Masson, i, 351-2.

¹ "Besides eating their meals and smoking tobacco, they did little but drink bang and intoxicate themselves." Masson, i, 366,

was detained by the death of his younger brother ; and two months were hardly sufficient to return home from Shikarpur by the other route. So he wanted to pass both ways, going and coming, through his country. He stated another cause why he could not go back by the left bank of the Indus. His uncle who was in the service of a Bahawalpur chief had accompanied Shah Shuja, without his master's permission, to Shikarpur, where he died. He was going there to fetch his family and could not go back by that route for fear of molestation from the chief. Bahram Khan was satisfied, and he gave him a suitable guard who conducted him safely across the boundary of the Mazari country.

At Badhari Mohan Lal entered the territory of Buldis, from where he proceeded to Shikarpur under the guidance of Sayyid Mir Shahbaz Ali Shah, a resident of Chak, a village on the left bank of the Indus, about 20 kos from Ahmadpur. Shahbaz Ali was accompanied by five followers, four of whom rode on two camels, and the fifth on horseback. On approaching a village or town the camel men sang the praises of Muhammad and the people ran to the Sayyid, kissed his feet and stirrups, and many who failed to reach him through the crowd bowed to him on the ground. "The Buldis as well as Mazaris afterwards said to us at the villages that we were under the protection of a zorawar or powerful man or else we would feel the taste of coming through the country of shers or tigers."¹

¹ Fanjab Records, Book 107, pp. 79-103, dated Shikarpur, the 25th March, 1836.

Mohan Lai's report against the depredations of the Mazaris, attracted the attention of Sir William Macnaghten, Secretary to the Government of India, who instructed Alexander Burnes, then on a mission to Hyderabad, to check this evil. He wrote: "One object therefore of your visit to Hyderabad must be to induce the Ameers to

14. *Trade of Shikarpur*

Mohan Lai reached Shikarpur on the 12 th March and left it on the 25th March. He says that Shikarpur could not rival Bahawalpur, Multan or Derah Ghazi Khan in trade ; but it could be proud of a "race of people who conduct a smart and prosperous trade in Afghanistan, Khorasan, Turkistan, and part of Persia."¹ It could not boast of any manufacture; but it was the junction of many trade-routes. Herat, Kandahar, Shal (Quetta) and Kalat were its western marts, and Bombay and Hyderabad were its southern emporia.

The agents of Shikarpuri merchants, especially of Gangaram, were established in Hyderabad, Bombay, Jaipur, Bahawalpur, Amritsar, Multan, Derah Ghazi Khan, Derah Ismail Khan, Peshawar, Kabul, Qanduz, Khulam, Balkh, Bokhara, Meshad,

adopt some effectual measures to prevent the Muiaarucs from in any way molesting the boats passing up or down the River."

Panjab Records, Book 107, Letter 17, dated Fort William, the 5th September, 1836.

¹ The same observations are made by Masson, who writes:—"This city, renowned for its wealth, is particularly celebrated for its Hindu bankers and money dealers, whose connections are ramified throughout the countries of Central Asia, and of Western India. It is especially the home of these people, where their families are fixed, and where are detained those of gomastahs, or agents, located in foreign countries." Masson, 1, 353.

About the people of this city he says —"The character of the Mahomedan population is not good ; the men are reputed ignorant and crafty, contentious and cowardly The Hindus are, as Hindus everywhere else, intent upon gain by any manner or means , and the females of their community are universally affirmed to be licentious and lewd" *ibid*; 337.

Herat, Sistan and Kandahar, where they collected immense riches by trade. There was no custom of insurance on account of the unsettled condition of the country.¹

¹ Panjab Records, Book 107, Letter 4, dated Shikarpur, the 25th Match, 1836. Thornton, 11, 191-4, says that the character of the place was thoroughly commercial, "almost every home having a shop attached to it." The trade of Shikarpur proper was not extensive, but "banking and other branches of monetary traffic constitute the more important departments of the commercial operations." Their credit stood so high that their bills were honoured "in every part of India and Central and Western Asia, from Astracan to Calcutta."

For a detailed minute "on the commerce of Shikarpur and upper Sindh" by Alexander Burnes dated at Bahawalpur, 6th May, 1837, see Panjab Records, Book 108, ni, Letter 73, pp. 362-76.

The commerce of Shikarpur in 1841 was thus described by Postans :—

"Shikarpur receives from Karachi, Marwar, Multan, Bahawalpur, Khairpur, and Ludhiana, European piece-goods, raw silk, ivory, cochineal, spices of sorts, coarse cotton cloth, *kankhabs*, manufactured silk, sugar-candy, coco-nuts, metals, *kirami* (groceries), drugs of sorts, indigo and other dyes, opium, and saffron, from Kachhi, Khorasan, and the north-west, raw silk (Turkestan), various kinds of fruit, madder, turquoises, antimony, medicinal herbs, sulphur, alum, saffron, asafoetida, gums, cochineal, and horses. The exports from Shikarpur are confined to the transmission of goods to Khorasan through the Bolan Pass, and a tolerable trade with Kachhi (Bagh, Gandava, Kotri, and Dadar). They consist of indigo (the most important), henna, *metals of all kinds, country coarse and fine cloths, European piece-goods (chintzes etc.), Multani coarse cloth, silks (manufactured), groceries and spices, raw cotton, coarse sugar, opium, hemp-seeds, shields, embroidered horse-cloths, and dry grains. The revenue of Shikarpur derivable from trade amounted in 1840 to Rs. 54,736, and other taxes and revenue from lands belonging to the town, Rs. 16,645, making a total of Rs. 71,381, which was divided among the Khairpur and Hyderabad Talpur Mirs in the proportion of three-sevenths and four-sevenths, respectively."

Imperial Gazetteer of India, xxii, 277.

*15. Journal from Shikarpur to Ahmadpur, 25th, March to
2nd April, 1836*

Mohan Lal proceeded on the 25th March from Shikarpur to Ahmadpur along the left bank of the Indus. He came to the ferry of Bhatar on the Indus in the company of Vali Shah, the chief of Shikarpur. This precaution had been taken for fear of the Baluch robbers, * who carried on their depredations to the very gates of Shikarpur. Two days before Mohan Lai's departure a Hindu coming from Rohri had been shot dead by a Baluch robber, only 3 miles away from Shikarpur. The unfortunate fellow had nothing but a few pice in his pocket, the clothes which he was wearing and a pony to ride. Some ploughmen who had heard the sound of the gun, and near whom the robber was passing, arrested him, and brought him to the magistrate. The robber acknowledged his crime, but pleaded for pardon for his being a Sayyid. No investigation was made to that effect, and the robber was ordered to be acquitted after having been blackened in the face, and paraded through the streets on an ass.¹

He was at Gotki' [6 miles from the left bank of the Indus] on the 27th March. He noticed that the Hindu Khattris formed the majority of the population. Their women moved

¹ While describing the method of plunder adopted by the Baluch robbers, Masson says:—"I was hardly yet aware that a Baluch generally prefaces robbery by proposing exchange, or by begging some articles, as the plunderer of the Afghan tribes near Kandahar first asks his victim if he has any tobacco or snuff". Masson, i, 344-5.

* "Saiyads are held in the greatest veneration, and many of them lead most licentious lives. It is often remarked that a Saiyad may commit any crime with impunity". Masson, i, 379.

¹ "The vicinity is infamous on account of the predatory and sanguinary character of its inhabitants". Thornton, i, 209.

about unveiled, and had handsome features; but they did not possess the delicacy which was common in Northern India. Men and women both smoked and drank bhang. Their smoking pipe was two yards in length. Marrying was not an expensive affair, as one could get a wife for Rs. 100. Fish was the favourite dish of the people. At a village named Malik, he observed a Sindian dance, held to celebrate a marriage. An old man was beating a drum, and the women who were not particular about concealing their faces were dancing in a circle. "The dance was exhibited in the form of the Europeans, but only differed in one thing that the men did not help the women when they were making the circle by dance, as I had observed in the Governor-General's house in Calcutta."

He reached Sabzalkot [27 miles east of Gotki] on the 29th March. It had many gates, four of which had fallen into decay for want of repairs. In one of the gates, Mohan Lai found a gun facing Bahawalpur. He wanted to measure it without exciting the suspicion of the guard. By way of astonishment he enquired what it was. The guard asked him to what country he belonged. Mohan Lai replied that he was a Hazara. He was told that it was a cannon. "To increase their astonishment, I began to look and feel it so wonderfully that they did not at least suspect me when I measured it. The gun was about 7 spans in length and half of it in diameter."¹

¹ Sabzalkot formed the western boundary of Bahawalpur State; but the Nawab had been dispossessed of this district along with that of Bhungara by the Mirs of Sind. Both these districts were restored to him by the British Government at the time of the annexation of Sind, "as a reward for the Nawab's fidelity". Shahamat Ali's Bahawalpur, p. ix.

On the 2nd April Mohan Lai reached Ahmadpur¹ [30 miles S. W. of Bahawalpur], the place of residence of the Nawab as well as Lieutenant Mackeson. From Shikarpur to this place, a distance of nine marches, he had travelled in a poor dress, riding on a lean pony without a saddle and stirrups. Mackeson's servants could not recognize him, and they refused him admittance at first. The same day he was attacked with sore eyes, but on washing them with sugar-candy he was all right again.*

*16. Nawab Bahawal Khan kills his Minister,
20th April, 1836*

In a letter from Ahmadpur, Mohan Lai reported the news of the death of a Minister, Muhammad Yaqub. He was suspected by the Nawab of intriguing with the Mirs of Sind, and of planning to poison him. In his court, he enquired of Imam Shah of Multan, Sheran Khan and Khwajah Sahib,

"I reached Sabzal Kot, observing it to be a walled town. I entered by one gate, and walking through the bazar, went out by the other. I understood that the town had declined in consequence, still it exhibited some activity in its trade. Being a frontier town, there is a small garrison, and three guns, are mounted on the ramparts". Masson, 1, 376 cf. Burnes, iii, 278 ; Hough, 13.

¹ There were two places, Bara Ahmadpur and Chhota Ahmadpur. Bara Ahmadpur rose from a cantonment to "an extensive and commercial town, as well as the principal residence of the Khan". It stood on the border of the desert. The houses of the people were "generally mean"; but the palace of the Nawab and the gardens were good. Masson, 1, 22.

Chhota Ahmadpur was a town of considerable size surrounded by a mud wall. It had a good bazar, and many fortified brick-built buildings, detached from one another. It was the frontier town towards Sind, and it had a garrison of 350 men with six guns. *Ibid* , 23.

¹ Panjab Records, Book 107, pp. 105-21, dated at Ahmadpur, 5th April, 1836.

what punishment should be meted out to a disloyal servant. The answer was "he must be severely chastised". The Khan ordeied Abddul Qadir Shah and Haidar Shah to arrest Muhammad Yaqub and put him to death. He was seized and dragged barefoot through the bazar to the place of execution. Munshi Salamat Rai, however, advised the Khan to postpone the execution for some time, but suggested imprisonment and confiscation of his property. The Nawab placed him under the guard of Captain Prem Singh. The Minister's friends Muhammad Qayam, Allah Bachaya, Khuda Yar and Muhammad Bakhsh were imprisoned in the fort. Muhammad Yaqub was then poisoned and his body was thrown into "a cave of some old tomb out of the city".¹

17. Report about Furni's injuries, 22nd April, 183b

Joseph Furni, an Italian, was travelling from the Panjab to Egypt via Bahawalpur and Sind. When he came near Bahawalpur, he was attacked by thieves and was slightly wounded. At Ahmadpur, he received a present of one hundred rupees and daily provisions from the Khan. One of the Khan's servants brought him a blank piece of paper, and requested him to write his name on it. On the other side of the paper the Nawab wrote a letter in Persian from Furni to Wade saying that when he was staying in the Goth of Nur Muhammad Daud Potra near Bahawalpur, he was attacked in the night by some thieves who did not succeed in stealing anything, and that the rumour of his being wounded was absolutely false. This letter was again brought to Furni with the request to write that he had "left Ahmadpur with

¹Panjab Records, Book 106, 11, Letter 77, p. 189, dated Ahmadpur, 20th April, 1836.

his *mat and jan* without any loss." Furni gave this letter to Mohan Lai to read, and on Mohan Lai's informing him what it contained, Furni told the Nawab's agent that he had never asked that letter to be written. , Thereupon the man seized the letter and gave it to his servant who ran away with it instantly. All this was intimated by Mohan Lal to Mackeson, adding, "he lived in your house and partook of dinner separately every day. He has left all his medicine chests in your house".¹

18. *At Bahawalpur, from April to July, 1836*

On his arrival at Bahawalpur, Mohan Lai was ordered to stay there as Mackeson was away to Ludhiana where he remained till the 30th November owing to ill health. The first duty he performed at this court was to deliver a letter from the supreme government to Nawab Muhammad Bahawal Khan, announcing the assumption of the Governor-Generalship of India by Lord Auckland. It was received with a formal ceremony. The Nawab held a court which was attended by all the high officials and noted chiefs. A salute was fired when Mohan Lal entered the palace with the letter. The Nawab took the letter respectfully, kissed it, touched it to his eyes, and then read out its contents loudly.

Soon afterwards Mohan Lal was called upon to settle certain disputes between the subjects of the governments of Lahore and Bahawalpur and to secure the preservation of order on the line of navigation between Bahawalpur and Mithankot.¹

¹ Panjab Records, Book 106, ii. Letter 78, p 194, dated Ahmadpur, the 22nd April, 1836.

¹ Travels, 447 In an article entitled "A brief account of the origin of the Daud Putras, and of the power and birth of **Bahawal**

19. *Mozart attack on Mithankot, July, 1836*

The Mazaris attacked Mithankot, defeated the Sikh garrison, and acquired a large booty. They, however, lost their commander Dost Ali Khan, son of Bahrain Khan, the Mazari Chief. "This young man," wrote Mohan Lai, "was the most clever, civil, brave, and sober in disposition among the whole tribe of the Mazaris. He was a great friend of mine, and kind to me when I saw him with his father Bhairam Khan during my late journey to Shikarpur." The Sikh soldiers then marched to Mithankot to establish peace and order there, and Sawan Mai also left Multan in that direction.¹

Khan, their chief, on the bank of the Ghara and Indus," published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1838, pp. 27-33, Mohan Lai writes about Nawab Muhammad Bahawal Khan :—" It is nearly 13 years since Sadaq Khan died and his son, the present chief Muhammad Bahawal Khan, killed and imprisoned all his uncles and brothers and made himself the owner of the country. In the beginning he was smitten with pleasures and took very little notice of public affairs. The lion of the Fanjab embraced a favorable opportunity and deprived the weak Khan of his hereditary rights, which his enterprising ancestors had secured in the countries of Multan and Kachhi. The land which he holds now yields him six lacs of rupees per year, and all his treasures, which amount to five millions, are deposited in the fort of Pilawar. He has a despotic character and is addicted to every kind of luxury. He does not neglect all sorts of assistance to the British authorities for the navigation of the Indus, and is the first and best of our allies on that river. He is very fond of hunting, the accounts of which he keeps and compares with those of his father, to know whether he or his ancestors killed most game."

¹ Panjab Records, Book 107, Letter 7. dated Jalalpur, the 24th July. 1836.

CHAPTER V

ON THE KABUL MISSION OF BURNES 1837-1838

1. *Mohan Lal Joins Burnes's Mission February, 1837*

Early in August, 1836, Mohan Lal fell ill, and was confined to bed in Multan for nearly four months.¹ About the end of November, he received orders immediately to join Captain Alexander Burnes,⁸ assistant to the Resident in Cutch, in charge of a "Commercial Mission" to Kabul,³ at Hyderabad (Sind).

Mohan Lal left Multan on the 1st December, and managed to pass safely through the Mazari country at a time when

¹ Panjab Records, Book 103, Letter 51, Mackeson to Wade, date "Camp on the Sutlej," 24th December, 1836. Mohan Lal felt so worried over his protracted illness that he applied for a transfer from these quarters.

² Durand says that "the choice of Burnes for a Mission" was "unfortunate." "A man of inordinate ambition, but of average ability and shallow acquirements and wanting in self-control, Burnes was not possessed of the qualifications essential to success." The First Afghan War, 34.

It is rather interesting to remark that whereas Durand holds a poor opinion of Burnes, Vincent Eyre is equally strong in praise of him. He was "to the State not only one of its bravest and most intelligent officers, but a man who for honesty of purpose and soundness of judgment, I may boldly aver, could not be surpassed." Mangleson, 84.

³ "Nominally commercial, the mission was in fact one of political discovery, and its real object was to sound the state of affairs in the countries to which it was deputed." Durand, 39. Also "to make peace between Dost Muhammad and the Maharaja of the Panjab." Sykes, 402,

this tribe was at war with the Sikhs. He came down the river to a village near Chachar on the east bank of the Indus opposite to Mithankot, situated in the territory of Bahawalpur. Here he received intimation that the Nawab, who then lay encamped at Khanpur,¹ desired to see him. Mohan Lai left his luggage in the boat, and met the Nawab who detained him for a few days. He was still here when the news arrived that his boat had caught fire, and all his private and public property had been reduced to ashes, and that his friend Jugal Kishore had lost his life. In February, 1837, at Hyderabad he joined the Mission, consisting of Captain Alexander Burnes, the leader of the Mission, Major Leech of the Bombay Engineers, Lieutenant Wood² and Nourozjee Furdoonjee.'

On the 16th March they interviewed Mir Rustam Khan of Khairpur, who gave them a warm welcome in opposition to the wishes of his brothers, Mir Ali Murad Khan and Mir

¹ Khanpur, situated on a navigable canal from the Panjnad, carried on a flourishing trade with the neighbouring places. It had formerly been protected by a mud fort 200 yards long and 120 yards broad then in ruine. cf. Masson, 1, 380; Conolly, 11. 282.

² Lieutenant John Wood (1811—1871) joined the naval service of the East India Company in 1826. In 1835-6, he commanded the company's first vessel, the *Indus*, in the navigation of the Indus river. He wrote "A Personal Narrative of a Journey to the Source of the Oxus," in 1841. In 1858, he was appointed Manager of the Oriental Steam Navigation Company in Sind. He became Superintendent of the Indus steam flotilla in 1861. He died in Sind on November 13, 1871. cf. Buckland, 460.

³ Burnes's Cabool, 42. After the battle of Jamrud in 1837, in which Dost Muhammad had failed to recover Peshawar, the Amir wrote to Lord Auckland to fix the Indus as the boundary line between his country and that of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Governor-General refused to interfere with the Maharaja, but promised to depute an English agent to discuss matters with him. Consequently, Burnes's Mission was sent. cf. Sykes, 1, 398; Kaye, i, 170.

Mubarik Khan. At this place they were joined by Dr. Lord¹ from Bombay. Here they spent a few days in collecting commercial and geographical information.

2. Report on the trade of Khairpur

Mohan Lai conducted independent inquiries into the subject and submitted an elaborate report on the trade of Khairpur." He recorded that the trade of Khairpur had declined during the previous 14 years in consequence of various duties imposed by numerous descendants and relatives of the Chief, who owned many villages along the road. The merchants of Herat, Farah, Kandahar and Kalat passed through Khairpur on their way to Pali⁸ and Hyderabad. Previously a sum varying from Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 10,000 per year was raised as customs duties, but the income from this source had been reduced to amounts varying from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,100. English goods, imported from Bombay and Hindustan through Bhatner and Bahawalpur to the value of Rs. 18,000, also, had decreased to between Rs. 7,000 and Rs. 13,000. On the occasion of a marriage in the Mir's family an additional Rs. 3,000 worth of English goods were purchased. Lead, tin, spices, essences, etc. to the amount of Rs. 6,000 annually were imported from Bombay through Pali and Hyderabad. All these imports fetched a net profit of 25% to the merchants of Khairpur.

¹ Percival Barton Lord (1808—1840) obtained the M. B. degree of the Dublin University in 1832. He came to Bombay in 1834, and was appointed assistant surgeon. He acquired a considerable knowledge of Persian, and was therefore appointed as surgeon on Burnes's Mission. Dictionary of National Biography.

¹ Khairpur is situated about 15 miles east of the Indus" Originally a military cantonment, it became the seat of the chief Amirs of Upper Sind. Masson, i, 363 ; Conolly, ii. 255 ; Burnes, iii, 273 ; Havelock, i, 130.

² "Pallia in Sind, a small town on the route from Cutch to Hyderabad, and ninety miles south-east of the latter place." Thornton, ii, 92.

In the upper portions of the Khairpur territory, extending from Sabzalkot to Nowshera and from Amarkot to Shikarpur, the most important product was cotton which was exported to the value of Rs. 50,000 per annum. It sold at a price ranging from Rs. 9 to Rs. 10 per maund. If the brigandage was suppressed and some encouragement given by the rulers, double the sum could be realized from this source.

Some cotton reserved for home consumption was spun into thread particularly at Khairpur, Koda,¹ Gambat* and Ranipur.' It was manufactured into cloth of various kinds such as *sarishaf*, *lungi*, *jori*, *khes*, *lihaf* and *susi* of many sorts. At Khairpur alone there were as many as 80 manufacturers. The price of *lungis* varied from six annas to two rupees and eight annas. A duty of Rs. 5 per load was charged on *lungis*. All these exports from Khairpur to Alayar Tanda⁴ and Adam Khan ka Tanda⁵ from where they were sent to Thatta⁶ and Karachi amounted to Rs. 20,000 or nearly 400

¹ For Major Leech's report on the trade of Ranipur, Gambat and Koda see Panjab Records, Book 108, in, Letter 74.

² Gambat was noted for bed-covers called *khes* Imperial Gazetteer of India, xv, 213.

³ A manufacturing town in Sind, 45 miles south-west of Hyderabad "The cotton manufactures here were formerly extensive and in high repute, but have latterly much decayed." Thornton, ii, 149. A great fair was held here annually. Imperial Gazetteer, xv, 214.

⁴ A town in Sind, 20 miles E. of Hyderabad, situated at the intersection of two great routes, one from Hyderabad eastward and the other from Cutch to Upper Sind and the Panjab, noted for manufactures in cotton and in dyeing. Thornton, 1, 52.

⁵ A village in Sind, 50 miles N. E. of Shikarpur, and 12 miles from the left bank of the Indus. Thornton, 1, 3.

• An old town of repute situated close to the vertex of the delta of the Indus, 3 miles west of the right bank of the river,

bales. From Karachi the imports in return were various kinds of Indian and English goods; from Thatta, *chautara*, *dautara*, *garbi*, *daryai*, *bochhan* and *lungis* made from a mixture of lace, silk and thread, and from Alayar uncoloured silk bought at Rs. 9 per seer. All these articles amounted to the value of Rs. 5,000 annually, fetching a net profit of about 6%.

Another commodity which was extensively cultivated in the Khairpur territory was indigo, about 50 camel-loads of which were annually exported to Karachi, from where it was shipped off to Bombay and Muscat. Sometimes a small quantity of it was sent to Kandahar. The price of indigo varied from year to year. At that time it was sold at from Rs. 40 to 70 per maund, and in Bombay brought a profit from Rs. 12 to 15 a maund.

*Sakur*¹ or *manin*, the fruit of tamarisk trees which grew in abundance in Sind especially along the banks of the Indus, was used in dyeing cloth ; and large quantities of it were exported to the Panjab and Hyderabad, whence it was shipped to Iran.

Woollen goods such as carpets, bags, cloaks and ropes were manufactured in Khairpur amounting in value to not more than Rs. 700 a year. Its exports could considerably increase if wool were gathered from Baluch tribes living on the right bank of the Indus. Kalat was very rich in the supply of wool, and it could export it to the value of Rs. 10,000. The Khan had, however, imposed restrictions on its sale to foreign traders. Wool sold there formerly at twenty seers to the rupee ; but at this time it was selling at the rate of seven seers.

¹ It was sold at the rate of Re. 1/8/- per maund. Panjab Records, Book 108, iii. Letter 76, p. 342.

Khairpur supplied Kandahar with unwashed coarse cloth, chintz and hides amounting in value to Rs. 600 a year, and in return imported fruits, carpets, vinegar, *shirkhisht*, swords and horses.

Bahawalpur, Multan and Derah Ghazi Khan supplied Khairpur *lungis*, *khes*, *timur shahi*, chintz, *susi*, *daryai*, and silken *garbi*, to the annual value of Rs. 7,000, on which a net profit of 6% was obtained. From Pali were imported silver and gilt-riband, lace, musk and camphor amounting to a value of Rs. 4,000 yearly, with a profit of about 15%. The goods from Pali to Khairpur passed through Jaisalmir, Gotaro and Sangram.

Gotki produced opium of fine quality to the extent of 25 maunds a year. It fetched a price of Rs. 12 per seer, while the opium of Shikarpur and Nari was sold at Rs. 5 a seer. Half of this quantity was consumed in Khairpur, and the rest was exported to Hyderabad.

The merchants of Khairpur maintained commercial intercourse with various marts such as Hyderabad, Thatta, Bombay, Pali, Jaisalmir, Bahawalpur, Multan, Derah Ghazi Khan, Shikarpur, Kalat and Kandahar; but they did not adopt the custom of insurance. The bankers charged a commission at the rate of 1% on *hundis* payable at Shikarpur.¹

3. Observations on the trade of Bahawalpur

Sailing in boats along the Indus and the Sutlej, the Mission reached Ahmadpur, where they were welcomed by Nawab

¹ Panjab Records, Book 108, iii Letter 75 According to the Imperial Gazetteer of India, the manufactures of Khairpur comprised cotton sheets, silk fabrics, silver wares, lacquered wood-work, leather goods, swords and matchlocks. The chief exports were cotton, wool, grain, indigo, hides and tobacco.

Bahawal Khan. Thence they proceeded overland to Bahawalpur to make enquiries regarding the trade of the place. Mohan Lal prepared his report on the subject, which elicited great approbation from Alexander Burnes.¹

Bahawalpur was noted for many kinds of fruits, especially apples selling at 8 annas per maund,² mangoes at Rs. 5 a maund, and oranges from Rs. 3 to 4 per maund.⁸

It was celebrated for its silk fabrics.⁴ There were about 300 workshops of weavers. Each workshop prepared six pairs of *lungis* in a month. A *lungi*, 9 yards in length, could be had at from Rs. 10 to 300 per piece. The silken *lungis* of a superior quality were of three kinds ; the first, with a golden border, was sold at from Rs. 20 to 300 ; the second, with a silver edge, at from Rs. 20 to 60 ; and the third, with green and yellow silk border at from Rs. 7 to 30. The *lungis* and *gulbadans* were exported to Khorasan and other places to the annual value of Rs. 80,000. Coarse cotton cloth was sold at a price of from 4 to 14 yards for a rupee. On silk goods was charged a customs duty at the rate of 1½%. Silk was imported from Khorasan. It was of various kinds. The first was sold at Rs. 40 per seer, second at Rs. 32, third at Rs. 19,

¹ Alexander Burnes forwarded it to the Governor-General with the remarks — "In forwarding it to His Lordship in Council it has appeared to me that I am transmitting not only a highly creditable specimen of attainments on the part of an Asiatic, but at the same time a very useful public document."

Panjab Records, Book 108, Letter 26, dated Kalabagh, the 20th July, 1837.

² A maund was 40 *pakka* seers, each seer weighing 84 tolas.

² "Among fruits which flourish in this climate are pomegranates, apples, mulberry, peach, grapes, lemons, oranges, mangoes, and aloocha." Shahamat Ali's Bahawalpur, x.

⁴ "Bhawalpoor is celebrated for the manufacture of loongees, for

fourth at Rs. 16, and fifth at Rs. 12. It was taxed at the **rate of Rs. 4** a maund, while the expenses of the road amounted to Rs. 9 per maund.

English thread¹ was imported from Bombay through Pali, and a duty of 1 ½% was levied on it.

Grain, fruits, vegetables and other supplies were sold at following rates :—

Rice	..	Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 per maund.
Butter	..	Rs. 10
Gur	••	Re. 1/8 to Rs. 2 „
Wheat	••	Annas 13 to 15 „
Barley	M	From 1} annas „
Gram	..	Re. 1/4/- „
Sesame		Rs. 2/10/8 „
Moth	••	Re. 1/8/- „
Mash	..	Re. 1/5/- „
M3ung	..	Rs. 2/- „
Jawar	..	Annas n to 12 „
Bajra	..	„ 12 to 14½ „
Sarshaf	..	Rs. 2/10/ to Rs. 3/4/- „
Adas	..	Re. 1/4/- „
Radish	..	3 to 4 seers for a pice „
Sunyua	..	12 to 16 „ „
Carrots	••	2 to 3 *

scarfs and turbans, made by Hindoo weavers, who are numerous here. There are also manufactures of chintzes and other cottons, of the total annual value of 520,000 rupees." Thornton, 1,105.

¹ "Lungees and silk goods, manufactured at Bahawalpur are much used. English chintz and other cloth are also in common use, but not universally " Shahamat All's *Bahawalpur*, xxi.

For a list of the foreign manufactures at Bahawalpur see Panjab Records, Book 108, lii, pp. 345-6.

Cucumbers	4	seers tor a pice
Brinjals	2	»
Turnips	2	»
Onions	6 ¹ / ₂	»
Melons	2	»
Water melons	4	»
Lemons	2 to 4	»
Dates	4 to 8	»
Citrons	1	»
Grapes	6 to 9	. rupee
Roses ¹	12 to 14	»»

The total sum of revenue derived from soil, ferries and customs houses of Bahawalpur amounted to from six to seven lakhs of rupees per year.¹

¹ "Sugar and indigo are also produced abundantly, and are among the staple articles, exported to foreign countries " Shahamat Ali's Bahawalpur, x.

"Potatoes do not yet appear to have been introduced" *Ibid*, x-xi.

"The principal exports are wheat, gram, indigo, dates, mangoes and other fruit, wool, saltpetre, and the manufactured articles mentioned above [silk cloth and metal cups etc]. Cloth and gur (unrefined sugar) are the chief imports." Imperial Gazetteer of India.

¹ "The annual revenue is about a million and a half of rupees." Thornton, 1, 104.

The government took its share varying from one-third to one-fifth in kind when the grain was in stock.

Shahamat Ali's *Bahawalpur*, xi.

Shahamat Ali puts the gross income of the State at 14 lakhs annually and expenditure at 9 lakhs "Hence the yearly saving is five lakhs, and the public treasury must therefore be full."

The Bahawalpur rupee was valued by Shahamat Ali at "an anna nd a half less than the Company's coin." *Ibid*;' xi

4. *Account of Kalabagh*

Having stayed at Bahawalpur for a few days, the Mission proceeded in boats down the river to Uch,¹ the holy town of the Muslims. They regained the Indus a little above Chachar, and reached Mithankot, where they were joined by the agents of Maharaja Ran jit Singh. They came to Derah Ghazi Khan, from where Dr. Lord, Major Leech and Mohan Lai came to Multan, and they stayed there for a few days. Passing through Derah Ismail Khan,⁸ they arrived by the middle of July at Kalabagh, where they were joined by Mackeson, who came from Ludhiana to accompany them as far as Peshawar.

Mohan Lai observed that Kalabagh commanded "a most striking scenery which I cannot describe in any language." The houses were built of stone and mud. The bazars were so narrow as hardly to allow passage to two men walking abreast. There were about 140 shops which were closed at nightfall.

cf. Imperial Records, Political Department, 25th September, 1837, No. qz ; dated Kalabagh, the 20th July, 1837.

Shahamat All's note on the trade of Bahawalpur states that wheat, nee, indigo, sugar and silk were the chief articles exported to Rajputana, Sind, Bombay and Afghanistan. The imports consisted of English cloth and spices from the Panjab, and fruits and horses from Afghanistan.

The inland trade was chiefly earned on by land and to some extent by water, and camels were the principal means of conveyance. Pp. xxiii-xxiv.

¹ For Mohan Lai's description of "Uch-Sharif", see the Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1836, pp. 796-8.

¹ "Derah Ismail Khan is one of the greatest marts on the Indus, and an entrepot for the merchandize of India and Khorasan passing in this direction. Few sites have a greater commercial importance," Masson, i, 39,

Malak Alayar Awan was the chief of the place. He collected Rs. 32,000 as annual revenues, and paid a tribute of Rs. 10,000 per annum to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He had in his service a contingent of 200 horse and 200 foot.

There were 10 alum factories at Kalabagh and 200 at Moch on the opposite bank. Each factory consumed fuel of Rs. 4 per day. The wood for fuel was brought from Kachhi. Alum was manufactured in huge loaves, each weighing two maunds, and its price was eight annas only.

Salt was taken out from salt mines at twenty—one places. The annual output was worth Rs. 300,000. Half of the money was paid to the labourers, one-third to the chief of the place, and the remainder was the share of Maharaja- Ranjit Singh. Salt was sold at a price of from 6 to 7 maunds to the rupee. Recently the monopoly of the salt-mine had been given to Raja Gulab Singh.

There were also sulphur mines, but this fact was not brought to the notice of Ranjit Singh, and the local chief used it in the preparation of gunpowder.

The complexion of the people was pale, and they generally suffered from fever. "Nearly half of the population is subject to goitre."¹

5. *Journey to Kabul*

From Kalabagh they travelled by land to Attock, and on the way met the Lahore forces under Raja Suchet Singh² going

¹ Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1838, pp. 25-27.

² Suchet Singh was the youngest of the three Dogra brothers, serving in high capacities under the Maharaja. "He was also one of the most polished courtiers of Lahore." He commanded a cavalry force. G. L. Chopra, 158.

to punish the Isa Khail tribe who carried on frequent plundering raids into the Sikh territory west of the Indus.¹

At Peshawar they were warmly received by General Avitabile. Here were stationed nearly 50,000 Sikh troops under Prince Kharak Singh and Jamadar Khushal Singh brought to punish Muhammad Akbar Khan who had killed Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa in the battle of Jamrud \ 10 miles W. of Peshawar j. They left Peshawar on the 30th August, and reached Ali Masjid [a fort in the Khyber Pass] where they were given a cordial reception by Captain Leslie alias Rattray, who had become a Musalman with the name of Fida Muhammad Khan. They were escorted by Mirza Agha Jan, governor of Jalalabad, and Sadat Khan, the chief of Daka. At the bridge on the Surkhab river, another deputation from Dost Muhammad Khan, headed by Nazir Ali Muhammad Khan, met them, and provided them with all kinds of Afghan cooking and other delicacies of Kabul. Mr. Masson met them at Butkhak [12 miles E. of Kabul]. Near Kabul they were received by Muhammad Akbar Khan, who conducted them on elephants to Kabul amidst great rejoicings. They were cordially received by the Amir, and were lodged in a lovely garden situated near the palace.²

6. *Negotiations fail*

On the 21st September, 1837, the Amir granted the Mission a formal interview, when in the full court he received the credentials from the Governor-General of India, which were read aloud by one of his ministers. For a few days the

¹ As the Mission approached nearer to Kabul the more frequently came letters of welcome from Amir Dost Muhammad, cf Dost Mohammed, 1, 253.

¹ Dost Mohammed, i, 253-4, Travels, 456-8.

conversation continued on friendly lines with an accommodating attitude on the part of the Amir. But there took place a sudden change in the views of the Amir, and he became very uncompromising in his terms.¹

The reasons for this were that the Amir had opened negotiations with Iran and Russia at the same time he started communications with the British Government. He was moderate in his demands with the British Government so long as he did not hear from Iran and Russia ; but the prospect of a hopeful response from these powers made him adopt an unyielding attitude.⁹ He stated that he could

¹ For details cf. Dost Mohammed, 1, 255-60. Extract of a letter from Mohan Lai, dated Kabul, the 12th February, 183ft —

"I am very happy under Capt. Burnes, who treats me friendly. The Mission, the head of which is that officer, was received with the highest distinction in this Capital of Afghanistan. The merchants are very happy since our arrival. The winter at Kabul is not so cold as it was in the preceding years. The natives never recollect such hot days as they are now. The thermometer never came down from 25 degree at sunsc or 34 degree in the day time. We went for a few days to amuse ourselves in the Koh Daman, and were highly delighted to see that celebrated place and gardens of I stallt. Dr Lord and Lieut. Wood have been very kindly received by the ruler of Qunduz of Turkcistan, and are collecting valuable information of those remote regions. Capt. Burnes has also ordered my friend Kashe Nath to accompany the above gentlemen to Turkcistan and he has sent good account of the different routes to Russia, Khoqand, Kashghar, and China which does great credit to his labours and taste for travelling. He was for some months educated in the Delhi Institution. Capt. Burnes is pleased with nun."

Asiatic Journal, August, 1838, pp. 215-6.

² Burnes wrote to Macnaghten — "Russia has come forward with offers which are certainly substantial. Persia has been lavish in her promises, and Bukhara and other states have not been backward. Yet, in all that has passed 01 is daily transpiring, the Chief of Kabul declares that he prefers the sympathy and friendly offers of the British ft> all these offers." Kaye, i, 187, f. n.

establish friendly relations with the British Government **only after** the restoration of Peshawar¹ province to him from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In the meantime the Russian agent Captain Vitkevich* came to Kabul with a letter said to be addressed by the Emperor of Russia,⁸ and gave the

¹ Masson says that Burnes gave Dost Muhammad to understand that the British Government would help him in securing possession of Peshawar. But doubts lurked in the mind of the Amir. He sent his confidant to verify the matter and Burnes replied, "Only wait till Lord Auckland's letter arrives, and, by the grace of God, the faces of the *monafikan* shall be blackened." Masson, lii, 459.

Burnes then opened communications with Wade, the British Agent at Ludhiana. "Captain Burnes, in place of urging upon Captain Wade the necessity of ascertaining the Maharaja's wishes, entered into a discussion about 'prerogative',—a note I have, will explain its origin. 'Read you ever such insolence The man talks of prerogative ' Captain Wade had declared, that to comment on Captain Burnes's despatches was his prerogative. Captain Burnes retorted that prerogative was only enjoyed by kings, and Captain Wade answered that he was mistaken, and sent him the meaning of the word from Johnson's Dictionary ! Two months were wasted in this very profitable discussion." *Ibid*) 461.

* Masson speaks of Burnes disparagingly. "The arrival of Vektavich completely overpowered the British envoy, and he abandoned himself to despair. He bound his head with wet towels and handkerchiefs, and took to the smelling-bottle." *Ibid*; 463.

* Masson states that Dost Muhammad Khan suspected Vitkevich's letter. It was shown to Burnes who assured him "it was genuine, and that there could be no doubt of it." Masson asserted that "the letter was a fabrication." "Captain Burnes pointed out to me", continues Masson, "the large exterior seal on the envelope, on which there were the Russian arms. I sent for a loaf of Russian sugar from the bazar, at the bottom of which we found precisely the same kind of seal. Captain Burnes shrugged his shoulders, elevated his eyebrows, and rolled his tongue round his cheek." *Ibid* ; 463-4.

Masson supported his charge of forgery by the fact that the letter bore no signature. To this criticism Mohan Lai replied that the absense

Amir every assurance of Russian assistance in procuring **for** him not only Peshawar, but also Kashmir, Multan and Derajat.¹

7. *Withdrawal of the Mission*

The uncompromising state of affairs on the part of the ruler of Afghanistan completely broke down the British negotiations*.² Alexander Burnes therefore with the approval of Lord Auckland decided to retire from Afghanistan.'

of the royal signature was "a proof rather of the genuine than the counterfeit character of the document." Kaye holds that "under the circumstances of the case, he would have been more inclined to omit than to attach the signature." Further on he remarks : "That it came from the cabinet of St. Petersburg there is now little room to doubt." History of the War in Afghanistan, i, 107-8 Sykes, 1, 404, says that the genuineness of the Tsar's letter was at first questioned, but was subsequently established".

¹ Dost Mohammed, 1, 308-9. It is believed that the Russian envoy had also authority to visit Kanjit Singh and the Mirs of Sind, and to settle terms with them cf. *Ibid* ; 309, 319, 340.

² Masson accuses Burnes of his submissive behaviour towards Dost Muhammad . "The Amir had every reason to exult in the humility of his new guest, who never addressed him but with his hands closed, in the attitude of supplication, or without prefacing his remarks with 'Ghanb Nawaz', your humble petitioner, which acquired for him in Kabul the sobriquet of Ghanb Nawaz. My friends used jocularly to tell me, I might as well leave, and the Amir himself was well pleased to find Captain Burnes more compliant and obsequious than I had been. The Nawab Jabar Khan, however, took the liberty of remonstrating with the envoy, and pointed out to him, that an agent of the British government had no occasion to fear, and that he might possibly repent having assumed so submissive a tone." Masson, 111, 452.

³ Regarding the conclusion of the Russian envoy's mission Sykes says - -"Vitkavich, upon his return to St. Petersburg, was refused an audience by Count Nesselrode, who stated that 'he knew no Captain Vitkavich, except an adventurer of that name who.... had **lately been**

Major Leech who had also failed in his negotiations with the Kandahar chiefs was directed to fall back upon Shikarpur. Dr. Lord and Lieutenant Wood who had been deputed to Mir Murad Beg, the chief of Qanduz in Turkistan, were ordered to return to Peshawar.¹ The failure of the Mission soon became known to the people, who now avoided any dealings with them for fear of the Amir. The traders would not lend them money, and the muleteers refused them conveyance unless permitted by the Afghan government. Consequently, Mohan Lai waited upon Dost Muhammad Khan with a letter from Burnes. The Amir gave orders to supply the British Mission with everything they wanted.⁸

The Mission left Kabul on the 26th April, 1838, escorted by the Amir's son Ghulam Haider Khan to a distance of four miles from the city. The minister Mirza Sami Khan accompanied them as far as Butkhak [12 miles E. of Kabul]. They

engaged in some unauthorised intrigues at Kabul and Kandahar'. Vitkavich, aware of the recent expostulations of the British and realizing that he was being sacrificed by the ignoble Nesselrode, wrote a reproachful letter to him and then blew out his brains". A History of Afghanistan, I, 407-8.

¹ Travels, 459. "It was a curious change of circumstances", says Mohan Lai, "that the Chief of Qunduz, who had behaved so ill to the late Mr. Moorcroft and whom we dreaded so much on our recent journey to Bokhara, should be so very friendly to us, that he permitted the above mentioned officers to see and survey all the places of note in his country, and treated them with great consideration". *Ibid.*

Mohan Lai probably knew the cause of Lord's popularity. Murad Beg of Qanduz had requested Lord's attendance on his brother, then threatened with blindness. Lord penetrated into his country over the Hindukush, but could not do much for his brother. He, however, won over the chief by giving him a scheme for the general improvement of his country. Dictionary of National Biography.

² Post Mohammed, I, 312-3.

were led by Nazir Ali Muhammad to Jalalabad, and were kindly treated there by Muhammad Akbar Khan. From Jalalabad they sailed down the river Kabul in a raft, and reached Peshawar safely. On the 17th June they joined Sir William Macnaghten¹ at Lahore who was then on a mission to the court of Ranjit Singh. They received orders to wait upon Lord Auckland at Simla where they arrived on the 20th July.²

¹ Sir William Hay Macnaghten (1793—1841), was the son of Sir Francis Macnaghten, a judge of the supreme court of Bengal. William obtained a cadetship in the East India Company's service in 1809. For some time he served as a bodyguard of the governor of Madras. He won two puzes of 500 pagodas each for gaining distinction in Hindustani and Persian. He also learnt Tamil, Telugu, Canarese and Marathi languages. He was appointed to the Bengal civil service in 1814, and served as assistant to the Registrar, as deputy-registrar, and registrar of the Sadar-i-Diwam Adalat, and also as a Judge. In the former capacities he published some works. From 1830 to 1833 he accompanied Lord William Bentinck during his tour in the northern and western provinces of India. He was then appointed in charge of the secret and political departments of the government secretariat. In 1837 he accompanied Lord Auckland during his tour of the north-west provinces, and became one of his "most trusted advisers " "He largely determined the policy of intervention in the affairs of Afghanistan, which was to effect the deposition of Dost Mohammed and the restoration of Shah Soojah to the throne of Cabul " In 1838 he interviewed Ranjit Singh, and concluded with him the tripartite treaty between the British Government, Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk. It was decided to send a large force of troops to Afghanistan and to reduce "the Shah to the position of a puppet in English hands. With this policy Macnaghten was thoroughly identified. He assisted in the preparation of Lord Auckland's manifesto of 1st October, 1838, signed it in his secretarial capacity and was gazetted envoy and minister at the Afghan Court of Soojah-ool-Moolk." Dictionary of National Biography Kaye, i, 312-14.

CHAPTER VI

POLITICAL ASSISTANT DURING THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR 1838-1841

1. *The Army of the Indus*

On the failure of Burnes's Mission to Kabul, Lord Auckland decided¹ to place a friendly ruler on the throne of Afghanistan with the help of British bayonets.⁸ The choice fell on Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, the ex-King of Kabul, then a

¹ Masson says that Lord Auckland against his own wishes "was obliged to yield to the assaults of certain females, aides-de-camp and secretaries," and to undertake this "useless expedition." Masson, ni, 495.

Auckland was accompanied on this occasion by three Secretaries-William Macnaghten, Henry Torrens and John Colvin, and by two of his sisters, "ladies of remarkable intelligence and varied accomplishments, who are supposed to have exercised an influence not wholly confined to the social amenities of the vice-regal camp" Auckland "lacked decision of character; he too often mistrusted his own opinions, and yielded his assent to those of irresponsible advisers less single-minded and sagacious than himself." Kaye, i, 315.

Sykes in his History of Afghanistan, ii, 2, says:—"In May 1838 Auckland had drawn up a minute in which he laid down that the only solution of the Afghan problem was the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne, and it is a curious fact which deserves mention that, just before this minute reached England, the Board of Control, on October 24, recommended the very course which the Governor-General had decided to adopt."

* Lord Auckland apparently lost sight of the prominent characteristic of the Afghan people, viz., their hatred of foreigners and of foreign invasions. "We are content," said an Afghan chief to Mountstuart Elphinstone, "with discord, we are content with alarms; we are content with blood; but we will never be content with a foreign master." The Gate-Keepers of India, 14.

pensioner of the British Government at Ludhiana.¹ It was considered necessary to secure the co-operation of Maharaja Rannjit Singh, and a tripartite treaty was concluded between the British Government, the Lahore ruler and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk. Ferozepur was made the rendezvous for the British forces known as the Army of the Indus ; and Lord Auckland and Sir Henry Fane, the commander-in-chief, interviewed Maharaja Ranjit Singh at that place. The Army of the Indus, in company of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, marched on Kabul, moving

¹ In August, 1831, Burnes had visited Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk at Ludhiana, whilst the latter was trying to exert himself to recover his lost territories. He formed an unfavourable impression of the Shah :—"I do not believe the Shah possesses sufficient energy to seat himself on the throne of Cabool, and if he did regain it, he has not the tact to discharge the duties of so difficult a situation." What prophetic words ! cf. *Asiatic Journal*, May, 1834, vol XLII, p. 223 ; Burnes's *Travels*, III, 185

Dr. Gerard who had met both Dost Muhammad Khan and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, speaks of both of them thus - "Dost Muhammed Khan's treatment of us was highly satisfactory, and no more than we durst have relied upon considering the position he occupies. We had none of the assiduous attentions and caresses of his brother at Peshawar; his character does not admit of familiarity, while his situation equally forbids it; but his civilities were of the first estimation. Kabul is rising into power under his republican spirit of government, and I should say is destined to an importance in spite of itself, for in every view it is the key to India. It is astonishing how much the country is relieved by the overthrow of the royal dynasty, and with respect to the latest reigns of the Timur family, the change in the condition of things for the better is not more wonderful than it is natural. In Shah Shujah's haughty career, there was little security in all we most value, and robberies and bloodshed disgraced the precincts of his court. Dost Muhammad's citizen-like demeanor and resolute simplicity, have suited the people's understanding, he has tried the effect of a new system and the experiment has succeeded." *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1833, pp. 1-2,

along the left bank of the Indus *via* Sind, the Bolan Pass, Kandahar, and Ghazni¹; whilst Prince Timur, the son of the Shah, with the Sikh contingent, passed through the Panjab and the Khyber Pass. Sir William Macnaghten was appointed the "Envoy and minister on the part of the Government of India at the court of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk," and Captain Alexander Burnes was employed "under Mr. Macnaghten's directions, as Envoy to the chief of Kelat and other states." It was believed that having placed Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk on the throne of Kabul, Macnaghten would return to India, leaving Burnes at Kabul as "the permanent representative of the British Indian Government at the court of the Shah."*

2. *Mohan Lai secures supplies at Multan*

At Simla Lord Auckland discussed with Mohan Lai the situation in Afghanistan and the problem of the supply of cattle and grain. Mohan Lai was given letters for the bankers of Multan and the Lohani merchants of Daraband to raise money,

¹ The distance from Ferozepur to Sukkur is 450 miles, from Sukkur to Kandahar 400 miles, and from Kandahar to Kabul 325 miles.

¹ How Macnaghten obtained this appointment is thus described by Masson. — "In a very short time it became developed that a large armament was to accompany the Shah, and Sir Henry Fane was flattered with having the direction of it, while Captain Burnes was soothed with the notion of being associated with His Excellency as Commissioner. Councils of all kinds were held at Simla, until the expedition was fairly determined upon, when Mr. Secretary Macnaghten volunteered his services for the occasion on the ground that Captain Burnes could hardly be depended upon in so important an affair. This was no doubt true, although the unfortunate Secretary was the last man in India who should have put himself forward. He saw I fear the opportunity of gratifying his ambition and vanity, and either over-estimated his ability or fancied that he had an easy task before him." Masson, iii, 490.

collect supplies and procure carriages for the use of the army. Besides him three other officers were deputed to various places. Captain Mackeson was directed to induce Bahawal Khan, the chief of Bahawalpur, to assist the army in every way ; Sir Alexander Burnes to form an offensive and defensive alliance with the Mirs of Khairpur, and Sir Henry Pottinger to effect the same with the Mirs of Hyderabad. Mohan Lai discharged his duties to the entire satisfaction of the government. The bankers of Multan conveyed money and grain in boats to Shikarpur, and the Lohani merchants collected a few thousand camels and conveyed the provisions to Kandahar.¹

3. Obtains a treaty from the Mir of Khairpur

From Multan Mohan Lai sailed down the Chenab and the Indus to Khairpur,¹ where he joined Sir Alexander Burnes. The latter officer had failed in forming a treaty with Mir Rustam Khan of Khairpur on account of the opposition of Fatah Muhammad Khan Ghori, the wazir of the Mir, and Ali Murad, the Mir's brother. He consequently came to Shikarpur, where he was visited by Fatah Muhammad Khan. But nothing came out of the interview. Afterwards Burnes deputed Mohan Lai to Khairpur, but he also experienced the same difficulty from the same quarters and returned disappointed.*

¹ cf. Panjab Records, 41C/161 dated Kabul, the 29th June, 1842, para 8, Dost Mohammed, 1, 397-8 ; Travels, 464. Havelock, vol. 1, p. 149 says:—"We had the assistance, as an agent for the supply of our wants, and an interpreter, able in both capacities, of his (Alexander Burnes's) celebrated Monshee or Meerza, Mohan Lai."

