GEORGE FORSTER SADLEIR

(1789-1859)

OF THE 47th REGT.

THE FIRST EUROPEAN TO CROSS ARABIA

IN the annals of Arabian travel, the name of George Forster Sadleir holds an honoured place, but it is known to few outside the narrow circle of historico-geographers, and even to them little or nothing is known of Sadleir's life, apart from the Diary of his trans-Arabian journey. He has no place in the D.N.B., but research shows that he has been undeservedly forgotten.

He was born in Cork on January 19, 1789, of Anglo-Irish extraction, the second son of James Sadleir, originally of Tipperary and later of Shannon Vale House, Clonakilty, Co. Cork, a cotton manufacturer, and Joanna, daughter of George Forster, of Cork. A brother of James—Richard, of Tipperary—married a cousin, Grace, and their son Nicholas, of Dunboyne Castle, Co. Meath, was the maternal grandfather of Earl Beatty. James was descended from a John Sadleir who presented a silver mace to Stratford-on-Avon in the seventeenth century, and was also related to Hamnet Sadler, Shakespeare's executor, and to the poet's son-in-law Quiney. He migrated to Ireland at the time of the Cromwellian settlement. Sadleir's father became Sheriff of Cork in 1791, his uncle Sheriff in 1785 and Mayor in 1815, and Sadleir himself was made Sheriff in 1837 after his retirement from the Army. His younger brother Richard was a Commander, R.N., who migrated to Sydney, where he died at the age of ninety-four. He is mentioned in O'Byrne's *Naval Biography* as a Catechist.

On April 4, 1805, at the age of sixteen, Sadleir became an Ensign "without purchase" in the 47th Regiment of Foot, in which he was to serve abroad continuously for over twenty-two years. He became Lieutenant in 1806 and Captain in 1813. In 1807 he took part in the retreat to Monte Video and the unsuccessful attack on Buenos Ayres, an unpropitious start to his career. For the period December, 1807 to May, 1812, the only information given in his statement of service (now in the Public Record Office) is "Station—East Indies," but the Regimental History of the 47th shows that the regiment took part in an expedition against the Joasimi pirates in the Persian Gulf in 1809. They remained in Bombay throughout 1810 and 1811 and in 1812 marched to Poona. He was then (1812) given the opportunity of showing his real ability. In the Bombay Secret Letters (1804-12, vol. 2, in I.O. Library) there is one from the office of the Governor of Bombay, dated June 3, 1812, to "The Hon'ble the Secret Committee of the Hon'ble the Court of Directors for Affairs of the Hon'ble Company of Merchant Seamen Trading to the East Indies" to inform them that, in accordance with the request of Sir Gore Ouseley (Ambassador to Persia) for "about six lieutenants and ensigns and a number of non-commissioned officers for the purpose of

disciplining the Persian troops," a Detail was then in readiness to proceed to Persia. An enclosure gives the names of the officers and their regiments, and states that they are under the charge of Lieutenant Sadleir [*sic*] of His Majesty's 47th Regiment.

On June 25 the Chief Secretary to the Bombay Government notified James Morier, Minister at the Court of Persia (author of the classic *Hajji Baba of Isaphan*), that Sadleir and his detail had embarked on the Hon. Co.'s cruiser *Benares* for Persia. An account of this Military Mission to Persia (1810-15) may be found in Curzon's *Persia*.* By the treaty signed in 1809 a subsidy was to be paid to the Shah, and he was to be supplied with as many British officers and troops as he required to discipline his army. Two of Sadleir's predecessors had been murdered by the Persians in 1810, and another, while lying wounded, was killed by a Russian officer in 1812. The mission obviously was dangerous, and although Curzon does not mention him by name, Sadleir discharged his duties with distinction, for his statement of service notes that he was presented with a sword and firman by the Shah (Fath Ali Shah, 1797-1833) when the mission ended in 1815, and he held the local rank of Major, " Conferred on him by H.R.H. The Prince Regent, the Governor-General of Azerbaijan." In General Orders he was " noticed " by Lord Hastings, Governor-General and C.-in-C. in India, an Anglo-Irishman who did not forget him later.

