

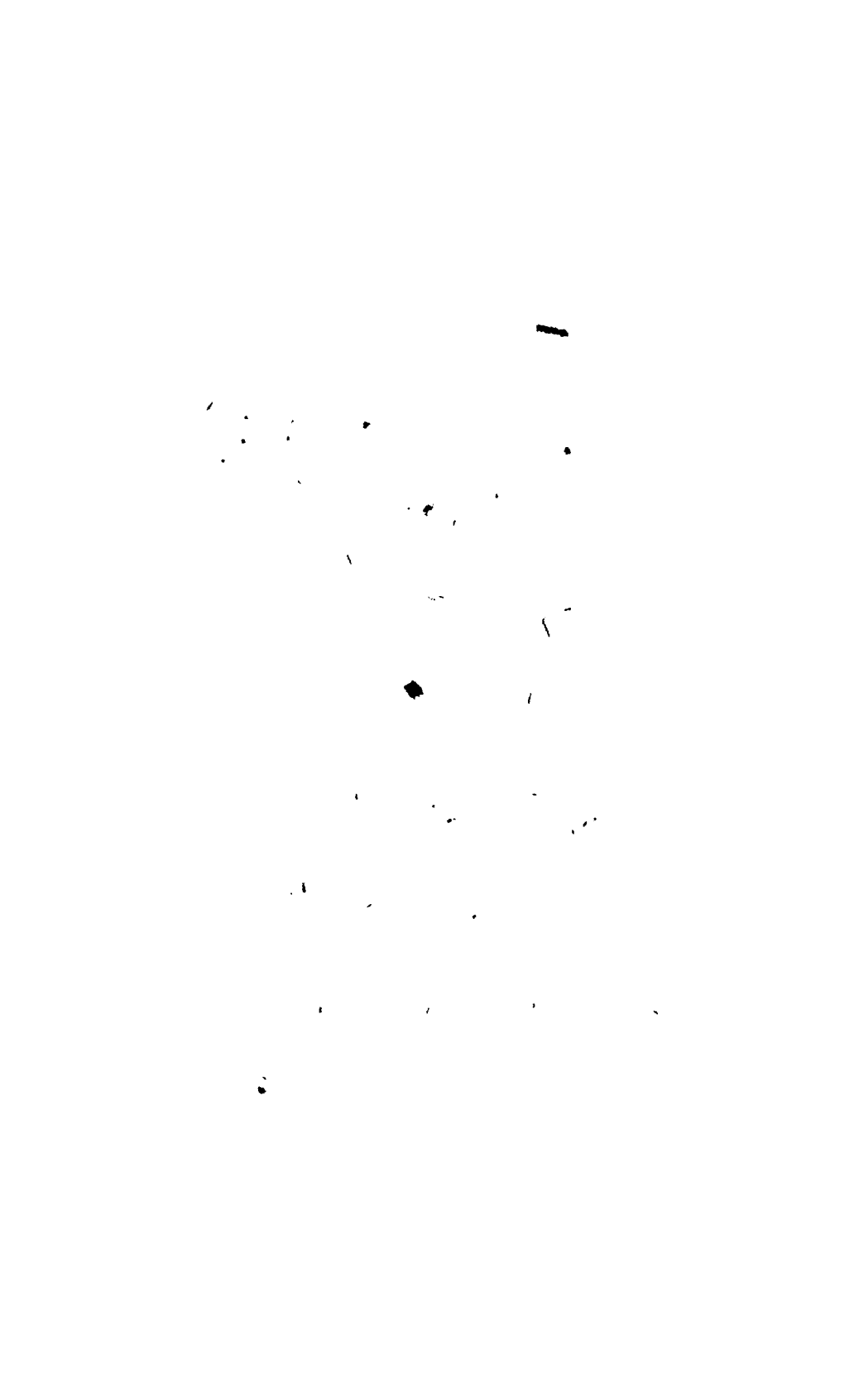
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**BRITISH RELATIONS WITH THE,  
CIS-SUTLEJ STATES,**

1809—1823.