¹ Masson considered Khairpur a "filthy" and "unhealthy" place, but he liked its "beautiful verdure". "The water drunk by the inhabitants has alike a bad repute, but the Mir has a well within his walls, so much esteemed that his relatives at Haidarabad are frequently supplied from it." Masson, i, 364.

' Post Mohammed, ii, 76-9 ; Travels, 464.

After this Ali Murad retired to his Dinji fort, 50 miles south towards Hyderabad, and Mohan Lai suggested to Burnes that he should call the Mir's minister to Shikarpur and detain him there while negotiations went on at Khairpur. Ali Murad was not to leave his fort without permission. All this was arranged accordingly, and while Fatah Muhammad¹ was on his way to Shikarpur Mohan Lal reached Khairpur by a different route on the 11th December, 1838.

He was kindly received by Mir Rustam Khan, who agreed to every article of the treaty, but declared that he would sign it in the presence of Alexander Burnes. This was objected to by Mohan Lai, as he believed that if Sir Alexander was invited from Shikarpur, the wazir would also follow him. Mohan Lai therefore wrote to Burnes advising him to intimate the Mir-that he would personally see and congratulate him on receiving the accepted treaty.

Alexander Burnes's letter arrived the same day as a message from Ali Murad, saying that he would join the Mir on the following morning, and that he should not see Mohan Lai till then. Mohan Lai got this information late at night, and, in consequence, he repaired to the Mir's place early next morning, desiring immediate interview with him. The good natured*

¹ The degree of esteem in which the Mir held his minister may be estimated from the following incident *—"His Vizier was an old man, a grey-beard like himself. He was his favourite and to such an extent did he carry his partiality for him, that on one occasion, when the eldest son of Mir Rustam abused this minister, Mir Rustam said, with the strongest indignation, 'Be not offended, Fateh Muhammad ; these words are not addressed to you, but to me. He who dares to reproach you, reproaches me'." Dry Leaves from Young Egypt, 59-60.

¹ "This venerable old man had from the first, even from the time that our earliest embassy was sent to Sindh, shown the strongest inclination to be on friendly terms, with the British." Dry Leaves from Young Egypt, 57-8.

Mir saw him in his night dress. Mohan Lal laid the treaty before him, and offering him pen and ink, which he had taken with him, requested Rustam Khan to sign and seal the treaty. After much persuasion Rustam Khan was about to seal it, when Ali Murad put in his appearance.

By this time some other members of the family had also come, and many protests were raised against the treaty. This was a trying time for Mohan Lal, but his sympathetic tone, firmness and boldness prevailed and after a discussion lasting nearly six hours, when he was about to retire in despair, Rustam Khan agreed to sign it:—

"He now, holding my hand, said in a most affectionate manner that he knew I was not an Englishman, and that I had a real regard for the welfare of Sindh, and therefore I must tell him candidly whether the acceptance of the proposed treaty by him will really increase the friendship and satisfaction of the Governor-General and of the Sovereign in England, or that, after the present object was gained, he shall be put aside as useless. I assured the Mir, pledging my word and honour, as well as that of Sir Alexander Burnes on the part of the Government (as he had told me), that every article of the treaty shall strictly be adhered to, and that the Mir and his descendants will from generation to generation enjoy the peaceable and independent authority of their possessions, without fearing any internal or external commotions; on which he affixed his seal, notwithstanding the open and repeated remonstrances of the Mir Ali Morad, whom the Mir Rustam Khan silenced by saying that he will get a separate agreement from Sir Alexander Burnes, stating that his (Ali Morad's) privileges will neither be interfered with nor coveted by the British Government; and at the Mir Rustam's repeated

solicitation that officer omitted the mention of the intrigues of Ali Morad in his despatch to (he Governor-General."¹

No sooner was the treaty signed and sealed than Mohan Lai put into Mir Rustarn's hand the separate article for the cession of the fort of Bhakkar * for the period of the war. The Mir objected to it saying that it was in violation of the sixth article² of the treaty just concluded. Mohan Lai pointed out that the fort of Bhakkar was situated "in the island between the banks", and it was not a violation of the article at all. Thereupon Ali Murad shook his head, and holding his own beard, asserted that the day was not far when they would be deprived of all their possessions. Mohan Lai, on behalf of Sir Alexander Burnes and the British Government, gave every assurance to the Mir that

¹ Dost Mohammed, ii, 79-83 . Travels, 464-5; Panjab Records, 41C/161, para9.

²The celebrated fortress of Bhakkar stood on an island in the Indus, between the towns of Rohn on the eastern bank and Sakkur on the western bank. When the river was lowest, the eastern channel was 400 yards wide and 30 feet deep ; while the western channel was 98 yards wide and 15 feet deep. Thornton. 1,117.

"On a rocky island opposite to this town is the fortress of Bakkar, once held by the Duranis, at this time subject to Mir Sohrab (Mir Rustam's father) Notwithstanding its imposing appearance, with its large extent of wall, and its indented battlements, it is of no consequence as a defensive erection in modern warfare, being entirely commanded by the heights and detached hills on either bank of the river, at Sakkur and at Rohn." Masson, 1, 362.

The Sindians regarded the fort of Bhakkar as "the sole place of any strength in upper Sindh." Dry Leaves from Young Egypt, 57.

² It ran :—"The British Government will not covet a dam or dram of the territories enjoyed by his Highness and his heirs, nor the fortresses on this bank or that bank of the river Indus." Dost Mohammed, ii, 85.

the fort would be restored to him when the war was over.¹ The Mir quietly agreed to it, and saying "Bismillah" signed and sealed the separate article and handed it over to Mohan Lal on the 24th December, 1838, the same day that the treaty was accepted.¹

Before the army reached Rohri, Major Leech and Mohan Lai were ordered to induce Mir Rustam Khan to allow the British Government to throw a bridge across the Indus under the walls of the fort of Bhakkar. This measure was violently opposed by Ali Murad, but Mohan Lai ultimately succeeded in securing the Mir's permission.⁹ There was also some difficulty in obtaining the possession of the fort of Bhakkar. Mohan Lai "was ordered again to wait upon the chief, and to state to him in the presence of all the members of the family that if the fort was not instantly delivered, the troops shall be employed to possess it by force."⁴ After a hard struggle Mohan Lai got the key of the fort⁵ which was occupied on the 24th January, 1839.⁶

² "In the East the surrender of a fortress is always felt a disgrace; and the cession of Bukkur, to which an exaggerated idea of strength and importance had long been attached, was a source of sorrow to the aged Ameer of Khyrpore, who felt humiliated by so open and manifest a token that his independence was at an end." Durand, i n .

* A bridge of boats was thrown here by the engineers of the Bengal army. Fifty-five boats were employed for the eastern channel and nineteen for the western. The bridge was swept away soon afterwards. Thornton, 1,118.

* Dost Mohammed, ii, 94.

⁵ The fort occupied almost the whole of the island which was 800 yards long, 300 yards wide and 1,875 yards in circuit. It had double walls, from 30 to 35 feet high, built both of burnt and unburnt bricks. There were 61 loop-holed bastions, having a weak parapet. It had two main gates, one facing Rohri and the other Sukkur. Thornton, i, 1x8.

* *Ibid.*, 95 ; Travels, 463 ; Pan jab Records, 41C/161, para 10.

The conclusion of the offensive and defensive treaty with the Mir of Khairpur as well as the cession of the fort of Bhakkar strengthened the negotiations then in progress at Hyderabad. The Mirs were, however, not prepared to accept

Lord Auckland in a letter to Mir Rustam Khan dated Bhagasar, January 10, 1839, stated:—"I address you this friendly letter as a lasting assurance of the plain meaning and purpose of the words of the separate article, namely, that the British shall avail themselves of the fort of Bakkar, the citadel of their ally the Mir of Khairpur, only during actual and periods of preparing for war, like the present."

On this Mohan Lal remarks :—"Not only kept the fort for ever, but the whole dominion afterwards conquered and the Mir banished."

He further says :—"The contents of the former documents afford a fearful lesson to every human being, and inculcate that, if men in power are at one time flattered, respected, and assured of perpetual friendship, they ought neither rely upon those assurances, nor be forgetful of the adversity of their fortunes which is to follow them." Dost Mohammed, ii, 178, 180-1.

An Englishman of the Political Department who was posted in Sind and frequently came into contact with Mir Rustam, says :—

"It was often said that one or both the Deras—Ismael Khan or Ghazt Khan—would be made over to him. How cruel, then, must have been his disappointment when he found himself degraded from his position of Raib, Chief Amir and his youngest brother exalted in his room—his Vizier first treated in the most contemptuous manner, and then chased from his presence, and his own grey hairs and venerable age, which ought to have commanded respect, regarded only as proofs of imbecility and incapacity to govern. At first he made many efforts to conciliate the good will of the Political Agent, but in vain. He sent, too, repeated messages to those who were his friends, myself among the number, to entreat our intercession in his behalf. Our representations, however, were of no avail, and at last the unbending spirit which was shown to him had its natural effect" Dry Leaves from Young Egypt, 61-2.

The same writer bitterly laments the treatment meted out to the Mir:—"Would it not have been more for our glory had the venerable head of Mir Rustam been laid to rest in his own land, in the tomb of his fathers, rather than that he should die as he has died, a prisoner

the terms offered to them. It was therefore resolved that the Bengal army should march down to Hyderabad, while the Bombay force was coming up to that place, and thus compel the Mirs to accept the treaty. The Bengal army had to march along the left bank of the Indus, passing near Khairpur. The Mir of Khairpur, asserting that this would cause them great inconvenience and would be disgraceful for their families residing at Khairpur, suggested that as the bridge was ready, they could easily march along the right bank. The Government decided to force its way along the

and exile, bitterly execrating the moment when the Faringi first set step in his country ? Posterity will answer this question, and will mete out justice, though, unfortunately, too late for those who have suffered in this unrighteous quarrel " *Ibid* ; 68.

Further on he observes :—"Mir Rustam was old enough to have been Ah Murad's father,—he was the acknowledged Rais or Chief of the Family, and he it was who had first received our envoys and concluded an alliance with us. Now, I will ask anyone who has the smallest soupcon of justice in his composition, whether it was right in us not only to fan the discussion between these members of the same family, but to support the junior and turbulent Amir against the inoffensive old man whom he ought to have regarded as a parent" ? *Ibid*; 170.

He speaks about the character of Mir Rustam thus :—"He was a man full of the milk of human kindness, gentle, peaceful, merciful, and forbearing over-much. His appearance was most venerable, and there was nothing in his look or deportment which could give colour to the story of his being addicted to the intoxicating bhang " *Ibid*, 175.

For the grievances of Mir Rustam Khan against the British Government see pages 176-7.

All employees of the Political Department were strictly forbidden to have any communication whatsoever with Fatah Muhammad, the late Wazir :—"On the way home Fateh Muhammad, the Vizir, rode up with a score or so of horsemen, and endeavoured to speak to me, but the Agent's orders were so express, that I was obliged to decline holding any communication with him." *Ibid*

left bank. The Khairpur Minister then left the British camp saying that the Baluches would resist this design with all their strength. Major Gordon was insulted by the Baluches, and the rumours of a night attack forced Sir Alexander Burnes to leave his tent at 8 O'clock in the evening, and take rest in that of the Commander-in-Chief. Mohan Lai was despatched at night to the Mir's camp, about five miles distant.¹

On entering the camp of Rustam Khan, Molian Lai was instantly surrounded by a large number of Baluches, who flourished their swords at him, abusing and insulting him. He was not allowed to see Rustam Khan for a long time. Mohan Lai then loudly shouted that if the Mir would not receive and hear him privately, great calamity would befall the Mir and his family on the following morning. This attracted the Mir's attention, and Mohan Lai was immediately called in. His discussion produced no effect on the Mir, and Mohan Lai got up to leave. Rustam Khan brought him back and again talked to him on the subject. Finding the British Government adamant, the Mir yielded. Mohan Lai advised him to break up his camp and go to his capital. Rustam Khan did accordingly.⁸

Mohan Lai was then ordered to accompany the Bengal army to Hyderabad, and work under Sir W. Cotton.⁸ The

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, paras 11-12, Dost Mohammed, ii, 96-7; Travels, 466.

² Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 13; Dost Mohammed, ii, 97-8.

³ Sir Willoughby Cotton (1783—1860), was a son of Admiral Rowland Cotton, cousin of Lord Combermerc. He was educated at Rugby and entered the Guards in 1798. He served in Hanover in 1805, at Copenhagen in 1807 and in the Peninsula from 1800 to 1814. He came to India in 1821, and commanded a brigade in the first Burmese War, 1825-6. He was promoted to the rank of Major-General in 1830. He commanded the Bengal Division of the Army of the Indus on this occasion. Buckland«

army proceeded from Rohri, but before it reached the boundary of Hyderabad, the Mirs agreed to the terms of the treaty. The army therefore returned to Shikarpur where Mohan Lai joined Sir Alexander Burnes *

4. Negotiates at Kalat

Sir Alexander Burnes was disinclined to serve in Afghanistan under another political chief, and consequently Sir William Macnaghten permitted him to stay at Shikarpur. Burnes also requested the Envoy to let Mohan Lai stay with him, which was agreed to. The arrangement, however, did not last long. Major Leech exerted himself to the utmost in procuring supplies and inducing the local chiefs to facilitate the advance of the army; but certain chiefs refused to communicate with anyone except Burnes. The commander-in-chief also wanted to have him with the army in view of his accurate knowledge of the state of affairs in Afghanistan. Sir William Macnaghten had in the meantime appointed him Envoy at Kalat, and Burnes said that if he was to go as far as that place, he would proceed to Kabul instead of coming back to Shikarpur. This was approved by Sir William.

Consequently, Sir Alexander Burnes and Mohan Lai left Shikarpur and joined the camp of Sir Willoughby Cotton. At Bhag on the route from Shikarpur to Dadar close to the entrance of the Bolan Pass they received the brother of the Khan of Kalat, who was introduced to Sir Willoughby by Mohan Lai. From Shal (Quetta) Sir Alexander Burnes, Captain Pattison, Captain Simpson and Mohan Lai went to Kalat*

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 15.

"Masson describes Kalat as a small town, standing on a hill, and defended by a mud wall and towers. It had three gates, facing east, north and south. It contained "about eight hundred houses, a large proportion inhabited by Hindus." Masson, ii, 96.

[seat of the government of Baluchistan] on the 25th March, 1839, with the object of inducing Mehrab Khan,¹ "an able and sagacious man",¹ the chief of Baluchistan, to assist the British troops with supplies of grain and grass, to check the marauding parties of Bauches, and to tender bis submission to Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk.

Mohan Lai took the treaty to the court of Mehrab Khan for approbation. The key-note of the treaty was that Mehrab Khan must wait upon Shah Shuja in his camp, a condition which Mehrab Khan thoroughly detested.⁸ The Khan was halting, wavering and hesitating, as 'he was altogether suspicious of Shah Soojah," and "by no means certain of the success of the present enterprise" of the British, and "believed that, by paying homage to the Shah, he would raise up a host of powerful enemies, and plunge himself into a sea of ruin."⁴ Mohan Lai took the treaty from his hands, and told him plainly that it was to his advantage to form an alliance with the British Government. The Khan taking the treaty from him remarked that he was a 'sakhtgo' (harsh speaker), and that the British had "soldiers to frighten with their arms and agents to cause alarm by their tongues."⁶

¹ Mehrab Khan was about forty years old. He could boast of a family which had given to Baluchistan twenty-three Khans. Mehrab Khan was absolutely illiterate. "Politically severe, distrustful, and incapable, he is not esteemed personally cruel or tyrannical; hence although he cannot be respected by his subjects, he is not thoroughly detested by them ; and in lieu of deprecating his vices they rather lament that he has not more virtues and energy. Neither is he harsh or exacting upon the merchant, whether foreign or domestic." *Ibid* ; 108.

² Kaye, i, 424

³ Kaye, i, 425,

⁴ *Ibid*; 426

⁵ Dost Mohammed, ii, 192 ; Hough, 60-61 . Stocqueler, 23,

Sir Alexander Burnes then pressed upon the Khin the problem of supplies. Mehrab Khan promised to do his best, but the response was not very encouraging. The Khan was, however, not to blame for this, as Burnes himself admitted :— "My inquiries serve to convince me that there is but a small supply of grain in this country, and none certainly to be given us, without aggravating the present distress of the inhabitants—some of whom are feeding on herbs and grasses gathered in the jungle. It is with some difficulty we have supported ourselves, whilst the small quantities we have procured have been got by stealth."¹ Alexander Burnes consequently left Kalat, and Mohan Lal stayed behind to carry on the negotiations. Mehrab Khan delayed the proceedings, and Mohan Lai was recalled to Quetta.* The road between Kalat and the camp was infested with thieves and robbers, who plundered and murdered all those found in the rear of the column. Mohan Lal in order to assure safe arrival, hired an escort of the Kakri tribe, notorious for robbery. Captain Nash of the Bengal army accompanied him. After three marches they reached the camp of Colonel Herring at Kojak.³ On the way

¹ Durand says that Burnes paid Mehrab Khan Rs 20,000 by way of inducement; "but Burnes's temperament and conduct marred every diplomatic transaction in which he engaged." Durand, 144-45*

¹ In November, 1839, Major-General Wiltshire was sent against Kalat. He knocked down one gate, and stormed the fort and the town. Mehrab Khan was killed fighting sword in hand and with him perished 400 Baluches, while 2,000 men were taken prisoners. In 1840, the Baluches rose against the British, overpowered the garrison, deposed the Khan placed in power by the British, became masters of the town, and killed the British officer in charge. About the close of 1840, General Nott recaptured the place. In 1841, Nasir Khan, son of Mehrab Khan, was recognised the Khan, and the British troops were withdrawn. Thornton, 1, 376.

³ The main route from the Bolan Pass to Kandahar passes through

they came across hundreds of soldiers, horses and camels lying dead, destroyed by the Kakris and Achakzais.¹ About eight miles from the main camp, a gang of robbers descended to attack Mohan Lai, but his Kakri escorts informed them that they did not belong to the Farangis, and Mohan Lai was declared to be one of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk's sons, who had been left behind owing to indisposition. The robbers were satisfied and quietly withdrew.*

5. *Assists in the capture of Kandahar*

Mohan Lal through his servant Muhammad Tahar won over Mulla Nasu, the prime minister of Sardar Kohandil Khan, the chief of Kandahar. The Wazir advised his master either to surrender or to fly. Major Leech, by secret correspondence, induced Haji Khan Kakar,³ a prominent noble of Kandahar, to desert his chief; and he joined the British army on the 20th April, 1839. The desertion of their ally made the Kandahar chiefs suspicious of every body at the court. Haji Khan's desertion was followed by that of several other notable chiefs, such as Abdul Majid Khan, the son of the Governor of Lash, and Ghulam Akhund Zadah. Mulla Nasu took advantage of this situation, and at the instigation of Mohan Lai sowed seeds of dissension among the Afghans, and persuaded the chiefs to leave the country and thereby secure safety for themselves and their families. The chiefs

the Kojak Pass. It crosses the Amran mountainb, from the valley of IHshin on the east to the plains of Kandahar in the west. Thornton, 1, 399-400.

¹ For details see Atkinson, 117-24.

² Travels, 467.

³ The Kakar tribes occupy a large tract of country to the south of Khoja Amran mountains and to the north-west of Baluchistan. They are chiefly a pastoral people and are far less turbulent than other Afghan?. Nor are they of much importance in a political or military way Malleson, 20-21.

followed this course, and Kandahar fell into the hands of the British without the least opposition. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk was publicly placed on the throne and declared sovereign of Afghanistan.¹

Mohan Lai was so whole-heartedly attached to the British cause that he was the instrument in securing most of the desertions from the Afghan ranks to the side of the British Government. But it pained him to see that the various promises and engagements entered into with them either by himself as advised by the British officials or by the British officials themselves were not strictly adhered to. He says :—

"Whatever we might boast of our diplomatic success during the campaign of Afghanistan, we were certainly very wrong in not keeping up our adherence, even for a short time, to those engagements and promises which we had so solemnly and faithfully made to the various chiefs, in return for their taking up our cause and abandoning their long-known and established masters. Our letters, pledging our honour and Government to reward and appreciate their services for our good, were in their hands; and as soon as we found that the chiefs of Qandhar were fled, and that there was no necessity for wearing longer the airy garb of political civilities and promises, we commenced to fail in fulfilling them. There are, in fact, such numerous instances of violating our engagements and deceiving the people in our political proceedings, within what I am acquainted with, that it would be hard to assemble them in one series. I shall, however, mention them in their proper places, and the time in which they

¹Panjab Records, 41C/161. para 18? Dost Mohammed, ii, 205-12; Travels, 468.

were made, in order to show how soon they were forgotten through our vain pride of power and of our tact shown in the temporary and speedy gaining of the people."¹

There remained only one nobleman of consequence, named Haji Dost Muhammad Khan of Gurm-i-Seel, who had not come over to the British. It was considered essential to induce him to wait upon the Shah. General communications passed between him and the Envoy, but not lung came of them. In the last resort, Mohan Lai was called upon to secure tffis meeting. Mohan Lai with the spirit of a zealot set himself to the task, and persuaded his old acquaintance Abdul Wahab Khan Popalzai* to go to Gurm-i-Seel. This man had already rendered many hazardous services to the British at Kalat and had intercepted letters addressed by the Mirs, of Hyderabad to the chiefs of Kandahar. These letters had been handed over by Mohan Lai to Sir Alexander ftrntp. Abdul Wahab Khan was provided with letters from the Shah and the Envoy to the Haji. He succeeded in bringing the Haji to wait upon the Shah at Kandahar. Haji Dost Muhammad Khan, was absolutely unwilling to accompany the Shah to Kabul, but he was forcibly detained.³

¹ Dost Mohammed, II, 208-9.

Mulla Nasu, the Kandahai Wazir, who was chiefly responsible for the bloodless occupation of Kandahar by the British, was given "a written agreement bestowing a pension upon him," but no money was paid to him. cf. Dost Mohammed, ii, 217.

¹ The Abdahs or Durrams are divided into nine great clans of which Popalzai is one.

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 19.

The Haji hung back by slow marches to avoid his appearance in the British camp. It was considered a "treacherous design," and they wished "to ensnare" him. "Such were our political views and fair dealings I" Dost Mohammed, ii, 2x4

6. *Helps in the capture of Ghazni*

Leaving two battalions of Indian troops, a contingent of Shah Shuja ul-Mulk's cavalry and four 18-pounder guns to hold Kandahar, the British army left this place early in June. On approaching Ghazni¹ it was discovered that they had to meet with severe opposition. Sir John (later Lord) Keane, the Commander-in-Chief, was anxious to capture Ghazni without any loss of men and ammunition, and consequently Mohan Lai's assistance was sought for the purpose. Mohan Lai, who was "endowed with a genius for traitor-making the lustre of which remained undimmed to the very end of the war,"⁸ again appeared on the scene. While on Burnes's mission to Kabul, Mohan Lai had made friends with Abdul Rashid Khan, the first nephew of Amir Dost Muhammad Khan, who was in the fort of Ghazni at that time. Mohan Lai "began to operate upon his friend and he achieved a brilliant success. Abdool Rabhed was not deaf to the voice of the charmer. Mohan Lai wrote him a seductive letter, and he determined to desert. As the British army approached Ghuznee he joined our camp." * He gave very valuable information to Major Thomson, the Chief Engineer, regarding the fortifications of Ghazni pointing out where the ramparts were weak, and from what direction the fort could be successfully stormed. As a result the fort was easily taken. The

The extremely valuable services of Abdul Wahab were utterly ignored. He was given nothing; and while in the British camp he spent his own money. When he became bankrupt, he left the army sorely disappointed. *Ibid*, 217-20.

¹ "The strength of Ghuznee was the boast of the Afghans. They believed that it was not to be carried by assault" Kaye, 1, 457.

² *Ibid*. 459

³ *Ibid*.

Commander-in-Chief strongly recommended Abdul Rashid "to the Envoy and got 500 rupees fixed for him from the Mission treasury."¹

Sardar Ghulam Hyder, the Chief of Ghazni, was taken prisoner, and was lodged in Mohan Lai's tent which was situated between those of Sir John Keane and Sir Alexander Burnes. Mohan Lai was then given charge of the Governor's wife, a young lady of twenty-one, the daughter of the late Sardar Muhammad Azim Khan. Mohan Lai had already met her in 1832, when she was unmarried, and asked Dr. Gerard for medicine for her sore eyes. She was accompanied by about thirty women, relations and servants. Mohan Lai spared no pains to make them comfortable, and this great duty he discharged "to the satisfaction of the ladies, till they were sent to India."²

Another chief was resisting the British troops in his house at the head of about a hundred armed men. He would not listen to any proposal from anyone except Sir Alexander

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 19 ; Dost Mohammed, 11, 221-4.

It is very strange that with the exception of Kaye all British writers on the subject give credit for the fall of Ghazni fort to British engineers and forces without making any mention whatsoever of Mohan Lai. Even the most recent writer, Sykes, in his History of Afghanistan omits this fact:—"Ghazni, however, with its parapet rising to a height of 70 feet and surrounded by a wide wet ditch, in the absence of siege guns, appeared to be as impregnable as Afghans boasted that it was. Fortunately, however, a traitor gave the priceless information that, although most of the city gates had been built up, the Kabul gate had been left open—presumably to serve as a bolt-hole. Supplies had fallen short, and rejecting the suggestion of the Chief Engineer to mask the fortress and march on Kabul, Keane gave orders to carry Ghazni by a *coup de main*." Sykes, ii, 10.

* Dost Mohammed, 11, 228.

Burnes or Mohan Lal. Mohan Lal was therefore provided with the seals of the Envoy and Sir Alexander Burnes and was authorised to come to an agreement with him. Mohan Lal found that all the doors of his house were closed from inside, and many dead bodies of the British soldiers and Indian sepoy, who had attempted to break open the doors, were lying under the walls. The whole regiment with its officers stood round the building taking shelter behind the debris. Mohan Lal was not free from fear in approaching the house. The chief, however, called him by name, and swore that he would be quite safe inside, saying that he only wished him to take charge of his women and place them with those of Ghulam Hyder Khan. Mohan Lal agreed to his request. The doors were then thrown open. The ladies were placed in his custody and the chief took his word of honour that they would not be insulted by the British soldiers. The Chief and his attendants handed over their arms, and from dark cells a large number of horses were let loose in the street. One of these, a lovely, grey-coloured charger was presented to Mohan Lal and the Commander-in-Chief allowed him to keep it, and it was not included in the list of booty obtained from Ghazni.¹

¹ Dost Mohammed, ii, 231.

On the fall of Ghazni Sir John [later Lord] Keane expressed his great delight in a letter to Lord Auckland "The army under my command have succeeded in performing one of the most brilliant acts it has ever been my lot to witness during my service of 45 years in the four quarters of the globe, in the capture by storm of the strong and important Fortress and Citadel of Ghuznee yesterday." Stocqueler, 28.

In the same letter he continued :—"The brilliant triumph we have obtained, the cool courage displayed, and the gallant bearing of the Troops I have the honour to command, will have taught such a lesson to our enemies in the Afghan nation, as will make them hereafter respect the name of a British Soldier." *Ibid* ; 34-35

7. *Enters Kabul*

The fall of Ghazni terrified the Afghans and paralysed Dost Muhammad Khan. He deputed his brother Nawab Jabbar Khan to wait on Macnaghten with the proposal that Dost Muhammad should be appointed Chief Minister to Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk; but this offer was coldly rejected by the British Envoy. Leaving a garrison to hold Ghazni, the British forces left for Kabul on the 30th July, and on the 3rd August encamped at Shekhabad [a village and fort, situated 50 miles south of Kabul on the right bank of the river Logar]. Whilst on Burnes's Mission, Mohan Lai had won over Ghulam Khan Popalzai, an enemy of Dost Muhammad Khan, to the side of the British Government. He had been sending to Mohan Lai, at the risk of his life, the news of the Afghan capital; and at Mohan Lai's advice Sir Alexander Burnes had sent him Rs. 40,000¹ from Kandahar to raise the Kohistanis against Dost Muhammad Khan. This alarmed the Amir greatly, and he felt so frightened, that leaving his artillery and ammunition at Maidan,* he fled

¹ The famous French traveller, Ferricr, while describing the character of the Afghans, says:—"Their cupidity and avarice are extreme, there is no tie they would not break, no duty they would not desert, to gratify their avidity for wealth. This surpasses all that can be imagined, it is insatiable, and to satisfy it they are capable of committing the greatest crimes. For it they will sacrifice all their native and independent pride, even prostitute the honour of their wives and daughters, whom they frequently put to death after they have received the price of their dishonour. Gold in Afghanistan is, more than anywhere else, the god of the human race, it stifles the still small cry of every man's conscience, if, indeed, it can be admitted that an Afghan has a conscience at all. It is impossible to rely on their promises, their friendship, or their fidelity." History of the Afghans, 286.

¹ Maidan is the principal town in the valley of the same name, situated on the left bank of the Kabul river, 22 miles S. W. of the city of Kabul.

towards Bamian to take shelter with Nasrullah Khan, the chief of Bokhara. This intelligence was received in the camp at this place.¹

Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, attended by a British force, entered Kabul on the 7th August. Mohan Lai's conspicuous figure in the cavalcade is thus described by the eye-witness, Havelock :—

"The major-generals, brigadiers, and the whole of the departmental and personal staff of both Presidencies, with all the officers politically employed, were in attendance, and let me not forget to record that Moonshee Mohun Lall, a traveller, and an author, as well as his talented master, appeared on horseback on this occasion in a new upper garment of very gay colours, and under a turban of very admirable fold and majestic dimensions, and was one of the gayest as well as the most sagacious and successful personages in the whole cortege." ^a

Shortly afterwards Captain Wade escorted Prince Timur to Afghanistan through the Panjab. He arrived at Kabul on the 3rd September. Shahamat Ali, an old class-fellow of Mohan Lai accompanied Wade as a Persian interpreter.⁸

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 21, Dost Mohammed, 11, 246, 276.

* Havelock, ii, 115. "And Moonshee Mohun Lai flaunting a maiestic turban, and looking in his spruceness, not at all as though his mission in Afghanistan were to do the dirty work of the British diplomatists, made a very conspicuous figure in the gay cavalcade " Kaye, 1, 478.

* Shahamat Ali records :—

30th August, 1839, at Tazecn:—"A good quantity of fruits was received from my friend Mohan Lai "

3rd September, Kabul:—"The first object on our arrival at the place was to see the city, which I did the same day in the company of my friend Mohan Lal."

Afterwards troops were stationed in various parts of Afghanistan, and the surplus soldiers were sent back to India. Kandahar, Ghazni, Kabul and Jalalabad were the places where British cantonments were established.

8. Aids in raising money

The greatest need of the hour was money,¹ and Major Macgregor, Secretary to the Envoy, was given charge of raising it. He received valuable assistance from Mohan Lai in this business, and in consequence he recommended Mohan Lai to the Envoy for the grant of the "Order of the Durrani Empire," as a mark of distinction, though it was not granted to him at this time ^s

The British army had a quiet time in the beginning for nearly a year; but all of a sudden, the appearance of Dost Muhammad Khan in Kohistan disturbed their deep repose. Sir Alexander Burnes and Mohan Lai accompanied General Sale³ to that part of the country, and on the 20th September, 1840, besieged Ali Khan, a supporter of the Amir at

"During our stay in Kabul I often received invitations especially from the Kazalbash people with whom I became acquainted through my friend Mohan Lai, and had many opportunities of examining and observing their habits and manners." Sikhs and Afghans, 464, 476, 482.

¹ "When the army reached the capital there was a painful scarcity of coin". Kaye, ii, 15.

² Travels, 470-71. This medal was conferred upon him later on.

³ Sir Robert Henry Sale [1782-1845], son of Colonel Sale, entered the army in 1795. He was at Madras in 1798, and fought in the Mysore War, 1798-9. He was employed against Travancore in 1809, and in the Mauritius expedition from 1810 to 1813. He was created Major in 1813. He participated in the first Burmese War, 1824-6. In the first Afghan War, he commanded the advanced Brigade, cf Buckland.

Tutamdrah.¹ The Brigade then marched to Parwan,² where they fought with the Amir, and suffered heavily.⁸ The Amir, however, surrendered⁴ to Macnaghten on the 3rd November, 1840,⁵ and the British forces returned to Kabul.⁶

¹ This village is situated on the Ghorband river, at the eastern entrance of Ghorband valley. All Khin took to flight after a brief resistance. Thornton, 11, 278.

² Parwan is a village situated in the valley of the same name.

"Two squadrons of the 2nd Bengal Native Cavalry, when ordered to charge, instead of responding to the command, fled in the most dastardly manner, deserting their officers; on this unhappy occasion. Dr. Lord, the political agent, Lieutenant Broadfoot, and Adjutant Crispin, were killed, and the remaining officers severely wounded." Thornton, ii, 144-5; Sykes, 11, 20.

⁴ Mohan Lal gives a fine description of the surrender of Dost Muhammad Khan. — "It was in the evening of the 3rd of November, when Sir William Macnaghten was riding with two officers and deliberating on the sad contents of the report of the battle of Parwan and on the uncertainty of the movements of the Amir, that one horseman galloped up and said to him, 'Are you Lord Sahab'? 'Yes', replied the Envoy. 'Then', rejoined the Afghan, 'I come to tell you that the Amir is arrived.' 'What Amir? Where is he?' 'Dost Mohammed Khan' was the answer. After a minute the Amir appeared, and dismounted from his horse, and claimed the protection of the British Envoy. The Envoy took his arm, and conducted him with all respect to his own residence, where the Amir one year before held his court, swayed his country, and now surrendered his sword as a state prisoner. Such are the decrees of fate!" Dost Mohammed, ii, 358-9.

» While Dost Muhammad was in hiding Macnaghten recorded: — "No mercy should be shown to the man who is the author of all the evils that are now distracting the country." But, when the Amir surrendered, Macnaghten wrote — "I trust the Dost will be treated with liberality," and confessed, "We ejected the Dost, who never offended us, in support of our policy, of which he was the victim." India under Ellenborough, 22.

• Travels, 472.

The object of the first Afghan War was now achieved; but the British army stayed in Afghanistan to "insure the benefits which we had conferred upon a reluctant people." Gate-Keepers of India, 15.

9. *The forged Utters*

After the surrender of Dost Muhammad Khan, Mohan Lai was called upon to translate a large number of letters which had been found in the battle-field of Parwan. These letters disclosed the names of various chiefs who were opposed to the British Government. The mischief-mongers of the capital took advantage of this fact, and forged letters on a large scale in order to make money and win the favour of the British officials. The detailed treatment of this question is beyond the scope of this treatise, but it is fair to relate one incident which concerns Mohan Lai. One Sayyid Muhammad, in the service of Ciptain Edward Conolly, reported that he had seized a messenger bearing letters from Sultan Muhammad Khan, the Governor of Peshawar, and the Sikhs for Nawab Jabbar Khan. These letters were translated, and were found entirely against the British interests. In the light of these letters, the British officials looked upon Jabbar Khan [one of their best friends in Afghanistan] as their enemy, and they contemplated banishment of the Nawab to India. Sir Alexander Burnes, being consulted, desired to examine the original letters. Mohan Lai suggested to Burnes that he should send for the man who had charge of the letters. He came and Mohan Lal asked him the date of his arrival in Kabul. On his mentioning a day, Mohan Lal declared that he had seen him in Kabul two days previously, and in so short a time he could not make a trip to Peshawar and come back. This puzzled him, and he was offered a reward of fifty rupees to make a clean breast of everything. He asked for pardon, and on necessary assurance being given "he stated that he was not a messenger but the horseman of Sayad Mohammad, who wrote the letters, and gave them into his hands, and told him to appear as a messenger before Captain Conolly."¹

¹ Dost Mohammed, ii, 363-4

10. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk annoyed at Mohan Lal

During Burnes's mission to Kabul, Mohan Lal, being very fond of music, had taken into his service a Kashmiri musician named Qadirju along with his band. On his again coming to this place the musician entered his service. His fame came to the knowledge of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, and the musician was ordered to wait upon him in the court. Qadirju replied that his instruments were in Mohan Lal's house, and he could not attend the court without his permission. The Shah felt insulted and complained to the Envoy, saying that Mohan Lal had forcibly kept the musician's instruments in his house though they belonged to the Shah. The Envoy made investigation and found that the Shah's allegations were false. He therefore refused to interfere in private matters of a state employee. Later Mohan Lal sent the musician to the Shah when he was asked.

The Shah had, however, made up his mind to disgrace Mohan Lal. He reported that Mohan Lal had built a magnificent house for himself in the heart of the city, and as it overlooked the neighbouring houses, it was objected to by the residents of the locality. Thereupon all his neighbours submitted a petition saying that he had built the house with their consent, and they experienced no inconvenience whatsoever on its account, and consequently no action was taken against Mohan Lal.¹

Not to be disheartened the Shah wrote to the Governor-General making a complaint of a more serious nature against Mohan Lal. He stated that Afghan women were daily brought

¹ Kaye, ii, 430,

to Mohan Lal's house, where they drank wine, and were then conducted on horseback to the cantonments, and that the Shah had himself seen them going. An inquiry was held, and Mohan Lal was found innocent.¹

¹ *Ibid*; 326-7. Mohan Lal lived in that house with his father and wife, and consequently could not be expected to carry on intrigues with Afghan women. Besides, he was trusted by all the Afghan chiefs. At the time of the outbreak of insurrection, Muhammad Zaman Khan, the famous Barakzai Sardar, gave him shelter in the ladies' apartment to save him from the rebels. Later he was afforded asylum by the Qizalbash Chief in his own house, where he remained for many months. These favours would not have been shown to him, if he had been of loose character. The Shah knew that Afghan women were enticed by British officials and soldiers, but he had not the courage to blame his masters. He wanted to make Mohan Lal a scapegoat, and in this unfair attempt he miserably failed.

CHAPTER VII

CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE DISASTER

1. *Favourable position of the English*

During the earlier parts of the campaign, the British authorities found the situation favourable, and everywhere success attended their arms. Until October, 1841, the political atmosphere in Afghanistan was peaceful. The English began settling down in Kabul and were taking to an easy life :—

"They were building and furnishing houses for themselves—laying out gardens—surrounding themselves with the comforts and luxuries of European life. The English, indeed, had begun to find the place not wholly unendurable. The fine climate braced and exhilarated them. There was no lack of amusement. They rode races ; they played at cricket. They got up dramatic entertainments. They went out fishing ; they went out shooting. When winter fell upon them, and the heavy frosts covered the lakes with ice, to the infinite astonishment of the Afghans they skimmed over the smooth surface on their skates. There is no want of manliness among the Afghans ; but the manliness of the Feringhee strangers quite put them to shame."¹

Dost Muhammad Khan had surrendered himself, and the British nominee Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk reigned in peace. But there were certain unfavourable factors at work leading to a catastrophe.² Above all the pride of power and prosperity

¹ Kaye, ii, 142-3.

² Sir John Keane, the Commander-in-Chief, while leaving Kabul, remarked to an officer, who was accompanying him to India : — " I wished;

had blinded the British authorities, and they committed terrible mistakes, even woeful blunders, so repeatedly that the whole country began to seethe with discontent and distrust. The sunshine of serenity gave place to the smoke of sorrow, and clouds of calamity rose everywhere, bursting ultimately with such fury and ferocity as to deluge all their power and prestige. The British officers and troopers were massacred, many men and women were taken prisoners, and then there prevailed a period of ignominy, humiliation and suffering lasting from the 2nd November, 1841 to the middle of September, 1842.

2. Causes of Dost Muhammad Khan's unpopularity

Dost Muhammad Khan, who had usurped the throne of Afghanistan, was a strong and sturdy ruler ; but this very fact disturbed the minds of Afghan chiefs, as they could no longer let loose forces of disruption. Besides, the ring-leaders of various tribes who had created disturbances in the past, and who were growing refractory during Dost Muhammad's regime, were either put to death or imprisoned. The masses were happy at the tranquillity established by him ; but the chiefs were chafing for the loss of their unbridled power. They were in consequence opposed to the Amir, and were anxiously waiting for an opportunity to fish in the troubled waters.¹

you to remain in Afghanistan for the good of the public service; but since circumstances have rendered that impossible, I cannot but congratulate you on quitting the country ; for, mark my words, it will not be long before there is here some signal catastrophe." Calcutta Review, quoted in Kaye, ii, 23 f. n

¹ On the surrender of Dost Muhammad Khan Masson remarked :—"Misfortune naturally excites compassion, and this has been shown to Post Mahomed Khan, who strangely enough, in opposition to the Shah

Dost Muhammad turned out many old governors and high officers from their posts, and appointed his sons in their places. He also treated his own relations in comparison with his sons with scant attention. For instance, he deprived his uncle, Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan of the Jalalabad¹ country, and placed it in the charge of his son Muhammad Akbar Khan. Similarly, he seized the Ghilzai country from Nawab Jabbar Khan, his elder brother by a step-mother. He behaved in the same manner with his nephew Sardar Shams-ud-din Khan, the Governor of Ghazni, and appointed his son Hyder Khan to that post.

He had killed several chiefs of Kohistan on account of their rebellious conduct. Their relations were, as a matter of course, bent upon revenge.

His army consisting mainly of cavalry was low paid, and forced to undertake long journeys without being granted any special allowance or other privileges. Consequently, there was great disaffection.

has been supposed to have been popular—yet he was not. Abandoned by his army at Arghandi, he became without a struggle a fugitive. When it was found that the British troops did not retire, and dissatisfaction as the consequence spread amongst the people of the country, he sought to profit by it, and presented himself at Bamian—for what ' to be repulsed and then deserted by his allies. Again he showed himself in the Kohistan, but only to surrender " Masson, i, IX.

¹ Jalalabad is a province in Afghanistan, which forms a subdivision of the Kabul valley. It is surrounded in the north by the Siah Koh and Lughman mountains, on the east by the Ah Boghan and Khyber hills, in the south by the Nangnehar highlands and on the west by the Kurkutch range. It is a fertile and rich territory. "Few countries can possess more attractive scenery, or can exhibit so many grand features in its surrounding landscape." Thornton, i, 295

It had been the practice with the previous rulers to pay fixed allowances to the Mullas, Sayyids and other priests, as they wielded tremendous influence upon the illiterate and ignorant masses.

The labourers and artisans were employed by the Amir in forced labour mostly without or with little wages. The merchants were obliged to give forced loans which were never repaid. He imposed several additional unjust revenues on cultivators while his servants and troops charged provisions and labour without payment.

Lastly, the Amir was trying to establish friendly relations with Muhammad Shah, king of Iran ; and the people of Afghanistan who were Sunnis looked upon these negotiations with the Shias with misgivings.¹

¹ Mohan Lal's Paper on the affairs of Afghanistan, dated the 29th June, 1842, para 22, Panjab Records, 41C/161.

General Pollock wrote to the Governor-General about this paper as follows:—"I have the honour to forward copy of a letter from Moonshee Mohun Lal of dated the 29th ultimo, transmitting a paper drawn up by him on the affairs of Affghanistan. The subject is one of too great importance to be ably treated by a person so indifferently educated as the Moonshee, but his knowledge of the character of the Affghans and his natural shrewdness entitle his remarks to attention, while his employment under Sir A Burnes and the late Envoy and Minister render his information valuable in points connected with the rebellion and disasters at Cabool." [Imperial Records, Secret consultation, 28th December, 1842, No 480]

The Governor-General in a letter to the Secret Committee dated Allahabad, August 17, 1842, wrote *—"Your Honourable Committee will find amongst the inclosures No. 24, an interesting paper, by Moonshee Mohun Lall, on the cause*, of the Affghan insurrection, and on the events which succeeded the outbreak at Cabool in November last." [Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, No. 421, p. 341.

3. *Reasons for the British popularity*

The British cause on the other hand was popular in the country from the start. The Afghans "are by nature the most avaricious set of mankind." The liberality and munificence of Mountstuart Elphinstone while on a Mission to Kabul in 1809 had excited their greed, and in supporting the British cause they found an excellent opportunity to enrich themselves.¹

The city of Kabul in particular, and the country in general were divided into two hostile religious camps, the Sunnis and the Shias. The Sunnis formed the majority, and the Shias, mostly of foreign origin, distrusted the government consisting of the Sunnis entirely. They favoured the British, expecting to receive justice from them. It was a general belief with the chiefs that by assisting the British Government not only they but also their descendants from generation to generation would derive the benefit of their service. The cultivators and merchants wished to see a foreign power planted in the

The well-known English traveller Masson in his Journey, 1, I X, verifies Mohan Lal's statement regarding Dost Muhammad's unpopularity, cf. Dost Mohammed, 11, 306-8

¹ This view is supported by Kaye. "Cupidity is one of the strongest feelings that finds entrance into the Afghan breast. The boundless wealth of the English had been a tradition in Afghanistan ever since the golden days of Mountstuart Elphinstone's mission. Money had been freely scattered about at Candahar; and it was believed that with an equally profuse hand it would now be disbursed at Caubul. It is true that the military chest and the political treasury had been so indented upon, that when the army reached the capital there was a painful scarcity of coin. But there were large supplies of treasure on the way. The jingling of the money-bag was already ravishing their ears and stirring their hearts. They did not love the Feringhees, but they delighted in Feringhee gold." Kaye, 11, 15

country in order to escape extortion and excessive taxes from the Amir. Some high dignitaries of the realm were jealous of the usurper's power. "They caused disunion against the Barukzaee chiefs on our approach to Afghanistan." The people in general dreaded the British arms, and were panic-stricken on the approach of the British army.¹

4. Wrong policy of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk

Such were the circumstances under which Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk was easily placed on the throne of Kabul in August, 1839. The Britishers were now supreme in Afghanistan. They did everything in the name of the Shah, and under his royal seal and signature ; but as a matter of fact the real power lay in the hands of the British officers who used the King as their creature. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk chafed under such a policy, and wanted to make his power felt. He therefore dropped a hint to his Afghan supporters that he wished to rule without the assistance of British arms *

The English officers carried on negotiations with the Afghan chiefs directly, and settled terms, and even fought to coerce them.³ They defeated the leaders in Kunar, Bajaur and

¹ Mohan Lal's Paper, Panjab Records, para 23. cf. Dost Mohammed, ii, 309-10.

¹ Sykes, ii, 18, also corroborates this fact:—"From his own point of view, Shah Shuja realized that he was only a King in name and proofs were not lacking that he and his Ministers were secretly fomenting disturbances in Zamindawar and elsewhere. Indeed, it was only reasonable to expect that, chafing under the system imposed upon him, he would constantly throw grit into the creaking machinery of dual government. Had he been allowed to rule his subjects by Afghan methods with the support of a subsidy, he might possibly have succeeded "

³ "It is to be noted, however, that Macnaghten retained in his own hands the right to send out expeditions against revolting tribes.

southern Ghilzai country of Kalat and appointed their rivals in their places such as Sayyid Baha-ud-din in Kunar. The Shah finding that his authority was absolutely ignored,¹ grew jealous; and " by secret messages and sometimes by personal speech advised the chiefs of the country to disturb the peace and oppose the British arms under the apparent pretence of rebelling against His majesty." By adopting such a line of conduct the Shah had two objects in view. In the first place he considered that by causing continuous tumults in the country, he would have the British dependent upon him ; and in the second place he would be able to fleece large sums of money from them.²

The Shah aimed at having a chief minister of his own choice, and in consequence conferred this post on Mulla Shakur, an old man who had been the King's companion in exile. He was unfit to perform the heavy duties of his charge.⁸ He

He settled the strength of each force and gave detailed instructions to their commanders as to the objectives and the method to be followed for their attainment." *Ibid.*

¹ Kaye, ii, 16, says that "it could hardly be said that the King possessed a government of his own, when the control of the army and the exchequer was in the hands of others England supplied the money and the bayonets ; and claimed the right to employ them both according to her own pleasure."

* Sir William Macnaghten once remarked that the Shah was so fond of money that he would rather allow a man to stab the back of his palm than open his "hand to give it willingly. Qadir, the Treasurer of the Shah, told Mohan Lal that when the Shah left Ludhiana, he had only Rs. 5,000 ; but in two years' time he collected as large a sum as 20 lakhs. Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 27.

¹ Mulla Shakur had lost his memory to such a degree that he could not recognise a well-known person if he had not met him even for a day. Kaye, ii. 18.

opposed the British policy secretly, but had no courage to do so openly. He got into touch with Mir Ghulam Qadir, the Kohistanis and other ringleaders, opposed to the British Government. He employed Daya Ram and Sher Muhammad Khan to extort money by unlawful means. Daily complaints were made to the English officers against the high-handedness of these two agents. The Minister always promised to look into these grievances ; but privately encouraged them to pursue their course.

Against the usual practice prevalent in Muslim countries, the King's name was omitted from the Friday prayers, probably with the connivance of Mulla Shakur, and the Shah himself. Sir Alexander Burnes sent Mohan Lal to the priest to enquire why such insolence was offered to the King ; and the answer was that the Shah was not the true King according to Muslim law, as he was supported by British arms. The Minister took no notice of this as he wished to excite the religious hatred of the people against them. The King also did not insist on its observance, clearly showing that though it was an insult to him, yet being faithful to his religion he would not urge the Mulla to do so. They also knew that the direct interference of the English in such matters would involve them in difficulties.

Mulla. Shakur, moreover, openly told the heads of the tribes that the King would throw off the yoke of the British as soon as he had his family back from Ludhiana. Further, he sent a crier to Charikar¹ in Kohistan to say that Ghulam Khan, a strong supporter of the English, was a disloyal subject and not a Muslim. Complaints were made to the King, but he took no action against his favourite Minister.

¹ Chankar was the residence of the Governor of Kohtelan, and controlled the trade between Afghanistan and Turkis»tan.