In the Foreign Office despatches (Public Record Office) there is a letter from Sadleir, dated March 23, 1815, to James Morier, in which he refers to the disbandment of the 47th Regiment in India, the officers being placed on half-pay, and he expresses the hope of returning to England by way of Russia, " since this is the quickest way, taking only four months." This hope was not fulfilled, for we have a letter written by him from Bushire to Morier which incidentally gives us a glimpse of a kindly side to his nature. In it he appeals for assistance to be given to the wife and child of a native trooper, Pir Muhammed, of the 6th Regiment Native Infantry, who had died on the march from Teheran. The march had begun on April 1, and two other men died on the way. On June 15 the detachment forty-three in all, embarked at Bushire for Bombay.

Although, owing to the disbandment of the 2nd Battalion of the 47th, Sadleir found himself Captain on half-pay, he was by order of Hastings detained for duty with the 1st Battalion and served throughout the Malwa Campaign in Central India. During part of this period (1817-18) he was employed in a political capacity under Sir John Malcolm, who again " noticed " him in General Orders. It was this four months' campaign, resulting in the occupation of Poona, the surrender of Nagpur and the subjection of Scindia and Berar, that established the supremacy of British rule throughout India.

In the following year Sadleir made his memorable journey across Arabia from east to west, which is his greatest claim to distinction. It was the first recorded crossing of the Peninsula by a European and a feat

* Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question* (1892), Vol. I, pp. 577 *et seq*. There is also an account in Morier's first book, *A Journey through Persia, Armenia, to Constantinople, etc.* (1812).

of Arabian travel unequalled for nearly a hundred years or, to be exact, until Captain Shakespear's great journey in 1914.*

In D. G. Hogarth's *The Penetration of Arabia* (1904) there is an account of Sadleir's journey, based on his (Sadleir's) Diary. This last is a very rare book. It is entitled "Diary of a journey from el Khatif in the Persian Gulf to Yanbo on the Red Sea during the year 1819, by Captain G. Forster Sadlier [*sic*] of H.M.'s 47th Regiment, Compiled from the Records of the Bombay Government. Printed at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, Bombay, 1866." A short account of the journey appeared in the Trans. Lit. Soc. of Bombay in 1821. It may be doubted whether the Diary would ever have been published but for the interest shown in the travels of the mysterious political crypto-Jesuit, W. G. Palgrave,† who in 1862 explored Nejd, through which Sadleir had passed. In 1866 Sadleir had been dead for seven years. The circumstances leading up to his mission may be stated briefly. Muhammed Ali Pasha, the founder of Modern Egypt, who ruled the country from 1804-49, was, in the early years of his reign, an obedient servant of the Sultan, by whose favour he enjoyed the Pashalic of Egypt, but his ambition was to be an independent Sovereign.

In 1812 he offered alliance to England, as without such backing he hesitated to break away from the Porte. The Sultan, suspecting his intentions and to check his increasing power, called on him to suppress the Wahhabis in Arabia.

This movement was initiated in Nejd by Muhammad ibn Abd el Wahhab about 1750 in an endeavour to restore to Islam its early purity and simplicity. He was strongly supported by the Amir Muhammad Ibn Sa'ud at Dar'iya. The Hijaz was occupied and the sacred shrines of Karbela, Mecca and Medina were sacked.

The Pasha and his son Tussun fought with fluctuating success during the years 1811-17, but Dar'iya, the Wahhabis' eastern stronghold and capital, showed unbroken resistance.

In 1816 the Pasha's second son, Ibrahim, aged only twenty-six, took over command of the Egyptian forces, as Muhammad Ali refused to ratify the treaty concluded by Tussun with the Wahhabis in the previous year. In 1818, after a siege of three months, Dar'iya capitulated. It is at this point that Sadleir comes on the scene. He was chosen, again by Lord Hastings, to convey to Ibrahim an address of congratulation and a sword of honour. The mildest of cynics might express some doubt's of England's sympathy with either side, in a civil war of religion fought in the deserts of Arabia, but the British rulers in India wished to establish friendly relations with the victor. The events leading up to this gesture have not hitherto, I believe, been fully recorded.

In a despatch from the Governor-General in Council to the Governor in Council, Bombay, dated November 7, 1818, the Governor-General proposes to invite Ibrahim Pasha to participate in an attack on the Pirate Ports along the southern shores of the Persian Gulf. Affairs in India

* D. Carruthers, "Captain Shakespear's Last Journey," *Gcogl. Journal*, May-June, 1922.

† W. G. Palgrave, Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862-63), 1865.

would probably not allow the sending of a sufficiently strong force to the Gulf before the summer of 1819.