BY

**Mian Bashir Ahmed Farooqi, M.A.**

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## **PREFATORY NOTE.**

THE monographs published so far deal mostly with the period after the annexation of the Punjab in 1849. In the present monograph—the 19th of the Series—the author has described at some length the contract of the British East India Company with the Cis-Sutlej States after the capture of Delhi in 1803. The distance between the Jamna and the Sutlej is well over two hundred miles. In their course of expansion towards the North-West of India the British had to exercise protective control over the States—mostly Sikh—in this region and the period under review in this monograph is interesting in view of the fact that the policy later pursued by the British East India Company in relation to the States in the Punjab was modelled on the principles evolved in the years 1809 to 1823.

The materials for the thesis have been almost wholly drawn from the records preserved in the Punjab Record Office.

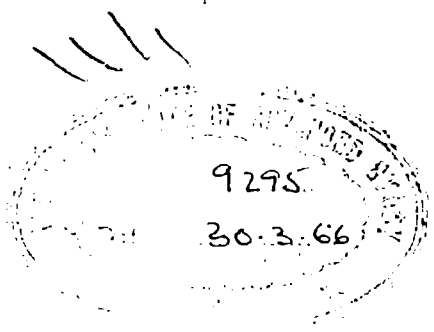
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## PREFACE.

The historical material upon which I have based the following thesis may be divided into two sections. The first is the miscellaneous correspondence which passed between the Company's Agents at Ludhiana and Ambala, the Assistant Agents at Nahan and Karnal and the Resident at Delhi and the Governor-General. This exists in the Punjab Government Record Office and forms the main source of this work. There are several large volumes comprising detailed information, the proper use of which is by no means an easy task for an inexperienced scholar like myself. Besides, some difficulty is caused by the fact that some of these letters are illegible, as for example those contained in books 2 and 5, while Book 20 seems to have been lost.

The second section consists of printed works, which were mostly written by persons employed in the Company's service, who, in the discharge of their official duties, came in contact with the families whose ancestors had served under some Sikh Chiefs and from whom they gathered useful information. Such are the publications of Cunningham and Griffin, while others of lesser importance deal with the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs with extreme brevity but dilate mostly on the Sikh Kingdom to the west of the Sutlej. Among Griffin's books, too, "The Rajas of the Punjab" is the only one which deals with the Cis-Sutlej States. It offers a detailed narrative of the three principal states of Patiala, Jind and Nabha but makes no mention of the smaller principalities and chiefships. Though written with considerable fullness and candour, Griffin's work does not maintain in these narratives that standard of disinterestedness and impartiality which is exemplified in the publications of certain other writers. He invariably justifies the Governor-General and his Agents in all their decisions about the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs.

Cunningham's history deals mainly with the Trans-Sutlej Punjab, in which connection he mentions something about Metcalfe's Mission and Ochterlony's Agency. As he tells us in his prefatory note, he spent eight years of his service (1838—1846) in close contact with the Sikhs and produced his first edition in 1849.

The arrangement of my work, covering as it does, so many different States the conditions and relations of which varied a great deal with the British Government, has proved a matter of considerable difficulty. If I had adopted the chronological order, I would have had to pass repeatedly from one State to the other and the different circumstances and problems of each would have caused confusion. On the other hand, an attempt to write out the

story of the progress of each State from start to finish would have produced a series of accounts rather than one unified whole. I had, therefore, to adopt a *via media* in trying to ensure, as best as I could, chronological continuity and avoidance of overlapping and confusion. My method has been to select different aspects of the period which are of greater significance and then treat them in relation to the major States.