When Dost Muhammad Khan was defeated at Bamian, Mulla Shakur held secret conferences with the Kohistani chiefs and their powerful priest, Hafizji. The Minister increased the pay of those who disliked the English, and ill-treated those who favoured them. When Dost Muhammad descended in the Ghorband valley, the Kohistani chiefs created disturbances. Prince Timur and Sir Alexander Burnes marched in that direction to punish the chiefs and prevent Dost Muhammad from getting into the Koh-i-Daman. The Shah despatched Mansoor Khan Chaoos Bashi to the Envoy to advance him money to bribe the Kohistanis, and under this pretence he wanted to enrich himself. The Chaoos Bashi secretly incited the people to stand against the British troops for a few days, and then quietly to retire to Kabul to wait upon the Shah. Sir Alexander Burnes persuaded the Shah not to allow the Chaoos Bashi to negotiate with the people, and requested the Envoy not to pay him any money. The result of this was that the British troops met little formidable opposition and Dost Muhammad Khan surrendered himself to the English.

After the exile of Dost Muhammad to India, it was discovered that the rebellion in Kohistan had been caused by the Shah himself. Letters written under his seal to this effect were shown to him, but he pleaded complete ignorance.

The Shah sent the Chaoos Bashi to Kandahar, and through him tried to induce Muhammad Taqi Khan, the Governor, appointed by the English, to join the Durrani and rise in revolt. The Governor informed Major Rankinson of the nature of the Shah's message. The English protested to the King, who blamed the Chaoos Bashi, and in order to justify himself, condemned him to be paraded in the streets of the city with blackened face mounted on a donkey. The Chaoos

Bashi in this condition lifted up his head and cried aloud as he rode through the bazars that this was the punishment for obeying and faithfully serving the King.

That the Shah was a party to these intrigues was quite certain. The intriguers otherwise could not expect any advantage by forging letters in the name of the King and by putting his seal to them. Most of the Afghan chiefs, and Durranis in particular had been liberated from the overburdening yoke of Dost Muhammad by the British and they evidently had no ground whatsoever to resort to such ugly tactics. Besides, Muhammad Taqi Khan could be summoned to Kabul by ordinary *dak* and there was no need to send the Chaoos Bashi only for this purpose. Furthermore, if the King knew that the Chaoos Bashi was not a man of trust, he could not possibly be employed for the second time, on political business.¹

5. *Mistakes in the British administration*

Whereas the situation was worsening on account of the Shah's policy, its process towards deterioration was quickening with headlong rapidity owing to the mistakes of the British administration. Sir William Macnaghten and Sir Alexander Burnes were quite sure of the Shah's intrigues ; but they did not tell him that if the King did not like them they were ready to leave the country provided he paid the expenses of the expedition ; nor did they warn him of the consequences.

The Envoy forced the King to dismiss Mulla Shakur, and appointed Muhammad Usman Khan, son of Shah Zaman's Wazir Wafadar Khan ; but he was an equally incapable man. It greatly added to the jealousy of the King as he was not

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, paras 24-42.

consulted in the matter.¹ Besides, he had not the backing of any tribe, and possessed neither talents nor the necessary qualifications for his high office. His appointment therefore enhanced the difficulties of the English on account of his unpopularity with the people and positive dislike by the Shah.

Having been brought up in poverty, he suddenly found himself installed in the highest office of the realm. This made him lose his head, and he became haughty and arrogant. As he was employed by the British authorities, he openly flouted at the Shah and the nobles.²

The Minister seized the lands of the King's priest, and in spite of the repeated entreaties of the King, the lands were never restored to the Sayyid. "Through our interference", says Mohan Lal, "but entirely against the wish of the Shah, he appointed his elder son the agent to the Prince at Candahar and the younger son Governor of Jellalabad." He was on hostile terms with the Durrani and others for the murder of his father. In order, therefore, to wreak vengeance upon them he excited the suspicion and alarm of the British by fabricating stories against the Durrani. Thereby he managed to secure the approval of the Envoy to reduce the pay of the Durrani, Ghilzai etc. The chiefs naturally grew restless. Usman Khan thereupon demanded written agreements from them to the effect that they would ever remain faithful to the Shah and would never speak against the English or their administration.

¹ Kaye, II, 136, also agrees with this view.—"The appointment of the new minister Oosman Khan, in the place of his old and tried servant Moollah Shikore, had been extremely distasteful to him."

² cf. Kaye, II, 136.

"It chafed him (the Shah) to think that a functionary so appointed must necessarily be less eager to fulfil his wishes than those of his European allies."

The chiefs replied that they were the loyal subjects of the King ; but they would not give such an undertaking as it was contrary to custom. They were forbidden attendance at court and ordered to leave Afghanistan within five days. The chiefs finding no alternative had to yield.

He persuaded the Envoy to dismiss Hamzah Khan, the Governor of the Ghilzai country, and attached this territory to Jalalabad under his son. Aminullah Khan, the collector of Logar¹ country, was forced to pay a larger sum of revenue than ever before. He employed as his chief agents Mirza Imam Vardi, Abdul Razaq Mustafi and Sayyid Husain Daftari, all of whom tried to enrich themselves by every possible means, thus causing wide discontentment against the British.

Furthermore, the King would not listen to any complaint of the people, saying that he was powerless before the Minister. Then they waited upon Sir Alexander Burnes who sent them on to the Envoy, and the Envoy directed them to Usman Khan. The Minister waited upon Macnaghten and Burnes every day and did what they told him regarding the disputes between Afghans and British followers. The more he was favoured by Sir William, the more disdainful he became of the Shah and the chiefs. "In short," says Mohan Lal, "we attended so much to the foolish advices of Mahomed Oosman Khan that we did not only displease the King, disappoint our friends ; but made the Dooranees, Ghilzies, Kuzzilbashes, Cabookees, Kohistanees, our desperate enemies."⁸

¹ The district of Logar, of considerable extent, is situated to the south of Kabul. It is watered by the Logar river. The territory is fertile and well cultivated.

² Panjab Records, 41C/161, paras 43-50, also Mohan Lal's letter to J. R. Colvin, Private Secretary to the Governor-General, dated Kabul, 29th January, 1842, Panjab Records, 41C/62.

The Shah suffered not only owing to Usman Khan's want of respect for him, but also for the unnecessary interference with him. He was not allowed to reward his friends and to punish his foes. Mirza Hyder Ali, an exile with the King and the medium of intercourse between the English and the Shah, was dismissed in spite of the King's utmost protests.

The army was dissatisfied due to hasty reforms. The number of the servants of the chiefs, and their pay were both reduced¹; while in settling internal disorders only the British troops were employed. This created misgivings in the minds of the chiefs who believed that they would be dismissed from their posts in course of time as their services were not required.

The people were reduced to a state of starvation. Too high prices were paid by the commissariat officers for grain, grass, meat and vegetables etc ; and the poor could not afford to pay such exorbitant rates.⁸ It became a general saying in the country that "the English enriched the grain and grass sellers etc ; while they reduced the chiefs to poverty, and killed the poor by starvation."

¹ cf. Sykes, 11, 24 "Many other allowances were also discontinued which, naturally, created feelings of intense resentment among the chiefs and even in the Shah himself."

¹ Kaye, 11, 15-16, remarks '—"The presence of the English soon raised the price of all the necessities of life. This was no new thing. If a flight of Englishmen settle in a French or a Belgian town, it is not long before the price of provisions is raised. But here was a commissariat department, with a mighty treasury at its command, buying up all the commodities of Caubul, and not only paying preposterous sums for everything they purchased, but holding out the strongest inducement to purveyors to keep back their supplies in order to force a higher range of prices."

The British troops and camp-followers abused the inhabitants by calling them "Numuk hram namurd" (disloyal and coward). The British officers, on the other hand, won several Afghan chiefs to their side by throwing out temptations of money, lands and posts. But when their object was achieved, the services of the chiefs were forgotten, and they were left at the mercy of their enemies. The pride of power had blinded the British officers so much that even Sir Alexander Burnes kept the highest grandees of the country "waiting for hours near the door-keeper," and then dismissed them "by saying that we have no time."¹

6'. Weakness of British statesmanship

A very serious mistake that Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India, committed, was in the appointment in the same field of action of two almost equally qualified and equally ambitious men, Sir William Macnaghten and Sir Alexander Burnes. Even at Rohri when the Army of the Indus was on its way to Afghanistan, Alexander Burnes had refused to proceed farther in subordination to Macnaghten.³ While in Afghanistan he seldom gave full co-operation to his superior. Mohan Lal in his characteristic way describes it thus:—"The lamented Sir Wm. Macnaghten and Sir Alexander Burnes were not so unanimous as the people of their character and ranks ought to be. The former attended too much to the advices of Mahomed Oosman Khan (Minister) against the wish of the latter, who [Burnes] then stood as stranger to see everything going wrong⁸; but such forbearance and silence in

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 141.

¹ Dost Mohammed, ii, 184.

² Kaye, ii, 137, remarks :—"Burnes was also at Caubul. He had been there ever since the restoration of the Shah, in a strange unrecognised

not rectifying the mistakes which threatened the British honour and fame were entirely inconsistent to the rules of service. The following are the quotations from his note book, the few leaves of which fell into my hands after his death. They confirm my opinion on this subject—'Cabool, 8th September, 1841—My spirits are up. Lord Auckland goes to England in January, and the Envoy, I hope, goes to Agra or Calcutta. I am hardly to be blamed for I have no responsibility, and why should I work ? Yet it is clear that if I had carried a hot correspondence with Lord Auckland as he wished, I must have injured Macnaghten. In after days I hope to be able to applaud my own discretion. I was glad at the good Envoy's self-complacency. He hints as Governor of Bombay he will be directed to control the politics of Afghanistan and he says that he may go through the Punjab to settle affairs there. Why from first to last he has mismanaged all affairs ? The Punjab treaty is the (cause ?) of our present rebellion which was brought on by want of means and in consequence of cutting; yet Sir William is Governor of Bombay, the (cause ?) of all. So I must change my standard of greatness, and consider myself living in total error. As to all that is passed, time will show. Principles etc. as I have said before are

position, of which it is difficult to give any intelligible account He used to say, that he was in the most nondescript of situations. It appears to have been his mission in Afghanistan to draw a large salary every month and to give advice that was never taken. This might have satisfied many men. It did not satisfy Burnes. He said that he wanted responsibility; and under Macnaghten he had none. He had no precise duties of any kind ; but he watched all that was going on in Afghanistan with a penetrating eye and an understanding brain, and he wrote, in the shape of letters to Macnaghten, long and elaborate 'papers on the state and prospects of Afghanistan, which his official chief dismissed with a few pencil-notes for the most part of contemptuous dwsent."

bewildered on what Sir William's claims to greatness are founded. Let Generals Fane, Cotton, Keane, and Elphinstone's private letters be consulted and they would tell a different tale'. "¹

The mutual disagreement between the two highest dignitaries reacted greatly on the minds of the military officers. They seldom obeyed the wishes or even orders of their political heads. Besides, they were sadly lacking in personal valour and united action. Macnaghten considered them "a pack of despicable cowards" ; while their commander General Elphinstone, was equally incapable and incapacitated.¹

7. Intrigues with Afghan women

The religious sentiments as well as the feelings of hatred of the average Afghan were aroused to the highest pitch by open drinking in streets and bazars and intriguing with Afghan women on such a large scale that no man, not even the greatest grandee of the capital found his women-folk safe from outrage.⁸ In this heinous pursuit British officers, soldiers and camp-followers all alike participated. Mohan Lal says :—

"We did not prevent our troops or camp-followers from drinking wine in the public streets, which excited the religious hatred of the people against us. We offended the people of all characters by not preventing our men to cause the elopement of the female sex, who were received so publicly that every Mahomedan was incensed and instigated to stand against us."⁴

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 141.

² "The British army was beaten at Caubul. because it was commanded by General Elphinstone " Kaye, li, 332.

³ Kaye, li, 143.

⁴ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 141.

The beginning of the ill-repute of the British character was probably made at the time of Alexander Burnes's Mission to Kabul. Durand definitely admits this.¹ Masson, the British newswriter at Kabul, who was present there at the time of the Mission, speaks about Alexander Burnes thus :—

"Mirza Sami Khan observing how matters stood, honoured me with a visit at my house, the first he had ever made me ; and after a few long-winded observations, proposed that I should imitate the example of my illustrious superiors, and fill my house with black-eyed damsels. I observed, that my house was hardly large enough, and he said that I should have Shahzada Ashraf's house, near to the Amir's palace. I then asked where the damsels were to come from ; and he replied, I might select any I pleased and he would take care I should have them. I told him his charity exceeded all praise, but I thought it better to go on quietly in my old way."²

Later on, during the first Afghan War, when British officers and troops were stationed at Kabul, Sir Alexander Burnes was suspected of displaying the same unbecoming conduct respecting the women of a certain high family. The odious example believed to have been set by the second man in command in Afghanistan was literally followed by other officers, and in turn the soldiers and camp-followers showed themselves faithful followers of their masters. Mohan Lal, however, denies the charge levelled against Sir Alexander Burnes and "believed in the circles of the high authorities both in Europe and in India," which he says " is a most

¹ Durand, 211-2.

² Masson, iii, 453.

unjust and misrepresented accusation against Sir Alexander Burnes, for intriguing with the ladies of Abdullah Khan, the Achakzai Chief."

On the other hand, Mohan Lal accuses many other English officers of this crime. He then cites a few instances, but conceals their names for fear of exciting feelings of "animosity."¹ On the entry of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk into Kabul, many chiefs, partisans of the old regime, had left the capital, and their houses were given away to various British officers by the King. These houses became the resorts of beautiful women of the city. This tempted other officers, and there was a rush for houses on rent. The supply of houses was soon exhausted. The officers then offered to buy them and some of them even built new ones in the heart of the city far away from the cantonments. "The consequence was, that, even before Keane marched from Cabul, officers searching for residences in the city, with the desire of purchasing them from the owners, heard their guides execrated by the neighbourhood for bringing licentious infidels into the vicinity."¹

Mohan Lal says that one of the favourite concubines of Abdullah Khan, a prominent chief, and later on one of the principal leaders of the insurrection, left her house and came to an Englishman in the neighbourhood. Abdullah's efforts

¹ Durand and Wolff also purposely do not disclose their names. Durand criticises "the conduct of some individuals, whom it is useless to particularise." Pp. 211-2.

Joseph Wolff ascribes the disaster "to the conduct of several British officers, whose names I forbear mentioning, and who shocked the feelings of the natives by their introducing into the country the vices of Europeans, and by the liberties they took with Affghaun women." Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara, 300-10,

' Durand, 211-2.

to "get her back through polite applications to that officer" having failed, he complained to Sir Alexander Burnes. Burnes sent one of his peons with the complainant to that officer's house asking him to restore the lady to her master. On their approach she was concealed in the back room, and the officer abused the Achakzai chief for making a false accusation against him. Burnes also scolded Abdullah Khan and "turned him out of the presence."

Another English officer was living in the house of Nawab Jabbar Khan, and from the neighbouring house enticed the favourite wife of Nazir Ali Muhammad. She was openly kept in the house. The Nazir waited on Mohan Lal, and he reported the matter to Burnes at the time when that Englishman was breakfasting with Sir Alexander. "He of course denied having ever seen the lady, on which the Nazir was dismissed and I myself was always disliked from that day by that gentleman for reporting that fact. The Nazir complained to the Envoy, who sent a peon to find the truth. The constable saw her in the house, and gave his testimony to this as a witness ; but Sir Alexander Burnes took the part of his countryman, and gave no justice The lady was openly sheltered at the house of the same gentleman after some time, and came to India under the protection of his relatives."

A rich merchant of the city had married a woman of his heart from Herat at an exorbitant expense. Leaving her under the protection of his relatives, he went to Bokhara on commercial business. In his absence she was appropriated by an Englishman. On hearing this news the merchant hurried to Kabul, and in extreme grief and sorrow complained to all the authorities, but nobody listened to him. "He offered a large sum to the King to have his fair wife restored to him; but she was not given up. He at last sat at the

door of Sir William Macnaghten, and declared that he had resolved to put an end to his own life by starvation." Macnaghten ordered Burnes to get her restored ; but Burnes offered Rs. 500 to the husband, in exchange for the wife, and set upon the complainant several influential Afghan chiefs to compel him to forego his claims, threatening him with dire consequences in case of refusal. "The poor man had no remedy but to fly to Turkistan, without taking the above mentioned sum. When her paramour was killed during the retreat of our forces from Kabul, she was also murdered by the Ghazis."

An Englishman was putting up in a house opposite to that of Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan, whose favourite wife he managed to win over. She came to reside with him. When all endeavours to get her back failed, the good-natured Nawab wrote to the Englishman saying that he could openly keep her as he had relinquished his claims upon her. When the Englishman's wife joined him, he deserted the Afghan woman "in an unprovided and destitute condition."

Another Englishman who was living in a house adjacent to that of Qudas Khan, seduced the handsomest wife of the Nawab, and openly kept her as a mistress.

The fiancée of Mir Ahmad Khan, brother of Abdullah Khan Achakzai, was lured away by an Englishman. When the British forces came back to India, this lady was left at Ludhiana unprovided for. Mir Ahmad joined the insurrection in retaliation later on.

In conclusion Mohan Lal says :—

" These instances of gallantry in the gentlemen, with numerous cases of the same nature, were disgraceful and abhorrent to the habits and to the pride of the people whom

we ruled; and it was the partiality of Sir Alexander Burnes to his friends in these circumstances which made him obnoxious to dislike, (sic) and wounded the feelings of the chiefs, who formerly looked upon him as their old friend and guardian. It was not he who committed himself in any sort of intrigue; but yet it was his duty to restore the ladies to their relations, and not to sacrifice his public name and duty through any private regard to his friends,—who, in return, never contradicted the accusations which were attached to him personally instead of to them. All of those friends knew well that Major Leech, Sir Alexander Burnes, his brother, and those who were subordinate to him, had Kashmerian females in their service, ever since he proceeded on a mission to Kabul, and no just man will deny this, and allow that they were persons to intrigue with the ladies in Kabul. ”¹

¹ Dost Mohammed, ii, 391-99.

Macmunn is rather harsh in throwing the entire blame on the weaker sex of Afghanistan alone :—

"Unfortunately, as we know, the attractive young Englishmen became too great favourites with the ladies of Kabul, and much jealousy and ill-will was finally engendered a story of which a good deal might be written by itself. Afghan ladies enjoy greater freedom than those of India, yet were not used to the attentions and courtesy of the well-bred young Englishmen, and found them more than attractive compared with the rougher ways of their own people." Afghanistan, 131.

Kaye, ii, 143 'writes:—"I am not writing an apology. There are truths which must be spoken. The temptations which are most difficult to withstand, were not withstood by our English officers*. The attractions of the women of Caubul they did not know how to resist. The Afghans are very jealous of the honour of their women, and there were tilings done in Caubul which covered them with shame and roused them to revenge. The inmates of the Mahomedan Zenana was not unwilling to visit the quarters of the Christian stranger. For two long years, now, had this shame been burning itself into the hearts of the Caubulecs; and there were some men of note and influence among them who knew themselves to be thus wronged. Complaints were made; but they were made in vain. The scandal was open undisguised, notorious. Redress was not to be obtained. The evil was not in course of suppression."

CHAPTER VIII

THE KABUL INSURRECTION

2ND NOVEMBER, 1841 TO 7TH JANUARY, 1842

j. *Warnings ignored*

In consequence of the misdirected policy of the British administration in Kabul, affairs in Afghanistan were going from bad to worse; and the prophetic words of the Khan of Kalat and the Duke of Wellington were going to prove true. "You may take Kandahar and Ghazni", the Khan of Kalat had warned the British at the outset, "you may even take Kabul, but you cannot conquer the snows; and when they fall, you will be able neither to maintain your army nor to withdraw it." And the Duke of Wellington had declared: "When your military difficulties are over your real difficulties will begin."¹

The situation was indeed serious, but the government declared that Afghanistan was "as tranquil as Wales",² and Macnaghten in a letter, dated 20th August, 1841, writing to Mr. Robertson, stated that "the country is perfectly quiet from Dan of Beersheba."³ Even a week before the insurrection broke out, this attitude was maintained by the British authorities in Afghanistan. "The general impression is that the Envoy is trying to deceive himself into an assurance that

¹ Quoted in Gate-Keepers of India, 15.

² *Ibid.*

³ Kaye, ii, 130.

the country is in a quiescent state."¹ The peace of mind of the British officers remained undisturbed till the very day of the revolt. "It was only two days ago Lady Macnaghten told Mrs. Sturt that the country was all quiet, except the little outbreak near Tezeen."² A day previous on the 1st November, "Sir A. Burnes congratulated Sir William on the prospect of soon leaving Cabul in a perfect state of tranquillity."³ The Afghans, as a matter of fact had become thoroughly discontented, and were bent on revenge for the various wrongs sustained at the hands of the British officials.

The chiefs, finding no redress for their grievances, decided to rise against the British. Consequently, they assembled towards the end of September, 1841, and made solemn declarations with their signatures on a leaf of the holy Koran to that effect.⁴ Mohan Lal got this information and conveyed it to Sir Alexander Burnes, telling him that he could procure the book, which would reveal to him the names of their enemies. Burnes took no notice of the affair.⁵

¹ Lady Sale, 22.

² *Ibid* • 43

³ *Ibid*. "We might attribute", says Lady Sale, "his anxiety to calm the Envoy's, mind, by assurances of the peaceful feelings of the people of the country, to anxiety on his part to succeed to the situation to be vacated by Sir William . but it appeared questionable whether he would permanently have done so ; as Col. Sutherland had, it was said, been nominated for the appointment"¹

⁴ "Pottinger was of opinion that the Ghilzyes, the Kohistanes, and the Douranees, were all leagued together; and that the compact between them was formed about the end of September." Kaye, ii, 145. f. n.

⁵ Panjab Records, 41c, 161, para 52.

According to the agreement the chiefs sent the Ghilzais¹ to disturb the peace of the road.* They stopped the *dak** and plundered merchants.⁴ Thereupon General Sale was sent to punish them, and in the absence of Captain Macgregor, the political officer, Mohan Lal was ordered to remain with the camp until the Captain's return from the Zurmat country, in order to conciliate the people and to prevent them from night attacks on their camp at Butkhak. Having discharged the duties of this commission to the entire satisfaction of the General, Mohan Lal came back to Kabul after Macgregor had joined the camp.⁵

At Kabul Mohan Lal gathered full information regarding the secret views of the chiefs ; and he informed Sir Alexander Burnes that the confederacy against them was daily growing

¹ The principal Afghan tribes comprise four great divisions, of which Ghilzai tribe is one. The Chilzais were very powerful and the most numerous of all the Afghan tribes. "They are, taken as a whole, a brave, hardy, warlike, and handsome race, simple and frugal in their fare, possessing great bodily strength, stern, violent, vindictive, impatient of control, intelligent, energetic, and ever ready to unite under their own chiefs against a common foe or in a popular cause." Malleeson, 14.

² " So they quitted Caubul, occupied the passes on the road to Jellalabad, plundered a valuable cafila and entirely cut off our communications with the provinces of Hindostan." Kaye, 11,153

¹ cf. *Ibid* ; 70.

⁴ " It must be remarked," says Eyre, "that, foi some time previous to these overt acts of rebellion, the always strong and ill-repressed personal dislike of the Afghans towards Europeans had been manifested m a more than usually open manner in and about Kabul. Officers had been insulted and attempts made to assassinate them. Two Europeans had been murdered, as also several camp-followers ; but these and other ugnns of the approaching storm had unfortunately been passed over as mere ebullitions of private angry feelings." *Ibtd*; 74-5.

* Kaye, ii, 164 ; cf. Malleeson, 70.

in power, and that it was unwise for them to consider it a trivial matter. This warning was ignored. In the meantime the storm had been brewing, and the chiefs held a conference, and resolved to attack Sir Alexander Burnes's house to begin with.¹

In the evening of the 1st November, 1841, Mohan Lal again impressed upon Burnes the threatening nature of the confederacy, and asked him to adopt vigorous measures to crush it. Burnes replied that he would not "meddle in the arrangements made by the Envoy." On his again stressing this point, Burnes rose from the chair, sighed, and said, that he knew nothing, except that the time had arrived when they should leave the country and count it as lost.

The same night Taj Muhammad gave Burnes, a similar warning, but the latter rudely turned him out declaring that he had no fear from such wild rumours.⁹ Naib Muhammad Sharif visited him immediately after Taj Muhammad's departure, and offered the services of his son at the head of 100 men to remain day and night in attendance upon him till the Ghilzai affair was settled. Burnes, however, declined. A few minutes later there came Muhammad Mirza Khan Jawansher, one of the conspirators, who interviewed Mohan Lal at Burnes's house, with a view to find what precautionary measures had

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 56.

* *Ibid*; para 57.

• Lady Sale records in her Journal on page 48 :—"Taj Mahommed Khan went to Sir Alexander Burnes the very day before the insurrection broke out, and told him what was going on. Burnes, incredulous, heaped abuse on this gentleman's head ; and the only reply he gave him was, ' Shuma besear shytan ust I ' on which Taj Mahommed left him. • This anecdote was told us by himself."

been adopted by the British. Mohan Lal in order to fathom the views of the conspirators remarked that the situation was perfectly quiet as Captain Macgregor had pacified the Ghilzais, and Sir Robert Sale was triumphantly marching to Jalalabad. At this the Mirza laughed and said that on the following morning the very door he was sitting at would be ablaze. Mohan Lal told all this to Burnes. He told Mohan Lal not to show any signs of anxiety, and to maintain perfect peace of mind. They were still talking when an anonymous note in Persian was delivered to Burnes disclosing what lay in store for them the next morning if they did not take vigorous steps to protect themselves. On this Burnes remarked that "the time is arrived that we must leave this country."¹

2. Insurrection breaks out, 2nd November, 1841

The insurrection took place on the following day, the 2nd of November, 1841. It was about 7 o'clock* in the morning, and Mohan Lal, as he had kept awake till late at night, was still in bed. His maid-servant loudly knocked at the door of his bed-room shouting, "*Agha! Shuma Khab hasted wa shahar chappa shudah*". [Master! you are asleep, and the city is upset.] Mohan Lal came out into his garden, and found that the people of the neighbourhood were busy sending out their goods to places of safety. One of his friends, Mirza Khudadad, warned him of the danger he was in, and pressed upon him the necessity of sending out his property and leaving the house immediately. Then came another friend, named Muhammad

¹ Mohan Lal's letter to Dr. James Burnes, quoted in Kaye, 11, 165 ; Dost Mohammed, 11, 399-400*

Sykc is apparently mistaken in stating that "neither Burnes, who occupied a house in the city, nor Macnaghten was aware of the existence of any serious plot at this period."

History of Afghanistan, ii, 28.

Kamal, to take him away along with his valuable possessions into the Qizalbash quarters. He did not accept their wise counsel, fearing that his leaving his house would enhance the gravity of the situation.¹

Mohan Lal sent a note through his servant Abdullah Kashmiri to Sir Alexander Burnes whose residence was only a few buildings away communicating to him the news he had* received and seeking his advice. Burnes asked him to stay where he was, telling him that he was sending for troops. Half an hour later, Mohan Lal's servant informed him that Burnes had been persuaded to retire to the Bala Hissar for security.

After a while some of the principal rebels, numbering not more than thirty, approached Sir Alexander Burnes's house. Burnes sent two of his servants, one a Sayyid,⁸ and the other named Hamid, to the rebels to inform them that their privileges would be restored to them. The Sayyid was instantly cut to pieces, and Hamid sought safety in Burnes's house. The rebels then climbed up the roofs of the neighbouring houses and fired upon Burnes's house for about four hours. The treasury next door, containing £ 17,000 in the charge

¹ The insurgents had closed the city gates to prevent reinforcements :—"On the morning of the 2nd November," says Brigadier Shelton, "I passed under the city wall about seven o'clock, when the cavarly grass-cutters, who were in the habit of going through the town for their grass, told me that the city gate was shut, and that they could not get in." Kaye, ii, 182.

¹ Dost Mohammed, ii, 401-2.

The Sayyids are descendants of the holy prophet and command the highest respect **among** the Mubalmans.

Captain Johnson, was plundered. Meanwhile a large number of men from the city and suburbs also reached the place to have a share in the booty. The house was then destroyed by fire, and a poor woman was burnt in it.

Burnes tried to pacify the rebels from the window of an upper room, but no one listened to him. On the contrary balls and bullets were showered on his house with the greater fury. Captain William Broadfoot was hit in the chest. He was brought downstairs. The rebels then set fire to the door of the room in which Broadfoot was lying, and the poor fellow was consumed in the flames. Lieutenant Charles Burnes then came out into the garden, and after killing six Afghans was shot dead. Afterwards Alexander Burnes came to the door opening on the garden, and implored the people to spare his life, but he received a "torrent of abuse." Burnes losing all hope now prepared to die. He might have enjoyed another hour or two of life but these hours of agony and anguish he determined to cut short. He forgot that he had any grievance or any cause of complaint against the rebels, and his mind was free of prejudice. Tying his black neck-cloth over his eyes in order not to see from what direction the blow was struck, and in a spirit of friendliness he rushed into the midst of the insurgents and in the twinkling of an eye was cut to pieces. Thus perished a great traveller, a well-known author, and a politician of no mean repute.¹

¹ Dost Mohammed, ii, 409; Stocqueler, CXL-i. "It is said that Mohun Lull has named the man who killed poor Sir Alexander Burnes." Lady Sale, 81.

"It will be some consolation to the many friends of Sir A. Burnes to know, that among such a nest of savages there was found one true and sincere friend, who after an interval of two days, notwithstanding the great risk he himself ran by so doing, had his body privately buried. This man was the Naib Shireef Khan." Stocqueler, Lx vii—viii.

3. *Mohan Lal escapes*

Mohan Lal had witnessed all this heart-rending sight from the top of his own house, while the balls were shattering the panes of his own windows. The rebels now turned towards Mohan Lal's house. He at once hurried downstairs, made a hole in the adjacent wall of the house of Nazir Zafar, and escaped into the street. The insurgents were, however, soon upon him. He was caught, and was about to be cut to pieces, when luckily there appeared the good-natured Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan, a cousin of Dost Muhammad Khan, who forcibly took Mohan Lal from his assailants, wrapped him in his own blanket, carried him home and gave him shelter in the ladies' apartment for fear of the rebels who included his own son. The ladies offered Mohan Lal a sumptuous breakfast, but his mind was so much upset that he could eat nothing. He was then shut up in a dark room, and the Nawab advised him to take off his rings and to conceal them somewhere, lest his son be tempted to cut off his fingers for the rings. In the meantime Mohan Lal's house was plundered and his servants murdered.¹

After some time Prince Fatah Jang, son of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, paraded the streets of the city, shouting, "destroy the

Khan Shirin Khan was the head of the Qizalbashes and Muhammad Shanf was his Naib or Deputy. He was a rich man possessing large estates worth above two lakhs of rupees. He paid a large sum of money for interring the bodies of Barnes and his brother. He did his utmost in his power to help the hostages left in Kabul by secretly conveying to them articles of a little comfort such as tea, sugar, stockings, gloves and even money ; and much that he sent never reached them. For being a friend of the British he had to flee from the country, leaving his entire property at the mercy of his enemies, cf. Lady Sale, 440-41.

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/62 and 161.

infidels and plunder their property." On hearing that the name of the King was associated with the insurrection, the Nawab became apprehensive on account of Mohan Lal's presence in his house. He therefore kept a large number of armed men concealed in his house to protect him.

In the evening Zaman Khan personally escorted Mohan Lal to the Qizalbash quarters called Chandal.¹ He was first taken to the house of Naib Muhammad Sharif Khan, but afterwards it was considered advisable to transfer him to the house of the Qizalbash Chief Khan Shirin Khan.⁸

¹ At the time of Nadir Shah's conquest of Kabul in 1738, a colony of Iranis, Shia by religion, known as Qizalbash, had sprung up in that city. On the assassination of that monarch in 1747 some settlers had fled away, but many remained and took up service under Ahmad Shah Abdah. Their quarters situated to the south-west of the city, strongly fortified, were known by the name of Chandal, which contained about two thousand houses. It was provided with bazars, baths, mosques etc. The Qizalbashes preserved themselves as a distinct party, having their separate police and courts of law and justice. But their military reputation had been on the decline for some time past.

Masson, ii, 260; *The Policy of the Government of British India*, 12.

For the origin of the word Qizalbash consult D'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque Orientale*, published in 1777

* Mohan Lal was believed to have been killed on this occasion. The following appeared in the *Asiatic Journal*, March, 1842, p. 215 :—

"The following is an account of the first commencement of the Cabul insurrection, which was credited at Kelat-i-Ghiljee and in Col. Maclaren's Camp. It appears, that five chiefs, of whom Futtoolah Khan was one, went to the house of Sir Alexander Burnes for a moolikat, but Sir Alexander being absent, they were shewn into a room where his brother, Charles Burnes, was sitting with Mohun Lal. After they had been a short time in the room, they suddenly started up, fell upon Burnes and his Moonshee, and cut them both to pieces. After perpetrating this atrocity, they rushed out into the streets, wounding the sentry on their way, raised a hullah, which soon spread over the city and ended in a general rise."

No sooner did the news of the murder of Alexander Burnes and the plunder of the treasury spread about than men in thousands joined the rebels.¹ The store-house¹ was pillaged, several officers killed, many regiments repulsed, and the insurgents caused havoc on every side of the cantonment and the Bala Hissar.²

¹ Sykes, ii, 28, remarks :—"The news of the murders and of the rich loot that had been secured spread far and wide, and thousands of armed Afghans hastened in from every direction. A weak British force was sent out to attack Kabul, but fortunately failed to enter the city, where it would have been cut up."

¹ Lady sale recorded on the 3rd November :—

"No military steps have been taken to suppress the insurrection, nor even to protect our only means of subsistence (the Godowns), in the event of a siege." Journal, 46.

When the insurgents attacked the state houses "no determined action was taken to expel them nor to reinforce the detachment in the fort, its weak garrison, after a gallant defence, escaped by means of an underground passage and the supplies were lost to the British." Sykes, ii, 28.

The store-houses contained 8,000 maunds of wheat flour. Kaye, ii, 194.

"The godown fort," wrote Captain Johnson in his Journal, "was this day something similar to a large ant's nest. Ere noon thousands and thousands had assembled from far and wide to participate in the booty of the English dogs, each man taking away with him as much as he could carry - and to this we were all eye-witnesses." Kaye, ii, 196.

¹ The entry of the same date further runs:—"The Envoy kept but few Affghans in his employ ; he had a news reporter at 150 rupees a month, who had the credit of concocting splendid untruths, an old moollah picked up at Kandahar, who, I believe, receives 200—a man greatly in Sir William's confidence; there is also an old cossid. These people adhere to the Envoy, and flatter him into the belief that the tumult is bash (nothing), and will shortly subside." *Jbtd*; 47.

4 Loss of the Bala Hissar averted, 18th November, 1841

Kabul had become the land of plots and counterplots. The Britishers and the Shah were to be deprived of their only safe refuge, the Bala Hissar, through a plot. The *Jamadar* of the *Jizairchis*, who was in command at the upper tower of the fort, deserted his post during the night of November 17-18, 1841, and accompanied by two non-commissioned officers, visited the city secretly. The plot, however, could not remain concealed from Mohan Lal, who, though in hiding, was acquainted with everything of importance going on in the city. He immediately informed the Shah that the *Jamadar* had turned traitor, and was going to hand over the tower to the insurgents for 100 gold coins. It had been arranged that a party of the enemy should come during the night to take possession of the tower, which commanded the Bala Hissar and was the key of the fort. The Shah was enraged, and immediately relieving the whole party, appointed his faithful Rohilla troops in their places. The *Jamadar* turned up in the evening, declaring that he had gone to the city on private business. He was put in irons and confined in the fort prison.¹

5. Assassination of two insurgent leaders

Having taken refuge in the Qizalbash quarters, Mohan Lal established daily communication⁸ with Sir William Macnaghten and Captain J. B. Conolly, the Envoy's cousin

¹ Lady Sale, 110-11 ; Stocquelcr, lxxxii-ii.

²A note dated November 7, 1841, says — "Mohun Lall, and the Naib Shereef were our new-givers from the city, and always kept us well acquainted with what was going on telling us when any powerful chief or body of men arrived, and did all in their power to create a diversion in our favour, by gaining over some sirdars to our side, but unsuccessfully." Stocqueler, Lxxxi.

and political assistant. In the opinion of the Envoy Mohan Lal was placed in favourable conditions to carry on negotiations with the chiefs whom Sir William wanted to win over to his cause. On the 2nd of November, the day when the insurrection had broken out Sir William Macnaghten wrote to Khan Shirin Khan that if he "did not bring the head of Abdoollah Khan, he would look on him as an enemy."¹ On the 5th November, 1841, Mohan Lal received a letter from John Conolly :—

"Send me all the news you can by Kossids. Tell the Kuzzilbash¹ Chiefs, Shereen Khan, Naib Sheriff, in fact all the chiefs of Sheeah persuasion, to join against the rebels. You can promise one lakh of rupees to Khan Shereen on the condition of his killing and seizing the rebels and arming all the Sheeahs and immediately attacking all rebels. This is the time for the Sheeahs to do good service. Explain to them that, if the Soonees once get the upper hand in the town they will immediately attack and plunder their part of the town. Hold out promises of reward and money. Write to me very frequently. Tell the chiefs who are well disposed, to send respectable agents to the Envoy. Try and spread 'nifak*' among the rebels. In everything that you do consult me, and write very often. Meer Hyder Purjabashi has been sent to Khan Shereen, and will see you.

¹ Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 15th June, 1844, No. 226, 14th Question.

²The Shia Qizalbash kept themselves apart from the political struggles of the Sunni Afghans, and when the issue of the struggle seemed imminent, they declared in favour of the strongest, and they were always welcomed as auxiliaries. "The Kazilbashis" says Eyre, "are vain and fond of display. They usually dress well, and attend more to domestic comfort and personal cleanliness than the Afghans, who are very careless of such matters. They also surpass the latter in general refinement and civilization, but are inferior to them in manly virtues and in religious toleration." Malleeson, 25-6.

"P. S. I promise 10,000 rupees for the head of each of the principal rebel chiefs."¹

At the same time an oral message was conveyed to him through Mir Hyder Parjabashi, referred to in Conolly's letter, saying that Mohan Lal "will do great service to the State if the principal rebels were executed by any means whatever."²

On the nth November, Sir William Macnaghten wrote to Mohan Lal :—

"You should encourage the rival of Ameen-oolah Khan by all possible means. This scoundrel and Abdoolah Khan should be executed if we could catch them."⁸

On the same day Conolly also wrote to him :—

"There is a man called Hajee Allee, who might be induced by a bribe to try and bring the heads of one or two of the *moofsids*. Endeavour to let him know that 10,000 rupees will be given for each head or even 15,000."^{*}

Mohan Lal set himself to this task in right earnest. On the same day that he received these two notes he succeeded in

¹ Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 15th June, 1844, No. 328 (lis). cf, also Kaye, li, 202, 217 ; Durand, 364.

This correspondence is reproduced in full in the Appendix.

Kaye, ii, 202, says — * ' I wish that I had nothing more to say of the efforts made out of the fair field of open battle to destroy the power of the insurgent chiefs. There is a darker page of history yet to be written. This Mohun Lal had other work entrusted to him than that spoken of in these letters. He was not directed merely to appeal to the cupidity of the chiefs, by offering them large sums of money to exert their influence in our favour. He was directed, also, to offer rewards for the heads of the principal insurgents."

² Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 15th June, 1844, No. 223.

³ Ibid., No. 228, (x).

⁴ Ibid., No. 228. (in).

engaging two men to whom he advanced Rs. 18,000, promising to pay the balance of Rs. 12,000, when they would bring in the heads of Abdullah Khan¹ and Mir Masjidi,* who were believed to be the "ablest and most resolute leaders of the rebels in field and council."⁸

On the 12th November, Mohan Lal informed Conolly that he had "employed Mahomed Oollah and Abdool Uziz through Agha Mahomed and Hudjee Ullee to do as proposed in his note,"* while the same news was conveyed to the Envoy.⁵ Macnaghten sent him a reply dated November 13 :—

"I have received your letter of this morning's date, and highly approve of all you have done."⁶

By the end of November, both the leaders were counted among the dead. How they lost their lives is not exactly known. On the 23rd of November, an action took place between the British troops and the rebels, and Abdullah Khan

¹ Abdullah Khan Achakzai was responsible for organizing a conspiracy in Kabul to murder Burnes etc.

¹ Mir Masjidi in October, 1841, "was sowing broadcast the seeds of rebellion," and "openly raised the standard of revolt, and the people were clustering around it" fKaye, 11,157, 158J A little later he led a revolt at Chankar, which was garrisoned by a Gurkha regiment. Eldred Pottmger and Rattray were in charge of the post. Mir Majidi cut down Rattray, and forced the garrison to evacuate the post. Only two officers, Pottmger and Houghton, both seriously wounded, reached Kabul on the 15th November, 1841.

³ Durand, 336.

⁴ Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 15th June, 1844, No. 226, 3rd Question

⁵ *Ibid*; 6th Question.

⁶ *Ibid*; No. 228, (v).

who was wounded, was removed from the battle-field. Abdul Aziz, one of the men who had been set upon the chiefs, claimed the full price of the blood declaring that he had shot him from behind a wall, promising that poison would complete the work which the bullet had partially effected. The chief died within a week. Mohan Lal, however, was not sure whether the chief had been struck down by the bullet of the troops or of the assassin. He therefore following Macnaghten's instructions, refused to pay the balance, alleging that the head of the chief was not brought in according to the agreement.¹

Mir Masjidi's death is also shrouded in mystery. His death was sudden and unexpected. Muhammad Allah Najar Ali, the other man entrusted with the task swore that he had "suffocated him when asleep"²; and claimed the full reward of his service. The payment of the balance to him was also refused on the same ground as was urged in the other case.³

Three persons—Macnaghten, Conolly and Mohan Lal—must share the responsibility in a greater or less degree for the assassination of these chiefs. Many writers on the first Afghan War do not refer to this incident at all; and those who do, would net implicate Sir William Macnaghten in this foul business. Durand writes that "at a later period he (Macnaghten) denied that it was his object to encourage assassination."⁴ Kaye quotes the following letter, without giving its source, from Macnaghten to Mohan Lal, dated 1st December:—

"I am sorry to find from your letter of last night that you should have supposed it was ever my object to encourage

¹ *Ibid*, No. 223, Kaye, ii, 413; Durand, 366.

² Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 15th June, 1844, No. 233.

³ Kaye, ii, 264.

⁴ Durand, 363.

assassination. The rebels are very wicked men, but we must not take unlawful means to destroy them."¹

The same writer describes another incident in support of this opinion on the evidence of Captain Skinner,¹ who stated that at a later period, it was suggested to the Envoy by Akbar Khan that he would secure the murder of Aminullah Khan. On this the Envoy "shrank with abhorrence and disgust" "assuring the ambassadors that, as a British functionary, nothing would induce him to pay a price for blood." ⁵ Further on he remarks .—

"It may fairly be presumed that a man of nature so humane, and of instincts so honourable, would not have encouraged or sanctioned the foul trade of secret murder, and peremptorily denied his approval of measures which he had himself originated or supported."⁴

After the close of the Afghan War, when Mohan Lal settled in India, he applied to the Government of India, claiming the amount of money advanced by him to the murderers, which had not been paid to him by the Envoy owing to shortage of funds. On this a full explanation with definite proofs was called for from him. Mohan Lal complied with the orders, and produced original letters of Macnaghten and Conolly.⁵

¹ Kaye, ii, 205.

² Captain Skinner was a party with Akbar at the time of the murder of Sir William Macnaghten. He might have made this statement to pretend his innocence, cf. *intra*.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 256.

⁵ Kaye, ii, 412, Appendix, entitled "Sir William Macnaghten and the price of blood," refers only to a fragmentary and incomplete portion of this correspondence.

This correspondence is reproduced in the Appendix, and will convince the reader how futile have been the efforts of Kaye, Durand and others in trying to prove that Sir William had absolutely no share in this affair. But we should not lose sight of the fact that Macnaghten lived under most critical and trying circumstances which cost him his own life besides that of thousands of others, and that the element of the gravest provocation was always present.

6. Diplomatic services from the 2nd November to the 22nd December, 1841

Having found a safe shelter in the Qizalbash quarters, Mohan Lal was successfully carrying out Macnaghten's instructions. Macnaghten had clearly realized the miserable failure of British arms. He now made up his mind to try another weapon—money. He thought that if he could not beat off the Afghans, he might buy them off. For this purpose Macnaghten could find no better man than Mohan Lal. As early as the 7th November, Mohan Lal received a letter from Sir William :—

"I am very glad to find that you are doing such excellent service. Enclosed are two letters for Khan Sheereen Khan and Mahomed Humza. You may assure them both that if they perform the service they have undertaken, the former shall receive one lakh, and the latter, 50,000 rupees and everything else they require. I hope you will encourage Mahomed Yar Khan, the rival of Aminoollah and assure him that he shall have the chiefship. You may give promise in my name to the extent of 5 lakhs."¹

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 65.

Another letter from the Envoy dated the 8th November stated :—

"I fully approve of your having raised 30,000 rupees for distribution among those disposed to assist our cause, but I would not advance more than 50,000 rupees before some service is actually rendered."¹

Mohan Lal opened negotiations at the risk of his life with the *Mullas* of Kabul, desiring them to relax their efforts from exciting the religious feelings of the people against the British. In the meantime Nawab Jabbar Khan communicated all the news of the capital to Muhammad Akbar Khan, son of Amir Dost Muhammad Khan, then in Turkistan. With a view to taking advantage of the insurrection, Akbar left Khulam and reached Bamian. Mohan Lal reported this to the Envoy and suggested that the best course was to offer him an allowance for which he had been asking so long, and to prevent him from coming to Kabul. Otherwise, he said, the rebels would place him at their head, and his leadership would considerably strengthen and unify the insurgents. But the Envoy rejected the proposal.⁸

In conformity with the Envoy's instructions, Mohan Lal employed Naib Muhammad Sharif to deal with the Ghilzai

¹ *Ibid.* Lady Sale in her Journal on p. 66 recorded:—"Sir William has given one of the Kuzzilbash chiefs 50,000 rupees to raise a diversion in our favour, and has promised him two lakhs more if he succeeds."

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 66. "Early in November," says Kaye, ii, 259, "Mohan Lal had suggested to Macnaghten the expediency of endeavouring to corrupt the Sirdar before his advance upon the capital; but the Envoy had received' slightly the proposal and no overtures had been made to the son of Dost Mahomed before his arrival at the capital."

chiefs and their Governor Hamza Khan, who at the head of 4,000 men were firing on the British cantonments from the south-eastern side ; while the rest of the rebels were fighting in the north-western side. Mohan Lal promised the chiefs two lakhs of rupees provided they either left the rebels and waited on the Shah, or went back to their country to keep the road open for the English mail. The Ghilzais accepted the terms, and they wrote an agreement on the leaf of the holy Koran. They, however, insisted on receiving Rs. 50,000 in advance out of the stipulated sum.¹

Considering the advantage of an immediate dispersal of the rebels, Mohan Lal agreed to pay this sum, and reported the same to the Envoy. Macnaghten approved of Mohan Lal's negotiations, but suggested that the Ghilzais should leave some of their men "as security for fulfilling their promises after getting 50,000 rupees." He also desired them to pay their respects to the Shah.²

Mohan Lal could not induce the Ghilzais to give security, as they alleged they would be disgraced for accepting- bribes; and they did not like to wait upon the Shah for fear of degradation in the eyes of the people. Macnaghten finally replied to Mohan Lal: "I do not like to give 50,000 rupees without some security." The Ghilzais felt annoyed and joined Muhammad Akbar Khan.*

By this time the insurrection had spread to Kandahar, Kalat-i-Ghilzai, Ghazni and Jalalabad. Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan declared himself King of Afghanistan. Akbar

¹ *Ibid*; 67.

² *Ibid* ; 68.

³ *Ibid*;69.

Khan had returned from Bamian to Kabul on November 22 and was pursuing a double policy, carrying on negotiations with the Envoy as well as with Nawab Zaman Khan.¹

The difficulties of the Envoy were, on the other hand, increasing tremendously. The soldiery had become thoroughly demoralised, and no general was prepared to leave the cantonments. Besides, "some of our English writers had gone over to the rebels and read the intercepted letters of the Envoy."⁸ The site of the cantonments was situated far from the base of the water supply, and therefore it had to be abandoned. The Charikar regiment fell into confusion, and was destroyed by the enemy, and "their females, with many other surviving Gorkhas, were distributed and sold as slaves."⁸ The supplies began to fail, and "it was through the most active and extraordinary exertions of Captain Boyd, and especially of Captain Johnson, that now and then a quantity of grain was brought for sale secretly into the cantonment."⁴

In this predicament, Sir William was pressed by the military authorities to order a retreat. He entreated them either to stand their ground or to retire to the Bala Hissar in order to maintain the semblance of British prestige and honour. But they would not listen. Finding them adamant, the Envoy unwillingly opened communications with Akbar Khan, now the chief leader of opposition, regarding plans for evacuating the country. Macnaghten met him on the nth December, and made an agreement with him promising to evacuate the cantonments in three days! time.⁵

¹ Dost Mohammed, ii, 416-7.

² Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 15th June, 1844, No. 223.

³ Dost Mohammed, ii, 416.

⁴ *Ibid* ; 419-20.

⁵ Sykes, ii, 30.

7. Murder of the Envoy, 23rd December, 1841

Macnaghten had realized that his only hope lay in creating dissensions among the insurgent chiefs, and with this aim in view he delayed the execution of the treaty. On the other hand Akbar Khan was in close touch with the situation in the British camp, and knew very well the weak position of Sir William Macnaghten, and he resolved to take full advantage of it.¹ Consequently, in the night of the 22nd December, Muhammad Sadiq, Captain Skinner and Sarwar Khan Lohani, in the capacity of agents of Akbar Khan, waited upon the Envoy, and decided for an interview between him and Akbar, outside the cantonments the following day. The conversation was to take place about these terms : Akbar wanted to be appointed minister to Shah Shuja-ul Mulk on the annual salary of four lakhs of rupees, and in addition to be given a reward of thirty lakhs. In return Akbar would cause the dispersal of the rebels; or would employ a strong cavalry force to protect the British cause and enable them to remain in Kabul; or would safely conduct the British forces to Jalalabad. In reality it was a trap laid for Macnaghten. The scheme was to get hold of the

¹ An Englishman of the Political Department says ;—"But so little was his [Macnaghten's] authority exerted beyond the districts dependent on that city, that he can scarce be regarded as the supreme authority or governor beyond the Indus. The officers in political charge at Candahar and Quetta acted, if not nominally, at least virtually, in independence of him, while the Agent in Upper Sindh entirely disclaimed his authority. On the other hand, the chief military commanders were still more intractable, and carried their jealousy of the civil power to such a height that their object appeared to be rather to counteract and thwart any suggestion made to them from that quarter, than to avail themselves of it." Dry Leaves from Young Egypt, 53-54.