"We recommend," wrote the Governor-General, "that measures be arranged for inviting Ibrahim Pasha to a joint operation against Ras-ul Khimah [a pirate stronghold] . . . on the terms of our conducting the siege and leaving the function of covering it to the Turkish Army" (I.O. Bombay Secret Proceedings, Vol. 38).

In due course the news came of Ibrahim's successes in Arabia and the fall of Dar'iya. The Chief Secretary to the Bengal Government, in a despatch to the Chief Secretary, Bombay, dated January 2, 1819, writes: "His Lordship in Council proposes to take advantage of the intelligence [Ibrahim's victory] to address a letter of congratulation to that chief on the ground of the correspondence that has long subsisted between the Governor-General and his father the Pasha of Egypt." The Chief Secretary went on to say that the letter, when transcribed into Persian (why Persian?), would be forwarded to Bombay, together with a sword to be transmitted to Ibrahim. An English version of the letter was enclosed. In it the Marquis of Hastings first of all congratulated Ibrahim on his successful campaign brought to a close by the fall of Dar'iya. He went on to say that there were reports of Ibrahim's intention to pursue his conquests to the Gulf and to subdue the maritime tribes dwelling along its shores.

He pointed out that the piracies and outrages committed by the tribes of the Pirate Coast, especially the "turbulent Qawasim," had damaged the prestige and interests of the British Government, and he proposed "a combination of the efforts of the two Governments for the tribes' early chastisement" ((I.O.) Bombay Secret Proceedings, Vol. 40, Consul. 17 of 14, iv, 1819).

Sadleir himself received instructions in a letter, dated April 13, 1819, from Nepean,* to sail in the Honourable Company's cruiser *Thetis*, a brig of war mounting fourteen guns, "to land on the Arabian coast, to congratulate Ibrahim on the reduction of Dar'iya and to concert the necessary arrangements with His Excellency with a view to the complete reduction of the Wahhabi power, if as would most probably be the case, H.E. should be desirous of availing himself of the aid of the British Government." He was to sound Ibrahim as to his plans "without showing any material interest in the subject" and to seek the assistance of the "Imam" of Muscat in arranging a meeting with him.

Incidentally, these egregious proposals were made without the sanction of the Home Government and without previous consultation with the Egyptians.†

There can rarely have been a more futile mission. The Pasha had no reason to promote British interests in the Persian Gulf, and his son Ibrahim, having reduced to desolation the country through which he passed, and having destroyed Dar'iya, was bent on evacuating Nejd and on returning, by way of Medina and Mecca, to Egypt, with the spoils of war and to enjoy a triumph.

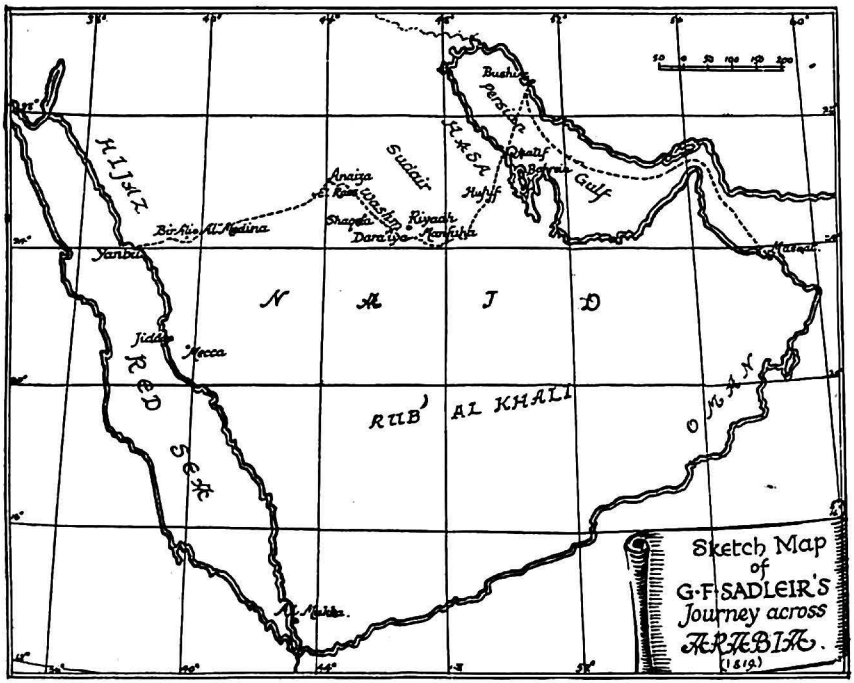
* Sir Evan Nepean, Governor of Bombay.