The first two chapters which recapitulate the circumstances which led to the Treaty of Amritsar and the two Proclamations of Protection, being of a preliminary nature, are described briefly. The third chapter deals with British intervention in the internal affairs of the States—the first real topic of this thesis—and as such has been treated with greater fullness. Every single event which is mentioned adds to the knowledge which helps to determine the working out of British policy towards the Cis-Sutlej States. One separate chapter is assigned to the general affairs of these States and their administration under the new surveillance of the Paramount Power, and another to the manner in which the Cis-Sutlej Hill States were brought under British supremacy. The last chapter attempts a general enunciation of the principles which formed the basis of the development of British policy in the Cis-Sutlej area.

I have the pleasant duty of recording my indebtedness to ever courteous Dr. G. L. Chopra, M.A., Ph. D., Bar-at-Law, for his valuable criticism and generous help; his kindly interest and encouragement. He very kindly read the whole of the manuscript with great care and removed many blemishes which might have escaped less vigilant eyes and thus helped very greatly to improve the form and presentation of this work.

BASHIR AHMED FAROOQI.



## INTRODUCTION.

In the beginning of the last century we find the Cis-Sutlej portion of the Punjab divided among the ruling families of Patiala, Jind, Nabha and several other minor chiefs. Most of them had descended from the Phulkian *Misl*. The descendants of another *misl*—the Nishanwalas—owned some tracts between Ambala and Saharanpur. A few small states, namely Malerkotla, Kunjpura and Khizrabad were ruled by Muslim Chiefs.

The Cis-Sutlej Sardars seem to have first attracted the official notice of the East India Company's Government in 1784 through their predatory activities and temporary alliance with the Marathas. Three years later these Chiefs appear to have suggested a defensive alliance to the British which the latter declined<sup>1</sup>.

The first action in which the Sikhs were actively arrayed against the British, was the battle of Delhi in 1803 when the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs fought on the side of the Marathas. Gurdit Singh Ladwa, Bhanga Singh of Thanesar and several other minor chieftains took part in this battle; while the Sikh bands continued crossing the Jamna and plundering the newly acquired British lands even after the Marathas were defeated<sup>2</sup>, until, in 1805, an amnesty was proclaimed by the British to all the Sikh Sardars, in case they would stop hostility against them. All the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs agreed except Gurdit Singh Ladwa whose conduct led to the British authorities to deprive him of his villages in the Doab and the town of Karnal<sup>3</sup>.

In 1806 Jaswant Rao Holkar again moved northward, closely followed by Lord Lake, and after an unsuccessful siege of Delhi, had to escape across the Jamna. General Lake, accompanied and assisted by the two Chiefs, Lal Singh and Bhag Singh, who had already rendered some service to the British, pursued him<sup>4</sup>. Holkar ran through the Cis-Sutlej lands, but none listened to him except that the ruler of Patiala made him some contributions<sup>5</sup>. Hard-pressed by the British General he had to move further into the Trans-Sutlej Punjab where Ranjit Singh was rapidly building a dominion for himself.

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<sup>1</sup> Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs*, page 134.

<sup>2</sup> *Lake's Ochterlony*, February 2, 1804, Bk. 2, Lt. 1. Also Burn to Ochterlony March 4, March 28 and November 30, 1809, Bk. 2, Lts. 3, 4 and 9.

<sup>3</sup> Bahadur Singh of Kalisal and Sardar Bhag Singh of Jind were already on friendly terms with the British Government.

<sup>4</sup> They assisted Colonel Burn who had been isolated at Saharanpur and were largely responsible for his ultimate relief from the Marathas.

<sup>5</sup> Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*. Pages 85-86.

Raja Bhag Singh was the maternal uncle of Ranjit Singh and his influence counted, among other things, in determining the attitude of the nephew who avoided encountering the better trained British forces by refusing to give any help to Holkar. The latter had consequently to return to the territory occupied by the British and conclude a treaty with them in January, 1806. By this treaty Holkar renounced all his possessions to the north of the Jamna. The British concluded a separate treaty with Ranjit Singh, recognising him as the ruler of the Trans-Sutlej territory on his undertaking to refrain from helping the Marathas<sup>1</sup>.