Envoy, to bring him into the city and to compel him to hand over all his treasure and arms, and then to put him to death. Mirza Khudadad was also a member of this conspiracy. He was a friend of Mohan Lal and probably with a view to obtain a reward, he informed him of the real nature of the affair. This information was given to Mohan Lal on the 23rd December at 10 o'clock in the morning, and the interview was to take place at 12 noon. Mohan Lal immediately sent his man to the Envoy warning him not to meet Akbar at all. In reply he received the following note from Macnaghten:—

"I am very glad to find that you are doing such excellent services. I hope the matters will still be right as I am taking steps for keeping open our negotiations. I thoroughly approve of all you have done and you may rely on my attending to your wishes. Send your man again to me tomorrow. I have entrusted him with a verbal message. If the people choose to quarrel among themselves, and we are allowed to remain here, you may spend twenty lakhs of rupees to effect this cause, but no time is to be lost. I rely on your discretion. Do not let me appear in this matter. In the meantime I am not idle on this side, and hope everything will turn out as we wish."¹

Macnaghten's mind was not quite free from anxiety, but as the military authorities insisted on immediate evacuation, there was no other alternative but to discuss the matter with Akbar khan. By way of precaution, however, he ordered that two regiments should be kept ready outside the cantonments. He then went out to meet Akbar. The interview took place within the distance of a musket-shot from the

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/62.

cantonments. While talking Akbar caught the Envoy by the waist and asked him to get on hoiseback. Macnaghten refused to comply, and in the struggle he uttered only three words, "*Az barai Khuda*" (for God's sake). On Macnaghten's resistance Akbar shot the Envoy with a pistol. He was still alive, but Akbar ordered his servant to fire a jizair with a larger ball, which put an end to his life. The officers of the guard with the Envoy made no exertions to help him, no gun was fired by the British troops, and no troops came from the cantonments.¹ Akbar then cut off his head and dragged his body along with that of Captain Trevor to the city, where they were kept hanging for two days in the bazar and then thrown into a well. The head was sent to Khulam. Lady Macnaghten's efforts to obtain the head of her late husband for a large sum availed her nothing; but Mohan Lal purchased the ring of the Envoy and sent it to her.*

¹" In the cantonments," says Durand, " all was apathy, and in decision. Although within sight of the scene, no attempt was made to avenge the slaughtered envoy and to recover his body from a cowardly mob who bore off in triumph his mangled remains to parade them in the city of Cabul." p. 376.

² Panjab Records, 41C/161, paras 91—92; 41C/57; Stocqueler, cxlviii—cli and cliv—vi.

Mohan Lal passes serious strictures against many British officials. He says that they exonerated Akbar Khan declaring that he murdered the Envoy "in a moment of desperation" and "that it never was pre-meditated." Kaye, ii, 413. Again he accuses them of disclosing the intentions of the Home Government to Akbar :—

"The difference of opinion and the doubt on the subject have not unjustly been raised by those who, while dining and conversing with the assassin during their imprisonment flattered him most imprudently by giving him the views of all the Parliamentary speeches and by

*8. Massacre of British forces and imprisonment of survivors,
7th January, 1842*

After the horrible murder of the Envoy, Major Pottinger succeeded to the political office. He again opened negotiations with Akbar Khan to secure the retreat of the army, and agreed to pay them money by bills if they were allowed to proceed safely to Jalalabad. Akbar found in this move an excellent opportunity of destroying the entire British camp. Mohan Lal tried his best to dissuade Pottinger from leaving the cantonments, and on finding them determined to retire, he suggested that in order to ensure security "he should exert to procure a properly written and sealed paper by all the chiefs especially the Kuzzilbashs guaranteeing themselves for our safety and their sons should accompany our camps." To this he received the following answer from Captain Lawrence, the military secretary :—

"Sir, Thanks for your letter and the hints it contains; the chiefs have signed the treaty, and the sons of them accompany us. As for attacking us on the road we are in the hands of God and in Him we trust."¹

Mohan Lal again informed him that the Qizalbash chiefs had not signed the treaty, and they would not do so, as the Barakzais were not sincere in their designs. He explained that they would not be protected by the rebels, nor would they be accompanied by the sons of the chiefs. No heed

assuring him that England will not keep possession of Afghanistan, but that it disapproved of the policy of the Indian Government, and has ordered evacuation of that country. Why such information and speeches were translated by some of us to please Akbajr Khan is a matter for others to determine and is not one of my suggesting." Dost Mohammed, ii, 425—6.

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 95.

was paid to this warning. Mohan Lal laments this carelessness:—"As the unfortunate hours were impending upon us, nothing was heard." The withdrawal of the British forces was decided upon. Mohan Lal was escorted from the Qizalbash quarters by Sultan Muhammad Khan, the son-in-law of Khan Shirin Khan. On the road to the camp they were assailed by a large number of men. One of the escorts was wounded and a mule loaded with provisions was carried away.¹

The road was covered with snow, and both sides of it occupied by the hostile Ghilzais. "The men were", says Sykes, "dispirited and were becoming demoralized ; rations, transport and forage were lacking."¹ The retreat began on the 6th January, 1842 ; but no sooner had the regiments evacuated the cantonments than the camp-followers were attacked. The camp equipage was plundered and the men mercilessly destroyed. "The whole of the road presented a terrible scene by leaving the dead bodies of our people frozen in every direction."⁸

On the 7th January the British camp was surrounded by Akbar. He took Major Pottinger and some other British officers as hostages, and promised that he would conduct the rest safely to Jalalabad. Then he spoke in the Turkish and Pashto languages to his followers advising them to plunder and destroy the infidels, while in Persian he asked them not to molest anybody. Mohan Lal now realized in what danger all of them were placed. But he could do nothing except ensure his own safety by seeking assistance of some Afghan, and this he immediately did. As soon as the British army

¹ *Ibid* , paras 96-8.

² History of Afghanistan, ii, 33.

³ There were "about 4500 fighting men, and 12,000 followers."

entered the narrow and frozen valley of Khurdkabul, they were furiously attacked, and in a short time a force of nearly 20,000 was destroyed in cold blood ; Dr. Bryden alone , managed to escape to Jalalabad to tell the woeful tale.¹ "I can hardly express in writing," says Mohan Lal, "the horrid scene I have witnessed and the most disgraceful treatment the British officers, ladies and servants have received in this country."*

Lady Sale, 221. Durand, p. 369, puts the number at "450b fighting men, and from 12,000 to 15,000 followers. The same author says that the British gave over "20,000 souls as a prey to famine, cold, and the edge of the sword." *Ibid*; 376. Of these 700 were European fighting men and the rest Indians. Malleon, 410, f. n. "The whole road was covered with men, women and children lying down in the snow to die." Lady Sale, 225.

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161, para 98.

² *Ibid*; 99—100; 41C/62.

"Never," says Bosworth Smith, "surely in the whole course of history has wrong doing been more terribly and more deservedly avenged." Quoted in the Gate-keepers of India, 16,

CHAPTER IX

SACRIFICE AND SUFFERING IN CONFINEMENT

I. *The insurrection spreads*

Mohan Lal had a narrow escape. He was protected and brought back to Kabul by a friend. He took up his quarters in the house of his old host Khan Shirin Khan in Chandaul and remained in confinement for a little over eight months.

The affair of the British army at Kabul was over by the 13th January. The nearest and strongest defensive outpost of the British was at Jalalabad, 124 miles from Kabul. Here Sir Robert Sale, the Commander of the British forces, and Major Macgregor, the Political Agent, held out bravely. It was to this place that Akbar now turned his attention on the 18th January, 1842. He demanded the immediate evacuation of the fort; but Sale and Macgregor boldly refused to comply in spite of the fact that they had been ordered to do so by General Elphinstone and Major Pottinger.¹

The difficulties of the British authorities were arising in other quarters also. The rebels sent two chiefs to subdue Ghazni, which fell after "a very little resistance." In the engagement one English lady who was in male dress was killed, and nine officers were taken prisoners. At Kalat-i-Ghilzai Major Leech offered stout resistance, and the rebels retired; but afterwards it had to be abandoned. The chiefs of Kandahar rose against the British authorities there. The English officers who commanded the Afghan corps were

¹ Post Mohammed, ii, 431.

murdered, and one of the city gates was burnt. Sir William Nott, however, bravely held out; but in spite of uniform success, he was unable to march towards Kabul for nearly eight months.¹

2. *A Hazardous Enterprize*

It was under such critical circumstances that Mohan Lal, at great personal risk, managed to collect and to transmit to Jalalabad, almost daily news at once accurate and detailed, of the situation in the capital. He also tried to cause disruption among the insurgents, winning as many as possible to the side of the British. He suggested to Macgregor and Pollock what kind of letters should be written to various chiefs who were kindly disposed towards the British, delivered them to the parties and persons concerned, and conveyed their replies to Jalalabad. He gave his own criticism of the day-to-day British policy and valuable suggestions for the guidance of the British officers. In spite of a regular watch on him and strict guard on the roads leading in all directions but particularly to Jalalabad not a single letter of Mohan Lal was ever intercepted, though he continued writing on an average two or three letters a week for upwards of eight months.⁸

This was Mohan Lal's most splendid achievement and he was rightly proud of it:—

"If I would fear (had feared for) my life, there was not a single 'man to send intelligence to Government at such a crisis ; and it was the most wonderful thing that

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/161 paras 105-7; Mohan Lal's letter to Major Macgregor, dated 1st March, 1842, cf, Panjab Records, 41C/57.

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/57,

I managed the despatch of letters so regularly and safely that none of them was ever intercepted by the enemy while the roads to Jellalabad were watched on every step."¹

The success of the perilous adventure depended firstly on the right selection of men in whom he could confide without any fear of betrayal, as the slightest evidence against Mohan Lal was sufficient to involve him in danger not only to his own life, but also to that of his father, wife and children who were present there, and his friends and sympathisers. But Mohan Lal was singularly fortunate in possessing this gift; and all men whom he selected and employed remained thoroughly faithful to him. The second factor was money. He had no money of his own as all of it had been plundered on the day of the commencement of the insurrection. But such was the trust and confidence established by Mohan Lal that not to speak of merchants and ordinary men even women were prepared to pawn their ornaments to supply money to him, and while in close confinement he was able to raise about Rs. 36,000.²

3. Remains in Kabul in British Interest

In addition to certain British prisoners who were kept in close confinement, Mohan Lal was the only Indian officer present in Kabul. Realizing the dangerous situation he was in, he was

¹ Letter from Mohan Lal published in the Calcutta Englishman and reproduced in Vincent Eyre's Journal, p 416

² Mohan Lal spent Rs. 18,328/9/- for furnishing intelligence, and Akbar Khan extracted from him Rs 17,673. cf Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 28th December, 1842, No 741, and Panjab Records, 41C/185, dated 29th July, 1842

anxious to leave Kabul and join Sale and Macgregor at Jalalabad. He requested his host Khan Shirin Khan to escort him to Jalalabad, but Khan Shirin could not summon courage to undertake the risky business. So he put him off by promising to seize some more suitable opportunity for the purpose. Mohan Lal ultimately sought Macgregor's assistance to achieve this object, and in a letter dated the 10th April he wrote:—

"I pray day and night that Khan Sheereen Khan would escort me safely to you and release me from this confinement. Since he could not take me beyond the KOTul, he brought me forcibly back and wrote to you on the subject; he promises everyday to send me to you, but the promises of this country are never fulfilled. If you oblige and emancipate me, I beg you to write to him to send me to you, but do so if you please by a secret opportunity."¹

Again, in a letter dated the 17th April, he implored Macgregor :—

"Pray ask Khan Sheereen Khan to send me to you as Aminooallah talks to deprive me of his protection."¹

It happened just as he had expected. Aminullah Khan accused Mohan Lal of carrying on correspondence with Jalalabad and Kandahar, though he had not been able to intercept any letter. He visited Khan Shirin Khan three times, and offered him Rs. 20,000 if he would deliver Mohan Lal to him. Finding his efforts of no avail he incited Muhammad Akbar Khan against Mohan Lal and Khan Shirin. Akbar also suspected

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/57.

² *Ibid*; 41C/42.

Mohan Lal of conveying the news of the capital to Jalalabad. Akbar decided to place Mohan Lal in his personal charge along with the British prisoners. Consequently, he united the Ghilzais, Kabulis, and Kohistanis, and brought their leaders to Khan Shirin Khan pressing upon him the necessity of handing over Mohan Lal to Akbar. The Qizalbash Chief first entreated * him to leave the matter there, and on Akbar's persistence prepared to appeal to arms. Akbar thereupon withdrew his claim saying that if in his opinion Mohan Lal's staying with him was not injuring the interest of the Muslims, he would not offend the chief by asking him to surrender Mohan Lal.¹

Mohan Lal wrote all this to Macgregor, and on the 4th May he received a reply from Jalalabad also acknowledging receipt of all his letters which Mohan Lal had written since January. Macgregor wished Mohan Lal to continue staying in Kabul:—"If you do not endanger your safety by remaining in the city of Cabool, you will be very useful to us there in sending us intelligence of the proceedings of the chiefs."* In another letter Macgregor stated :—

"Write to me continually, and as regards yourself you may be assured that I shall be actuated with the same degree of friendship with which the lamented Sir William Macnaghten and Sir Alexander Burnes regarded you."*

Mohan Lal at once gave up the idea of leaving Kabul, and resolved to carry out the wishes of Macgregor. He wrote :—

"I have always sent you intelligence without fail since the destruction of General Elphinstone's force, and now

¹ *Ibid* ; 41C/161, para 138.

² *Ibid* ; 41C/161, para 140.

³ *Ibid*.

will continue to be active in doing so. I have secretly placed my relation Rishi Nath in the Bala Hissar to inform me of the daily occurrences and employed two men to go round to almost every chief's house and to give particular accounts of them for your notice."¹

4. Arrested by Akbar

Akbar's suspicion regarding Mohan Lal's correspondence with Jalalabad was growing stronger day by day, but he could not get any positive proof to this effect in spite of his best efforts. He therefore made up his mind to seize Mohan Lal. On the 30th May Akbar Khan and Jabbar Khan won over the support of Ghilzai, Kabuli and Kohistani Chiefs, and they gathered their forces in the city. Khan Shirin Khan, finding the opposition more serious this time, told Mohan Lal in the evening to change his room. On ascertaining the reason Mohan Lal sent a message to three other Persian chiefs who had certain differences with Khan Shirin, and thus united them in a common cause. He also won over Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan to join the Persian chiefs. Then a meeting of both parties took place at the house of Muhammad Zaman Khan. Jabbar Khan demanded Mohan Lal from Khan Shirin. On this the Persian chiefs flared up and threatened armed action if any attempt was made upon Mohan Lal. Muhammad Zaman Khan abused Akbar, declaring that he would not allow him to interfere with Khan Shirin Khan. On this Jabbar Khan lost his temper and called Zaman Khan an ass. At this Zaman Khan was incensed, pulled the beard of Jabbar Khan, struck him a blow, and turned him out of his house. The Persian chiefs got ready to fight; but Akbar remained quiet, and the meeting dispersed. Prince Fatah Jang promised to

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/64

lend one lakh of rupees to Khan Shirin Khan for fighting the Barakzais. Akbar finding such heavy odds arrayed against him visited Khan Shirin, apologised to him, and thus, for the time being, closed the incident.¹

Akbar was, however, waiting for an opportunity. On the 21st June Akbar defeated Zaman Khan, and sent his troops against Khan Shirin. Mohan Lal at once left his house and concealed himself, thus eluding the grasp of his pursuers. But he was apprehensive of his arrest at any moment.¹ On the 22nd June he wrote :—

"In case Mahomed Akbar may catch me or force me to write to the General or any other authority, he is not to reply my letter saying that I was not in service. I will not date the letter. I may write by his advice, and thus you may know that it is not to be answered."⁸

The same day, on the 22nd June, 1842, Akbar succeeded in capturing Mohan Lal. He was confined in a room opposite to that where Major Pottinger was imprisoned. Mohan Lal, however, won over Muhammad Mirza, one of the principal rebel chiefs, a great favourite of Akbar and a rival of Khan Shirin. He requested him to secure his transfer to his own house in the Persian quarters. This was done, and he was brought there two days later; but he was kept under strict vigilance.⁴

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/109, Mohan Lal to Macgregor, dated 22nd June, 1842.

² *Ibid*; 41C/143 and 410/144, Mohan Lal to Sir R. Shakespeare, Military Secretary at Jalalabad, dated 21st and 22nd June, 1842.

³ Panjab Records, 41C/144, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, dated 22nd June, 1842.

⁴ *Ibid*; 41C/148, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, dated 24th June, 1842.

Major-General Pollock commanding troops in Afghanistan, and then encamped at Jalalabad, addressed the following letter to the Governor-General, while announcing this incident :—

"I regret to have to report the seizure of Moonshee Mohun Lal by Mahomed Akbar Khan. I will endeavour to engage some other person to supply the place of the Moonshee in sending me intelligence from Cabool, but I venture to take this opportunity of bringing to the notice of the Rt. Hon'ble the Governor-General the zeal and perseverance of Moonshee Mohun Lal who under very difficult circumstances, and at very great personal risk has contrived to send me regular and correct information of the state of the different parties at Cabool."¹

Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General of India, expressed his approbation of Mohan Lal's services in equally strong terms:—

"In reply I am directed to inform you that the Governor-General duly appreciated the zeal and intelligence displayed by Mohan Lal during the late events at Kabul and regrets that the state is likely to be deprived for a time of that officer's services."¹

While in captivity, Mohan Lal contrived means to maintain correspondence with Jalalabad. His first letter was addressed only after two days. In another letter he wrote :—

"I am here strictly watched, but can steal time to write/*

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/X46, Major-General Pollock to Maddock, Secretary to Govt, Political Deptt., dated Jalalabad, the 26th June, 1842.

* Panjab Records, 41C/196 ; Dost Mohammed, ii, 467.

Panjab Records. 41C/151, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 26th June, 1842.

Regarding his method of sending news he says :—

"I have adopted the most wise plan to transmit my letters which through the favour of God have never been hitherto intercepted or miscarried. I have got possession of some of the Ghilzies who leave this (place) with my letter, armed and in the soldier's dress. It is to prevent the suspicions of the people on the road, and I do not think it safe to send one man, but always send two, three, or sometimes four men with each of my letters. I pay for each of my letters from 150 to 200 rupees, when the answer reaches me from Jellalabad."¹

Some further difficulties were put in Mohan Lal's way to prevent any chance of his writing. He was not allowed to visit his father, wife and children who were placed in the house opposite to that of his confinement. Thus he was deprived of the opportunity of getting paper, pen and ink. Guards were posted to keep watch over him day and night. He, however, won over the guards, and at mid-day when it was hot, he secured their permission to sleep in the room of Shikarpuri bankers, who provided him with writing materials. Under Akbar's orders no food was given to him till 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and dinner was served at eleven in the night. But this hardship had no deterrent effect upon him :—
"I am not fearful and lazy."*

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/157, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 1st July, 1842.

"Each of the three *cossids* who were the bearers of each of my letters was paid at 50 rupees, but still they were cheaper and safer than those employed by the late Lt. J. Conolly."

Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 28th .December, 1842, No. 741.

* Panjab Records, 41C/162, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 4th July, 1842.

Akbar was always suspicious of Mohan Lal, and believed that he was carrying on correspondence with the British officers at Jalalabad. Consequently, on the 9th July he removed him into the Bala Hissar, and kept him under the charge of Sultan Jan. But the same day Mohan Lal sent a letter saying :—

"I am not for myself, but regret in anticipating that I may lose the opportunity of writing you the news. But I will send you in Persian and you may reply as usual."¹

5. *Tortured*

Akbar's mind was not at rest, and he suspected that Mohan Lal was writing even from the Bala Hissar. Therefore two days later he placed him in the charge of a more strict person, Mulla Jalal, to whose house he was brought. Though under the strictest surveillance and suffering from acute anguish as a result of torture, he found means to write only three days later. It is remarkable how he intermingles with the pathetic tale of his sufferings, the important news of the place. A study of the psychology of his mind will reveal the fact that the idea of conveying the news was uppermost in his mind even under persecution. His letter ran :—

"Akbar on the night of the nth instant put me in charge of Mulla Jalal Achukzie in whose house I was forced to lie down and a couch placed over me on which the people jumped and are beating me with sticks and tormenting me in very rude and unmerciful manner. Akbar wants 30,000 rupees from me, says otherwise

¹ Panjab Records, 410/165, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 9th July, 1842.

he will pull out my eyes ; all my body has been severely beaten. I cannot promise anything without Government's order, but see myself destroyed. Candahar rebels with 300 horse have reached here. Hajee Alee will leave this (place) for Jallalabad. Grain is nearly cut. Akbar has married a sister of Ameenollah. All my feet is wounded by bastinadoing."¹

Three days afterwards he again narrated the painful story of his affliction, also suggesting remedy for the same :—

"Akbar has confined me very strictly, no man is allowed to come to me, and I induced one of my guards to supply me with the paper, etc., from my servant whom I have desired to remain always out in the street where I am confined. I suffer very much. Sometimes I am pinioned and a heavy stone is placed over my back, while the red pepper is burnt before my nose and eyes. Sometimes I am bastinadoed. In short I suffer every imaginable agony. He wants 30,000 rupees out of which he has hitherto got 12,000 after using me very rudely. The remainder if not paid in the course of 10 days, he says he will pull out my eyes and burn my body with hot iron. If any of Akbar's men are in attendance with Captain Troupe who I hear is gone to the General, it would be better to send message or write to Akbar that if he takes any money from our prisoners whether Englishmen or Indians the same shall be deducted from the allowances of his family at Loodianah, and if he injures any of us, the

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/172, Mohan Lal to Shakspeare, 14th July, 1842.

same injury shall be inflicted upon his family. If we threaten him in this manner we will secure good treatment for us."¹

Mohan Lal found the situation in Kabul favourable to the British Government, and in almost every letter since April he had been urging General Pollock's immediate inarch to Kabul; but he could not move unless the Kandahar forces were to join hands with him in Kabul. Finding himself placed in a serious situation, and being not very hopeful of the General's move, he wrote :—

"If the circumstances are not favourable for the march of the army to Cabool, kindly tell me so that I may regulate my conduct accordingly. I will write every 5th day* hereafter unless some urgent business occurs. Government shall take care of my wife, two children, and an old father. Akbar says if I am not alive, he has no fear."³

Mohan Lal made piteous appeals to the British authorities at Jalalabad to deliver him from his sufferings; but on receiving no reply from there he gave himself up to despair. Henceforward he spoke of himself in the third person. He wrote :—

"Mohun Lall is severely beaten three times and most disgracefully and cruelly treated. He has been hitherto

¹ Panjab Records, 410/176, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 17th July, 1842.

² Actually, however, Mohan Lal's letters became more frequent and he sent news almost daily.

³ Panjab Records, 41C/176, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 17th July, 1842.

forced to pay 18,000 rupees and God knows what may befall him more than this. Kindly do something for his release from such pains."¹

Repeating the doleful story that he "was again pinioned and severely beaten till eight in the morning/" he requested the General to write to Major Pottinger to get himself placed with the British prisoners.¹ General Pollock wrote to Akbar accordingly, and in consequence Mohan Lal was sent to live with the prisoners, and the money that had been seized from him after the 26th July was returned to him, Akbar keeping only the money taken previously amounting to Rs. 17,673.³

Mohan Lal was again separated from the prisoners, and kept in the city with Mulla Jalal, a religious guide. He was now lost in despondency, and entreated the Government in case of his death to fix an allowance of Rs. 100 per mensem on his two daughters, below two years of age, and to have them educated in the English school at Ludhiana under the guardianship of Hodges, and Rs. 50 per mensem for his wife.⁴

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/184, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 26th July, 1842.

² Panjab Records, 410/185, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 29th July, 1842.

³ Panjab Records, 410/189, Shakespeare to Mohan Lal, 25th July, and 41C/185, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 29th July. Akbar, while intimating to Pollock, the transfer of Mohan Lal to the Prisoners' quarters wrote :—"In the time when there was strife between me and Mahomed Zaman Khan I considered, it necessary for many reasons to have Moonshee Mohun Lal removed to another place, without threats or violence. Some money was received from him on different occasions." Panjab Records, 41C/186; cf. Eyre, 323.

⁴ Panjab Records, 410/196, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 12th August, 1842.

On the 1st September, Mohan Lal was ordered by Akbar to pay the balance of Rs. 12,000 or to "be ready to be blown up by gun or proceed to Turkistan."¹ On the 4th September, Akbar asked Mohan Lal to go with his sister to Turkistan to join the prisoners. Mohan Lal protested and reminded Akbar of the promise he had made with him on the day when Akbar got money from Mohan Lal to the effect that he would not be sent to Turkistan. Consequently, Akbar changed his mind and decided to keep Mohan Lal with him.*

On the 9th September, Mohan Lal managed to escape from the prison of Akbar Khan.⁸ He came to the Afshar fort, and was protected by a large body of Qizalbash cavalry.⁴

¹ Panjab Records, 410/210, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 1st September, 1842.

² Panjab Records, 41C/207, Mohan Lal to Shakespeare, 4th September. 1842.

¹ Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 28th December, 1842, No. 741-

How the old spirit of true friendship was maintained by a Muslim class-mate of Mohan Lal on this occasion, is worth quoting in the words of Mohan Lal :—

"While I was a prisoner in Kabul, amongst all my numerous relations and friends, Shahamat Ali alone volunteered to obtain my release at his own expense. Not being present at Lodiana himself, he wrote from Indore, and authorised Suraj Bhan, a brave officer at the Lahore Court, to expend as far as 10,000 rupees employing some influential emissary, to procure my escape from Kabul. This was, indeed, a generous and noble act of friendship. However, circumstances would not allow its successful execution." Travels, 478-9.

⁴ Travels, 475.

CHAPTER X

POLITICAL SITUATION IN KABUL JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER, 1842

9th January, 1842¹

No sooner had Mohan Lal taken shelter with his old host Khan Shirin Khan than he set himself in right earnest to the task of reporting the political-situation in Kabul to the political and military officers at Jalalabad.¹ His first letter was written only two days after the massacre, on the 9th January, 1842. In this he gave a very brief review of the mishap that happened to the British forces on the 7th January, 1842.³

29th January

The political situation in the country being very uncertain and extremely risky, Mohan Lal wanted to bide his time in order to find what fate had overtaken his first letter. This was a task full of peril not only for Mohan Lal but also for the messengers who had to travel the long distance of about 124 miles. The difficulties had considerably increased owing to the nearness of Akbar who was on his way to Jalalabad to

¹This chapter contains a brief summary of Mohan Lal's letters, often very long and detailed.

² Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General of India, while addressing the Secret Committee, (Allahabad, July 8, 1842), stated :—"The intelligence which has been lately received by Major-General Pollock from Cabool with great despatch and regularity contains a clear and connected account, mostly from the pen of Moonshee Mohun Lall, of the progress of events at that Capital." Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, No. 381, para 9, p. 316.

•Panjab Records, Pollock's Correspondence, 41C/57, Mohan Lal to Captain Macgregor, Political Agent at Jalalabad

besiege the British garrison. Mohan Lal's messengers, generally Ghilzais, always more than one—sometimes two and sometimes three—in the military uniform worn by Akbar's followers, and fully armed, marched separately pretending to act against the English. They carried copies of the same letter and received about Rs. 50 each. His second letter written on the 29th January treats of the situation rather at length.

Mohan Lal stated that the rebels led by the Barakzais waited on Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk and asked for his pardon. The Shah who was now favourably disposed towards the English forbade people to join Akbar in fighting the English at Jalalabad. The Shah's servant Allahdad Khan who had been sent to Jalalabad some days earlier returned. Aminullah¹ and the Barakzais were pressing the Shah to send one of his sons to Jalalabad. They wanted the Prince to tell Macgregor in the name of Shah Shuja-ul Mulk to retire from Afghanistan, promising him a safe passage through the Khyber Pass, otherwise they desired to collect troops and fight with him.

Aminullah intended to send Haji Ali at the head of a few hundred soldiers to the Khyber Pass in order to check the progress of any troops coming from Peshawar. Aminullah's son and Shams-ud-din Khan were thinking of going to Ghazni to bring the Indian forces to Kabul; but Mohan Lal hoped they would not be entrapped. He intimated that the forces at Ghazni, Kalat-i-Ghilzai,¹ Kandahar and Jalalabad were holding their ground firmly.

¹ Aminullah Khan "was in reality the most influential man in the state." He maintained the balance between Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk and his opponents, the Baraksais. He had amassed a great fortune, and thus had become very powerful, cf. Kaye, iii, 104.

² This place is situated on the route from Kandahar to Ghazni, 84 miles north-west of the former place.

He suggested the immediate despatch of a strong army to Jalalabad to reinforce the garrison and to advance upon Kabul in June when the harvest would be ready to afford plentiful supplies of grain and grass for the troops and horses. He discussed several alternatives open to the Government; but laid great emphasis on the course advised by him :—"We must at once send an army which will frighten the followers of the rebels, ensure the good treatment for our prisoners and hostages and re-establish the British power without much fright."

He laboured hard to point out the feasibility of such a course, declaring that the position of the insurgents was weak. He also advised securing the co-operation of the Sikhs "on any terms whatever." He also suggested the necessity of the appointment of a high official of the central Government as a British Minister in Kabul, clearly stating that a mere traveller into these regions or a person of a subordinate position possessing personal experience of Afghanistan should not be entrusted with this job.

This being his first letter addressed to the Government of India, Mohan Lal stated the reason for so doing:—

"I beg you will kindly excuse me if I might have committed anything wrong in this letter; but believe that everything I have humbly penned here, is from the zeal and love I have to serve my Government. Though I am a native of India ; but the experience which I have obtained (during my faithful and arduous services of twelve years in this country as well as by the kind encouragement of my superiors) of the character of the inhabitants here, and the mode of behaving with them, can be compared with very few people. As the

natives can never speak freely and with an open heart with a superior, as they do with an inferior, and hence the latter must be possessed of such valuable information of the country than the former."¹

30th January

On the 30th January, Mohan Lal informed Macgregor that Kabulis Qizalbashes, Durranis and Aminullah had agreed to accept Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk as their king and Muhammad Zaman Khan as his minister ; but the real power was to remain with Aminullah. A *darbar* was held on the 17th January, when, Qazi Fazal-i-Qadir asked the courtiers and others to swear by the Koran to destroy the infidels and serve the Shah faithfully. The Shah remarked that when he heard about the death of a Musalman at the hands of the British troops, he felt as grieved as at the death of his own son.*

28th February

No acknowledgment of the receipt of Mohan Lal's letters was conveyed to him by Macgregor. Mohan Lal therefore waited for a reply for nearly a month ; but on hearing nothing he again resumed his task. Colonel Stoddart's* letters

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/62 ; Mohan Lal to J. R. Colvin. About the risk Mohan Lal was running in sending these communications, he wrote in this letter : "The road between this place and Peshawar by Jellalabad is very much disturbed, and besides the presence of Mahomed Akbar in that direction makes me fearful to attempt and undertake that way, because he publicly says, if I were destroyed, no serious evil was apprehended and foolishly that I am the only surviving person acquainted with the country."

² *Ibid*; 41C/57 ; Mohan Lal to Macgregor.

³ Charles Stoddart (1806-1842) entered the Royal Staff Corps in 1823. He became a Captain in 1834. He went to Iraq as Military

from Bokhara, received by Mohan Lal, stated that the King was favouring the Russian agents. Mohan Lal purchased Sir Williams ring for lady Macnaghten. Qazi Abdul Rahim forged a letter from Macgregor to Khan Shirin saying that he* had known of all his friendly deeds through Mohan Lal. This was done to harm the Khan and Mohan Lal.¹

1st March

The communication of the 1st March stated that Aminullah Khan and the Barakzais were pressing Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk to march in person against Jalalabad at the head of 6,000 men, and the Shah had sent out his tent to be pitched on the road to Jalalabad. Macgregor's bold defiance of the insurgents in refusing to surrender Jalalabad was greatly appreciated in certain circles in Kabul. There was a rumour that Ghazni had surrendered on the nth February, and that an English lady in male dress had lost her life.¹ Madiya Khan commandant at the instigation of Aminullah Khan deserted Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan. Aminullah Khan then under royal seal and

Secretary to the British Envoy in 1835, and served with the Irani forces at the siege of Herat in 1837-8. He was sent to Bokhara to draw up a treaty with the Amir with a view to securing the release of Russian captives in 1838. He was imprisoned, but released in 1839. He was again imprisoned in 1839-40, and again in 1841, and was publicly beheaded along with Arthur Conolly on June 17, 1842. Buckland

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/57, Mohan Lal to Macgregor.

² Ghazni fell on the 6th March, 1842 Sykes, ii, 43, says :—"With half rations and with practically no forage or water, Colonel Falmcr made a treaty with the enemy by which the British were to be conducted in safety to Peshawar. Treachery was, however, intended, as indeed might have been expected, and the force was surrounded and after surrender, was massacred".

signatures demanded possession of the British prisoners from the Nawab ; but the latter boldly refused to yield. In this attitude the Nawab was supported by Khan Shirin.¹

10th March

Mirza Khudadad, a confidant of Muhammad Sadiq and Akbar, told Mohan Lal that an agent from Raja Gulab Singh had arrived in Akbar's camp. Rumours prevailed in the city that General Sale's letter to Monsieur Avitabile, another letter from Lieutenant Conolly, and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk's letter to Mackeson, had all been intercepted by Saadat Khan Mohmand. A report was current to the effect that Kandahar had been besieged by the insurgents.¹ Qazi Ab.dul Karim suggested to Aminullah that he should kill Conolly and Mohan Lal as they were inciting the Afghans to support the British. Agha Neko got a letter from Taj Muhammad Khan, the head of the *Janbaz* contingent serving under Mr. Golding at Kandahar, announcing that Taj Muhammad had treacherously killed two British officers. Major Leech was safe at Kalat-i-Ghilzai.³

¹ *Ibid* , 41C/57, to Macgregor.

² Mirza Ahmad in whose hands lay the management of Kandahar sent various chiefs into different districts to recruit troops and to raise revenue. "Statements of the Shah's connivance in the Caubul revolution were industriously circulated ; incessant attempts were made to tamper with our Hindostanee troops (not altogether without success), and letters were designedly thrown into our hands to render us suspicious of such chiefs as adhered to us, whilst the most stringent measures were adopted to deter the villagers around the city from bringing supplies into Candahar. Such was the line of policy pursued by Meerza Ahmed from the 20th of January to the 20th of February." Kaye, iii, 142.

² *Ibid* ; 41C/57, to Macgregor.

28th March

Sardar Muhammad Husain Khan Barakzai in response to a request previously made sent a message to Mohan Lal saying that if he were to promise him a reward of three lakhs of rupees, he would secure apprehension or murder of Aminullah. Mohan Lal replied that he could negotiate on such matters only when Macnaghten was alive. He referred him to Lieutenant Conolly, and promised to communicate his wishes to higher authorities. Mohan Lal informed Macgregor that Aminullah was trying to cash bills granted by Pottinger to chiefs and certain other bills plundered by them. He suggested that the British Government should not cash a bill without Conolly's signature on it. Mir Haji, a son of the late Mir Waiz, the Chief-Maulvi of Kabul, had sent a messenger to his brother known as Hafizji, asking him to come back to Afghanistan. Hafizji had previously intrigued against the British, and consequently had been sent on a pilgrimage to Mecca. The messenger named Afzal Afju Kabuli had been paid Rs. 240 for his travelling expenses. He had left Kabul ten days previously in the disguise of a beggar, and was to travel via Peshawar through the North-Western Frontier Province and Sind. He was bearing letters for Hafizji.¹

31st March

Mirza Ahmad Khan's messengers visited Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk and reported that their master, Ghani Safdar and Ata Muhammad Khan and Taj Muhammad Khan were doing everything possible against the British. They asked the Shah for money and guns. Aminullah sent Murtza Khan to Khan Shirin saying that he would give him the government of Bamian if he were to co-operate with him. The Shah offered

¹ *Ibtd 1* to Captain F. Mackeson, Political Agent, Peshawar.

three lakhs of rupees to the Barakzai chiefs to pay their troops if they would not force him to march to Jalalabad. Jabbar Khan was now opposed to the British. The Kandahar forces were bravely holding out. On the 30th March Akbar wrote to the Shah and the Chiefs asking for men and money. The Barakzais were therefore compelling the Shah to leave for Jalalabad on the 1st April.¹

2nd April

A letter from Akbar at Jalalabad was received by the Shah and the chiefs of Kabul. Mohan Lal also read it. It stated that five battalions of English Cavalry were at Hasan Abdal on their way to Kabul. At Peshawar they would be joined by the Najib battalions in the service of the Sikhs. They would force their way through the Khyber Pass; but he had sent Sultan Jan at the head of a few hundred soldiers to reinforce the Khyberis. He continued that if these forces joined the British troops at Jalalabad it would be extremely difficult for them to defeat the English. He therefore suggested that the Afghans should sink their differences, and should give him full help in capturing Jalalabad. "The Shah," says Mohan Lal, "I am told has made up his mind again to proceed in person to Jellalabad, but I scarcely believe that he will ever march; and if he does he will be either murdered or made blind by the Barukzyes."¹

5th April

The Barakzais informed Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk on the 3rd April that if he did not go to Jalalabad he would be considered a faithful ally of the English. Nawab Zaman Khan sent

¹ *Ibid* ; to Macgregor.

² Quoted in Kaye, iii, pp 1808-9, f.n

his wife in a palanquin to the Shah with a sealed Koran assuring him of the fidelity of the Barakzais if he would advance to Jalalabad. The Shah being convinced by a lady of so high a station, agreed to the proposal, and left the Bala Hissar on the 4th April, and his departure was signified by a salute of guns. The Shah's tent was pitched at Siah Sang ; but in the night he came back to his palace in the fort. He rode out of the Bala Hissar again early in the morning of the 5th April. Before he reached his camp, he was attacked by Shuja-ud-daulah, a son of Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan. It appeared that the young man was instigated to perpetrate this crime by Muhammad Usman Khan and Jabbar Khan. He was accompanied by sixty armed men, while the Shah was attended by a few Hindustanis. The Shah was travelling in a litter (*Jampan*), when he was fired upon by Shuja-ud-daulah. The Shah immediately came out of the litter and ran towards a ditch of a neighbouring field. But he was overtaken and again shot at. The Shah implored for mercy saying, "*Az barai Khuda, Sardar! Sarkar cheh gunah Kardah ?*" [For God's sake, Sir, what sin have I committed ?] Shuja-ud-daulah listened to nothing, opened fire on him with his musket and killed him instantly. The Nawab, though not to be blamed in this matter,¹ expected revenge upon himself.

¹ Shuja-ud-daulah was a godson of the Shah, who had shown him great personal consideration and kindness. But his evil passions had compelled him to be hostile to the Shah. His father Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan was deeply shocked at the horrible misdeed of his son. "To no one were the circumstances of the Shah's death a source of deeper horror and regret than to the good old Nawab, the father of the murderer. He is said to have sworn an oath never again to see his son beneath his roof, or to suffer him to be named in his presence." Kaye, iii, 110-111.

He consequently got ready to defend himself, and Mohan Lal expected a desperate contest between Aminullah and the Nawab.*

9th April

Aminullah, Mir Aftab and the Durrani chiefs placed Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk's second son, Fatah Jang,* on the throne on the 9th April and fired a salute of guns. The Barakzais refused to recognise him, and they elected Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan the king, and fired a salute of guns from his house. The blind ex-king Shah Zaman collected 3,000 men expecting to recover his lost throne. Fatah Jang on the other hand was spending money⁸ lavishly to win people to his side. The Shah's corpse was lying in the Bala Hissar, as Fatah Jang declared that he would bury it when the regicides were punished. Mohan Lal congratulated Macgregor and Sale on their having defeated Akbar. He stated that Akbar's followers returned to Kabul at 5 o'clock in the evening on the 8th April. This alarmed the people so much that they

¹ *Ibid*, Dost Mohammed, ii, 440-2. That Mohan Lal's letters were the only source of information about events at Kabul may be gathered from Lord Ellenborough's dispatch to the Secret Committee, dated Allahabad. 8th June, 1842 — "In the letter from Mohun Lal, the intelligent Moonshce of the late Sir A. Burnes, which forms one of the enclosures of the letter from Major-General Pollock, of the date noted in the margin [April 16, 1842], your Honourable Committee will be put in possession of the manner in which the King Shah Soojah ool Moolk was on the 5th April, treacherously murdered by a son of Nawab Mahomed Zeman Khan." Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, No. 312, para 32, p. 262.

² "He was a man of weak understanding and infamous character." Kaye, lii, 264.

"Mohan Lal wrote that the royal treasury was believed to contain twenty lakhs of rupees and a considerable quantity of jewellery. Kaye, 111, 112, f.n.

got ready to flee to the hills. Akbar had not arrived there till then. Food was growing very dear in the city. The Ghilzais had returned to the capital. Kalat-i-Ghilzai and Kandahar were bravely holding out.¹

10th April

The insurgents were making preparations to march to Jalalabad again. A crier announced a salary of Rs. 20 per mensem for a horseman and Rs. 12 for a footman ; but the people were not willing to serve under Akbar. The Barakzais fired a salute of guns indicating that Kandahar had fallen. Mohan Lal believed that it was meant to cheer up people who were running away from the town. Aminullah's power was steadily on the increase as he controlled the late Shah's treasury. He was collecting a force of Logans, his own tribesmen.¹

nth April

Akbar asked Barakzais for men and money in order to take Jalalabad.*

17th April

Mohan Lal reported that on the 13th April Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan fired a salute of guns indicating

¹ *Ibid*; Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General of India, in a dispatch to the Secret Committee, dated at Allahabad, 17th May, 1842, stated :—"Subsequent information has confirmed the report of the Shah's murder, and the elevation to the throne of Prince Futteh Jung, who has opened a communication with Major-General Pollock, and professes a strong inclination to co-operate with our Government. For particulars of the state of parties and affairs at Cabool I beg to refer your Honourable Committee to the letters from Mohun Lall to Captain Macgregor, inclosed in General Pollock's dispatch of the 30th ultimo." Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, No. 294. para 24, p. 230.

² *Ibid*.

³ *Ibid*.

that the English **had** been defeated in the Khyber Pass. Gbulam Khan and Agha Haniza of the Bala Hissar visited Mohan Lal and informed him that they could not communicate with Conolly owing to the strict vigilance kept over him. On the 14th April Aminullah and the Popalzais asked Muhammad Zaman Khan to deliver all his guns and the murderers of the Shah to them. Khan Shirin Khan gave him a letter for Macgregor. On the 26th April Mirza Imam Vardi came to Kabul as Akbar's agent to discuss political matters with Aminullah. The capital wore a deserted appearance as most of the people had fled. There was great confusion in Kabul and the advance of a British force was expected to carry everything before it.¹

25th April

On the 22nd April Aminullah and the Popalzai chiefs asked the Barakzais to march to Jalalabad in advance ; but they insisted on following the Prince. While this dissension was going on Muhammad Shah Khan Ghilzai accompanied by Mirza Imam Vardi came from Akbar's camp and removed the misunderstanding that had lately arisen between Hafizji's party and the Barakzais. Then they asked the Prince to permit Aminullah's son with 1,000 troops to stay in the Bala Hissar. Fatah Jang, however, rejected this demand. The Prince thereupon sent Mirza Akarmat Beg to Mohan Lal asking him to write to Macgregor to send a British force to Kabul as early as possible. The Prince increased the number of guards at the gates of the Bala Hissar. Muhammad Shah Khan and Imam Vardi collected the deserters from Akbar's army in the house of Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan, gave them money, and persuaded them to rejoin Akbar at Tazin.*

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/42. '

² Tazin is situated 26 miles from Kabul on the road to Jalalabad.

Mohan Lal's opinion was that the Barakzais would not succeed in raising a large force in Kabul as the residents were afraid lest their families be plundered by the Kohistanis in their absence. Muhammad Shah Khan was also trying to establish blood relationship between Akbar and Aminullah by securing the latter's daughter for the former. He also gathered Kabulis in Aminullah's house asking them to go to Jalalabad. In case of refusal he threatened them with persecution by 20,000 Ghilzais.

During the night of the 24th April Aminullah demanded from the Prince a large sum of money for payment of troops ; but he could extract only Rs. 4,000 and 100 pieces of shawls. The Kohistani chiefs received money from Aminullah to support Prince Fatah Jang on the 24th April; but on the 25th they joined the Barakzais against the Prince. Mehtar Musa of Zurmat at the head of 400 men reached Logar to raise a contingent of troops for Akbar; while his brother came to Kabul to help the insurgents. Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan fired a salute of guns on the morning of the 25th April to indicate that Kohandil Khan, ex-chief of Kandahar had marched upon Kandahar with a large Irani force. Mohan Lal believed that there was no truth in the report. He thought that the Nawab had done this in order to secure better terms from Aminullah. He was not sure about the success of this trick as Aminullah was too cunning to be deceived.

The Barakzais led a deputation to Aminullah asking for his whole-hearted support against the English. They assured him that they bore no ill-will towards him, offering to leave their families in his charge as sureties. Aminullah's son arrived from Ghazni at the head of 3,000 troops.

Mohan Lal advised Macgregor to write letters to Mir Haji and Khan Shirin suggesting that the British would punish only the insurgents, and would not injure the other people and neutral chiefs. He stated that Khan Shirin was a sincere friend of the British ; but his position had been considerably weakened, as the majority of Qizalbashes had joined the Barakzais. Mohan Lal also required a general proclamation of amnesty which he wanted to circulate among the people. He wrote that there was confusion, mistrust and jealousy among the rebels, and he was not sure about their united opposition to the British advance upon Kabul.¹

27th April

On the 26th April, Aminullah asked the Prince to allow him to place his guards at the gates of the Bala Hissar. Fatah Jang rejected this demand. He expelled all of Aminullah's horses and animals from the fort. He also purchased a large quantity of grain to be able to stand in case of a siege. Aminullah thereupon called to a meeting the Qizalbash and Kohistani chiefs. There it was decided that a contingent of 6,000 horse and foot should be paid by the Prince. Aminullah wanted to ruin the Barakzais, and they were anxious to destroy him. Aminullah managed to win over Abdul Salam, Mir Afzal Khan and Sikandar, and so his party was stronger than the Barakzais. In consequence the Barakzais kept themselves armed and ready to fight if they were attacked by Aminullah. They were selling their heavy moveable property in order to raise funds for recruitment of troops.

Aminullah sent for the English prisoners from Ghazni, but Mohan Lal's opinion was that Shamsud-din Khan, the

¹ *Ibid* ; 41C/61, to ' Macgregor, and 416/62, to J. R. Colvin, Secretary to the Governor-General.

chief of the place, would not comply with the demand. Mohan Lal forwarded Conolly's letter to Macgregor, through Mirza Ahsanullah Beg.¹

5th May

Mohan Lal intimated that Macgregor's letter to Khan Shirin and that of General Pollock to Prince Fatah Jang had been delivered. Mohan Lal promised to stay 'in Kabul and not to attempt escape in obedience to the wishes of Pollock and Macgregor. He placed his relative Rishi Nath in the Bala Hissar and two more men in the city to supply him all the news.

The Prince desired an immediate advance of the General to Kabul. He was prepared to resist Aminullah and the Popalzais. He had a force of 5,000 men and plenty of provisions in the fort. The Barakzais were making long ladders with which to deliver an assault on the fort. The Prince had closed all the gates except the Shah Shahid gate which was strongly defended. Aminullah was becoming friendly to the Prince for fear of the Barakzais. The Prince was liberally paying his supporters; whilst the Barakzais had no money, and they were trying to raise funds by selling jewels and imposing fines on the people. The Kohistanis, disciples of Mir Haji, who supported the Barakzais, were complaining of not receiving full payment. Mir Aftab and Mir Sayyid Khan, relations of Mir Haji, were friends of the Prince. Ghulam

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/61, to Macgregor. Major-General Pollock, commanding troops west of the Indus, forwarded Mohan Lal's letters to the Governor-General with these remarks :—

" I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of letters received by Captain Macgregor, from Mohun Lal giving an account of the state of affairs in Cabool and which I have no doubt is correct." *Ibid*; 41C/61.

Muhammad Khan, Khan Shirin Khan, Ghulam Husain Afshar and Abdul Rahim were anxious to see the British forces in Kabul in order to restore peace and order there. A rumour stated that Prince Timur had been placed on the throne at Kandahar. Muhammad Akbar was expected in Kabul on the following day.¹

9th May

Khan Shirin Khan visited Mohan Lal the previous night and told him that the Barakzais were pressing him to join them against the Prince. He said that he was not prepared for such a course. He was sending his women folk to some country fort, and would himself go to Bala Hissar or to Jalalabad.⁸

10th May

In the afternoon of the 9th May, Akbar paid a visit to Khan Shirin and persuaded him to join him against the Prince. When Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan heard of it, he dissuaded the Khan from joining Akbar.¹

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/64, to Macgregor. Mohan Lal received acknowledgment for the first time of all his previous letters on the 4th May. In this letter Mohan Lal states that he wrote letters on the 17th April, 28th April, 21st April, 2nd May, and 4th May. These letters, however, could not be traced.

Lord Ellenborough in a dispatch to the Secret Committee dated Allahabad, 8th June, 1842, stated about Mohan Lal's last letter:—

"In a letter from Moonshee Mohun Lal, dated Cabool, 9th May, (inclosed in a dispatch from Major-General Pollock, dated 15th May, No. 47), your Honourable Committee will observe that notwithstanding the vigilance observed in strictly guarding Dost Mahomed Khan within our provinces, it is alleged that he had found means to communicate with his son Mahomed Akbar." Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, No. 312, para 42, pp. 264-5.

¹ Quoted in Kaye, iii, 267, f.n.

² *Ibid* ; pp. 267-8, f. n.

15th May

During the night of the 13th May, a tower of the Bala Hissar named Burj-i-Ek Laku was attacked by the Barakzais. The reason was that Akbar Khan had opened negotiations with the Prince against the wishes of Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan. The Nawab with a view to outbidding Akbar opened secret negotiations with Alahdad Turki, the commander of the Burj to allow his men to ascend the tower. Akbar came to know of it and informed the Prince, who at once changed the guard. Muhammad Zaman's men ignorant of the change ascended the hill and got close to the tower, where they were violently opposed. This party was ultimately repulsed with heavy losses. The same night Muhammad Shah Khan had an interview with the Prince. He informed him that Akbar would soon seize the murderers of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk.