† For an examination of Ibrahim's policy after the fall of Dar'iya, see Philby, *Saudi Arabia*, 1955 (E. Benn, Ltd.), pp. 148-49.

The retirement of the Egyptians from Nejd completely defeated from the outset the main object of the mission.

However, Sadleir was left with the sword of honour and the letter of congratulation, so, in the words of Hogarth, " to his great credit, his lasting fame and our profit he determined to go up into Arabia. . . . The first European to cross the Peninsula and the first to put on record what he saw in Nejd."*

Sadleir left Bombay on April 14, 1819, and reached Muscat on May 7. Philby and Hogarth are of the opinion that the " Imam " Sayyed Said was one of the chiefs whose overthrow had been ordered by Muhammad Ali, but there is evidence that the ruler of Muscat and the Pasha of Egypt were on very good terms throughout their respective careers, and Ibrahim's



efforts in Eastern Arabia were certainly not directed towards the overthrow of the Ali Bu Said rulers of Oman. The reason for Sayyid Said's distrust of Ibrahim was simple: he himself had for many years coveted the island of Bahrein, with its pearl fisheries and trade, and he feared that Ibrahim planned to occupy it. He showed himself, therefore, uncooperative.

Sadleir spent eleven days at Muscat, during which he had several interviews with the " Imam." In a despatch dated May 15, 1819, to the Governor of Bombay, he gave an account of these meetings. He reported that Said deplored Ibrahim's atrocities at Dar'iya and had become so distrustful of his intentions that he refused to co-operate, except by sea, in any operations against the Pirate Ports. Finding that he could expect no assistance from Said to facilitate his journey to Ibrahim, Sadleir sailed for

* Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*, p. 107.

Bushire on May 18. The voyage from Muscat took nearly three weeks, " particularly tedious as we encountered a north-west gale."

From Bushire, Sadleir sent a despatch (9, VI, 1819) to the Governor of Bombay, informing him of Ibrahim's probable intention to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and to return subsequently to Egypt. He (Sadleir) would sail for Qatif as soon as he could obtain a pilot and from there would try to reach Ibrahim before he withdrew to Mecca. He could hold out little hope of securing Ibrahim's co-operation in the attack on the Pirate Coast (I.O., Bombay Secret Proceedings, Vol. 41, Consul. 29 of 21, VIII, 1819). Sadleir left the Bushire roads in the Hon'ble Company's cruiser *Vestal* on June 16, and on June 21 landed three miles below Qatif, after spending two days on a sandbank owing to the pilot's incompetence.

He left Qatif on June 28 and began his journey of over a thousand miles, which in eighty-four days took him across Arabia to Yanbu on the Red Sea. In a despatch (17, VII, 19) from Al Hasa (Hufuf) to the Governor of Bombay, Sadleir stated that at Qatif he had found that the only Egyptians there were the Governor and his two assistants, so he decided to place himself under the protection of the Sheikh of the Bani Khalid and to make for Hufuf, where he had arrived on July 11. He had learned that Ibrahim had had great difficulty in keeping open his communications, especially to the east of Dar'iya. The Turkish Commander at Hufuf was under orders to retire on Dar'iya, with all the troops in the Al Hasa province, and then join Ibrahim at his camp, two days' march to the west of the ruined capital. He (Sadleir) had decided to accompany the Turkish withdrawal, but he no longer had any doubts that the co-operation of Ibrahim in the attack on the Pirate Ports was now impossible. " It is evident that the districts of Ul Ahsa, the port of Kuteef, and the advantages of the communication by Aujuir (Oqair) present more favourable prospects than any advantages which could be expected by the accession of Ras-el Khyma (the Pirate Port)" (I.O., Bombay Secret Proceedings, Vol. 41, Consul. 37 of 20, IX, 1819).

It is not the purpose of this memoir to give a detailed account of Sadleir's journey, since the Diary exists and an assessment of its geographical value may be found in Hogarth's book referred to above. It has been written to put on record for the first time an account of Sadleir's career, to tell something of the man himself and to make some observations on his Diary.