In 1806 Ranjit Singh turned his attention to the rich lands of Malwa and Sarhind which lay between the Sutlej and the Jamna. The pretext for an incursion into the principalities of Nabha and Patiala was provided by a dispute which had arisen between their rulers over the possession of a village named Doluddee. Raja Bhag Singh who was a strong supporter of Nabha prompted his nephew to mediate in the dispute.<sup>2</sup>

Having crossed the Sutlej at the head of a force, Ranjit Singh seized Ludhiana from its Muslim ruler, Rani Nur-un-Nisa (mother of Rao Ilias) and made it over to Raja Bhag Singh. He next seized Sanewal from another defenceless widow and gave it in *jagir* to his famous general, Diwan Mohkam Chand. This was, however, restored to its original owner afterwards on payment of a *nazrana* of thirty thousand rupees. Ranjit Singh scored several other successes which caused alarm among the chiefs who had sought his assistance and who now began buying off his approach by the payment of tribute and guns<sup>3</sup>. After celebrating the Diwali festival at Thanesar, Ranjit Singh recrossed the Sutlej<sup>4</sup>.

A second opportunity was provided for Ranjit Singh's intrusion by the dissensions between the Raja of Patiala and his wife, Rani Aus Kaur. She invited him to espouse her cause, promising a famous brass piece of ordnance belonging to the family and a precious diamond necklace as the price of his assistance. The Sikh ruler crossed Sutlej at Hari-ke-Pattan in September 1807. On the way to Patiala, he seized all the remaining possessions of the deceased Rao Ilias and distributed them among his own dependants and allies. Before he reached Patiala, the Raja and the Rani had become reconciled through the mediation of the Jind and Thanesar Chiefs ; nevertheless Ranjit Singh exacted his prize. After sacking Naraingarh and

<sup>1</sup> Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*. Pages 85-86.

<sup>2</sup> Before that the case had been brought to the notice of the British authorities but they refused to mediate in the dispute, in consequence of the repeated instructions from Home to avoid all connections with Powers beyond the Jamna (Cunningham).

<sup>3</sup> *History of the Punjab*, Volume I.

<sup>4</sup> Metcalfe to Government, January 13, 1809.

several other places, he returned to Lahore and entrusted the task of effecting a settlement of these newly acquired Cis-Sutlej territories to Diwan Mohkam Chand.

These recurring aggressions of Ranjit Singh beyond the Sutlej raised the alarm of all the Chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej region. They were, however, too weak individually to oppose him and too much divided to act together. The other alternative was to invite external assistance to escape the impending fate. After some deliberation they determined on inviting an English overlordship in preference to that of Ranjit Singh. Accordingly a formal deputation consisting of the Chiefs of Jind and Kaithal and Sardar Chain Singh, the Diwan of Patiala, visited Mr. Seton, Resident at Delhi, in March 1808 and sounded him as to the extent and kind of protection which the British Government might be willing to afford them<sup>1</sup>. It transpired that that Government was disposed to protect them though they had not yet determined how to act. The deputation therefore did not succeed in securing more than vague expressions of good will and the hope that perhaps the ruler of Lahore would not be suffered to extend his usurpations eastward.

On the other hand, Ranjit Singh, on coming to know of this deputation, had sent messengers to the Cis-Sutlej area to calm the apprehensions of the Chiefs and to induce them to join his camp. This and the lack of any positive assurance from the British, brought the members of the deputation to Amritsar, where they were received by the Sikh ruler, who spared no efforts to detach them from their design of entering into any relationship with the British Government.

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<sup>1</sup> Seton to Metcalfe, April 2, 1808, Bk. 4, Lt. 25, C.