On the 14th May, Aminullah sent a message through Hyder Ali to the Prince that he should appoint Akbar his minister, and should allow him to stay in the Bala Hissar with his personal guard. This would incense Muhammad Zaman Khan whom Akbar would drive out of the city. Then he would march against Jalalabad; and the Prince must assist him with arms and money in the cause of religion and country. He assured the Prince of Akbar's loyalty by swearing on the holy Koran. The Prince sought for the opinion of Hyder Ali who replied that "since the rebellion took place, he has seen nobody eating bread but the holy swearing which have always been faithfully violated." The Prince told Aminullah that he would agree to his proposals provided the Qizalbash, Ghilzai, Kabuli and Kohistani chiefs would assure him of Akbar's fidelity. Aminullah did not accept this condition. The Prince then proposed that he would meet Akbar outside

the Bala Hissar, would grant him the robes of ministership and would provide him with four guns and some money to go to Jalalabad to fight against the British. Aminullah answered that before fighting with the English, Akbar wanted to secure his position in the Bala Hissar for an easy refuge in case of defeat. On this the Arabs, Negroes and Indians, numbering in all about 3,000, boldly asserted that they had their families inside the Bala Hissar and would not allow anybody else to take possession of the fort. Aminullah thereupon departed.¹

18th May

On the 16th May, Aminullah agreed to a meeting between the Prince and Akbar outside the Bala Hissar. It was arranged that Akbar should come with only ten attendants, but he managed to conceal about 500 men in the surrounding fields and ruined tombs. The Prince accompanied by Aminullah rode to the gate of the fort. Here 200 men insisted on accompanying the Prince as bodyguards. Aminullah objected to it, and finding his efforts in vain, he brought the Prince back into the palace. Aminullah induced Muhammad Shah Khan and Sultan Jan to persuade the Prince to see Akbar all alone. He then tried to seduce the Arabs, Negroes and Indians, but it availed him nothing.

On the 17th May Aminullah again pressed the Prince to interview Akbar, but the Arab guards opposed this proposal tooth and nail. The Prince thereupon gave up the idea of meeting Akbar outside. He therefore suggested that Akbar should see him in the fort, and said that he would send

* *Ibid* ; 41C/88. to Macgiegor. Mohan Lal stated in this letter:—"I send you now news every day or every second day. I also sent you a letter from the Prince with its translation." This letter along with others could not be traced in the Panjab Record office.

out his sons, Shah Zaman and Shahpur, as hostages. At this Aminullah got angry and left the place. After this the Shah Shahid gate of the Bala Hissar was closed. Akbar thereupon ordered the Ghilzais to fire upon the fort. The fight began and continued throughout the day and at night.

On the 18th May, at 10 o'clock in the morning the sister of Dost Muhammad Khan [wife of the late Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk] sent word to Muhammad Zaman Khan to protect the royal family. The Nawab requested Akbar to cease fighting for the day and so the battle was discontinued. The Kohistanis waited upon Akbar and told him that Muhammad Zaman Khan had not paid them for the past four days their daily allowance of Rs. 200 per day. Akbar offered them no money. Mohan Lal's opinion was that if the Barakzais did not pay their troops regularly, they would be deserted by more than half their followers.

Mohan Lal suggested that General Pollock should march as far as Gandamak 28 miles west of Jalalabad and stay there. The best time for advance upon Kabul was when the harvest would be ready.¹

22nd May

No peace could be established between Akbar and the Prince. Akbar therefore attacked Burj-i-Ek Laku from the direction of the city and the Jabbar gate. Muhammad Zaman Khan threatened Akbar for this conduct. Nawab Jabbar Khan and Muhammad Usman Khan patched up a peace

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/85. Mohan Lal forwarded Macgregor's letter to General Nott at Kandahar with his own paper giving news of the capital. He stated:—"I have sent at the risk of my life several letters to Major Rawlinson informing him of the state of affairs in Cabool"

between them, and the fighting continued with great fury. The Prince paid one gold *muhar*¹ daily to a chief and one rupee¹ to a soldier; whilst the Barakzais paid four *shahis*² a day to a chief and one *shahi* to a soldier. Mohan Lal wrote that he would send four donkey-loads of gunpowder and lead to the Prince during the night. In the day's fight Akbar lost forty men in killed and wounded.⁴

23rd May

The Barakzais suffered heavy losses in their attack on Burj-i-Ek Laku and they retired. Their repulsion was chiefly due to the bravery of Arab and Hindustani soldiers in the service of the Prince. Mohan Lal aimed at securing for the English the sympathy of Agha Hamza and Darvesh Muhammad Khan, the chiefs of the Arabs, and asked Macgregor to send him two letters for these chiefs. Muhammad Taqi Khan Vakil, and Nawab Dost Muhammad Khan of Kandahar visited Mohan Lal and offered their services to help the Prince if required by the British Government. Consequently, Mohan Lal asked Macgregor to write letters to them.⁵

25th May

Akbar sent Faiz Talab to the Prince to discuss terms of peace. Fatah Jang was to be made King of Afghanistan under the title of Fatah Shah after the expulsion of the

¹ A gold *muhar* or *asharfi* varied in value from Rs. 15 to Rs. 18 [Kabul rupees], cf. Nowrozjee Furdoonjee's Report on the Weights, Measures and Coins of Kabul, in J. A. S. B., October, 1838, p. 897.

¹117 Kabul rupees were equal in value to 100 rupees of the East India Company *Ibid*.

² The *shahi* was a silver coin equal in value to 1 anna and 1*425 pies of the E. I. Company. *Ibid*.

⁴ *Ibid*; 41C/92.

⁵ *Ibid*; 41C/94.

English from the country. Akbar was to serve him in the capacity of chief minister. Coins were to be struck in the name of the Prince, and he was to advance money, some guns, to send one of his sons to march against the English in company with Akbar, and to permit Aminullah at the head of a dozen men to stay in the Bala Hissar. The Prince, agreeing to provide Akbar with Rs. 20,000 and to send one of his sons with him who would exercise sole control over the spending of money, rejected all other demands. Akbar thereupon renewed his attack on Burj-i-Ek Laku on the night of the 24th May. In the morning of the 25th May Akbar placed a gun on the top of Khojah Safa Hill and bombarded the tower from there, causing a serious breach. Mirza Imam Vardi was forging letters in order to injure the British interests. *

26th May

Akbar again negotiated for peace demanding from the Prince one lakh of rupees and five guns. Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan wanted to settle terms with the Prince against Akbar; but he required two lakhs of rupees, the entire artillery and the placing of some of his men in the fort. Khan Shirin and Mir Haji were discussing this matter with Fatah Jang on behalf of the Nawab. The Prince had run short of ammunition, and Mohan Lal did not deem it safe to send it. The Prince requested General Pollock to advance to Gandamak.¹

28th May

Major Pottinger was abused by Akbar and his associates, and pressed to cash his bills; but the Major refused. At a conference of Barakzais, Kabulis, Qizalbashes, Kohistanis and Ghilzais, attended by Akbar, it was decided that Akbar

¹ *Ibid* 1 41C/99.

² *Ibid*; 41C/103.

should not attempt to possess himself of the Bala Hissar and that he should secure from the Prince only two lakhs of rupees and six guns to fight against the English.¹

2nd June

A conference was held between Akbar, Muhammad Zaman Khan, Jabbar Khan, Khan Shirin, Mehar Ali Khan and Ghulam Husain Afshar. Jabbar Khan asked Muhammad Zaman Khan to request Khan Shirin to hand over Mohan Lal to Akbar in the interest of country and religion. On this a heated discussion took place. Muhammad Zaman Khan told Akbar that he was ruining the country by his misdirected policy. Jabbar Khan called the Nawab an "ass". The Nawab pulled Jabbar Khan's beard, struck him a blow and expelled him. The three Qizalbash chiefs also declared in favour of the Nawab, and the conference broke up. The Prince offered the Qizalbashes one lakh of rupees to fight against Akbar. On learning this Akbar visited Khan Shirin and secured his pardon. Akbar produced a letter from Aziz Khan Ghilzai saying that the Governor-General had ordered Major-General Pollock to withdraw from Afghanistan. Mohan Lal, however, pressed the General to advance at the earliest possible moment as far as Gandamak.⁸

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/100.

² Mohan Lal wrote a letter on the 30th May also, which could not be traced.

³ *Ibid*; 41C/109. "Impulsively he [Lord Ellenborough] determined on immediate evacuation without any attempt at reprisals or even the rescue of the prisoners still in the hands of the Afghans. Nott was ordered to abandon Kandahar, Pollock to withdraw to Peshawar..... Neither Pollock nor Nott made any movement to obey the order for retirement, but pleaded lack of transport as a pretext for delay." P. E. Robert's History of British India, pp. 322-23.

3rd June

The Barakzais laid two mines under Burj-i-Majanju, one of which was destroyed by Mohan Lal. The Barakzais placed guns opposite the tower to blow it off during the night. This frightened the Prince's soldiers and they asked him to make peace with the Barakzais. The Prince considered it advisable as he was short of gunpowder. Mohan Lal stated that news had arrived from Jalalabad saying that the late Minister Muhammad Usman Khan's son was given a warm welcome by Pollock and Macgregor. This had caused great resentment in Kabul particularly in the minds of persons devoted to the British interests.¹

5th June

Mir Muhammad, son of the late Mir Waiz, went to the Jabbar gate of the Bala Hissar to negotiate terms with the Prince. Just then Mir Mahbub with 1,000 troops attacked the Khuni gate. This attack was repulsed and the enemy lost forty men. Another party of Muhammad Zaman Khan attacked the Bala Burj. They were also driven back with considerable loss. The Prince despatched Sikandar Khan, Ismail Khan, Inayatullah Khan and Qazi Sayyid Muhammad to Akbar to settle terms of peace. Akbar won them over and they promised to admit Akbar into the Bala Hissar. Mohan Lal informed the Prince of these secret negotiations. Mohan Lal

¹*Ibid*; 41C/111. Pollock wrote to Maddock, Secretary to the Governor-General, Political Department, from Jalalabad, on the 6th June, 1842 :—"This is proper to mention that the reception of Nizam-ud-doula's son as described by Mbonshce Mohan Lal has been greatly exaggerated at Cabool. He applied for permission to come into my camp and I could not refuse to admit him, but I have not yet admitted him to an interview and he has only once seen Captain Macgregor." *Ibid*.

urged Pollock to march immediately to Gandamak to cause disruption among the Barakzais. He stated that the harvest was approaching, that barley would ripen in 15 days and wheat in 25 days.¹

6th June

• Akbar invited people by the beat of drum to assemble before the Bala Hissar to see the bursting of a mine laid by him. When they had gathered, Akbar sent Aminullah to the Prince to settle terms threatening otherwise to blow up the mine. The Prince agreed to give Akbar guns and money and to admit Aminullah with 300 men into the Bala Hissar. In order to foil the schemes of the insurgents Mohan Lal again urged Pollock to march as far as Gandamak, because in that case "the General will not only save the Royal Family, cause the release of the English prisoners, but disperse the whole confederates."*

Another letter written the same day in the evening stated that in spite of the settlement of peace Akbar resolved to capture the Bala Hissar and instructed Aminullah to open the gate. Mohan Lal at once informed the Prince of the plot, telling him that he should not fear the mine as it had not

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/113, Mohan Lal to Sir R. Shakespeare, Military Secretary at Jalalabad.

* *Ibid*, 41C/114. Lord Ellenborough in a dispatch to the Secret Committee dated Allahabad, 8th July, 1842, wrote :—"The letters from Prince Futteh Jung and Mohun Lall to Captain Macgregor at Jellalabad previous to the capture of Bala Hissar by BCahomed Akbar, had repeatedly urged the expediency of the advance of the British army, even as far as Gundamuk, as a measure which would lead almost certainly to the dispersion of the Baruksye party, and the probable flight of Mahomed Akbar and the liberation of the British prisoners " Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, No. 381, para 10, p. 316.

been properly laid. The Prince consequently deprived Aminullah's men of their arms. Just then Akbar blew up the mine which caused only slight damage to the fort though it killed 590 of Akbar's assailants. In the subsequent fight he lost about 500 men more.¹

7th June

After the day's hard fight Akbar succeeded in capturing the Bala Hissar and the Prince surrendered. Mohan Lal found himself in danger and asked for Pollock's permission to escape, which, he wrote, he could easily manage.¹

9th June

Mohan Lal stated that the Prince had been forced to surrender owing to the treachery of his Arab guards. The Hindustanis remained loyal. They closed the gates of the ladies' apartments and were guarding it with single-minded devotion. Four hundred Hindus and Sikhs were still defying Akbar in the upper Bala Hissar, refusing to surrender. The rupture between Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan and Akbar was imminent. Mohan Lal advised the Prince to secure his treasure, and the Prince informed him that he had already buried most of it. He intimated that the British forces of Kandahar had reached Kalat-i-Ghilzai.³

10th June

Akbar waited upon the Prince on the 9th June, paid him homage, and swore on the Koran to remain loyal. The Prince

¹*Ibid.*

² *Ibid*; 41C/115.

³ *Ibid*; 41C/120.

offered him the robes of chief minister, but he declined this office for the time being. Muhammad Zaman Khan was trying to gather forces to fight Akbar.¹

13th June

Muhammad Shah Khan Ghilzai and Jabbar Khan approved of Akbar's capture of the Bala Hissar; while Muhammad Zaman Khan, Muhammad Usman and Mir Haji were opposed to it. Akbar wrote letters to Ghilzai, Logar and Khurjani chiefs asking them not to submit to the English and to stop grain going into their camp. The messenger to Dost Muhammad Khan carried a letter inside a knee-bone of sheep which was mixed in with the other meat. Akbar advised his father to flee from the hands of the British.¹

14th June

The jewels of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk came into the possession of Muhammad Zaman Khan. Just before the King was murdered he threw into a ditch the bag of jewellery which he had always kept with him. An Afghan, who had seen this, presently rescued the bag from the ditch and sold the stones for Rs. 600 only. When this came to the knowledge of the Nawab, he recovered the jewellery from the merchant. It was believed to be worth about 50 lakhs of rupees.⁸

15th June

Akbar was trying to seduce Zaman's followers. He wanted to keep Prince Fatah Jang as king in order to unite all the Afghans in his name and to get money from him to fight against the British. Zaman on the other hand wished

¹ *Ibid* ; 41C/122.

² *Ibid* ; 41C/126.

³ *Ibid* ; 41C/129.

himself to become king. The Ghitaais and Kabulis were with Akbar, and the majority of Qizalbashes were also on his side. The Kohistanis were still wavering. Mohan Lal insisted on Pollock's advance to Kabul in a fortnight, when the harvest would be ready. The Prince also pressed the General to the same course. Mohan Lal suggested the names of various chiefs and asked him to write letters to them in a particular form.¹

19th June

Prince Fatah Jang sent a message to Mohan Lal asking him to press General Pollock to advance upon Kabul immediately. Mohan Lal while supporting the Prince stated that the General's advance as far as Gandamak or Jagdalak [23 miles from Gandamak towards Kabul] would cause Akbar's flight to Khulam beyond the Hindukush and the release of the British prisoners. Muhammad Zaman and Akbar were preparing to fight; but the former wished for Pollock's arrival in the capital with a view to avoiding bloodshed. Khan Shirin Khan declined to join Akbar against Muhammad Zaman. Akbar was trying to get money from the Prince and so far had extracted Rs. 150,000.²

19th June

Akbar was prevented by Muhammad Zaman's men in the village of Deh Sabz [12 miles north-east of Kabul] from collecting grain. Akbar proclaimed that Lord Ellenborough had decided to restore his father Dost Muhammad Khan to the throne of Kabul. Akbar was forcing the Prince to dismiss his Indian troops ; but Hyder Ali, a confidant of the Prince, managed to win over Aminullah who promised to dissuade Akbar from such a demand.*

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/133.

² *Ibid*; 41C/137, to Macgregor.

³ *Ibid*; 41C/138.

20th June

Akbar dug trenches on all sides of Nawab Muhammad Zaman's house and posted his men there. The fight was going to commence in the evening, but Jabbar Khan intervened and stopped hostilities for the night.¹

21st June

Akbar fought with Nawab Muhammad Zaman, and the Nawab was defeated. Akbar's men then came to Chandaul to arrest Khan Shirin. Mohan Lal escaped and took shelter in another place in Chandaul. He again urged the General to march only as far as Gandamak.*

22nd June

Akbar made peace with Khan Shirin ; but he stated that the situation was serious. He again pressed for the General's advance saying that he had arranged for 2,000 *kharwars** of grain and plenty of fodder supplies for his army.⁴ Mohan Lal also supplied various details of a plan which would render the advance safe.⁵

¹ *Ibid* ; 41C/141.

² *Ibid* , 41C/143, to K. Shakespeare.

³ A *kharwar* was 1038 lbs 6 oz in weight, cf. J. A. S. B; Oct, 1838, p. 893.

⁴ *Ibid*; 41C/144.

⁵ *Ibid*; 41C/142. The Governor-General of India in a dispatch to the Secret Committee, dated Allahabad, 17th August, 1842, stated :—"Since the dispatch of the last mail, I have continued to receive constant reports furnished by Moonshee Mohun Lall, of the progress of events at Cabool, and from them your Honourable Committee will learn that Mahomed Akbar has succeeded in overcoming the parties of Zeman Khan and Khan Shureen, and installing himself in the office of Vizier to Prince Fatten Jung, whom he has formally proclaimed king." Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, No. 421. p, 340.

24th June

Mohan Lal stated that he had been captured by Akbar on the 22nd June, and confined in the room opposite to Major Pottinger's. Mohan Lal was later on transferred to Chandauh Khan Shirin's life was also in danger.¹

26th June

Aminullah was making friends with Mir Haji in order to form a party against Akbar. Mohan Lal suggested to Pollock that he should write a letter to Mir Haji and indicated the subject matter.¹

28th June

Ghulam Muhammad Khan Mukhtar, Mir Haji and Khan Shirin were ready to join Pollock against Akbar. Akbar forced the Prince to dismiss his Indian troops. Finding everything favourable to him Akbar began to lead a life of pleasure, leaving his entire business to Muhammad Shah Khan, Imam Vardi, Muhammad Mirza and Sayyid Hasan.⁸

30th June

Sultan Jan, the brother-in-law of Akbar, visited Mohan Lal and conversed with him for six hours. He told him that Akbar would resist Pollock's advance in the valleys of Jagdalak, Tazin and Khurd Kabul; and if defeated would fly to Turkistan taking the British prisoners with him.⁴

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/148.

² *Ibid* ; 41C/151.

³ *Ibid* ; 41C/156.

⁴ *Ibid*; 41C/157. The Governor-General of India in a letter to Major-General Nott, dated Allahabad, 16th July, 1842, wrote:—"Mahomed Akbar has told Mohnn Lall that, in the event of the British army advancing, he shall not meet it in the field, but defend the town of

1st July

Sultan Jan again visited Mohan Lal and told him that Akbar had ordered 1500 foot and 500 horse to march to Jagdalak under Dost Muhammad (brother of Muhammad Shah Khan), Sarfraz (brother of Aminullah) and Mulla Momin. He also stated that Akbar feared the English for twenty days more until the harvest would be ready ; after that, he said, the British would not be able to assure themselves of the supply of grain and fodder.¹

4th July

Akbar sent a present of shawls, brocades and English fabrics worth Rs. 8,000 to the Ruler of Khulam in order to secure his friendship in case of his flight. Akbar was making the ditch round the Bala Hissar deeper and was repairing its towers and ramparts. He had placed all the guns from the city on its walls. The Kohistani chiefs had left Kabul for their home where a civil war was going on among them.¹

6th July

Mirza Ahmad Khan, the chief insurgent leader of Kandahar, reached Ghazni. A rumour stated that the fort of Girishk, situated in Western Afghanistan on the high road from Herat to Kandahar, was attacked by Muhammad Quli Khan, the son of the late Wazir Fatah Khan. Akbar conferred upon Muhammad Usman Khan Barakzai robes of honour with the title of Amin-ul-Mulk. Akbar and the Prince had grown very fond of dancing-girls and wine. Akbar seized the house

Cabool; upon which I immediately sent 400 more rockets to Major-General Pollock." Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, No. 412, p. 333.

² *Ibid*; 41C/162.

of the British ally, Agha Hamza. The Qizalbashes were not attending the court in spite of Akbar's repeated requests. The spirit of disaffection was growing among Kabulis and Ghilzais.¹

8th July

Akbar was pressing the Prince to pay him money. The Prince pretended lack of funds; but in order not to displease Akbar he paid him something in the form of clothes and other articles. Akbar's agent, Muhammad Mirza, accepted an article worth a rupee for an anna. Aminullah and Mir Haji formed an alliance on oath to help the royal family. Akbar was also trying to get money, horses and camels from Khan Shirin Khan. This conduct disappointed the people and the Qizalbashes were turning against him. Mirza Hyder Ali informed him that the general public with the exception of the Ghilzais, the followers of Muhammad Shah Khan, were opposed to Akbar.¹

9th July

Mohan Lal suggested the contents of letters to be written to Aminullah and Mir Haji by Pollock. He advised the General to issue a proclamation for the people of Kabul. Mohan Lal was removed into the Bala Hissar under the charge of Sultan Jan.*

14th July

Three hundred insurgents under Mirza Ahmad Khan from Kandahar had reached Kabul. Most of the grain had been harvested. Akbar had married a sister of Aminullah.⁴

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/165.

² *Ibid*.

³ *Ibid*.

⁴ *Ibid*; 41C/172.

17th July

Akbar was hard up for money, and he was extorting a little sum from the customs-houses and people. He managed to pay 4,000 infantry in cash and cloth. A report stated that on the Kandahar-Ghazni road Ghilzais were fleeing from villages. Mohan Lal suggested to Pollock that he should close the Peshawar road for caravans in order to starve Akbar of money. Akbar was so much afraid of his life that he would not take even water in the house of Aminullah when visiting his bride.¹

19th July

Mohan Lal delivered Pollock's letters to Aminullah and Mir Haji. A rumour announced that the British Government was going to restore Dost Muhammad to the throne of Kabul. Akbar deposed Khan Shirin Khan from the headship of the Qizalbashes, and appointed Muhammad Husain Khan Arzbegi in his place. "The new chief is stupid and a drunken fellow. No respectable Persians go near him, and this occurrence has incensed all the Morad Khanee, Afshar and Chandoul Persians, and all of them are roaring against Akbar." Jabbar Khan was appointed city magistrate. He mutilated the noses and ears of shopkeepers for not selling things cheaper; and Akbar extorted money from them. In consequence merchants, artisans and shopkeepers were suffering very much, and the people in general were "looking for an opportunity to take arms against the Burukzies." Muhammad Usman Khan Amin-ul-Mulk was the chief collector ; but he failed to realize any sum from cultivators. Akbar employed 4,000 horse on a salary of Rs. 10 per mensem to fight at Jalalabad and advanced them two months' pay, half in cash and half in cloth.¹

¹*Ibid*; 41C/176.

² *Ibid* ; 41C/177.

20th July

Akbar had given up for the present the idea of employing a force of 5,000 cavalry for want of money. Mohan Lal warned Sir R. Shakespeare, Military Secretary, Jalalabad, not to be deceived by Akbar in his negotiations for peace :—"We have already suffered too much from his treachery, then how we are going to believe. If we will believe him we will suffer and repent much more than we have hitherto suffered." Haji Ali, commanding a contingent of 4,000 men had been stopped by Akbar at Butkhak [9 miles from Kabul], and ordered not to march to Jalalabad.¹

21st July

There were strong rumours that the British Government was contemplating peace with Akbar. On this news the friends of the English in Kabul were evacuating the place for fear of Akbar. The Prince in a letter supplicated the General to advance immediately to Kabul or to take the royal family under British protection. The Prince was forced by Akbar to write letters to the General in his own interest against the Prince's wishes. Mohan Lal informed Pollock that the Prince's letters without his signatures in English should not be considered genuine. Mohan Lal also pointed out that his own letters without a date should be considered as having been written under duress and therefore should not be attended to.¹

26th July

The chiefs of Kohistan revolted against Akbar, and he sent a small force with a few cannon against them. Nawab Jabbar Khan, the city magistrate of Kabul by his severity "caused so much hatred of the people against Akbar that

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/179.

² *Ibid*; 41C/180.

the whole populace took arms against him, on which Akbar cunningly discharged the Nawab and ordered the people to sell the things at the rate they wish and fix themselves." The Ghilzais of Tazin entered into solemn oaths with the Persians to the effect that they would unite against Akbar in case he tried to injure either of them.¹

29th July

Akbar was losing his popularity in Kabul, and the people were growing disloyal to him. Mohan Lal sent some Persian newspapers, adding:—"They contain valuable information. You should tear them up when all read."¹

31st July

On the 30th July all the Ghilzai chiefs waited upon Aminullah, and asked him to express their alarm to Akbar for his giving more and more powers to Muhammad Shah Khan. Aminullah conveyed their wishes, and Akbar promised to settle the matter with them in two days' time. Mirza Ahmad of Kandahar received a *khilat* from Akbar. Akbar's troops threatened to mutiny if their arrears of pay were not cleared in a week's time. Akbar received from the collector of the customs-house Rs. 93,035 ; and to supplement this sum he was selling silver articles received by him from the the Prince as gifts. The well-wishers of the British Government in Kabul despaired on hearing that the English armies were going to retire from Afghanistan. Mohan Lal urged Pollock not to return from Jalalabad even if peace terms were under consideration, and made a strong appeal for his advance upon Kabul.'

¹*Ibid*; 41C/184. '

² *Ibid* ; 41C/185.

³ *Ibid*; 41C/189.

4th August

Mohan Lal forwarded to R. C. Shakespeare two letters, one from Prince Fatah Jang and the other from Mir Ali Khan, the Murad Khani chief, containing the "most valuable topics." He also sent a message of good-will from Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan. On hearing that the British forces had marched from Jalalabad to Charbagh in Lughman Akbar ordered an Afghan contingent of 2,000 horse and foot to attack them. Mulla Momin was in charge of the advance-guard consisting of 400 men. The contingent had reached Siah Sang.¹

8th August

Akbar received a message from Shams-ud-din Khan of Ghazni saying that the Durrani chiefs of Kandahar had acknowledged Prince Timur as their ruler and Muhammad Quli, the son of the late Wazir Fatah Khan, as his minister. The message also stated that the English army had received considerable reinforcement in the form of camels, bullocks etc, from Shikarpur, and that it was marching towards Kabul. Mohan Lal reported the arrival at Kabul of Captain Saunders in disguise from Kandahar. Mohan Lal sent his servant to the house where Saunders was staying. Saunder's servant, Mustafa, informed Mohan Lal's servant that Saunders would not see anybody or make himself known. Mustafa told him that Saunders had been deputed by General Nott to Prince Fatah Jang. Akbar was making preparations to oppose Pollock's advance either at Tazin or at Khurd Kabul. On Friday in the mosque at the afternoon prayers Akbar made a fervent appeal to the Musalmans in the name of Islam together under his banners to fight against the English. On the 8th August he invited all the chiefs to a sumptuous

¹ *Ibid* ; 41C/191.

dinner given by Jabbar Khan and "intends to produce Koran and beg the chiefs to enter into solemn oaths that they will not desert him if he may be pressed to fight with us."¹

*12th August**

The result of Pollock's delay in advancing upon Kabul was that Akbar prepared to punish the chiefs inclined towards the British. He placed a large number of guards at the gates of the Bala Hissar; and stationed Sultan Jan in Chandaul. He then seized Prince Fatah Jang, and stationed some of his men to guard the place. The secretary of the Prince and Agha Hamza were also taken into custody. "The delay in advancing our army afford an increasing power while it does ruin our friends and interests. Akbar is engaged to catch everybody and extort money for his force to send against us."¹

18th August

Akbar was alarmed at learning that General Nott had left Kandahar for Kabul. He felt that he would be unable to fight the two forces, of Nott and Pollock, at the same time. In case of Pollock's advance he would be joined against Akbar by Malik Shadad Khan, the chief of Sagao. Ghulam Khan who had already rendered valuable services to the British against Dost Muhammad Khan for Rs. 40,000 was preparing to support Pollock against Akbar. Mohan Lal recommended him for a further favour of money : — "If any sum is advanced to him, he will not cheat us and perform the service we point him out." Mohan Lal stated that Prince Fatah Jang had

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/193.

² Mohan Lal addressed a letter on the 22th August but it could not be traced.

³ Panjab Records, 41C/196.

⁴ Mohan Lal addressed a letter on the 16th August; but it could not be traced.

plenty of jewellery, but he was hard up for cash. Akbar "swept off the palace from every moveable property or in fact plundered everything without disgracing the royal family."¹

25th August²

Akbar ordered the followers of the Logar chiefs, Muhammad Usman Khan and Jabbar Khan, to march to Ghazni to oppose Nott's advance. He himself wanted to resist Pollock who had left Jalalabad on the 20th August and reached Gandamak on the 23rd. Akbar selected the valleys of Jagdalak and Tazin as the best places of defence. The soldiers following in both directions were to be paid daily wages at the rate of four *shahis* a day for a horseman, and one and a half *shahis* a day for a footman. Jabbar Khan was to remain in Kabul as its Governor. Akbar asked Mir Haji to persuade the people in the city to march as far as Siah Sang just to frighten Pollock with the idea that the whole population was with Akbar. On later consideration Akbar ordered almost all the cavalry to go to Ghazni and infantry to Tazin. There was a rumour in the town that General Nott had defeated Shams-ud-din.³

26th August

Akbar sent his tents to Siah Sang in the morning and intended to move to Butkhak and Tazin in the course of three days. General Nott had reached Mukur [situated on the Kandahar-Ghazni road, 160 miles north-east of the former city].

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/200.

² Mohan Lal also addressed letters on the 20th & 21st August; but they were not found.

³ Panjab Records, 41C/202. It may be pointed out that "Hotspur" is the name used in letters for Akbar, "High city" for General Nott, "Peshawar" for General Pollock and "Red Head" for Khan Shirin cf. *Ibid*; 41C/205.

Akbar and his friends came to the conclusion that they would be able to offer greater resistance to the British troops in the hills than in the plains.¹

30th August

On the 27th, Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan was pressed by various chiefs to adjust his differences with Akbar. Akbar demanded from him all the jewels of Shah Shuja, and in return offered to place him on the throne of Afghanistan, and rule with the assistance of Mir Haji. Nawab Jabbar Khan and Muhammad Usman Khan were to be placed in charge of the Bala Hissar. Akbar sent away his property to the fort of Surkhab. Muhammad Usman Khan was also despatching his property to Surkhab. Khudabakhsh Khan, the chief of Tazin, received a *khilat* from Akbar, and promised to help Akbar against Pollock. A relation of Muhammad Shah Khan severely wounded a gun-maker of Kabul. Mir Haji was offended at it and the minds of the people were perturbed. Akbar thereupon cut off an ear of the culprit. This incensed Muhammad Shah Khan. He therefore cut off both the ears of a man belonging to Akbar's party. He then retired in anger to his fort of Shewki. Akbar went to this place and conciliated Muhammad Shah Khan. Akbar plundered certain merchants of Kabul of their goods particularly English cloth and indigo. He paid his soldiers in these goods, giving an article worth Rs. 2/8/- for three rupees, and the soldiery sold it for Rs. 2. Akbar left the Bala Hissar for Butkhak on the 30th August. Aminullah, Hamza Khan and Mehar Ali Khan were forming a party against Akbar. Prince Fatah Jang had escaped to join Pollock's camp.¹

¹ *Ibid* 1 41C/205.

² *Ibid*; 41C/206. The Prince joined Pollock on the 1st September. His arrival is thus described by Kaye, iii, 300-1;—"It was on the 28th of

1st September

A rumour stated that General Nott had reached Ghazni. Mohan Lal therefore again urged Pollock to advance to Gandamak. Residents of Kabul were fleeing, and many parties in the city were joining against Akbar.¹

4th September

Akbar sought Mohan Lal's advice regarding peace terms with the British Government. Akbar wanted an agreement from the Governor-General to the effect that he and other members of his family would not be injured. Akbar then asked Mohan Lal to write a letter for him. There was a strong rumour that General Nott had gained a brilliant victory over Shams-ud-din of Ghazni. Aziz Khan Ghilzai was coming to join Akbar against Pollock to fight at Gandamak. Khojah Mir Khan, Chief of Istalif (22 miles north-west of Kabul), sent his son at the head of 200 men to assist Akbar. Akbar had only 2,000 men in his camp.⁸

September, when Pollock was awaiting at Gundamuck the assembling of his brigades, that an Afghan, of forlorn aspect, in soiled and tattered clothes rode upon a wretched pony, attended by three followers, into the British camp. Two officers of the general staff, Burn and Mayne, met the stranger as he approached, and recognised him. They knew him to be Futteh Jung."

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/210.

²*Ibid*, 410/207. This is the last letter of Mohan Lal on the subject. He escaped from prison five days later, and Pollock entered Kabul after eleven days.

CHAPTER XI

RELEASE OF BRITISH PRISONERS

J. Movements of the Prisoners

It¹ may be recalled that in January, 1842, when the British forces were massacred, many persons, the total number of whom later on increased to 122, consisting of 35 officers, 51 soldiers, 2 civilians, 10 officers' wives, 2 soldiers' wives and 22 children, had been taken prisoners by Akbar¹. They remained in Khurd Kabul for a day, and on the 12th January advanced towards Tazin. On the 12th they were taken to SehBaba. Shortly afterwards they were removed to Tigree, 30 miles from Jalalabad. As this place was not safe they were taken to Badiabad, a fortified village belonging to Muhammed Shah Khan, father-in-law of Akbar. Here the prisoners spent nearly three months. The prisoners moved from this place on the 11th April and reached Tazin on the 19th April. Then they marched to Gondah, a village 12 miles from Tazin, where General Elphinstone died on the 23rd April. On the 23rd May they were taken to Haft Kotal, and later to the Khurd Kabul fort. The prisoners were transferred for the sake of safety to the fort of Ali Muhammad, three miles from

¹ This chapter will show that Mohan Lal made the greatest possible exertions and ultimately succeeded in securing the release of the British prisoners. But it is painfully surprising to find that in a large number of works on the 1st Afghan War written by Englishmen, no reference whatsoever has been made to him with the exception of Kaye and Eyre. Even the most recent writer on the subject, Sykes, is absolutely silent regarding Mohan Lal's services in this matter.

¹ Malleon, 335. For their names and other particulars vide Eyre's *Journal of Imprisonment in Afghanistan*, 423-6.

Kabul on the banks of the Logar river. There were a number of English hostages in Kabul, who were under the charge of Nawab Muhammed Zaman Khan.¹

2. Mohan Lal sends news about the Prisoners

Mohan Lal, though placed in a situation of peculiar danger and difficulty, managed by his fortitude, ability and judgment to supply regular information about the prisoners either to Macgregor, the political agent, or to Shakespeare*, the military secretary, at Jalalabad.

¹ Kaye, iii, 105, pays a glowing tribute to the Nawab:—"In the meanwhile the English hostages remained under the protection of Mahomed Zemaun Khan. Nothing could exceed the kindness of the good old man. Faithful among the faithless, he was resolute to defend the Christian strangers at all risks; and never when the popular clamour ran highest, and other men of note were thirsting for the blood of the captives did he waver for an instant in his determination to shield the helpless Feringhees from the malice of his remorseless countrymen. He was a Barukzye chief—a near relative of Dost Mahomed Khan; and there was not among the Sirdars of all the tribes one in whom the spirit of nationality glowed more strongly and more purely. But whilst the independence of his country was as dear to him as to any of his brethren, he did not burn with that fierce hatred against the English which broke out in other places, nor did he ever, in the advancement of the most cherished objects of his heart, stain his patriotism with those foul crimes from which elsewhere there was little shrinking. Regarding with abhorrence the conduct of those who had betrayed our unhappy people, he himself did all that, single-handed, he could do, to atone for the cruelty of his countrymen; and no father could have treated his children more kindly than the good Newab cherished and protected the English hostages who found a sanctuary in his home."

¹ Shakespeare, Sir Richmond Campbell (1812-1861), was the youngest son of John Talbot Shakespeare, of the Bengal civil service, by Emily, eldest daughter of William Makepeace Thackeray. In England he was at school with his first cousin, William Makepeace Thackeray, "governed," says Thackeray, "by a horrible little tyrant." Shakespeare

29th January, 1842

In a letter of the 29th January, Mohan Lal stated that Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk had written to Akbar to send all the British prisoners to him.¹

30th January, 1842

Mohan Lal informed Macgregor that the British prisoners had been sent by Akbar to Lughman' [24 miles from Jalalabad], and that Lieutenant Sturt had been killed and his wife taken prisoner by Durrani.

28th February

Mohan Lal wrote that Aminullah was very much against Lieutenant Conolly* and other officers. Muhammad Usman Khan Barakzai sent a message to Mohan Lal through Naib Sharif, offering to kill Aminullah. Mohan Lal referred him to

obtained a commission as second lieutenant in the Bengal artillery in 1828. Following the Army of the Indus, he reached Kandahar in April, 1839. He went to Girishk, with Sir Robert Sale on an expedition against the Kandahar chiefs. In June he was appointed political assistant in the mission to Herat. From there he was sent to Khiva to secure the surrender of Russian captives. He delivered many of the prisoners at St. Petersburg. He was knighted in 1841. In June, 1842 he was appointed military secretary to major-general Pollock, cf. *Dictionary of National Biography and Buckland*.

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/62.

² The valley of Lughman is situated to the north of Jalalabad and is bounded on the north by the Hindukush, in the east by the Kama river, on the south by the Kabul river, and in the west by Ahshang river. It is forty miles long and thirty miles broad. The inhabitants are Tajiks. Thornton, ii, 26.

* Conolly, John* Balfour, Lieutenant, 20th Bengal native infantry, was attached to the Kabul embassy. While a hostage in the Bala Hissar, he died of fever on the 7th August, 1842 ; cf. Lady Sale's Journal, 392.

the officers staying with **Nawab** Muhammad Zaman Khan. Mohan Lal maintained communications with Lieutenant Conolly, one of the prisoners, but received nothing in reply as a strict watch was kept on his movements.¹

1st March

Aminullah in the name of the Shah sent a word to Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan asking him to deliver the British prisoners to him, "but the good Nawab has refused, saying that he will fight if anyone will dare to take them from him." Khan Shirin Khan also conveyed a message to the Nawab not to hand over the prisoners to AminuUah. Ghulam Khan also offered his assistance in securing the release of the prisoners in case they were to be sent outside Kabul.¹

10th March

Mohan Lal wrote that an old servant of Lieutenant Conolly had informed him of the danger the prisoners were in from AminuUah. Dr. Berwick sought Mohan Lal's advice in case the prisoners found themselves in a serious situation, and Mohan Lal promised him their safe refuge in Chandaul.*

28th March

Ghulam Khan Popalzai who had stirred up the Kohistanis in favour of the British and against Dost Muhammad Khan visited Mohan Lal on the 16th March. He again volunteered to raise Logar Afghans to release the prisoners if they were to be removed from Kabul by Akbar.⁴

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/57.

2Ibid.

3Ibid.

4Ibid.

9th April

Aminullah again requested Nawab Muhammad. Zaman Khan to hand over the English prisoners to him. He also asked Khan Shirin Khan to deliver Mohan Lal to him. He suspected that their stay in Kabul would cause dissensions among the chiefs, and therefore wanted to send them to some distant place.¹

10th April

He conveyed the sad news of Nawab Muhammad Zaman's decision to relinquish charge of the prisoners. The prisoners however, were not to be put up with Aminullah but were to be placed under the charge of Mir Haji, the high priest of Kabul.*

17th April

Mohan Lal wrote that on the 12th April Aminullah and the Popalzais threatened Nawab Muhammad Zaman Khan that he must deliver the prisoners or fight. The Nawab got ready to defend himself. Nawab Jabbar Khan and Agha Husain persuaded the Nawab to yield. Consequently the prisoners were conducted to the house of Mir Haji; whilst Aminullah's guards were placed over them. On the 15th April Aminullah gave orders for the removal of the sick and the wounded among the prisoners along with ConoUy under the charge of Sayyid Murtza to Char Oblah situated on the road to Logar. Akbar intended to remove the prisoners either to Nijrow³ or Hisarak;⁴ but the Ghilzai chiefs were opposed to this plan.⁵

1 Ibid,

2 Ibid.

3 Nijrow is a valley in the Kohistan inhabited by Tajiks.

4 Hisarak is situated in the vaUey of Jalalabad, south of the mam road from Kabul to Jalalabad.

5 Panjab Records, 41C/42.

25th April

Mohan Lal stated that Lieutenant Conolly was in distress in the house of Mir Haji. Aminullaji wished to transfer the prisoners to the Logar country; but Mir Haji was not prepared to allow him to do so.¹

27th April'

Aminullah sent for the English prisoners to come from Ghazni to Kabul. A strict watch was kept on Lieutenant Conolly. The prisoners were confined in a small room in the house of Mir Haji. A letter from Conolly, apparently blank, but on which words appeared when held against fire, was forwarded by Mohan Lal to Macgregor.*

23rd May

Gul Muhammad Ghilzai of Logar informed Akbar that Mir Afzal Malik of Gandamak and Gul Muhammad Khan of Jabbar Khail were in correspondence with Macgregor regarding the release of the prisoners. Akbar in consequence ordered the removal of the prisoners from Tazin to Kabul. Mohan Lal suggested to Macgregor that he should write letters to Khan Shirin, Mehar Ali and Baqar Khan, the Qizalbash chiefs, and Ghulam Husain Khan Afshar and Mir Muhammad Hazara asking for their assistance regarding the prisoners' safety.²

25th May

Mohan Lal informed Macgregor that the prisoners had been placed by Akbar in the fort of Vali Mir Akhur in Shewki,

1 *Ibid* ; 41C/61 and 62.

2 *Ibid*; 41C/61.

3 *Ibid*; 41C/94-

situated near Kabul. He heard that Akbar was deliberating on a plan to send them to the village of Ahungiam, situated on the route to Bamian.¹

28th May

Mirza Imam Vardi told Mohan Lal that at Major Pottinger's and Captain Mackenzie's representation, Akbar was willing to release the prisoners; but Captain Troupe¹ secretly told Akbar that he could secure two lakhs of rupees by releasing only the women prisoners and consequently Akbar had changed his mind and called a conference of Barakzais, Kabulis, Qizalbashes, Kohistanis and Ghilzais, in the Charbagh, the tomb of Timur Shah; where it was ultimately decided that the prisoners should be allowed to remain in Kabul.*

2nd June

Mohan Lal advised General Pollock to advance immediately as far as Gandamak. "If you follow this advice, you will not only save the Royal family, but disperse the Barakzais and cause the release of our prisoners before Mahomed Akbar should send them to Turkistan."⁴

6th June

Mohan Lal again urged General Tollock to march to Gandamak in the interest of the prisoners if nothing else.⁶

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/99.

¹ Troupe. Colin entered the army in 1820 ; served against the Bhils in 1827, "and was in Afghanistan during the first Afghan war. He was taken prisoner in the retreat from Kabul in January, 1842. Later he commanded the 48th regiment at Aliwai in the first Sikh War, 1845-6. He was created a C. B., and Lt General in 1872. He died at Meerut in April, 1876. cf. *Buckland*.

²*Ibid*.; 41C/100. "

³*Ibid*; 41C/109.

⁴ *Ibid* ; 41C/114.

15th June

He communicated to Jalalabad the news of Akbar's intention to send the prisoners to Bamian in case of Pollock's victorious march to Jagdalak.¹

19th June

Mohan Lal assured Macgregor of the safety of the prisoners against their despatch to Bamian, "as I have, excited many people against this plan of Akbar."

20th June

Mohan Lal again insisted on Pollock's advance to save the prisoners from slavery in Turkistan.⁸

22nd June

Khan Shirin Khan and Ghulam Hasar Khan, chief of the Afshar Persians, stated that the prisoners might have been released if General Pollock had advanced to Gandamak a fortnight earlier when Akbar was busy in fighting with Muhammad Zaman Khan. They suggested that they would secure the release of the prisoners if Pollock would advance in a week's time at the latest.⁴

1

24th June

Akbar intended to take away Lieutenant Conolly and others from under the charge of Mir Haji.⁶

26th June

Khan Shirin Khan sent a word to Mohan Lal saying that he was not visiting Akbar, had collected all his followers, sent

1 Ibid; 41C/133.

2 Ibid; 41C/138.

3 Ibid; 41C/141.

4 Ibid; 41C/144.

5 Ibid; 41C/148.

away his moveable property, and removed his women to a place of safety. As soon as the General commenced his march towards Kabul he would openly oppose Akbar, and would seize the prisoners from his possession. Ghulam Muhammad Khan Mukhtar also assured Mohan Lal of his support in securing the release of the prisoners. Akbar daily visited Mir Haji to take over charge of the prisoners. Mohan Lal advised General Pollock and Macgregor to write a letter to Mir Haji, saying that "he is chief priest of Cabool etc; and it is therefore expected that he will keep all our prisoners by him."*

28th June

Ghulam Muhammad Khan Mukhtar advised Mir Haji not to hand over the prisoners to Akbar. He assured Mohan Lal of his whole-hearted co-operation in this matter. Khan Shirin Khan wrote letters to various Hazara chiefs on the route to Bamian to molest Akbar if he should flee in that direction. The Khan was concerting measures in consultation with Ghulam Hasar Khan, the Afshar chief, to secure freedom of the prisoners.¹

30th June

Ghulam Muhammad Khan Mukhtar sent his son Taj Muhammad, giving him assurance of his fidelity, expecting "that I have approved of his services. I replied that he will be rewarded and made the minister of the country if he keeps his word." He sent a reply to Mohan Lal saying that "as long as he and Meer Hajee live our prisoners shall not be removed. He insists upon me to write to you to advance quickly."*

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/151.

² *Ibid*; 41C/156.

³ *Ibid*; 41C/157.

1st July

Sultan Jan, the brother-in-law of Akbar [son-in-law of Dost Muhammad Khan], visited Mohan Lal asking his opinion as to how the British Government could be satisfied. Mohan Lal suggested that immediate release of the prisoners and Akbar's apology were the only means which could satisfy the British authorities.¹

4th July

Mohan Lal wrote:—"Our friend Aga Humza in the Bala Hissar tells me that Syud Mehseer who is respected and worshipped by the Hazarabs of Bamian and Deh Koonde and who has been the collector of that country for a long time agrees to raise 5,000 horse and foot and prevent the transmission of our prisoners to Toorkistan in case Akbar should intend to send them away, but I must advance Rs. 10,000. I replied to Aga Humza that I am destitute of such means; but if the Prince and he think the Syud an honest man, they may settle with him on this subject, and the services of the Syud shall be appreciated by our Government."¹

6th July

Kamal, a servant of Nawab Jabbar Khan, told Mohan Lal that Akbar was determined to send away the prisoners to the Hazara country; but he was afraid the people of Kabul might stand in his way. Jabbar Khan had therefore taken upon himself to conciliate the people before removing the prisoners. Mohan Lal thereupon took the most hazardous step of writing thirty anonymous letters to the most influential chiefs of Kabul. The subject matter of the letters was:—

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid*; 41C/162.

"Akbar is of course faithful, but why he makes preparations to fly upon one hand and to fight with the English on the other. If he intends to fly and send away the English prisoners towards Bamian, we, the citizens, should take steps to prevent the removal of the prisoners, otherwise if the English take Cabool, they will ask the citizens why they allowed Akbar to send away the prisoners." These letters created great excitement in the city, and people began to argue openly that it was in their interest to keep the prisoners in Kabul.*

8th July

Akbar sent Mirza Imam Vardi to Mir Haji with the request that he would send the prisoners to the Bala Hissar which was a safer place. Mir Haji did not like to create any suspicion in the mind of Akbar, and complied with his wishes. The prisoners were consequently transferred to the Bala Hissar. Mohan Lal was, however, hopeful about the future of the prisoners. He reported that Aminullah and Mir Haji were greatly disappointed with Akbar. They held a secret meeting in the house of Ahmad Khan. They took solemn oaths to stand by each other in securing the release of the English prisoners. They were going to form a party with the Persian chiefs for this purpose. A rumour stated that the Vali of Khulam wrote to Akbar that in case he wanted to come there he should not bring the English prisoners with him.*

9th July

Mohan Lal conveyed assurances of British favour to Ghulam Muhammad Khan Mukhtar if he would secure

1Ibid; 41C/163.

2Ibid.

the release of the prisoners. "He replied that when **we were** ruling at Cabool we never cared about him, and if I had money to advance to him, he would immediately take possession of our prisoners." Mohan Lal told him that he was a prisoner and had no money. Mirza Hyder Ali also promised to co-operate with Aminullah towards achieving this end. Mohan Lal suggested that letters should be written to all these chiefs under the seal and signature of General Pollock. He pointed out the following subject matter .—"They will be treated as friends and pardoned for the past, their lands, pay and rank shall continue as before; Prince Futteh Jung shall be looked as their superior and the English will not interfere in the internal affairs of the kingdom; British Envoy will remain with some army and the rest of the forces shall go to India."¹ Mohan Lal further communicated that Akbar was going to send Majid Peshkhidmat to the Vali of Khulam. Mohan Lal's opinion was that the "treachery, flattery, and capacity of Akbar" would ultimately succeed in frustrating all the schemes

¹ Sir R. Shakespeare, military secretary to the Major-General commanding in Afghanistan wrote:—"I yesterday had the pleasure to receive your three letters of date 6th, 8th and 10th instant In reply to the letter in which you propose that the General should write to Meer Hajee and Ameenoolah, I am directed to say :—

"That the rank, pay and lands of these chiefs and of all others who may assist in the recovery of the prisoners, will not be interfered with by the English Government, who will consider the service of recovering the prisoners as obliterating their errors during the rebellion at Cabool.

"The General has heard that the Afghan nation has selected a king and placed Futteh Jung on the throne. It is not the wish of the English Government to interfere in matters in this country more than in recovering our prisoners and guns etc. The subject of an Envoy at the court of Cabool is one which must be decided by a reference to the Supreme Government."

Panjab Records, 41C/165.

of the supporters and sympathisers of the English, and in sending the prisoners to Turkistan. Mohan Lal again urged Pollock to advance quickly.¹

17th July

Ghulam Muhammad Khan Mukhtar and Mir Haji again assured Mohan Lal that they would not allow Akbar to remove the prisoners from Kabul.¹

19th July

Mohan Lal intimated that he had delivered letters to Aminullah and Mir Haji*. Sarfraz Khan, the brother of the former, told Mohan Lal that Biir Haji, Aminullah and the Persian chiefs had entered into a solemn league to secure the liberty of the prisoners."