On July 12 he reached " Foof " (Hufuf), with its great mud walls in the Hasa Oasis. Here he waited until July 21 for the Egyptian garrison which was retiring from the Oasis to rejoin the main army in Sedeir. With the garrison and its 600 camels, he continued across the desert still in pursuit of Ibrahim. They met with heavy rains, a rare phenomenon in Central Arabia. The bedouin were now more or less hostile everywhere. On one occasion he was delayed while a detachment of Ibrahim's troops, beleaguered in Kharg, was rescued from the avengers of some sheikhs treacherously put to death by Ibrahim's orders. Four days' march from here brought Sadleir to Shakra, a singularly fertile oasis which no other European was to see for nearly a century. He was now in the heart of Arabia; he made notes on the distribution of tribes in the neighbourhood

everywhere and noted the town's importance as a commercial centre.

News reached him that Ibrahim was at Rass, two days to the west, but on arriving there he found once again that the quarry had escaped. In despair, he resolved to call off the chase and to make for Basra and India, but Ibrahim's deputy would not accept responsibility for his safe conduct among the vengeful tribes. He had no choice but to push on to Medina, or rather to Bir Ali, three miles to the west of Medina, since as a "kafir" (infidel) he could not enter the Holy City, the burial place of the prophet.

Then, on September 8 and 9, he had audiences with Ibrahim, and the sword and the address of congratulation were presented. The Pasha was affable but non-committal. He was, he said, under his father's orders as his father was under the Sultan's. He provided a convoy for Sadleir to Yanbo, and on September 20 Sadleir's great trans-Arabian journey was over.* Here is his entry for that day: "Marched from Melha. Hence the country assumes a new aspect, and opens into an extensive plain bounded to the West by the Red Sea. Arrived at Yanbo at 10 a.m. It is a miserable Arab Sea-Port. It is surrounded by a wall of stone badly cemented, and now tottering. This wall is a modern work and appears to have been built in consequence of the old walls being too circumscribed to afford protection to all the inhabitants. The old walls and one of the gates still remain standing, appear to have no claim to antiquity of structure, although Yanbo is a very ancient port."

Admittedly, Sadleir's prose has little in common with that of Palgrave or Doughty. He was a soldier with no pretensions to fine writing, although, as will be seen later, he had on occasion a command of the more dignified style appropriate to official despatches, but surely no traveller ever gave a more modest account of the last stage of a great journey or was less conscious of its importance.

The journey, though of great value to geographers, interested Sadleir very little; he was, like Ibn Batuta, "the traveller of Islam" and perhaps the greatest traveller of all time, a geographer *malgré lui*. His Diary was the report of a soldier trying to carry out certain orders. He was, indeed, the most objective of travellers. His own feelings and speculations were not within the terms of reference. His education, in the narrow sense, ended when at the age of sixteen he became an Ensign, and he had been serving abroad continuously for over twelve years. In spite of illness and hardships of all kinds—intense heat, lack of water, incompetent guides, exasperating delays and forced marches—he kept his Diary with scrupulous care, noticing the names of villages and tribes and the physical features of the country. He estimated the distances covered each day by the time spent on the march. In the words of Hogarth, "It was only from his full report that a just idea was obtained of the proportion of settled to nomad life in Southern Nejd, the character of the settlements, the circum-

* There is unintentional irony in a despatch to Sadleir from the Governor of Bombay, sent apparently about this date: "As there appears no probability of your being able to return to Bombay before the departure of the intended expedition to the Gulph, the Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased to direct that on your return from the Turkish Camp you remain at Bushire or Muscat . . . to enable you to join the officer commanding the expedition" (as Arabic interpreter; but see below reference to his knowledge of Arabic).

stances under which cultivation was carried on, the conditions of trade and transit, and the general state of the society during the Egyptian occupation. Other Europeans, more scientific and observant, were to come after him to Nejd, but none on whose report we may surely rely." (P. 117.)

There is a tradition that he was an Arabic scholar and a man of violent temper. His Diary disproves both assertions. The few Arabic words that he uses are incorrect (e.g. *faras* (a mare) for *farrash* (servant, sweeper), *ḳamsin* for *ḵhamsin*, and no Arabist would speak of "the Mahomedan prophet"). The Diary shows him as a quiet, serious man of endless patience among "turbulent barbarians" who, unlike the Persians and Indians, had no respect for "Sahibs." His ignorance of Arabic makes all the more remarkable the fullness of the observations, geographical and otherwise, set down in his Diary.