## CHAPTER I.

### METCALFE'S MISSION AND THE TREATY WITH RANJIT SINGH.

For understanding the attitude of the British Government towards the Cis-Sutlej Sardars, we must take into consideration the Non-Intervention policies of Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Barlow. The state of the country between the Sutlej and the Jamna was such that a more vigorous and ambitious Governor-General might have regarded it a suitable opportunity for extending British protection over that region, especially when the Chiefs themselves had sought it. But Barlow could do nothing against the positive and clear instructions of the Home Government, these being to avoid all connections with the rulers beyond the Jamna.

Sir John Barlow was succeeded by Lord Minto and soon after the latter's arrival in India in July 1807 the international situation in Europe underwent a very material change. This was due to the conclusion of the Treaty of Tilsit between Napoleon and the Czar of Russia<sup>1</sup> and the consequent danger of a Franco-Russian invasion of India. This grave outlook necessitated, in turn, a departure from the earlier policy of non-intervention and entering into a defensive alliance by the Company's Government with the kingdoms bordering on the North-Western frontiers of India. Both the countries beyond these frontiers as well as those which lay on the way to them were to be approached with a view "to conciliate the princes, and to obtain permission to enter into their territories, for the purpose of opposing the French in their projected invasion of Hindustan<sup>2</sup>".

Envoys were accordingly despatched to the courts of Afghanistan and Persia and to the rulers of Sindh and the Punjab. The collision threatened by the recent proceedings and designs of Ranjit Singh in the Cis-Sutlej area formed an additional motive for deputing a British envoy to Lahore.

Mr. (afterwards Lord) C. T. Metcalfe was selected to conduct the negotiations at Lahore, the formal announcement of his appointment as envoy to the Sikh Court being made on June 20, 1808. Before his departure, on August 12 of that year, the policy of the new Governor-General towards the Cis-Sutlej States had already changed<sup>3</sup>. He had now grown anxious to establish

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<sup>1</sup> The Treaty of Tilsit was concluded on July 7, 1807.

<sup>2</sup> Kaye, *Lord Minto in India*, page 148.

<sup>3</sup> Kaye, *Lord Minto in India*, pages 145-46. Previous policy described in the introduction.

some kind of friendly relations with them instead of maintaining complete aloofness and indifference. The Resident at Delhi now wrote encouraging letters to the Chiefs of Patiala, Kaithal and Jind, at the same time verbally assuring them of British protection. A similar attitude was adopted in the long memorandum of instructions given to Metcalfe, who was told to 'counteract the designs of French and Russian despots<sup>1</sup>', to persuade Ranjit Singh to believe that his interests and those of the British being identical, he should follow the most prudent policy of joining hands with them to avert the common danger<sup>2</sup> and it was explicitly enjoined upon him to adopt a non-committal attitude with regard to the question of the future of the Cis-Sutlej States.

Metcalfe crossed the Jamna and reached Thanesar in the middle of August. Bhunga Singh, the Chief of that place, sent his son to the envoy asking him to safeguard his interests at Lahore which he promised to do<sup>3</sup>. When he reached Patiala, Raja Sahib Singh sent his uncle to arrange a visit between the Envoy and himself. The Raja's first two visits were merely formal, but at the third he made an unexpected and dramatic gesture by producing the keys of his fort, which he presented to the Envoy with the request that the same may be handed back to him as a gift from the British Government. The Envoy, however, declined to undertake this though he assured him of the friendly intentions of his Government. But he expressed his inability to make any definite commitments. Metcalfe crossed the Sutlej on September 1, 1808<sup>4</sup>. There he received a letter from Ranjit Singh who had moved to Kasur asking him to join him there<sup>5</sup>. It appears that Ranjit Singh had moved there for the double purpose of re-crossing the Sutlej and attacking the Cis-Sutlej States and preventing the Mission from visiting his principal cities.

The previous discouraging attitude of Mr. Seton, Resident at Delhi, and the departure of Mr. Metcalfe from Patiala, without giving its Raja any definite assurances of British protection, seem now to have created fresh apprehensions among the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs who felt more inclined than ever previously to look to the clemency of Ranjit Singh. This is shown by the fact that when the embassy reached Kasur, all those Chiefs with the exception of Bhagwan Singh of Jagadhri attended Ranjit Singh's camp

<sup>1</sup> Kaye, *Life of Metcalfe*, pages 171-72.