20th July

Mohan Lal forwarded three Persian letters, one from the Prince, the second from his Secretary and the third from Mehtar Ali, the Murad Khani chief; also a Persian newspaper. He asserted that they contained " the most valuable information and the feeling of the combined chiefs with regard of our prisoners etc."⁴

21st July

A report was current in the city that the English prisoners had been secretly taken away by Ghilzais who were bribed by the English. The Kabul chiefs suspected treachery on tip part of Akbar. Consequently, they waited upon Akbar and declared that they would take arms against him if he sent

'Out.

2 IBID; 41C/176.

3 *Ibid*; 41C/177.

4 *Ibid*;41C/179.

away the prisoners. Akbar offered to show that the prisoners were still there. Mohan Lal also sent his servant who found that Akbar's statement was correct.¹

26th July

When General Pollock's letter to Mir Haji was read before the members of his family, all were pleased, and they pressed Blir Haji not only to secure the liberty of the prisoners but also to try to seize Akbar.¹

29th July

Akbar called a council of the chiefs on the 28th July and asked their opinion about releasing the prisoners. AminuUah was the first to plead for the immediate release of the prisoners. In this demand he was supported by Mir Haji and Mehar Ali, the Murad Khani chief. This proposal was opposed by Jabbar Khan, Muhammad Shah Khan, Mirza Ali and Akbar. Akbar, however, ultimately agreed to Aminullah's proposal.³

31st July

Akbar was prevented from releasing the prisoners by Mirza Ali and Khaliq Ali etc. They advised him not to set the prisoners free before the members of his own family were restored to him.⁴

4th August

Mohan Lal forwarded a letter from Nawab Muhammad Zaman, "who undertakes the delivery of our prisoners and apprehension of Mahomed Akbar Khan if I would procure some money for him."⁵

1 Ibid; 41C/180.

2 Ibid; 41C/184.

3 Ibid; 41C/185.

4 Ibid; 41C/189.

5 Ibid; 41C/191.

12th August

Mohan Lal wrote that Akbar realized the danger of "an immediate rise of the people against him in securing our prisoners." Consequently, he placed a large number of guards on them in the Bala Hissar, seized Prince Fatah Jang, Agha Hamza etc., and decided to send the prisoners from the Bala Hissar to Shewki, and thence to Khulam or Nijrow. Just then there arrived in Kabul Malik Mirza Shah, the Chief of Nijrow, and Akbar postponed the transfer of the prisoners for a day, as he wanted to consult the Chief in this matter. Mohan Lal suggested a coup d'etat. He stated that the fort of Shewki was guarded by only forty men. A strong cavalry force by leaving Surkhab at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and marching in the night could arrive at Shewki at 5 o'clock next morning. Thus the garrison should be taken by surprise; and prisoners could easily be secured. He, however, pointed out that the cleverest guides should be employed for such a dangerous journey*. He informed Macgregor that Aminullah was doing his best to help the prisoners, and he was making every possible effort to delay their departure from Kabul. Akbar could not be persuaded and he sent the prisoners from the Bala Hissar to Shewki. Mohan Lal was detained in the Bala Hissar.¹

25th August

Mohan Lal reported the arrival in Kabul on the 22nd August of another batch of English prisoners from Ghazni in the charge of Colonel Palmer. Akbar told them that General Pollock was very fond of fighting, and in consequence the prisoners should be ready "to see the wonders of Toorkistan". They were also sent to Shewki on the 23rd August, and thus all the prisoners assembled in one place.¹

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/196.

² *Ibid*; 41C/202.

J. Prisoners are sent off towards Turkistan

On the 25th August the prisoners were ordered to be taken to Turkistan across Bamian. They were provided with 29 camels and 67 horses and with sufficient quantity of medicines. Captains Troupe and Bygrave were detained to accompany Akbar to Butkhak. For some time before their departure the prisoners had been suffering from fever which had considerably reduced them. Vincent Eyre,¹ one of the prisoners recorded on the 17th August:—"Mrs. Smith, a poor European widow, servant to Mrs. Trevor died of fever. Scarcely a single lady, officer, soldier, or child had now escaped the disease and we began to resemble accompany of ghosts on a visit from the other world."*

In a letter on the 26th August Mohan Lal stated that Captain Anderson and his wife, and the wife and children of Captain Trevor, all being extremely ill had been left behind at Shewki with Dr. Campbell to attend them.⁸

On the 30th August Mohan Lal wrote s—"Poor Mrs. Trevor is very sick and Captain Troupe writes me that she is not expected to live."⁴

¹ Eyre, Sir Vincent (1811-1881), general, joined the artillery of the Company in Bengal in 1829. After eight years he was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant. In 1839 he was appointed commissary of ordnance to the Kabul army. He passed through the Panjab, with an immense train of ordnance stores and arrived at Kabul in April, 1840. When on the 9th January, 1842, the British married officers with their families had to surrender to Akbar, Eyre with his wife and child was among those so surrendered.

² Eyre, 331.

³ Panjab Records, 41C/205.

⁴ *Ibid*; 41C/206.

Their distress grew greater on the journey. On the 2nd September, Eyre wrote:—"Some of the sick soldiers, who were forced to walk, were quite exhausted; and one poor fellow, who was too weak even to sit on a horse, it was found necessary to bind on a camel."¹

The prisoners reached Bamian on the 3rd September. At this place they were taken from fort to fort and at last on the 9th September were lodged in a wretched fort.¹

4. British Officers' attempt to persuade Salah Muhammad fails

The British prisoners were placed under the command of Salah Muhammad, a chief of the Hazaras, who had begun his political career when Sir John Keane arrived in Kabul, by espousing the cause of Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk. He was taken in the British service and employed as a Subahdar in Captain Hopkin's regiment of infantry. When Dost Muhammad Khan was fighting with the British force under the command of Colonel Dennie at Bamian, Salah Muhammad deserted the British army, and went over with his relations to Dost Muhammad Khan. He fought under Dost Muhammad Khan against General Sale at Par wan. When Dost Muhammad surrendered, he fled away to Turkistan.* On Akbar's getting possession of the Bala Hissar, Salah Muhammad came back, and received command of an infantry regiment consisting of Afghans, Tajiks and Persians etc. Afterwards he was given charge of the British prisoners with a contingent of 300 men.*

The British prisoners knew that he was a deserter, and thought that he might be prevailed upon to desert again.

¹ Eyre, 343.

² [Kaye.iii.331.](#)

³ Panjb Records, 41C/206,

With this end in view some leading Englishmen opened negotiations with him; but failed in their attempt. Major Pottinger while addressing a letter to General Pollock on the 21st September, 1842, says : — " I have omitted to state that on the 29th and 30th of August, the prisoners having agreed amongst themselves that they would raise a subscription for their release, and the party having selected Captain Lawrence, Captain Johnson and myself, as their agents we opened a negotiation with Salah Mohammad Khan, by Captain Johnson and Captain Lawrence severally offering to engage themselves for the payment of a lac of rupees to Salah Mohammad Khan, if he would agree to aid in our release; and Captain Johnson explained to him that if he (Salah Mohammad) would delay our march when Major-General Nott's army reached 'Mydan', we might by a forced march join his camp. To both these proposals Salah Mohammad Khan returned distinct refusals and afterwards treated us with considerable harshness giving orders that no one should go beyond the line of sentinels round our tents, threatening to kill us if any escaped, and in other ways shewing himself displeased with our propositions."¹

¹ cf. Memorandum of Agha Hyder Hasan, p. 2; Forman Christian College Library. Kaye, iii, 351-3, says:—"The commander of the escort was one Saleh Mahomed. A soldier of fortune, who had visited many countries, and served under many masters, he had been at one time a subahdar in Captain Hopkin's regiment of infantry, and had deserted with his men to Dost Mahomed on the eve of the contest at Bameean. A good-humoured, loquacious, boasting man, he was never happier than when narrating his adventures to the English officers under his charge. Among them there was not one who better understood the Afghan character, or who had made more friends in the country, than Captain Johnson; and now, in a short time, between him and Saleh Mahomed an intimacy was established which the former began to turn to the best account. He rode with the commandant, listened to his stories, and soon began to throw out hints that a lakh of rupees and a pension in Hindostan might be found for him, if, instead of carrying

Shortly afterwards a definite order came from Akbar to Salah Muhammad to march the prisoners instantly to Khulam, where they were to be detained as hostages. "All hope of deliverance", says Eyre, "seemed now at an end and we endeavoured calmly- to resign ourselves to a fate that seemed inevitable."¹

5. Mohan Lal succeeds in recovering the Prisoners

The leaders of the prisoners were not wrong in their surmise of the character of the man Salah Muhammad, however, could not trust the people whom he had once wronged. Besides, he could not place confidence in the British authorities who had for the most part broken off their vows and promises in Afghanistan. An Orientalist like him could only rely on another Orientalist of position and in the confidence of the British. Luckily for the English, they had a man of such description in their service. This was Mohan Lal, who was within easy reach of every inhabitant of Afghanistan, from the highest grandee to the humblest peasant; and whose influence was believed to have its desired effect upon the British authorities not only in that country, but also in India.

Negotiations had already been going on between Salah Muhammad and Mohan Lal. As early as the 28th August, Salah Muhammad had agreed to take the British prisoners to a place of safety if he were given a reward of Rs. 25,000 and a

off his prisoners to Bameean, he would conduct them in safety to the British camp. . . . On the 29th of August, the suggestion was put forth, in a light and jesting manner; and not until he had convinced himself that there would be no danger in a more direct proposition, did Johnson suffer Saleh Mahomed to feel that he was thoroughly in earnest. The Afghan was in no hurry to commit himself. Days passed. The party reached Bameean ; and no allusion was made to the subject."

* Eyre's Journal, dated n t h September, 1842, p. 352.

monthly pension of Rs. 1,000. Jfohan Lal gave him every assurance, holding out hopes of an agreement with his proposals. But he refrained from giving anything in writing:—"I have promised everything he asked ; but not in writing."¹

Mohan Lal then referred the matter to General Pollock and received the following reply :—

" In reply to your letter of the 30th ultimo, I am directed by the General to say.... If Salah Mahomed secures the prisoners as he proposes, his expenses to the amount he mentions shall be paid; but the General cannot promise the pension without a reference to the Governor-General; he may be quite sure that he will be forgiven and well rewarded if we get the prisoners...."²

Mohan Lal now prepared to assume the entire responsibility himself. He says :—

"Finding that to induce the chiefs in the city as well as the letters of General Pollock to their address availed nothing in behalf of the prisoners, I took the most dangerous step, with full belief either to lose my life or gain my object. To effect this cause I supplicated, and asked Mahomed Akbar Khan to allow me to remain in the house near himself, under the pretence that my visiting him occasionally will show his kindness to me in future. It was agreed, and I was placed under a guard as before, but not sent out of the

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/206.

² *Ibid.*

city; after this I sent for my acquaintance, Moortza Shah, in the confinement on' the pretence of selling, some cloth to me."¹

Mohan Lal gave Sayyid Murtza Shah Kashmiri one hundred rupees for his travelling expenses and asked him to go to Bamian, and on his behalf request Salah Muhammad Khan not to take the prisoners beyond the territory of Kabul, and to deliver them on the arrival of the British army from Jalalabad or Kandahar. In return for this service Mohan Lal promised on the part of the British Government to reward Salah Muhammad as follows:—(i) Pardon for his desertion, (ii) A pension of Rs.1,000 per mensem for life, (iii) A prize of Rs.20,000 in cash to be given on the arrival of the prisoners in the British camp, (iv) Rs. 6,250 to be given to his adherents, and (v) Rs.5,000 to Sayyid Murtza Shah.²

Murtza Shah who had also been urged by the Qizalbash chiefs for the same purpose reached Bamian on the 30th September, and delivered to Salah Muhammad the message from Mohan Lal. On the 1st September, Salah Muhammad called to a meeting Johnson, Pottinger and Lawrence, and told them "that one Syud Moorteza, a Cashmeree, who, during the Caubul insurrection had helped Johnson to collect grain from the villages, had arrived from Caubul, and brought a message from Mohan Lal to the effect, that if he would release prisoners, General Pollock would ensure him a life-pension of 1,000 rupees a month, and make him a present of 20,000 rupees. 'I know nothing of General Pollock/ then said Saleh Mohamed, 'but if you three gentlemen will swear by your

^xThe Calcutta Englishman. 7th December, 1842, quoted in the Asiatic Journal, February, 2843, pp. 106-7.

¹ Memorandum of Agha Hyder Hasan, p. 2.

Saviour to make good to me what Syud Moorteza Shah states that he is authorised to, offer, I will deliver you over to your own people.' The offer was at once accepted. With little delay an agreement was written out in Persian by Sayed Moorteza Shah, and signed by Johnson, Pottinger, Lawrence, and Mackenzie."¹

6. Acknowledgment of Mohan Lal's services

Mohan Lal justly felt elated at the phenomenal success his daring and dash had achieved:—

" If I were not to run the personal risk while myself in confinement and not induce Salah Mahomed to restore our prisoners they would never be released until we were to meet the wishes of Mahomed Akbar Khan, and would by this time be wandering and suffering on the deserts of Toorkistan. If Government take these my humble services into their just, impartial and favourable view I hope I shall be highly rewarded; because I have saved the British name, which, if the English ladies and officers were taken into Turkistan, would deeply suffer. I have not only done this, but spent not the fourth of the money which was offered by General Pollock for recovering the prisoners, and thus saved the Company's cash. I am proud indeed of what I have done."¹

Most of the prisoners might have been ignorant of the man to whom they owed their miraculous release, and so they made

¹ Kaye, iii, 335.

² Mohan Lal's letter to a friend published in the Calcutta; Englishman, quoted in Vincent Byre's Journal, 416.

90 mention whatsoever of Mohan Lal in their accounts of imprisonment. But the testimony of their chief leader, Major Pottinger, and General Pollock is conclusive on this point. When the prisoners joined Pollock's camp at Kabul on ~~the~~ 21st September, Major Pottinger¹ addressed the same day the following letter to Major-General Pollock :—

"I have the honour to report my arrival in your camp, and beg to lay before you the following statement of the measures we had recourse to at Bamian to effect our release.

"On the 10th of this month Syed Moortza Kashmeery, an agent of Aly Reza Khan Kuzzulbash, arrived at Bamian; he had received from Moonshee Mohun Lal verbal assurances that all those who would engage in effecting our release should be handsomely rewarded and that a pension should be paid to himself, Saleh Mahomed Khan (who commanded the Afghan Regiment sent to escort the Prisoners to Toorkistan). Syed Moortza brought urgent letters from the Kuzzulbash Chiefs to their clansman Saleh Mahomed, and having gained over his brother Mahomed Sadiq

¹ Pottinger, Eldred (1811-1845), was born in Ireland. He entered the Bombay artillery in 1827 ; but after some time -was transferred to the political department. In 1837 he travelled through Afghanistan disguised as a horse-dealer. Shortly after his arrival at Herat the city was besieged by the Iranis, and Pottinger rendered great services in defending the place. In return he was created a C.B. and was appointed political agent at Herat. He returned to India in 1839. In 1841 he was again sent back to Afghanistan as political officer in Kohistan. On Macnaghten's murder on the 23rd December, 1841, he succeeded to his post. During the retreat he. was detained as a hostage.

Khan paid him fifty out of a hundred rupees which had been furnished by Moonshee Mohun Lal....."¹

Vincent Eyre, one of the prisoners, wrote in his Journal:—

"We afterwards learned that we were in a great measure indebted for this sudden turn of affairs in our favour to Ali Kuzul Khan, and other Kuzzilbash Chiefs, in concert with Mohun Lall, who sent Syud Moorteezzer to Bameean to negotiate with Saleh Mahomed for our release, Mohan Lal promising a liberal reward in the name of the British Government."*

Major-General Pollock in his report to the Secretary, Political Department, stated :—

"The return in safety of the Prisoners may be attributed in a great measure to the negotiations of Mohun Lal, and the active co-operation of the Kuzzilbash chiefs in addition to the judicious measures adopted by Major Pottinger."⁸

¹Panjab Records, 410/211, Major Pottinger to Major-General Pollock, 21st September, 1842.

• Eyre, 353.

²Panjab Records, 41C/211, dated Kabul, 23rd September, 1842. cf. Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 28th December, 1842, No. 674; Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan, Nos. 510 and 511, pp. 404, 405. In another letter dated *Camp Ferozepur*, 6th January, 1843, General Pollock stated:—"Mohun Lall Moonshee has proved himself to be a very intelligent and useful public servant. He was of essential service in sending me information from Cabool until I reached that Capital with the army under my command. He was also greatly instrumental in effecting the escape of the prisoners from Bamian." Imperial Records, Foreign Department, Political Proceedings, 15th March, 1843, Nos. 107-107 A.

Mohan Lal then paid with his own hands on the 26th September the sums of money which had been promised to Salah Muhammad Khan, Sayyid Murtza Shah, and others,¹

It may be pointed that Sayyid Murtza Shah was also granted a pension of Rs. xoo per mensem from 21st September, 2842. The Sayyid had settled in the Panjab, and continued to receive this allowance until the end of 1844, when this pension was raised by the Court of Directors to Rs. 500 from 21st September, 1842 :—"The Honorable the Court of Directors having decided that the Afghan Syud Moortezah Shah, who exerted himself so meritoriously and successfully for the release of the British Prisoners from the hands of Mahomed Akbar Khan should receive a monthly allowance of Rupees 500, instead of the allowance of Rupees zoo a month, which he has been in receipt of since September, 1842, I am directed by the Right Honorable the Governor-General-in-Council to request that you will pay to the Syud the arrears due to him under the above instructions which at the rate of Rs. 400 a month from the 21st September, 1842, until January, 1845, a period of 27 months and 10 days, amounts to Rs. 10,933/5/4."*

¹ Travels, 476. In his diary Mohan Lal wrote:—"Paid to Saleh Mahomed 31,520 rupees." Imperial Records. Foreign Consultation, 24th March, 1848, no. 78.

² Panjab Records, Book 135, Letter 2, p.5, F. Currie, Secretary to Government of India, to G. Broadfoot, Agent to the Governor-General, N. W F; dated Fort William. 3rd January, 1845.

CHAPTER XII

BACK TO INDIA, 1842-1844

1. Mohan Lal is embarrassed by a money bill

When the British treasury was plundered during the Kabul insurrection early in November, Mohan Lal was assigned the task of raising funds for the British authorities. He collected lakhs of rupees, and granted bills to merchants and other persons under the signature of Sir William Macnaghten. There are many references in Mohan Lal's letters to such sums. To quote only one by way of example:—"I had also raised about 80,000 Rupees for the Envoy, and after the cash was received, I had got five bills from him and Major Pottinger which I gave to the merchants."¹

On this occasion, however, we refer here to a bill which remained unpaid for a long time, and caused considerable worry and inconvenience to Mohan Lal at a time when he was performing the dangerous duty of supplying information about the political situation in Kabul, and badly stood in need of raising more money for the purpose. Due to the suspicion aroused by one man, the bill remained unpaid for over a year and a quarter, in spite of the recommendation of the Governor-General on behalf of Mohan Lal.

The bill, for Rs. 24,404, was in the handwriting of Captain Lawrence¹ and bore the signature of Sir William Macnaghten.

¹ Panjab Records, 410/57, Mohan Lal to Captain Macgregor, dated Kabul, 10th March, 1842.

¹ Lawrence, Sir George St. Patrick (1804-1884), General, was elder brother of Sir Henry Lawrence and of John Lawrence. He was

It was drawn in the name of one Muhammad Sadiq, and was payable to R. Hodges* Head clerk in the office of the Assistant Agent to the GovernortGeneral, N. W. Frontier at Ludhiana. He was an Anglo-Indian and was related to Mohan Lal by marriage. Hodges was brought in to expedite the payment of the bill. In' a letter to Hodges dated Kabul, 11 p. m., 17th December, 1841, enclosed with the bill, Mohan Lal stated :—

"You will bejglad to receive this note from me which will show you that I am alive and safe with my father and family. I am plundered of everything I had and suffered a considerable loss. I am now under the immediate orders of the Envoy. He is very kind to me and trusts me with all his secrets, and has employed me in the most trying and critical affairs. However, the loss of Sir Alexander has been very mortifying and vexatious to me. I say only here that we are involved in the most unfortunate difficulties and. trust in God for protection. I write this on the table of the Envoy, who has invited me secretly to talk on some affairs from the city.

"I enclose a bill from the Envoy in favour of Mohammed Sadeek, a respectable merchant here; he is doing great services to the Envoy and myself and procures money for us in such crisis and want. His object is that you will receive the amount of the bill and keep ready in

appointed a cavalry cadet in the 2nd regiment of light cavalry in Bengal in 1832. In 1825 he was promoted to be adjutant of his regiment. He was present in Afghanistan with his regiment. In Kabul he was appointed political assistant to Sir William Macnaghten. Subsequently he became his military secretary, a post which he held to the death of his chief. In the retreat from Kabul he was taken as a hostage by Akbar, and remained in captivity till .their release on the 17th September, 1842.

your command that; when he or his servant comes with note, the duplicate and triplicate of it to you, he may receive it without waiting on his arrival there, which is the period fixed for the payment of the sum. Neither he nor his servant will leave this till the road is safe and quiet. I shall be very much obliged to you to have this bill cashed and the Envoy has agreed to pay it without further advice. The duplicate and triplicate of the bill are here. I hope this will reach you safe. If my bearers come back from their houses, send them with my palankeen to Peshawar and tell them to remain in serai till I write and send for them. I hope Shah Valee has reached Loodianah with your horse. When the servant of Mohammed Sadeek or he himself comes to you with my note and the duplicate and triplicate of the bill to receive the cash, I beg you will kindly treat him and give him a *Zeafut* [a feast] on my account. I say no more here now, as very busy, vexed and disheartened. Give my regards to everyone."¹

The bearer of the bill reached Peshawar on the 27th December, and desired a permit to go to Ludhiana. Captain H. M. Lawrence,² Assistant Agent, Governor-General, at

¹ Panjab Records, 41 B/72.

* Lawrence, Sir Henry Montgomery (1806-1857), Brigadier-General, Chief Commissioner in Oudh, was the fourth son of Colonel Alexander Lawrence. He obtained a commission as second lieutenant in the Bengal artillery in 1822. He participated in the first Burmese War, and was promoted first lieutenant in 1825. In 1830 he was posted to the foot artillery at Karnal, and next year he was transferred to the horse artillery at Meerut, and then at Cawnpore. In 1833 he was appointed an assistant revenue surveyor at Moradabad. He became a full surveyor in 1835, and a captain in 1837. Through the influence of Frederick Currie he was appointed in 1839 officiating assistant to George Clerk, the political

Peshawar suspected some foul business, and he, therefore, sent a note dated 28th December to G. R. Clerk, Agent, Governor-General, N. W. F; who was responsible for honouring the bill:—

"A man from Caubul yesterday urged me for a *rahdaree* [a passport] to Loodiana and-at last produced a letter directed to Mr. Hodges from Mohun Lall which he said he was anxious to take secretly to Loodiana. I was starting for camp and took the letter with me, telling the General that I suspected it contained a bill and asked his authority to open it; he gave it and in it we found an order for 24,404 Rs. The above is an extract from the letter, the original. When it reaches, Mr. Hodges will doubtless show to Mr. C. Miles. The bill is dated December 17th but without number. It is made payable to Mr. Hodges by Mahommed Sadik, who you will observe by the deposition of Golam Mahommed, the bearer of the letter, is a servant of * Mohun Lall instead of a respectable merchant as stated by Mohun Lall. This is the first line received from Mohun Lall since the catastrophe. The bill is in my brother's handwriting, is at thirty days' sight and without further advice; 2 & 3 of the same bear to date [sic] being unpaid payable to Mahommed Sadik or order and to be debited in account with Government.

"The deposition is enclosed. I have returned the letter and bill to Golam Mahommed and given him a *rahdaree*,"¹

agent at- Ludhiana. Announcing the appointment Currie wrote to him :—
 "I have helped to put your foot in the stirrup. It rests with you to put yourself in the saddle." In December, 1841, he was sent to join Major Mackeson, the senior assistant political officer at Peshawar. *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Panjab Records, 41B/72.

2. Repeated requests are made for its payment

Mohan Lal waited for the payment of the bill for about five months, and was 'pressed by the merchant to pay him the money. So in a letter of the 23rd May, 1842, he requested Captain Macgregor to "kindly write to Mr. Clerk to pay the bill granted on the 17th of December last by the lamented Envoy which is accompanied with a small note from myself dated the same day, and which was transmitted the same night when I was with the late Envoy. It has been in the handwriting of Captain Lawrence and signed by the Envoy."¹

In another letter of the 2nd June, 1842, he again pressed Macgregor to secure the payment of the bill:—"I beg you to write again to Mr. Clerk or the Governor-General to pay the bill granted by the late Envoy on the 17th December, 1841 in favour of Mahomed Sadik. This bill has been given for the cash paid through me and is written by Captain Lawrence. This merchant has been always with Sir Alexander, procuring money at the most want and has a letter of the Envoy in his hand acknowledging his services, receiving the money, and sending him the bills. He is doing us now great service with Meer Aboo Talib merchant."*

On the 9th June he requested Sir R. Shakespeare, Military Secretary to Major-General Pollock, for the payment of the bill.*

On the 14th June he again wrote to Shakespeare:—"I hope he (Macgregor) or the General (Pollock) has asked Mr. Clerk to pay the bill granted by the Envoy for the sum paid through

¹ Panjab Records, 41C/94.

2 *Ibid* ; 41C/109.

3 *Ibid*; 41C/120.

me. The owner of the bill and myself have the letters of the Envoy on this subject. I beg you to write to Mr Clerk to pay the bill as the merchant annoys me very much."¹

On the *17th June* he again requested Macgregor : — " I beg you will write to Mr. Clerk to pay the bill of the 17th December."²

On the *19th June* he wrote to Macgregor : — " I hope you have written to Mr. Clerk about the bill."*

On the *28th June* he expressed hope for its payment :— "I am very glad to hear from you that Mr. Clerk will do all I wish for the order of the late Envoy dated the 17 December, 1841."³*

On the *30th June* he wrote to Shakespeare : — " I beg you will kindly ask the General or write to Captain Macgregor to ask Government to pay the bill in favour of Mahomed Sadik granted by the late Envoy on the 17th December, 1841. As I wrote you before, his services at present are very much required and without his assistance, I will not be able to do anything."⁴

On the *6th July* he again reminded Shakespeare : — " I hope you have heard about the bill from Mr. Clerk as the merchant is pressing upon me."⁵

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/129.

² *Ibid* ; 41C/137. ,

³ *Ibid*; 41C/138.

⁴ *Ibid*; 41C/136.

⁵ *Ibid*;41C/157(i).

⁶ *Ibid* ; 41C/165 (1).

On the 9th July he wrote to Shakespeare:—"I beg to trouble the General again about the bill of the 17th December granted by the Envoy. The merchant is useful to me and pressing me for its payment."¹

As Mohan Lal's letters were regularly forwarded to the Governor-General, he took notice of this bill. On the 11th July, 1842, from his camp at Allahabad T. H. Maddock, Secretary to the Government of India with the Governor-General, wrote to George Clerk :—"The Governor-General begs to be informed whether the bills to which Moonshee Mohun Lall so often alludes in his correspondence with the officers at Jellalabad have yet been paid, and if not, to authorise their payment, if such should be consistent with the instructions you have already received on the subject of such bills."*

On the 20th July, Mohan Lal wrote to Shakespeare :—"You have never favoured me by letting me know what Mr. Clerk has done about the bill. I wrote so often about it. I have given a banker security for the money it contains to the owner of the bill as he had stood against me. Insist upon this point if you please."⁸

R. Shakespeare replied to Mohan Lal on the 25th July, 1842 :—"Copies of all your letters are sent to Mr. Clerk, but he has not yet written anything about the bill which you have so frequently mentioned. I will, however, write to him to-day on the subject."⁴

George Clerk replied to T. H. Maddock, dated Ambala, the 29th July, 1842 : — " I herewith submit for the consideration

¹ *Ibid*; 41C/165 (iii)-

² *Ibid*; Book 131, Letter 48, p. 111.

³ *Ibid* ; 41C/179.

⁴ *Ibid*; 41C/189.

of the Right Honorable the Governor-General all the particulars known to me regarding the bill alluded to by Moonshee Mohun Lall and from the circumstance of the person to whom it was granted having been represented by him as a respectable merchant and subsequently stated to be Mohun Lall's servant by Golam Mohamed who was deputed to receive the amount of it from the Loodiana Treasury, I, do not feel justified consistently with my present instructions in sanctioning the payment of it. I have suggested to Captain Lawrence to* ascertain whenever practicable from his brother, late Secretary to the Envoy, the circumstances under which this bill was given."¹

On the 30th July, George Clerk wrote to H. M. Lawrence to "endeavour to procure the information required relative to the bill which Mohun Lall so often refers to in his letters to Captain Macgregor."*

On the 4th August, while writing to Shakespeare, Mohan Lal spoke of his financial difficulties thus : — " I have drawn two thousand Rupees upon as sanctioned by General Pollock. The shroff has agreed to pay me 106 Caboole Rupees for 100 Company's Rupees, and will not pay me the whole until he receives it from you at Jellalabad. This shroff is the native of Loodianah, and i could not induce any man of Cabool to advance me the sum because the people with whom I had formerly negotiated complain of not receiving the money they lent for messengers from the month of January which has amounted to a large sum besides the money advanced for grain and Mahomed Akbar."*

¹ *Ibid*; Book 85, Letter 414. p. 237.

² *Ibid*; Letter 415.

³ *Ibid*; 41C/191,

Further on in the same letter he says about the bill :—

"I am much obliged to you for writing to Mr. Clerk about the bill alluded to. I have directed another banker to be security to Mahommed Sadik who collected the sum of it from the various people, and promised them to settle the case in two months."¹

Mohan Lal had borrowed a sum of Rs. 3,000 from Banka -Rai, son of Anant Ram of Ludhiana. To Banka Rai he granted a bill in the name of Hodges to be paid to Anant Ram at Ludhiana, and the bill was endorsed by Banka Rai authorising his father Anant Ram to receive the payment. Mohan Lal requested Assistant Agent, Governor-General, to pay this sum to Hodges for Anant Ram and deduct the same from his bill of the 17th December, 1841. Mohan Lal wrote about it to Hodges dated Kabul, 1st August, 1842:—

" I am confined and undergone many sufferings. Mohamed Akbar forced me to pay Rs. 18,000 of which General Pollock has been informed. I borrowed 3,000 Rs. from Banka Rae to pay him which I beg, if you have cashed the bill of Mohamed Sadik, to pay to Anant Ram. If you have not cashed it, detain the messenger on the pretence that the case is referred to higher authority, for two months at Loodiana, till I hope to join the General, and get my release, when all the matters will be settled. I am now living with Major Pottinger, etc. My father and family are well."¹

Captain C. Miles, Assistant Agent, Governor-General, in a letter dated Ludhiana, the 7th September, 1842, referred the matter to G. R. Clerk :—

" I have the honour to forward a copy of a letter from

¹ *Ibid.*

² Panjab Records, Book 47, Letter 153, p 359.

Moonshee Mohun Lal to Mr. Hodges requesting him to pay the sum of 3,000 Rupees to Anant Ram a cloth merchant of this city, and to deduct the same from the sum due to Mohamed¹ Sadeek. The amount ' was advanced to Moonshee Mohun Lal at Cabool by Banka Rae, the son of Anant Ram, who has endorsed it in his father's favor."¹

On the 24th September came the reply from George Clerk from Simla forbidding him to pay the bill:—

" I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant with a copy of Moonshee Mohun Lal's letter to Mr. Hodges, and in reply to state that under the late orders of Government dated 8th ultimo relative to Mohamed Sadeek's Bill you are not authorised to advance the amount of the bill now drawn by Mohun Lal by deducting the amount from the sum due to Mohamed Sadeek."¹

On the 30th and 31st March, 1843, at Agra, while in the camp of the Governor-General, Mohan Lal recorded in his diary:—

" Very hot, ill of temper and ill of health, these are caused by injustice. No situation,...and no 24,000rupees of Sir William Macnaghten.""

I have come across no other reference to this matter in the Government Records; but it seems certain that Mohan Lal received the payment of the bill later on.

¹ *Ibid* ; 358. '

² *Ibid* 1 Book 85, Letter 475, p. 268.

³ Imperial Record*, Foreign Consultation, 24th March, 2848, No. 78.

The object of dealing with this matter at length is only to point out that here was a young man of thirty only, caught in a whirlpool of continuous miseries and misfortunes lasting for about nine months, placed in the greatest possible danger not only to his own life but also to that of his relatives and friends; and during which time he received no encouragement but only pecuniary difficulties from those whom he was serving. But Mohan Lal was born a valiant fighter, and disappointment, dismay and despair could not turn him away from the path of loyalty to his masters. Mohan Lal transacted another bargain involving a large sum of nearly Rs. 80,000 excluding the interest thereupon, for which he received no money whatsoever. The details of this case are studied in a separate chapter.

3. *Mohan Lal joins the Expedition to Kohistan*

General Pollock moved from Gandamak, accompanied by General Sale, on the 7th September. The British army passed through the Jagdalak pass in face of severe opposition of Ghilzais on the 8th September. In the meantime Akbar marched to Tazin. On the 13th September there took place a fierce fight between him and Pollock. Akbar was ultimately repulsed, and Pollock made his triumphant entry into Kabul on the 15th September. Two days later (17th September) General Nott arrived at Kabul from Kandahar.

Mohan Lal had managed to escape from the prison of Akbar on the 9th September.¹ He took shelter in the Afshar fort, garrisoned by a large body of Qizalbash cavalry. On the 15th September he along with Durrani and Qizalbash chiefs received General Pollock outside "Kabul, and was introduced to the General by Macgregor. He, kindly squeezing

¹ Imperial Records. Secret Consultation, 28th December, 1842, No. 741.

my hand, expressed his entire approbation of my services adding, that they had been always communicated to, and appreciated by the Governor-General."¹

On his arrival at Kabul, Pollock came to know that Aminullah was trying to assemble whatever force he possibly could at Istalif² in Kohistan. Pollock therefore decided to crush the remnant of this opposition. He despatched a force under General McCaskill with Captain Colin Mackenzie as a political officer. Mohan Lal was appointed assistant to Colin Mackenzie.¹ The British force defeated the Afghans, stormed, and partly destroyed the town on the 29th September. Having achieved the object of this expedition, they returned to Kabul on the 7th October.⁴

¹ Travels, 475.

² Istalif is situated twenty-two miles north-west of Kabul. The town commands very picturesque country, and is surrounded by beautiful orchards, gardens and groves. The houses are built on a steep hill, and rise above one another; and thus present a very striking view. The inhabitants are Tajiks. *Thornton*, i, 287-8,

• Mackenzie, Colin (1806-1881), Lt-General, joined the 48th Madras N. I. in 1825. He participated in campaigns at Coorg and in the Straits of Molucca, 1834 and 1836. In 1840 he was appointed assistant political agent at Peshawar. He went to Kabul and led Sale's returning forces to Gandamak. He was present at the conference at which Macnaghten was murdered. He was taken as a hostage by Akbar. After release he joined in the attack on Istalif. cf. *Buckland*.

⁴ About this expedition, Ferrier in his *History of the Afghans*, pp. 375-7* quoting from *Journal Des Debuts* states ;—" 'Istatif,' says the letter often English officer, 'is a pretty little town of 15,000 inhabitants, against whom we had nothing to say unless that their own stood halfway between Kabul and Charikar where one of our Goorkha regiments (irregular cavalry) was destroyed the year before by the Afghans'. As, then, they were pressed for time and could not push on to Charikar, Istalif was punished. A brigade under the orders of General M'Caskill, entered it

4. *Retires to India*

The British Government had decided to evacuate Afghanistan and to restore Dost Muhammad Khan to the throne of

early in September, after a trifling engagement, and proceeded to put to the sword every one who had not succeeded in making his escape. It appears that even the dead and wounded were not respected. The sepoy soldiers, in the excess of their unmitigable cruelty, set fire to the cotton clothing of their victims, and thus burned the dead and dying, which would, according to their superstitious notions, call down a curse on the descendants of those whose remains were thus disposed of without the honours of sepulture. After the slaughter six hundred women remained in the hands of the victors, who set them at liberty. Were they respected, as had been the European ladies who fell into the power of the Afghans after the disasters at Kabul the winter before ? It does not seem that the soldiers saw their prisoners taken from them with much satisfaction.

" Two soldiers of the 9th infantry of the Royal army had at the same moment seized a pretty girl of fourteen years of age, and, not wishing to fight for the possession of the prize, they agreed to decide it with the dice,—with this condition, that the winner should make her an honest woman and marry her the first time he should meet with a priest to bless their union. The dice thrown, the successful player was walking off with the bride elect on his arm, when he received an order to set her at liberty. In vain he entreated and asserted his good intentions ; he was obliged to give her up, and it was not without regret.

" A Captain of the 26th, having selected one from amongst a group of distracted beauties, purchased for his *sultana* a magnificent trousseau of the embroidered vests and trousers worn by Afghan women of rank, which after the sack of the town were sold for next to nothing; but scarcely had the time to present them to the lady, when the order arrived to set her free; she did not require to be told twice, but fled as fast as her legs would carry her. 'Ah', said the Captain, as she disappeared; 'if I had known all the ingratitude of the female heart, they would never have caught me buying these garments.'

" After being regularly pillaged, Istalif was given up to the flames, and the brigade of General M'Caskill returned to Kabul, where another tragedy was to be performed."

that country. In pursuance of this policy, the British army left Kabul¹ on the 12th October, 1842 and destroyed Jalalabad¹

¹ Regarding the British vengeance on the city of Kabul, Ferrier quotes from *Journal Des Debuts* .—••The work of destruction there was accomplished with a refinement of systematic barbarity and cunning which it is difficult to believe. Arriving under the walls of the Capital on the 15th of September, the English found it deserted ; for the examples they had already made put the whole population to flight. Occupied entirely with the recovery of the English prisoners. General Pollock had never manifested any evil intention against the city; the army was encamped outside, guards were placed at the gates, and the soldiers forbidden to pass them; it might have been supposed that it was a friendly army, an army of pious devotees, for the Rev. Mr. Allen took advantage of the inactivity of the troops during these few days of rest to preach several sermons upon the mercy of God, who had permitted the return of their captive comrades. The event was celebrated by a solemn service, at which all the troops attended, and men selected from the 13th light infantry sang the Psalms. The strict discipline of the army, and these religious exercises, restored in some degree the confidence of the wretched inhabitants, and a great many ventured to return to their houses. It was then, that is to say on the 9th of October, that General Pollock ordered Colonel Richmond Shakespeare to enter Kabul with his brigade, and, with the exception of the Bala Hissar, and the quarter inhabited by the Kuzxilbashs, who had always been friendly to the English, to destroy the city and give it up to the flames." Remarking in general he writes:—"Here then are 100,000 people whose houses have been burnt just at the commencement of winter, and in a country too where that season is almost as severe as in Russia. Frightful as all this is, the most odious feature in these cruel transactions is that, in conducting the war as they have done upon the inhabitants of the towns only, the English have punished the inoffensive part of the population, and not the tribes who in 1841 destroyed the army of General Asttrtone." *History of the Afghans*, pp. 377, 378.

**At Jellalabad the same scenes were enacted, and it is perhaps still more difficult to understand why that place was treated with such severity. When in the November of 1841, General Sale, harassed by the Ghildjsyes, and almost overcome by numbers, presented himself at the gates, the inhabitants opened them to him without resistance. He had

on the way. The Ravi was crossed on the 10th December, and on the 15th, they reached Ganda Singhwala, opposite to the ferry at Ferozepur. '* On the 17th December," says Mohan Lal, "Sir Robert Sale, Major Macgregor, Captain Wade, and myself, proceeded ahead of the brave garrison of Jalalabad, and crossed the Ghara to Firozpur on a beautiful bridge thrown across by the especial commands of the Governor-General, to shew honour to the heroes of Jalalabad. Just at the end of the bridge, towards the Firozpur side, Lord Ellenborough, with his Secretaries, stood, under a magnificent canopy, and received the Jalalabad garrison and its brave leaders with marked distinction. Major Lawrence introduced me, or rather pointed me out, to the Governor-General, who kindly bowed to me in return."¹

brought with him only two days' provisions, but they supplied him as well as they were able—moreover, on credit. When he afterwards saw that he could not be relieved before the spring and must therefore pass the winter in the town, and found that, to avoid being destroyed with his small garrison by famine, he was compelled to drive out the inhabitants, they left their homes without a murmur, and their provisions in them. Why then was this town so completely destroyed and burnt?" Ferrier, 377-8.

¹ Travels, 478.

In view of the weakness of character displayed by the British forces in Afghanistan Ferrier quoting from *Journal Dee Debats* criticises the action of the Governor-General in arranging a grand reception for them :— "The Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, is preparing a magnificent reception at Ferozepore for victorious army of Afghanistan. Invitations have been sent to all the native princes to attend the military fetes which will, it is said, eclipse the splendour of the courts of the ancient Mogul Emperors; a magnificent triumphal arch is now in course of construction, through which the army of the Indus is to defile, followed by, as trophies of its victories, the gates of the tomb of Mahmood the Ghaznevide, that were captured at Ghuznee, and the twenty-four pieces of cannon taken in 1839 from Dost Mohamed. This last detail is not the least curious part of the ceremony, for it is well known that the English army returned from

**5. Attached to the Ludhiana Agency,
May, 1843 to March, 1844**

Mohan Lal stayed at Ferozepur in the camp of the Governor-General till the 7th January, 1843, when he left for Delhi. Near Ludhiana, on the bank of the Sutlej, he had an interview with Amir Dost Muhammad Khan who was on his way to Kabul. He also met Hyder Khan, the son of the Amir, who was kept in Mohan Lal's tent at Ghazni.

Mohan Lal left Ludhiana on the 18th January. At Karnal he met George Clerk, Agent to the Governor-General, N. W. Frontier. He knew all about Mohan Lal's services, and therefore received him most cordially. The Kabul affair being over, Mohan Lal was without a job and finding George Clerk interested in him he submitted through him on the 29th January, 1843, an application for the post of Mir Munshi either at Hyderabad (Deccan) or at Lucknow, the post being vacant at both the places.¹

At Panipat he was joined by his brother Kidar Nath, who had come all the way from Delhi to receive him. Mohan Lal accompanied the suite of the Governor-General as far as Agra.

Afghanistan having lost its own artillery there; the guns were either taken by the Afghans or destroyed by order of the British Generals, who had no means of transport for them.

"Dost Mohamed and his family, and all the Afghans now prisoners in India, will be present at these fetes, after which the Governor-General will allow them to return as they may think fit to their own country.

"The government of British India will then believe itself free of all obligation to Afghanistan ; it introduced disorder and made war there for three years, and left anarchy which may last for ages." *History of the Afghans*, 379.

¹ Imperial Records, Foreign Department, Political Proceedings, 15th March, 1843, No. 10/—107 A.

The Governor-General was of opinion that Mohan Lal's services could best be used in the Panjab, where the political situation **was** in a chaotic condition, and it was expected that the British Government would be soon called upon to interfere in the affairs of the Panjab. Mohan Lal was therefore ordered to take a temporary post at Ludhiana.

The Secretary to the Government of India with the Governor-General in a letter to George Clerk dated Agra, the 26th May, 1843, recommended him thus:—"The Governor-General has been pleased to place at your disposal the services of Moonshee Mohan Lal for such employment as you may see fit to assign to him; you are well aware of the services rendered by this individual to the British Government, and of the qualifications of which he is possessed, and the Governor-General feels confident, that you are the person who can put to the best account his experience and abilities. Mohan Lal will continue to draw the allowance of 320 Rupees per mensem which he formerly drew and you will charge this amount from 1st May last in your contingent bill till opportunity occurs, by finding him fixed and responsible duties, and for bringing him on the permanent establishment of your agency."¹

Just at this time George Clerk was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of N. W. F. Province, and Lieutenant-Colonel A. F. Richmond succeeded to the office of Agent, Governor-General, N. W. F. Two factors weighed against Mohan Lal's success in his new post. In the first place his officers did not like him because his approach lay to the highest authorities. In the second place his relationship with R. Hodges always put an obstacle in the way of his progress. Mohan Lal was assigned no duties, and he soon grew tired of his inactive life, in spite of the fact that he received his salary regularly.

¹ Panjab Records, Book 133, Letter 80, p. 120.

6. *Applies for Leave*

Only three months later Mohan Lal applied for twelve months' leave "to visit Calcutta and Bombay." Richmond recommended his application on the 26th August, 1843¹; but the Government of India in reply dated Fort William, the 9th September, 1843 delayed passing orders on his application.¹

Meanwhile George Clerk, the Lieutenant-Governor of N. W. F. Province, decided to offer Mohan Lal a temporary post as the Deputy Collector, Rohtak, and enquired in a letter of the nth December, 1843 from the Agent, Governor-General, N. W. F. if he could spare him.* Richmond readily agreed to place Mohan Lal's services at the disposal of George Clerk :—

" I would gladly have availed myself of his services at the present time for the local duties of Lodiana, when the presence of an officer is much required, but as a general rule, Mohan Lal's connexions at that station seemed to render such a nomination objectionable. Under these circumstances his services in this Agency may, I think, be dispensed with, in order to admit of his being employed temporarily at Rohtuk."⁴

George Clerk then referred the matter to the Government of India, who forwarded the case to the Court of Directors. The reasons for doing so are not known ; but it may be that the Government of India in giving such a high post to an

¹ Panjab Records, Book 158, Letter 95, p. 177.

² *Ibid*; Book 133, Letter 123, p. 198.

³ *Ibid*; Letter 161, p. 257.

⁴ *Ibid* ; Book 158, Letter 179, p. 373, dated Camp Morandah, the 20th December, 1843.

Indian, at a time when numerous Englishmen were serving as clerks in those offices, felt justified in securing permission from the Home Government to avoid any criticism. Besides, the new Governor-General knew nothing of Mohan Lal's services, and of his ability and capacity ; and George Clerk who was interested in this matter had been transferred from his post.¹ This disappointed Mohan Lal, and about the middle of January he applied for three months' leave from 1st February, 1844. F. Currie, Secretary to the Government of India, while intimating the sanction of this leave to Richmond in a letter dated the 30th January, 1844, stated:—

"The Governor-General authorises your granting three months' leave of absence to Moonshee Mohun Lall, but you will be pleased to intimate to him that he is not to come to his Lordship's Camp."¹

It seems probable that Mohan Lal had obtained this leave to visit the Governor-General with a view to press his claims for a permanent post. Finding this door closed, Mohan Lal decided to visit England and claim the reward of his services in Afghanistan from the Court of Directors. But he could not get leave if he plainly stated this fact. He therefore applied on the 13th February, 1844, for eighteen months' leave "to visit Bombay." Richmond readily recommended this application :—

"As I understand that the Moonshee is not to be employed until the result of a reference is known which has been made to the Court of Directors regarding

¹ George Clerk held his new post at Agra from June to December, 1843. cf. *Buekland*.

² Panjab Records, Book 134, Letter 7, p. 30.

him, and as he is not engaged in any duty at present, perhaps His Lordship may be disposed the more readily to accede to the request now submitted."¹

This leave was granted with a reservation regarding his future service:—

"The Governor-General-in-Council has been pleased to grant the leave therein solicited, but Mohun Lall should understand that the question as to his eligibility for future employment will depend on the orders of the Home Government on the reference made to them in January last."¹

¹ *Ibid*; Book 134, Letter 11, p. 63, dated Fort William, 2nd March, 1844.

² *Ibid*; Book 159. Letter 18, p. 35, dated Ludhiana, 14th February, 1844.

CHAPTER XIII

A VISIT TO EUROPE, 1844-1846

1. Mohan *Lal* leaves for Bombay

Mohan Lal left Ludhiana on the 2nd April, 1844, and passing through Ambala, Delhi, Agra and Gwalior reached Dewas [21 miles south-east of Ujjain] on the 25th May. The Prince of this place accorded him a warm reception, and pressed him to continue his stay which Mohan Lal had to cut short in view of the intolerable heat. • He was at Indore from the 26th May to the 6th June, and spent a happy time with his class-fellow Shahamat Ali, the Persian Secretary to the Resident. Mr. Hamilton,¹ the Resident, furnished him with several letters of introduction in England. On the 7th June he was at Mhow, where Brigadier Hughes gave him letters for his friends at home. Colonel Outram* took him for an outing in his boat in

¹ Hamilton, Sir Robert North Collie (1802-1887), obtained a Bengal writership in 1819, and first joined as assistant to the magistrate at Benares. In 1827 he was appointed magistrate of the city court of Benares. In 1830 he became acting secretary in the political department. In 1834 he officiated, collector and magistrate of Meerut. In 1836 he served as collector and session-judge at Delhi; and in 1837 as officiating commissioner of revenue at Agra. In 1843 he became secretary to the Government in the North-West Provinces. He was appointed resident with Holkar at Indore in 1844. cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹ Outram, Sir James (1803—1863), baronet, lieutenant-general Indian army, received cadetship in 1819. He joined his regiment at Poona and later served at many places in the Bombay Presidency. He had a passion for hunting, and "from 1823 to 1834 he himself killed no fewer than 191 tigers, 25 bears, 12 buffaloes and 15 leopards." In 1838 he was aide-de-camp to Sir John Keane. He pursued Dost Muhammed Khan

the Narbada river, and gave him a letter for Lord Jocelym, and several more for other influential friends.¹

He reached Nasik on the 16th June, and received every hospitality from Mr. and Mrs. Malet. On the 25th he was at Bombay, where he put up first with his colleague of the Kabul Mission, Nourozjee Furdonjee, and afterwards with Dr. James Burnes, brother of the late Sir Alexander Burnes. He visited Poona and stayed there from the 9th July to the 12th. The Governor of Bombay, Sir George Arthur,* gave him a letter for Mr. Baring, the Secretary to the Board of Control, and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir T. Macmahon, recommended him to Sir P. Stuart, Governor of Malta. He returned to Bombay on the 14th July, and made numerous acquaintances among his "Masonic brothers." He preferred the climate and people of Bombay to those of Calcutta.¹

as far as Bamian during the latter's flight to Bokhara. He rendered good service at Kalat, and then he returned to Bombay. About the close of 1839 he succeeded as agent in Lower Sind. In 1841 an additional charge of the office of the agent for Upper Sind was given to him. For his services in the Sind campaign he was promoted Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel in 1843, and was made a C.B. On account of his sympathies with the Amirs of Sind Lord Ellenborough "refused him a personal interview, and objected to his joining Gough, but gave him political charge of Minar, an appendage of Indore" in March, 1844. cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹ Travels, 482-3.

* Arthur, Sir George, baronet (1784-1854), lieutenant-general, entered the British army in 1804. From 1806 to 1814 he served in Italy, Egypt, Sicily and Jamaica. In 1814 he was appointed lieutenant-governor of British Honduras and this post he held until 1822. From 1824 to 1836 he served as lieutenant-governor of Van Diemen's Land. In 1837 he was sent to Upper Canada as its lieutenant-governor. In 1841 he was created a baronet. In June, 1842 he joined as Governor of Bombay Presidency, cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*.

* Travels, 484-5.

2. *Sails for England*

On the 19th July along with his Kabul servant Mohan Lal sailed in the *Semiramis*, a steam-frigate of the East India Company. This was for the first time that Mohan Lal had been to the sea, but he did not suffer from sea-sickness. On the 25th July the main shaft of the engine of the steamer broke down, and they had to sail back to Bombay, reaching there on the 30th July. Next day they sailed again in a new steamer, the *Sesostris*, under a new captain.

Aden was reached on the 19th August. Here they went on board another steamer, the *Cleopatra*. On the 28th August they arrived at Suez. Mohan Lal visited Alexandria and Cairo, and sailed from Alexandria in the *Oriental*. After five days' voyage the steamer anchored at Malta to take in coal and other provisions. The steamer entered the Straits of Gibraltar on the 9th September, and passing through the Atlantic and the Bay of Biscay, they anchored by the Isle of Wight.¹

3. *In the Isle of Wight*

The passengers were released from the quarantine on the 17th September, and at the same time Mohan Lal received a letter accompanied by a basket of fruits and some newspapers. These were sent from Sir Claude Wade and delivered by his nephew Mr. Singleton and with them was sent a carriage. Just then came Mr. Trevelyan's letter asking him to come to Southampton. But Mohan Lal first went to Sir Claude Wade's house, where he was introduced to the family and guests. On the 18th September, he was invited to dinner by Lord Ashley,* an M. P., who had taken great interest in Mohan Lal's activities

¹*Ibid*; 486-9.

¹ The author has used the same copy of Mohan Lal's *Travels* as was presented by him to Lord Ashley on the 26th March, 1846.

in Afghanistan. Mohan Lal liked the sea-side, and spent his time bathing in sea water and moving about from place to place :—

"I bathed every morning, and felt myself refreshed to a degree quite impossible to express. I generally breakfasted in one place, lunched in another, and dined at a third, and thus kept myself moving sometimes for fourteen hours every day."¹

4. *At Portsmouth*

On the 19th September Mohan Lal was at Portsmouth. He visited the dockyards where ships were under construction, the biscuit factory which turned out 25,000 pounds of biscuits in an hour, and the telegraph and telephone offices where he was "lost in wonder." Mohan Lal's astonishment knew no bounds when on inquiry a telephone clerk rang up the London office, and "in the course of live seconds" informed him what kind of weather was there. At this place Mohan Lal was entertained by the Governor, Sir Hercules, Lady Pakenham, General Baumgardt, and Dr. Moore.*

5. *At Southampton*

From Portsmouth, Mohan Lal travelled for the first time, by railroad. On reaching Southampton, he was received by Mr. Hill, with another letter from Mr. Trevelyan. Here he stayed for two days and found the place "very interesting."⁸

6. *In London*

On the 23rd September he reached London. At the railway station, a gentleman from Mr. Trevelyan received him. He procured him a carriage and sent him with his servants to the

¹ Travels, 492.

² *Ibid*; 493-4.

³ *Ibid*; 494.

Bedford Hotel, Covent Garden. Mohan Lal immediately went to see Mr. Trevelyan at the Treasury, and was pleased to meet his patron and friend. The Chairman of the Honourable East India Company was informed of his arrival, and the 26th September was fixed as the day of interview.

On this day Mohan Lal went to the India House, and was introduced to Mr. Shepherd, the Chairman, and also to the Deputy Chairman and to the Secretary. All these gentlemen frequently invited him to dinner and other functions, and introduced him to numerous persons. Mr. Hogg, an M. P. and a Director, introduced him to Sir Walter James, the son of Sir Henry Hardinge, the Governor-General of India, and to Lord John Russell. Many Directors of the E. I. Company, including Sir James Law Lushington, General Galloway, Colonel Sykes, and Mr. Warden entertained him. Sir Richard Jenkins introduced him at Her Majesty's ball at Buckingham Palace, and gave an eloquent account of his services and attainments.

Mohan Lal was much impressed by the crowded streets of London, whilst its theatres reminded him of "the fabulous tales of the gardens of the fairies". But he "could not say much in commendation of the beauty or modesty of the females," appearing on the stage. He felt annoyed at the London houses which were very small and stifling as the windows and doors were kept always shut. He did not find the place as cold as it had been intimated and he moved about in a "thin shirt and white trousers." He had a greater complaint against the ball rooms which were "awfully heated," on account of which he once fainted in the month of February. The English climate was exhilarating and improved his health ; but he did not like "the fogs and smoke of London."¹

¹ *Ibid* ; 495-9.

7. At Oakley

On the 7th October, he received a letter from Mountstuart Elphinstone, ex-Governor of Bombay, under whom Mohan Lal's father had served, inviting him to Oakley to enjoy the "English scenery/" and to "accept a hearty welcome." Needless to say Mohan Lal gladly availed himself of this opportunity.¹

8. In Scotland

On his return to London, Mohan Lal received an invitation from Mr. Burnes, father of the late Sir Alexander Burnes from Montrose in Scotland. Mohan Lal immediately set off to Edinburgh, and reached Montrose on the 23rd October. The meeting with the father and mother of one who was chiefly instrumental in the rise of Mohan Lal, was a most moving sight. The parents with tears trickling down their eyes rushed forward and embraced him with, the greatest affection. Mohan Lal gave the old couple a touching account of their beloved sons, and delivered to them the papers and the Journal of Sir Alexander Burnes, written down to the evening preceding his death.

At Edinburgh he was feted by numerous friends and acquaintances with a round of parties, dinners and dances. Even the Mayor invited him and seated him by his side at a meeting of the Corporation. He received many invitations from the Highland chiefs, but he declined them for want of time. Sir William Allan, the famous artist of Edinburgh, requested Mohan Lal through his host. Sir John Macneil, to give him a few sittings, and he painted a fine portrait of him, which was shown in the art exhibition in 1845.

¹*Ibid*; 499-501.

FACSIMILE
OF
MOHAN LAL'S HANDWRITING

For

Lord Stanley
with most respectful
for

Mohan Lal

16 March 1846

London

4 George Street
Manchester Square

On the 11th November he visited Glasgow, where Sir James Campbell received him. He was invited to dinner at the club of Highlanders, where every member appeared in his national costume. About the people of Scotland Mohan Lal observed :—

"The inhabitants show a healthier complexion than those of England, but cannot rival them in beauty or dress. They are a very hospitable and obliging nation, far from indulging in any unbecoming pride and free from vanity."¹

9. *In Ireland*

Mohan Lal then visited Ireland where he stayed for a month. In Dublin scores of ladies and gentlemen of the highest society, including high officials, favoured him with visits, and entertained him at numerous functions. Lord Altamont invited him to Westport in the country of Sligo, where Mohan Lal was lodged in a princely mansion. About the country and the people he says :—

"Ireland is a beautiful country, always green, on which account it has received the name of 'the Emerald Island.' The land and the people towards the country of Sligo are very poor; and it was heart-rending to see the men and women, with large families walking without shoes and sufficient clothing in the most piercing cold. The natives of Ireland are hospitable, and I was welcomed in every cottage, and the farmers appeared delighted to present me with a piece of bread and some porter; but generally I saw the poor inhabitants living entirely on potatoes."¹

¹*Ibid*; 501-5.

² *Ibid*; 506-10.

10 At Liverpool

On his return from Ireland, Mohan Lal visited Liverpool on the 14th December, and was received by the Mayor. He ~~was~~¹ entertained by Sir Henry Pottinger, Lord Stanley, Lord Sandon and Mr. Cooper. He was shown every place of note, including a number of factories, workshops, dockyards and the school for the deaf and dumb.

11. Returns to London

Visiting Birmingham on the way he returned to London on the 1st January, 1845. Here he was a guest of honour of Sir Robert Inglis, Lord Palmerston, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Auckland and others. On the 4th March he was invited for an interview by His Royal Highness Prince Albert at Buckingham Palace. The Earl of Ripon, President of the Board of Control, extended his full co-operation to him. Lord Ashley presented him to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and he was invited to a royal ball.¹

12. Receives a pension of £ i,000.

' On the 25th January Mohan Lal submitted to the Court of Directors a memorial of his diplomatic services in Afghanistan and Sind. He was granted a pension of Rs. 500 per mensem, and was allowed to draw his salary of Rs. 320 per mensem.' Mohan Lal pressed his claims further pointing out the generous allowance of Rs. 500 per mensem granted to Sayyid Murtza Shah who had only taken his message from Kabul to Bamian for the liberation of prisoners. He received in consequence a total grant of £1,000 per annum for life," and the chairman remarked

¹ *Ibid*; 512-5.

² Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 1st November, 1845, No. 42.

³ Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 25th August, 1855, Nos. 3-8.

"that as I was yet a young person, I should have many other opportunities of establishing further claims by good services to the' Honourable Company, and when I get old, or retire, the Government would take all my services into reconsideration, and reward me accordingly."¹

13. *In Germany*

On the 21st September, 1845, Mohan Lal left London for a visit to Germany. The German ambassador in England, Chevalier Bunsen, had informed the King of Prussia of Mohan Lal's intended visit to his capital; while Lord Aberdeen gave him letters of introduction to all the British ambassadors in different courts. He visited Antwerp where he attended service in a "wonderful cathedral," and "the lights, the burning of incense, the ringing of small bells, and the ornamenting and worshipping small images of Jesus and of the Virgin Mary," all reminded him of the temples at Mathura and Brindaban. At Brussels, Sir G. Hamilton Seymour, the British ambassador, gave him a seat in his box at the opera. He visited Aix-La-Chapelle, Cologne and Bonn, and at the last named place, he saw "the small house where Prince Albert resided and was educated." He was enchanted by the lovely and picturesque scenery of the Rhine Valley described by him as "beyond my praise." At Wisbaden he bathed in mineral waters. Passing through Frankfort, Dresden, and Leipsic, he reached Berlin on the 7th October.

Here warm welcome awaited him from the British ambassador, the Earl of Westmoreland. Baron Humboldt, Count Ross and Captain Von Orlich were among others who entertained him. On the 10th October, His Majesty Frederick William the Fourth, the King of Prussia, invited him to dinner at his

¹ Ibid, Travels, 515.

palace. The King "squeezed" his hand, and Mohan Lal received attention also from the Queen. "It is impossible," says Mohan Lal, "for me to describe to my own satisfaction the gracious, kindly and benevolent kindness which his majesty shewed me at and after dinner. There was no shadow of pride but every mark of liberality and condescension." Mohan Lal was also much impressed by the fluent English in which the King conversed with him. His Majesty then asked him to stay there longer, but he had to cut short his visit owing to certain business in England.

On his return to London, the Prussian ambassador called on Mohan Lal on the 24th January, 1846, and delivered to him "a most charming likeness of His Majesty the King of Prussia. It was exquisitely carved in ivory, in a frame of solid gold, richly embossed and enamelled," bearing an inscription to the effect that it was presented to Mirza Mohan Lal by Frederick William IV.

On the 15th February, Mohan Lal was entertained by Lord Combermere,¹ about whose estate etc. Mohan Lal says :—

"The park is about twenty miles round, and the lake four miles. It abounds with sport, and the scenery is rich

¹ Lord Combermere (1773—1865) obtained second lieutenancy in 1790 and joined his corps in Dublin in 1791. The same year he became first lieutenant. In 1794 he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He served in India in 1799 in the campaign against Tipu Sultan. In 1800 he returned to England. The same year he became a colonel and shortly after a major-general. He served under Wellington in Spain. He was raised to the peerage as Baron Combermere in 1813. In 1817 he was appointed Governor of Barbadoes. From 1822 to 1825 he served as commander-in-chief in Ireland. In 1825 he sailed for India as a general and commander-in-chief in India. He captured Bharatpur, the famous Jat fortress, which twenty years earlier had defied Lord Lake. He stayed

and luxurious. The house is full of Indian curiosities, and of weapons of war from the fort of Bharutpur. His lordship has also the history in manuscript of Soraj Mal Jat, the founder of the dynasty of that tribe, and of the fort."¹

Mohan Lal stayed in England for a few months more and returned to India in November, 1846.²

14. Case against R. Hodges and the alleged implication of Mohan Lal in the conspiracy

R. Hodges,⁸ an Anglo-Indian, and a relation⁴ of Mohan Lal, was Assistant Magistrate and Deputy Collector at Kaithal in

in India for five years, during nine months of which he acted as Governor-General. He returned to England in 1830, and spent the remaining year, of his life in parliamentary and social activities, cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹ Travels, 522—27.

² Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 25th August, 1855, Nos. 3-8. Mohan Lal returned from England to Calcutta, on the 6th November, 1846, and left it on the 12th for the Governor-General's Camp. Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 31st December, 1847, No. 1145.

Agha Hyder Hasan of Hyderabad has in his possession a miniature of Mohan Lal which seems to be the original of the picture of Mohan Lal that appeared in his Travels. On the back of this miniature is the following inscription.—"Painted by Pell Smith, 10, Rathborough Street, Piccadilly, London." He has another miniature of a European woman, whom the Agha alleges to be a wife of Mohan Lal. The lady did not come to India with Mohan Lal, but it is said that his family received letters for many years from her and from persons who declared they were either sons or daughters of Mohan Lal.

⁹ Hodges was head clerk in the Assistant Agent's office at Ludhiana. On the escheat of Kaithal estate he was appointed Deputy Collector there. Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 25th October, 1845, No. 78.

* Mohan Lal's father. Pandit Budh Singh, kept a Muslim concubine and had a daughter by her who was brought up as a Muslim. She was

the Karnal district. He fell ill and went on leave to Ludhiana. Then Captain Abbott was appointed as 3rd Assistant to the Governor-General's Agent, and his position was that of the immediate superior officer of Hodges. Captain Abbott found the clerical staff of Hodges's office corrupt. He also noticed that Hodges himself had committed "a few glaring cases of injustice",¹ and consequently he lodged a complaint with the higher authorities. The matter was handed over for inquiry to the Sub-Commissioner, and was afterwards taken up by G. Broadfoot,² Agent, Governor-General.

In his report Broadfoot stated:—"Captain Abbott has sometimes laid aside the calmness of a superior responsible for those under him and adopted the tone of a party in a dispute, and after using very strong language respecting Mr. Hodges he declined to bring specific charges against him." But concurring with the opinion of the Sub-Commissioner, he declared "Hodges'

Hodges's wife. Mohan Lal also kept a concubine who was the daughter of another Muslim mistress of Hodges. Panjab Records, Book 167, Letter 23, dated the 5th September, 1845.

¹ Panjab Records Book 51, Letter 88, dated the 27th September, 1844.

"Broadfoot, George (1807-1845), major, the eldest of three brothers serving in India, entered the Indian army in 1826 as an ensign in the Madras native infantry. He passed the greater part of earlier service with this regiment. In May, 1841, he went to Kabul to escort the families of Shah Shuja and Zaman Shah. In October he accompanied Sale's brigade from Kabul to Jalalabad. Here Broadfoot served as a garrison engineer. Later he followed General Pollock to Kabul. After the close of the first Afghan War he was created a Companion of the Bath and was appointed Commissioner of Moulmein; but was shortly afterwards transferred to the Panjab in the capacity of the Agent to the Governor-General on the Sikh frontier, cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*.

entire unfitness for his duties in Kythal" and further held that he could not be "beneficially employed in any way in the public service in these states."¹

Captain Abbott brought another charge of a more serious nature against R. Hodges of intriguing with *Mai* Sahib Kaur of Kaithal whose estates had lapsed to the British Government for lack of a male heir. He asserted that Hodges had received Rs. 9,000 from the *Mai* as a bribe "by giving her hopes that his brother-in-law, Mohan Lal, will support her cause in England",¹ in order to secure her permission to adopt a son.³

Regarding this charge, however, no witnesses were examined, no evidence was recorded and no investigation was made⁴ probably due to G. Broadfoot's positive dislike for Mohan Lal, as he himself admitted that he had "formed an unfavourable opinion of Mohun Lall in Afghanistan," and also for want of means to substantiate his charge against him.⁵

Mohan Lal was at this time in England and had been most cordially received in high quarters. Besides, Mohan Lal had been granted a pension of about Rs.1250 per mensem. He was expected to serve under the Indian Government, and could draw at least the minimum salary of Rs. 320, which he had already been getting. Such a large amount of money, together

¹ Panjab Records, Book 166, Letter 101, dated Simla, the 17th May, 1845.

²Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 25th October, 1845, No. 78.

³ She actually adopted a son of Gulab Singh of Arnauui and had him marched in procession through the streets and bazars of Kaithal. *Ibid*.

⁴ Panjab Records, Book 167, Letter 38.

⁵*Ibid*; Letter 24; G. Broadfoot to Fred Curne, Secretary to the Government of India, dated Simla, the 5th September, 1843.

with his enviable influence with the highest authorities in India as well as in England seems to have been too much to be quietly borne by G. Broadfoot. Further, he knew that Panjab was the best field for Mohan Lal's future employment, and Broadfoot was not going to have a subordinate officer of Mohan Lal's position. He was therefore bent upon ruining him! and he found an opportunity of doing so in the case of R. Hodges.

In the Panjab dark clouds were hovering in the sky, and were soon to burst out in a torrential downpour in the form of the First Sikh War. The political situation therefore was very acute, and Hodges's alleged intrigues with the *Mai* of Kaithal could easily be made a pretext to arouse the fears of the Government of India.

Taking advantage of Hodges's relationship with Mohan Lal, he accused Mohan Lal of carrying on intrigues against the British Government with regard to the Panjab. He brought no proof to support his charge, but made an emphatic report against him not only to the Government of N. W. Province of Agra with which he had no connection whatsoever, but also to the Government of India. The tone of the whole letter is offensive as the following extract testifies:—

"From Captain Abbott's private note herewith sent you will perceive that he recommends the removal of Mr. Hodges from the protected states. His presence is undoubtedly mischievous and the recent grant of a very considerable pension in England to Mohan Lal with the accounts diligently published of his reception by the English Queen and nobility and his supposed influence with the Court of Directors have greatly and sensibly, increased the power of these intrigues.

But I am not prepared to recommend any measure unless sure it would be effectual in stopping the mischief which I doubt if removal would be as neihter Mohan Lal nor the Cashmeere Bramins would be removed while the benefit of depriving them of Mr. Hodges' advice and aid would be counterbalanced by the kind of martyrdom to the honour of which he and his friends would lay claim. At the same time I am far from having formed a very decided opinion on the subject and still less • thinking that circumstances especially in the Punjab may not speedily render some strong measures imperative, for I need not say that the schemes of these parties extend to that country as their chief field and I may add that they are connected with our press and especially with the Delhi Gazette."¹

This strongly-worded note went unheeded both by the Government of N. W. P. Agra and the Government of India. The Secretary of the former replied :—

"The Lieutenant-Governor does not attach much importance to foolish intrigues of this kind which carry with them their own remedy in the disappointment of the hopes they excite."* The reply from the Government of India, though more cautiously worded, was to the same effect:—

"The fact of Mr. Hodges' being the brother-in-law of Mohan Lal will not influence the decision of Government in

¹ *Ibid* 1 Letter 23, dated Simla, the 5th September, 1845

² Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 29th November, 1845,
No. 32.

regard to the disposal of the former, and the Governor-General-in-Council is of opinion that it is not expedient, whatever may be the temporary effect of the intrigues of this person in England, to show that they create any impression on your proceedings as the Political Agent of the Government."¹

But in reality G. Broadfoot succeeded in his object. Hodges lost his job and Mohan Lal never got one in spite of a partial loss of his pension.²

¹ Panjab Records, Book 136, Letter 78, dated 18th September, 1845, para 2.

² It may be interesting to note that the payment of Mohan Lal's salary of Rs. 320 per mensem was refused to him by the Government of India, "in consequence of his going to England, while he had leave only to go to Bombay." But this money was later on paid to him on the intercession of the Court of Directors. *Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation*, 31st December, 1847, No. 1129. Vide Panjab Records, Book 89, Letter 246, G. Broadfoot, A. G. G. N. W. F. to Mohan Lal, 53, Manchester Street, Manchester Square, London, dated Simla, 19th July, 1846:—"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st May last, and to inform you, that your claim has been laid before the Government of India, by whose order your pay was stopped."

CHAPTER XIV

REJECTION OF CLAIMS FOR KABUL SUPPLIES

I. Days of retirement

The visit to Europe marked the turning point in the life of Mohan Lal. He had reached the zenith of his greatness and glory, the farthest limit which an Indian in the service of the British Government in those days could reach. The Government of India could no longer employ in its service an Indian who had access to the highest quarters in England. So he was obliged to retire from service and public life at the young age of thirty-four.

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The true life of Mohan Lal therefore came to an end, and the remainder of his days were of a twilight nature. Consequently, for the biographer there is darkness over this period of his life. The years of public life are illuminated by a large quantity of authentic information, but with his retirement a veil descends. Only occasionally at disconnected intervals, does it lift for a time; and a few details are discerned, while generally there is gloom and obscurity. Though he survived for more than thirty years, the chronicle of those years can bear no proportion to the story of his earlier days.

2. Claims for Kabul Supplies

Mohan Lal had returned to India in November, 1846, and on the 18th January, 1847, when he was still in the Governor-General's Camp, he put forward his claims for Rs. 79, 496, advanced by him to Kabul merchants for the supplies of grain and fodder for General Pollock's army.

In his petition he submitted that while in Kabul at the time of General Pollock's advance to that city, he received various express communications such as :—

"Do all in your power to secure grain for us" ; and
"Purchase any quantity of grain which is procurable."

[Extracts from the letters of Sir R. Shakespeare,
Military Secretary to Sir George Pollock.]

In obedience to such orders, Mohan Lal purchased grain to the value of Rs. 135,000, paying in advance Rs. 83,000 and promising to pay the balance on the arrival of the army in Kabul.

He then heard wild rumours that the British forces were retiring from Jalalabad, and also received a letter from the camp of Sir George Pollock saying that "the Dost and all Afghans shall be given up when our prisoners and guns restored." [Extract from Sir R. Shakespeare's letter, dated 15th July, 1842.] Mohan Lal therefore planned to sell the grain. But soon afterwards he received another letter: "You ought not to despair of British troops advancing on Cabool, and you must not on any account sell the grain which has been collected for the use of the army." [Extract from Sir R. Shakespeare's letter, dated 22nd July, 1842.] He received another express letter saying "that detaining our prisoners and getting grain and supplies for our troops we trust to you to make every exertion to effect them both." [Extract from Sir R. Shakespeare's letter dated 9th September, 1842.]

On the arrival of General Pollock in Kabul, Muhammad Akbar Khan took to flight, but certain chiefs rose against the British in the Kohistan. General Pollock organised an expedition under General MacCasldlll, and Mohan Lal was

ordered through Captain Colin Mackenzie to accompany the General as a Political Assistant. Mohan Lal objected to his leaving Kabul declaring that in his absence, and in view of the expected withdrawal of the British forces, the grain merchants would either disappear from the city, or their stores of grain might be plundered by their enemies, and he might in consequence lose the money advanced to the grain dealers.

Major Macgregor and Captain Colin Mackenzie, the Political Agents, told Mohan Lal that his company with the expeditionary force was "indispensably necessary", and that "even at the risk of loss" which "would fall upon Government,"¹ he would have to go. Mohan Lal accompanied MacCaskill's forces and discharged his duties well; but the idea of possible loss of a large sum of money weighed on his mind. He recorded:—

" I was very unwell during this campaign, and having been of a different opinion from that of several of the functionaries I should have felt very uncomfortable but for the civilities and attention of Captain Mackenzie."¹

On his return from the expedition, Mohan Lal found some of the grain merchants missing. Consequently, he gave a list of the contractors to Major Macgregor for their apprehension. The Major could recover only Rs. 3,000 from one contractor, the rest having taken to flight. In his absence the commissariat officers had bought grain from one contractor amounting to the value of only Rs. 504, for which sum he was given a bill. Thus, out of Rs. 83,000 only Rs. 3,504 had been recovered, and Mohan Lal asserted that he had to pay to his creditors the balance of Rs. 79,496.

¹ Travels, 476,

On his return to India, he submitted his claims to the Governor-General in January, 1843, at Ferazepur, and later at Agra, and personally spoke to Mr. Thomson, the Secretary, who told him that the "Government cannot form any decisive opinion on the claim without certificates or' enquiries made from Major Macgregor and Captain Colin Mackenzie who have proceeded to England" and that he "should wait till their return."

During his visit to Europe Mohan Lal obtained a certificate regarding the purchases from Colin Mackenzie in Germany on the 6th October, 1845, and from Major Macgregor in London on the 16th November, 1845. On the 18th May, 1846, he submitted his claims regarding the Kabul supplies to the Honourable Court of Directors, but received an intimation in reply that the "application on the subject should be made to the Government of India."¹

3. Extract from Colin Mackenzie's Certificate

"On the recapture of Cabul by the British army under Sir G. Pollock it was found necessary to despatch a force under General MacCaskill to disperse a strong body of the enemy assembled at Istalif and to obtain the release of the survivors of the unfortunate Ghoorka Regiment which had been destroyed or taken prisoners at Chareekar. On this occasion Mohun Lal was requested by G. Pollock to accompany Prince Shahpoor, myself, and the friendly Kuzzilbash Chiefs with their cavalry to assist in effecting the above objects, to give confidence to the inhabitants of the valley of Kohistan, to secure the necessary supplies to the army. At first Mohan Lal objected to leave Cabul stating that his

¹ Imperial Records. Foreign Consultation, 31st December, 1847.

absence added to the report, which was daily gaining strength of the speedy evacuation of the country by the British troops, would make it impossible for him to secure himself from great loss having already, by orders of his superiors, collected together large supplies for the use of the army in contemplation of its remaining sometime in Afghanistan. In the collection of these supplies Mohun Lal had advanced certain sums of money to various contractors. However, Mohun Lal's talents in native diplomacy, his personal intimacy with many of the Kuzzilbash Chiefs, and his knowledge of the country rendered it desirable that he should accompany the expedition even at the risk of loss; it being understood as a matter of course that such loss would fall on Government. He obeyed accordingly."

4. Major Macgregor's testimonial

"I certify that Mohun Lal purchased and collected grain for the use of the army under Sir G. Pollock according to the directions contained in the communications conveyed through me and other officers which are now in his possession.

"It having been found necessary to despatch a force into the Kohistan under Major-General MacCaskill for the subjugation of certain refractory chiefs, Sir G. Pollock considered Mohun Lal's service might be made very useful to the interests of the British Government if he accompanied this expedition. Mohun Lal stated to me at the time, that he was involved in certain grain transaction on account of Government, that he had made advances to certain merchants on that account and that his absence from Cabul might be taken advantage of by the merchants by their not fulfilling

their engagements with him and unless he was present at Cabul to compel them to do so he might sustain considerable pecuniary loss. His services, however, with General MacCaskill's force were deemed indispensably necessary, and he was accordingly directed to accompany H. R. H. Shahpoor, the Persian Chiefs, and to place more immediately under the orders of Captain 'Colin Mackenzie who accompanied the Prince and party. I was told by Mohun Lal on his return to Cabul from Kohistan that some of the grain merchants had absconded and I endeavoured to apprehend those a list of whose names he gave me. One of them, Akbar Shah, was seized and paid back 3,000 rupees. The others were not apprehended in consequence of the sudden retirement of the British force from Cabul, not admitting of sufficient time to do so.

"I have already stated in my official letter my opinion that the service which Mohun Lal has rendered to the British Government in times of unprecedented difficulty and danger had proved of the greatest advantage to its interests and I need not repeat it here in details.

"I should be very glad if the testimony contained in this document may in Any way assist Mohun Lal in recovering the money which he had advanced on account of the grain he purchased for the Government."¹

5. References in Mohan Lal's Utters

22nd June, 1842

"Plenty of the grain has been secured for the General's army, and I have advanced some money for it."¹

¹ Ibid.

² Panjab Records, 41C/142.

24th June

"Whatever may happen to me, the General will meet my men, whom I have appointed to get grain and have advanced the money."¹

26th June

"When you reach near I will send out Sawurdur and Qurban Alee, my servant, to meet and supply the General with grain as the former has agreed."¹

28th June

"I have secured grain.""

19th July

"If it is not the intention of the General to come to Cabool, I beg you will kindly tell me plainly so that I may tell every one of our friends to sell the grain which they collected for us and recover the money which [had advanced to the extent of 3,000 Rupees."⁴

29th July

"I have stopped the sale of the grain collected for your army and made arrangements to collect the great quantity of *bhoosa* as you wrote."⁶

4th August

"The people with whom I had formerly negotiated complain of not receiving the money they lent for messengers from the

¹*Ibid*; 41C/148.

²*Ibid*; 41C/151.

³*Ibid*; 41C/156.

⁴*Ibid*; 41C/177

⁵ *Ibid*; 41C/185

month of January which has amounted to a large sum besides the money advanced for grain and Mahomed Akbar."¹

6. Extracts from the Bound Diary of Mohan Lal written and kept from 2nd November, 1841 to 5th April, 1845

Mohan Lal was called upon to substantiate his claims from the notes in his diary which he regularly kept. The relevant extracts are given below :—

"Cabool, 22nd September, 1842, Thursday

I asked General Pollock to send Force and letters to Kohistan—wrote about grain, 83,000 loss and trouble.

"Cabool, 26th September, 1842, Monday

Paid to Saleh Mahomed 31,520 rupees.

Captain Mackenzie told General to send me with him to Kohistan, as I will do much there. All money given for grain. *Casids'* account remained unsettled. I told Capt. Macgregor that Government will suffer the loss. I was sick.

"Cabool, 8th October, 1842, Saturday

I was in the city. Shah's people plundered and the English got bad name. Plenty of the supplies collected and purchased by me plundered and burnt. The sellers who had received money from me more than 80,000 rupees ran away and Captain Macgregor got very little sum back.

"11th December, 1842, Camp, Eastern bank of Ravee

Captain Macgregor asked General Pollock to allow me to remain with the garrison of Jellalabad.

Received *Palkee* from Hodges and also wine, application for 83,000 rupees to Sir R. Shakespeare.

² *Ibid*; 41C/19I.

"Agra, 30th, Thursday, 31st, Friday, March, 1843

Very hot, ill of temper and ill of health, these are caused by injustice. No situation, no 83,000 rupees of grain and no 24,000 rupees of Sir William Macnaghten. How foolish I was to act in advice and borrow money and spend my own money!

"Agra, from 1st to 13th, April, 1843

Waited on the Secretary, spoke of my claim of the grain money, says to submit application.

"Agra, 14th April, 1843

Wrote application of 83,000 rupees of grain claim and sent it to Mr. Thomson, also copy of the receipt and letters of the Secretary of Sir G. Pollock quoted in it. Saw Mr. Jackson Magistrate after a long period, the first time I saw him at Mr. Trevelyan's at Calcutta.

"From 15th to 17th April, 1843, Agra

Saw Mr. Edward, told him that I gave letters of my grain claim. He says that Mr. Thomson is favourably disposed towards me, and that he thinks I shall not meet disappointment after a full enquiry.

"Agra, 18th, 19th April, 1843

Saw Mr. Thomson, kind, says as I cannot submit written evidences of Major Macgregor and Capt. Mackenzie he cannot present the case to the Governor-General. I must wait till their return, as the amount of 83,000 rupees being large cannot be settled favourably without a full investigation. He gave my letter back, 'written by pencil, give this back to Mohun Lal as it is.'¹

¹ Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 24th March, 1848. No. 78.

7. Extract from a published work

" On my return to Kabul (from expedition to Kohistan, September-October, 1842), I found that Major Macgregor had succeeded in recovering about 3,000 rupees from the sellers of grain. The money which I had advanced for supplies was more than a lac of rupees, which was demanded of me by those from whom I had borrowed it, and who had been obliged to leave Kabul with us. I am still responsible for debt, and cannot say when the Government will make up their mind to pay it."¹

8. Claims rejected

The matter was referred to Major-General George Pollock for corroboration, but he did not take the full responsibility of the grain transaction on himself.¹ Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, rejected Mohan Lal's petition "in consequence of having made the fullest enquiry respecting the grounds of your claim from all the officers, who were likely to have any cognizance of them," and in the "absence of all proof of its validity."³

9. Pecuniary embarrassments

Mohan Lal could easily pass a comfortable life in retirement on the fat pension of £ 1,000 per annum. But having been accustomed to move in high society, and devoted to worldly pleasures, his expenses were far higher than those of another Indian of his means.

¹ Travels, 476 (published in 1846).

²Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 19th August, 1848, No. 108.

³ *Ibid* , 29th December. 184Q. No. 357.

He settled at Ludhiana,¹ and lived in a fine bungalow,¹ situated opposite to Shahzadah Timur's Garden and next door to Mr. Hodges's house. He kept a large number of people about him, chiefly Afghans, all of whom were paid and supported by him. He had a carriage drawn by two horses. Following the fashion of the day he spent money lavishly on dancing girls. One was regularly maintained at an allowance of two rupees per day, but his expenditure on this head alone amounted to Rs. 300 per mensem. He also drank champagne, and his friends drank at his expense. He then entered into a speculation, and started a hotel in partnership with Ganeshi Lal, Nabi Bakhsh and one or two others. The speculation failed, costing them about Rs. 2,000. He sent his daughter to England to receive an education under the guardianship of Sir Charles Trevelyan, and she cost him from £ 200 to 150 a year.⁸

Added to these was the heavy burden of the interest of the large sum of the Kabul supplies. All this made him run into debt, and in 1852 his debts stood as follows :—

Banka Rai of Ludhiana,	..	..	Rs. 12,000
Bansi Dhar	. •	. •	Rs. 4,000
Colonel Nash of Ferozepur,	..	...	Rs. 5,000
Miscellaneous	..	..	Rs. 4,000
TOTAL	..	..	Rs. 25,000.

¹ An entry in the Ludhiana Mission, 1844-7, p. 28, shows that Mohan Lal in 1847 contributed a sum of five rupees for the Poor House of the Mission.

¹ The *Noor Afshan*, an Urdu weekly, published from Ludhiana, has a reference in its issue dated the 6th September, 1877, p. 284:—"A beam of Agha Hasan Jan's bungalow had broken down even before the rains, and the Government school which was located in this building has been shifted to the house of Rupa Blistri. The mansion is now peeping at the sky."

² Agha Hyder Hasan of Hyderabad says that Mohan Lal took to

Consequently, his pension was burthened heavily in favour of various creditors, which were payable through his agents, Colviii Anslie and Co; Calcutta.¹

10. Applies for Ike post of a Mir Munshi

After settling at Ludhiana, Mohan Lal had realised the weakness of his financial resources in about a year's time, and on the 20th April, 1848, he applied to the Governor-General for the post of a Mir Munshi at Hyderabad (Deccan) on Rs. 150 per mensem. In his application he stated :—

"I have now fully respectfully laid the whole statement for the generous consideration of the Rt. Hon'ble the Governor-General of India, and humbly throw myself into the ocean of the clemency and liberality of His Lordship trusting that the situation of the Meer Moonshee in the Hyderabad Residency (if not in Lucknow) be granted to me, which is still vacant and has the salary of 150 rupees per month only.

"It is not with the view of any pecuniary advantage of 150 rupees per mensem that I apply for the said situation, but it is with the view to establish my further claims on Government by performing the services to the advantage of the State. I therefore repeatedly implore the mercy of his Lordship to nominate me to that situation in Hyderabad."¹

wife a woman from Kafaristan. He had two daughters by her, who were sent to England. On their way back to India they were taken ill with small-pox and died.

¹ Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 20th February, 1854, No. 273.

² Imperial Records, Political Department, 6th May, 1848, Nos. 127-8.

Mohan Lal was unsuccessful in this attempt. In 1852 A. Burton, the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, who was touched at finding him living "very quietly" under straitened circumstances and keeping only one horse for a ride, recommended him unsuccessfully for a job to Sir Henry Lawrence, then passing through Ludhiana. Mohan Lal afterwards spent most of his time first with his brother Kidar Nath, the Deputy Collector of Ambala, and then at Ajmer, Lucknow and Allahabad, chiefly for fear of his creditors, who had obtained decrees from civil courts against him.¹

The pecuniary embarrassment compelled him again to seek assistance from the British Government. In an application, dated Agra, the 3rd November, 1853, to J. P. Grant, officiating Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, he submitted:—

"The noble pension granted to me by the Honourable the Court of Directors for my poor services in Afghanistan has been mortgaged by me to pay the debts originally incurred to purchase provisions for the British army in Cabool, the amount of which has unfortunately been rejected by Government.

"I am therefore thrown into an innumerable distress and dire necessity almost approaching to starvation. If Government should have no objection and mercifully permit me, I shall search to have an employment (as English teacher or something else) under some native chief dependent to and with treaty with the British Government, on the usual conditions of leaving

¹ Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 10th February, 1854, No. 273.

the same whenever my services are required by my own Government, and thus provide maintenance for myself until I am out of such distress."¹

II. Memorial to the Directors

About a fortnight later Mohan Lal decided to try his last chance about his claims regarding the Kabul supplies, and on the 20th November, 1853, submitted a memorial to the Court of Directors for the appointment of a Commission to investigate in the matter. He requested that Sir Richmond Shakespeare, Colonel Macgregor and Brigadier Colin Mackenzie who were connected with the case should be taken on the Commission.⁸

IB. A Commission appointed

The Court of Directors authorised the Governor-General to appoint a Commission which was appointed in November, 1854. It consisted of Lieutenant Colonel P. Goldney as Chairman, and Major Reddie, and R. Temple, Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of the Panjab as members. The Commission was to meet at Lahore in February, 1855.

Mohan Lal was at this time at Allahabad. For two months past he had been suffering from a sore in his right eye, the sight of which he had "nearly lost," and was forbidden to expose it to extreme cold and sun. Besides, he had to bear travelling expenses, and none of the officers whom he wanted to produce as witnesses were present in the Panjab. Furthermore, he was afraid of his Ludhiana creditors who held

¹ Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 25th November, 1853. No 81.

¹ Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 3rd March, 1855, Nos. 39-40

court decrees for his apprehension. So he applied that the Commission should meet either at Allahabad or Murshidabad or Calcutta.¹

Sir John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Pan jab, ordered him to leave for Lahore immediately, to travel by *dak*, and not to waste any time on the way. He informed him however, that his travelling expenses from Allahabad to Lahore would be borne by the Government, and he ordered the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana to protect Mohan Lal from arrest until the termination of the proceedings of the Commission appointed to investigate into his claims."

In a letter dated Cawnpore, 8th February, 1855, Mohan Lal solicited the Chief Commissioner to summon the three officers named in his memorial as witnesses. P. Goldney did not agree:—

"I am of opinion that it is unnecessary to summon three gentlemen ; the claimant can submit any queries he may deem necessary, but with the full testimony already in our possession. I contemplate no further reference."¹

P. Goldney, before his appointment on the Commission, held the civil charge of Ludhiana district as Deputy Commissioner. He knew Mohan Lal intimately, and was aware of his extravagant habits. At this time another incident also took place which exercised at least some unfavourable influence on Mohan Lal's case. Colonel Nash of the Bengal Army who had

¹ Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 6th January, 1855, No. 13, and 27th January, 1855, Nos 24-26.

• *Ibid*; 17th February, 1855, Nos. 8-9.

known Mohan Lal at Kabul, became in 1847 security for Mohan Lal for a sum of Rs: 5,200 advanced to him by the N. W. Bank. Mohan Lal failed to pay to the bank, and Colonel Nash had to pay in 1852 the principal and interest both. Colonel Nash sought Colonel Goldney's assistance in recovering money from Mohan Lal, but he failed in doing so. Colonel Nash, however, supplied Goldney some information about this transaction, which seems to have prejudiced the mind of the chairman.¹

13. Report of the Commission

The Commission commenced its proceedings about the end of February and concluded the inquiries on the 8th May. The report was submitted by the middle of August. As it is unnecessary to deal with the case at length a summarized account from the report of the Chairman of the Commission in his own words follows:—

3. "Prima facie claimant's case is very strong.
4. "I believe that he had credit and influence to raise money as described.
5. "It is established that he had authority to procure supplies.
6. "It is admitted that he wrote to say that he had done so.
7. "It is proved that the commissariat actually received a portion of these supplies.
8. "It is shown that claimant declined going to Istalif on the apprehension of loss of advances made for these supplies.
9. "And that on returning from Istalif to Cabul, he again urged the subject of these advances.

¹ *Ibid* ; 25th August, 1855, Nos. 3-8.

10. "It is proved that claimant gave in a list of parties to whom he had made advances, and that one of these parties refunded 3,000 rupees (about 3-5/8 per cent of the entire sums alleged) which money was paid over to claimant.

11. "There is violent presumption that claimant proposed about the middle of July, 1842 to dispose of grain then collected.

12. "It is clear that so late as the 13th of September, 1842 Sir Richmond Shakespeare wrote to claimant to purchase any quantity of grain procurable, although it most unaccountably appears that Sir Richmond Shakespeare entering Cabul (48) forty-eight hours afterwards forgot to make any enquiries about the grain etc., and that he had been writing constantly about it from the 5th of June inclusive, viz 3½ months previous.

13. "Three political assistants under Sir George Pollock (and Sir George himself) write very strongly in favour of claimant's demands.

14. "Claimant's verbal explanations of many doubtful points put to him by our Commission are plausible and probable, the papers produced as vouchers are formal, the recorded depositions by which they are supported are to the point.

15. "The extracts from claimant's private Journal are very conclusive.

16. "Claimant's antecedents are very much in his favour and his services have been cordially recognised and munificently rewarded by a pension for life granted at the age of seven or eight and twenty of £ 1,000 per annum.

On the other hand

i£. "Sir George Pollock first remarks that he never heard of these supplies.

18. "The Commissary General states that he applied to claimant and could hear of but an insignificant quantity.

19. "A very slight analysis of the three Political Assistants' reports shows that they never heard of them at Cabul, of the advances they did hear but not of the supplies.

20. "And here I am bound in justice to claimant to observe that the inadvertence of these three officers is most unaccountable. It is notorious that Sir George Pollock's success after forcing the passes was most complete, that the release of the prisoners was far more facile than he could expect. I assume therefore that there was much less to distract the attention of his political assistants than might have existed under other circumstances: yet though Sir R. Shakespeare's attention was especially directed to the subject on 22nd September! though Lt. Col. Macgregor's attention was called to it prior and subsequent to claimant's departure for Istalif, though Brigadier Mackenzie with Col. Macgregor was obliged to pledge Government to make good claimant's demands in case of loss, yet not one of these three gentlemen ever took the slightest trouble to ascertain one single particular connected with the matter.

21. "Such omission was I feel called upon to record in my opinion unjust to Government and unfair to claimant.

39. "My own inference is that there were advances made by claimant and by his confederates, but that these advances were on private speculation.

49. . "Claimant went home to England in 1844, he there presented a memorial of his services to the Court of Directors: in this no allusion is made to the claims now under discussion, the very first paragraph of that memorial contains a disingenuous statement; it declares, claimant's family *jagirs* to have been

£200,000 (or 20 lacs) sterling per annum. Mr. Philip Egerton, Collector of Delhi, informs me that they were but £4,000 (or Rs. 40,000) a year and claimant admits the fact.¹

60. "Four depositions go to show that he lived very extravagantly and that he came down from Kabul in debt. It is notorious that he lived expensively in London, aided he was no doubt by the Court of Directors. Mr. Hodges, his brother-in-law, says he returned from England in debt. The Commission can obtain no proof; it was eventually believed all over India at the time that Mohan Lal lived an expensive style at home.

70. "Everything is obscure. Even the private Journal is lost in the river Chambal; claimant acts neither like a faithful servant nor like a sensible man.

80. "I ignore the rest of the claim, wholly and entirely. I believe the transactions set forth to be fictitious, concocted.

81. "I propose to grant to claimant Rs. 8,000 principal and as much more interest, total Rs.16,000. He has not been well

¹ This information was supplied by Colonel Nash. It was partly wrong. Mohan Lal did submit a petition for money of the Kabul supplies to the Court of Directors on the 18th May, 1846. The omission of claims in his memorial submitted on the 25th January, 1846 and the exaggeration of the value of his family estates is due to his desire to obtain as large a sum for his allowance as was possible under the circumstances. If in his petition for an allowance he had demanded Rs 80,000 of his Kabul supplies, it must have naturally reacted on the minds of the Directors against the grant of the handsome allowance which Mohan Lal received. The exaggeration of his family *jagirs* is apparently unfair; but young and ambitious as he was he wanted to impress the Directors with his noble descent and a high standard of living which he was actually maintaining in England to secure a very decent allowance.

used, he undoubtedly apprehended losses and but for unjudicious advocacy and his own judicious exaggeration and I must say unaccountable non-investigation (there is no other term I can use) on the part of Government, this portion of this question seems to have been lost sight of altogether.

82. "I have purposely written this opinion without consulting my colleagues, in fact the award of z6,000 rupees has gradually forced itself on me during the writing of this minute; but I cannot be sure of the concurrence of either Major Reddie or Mr. Temple.

83. 'I therefore request that each of these gentlemen will indicate his ideas on the mode of estimating claimant's compensations which should be ultimately awarded.

84. "If both my coadjutors ignore compensation altogether, claimant should get none."¹

14. Petition rejected

Sir John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjab, recommended that Mohan Lal should be granted a donation of Rs. 12,000, which sum was the mean of the recommendations of the members of the Commission.

Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, however, did not concur with the views of the Commission and the Chief Commissioner, and expressed his opinion against any grant of money. The Court of Directors, agreeing with the Governor-General, rejected Mohan Lal's petition.⁸

¹ Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 25th August, 1855 Nos. 3-8.

¹ Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 17th November, 1855, Nos. 28-32 ; 22nd November, 1856, nos 6-8.

15. Mohan Lal's brother's death

Mohan Lal was still in Lahore when news arrived from Delhi that Kidar Nath, his only brother, had died. Therefore no sooner was the inquiry completed by the Commission than Mohan Lal applied for permission to leave Lahore for Delhi in order to arrange for the obsequies of his deceased brother.

Colonel Goldney recommended this case saying : —

"The claimant who has recently lost his only brother is anxious to proceed to Delhi where on the 27th of this month it is, it seems, incumbent on him to cause certain ceremonies to be performed connected with deceased. Although incapacitated by change of religion from personal participation in these rites, claimant is yet, as next of kin, bound to cause them to be celebrated by qualified substitute.

"I think that his wish to quit Lahore should be complied with and his expenses be paid to Delhi."¹

The Chief Commissioner approved of Colonel Goldney's recommendation, but required Mohan Lal to report himself to Colonel Goldney at Delhi from time to time until the proceedings of the Commission were finally closed.¹

16. Mohan Lal arrested and released

Mohan Lal left Lahore on the 20th May, but on his arrival

¹ *Ibid*; 19th May, 1855, Nos. 38-39.

² *Ibid*; R. Temple's letter to Col. Goldney, dated 19th May, 1855, No. 465.

at Ludhiana on the 23rd, he was arrested under orders of the Civil court. Mohan Lal sought the intervention¹ of the Chief

¹ "R. Temple Esquire,
Secy, to the Chief Commissioner,
for the Punjab,
Murree.

"Sir,

Agreeably to the permission of the Chief Commissioner, through Colonel Goldney I left Lahore on the 20th instant for Delhi, but to my misfortune on arrival at Loodianah this morning, I was arrested by the peon of the Civil court, on account of the claim of a decree holder.

"2. By your former letters which you had kindly addressed me before my coming to Lahore, I was led to understand that till my claim is finally disposed of, I shall be under the protection of the Chief Commissioner's order, otherwise (as I had said before) I would have moved from provinces towards Lahore, after making some arrangement to satisfy my creditors.

"3. I entreat the Chief Commissioner and yourself to send immediate orders for the Civil court here not to molest me till my claim is 'finally disposed of by the Chief Commissioner and not hinder me from leaving Loodianah, as I have to cause the performance of the funeral obsequies of my only brother, who had served under the Chief Commissioner for many years.

"4. I write this letter while I am in custody of the peon of the Civil court, and it is evident that being a pensioner of Government I cannot run away.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

LOODIANAH,
33rd May, 1855.

Your most obedient and humble servant,
Mohan Lal".

Commissioner, and was released.¹

¹ Loodianah.

"31st May, 1855.

Deputy Commissioner, Loodianah

"Sir,

Moonshee Mohan Lal whose claims against the Govt, are under investigation before a special Commission has represented that he is under detention at Loodianah, in consequence of execution of a decree of the Civil court at that place. If such be the case I am directed to request that you will release him with a view to his attendance at Delhi, and refrain from arresting him in execution of decrees, while the proceedings of the Commission may last. You may, however, require from him security for his appearance before your court if summoned, after the proceedings of the Commission have been closed. The date of such closing can be ascertained from this office.

R. Temple".

(Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 2nd June, 1855, Nos. 40-42.)

Prince Fatah Jang living as-a British pensioner at Ludhiana Applied on the 8th February, 1855, stating that he had advanced 20,000 Raj to Mohan Lal in Kabul in order to enable him to discharge his public duties ; but he was informed that "the Government can do nothing for him in this matter", cf. C. Beadons, Secy, to the Govt, of India's letter, dated Fort William, 9th March. 1855.

Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 9th March, 1855, No. 182.

CHAPTER XV

MIRACULOUS ESCAPE IN THE MUTINY

MAY—JULY, 1857

1. *Harassed by the Mutineers*

We know nothing about Mohan Lal in the two years after May, 1855. It seems probable that he finally settled at Delhi after his brother's death. Mohan Lal was in Delhi at the time of the outbreak of the Mutiny in May, 1857. R. Hodges came to Delhi from Kapurthala¹ on the 10th May. They purchased certain articles including a pair of leopards for the Maharaja of Kapurthala. In the evening Mohan Lal took Hodges out in his own carriage to show him historical sights and other places of note. On the morning of the nth May, they looked through some newspapers that had just arrived from Calcutta.

¹ R. Hodges obtained employment in the Kapurthala State through the patronage of Sir Henry Lawrence and Mr. Vansittart, the Commissioner of the Jullundur Division.