His travels were not yet over. He waited at Yanbo for a few days, as Ibrahim had promised to visit him there, but Ibrahim did not come, so Sadleir sailed to Jidda—four days in an open boat. There he had another interview with Ibrahim, equally fruitless and culminating in a ridiculous quarrel over the shabby "saddle furniture" accompanying an Arab horse and mare that the Pasha wished to entrust to Sadleir for conveyance to the Governor-General. Sadleir objected with courtesy that the "trappings were not a necessary accompaniment and as they could not be procured in a new or fresh state it was more politic that they should be dispensed with. "I authorised," Sadleir continues, "the interpreter, in the event of His Excellency requiring a further explanation, to offer my opinion that articles which had been used could not be considered a suitable present to a nobleman filling so high an official situation under the British Government as the Marquis of Hastings now fills." His Excellency then ordered the horses to be disembarked and his letter to be destroyed, and directed Sadleir to depart on the morrow in the boat which had been prepared to convey him to Mocha. He added that, on arriving in Cairo, he would address a letter to the Governor-General, returning the sword which had been presented. Poor Sadleir, it was the last straw, a stupid end to all his efforts and privations; but it is worth recording, if only for his final message to Ibrahim. He was a sick and disappointed man, alone and discredited among fanatics, but he was a proud man and true to his high standard of loyalty. He writes, "To this message there remained only one reply to offer: 'That under any other circumstances I should have accepted the accommodation of the buggalo (boat); that I should now procure a vessel at my own expense to convey me to the destination I may now prefer and at such time as would best suit my convenience.'" This was on November 14, and there he stayed in Jidda until January 23, 1820, when he was delighted to see an English vessel approach Jidda, the cruiser *Prince of Wales*. In her he sailed to Mocha, reached on February 11, whence, after a delay of over six weeks, he set sail for India, reaching Bombay on May 8, 1820. As an example of his command of the ornate, at times stilted "officialese," here in a despatch to the Governor of Bombay is his description of Ibrahim Pasha's character:

"It has unluckily fallen to my lot to have become acquainted with a leading feature of Ibrahim Pasha's character from personal observation,

to which I have to add that the general history of the late campaign entrusted to his management exhibits a series of the most barbarous cruelties, committed in violation of the faith of the most sacred promises; on some occasions to enrich himself by the plunder of the very tribesmen who had contributed to his success, and in other cases to obtain the wealth of such of his vanquished enemies as had for a moment screened themselves from his rage. These unfortunate wretches, deluded by the fairest promises, have frequently fallen victims to his avaricious disposition and insatiable desire to shed human blood."

He wrote in the same strain to H. Salt, H.M. Consul-General in Egypt, in the hope that Muhammad Ali "would view the conduct of his son and General in the light it deserves and express his disapprobation . . ."

Elsewhere he comments on the fact that the Shah wished to ingratiate himself with the Pasha, "the self styled protector of the holy land of Mahomed." He writes with a certain irony, "His Majesty the King of Persia has sent several letters . . . with a view to gain the good graces of the Pasha and through his influence to obtain permission for some persons to visit Medina in his name and there to offer up prayers and make offerings at the shrine of the prophet: but in this object I can assure His Majesty he will never succeed. As I entertain sentiments of the highest respect for the King of Kings, I would recommend him to effect his salvation through the medium of 'Ali* at whose shrine his diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and feerozahs (turquoises) will be eagerly accepted and through whose intercession he has equally as good a chance of inducing the divine providence to defer the visit of Asrail, of whose approach it would be treason to offer the most distant hint to His Majesty. I fear if this pious King should ever fall into the hands of Mahomed Ali, he would discover too late, that the Pasha has been one of that Angel's most expert vice-regents." When it is remembered that, as has been stated, Sadleir's schooling ended when he was sixteen, that he had been serving abroad continuously for over twelve years, and that when he wrote the above he was a sick and weary man after a thousand miles of desert travel, it must be agreed that he was no ordinary soldier and showed a readiness with his pen not usually associated with that profession. From time to time he shows a little dry humour, as when he writes: "The Turk applied himself to regulate his [his bedouin predecessor's] accounts, in which branch he appears to be an adept, converting tens into hundreds and vice versa with the greatest facility." He shows a humane concern for the fate of the wretched women, camp followers, who accompanied the Egyptian troops. It is curious, to say the least, that he makes no reference in his Diary to a man without whom he could hardly have undertaken his mission—namely, his "moonshee," who accompanied him throughout the journey. We are not even told his name, but he was a Persian with presumably a good knowledge of Arabic, since Sadleir must have relied on him not only as an interpreter but also as a scribe.

However, in a despatch from Bombay on May 8, 1820, on his return

* 'Ali, the son-in-law of Muhammad. The Persians belong to the (heretical) Shi'ah branch of Islam which regards 'Ali as first Imam or successor to Muhammad.

to India, he writes, "Of the pilgrims who had attempted to recross the desert [from Medina] to the Persian Gulf many had died of fatigue: the few who arrived were stripped of everything they possessed, even to their shirts, and were treated in the most barbarous fashion by the Bedouins. My moonshee [the one and only reference to him] was one of the few who arrived; he had been plundered of everything, letters, papers, etc. . . . He was a native of Abou Sheere, Bushire of the Sheeah [Shi'ah] faith; after performing the Ziyaret [i.e., visiting of the el Nawabi Mosque] at Medina, he set off direct for Mecca under a promise of rejoining me at Yanbo when he had become a Hajee, to which I freely assented." The moonshee reached Mecca, where he came under the influence of a Persian official who had been on a mission to Muhammad Ali. In his company he reached Medina on the return journey. Sadleir continues: "There the Khan [official] died and the moonshee with other Persian pilgrims relying on the protection of Ibrahim Pasha, to whom a large sum had been paid, tried to recross the desert to Persian Gulf. The Turkish guard left them at a frontier post to the mercy of the Bedouin who plundered them ruthlessly." It is not clear how Sadleir discovered these facts, nor are we told whether "the native of Abou Sheere" ever reached Persia again.

As stated above, Sadleir eventually reached Bombay in May, 1820. In December of the same year he was selected by the Governor for another mission, this time to Hyderabad.

An extract from a political letter from Bombay (December 6, 1820) states: "The Vakeels having pressed the Governor for the mission of an Envoy to Hyderabad as a proof that the advances of the Ameers of Sinde had not been rejected, we have acquiesced in their request and selected Captain Sadleir of H.M. 47th Regiment for that duty." His mission was mainly concerned with the suppression of the Cutch and Khosa Banditti —of Baluchi origin—and with a demand for reparation from the Amirs of Sind.

In a treaty between the E.I. Company and the Amirs, dated at Bombay, November 9, 1820, the Amirs had engaged to restrain the depredations of the Khoozas and all other tribes and individuals within their limits and to prevent the occurrence of any inroad into the British Dominions (Art. IV). Sadleir found that the raids had not ceased and he insisted on the surrender of the ringleader and his followers or the deposit of a sum of money equal to the losses suffered by the inhabitants of Sind. The Amirs complied with his request by paying the required deposit. Then the freebooter surrendered and the Amirs' claim to be repaid the deposit was granted, and the sufferers were compensated out of the East India Company's Treasury; this concluded the "Treaty of Hyderabad on the Indus." How our own statesmen must sigh for the days when one English Captain could achieve such results.

This harmonious settlement was not effected without the exercise of endless patience and firmness by Sadleir, whose previous experience in Persia and Arabia must have developed his natural aptitude for Oriental negotiations. For twenty-six days he argued, and the meetings with the Amirs were broken off from time to time for nonsensical reasons, quibbles over titles, precedence, etc., or interrupted by feasts. These happenings,

for the most part trivial, are recorded at wearisome length in the files of the India Office Library (Bombay Secret Letters). On his departure, Sadleir was presented with "a sword with gold mounts, 1 horse with trappings, 2 covers (?), shawls and pieces of money."

In the light of the various despatches relating to the mission, it is difficult to take seriously the charge brought later against Sadleir. In a letter from the Secretary to the Bombay Government to the Governor-General, we read: "Notwithstanding the cordiality with which Captain Sadleir took his leave of the Ameers he had scarcely quitted the Scind territories when we received a complaint from those chieftains principally having reference to his alleged violent and unconciliatory deportment." After inquiries, Sadleir was acquitted handsomely.