Miss Warburton of Kasauli, a lady 75 years old, has some vivid recollections of Mr. Hodges's family. She supplied the following information:—

Mrs. Hodges [Mohan Lal's sister by a Muslim step-mother] used to come and stay at Amritsar with Miss Warburton's mother who was an Afghan lady. Miss Warburton remembers the great preparations made to receive Mrs. Hodges. *Pulao* and *Qurma* were cooked. Mrs. Hodges would arrive accompanied by a huge hubble-bubble [*huqqa*] with a long pipe.

Mr. Hodges had several children. First, a daughter called Mathilda [Matty for short]. She married a Major Oldham, an officer in an Indian regiment. She had two children named Evelyn and Bertie.

They were talking when suddenly news was brought to them that the people had mutinied, and that the mutineers of Meerut, both horse and foot, were mercilessly destroying Englishmen and their houses. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon, four soldiers, armed with guns, appeared at the gate of Mohan Lal's house. They abused him in foul language, declaring that the house belonged to a Christian, and that as an Englishman was staying there, they would kill both the owner of the house and his guest. Mohan Lal had already closed the doors; but he sent out his servants who loudly proclaimed that the owner of the house was not a Christian and that there was no Englishman staying there. The neighbours corroborated this statement and coaxed away the soldiers with offers of money. Thereupon the mutineers withdrew. While the soldiers were there, Mohan Lal and Hodges hid themselves in a small, dark cell used for storing fuel.¹

Second, a daughter named Henrietta, [Hetty for short]. Miss Warburton's father as a young man wished to marry this girl. She was married to Maharaja Randhir Singh of Kapurthala. The Maharaja is said to have had fourteen wives, and he was married to this 15th wife, a Christian, by the Reverend Mr. Woodside of the American Presbyterian Mission which resulted in an acute controversy in Mission circles. She had a daughter named Helen, who gained some notoriety on the music hall stage in England. She married one Gilbert in England whose son Arthur Stuart Ahluwalia Stronge Gilbert, B. A. was in the Burma civil service in 1907. [cf. The combined Civil List for India up to 1st July, 1919. the Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1919, p. 152.]

Third, a son, Robert, who after some education in England returned to India as an engineer.

Fourth, a son, William, who was a Tea planter near Dehra Dun.

¹ "I tremble," says ;Mohan Lal, "when I remember that day." Annals of the Indian Rebellion, 1857-58, p. 207.

2. Jfofees beheaded

In the night Mohan Lal conveyed Hodges from his house to that of his uncle for fear of the mutineers whom they expected again. On the 13th, the mutineers attacked the street in which Mohan Lal was living. First they plundered the shops in the neighbourhood, and then forcibly made their way into Mohan Lal's house. They pillaged everything in the house, all worth about Rs. 10,000, with the exception of the library that was in the adjoining house. Then they seized Mohan Lal, and declared that he was neither a Hindu for having visited England, nor a Musalman having sent his daughter to England for studies, and for his relationship with Hodges. Besides, they said, he was a scout ["Mukhbir"] of the British Government, and it was for this reason that he was receiving a large pension. They decided that he must be put to death, and one of them aimed his gun at his breast, and was going to pull the trigger when he was touched by the cries, bewailings, requests, coaxing and flattery of the women of the house. The neighbours both Hindus and Muslims also prevented them from killing Mohan Lal. Just then the *Kotwal* of the city who knew Mohan Lal passed by that way. He also persuaded the mutineers to postpone the murder for the present and to kill him after investigation.

After this incident Mohan Lal disappeared from the house, and kept himself concealed at various places. Hodges also left Mohan Lal's uncle's house, and took refuge with Mohan Lal's mother's sister, with whom he stayed for a few days. By this time people began to suspect that Hodges lay concealed there. Mohan Lal and others therefore decided that Hodges should try to escape. At 8 o'clock at night he left the house in disguise having changed his colour and dress and tried to get out of the town by the Lahori Gate. The mutineers, however, arrested him on suspicion arising from his dress and gait and on talking

to him, they got at the real secret. Hodges then confessed that he was an Englishman in Indian dress, and also stated why he had come to Delhi, and the place he was staying, mentioning, Mohan Lal's name also. He was at once shot down.¹

3. *Escapes from Delhi to Malagarh*

Then the mutineers set out in pursuit of Mohan Lal. Some of his friends sought assistance from Prince Khizar Sultan, and by spending about Rs. 500 secured his permission for Mohan Lal to travel in the train of Nawab Walidad Khan, the chief of Malagarh fort near Bulandshahar.

Walidad Khan was a pensioner of the British Government. He also had obtained from the Emperor of Delhi, the rescript for the governorship of the Gangetic Doab, and was to leave Delhi, on the 26th May. Walidad Khan had promised that he would safely conduct Mohan Lal to Agra, and that he would remain faithful to the British Government.

Walidad Khan was also taking his women folk with him, and was attended by a number of soldiers. Mohan Lal got in a separate palanquin, and accompanied the Nawab.

The first day's halt was made at Ghazi Nagar, where the *Tahsildar* and the *Thanedar* presented their *nazars* to the Nawab. The second night was spent at Dadari, and they reached Malagarh in the evening of the third day. After two days the Nawab sent a gift of mangoes, melons and oranges to

¹ Mohan Lal's letter to a son of R. Hodges translated by Khwaja Hasan Nizami in the 2nd vol. of *Mutiny Tales*, pp. 47-49; X I I p. 14, Mohan Lal's letter to the Secy, of the Chief Commissioner, Panjab, Foreign Department, dated 4th September, 1857; *Mutiny Papers, Proceedings* No. 52, [Panjab Records]; *Annals of the Indian Rebellion, 1857-58*, Part in, July, 1859.

Mr. Sapte, the Collector of Bulandshahar through his agent Har Parshad. After another two days, the Nawab visited the Collector in the company of Mohan Lal. The interview took place in a garden near Bulandshahar. The Nawab assured the Collector of his loyalty. H* again waited upon the Collector after three days in the company of Mohan Lal, Har Parshad and two other courtiers, and again gave assurance of his fidelity to the British Government.

The following day, the headman of village Sayalpur, came to the Nawab at the head of zoo horse and 500 foot complaining bitterly that his son Chand Khan had been hanged by the Collector without any proof of crime. He incited the Nawab to raise the standard of revolt, and the Nawab satisfied him on this score.

Mohan Lal informed the Collector of all this by letter. On this the Collector addressed a letter to the Nawab, telling him of the rumour he had heard, and threatening him with due consequences, hinting at the penalty of death and confiscation of property. The Nawab replied in a humble tone that he would remain ever faithful, and even suggested handing over his fort to any one of the Collector's nomination. The Collector therefore wrote to him a friendly letter, and thus outwardly peace was patched up.

Walidad Khan remained loyal till the 10th July after which he joined the rebels, stopped the English mail, and imprisoned Mohan Lal in a room. Rao Gulab Singh who was a loyal subject and a very rich *talukdar*, was also a friend of Walidad Khan.

Mohan Lal made him a secret request for assistance, and he sent a party of horsemen with a letter asking the Nawab to send Mohan Lal to him. But the Nawab did not agree,

having decided to murder him on the day his fort was attacked, if favourable terms were not granted to him by the British Government. Mohan Lal also sent a letter along with a draft for Rs. 500 to his friend Munir Khan of Agra to employ twenty armed men to secure his release, but he failed in carrying out his scheme.¹

4. Flees to Meerut

Mohan Lal, however, managed to escape on the 30th July, and reached Khanpur. He then came to Bahadurgarh on the Ganges. On the 31st July Zain-ul-Abidin, son of the poet Mian Zaki, at the head of 50 horsemen, came from Muradabad to Malagarh with the determination to put an end to the life of Mohan Lal; but in spite of all his efforts, he failed in laying hands upon him. At this place Mr. Sapte, who had gone to Meerut for safety, and Mr. Dunlop, the Collector of Meerut sent him letters asking him to come to Meerut by way of Hapur and give them all particulars regarding Walidad Khan and his fort. He was escorted by ten horsemen to Meerut where he was requested to submit the plan of the Malagarh fort and its defences.¹

5. Report on the Malagarh Fort

Mohan Lal reported that in the fort of Malagarh the provisions were so short as not to last longer than two days. Walidad Khan's force in the fort numbered between 1,000 and 1,200. The

¹Ghulam Husam Khan, the companion of Mohan Lal for two months from the time of his escape at Delhi to the time of escape from Malagarh, wrote these details in a Persian Ms. translated by Khwaja Hasan Nixami in his *Mutiny Tales*, vol. xii, pp. 23 to 32; cf. also vol. II. pp. 49-50; *Annals of the Indian Rebellion, 1857-58*, Part III [July, 1859], pp. 207-9; *Panjab Records, Mutiny Papers, Proceedings No. 52*, dated 4th September, 1857.

¹ *Panjab Records, Mutiny Papers, Proceedings Nos. 32-59.*

best portion of this force consisted of about 150 deserters from the Company's troops commanded by Flut Missar, Subedar Yahiya Khan and Mustafa Khan Risaldar. Three guns of Walidad Khan were taken away by the Jats, and only five small guns were in his possession, two of which were given to him by the Talukdar of Aurangabad. Ammunition was poor both in quantity and quality. His supporters were the Talukdars of Khylia and Aurangabad, Amun Gujar and Rajputs of Parichatgarh, all of whom could reinforce him with 3,000 troops. Azim Khan, the uncle, and Munir Khan, the nephew of Abdul Latif Khan, the Talukdar of Khanpur had raised about 1,000 troops to help him. Rao Gulab Singh, the great zamindar of Kuchasar, was sincerely devoted to the British but he was coerced by Walidad Khan to make some contribution to the war fund.

Walidad Khan appointed Ghaus Muhammad Khan of village Rao Sikandra his deputy at Aligarh, and Azim Khan at Khurja and Ismail Khan at Bulandshahar. The tahsildar and kotwal of Bulandshahar were Mir. Imdad Ali Wakil and Meharban Khan respectively.

A force of 1,000 men of whom three or four hundreds should be Europeans, with four guns, and one mortar, would be sufficient to capture the Malagarh fort. The Jats could be persuaded to harass the enemy from the eastern side and other villagers should, be stirred to rise against him. In that way his forces would be divided.

The attacking party should not approach the fort by crossing the stream on the west or south, as in that case they would be exposed to the enemy's gun fire. The stream should be crossed towards the north-west near the village Chirawali. From this place the stream was about 500 paces distant and the fort of Malagarh within a gunshot, while the Grand Trunk

Road lay at a distance of a mile. A cart track led to the fort, and the troops could easily pass along it. Besides, there was the shelter of trees, gardens and a *takiya* (a house reserved for for Muslim *faqirs* and travellers). The water course along the southern wall of the fort was divided into two parts. The lower part had gratings, and the upper part had a small door locked from inside. This was meant for flight, and was in consequence to be carefully watched.¹

¹*Ibid.*

It seems that Mohan Lal supplied information about the fort of Multan probably at the time of the Second Sikh War. He says:—"In the Panjab where I likewise was ordered to give a plan and report of the fort of Mooltan, Colonel Napier, the Chief Engineer, found it useful and Sir P. Currie, then Resident, was good enough to honour me with acknowledgments." *Ibid.*

CHAPTER XVI

THE END

Nothing definite is known about the last years of Mohan Lal. Nawab Abul Hasan of Qazi Hauz, Delhi, told the writer how Mohan Lal secured the hand of Hyderi Begam, a relative of his, in 1857. The girl was a niece of Sher Muhammad Khan and Nawab Musa Khan. Her bewitching youth and beauty had attracted Mohan Lal's attention; but all his overtures came to nothing. After the Mutiny the people of Delhi were summarily tried and executed. Mohan Lal seized this opportunity to obtain the wishes of his heart. He implicated some male members of the girl's family, and thus succeeded in marrying her.

In 1861 Mohan Lal lived, at least for some time, with the Maharaja of Kapurthala.¹ He died in 1877,* and was buried

¹ Panjab Records, Political Department Proceedings, 27th July, 1861, Nos. 13—14.

¹ Buckland in his Dictionary of Indian Biography, p. 294, and Beale in his Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 254, state that he died about 1870. Agha Hyder Hasan has in his possession a medal given to Mohan Lal on the assumption by Queen Victoria of the title "Empress of India" in January, 1877. He, however, declares that Mohan Lal died in 1878. The *Noor Afshan* an Urdu weekly, started from Ludhiana in 1873 contains a reference in its issue of the 18th October, 1877, p. 332 :—"The Library which was established in the Municipal Committee hall is now in progress as Munshi Ghania Lal Alakhdhari has presented to it some books and journals. It is also said that many books donated by Agha Hasan Jan alias ftohan Lal at the time of his death have been received in this Library." It therefore seems clear that Mohan Lal died sometime between January and October, 1877.

in Delhi in his garden called Lal Bagh, near Azadpur, on the Delhi-Panipat Road.¹

Mohan Lal was a typical Kashmiri Pandit. From the race he derived good looks, natural grace of expression and virile courtliness. To his own family he was indebted for sensitive pride and capacity to put up with the rough—and—tumble of political conflict. He inherited from his parents a shrewd instinct for getting and keeping, a distinct gift of courtiership, and a fine enthusiasm for things of the mind. He was tall and very handsome with classically regular features. "In appearance Mohan Lal is agreeable with pleasing manners, his features are marked and countenance intelligent."¹ His slim and manly figure, his majestic turban, his fine dress, his well-trimmed moustaches, sharp-pointed nose and large, prominent eyes, all inspired an emotion of their own, and gave an added interest to his conversation. His laugh was melodious.

He possessed a sweet disposition and scattered sunshine and good cheer by giving, a kind word and throwing a pleasant smile to every one. Few of those thrown into his company ever found it possible to resist his infectious and merry charm. It was not so much that he was extraordinarily witty in society; but he created an easy atmosphere, in the midst of which every companion thought and talked with ease and spontaneity. He was a fine talker. His demeanour, his humility, his impulsiveness, his effective delivery, and his magnetic personality,

¹ There is no tomb; but a big platform—like structure of red sand stone, said to contain the bodies of Mohan Lal and his favourite wife Hyderi Begam. It is now in a dilapidated condition. The garden also has changed hands from Mohan Lal's family.

¹ Asiatic Journal, October, 1835, VOL. XLIV, p. 88.

made him a fascinating companion. He could therefore dominate both men and women. A Burton, the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana says :—

"When I first came here I cultivated his acquaintance from a desire to hear from him an account of those stirring events in which he had borne a part and likewise from a feeling that a man who had been so well received in England, and other parts of Europe by the very first people, Kings and Queens not excepted, should not be ignored by the British Society of this country as I found Mohan Lal was and thus be driven back in his heathen and ignorant associates to the inevitable deterioration of the enlightened ideas he had acquired in his European tour.

"I like Mohan Lal. I find him a very agreeable, well informed, companionable man, plenty to say, and by no means unobservant. He got into bad hands, as was natural,, for the best English Society seems not to have been open to him. I have been told he drank at military messes and made himself disagreeable to the army officers in that way. Then his associating with Nubee Buksh and Mr. Hodges was of course against him; but he has had no fair chance on his return from Europe, from dining with princes he found himself shut out except from the converse of men like Hodges, a discharged clerk of this office who drank his champagne and encouraged him to drink it likewise."¹

Another remarkable trait in his character was intuition, subtlety and divination which enabled him to understand and appreciate those who came into contact with him. He was cool and courageous. He was never so happy and so resourceful

¹ Imperial Records, Foreign Consultation, 10th February, 1854, No.' 273.

as when confronted with most serious problems. His fierce and restless energy was a great asset. When required, he could work for long hours with enthusiasm and even with relish.

He was an adept in the art of pleasing. His personality always attracted, never repelled. There was a heartiness in his expression, in the smile, in the handshake and in the cordiality with which he greeted people.

Capable of both thought and action, and equally at home in matters of daily routine, he was at his best in the midst of miseries and misfortunes. In the time of political crisis alone he could display his great talents to the full. Then he found a continuous interest in political work and a constant compulsion to use his full weight in the game. He could then force co-operation with men of different classes and temperament. At such times he showed that he was endowed with mental powers of the first order, and that his readiness and resources were extraordinary.

He was therefore at his best when he was required to persuade people, not ordinary persons, but leaders of men. Then he could bring every one to the point at which he could be used not by deception but by suggestion. In a word he was a born diplomat and the real field of his work was politics.

He had a passion for beauty and for beautiful things. He was at home with literary men in the library, with sportsmen in the field, and with poets in moonlit gardens. He was familiar with the best that the Persian poets had sung, and the loveliest that the artists had created in form and colour. He loved with the charm of roses and lilies and birds and green boughs. He enjoyed life, and believed that this world was really a place

worth living in. He was never too tired for more festivities, more songs, more wine and more women. "Wherever he went he managed to take a new wife unto himself, usually marrying in the highest circles."¹

When forced to lead a life of retirement at the young age of thirty-four, he found himself freed of all obstructions, usually imposed by public life. Consequently, passion now found itself untrammelled. Formerly, he was carried away by the love of glory, and now, he was swept away by the love of wine and women. He could not devote himself to a pursuit, whether politics or pleasure, half-heartedly; it possessed him entirely. He did every thing with a gusto, every nerve and every fibre. He had in all seventeen wives in his harem.¹

He was a man of literary taste and had a library of his own. This escaped destruction at the hands of the mutineers in Delhi, and was donated by him at his death to the Municipality of Ludhiana. He was a writer of no mean merit. His Journal, Travels and Life of Dost Muhammad clearly show that he possessed deftness and dexterity in writing his personal experiences. All these works suggest considerable possibilities. He is said to have kept a detailed diary for the last forty-five years of his life. If it comes to light he will undoubtedly rank as the greatest Indian Diarist of modern times.

His numerous letters in manuscript display an easy style of English in spite of his eccentric phraseology. He had a command of language and a felicitous touch in sketching an incident or a character. In reading these letters we feel that his aim was truth rather than effect. He was free and frank

¹ pandit Jawaharlal's Autobiography, 14.

² Adbi Duniya, a local Urdu monthly, July, 1933, P.207.

while giving counsels to his superiors on events and tendencies which affected the grave issues of peace and war and the lives of thousands of men and women.

Exhilaration of spirit, buoyancy of mind, vigour of body, keenness for achievement, will to power and the awareness of great faculties—these are the elements of his success.

All that remains of Mohan Lal's activities in this world are his three books mentioned above. At Ludhiana he built a religious place for the Shias known as Agha Hasan Jan's *Imambara*. Close by it there runs a road bearing his name. His grave in Lal Bagh, Delhi, is in ruins and is likely to disappear in course of time.

Mohan Lal's life does not challenge the attention of the world, but modestly solicits it.

APPENDIX

THE ASSASSINATION AFFAIR

F Imperial Records, Secret Consultation, 15th June, 1844.]

No. 222.

From

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL RICHMOND,
AGENT GOVERNOR-GENERAL,

To

MOONSHEE MOHUN LALL, AMBALLAH.

Sir,

I annex per margin* the items contained in your accounts marked Nos. 2 and 4 forwarded with your letter to the address of Mr. Secretary Thomson dated 28th May last, and with reference to them I am directed to call upon you to furnish me with a full explanation of the transactions to which they refer, the sums stated in these items appearing to have been disbursed for procuring the assassination of certain hostile chiefs although such acts are acknowledged to have been disavowed by the authorities at the time.

2nd. The wording of the first item not being clearly expressed as regards the late Captain Conolly, you are now requested to explain its meaning, and to state explicitly, whether, in constituting yourself the agent in such transactions you acted under the authority of any British Officer to whom you were subordinate.

Governor-General's
Agency, N. W. Frontier,
AMBALLAH,
the 15th Sept., 1843.

I have & etc.,
A. F. Richmond,
Lieutenant-Colonel,
Agent Governor-General, N. W. F.

*1st. Advanced to Mahomed Oollah Najrallee for bringing in the head of Meer Muajidi Khan, as requested in a note by Capt. Conolly ;

No. 223.

From

Moonshee Mohun Lall,

To

Lieutenant-Colonel A. F. Richmond, C. B.,

Agent Governor-General, N. W. F.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 15th September calling upon me for the explanation of the meaning of the two items of Rs. 5,000 put down by me in the accounts submitted to Mr. Secretary Thomson on the 28th May last.

2. In reply I have the honour to state that during the late, insurrection of Cabool I was under the immediate orders of the late Sir W. Macnaghten and Lieutenant J. B. Conolly. On the 5th November, 1841, the latter Officer wrote to me, " I promise 10,000 rupees for the head of each of the principal Rebel Chiefs," and sent his native officer Meer Haidur Purjahbashee and wrote to me thus: " Meer Haider Purjahbashee has been sent to Khan Sheereen and will see you. If the bearer (he) wants money for *Cossid* and other purposes give him to the extent of Rs. 200". This individual repeated the same what Lieutenant Conolly had written about the reward of 10,000 Rs. and added on his part that I will do great service to the state if the principal rebels were executed by any means whatever. On the nth Lieutenant Conolly wrote me again, "there is a man called Hajee Allee,

as he did not cut Meer Musjidi's head off, but assassinated him as known to that officer who wrote to enquire from me, out of 10,000 rupees received 5,000 rupees.

2nd. Advanced to Abdul Asis who offered to kill Abdoollah Khan and destroy his life by such means which the Envoy did not approve, therefore the balance 11,000 rupees was not paid, 4,000 Rs,

who might be induced "by a bribe to try and bring the heads of one or two of the *moofsids*. Endeavour to let him know that 10,000 rupees will be given for each head or even 15,000. I have sent to him two or three times". I reported all this to the Envoy and explained the exact meaning of that Officer's extracts without any addition or alteration, to a person named Agha Mahomed Sondah, friend of Hajee Alea and in the service of the Barukzaees.

3. Agha Mahomed and Hajee Alea induced Abdool Aziz and Mahomed Oollah to execute the wishes of Lt. Conolly, **who** had also written the same to them. In consequence of the power granted to me by the late Envoy to promise the rewards of five lakhs and distribute as far as 50,000 rupees to the different men who may be disposed to take our cause, I advanced 9,000 rupees respectively for them and promised the balance (12,000) to be paid to both after the service was performed, and reported all the commencement and settlement of this matter to the Envoy, adding that I could not find out by Lieutenant Conolly's notes how the rebels are to be assassinated, but the men now employed promise to go in their houses and cut off their heads where they may be without attendants. He replied to me on the 13th as follows :—

"I have received your letter of this morning's date and highly approve of all you have done."—The same was reported to Lieutenant Conolly also. When Meer Musjidee died, Lieutenant Conolly wrote and enquired from me, "Is it true that the Butcha-i-Musjidee was killed yesterday ?". This was the only enquiry he made from me and which word I mentioned with the item of 5,000 rupees. . . . I sent him reply that Meer Musjidee himself died and not his son (Butchai) and stated that Mahomed Oollah has neither brought his head nor shot him as promised, but says he suffocated him when asleep.

I beg to state in this place that Meer Musjidee was not killed in fight but he died suddenly whether by some other accident or as Mahomed Oollah asserted. Abdool Aziz stated that he had concealed himself behind a wall and shot Abdoollah Khan when he was standing amongst the "Ghazees" and fighting with our troops, because they both could not cut the heads in their houses. He added also that his ball was poisonous and Abdoollah Khan will shortly die. I answered to him that Abdoollah Khan is likely wounded by our own soldiers and not by him. He was not killed in the field of battle, perhaps after a week of his receiving the wound.

4. On the death of Meer Musjidee and Abdoollah Khan (the principal murderers of Sir Alexander Burnes) Hajee Alea and Agha Mahomed sent me notes from Mahomed Oollah and Abdool Aziz demanding the payment of their respective balance (5,000 and 7,000 Rs.), which I refused and forwarded their notes to the Envoy with an explanation how these people were reported to be killed and added the reply I had given to Abdool Aziz.

5. On this the Envoy sent Kurban Alea a confidential messenger in the permanent employ of the Mission with the following message¹ which was accompanied with the token (Neeshanee) of long past thing of which the Envoy and myself were only acquainted. Had Mahomed Oollah and Abdool Aziz sent him the heads he would tell me to pay them the balance, but as they failed in doing so, they therefore should

z. I beg to add in this place that some of our English writers had gone over to the Rebels and read the intercepted letters of the Envoy few hours before I sent him an explanation of Mahomed Oollah and Abdool Asia's doings. This disloyal conduct of the writers had prevented us to write offensive secrets in letters and which secrets were henceforth generally sent through trustworthy people and also by hints.

be contented by the advances already made to them for their doubtful services and not brought the heads as stipulated. This was the only thing which I meant in inserting the words (the Envoy did not approve) in the item of 11,000 Rs ; but I did not mean that the Envoy had disavowed my explaining the contents of the extracts of Lieutenant Conolly's letter, Agha Mahomed and Hajee Allee or the sanction of the sums advanced by me to Mahomed Oollah etc., because I have already stated in the 3rd para of this letter of my reporting him the whole affair with his reply and the following extracts of his letters still confirm that the item was approved and sanctioned by him as it was charged in the accounts of rupees 25,900 for which a Bill was given to Nayub Shurreef, "I have directed Captain Trevor to send you an order on Nain Sookh for 25,900 rupees in favour of Nayub Shureef. I send herewith triplicate Bills in favour of Nain Sookh on the Loodiana Treasury for 25,900 rupees." Captain Lawrence had by him the copy of the receipt or note of Mahomed Oollah (original mentioned in para 4) when he made report to Government for paying the Nayub Shurreef s Bill, so it has been paid. Sir William Macnaghten had also sent message to Khan Shereen through Shah Ghasee Abbas, a man of rank, that if he will not bring the head of Abdoollah Khan - he will look upon him as an enemy. The Envoy did not grant the Bills until he had not got the receipts, examined the accounts, and, approved the items of their disbursements. The accounts now submitted to the Secretary are the copies of those given to and approved by the Envoy.

6. In the conclusion I beg to state that I have always acted up to the spirit of the orders and messages of my superiors with the view to promote the cause of my Government, though the dangers of losing my life were impending upon me in those critical days, while I had full powers to distribute

50,000 rupees. This is the full explanation I may offer; otherwise I humbly beg pardon for my mistakes, imperfection to the English knowledge and to remind the treacherous conduct of the Afghans and the difficulties which involved us in that time.

18th September, 1843,
AMBALA.

I have & etc.,
Mohun Lall.

Panjab Records, Book 87, Letter 336.

FROM

THE AGENT TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL, N. W. F.,

To I. THOMSON ESQUIRE, SECRETARY,

To THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, Fort William,

Dated Amballa, 19th September, 1843.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter without No. dated 26th August last with enclosure, regarding the account furnished by Moonshee Mohun Lall.

2nd. In reply I beg to forward a copy of my letter No, 331 of the 15th instant calling on the Moonshee for the required explanation. His reply in original dated 18th September is herewith transmitted for the information of the Right Honourable the Governof-General-in-Council.

3rd. It may, perhaps, be satisfactory to add that I have perused the notes from the late Sir W. Macnaghten and Lt. Conolly quoted by Moonshee Mohan Lall in his letter, and they appear to be in original.

Governor-General's Agency,
N. W. Frontier,
19th September, 1843.

I have etc.
V A. F. Richmond, Lt. Col.,
) Agent Governor-General.

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**Imperial Records, Secret Consultation,
15th June, 1844.**

No. 224.

From the Secretary to the Government of India,
To the Agent Governor-General, N. W. Frontier.

No. 426.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 168 dated September 19th, 1843 forwarding for the consideration of the Governor-General-in-Council Moonshee Mohun Lall's letter dated the 18th ultimo on the subject of occurrences in Cabool.

2. The Governor-General-in-Council has perused with the deepest concern a statement which tends to implicate British Officers in the crime of assassination and feels that the enquiry cannot be allowed to rest where it at present does.

3. Moonshee Mohun Lall's original letter is herewith returned to you, a copy of it having been retained in this office, and your attention is particularly desired to the contents of the letter. You will observe that it contains many passages, purporting to be quotations from orders communicated to him by the late Sir W. Macnaghten and Lieutenant J. B. Conolly. You will be pleased to require of Mohun Lall the originals from which the quotations are made, and you will examine whether they are authentic, and whether the extracts given fairly convey the meaning intended by the writers. You will not fail to observe that Mohun Lall professes to hold the express orders of Lieutenant J. B. Conolly for these atrocious acts, whilst the approval of them by Sir. W. Macnaghten is inferred from written expressions which may be otherwise interpreted or from verbal messages, which may have been falsely reported.

You will endeavour to satisfy yourself on both points, by an examination of all the documents Mohun Lall may have, by cross-questioning him on the subject and by such other ready means of discovering the truth as Mohun Lall may suggest or as may occur to yourself.

4. Whilst the Governor-General-in-Council feels it incumbent upon him to avail himself of such means as are at hand to clear up these particulars he is at the same time desirous that the circumstances should not be made known further than may be absolutely necessary for the discovery of the truth. You will therefore be careful to avoid publicity as much as possible and to consider the enquiry as altogether confidential.

Fort William,
the 12th October, 1843.

I have & etc.,
I. Thomson,
Secretary to the Government of India.

No. 223.

From-the Agent, Governor-General,
North-West Frontier,

To

F. Currie, Esquire,
Secretary to the Government,
with the Governor-General.

Sir,

I had the honor to receive Mr. Secretary Thomson's despatch No. 426 of the 12th ultimo, returning to me Moonshee Mohun Lal's letter dated 18th September last on the subject of occurrences at Cabool, for the purpose of instituting further enquiries into the authenticity of his statements, and particularly calling my attention to certain passages quoted by the Moonshee from orders communicated to him by the late Sir William Macnaghten and Lieutenant J. B. Conolly.

2. As desired by Mr. Thomson's letter, I required Moonshee Mohun Lal to produce the original letters, which he willingly complied with, and assented to their being forwarded to Government in order that all doubt as to their authenticity might be removed by comparing the writing with that of other documents, which doubtless are to be found in the Government Office. I therefore forward the original notes and letters numbered i to 10 inclusive, agreeably to the list which accompanies them.

3. I also forward herewith a memorandum of questions which I put to Moonshee Mohun Lal and of his replies regarding these letters and the transactions referred to in the statement contained in his letter of the 28th September last.

4. It appears almost superfluous my troubling you with any observations regarding these several documents, as they are sufficiently explanatory in themselves, and on perusal of them Government will have no difficulty in judging of the meaning intended to be conveyed by the instructions to Moonshee Mohun Lal, provided the letters are found to be authentic. Whether the late Envoy had cognizance of these instructions is very doubtful as by his letter of 13th November marked No 5, he merely contemplated "a reward of rupees 10,000 for the apprehension of Ameenollah Khan and each of the Dooranee Rebel Chiefs," from which it may be inferred that the message said to have been conveyed to Khan Shereen Khan on the 2nd November was exaggerated by the messenger for some evil purpose.

Governor-General's Agency,
N. W. Frontier,
Camp Loodiana,
18th November, 1843.

I have & etc.,
A. F. Richmond, Lt. Col.,
Agent, Governor-General,
North-West Frontier.

No. 226.

Memo of Questions put to Moonshee Mohun Lal regarding affairs at Cabool, and of his replies.

Camp Loodiana,
7th November, 1843.

1st Question

What was the nature of your conversation with Meer Haider, who was sent to you by Lt. Conolly ?

Answer

He mentioned to me that he had just been to Khan Sheereen who told him that Lieutenant Conolly had said he would give from 10 to 15,000 Rs. for the heads of the Rebel Chiefs.

Note

About 20 days after his conversation (beginning of December) Khan Sheereen told Mohun Lal that the Envoy had sent him a message to the effect that if he did not bring him AbdooUah Khan's head, he would look on him as an enemy.

2nd Question

For what other purposes did Meer Haider want money from you ?

Answer

To erfcite the Afghans in favour of the English. I now produce Lieutenant Conolly's original notes on this subject, marked Nos. 1 & 2 also his note dated n th November, marked No. 3.

3rd Question

Did you write to Lieutenant Conolly reporting the nature of the arrangements you had made in consequence of his note of 5th November ? State the substance of your letter and the date of it.

Answer

I replied by note that I had employed Mahomed Oollah and Abdool Aziz through Agha Mahomed and Hajee Allee to do as proposed in his note. I have no copy of my letter. It must have been dated the zith or 12tb of November. I was constantly writing to Lieutenant Conolly.

4th Question

Did you write to Lieutenant Conolly to ascertain how he proposed to obtain the heads of the Rebel Chiefs, or did you ever ask him about it verbally ?

Answer

No, I never wrote to him on the subject nor did I ever ask him verbally.

5th Question

Did Lieutenant Conolly ever speak or write to you before the 5th November about obtaining the heads of the Rebel Chiefs?

Answer

No, he never wrote, or spoke to me on the subject before the date of that note.

I now produce another note of Lieutenant Conolly regarding the death of Meer Musjidee, marked No. 4.

6th Question

Did you show Lieutenant Conolly's note of the 5th November to the Envoy when you reported to him its contents ?

Answer

No, I did not show him the note. He never asked me about it when I reported the matter to him. I simply wrote to him that Lieutenant Conolly had authorized me to give so much money for the heads of the Rebel Chiefs, and that I had in consequence bribed Mahomed Oollah and Abdool Aziz through

Agha Mahomed and Hajee Alee to do as Lieutenant Conolly wished. The Envoy's letter in reply is dated the 13th Nov. I have no copy of my letter

7th Question

Did the Envoy explain to you the nature of the service he wished to be performed when he authorized you to distribute 50,000 Rupees to the different chiefs ?

Answer

He said he wished to detach as many of the chiefs as possible from the Rebels and to get them to do what good they could in our cause. He wrote to me on the 8th November on this subject' and his letter I now produce marked No. 6.

8th Question

. Did you report verbally or in writing to the Envoy what you had done in consequence of his instructions ?

Answer

In my notes at different times, I explained the nature of the advances I was making for the services of individuals, among which were included the sums advanced in consequence of Lieutenant Conolly's note of the nth November. I have no copies of these notes. I only saw the Envoy 'twice after the insurrection broke out. On one of these occasions, the 15th December, I made a special report verbally of what had been done, when I submitted the accounts for Rs. 25,900 and for Rs. 24,404. The Envoy then ordered Captain Lawrence to draw out the Bills for the former sum, vide the Envoy's letter of 15th December No. 7 which were sent to me on the 26th December, vide the Envoy's letter to me of that date No. 8, both now produced.

The Bills for 24,404 Rs. were given to me on the 17th December which was my last interview with the Envoy.

9th Question

By whom did you send the notes from Mahomed Oollah and Abdool Aziz to the Envoy, and what was the nature of your explanation of how the Rebel Chiefs had been killed ?

Answer

I sent them by Kurban Alee, or by Ismail Khan—I do not remember which. They were confidential messengers attached to the Mission. I wrote at the time to the Envoy stating that these men wanted payment of the balance due for their services, but at the same time I intimated my doubts, whether the rebel Chiefs had been killed by these men, or had died of wounds received in action, as reports to the latter effect had been circulated. I have no copy of my note on that occasion.

10th Question

What reply did you receive to that letter, and what messenger brought it to you ?

Answer

I received a message by the confidential servant above referred to from the Envoy stating that he could not write, as one of his notes had been intercepted that morning. That he had heard from different quarters that Abdoollah Khan had died of a wound received in action at Cabool, and that Meet Musjidee had also died of a wound he received*at Joolgah, and therefore the Envoy could not agree to give the balance claimed, as their service was doubtful, and that they should be contented with what they had already received.

nth Question

Did you write down the above message at the time of receiving it ?

Answer

No, I give the purport from memory.

12th Question

Had these men ever been employed by the Envoy on former occasions in a confidential way, and how were you aware of their having so employed ?

Answer

They were constantly employed in a confidential way. I knew them well. I now produce a note from the Envoy dated 12th December, marked No. 9 to show that he was in the habit of entrusting verbal messages to these men.

13th Question.

What was the nature of the Token used on these occasions ?

Answer

It was a Persian proverb that I had heard the Envoy, repeat to a Moollah who came to visit him at Cabool as follows:
Mohtsib ra daroon-i-khana chin kar ?

14th Question

From whom did you learn that the Envoy had sent a message to Khan Sheereen Khan through Shah Ghasee and what was said on that occasion ?

Answer

I heard it from Khan Sheereen himself. The message was sent on the 2nd November, 1841, the day that the insurrection commenced. He told me that he had sent Shah Ghasee to the Envoy to know what he wished him to do when the Envoy replied that if Khan Sheereen did not bring the head of Abdoollah Khan he would look on him as an enemy.

15th Question

Did the Envoy ever speak to you about Ameenollah Khan, or write to you about him, and when ?

Answer

The Envoy wrote a note to me about Ameenollah Khan on the 11th November, 1841, which I now produce marked No. 10, in which he says, "You should encourage the rival of Ameenollah Khan by all possible means. That scoundrel and Abdool Salam Khan should be executed, if we can catch them".

Afterwards, on the 17th December, when I had my last interview with the Envoy, speaking of the death of Abdollah Khan and Meer Musjidee the Envoy said he would be pleased, if Ameenollah Khan followed them. I had no other conversation with him on the subject.

A. F. Richmond, Lieutenant-Colonel,
Agent, Governor General.

No. 227.

List of original notes and letters produced by Mooffhee Mohun Lall, and referred to in his replies to the various questions put to him regarding affairs at Cabool.

Loodiana, 7th Nov., 1843.

No. 1. Note from Lieut.

Conolly.

No. 2. Note from Lieut.

Conolly, dated
5th, 2 o'clock.

Referred to in answer to 2nd
Question.

No. 3. Note from Lieut.

Conolly, dated
11th, 5 o'clock.

No. 4. Note from Lieut,

Conolly dated 1/2
past 8 o'clock p.m. }
}

Referred to in answer to 5th
Question,

- No. 5. Letter from Sir
W. Macnaghten to Referred to in answer to
Moonshee Mohun Lall, Question.
dated 13th Nov., 9.a.m.
- No. 6. Letter from Sir W. Macnaghten Referred to in
to Moonshee Mohun Lall, dated 8th answer to 7th
November. question.
- No. 7. Letter from Sir W. Macnaghten
to Moonshee Mohun Lall, dated 15th
December. Referred to in
answer to 8th
question.
- No. 8. Letter from Sir W. Macnaghten
to Moonshee Mohun Lall, dated 16th
Decceember, 8 p. m.
- No. 9. Letter from Sir W. Macnaghten Referred to in
to Moonshee Mohun Lall, dated 12th answer to 12th
December, 1 p. m. question.
- No. 10. Letter from Sir W. Macnaghten Referred to in
to Moonshee Mohun Lall, dated nth '- answer to 15th
November.

A. F. Richmond,
Lieutenant-Colonel,
Agent, Governor-General.

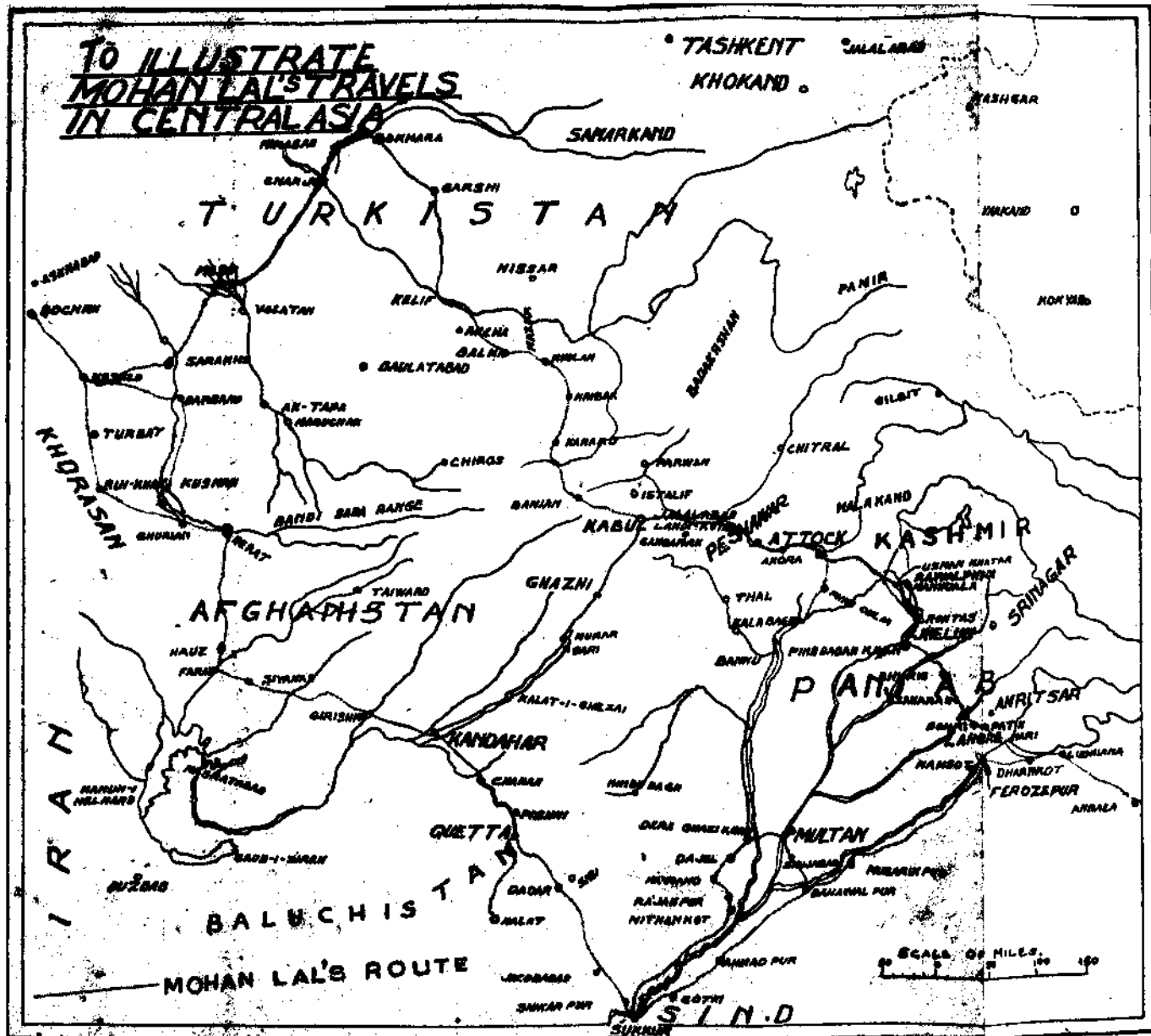
No. 228.

No. 1.

Mohun Lall—If the Bearer wants money for *Cossids* and other purposes give him to the extent of 200 rupees.

Yours etc.,
J. B. Conolly.

TO ILLUSTRATE
MOHAN LAL'S TRAVELS
IN CENTRAL ASIA



MOHAN LAL'S ROUTE

No. 2.

Mohun Lall,

I have sent you one letter which- may not have reached you.

Send me all the news you can by *Cossids*. Tell the Kuzzillbash Chiefs, Shereen Khan, Naib Shereef, in fact, all the Chiefs .of Sheah persuasion to join against the Rebels. You can promise one lakh of Rupees to Khan Shereen on the condition of his killing and seizing the Rebels and arming all the Sheahs, and immediately attacking all Rebels. This is the time for the Sheahs to do good service Explain to them that if the Soonnees once get the upper hand in the Town they will immediately attack and plunder their part of the Town.

Hold out promises of reward and money. Write to me very frequently. Tell the Chiefs who are well disposed to send respectable agents to the Envoy.

Try and spread *Nifak* among the Rebels.

In every thing that you do consult me and write very often.

Meer Hyder Purjabashee has been sent to Khan Shereen and will see you.

Yours Sincerely,
J. B. Conolly.

I promise 20,000 rupees for the head of each of the principal Rebel Chiefs.

5th, 2 o'clock, Balla Hissar.

No. 3.

My dear Mohun Lall,

Why do you not write ? What has become of Meer Hyder ? Is he doing anything with Khan Shereen ? You never told me whether you had written to Naib Humza. What do the rebels propose doing now ? Have you not made any arrangement about the bodies of the murdered officers? Offer 2,000 rupees to any one who will take them to cantonments, or 2,000 to any one who will bury them. Has not Sir Alexander's body been found ? Give my salam to the Naib. If Khan Shereen is not inclined to do service, try other Kuzzilbash Chiefs independently. Exert yourself. Write to me often for the news of *Cossids* is not to be depended on. There is a man called Hajee Allee, who might be induced by a bribe to try and bring the heads of one or two of the *moofsids*. Endeavour to let him know that 10,000 rupees will be given for each head or even 15,000. I have sent to him two or three times. Is Moolla Moosa killed ? How many men did the enemy lose ?

Yours Sincerely,

11th, 5 a. m.

J. B. Conolly.

No. 4.

Reward the Bearer well.

1/2 past 8 p. m.

My dear Mohun Lall,

I have received both your letters which are very satisfactory. Send respectable men from the different chiefs who are friendly to us to the Envoy, and tell them to be *Khatir Junta* in every respect. Tell Naib Shereef to show himself a good servant. See if Shumshoodeen can be bribed, and find out whether any of the chief Rebels can be bribed to

leave the opposite party. Who have joined the Rebels ? Is it true that the Butchai-i-Musjidee was killed yesterday ? Write very often, and tell any chief who wants assurance of good treatment to write to me, or send to the Envoy.

Get the bodies of the murdered gentlemen buried. I will give a handsome present to any one who does this service. Is Sir Alexander really murdered or is there any hope still of his being alive ?

Pray write to me often and give me all particulars of the Rebels and their intentions. Be active in your endeavours to gain friends. Try the Afshur people, and if they are inclined to be friendly, tell them to send supplies into cantonments.

Write as often as possible Give my salam to Naib Khan Shcreen, and all I know.

Yours Sincerely,
J. B. Conolly.

No. 5.

To Moonshec Mohun Lall.

Cabool, Nov. 13th, 9 a. m.

My dear Sir,

I have received your letter of this morning's date and highly approve of all you have done. Let Gholam Hussun Afshar and Abdooruheem Khan, ... come to Zoolfikar's Fort this evening and Captain Trevor will be in that fort night and day for some time to receive overtures from any person. Parties coming in should send a single messenger before them.

Khan Shereen Khan is quite right not to leave the Chandawul for a day or two.

Tell Naib Shurif he may safely give security to the Ghilzies for the payment of the money.

When I see Humza Khan I will talk to him about the best plan for the Ghilzie Chiefs to wait upon His Majesty.

Yours Faithfully,
W. H. Macnaghten.

You are aware that I would give a reward of rupees 10,000 for the apprehension of Ameenoolah Khan and each of the Dooranee Rebel Chiefs. If you could see some of the officers of the Hazirbash Corps that is just come in with Mahomed Azeem Khan and give them encouragement it would be very desirable. If you could send Meerza Kullil AH or Meerza Inayat Ali out with Gholam Hussun and Abdooruheem it would be well.

No. 6.

To Moonshee Mohun Lall,

8th November.

I have received your letter of this date, and fully approve your having raised 30,000 rupees for distribution amongst those disposed to assist our cause. But I would not advance more than 50,000 rupees before some service is actually rendered. I do not place any reliance in the story about the Troops at Gundumuk ; they are too strong to be molested by any force that the rebels could bring against them. Mahomed Ukbur's arrival at Bameean is likely enough. There can be little use I fear in offering him a separate maintenance, if the Rebels have made overtures to him already.

Faithfully Yours,
W. H. Macnaghten.

Tell Khan Shereen with my best compliments that he will not be disappointed if he does us quick and good service,

No. 7.

CANTONMENT,
December, 15th, 1841.

My dear Sir,

I have received your notes. Several of my letters to you must have miscarried, for I repeatedly wrote that His Majesty would not attend to my advice, and therefore we should have nothing more to say to him. Tell Humza Khan and Shereen Khan that His Majesty is now our enemy. We are no longer friends with him but with the Barukzyes who have behaved towards us in the most friendly manner. You may say that the *Purda* is now lifted up, and His Majesty's friends are our enemies. There is no doubt about this. You may make this *mushhoor*. The Ghilzies and others should attend to what Nawab Zaman Khan says. If they attend to his advice, they will do what I wish. Do not attempt to send grain or anything else without consulting the Barukzies. I wish to keep nothing *poshida* from them. They are our best friends. Send a message to Nawab Zaman Khan, saying, that whatever happened before our agreement I will do nothing without his consent in future. Tell the Ghilzies they shall have the balance of their money as soon as we get to Jellalabad. I will either give them the money or an order for it. They may rely on my word. Let me know what they say to this. I have directed Captain Trevor to send you an order on Nain Sookh for 25,900 rupees in favour of Nayub Shureef.

Yours Faithfully,
W. H. Macnaghtcn.

You shall be taken care of as soon as arrangements are made for our marching.

No. 8.

CANTONMENT,
December 16th, 8 p.m.

My dear Sir,

I have received your letter of this date and I beg to enclose a letter from the Ghilzie Chiefs. We have very little money now in our Treasury, but as I am anxious to secure their friendship, you can tell them that in the event of their standing in great need of the cash I may possibly be able to advance here as far as thirty or forty thousand rupees, but it will put us to some difficulty and if all the same to them, I would rather postpone the payment. I have so many letters to answer that I cannot write to you fully tonight. I send herewith triplicate Bills in favour of Nain Sookh on the Loodiana Treasury for 25,900 rupees. You may be sure that I shall take good care of you and see that you are brought to the Cantonment before we make arrangements for our journey. Present my best regards to Khan Shereen and Naib Shureef and all friends

Yours Faithfully,
W. H. Macnaghten.

No. 9.

December 12th, 1 p.m.

My dear Sir,

I hope that matters will still be right as I am taking steps for keeping open our negotiations. I am very busy now, but whatever happens you may rely on my attending to your wishes. Send your man again to me tomorrow. I have entrusted him with a verbal message.

Faithfully Yours,
W. H. Macnaghten.

No. 10.

November nth, 1841.

To Moonshee Mohun Lall,

You will observe from the enclosed letters that I have confirmed the promises etc. made by you to the Ghilzie rebels etc. though had you known of our successes yesterday, the terms might have been more favorable for us. Humza Khan should come to me as soon as possible and I will then talk to him about the case of Gool Mahomed. The money will not be paid until the conditions of the agreement are fulfilled and we are perfectly certain of the fidelity of Humza and the Chiefs. The Chiefs should go at once and pay their respects to His Majesty. You should encourage the rival of Ameen Oollah Khan by all possible means. That scoundrel and Abdoollah Khan should be executed if we can catch them.

Yours Faithfully,
W. H. Macnaghten.

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