He caused surprise, or rather ill-feeling, by refusing a considerable sum of money. He must himself have been surprised to be informed, in a despatch from the Secretary to the Government (of Bombay), February 18, 1821, that "The Hon'ble the Governor has instructed me to express his satisfaction at the friendly reception afforded by their Highnesses nor is he disposed to put an unfavourable construction on their pressing the acceptance of a sum of money by the Envoy, such an offering generally accompanies the first presents to strangers of distinction in India and is always accepted by the British Residents at the Courts of Native Princes."*

For the next three years (1821-24) Sadleir remained in the Deccan with the 47th, and then another occasion was found for his special qualifications. This time it was in Burmah.† In his statement of service it is recorded that December 12, 1824, he took part in the attack on Cokain as Major of Brigade, and that in the same capacity he was present at the battles of Panlang and Donabew; his last recorded engagement was the storming of the heights of Nepadee. In the Annual Register for 1825 and 1826 there is a full account of this campaign, but Sadleir's name does not appear although in his statement of service reference is made to his being "noticed" in general orders, and in an official despatch by Brig-General Cotton, who commanded the column with which Sadleir was Brigade Major.

At this point Sadleir's career of active service seems to have ended. His statement of service has an entry, 1826—September, 1828, "India & Voyage to England," and a note to the effect that he became Major on June 11, 1830 "by purchase vice Backhouse" and "retired from the service 17 February 1837." He sold his Majority for £1,400.

Except for a few details given in the introduction to the Diary of this trans-Arabian journey (published in 1866, *v. supra*) and for his "Statement of Service," little or nothing has previously been recorded of his life

* The Company had perhaps already adopted the "Tosha Khaneh" system under which an official recipient of presents which could not be refused deposited them in the Treasury, from which presents of equal value were taken and given to the Oriental who had made the original gift.

† After Michael Syme's mission to the court of Ava in 1802, relations between Ava and Calcutta improved and a state of peace followed that lasted for twenty years. Professor Hall has recently edited Syme's Journal of his Embassy to Ava, and in a recent review of this work it is pointed out that "had the British Authorities taken care to prevent the attacks on Arakan, which refugees settled in British Territory were in the habit of making, the war of 1824-26 might never have happened."

and death. We are told in the introduction that in 1821 the Literary Society of Bombay gave an account of his Arabian journey (Sadleir himself was absent) and we are given an extract from the account, which after expressing admiration for his remarkable journey "through a country in which the exact position of a single town has never been ascertained," observes that he mapped his route "by a very good compass and in noting the time of each day's journey." The introduction ends with the statement (erroneous) that he "appears to have returned to England in 1825," and adds that "nothing is known of his subsequent career."

Research during the last few years has made possible a reconstruction of his life as a soldier, but little light has been shed on his boyhood or his life after he had left the Army. The 47th, after 1828, was continually on the move, and between this date and 1837, was posted to eight different stations (including Edinburgh, stations in Ireland and Gibraltar), but Sadleir's name does not appear in the records.

As has been stated, he became a Sheriff of Cork in 1837. He married in 1847 or 1848 a Miss Ridings, of Cork (whose great-nephew is alive to-day: he inherited the sword presented to Sadleir by the Shah).

An unconfirmed statement that he had migrated to New Zealand about 1855 proved correct. Until a year ago the place and date of his death was unknown, but the following up of many clues in New Zealand brought at last the information desired.

In the Auckland newspaper, *The New Zealander*, December 3, 1859, is his obituary notice:

> Died on the 2nd instant, at his residence, Upper Queen Street, George Forster Sadleir Esq. Late Major in H.M. 47th regiment, age 73.

And this is confirmed by his death certificate, which gives as cause of death *Marasmus Senilis*. Nothing seems to be known of his life in New Zealand nor, indeed, when he emigrated from Ireland. Even his death certificate—a copy is before me—is inaccurate—he was aged seventy, not seventy-three as therein stated. *Non omnis moriar* is a comforting reflection, but with Sadleir it was a near thing. His reputation has suffered from indifference and neglect. His Diary was not published until seven years after his death, forty-five years after he had written it, his name is often mis-spelt, there are mis-statements in the introduction, Curzon does not mention him but mentions the 47th, Philby refers to his journey with faint praise, Hogarth alone treats him with fairness. The Regimental History of the 47th refers briefly to his mission to Persia and to his participation in the Burmah campaign, but ignores the mission which took him across Arabia. In later times the 47th and 81st Regiments combined to form the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) whose motto is *Loyauté m'oblige*. It was this sentiment which inspired Sadleir throughout his thirty years soldiering. Some there be which have no memorial, but it is fitting, as far as is possible, to see that they are not altogether forgotten, and with such intention this memoir has been written. In the familiar words of Horace, *dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori*.

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