<sup>2</sup> A. Seton to P. Carcy, October 25, 1808, Bk. 4, Lt. 43, Copy.

<sup>3</sup> Metcalfe to Edmonstone, August 9, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 3, Copy.

<sup>4</sup> Metcalfe to Edmonstone, September 2, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 6, Copy.

<sup>5</sup> Metcalfe to Government, September 3, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 7, Copy.

either personally or through their *vakeels*<sup>1</sup>. Metcalfe reached Kasur on September 11 and was cordially received by the Sikh ruler, who in order to impress his subjects and the mission with his own importance had already gathered his army there.

The first interview with Ranjit Singh was of a ceremonial nature and marked by exchange of presents<sup>2</sup>. The second took place on the 22nd of the same month, when the real object of the mission, that is to invite the Sikh ruler to enter into an alliance with the English in order to counteract a possible invasion of Napoleon from the direction of Kabul, was disclosed. The Raja and his ministers asked for time to consider the matter<sup>3</sup>.

Next day the Envoy was visited by three of Ranjit Singh's ministers, who brought three important points for discussion: the first was about the nature and details of the proposed alliance; the second, about the Raja's claim to sovereignty over the Cis-Sutlej area; and the third was that the proposed British Mission to Kabul should not interfere with Ranjit Singh's claims to some of the territory of the Kabul ruler. As regards the first point, they were told that the British intended only an alliance for mutual self-defence; as to the second, the Envoy advised them to postpone its consideration until afterwards; and as for the third point, he assured them that their apprehensions were groundless<sup>4</sup>.

Ranjit Singh suddenly broke up his camp in the middle of the negotiations, crossed the Sutlej with his army and asked the British Envoy to follow him. This was obviously to nullify the second of the above-mentioned points, on which the Envoy had given no satisfaction but which was of most immediate concern to the Sikh ruler, into a *fait accompli*. He seized Faridkot from Gulab Singh and made it over to Sada Kaur, and then forced the Muslim Chief of Malerkotla to undertake to pay a lakh of rupees for which the Rajas of Patiala and Jind agreed to stand surety<sup>5</sup>.

Metcalfe accompanied the Raja of Lahore up to Malerkotla but refused to 'follow the army in campaign' any further and strongly remonstrated against Ranjit's encroachments towards the east of the Sutlej.

Ranjit Singh continued his advance to Ambala which he seized with its dependencies from a widow and made it over to the Chiefs of Nabha and Kaithal. He next exacted tribute

<sup>1</sup> Metcalfe to Edmonstone, August 19, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 3, also Lt. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Metcalfe to Government, September 13, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 10, Copy.

<sup>3</sup> Metcalfe to Edmonstone, September 23, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 15, Copy.

<sup>4</sup> Metcalfe to Government, September 25, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 17, P.G.R.C.

<sup>5</sup> Metcalfe to Government, October 25, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 26, Copy.

from Shahabad and Thanesar and returning by Patiala exchanged brotherly turbans with Sahib Singh as a sign of mutual friendship<sup>1</sup>.

During recent negotiations Ranjit Singh had insisted that his supremacy over the Cis-Sutlej area should be accepted as the basic condition of the alliance. But Metcalfe would not agree to it and proposed a reference to the Supreme Government at Calcutta to which Ranjit Singh consented. But after writing the letter to the Governor-General, Ranjit Singh had embarked on his above-mentioned campaign.

The conduct of Ranjit Singh in his dealings with the British envoy appeared highly objectionable to Metcalfe who described it as an 'extraordinary instance of suspicion, hastiness and disrespect.' His object in adopting a course at once so unexpected and provoking to Metcalfe was to prolong negotiations so that, in the meantime, he might seize as much Cis-Sutlej area as he could, besides disheartening the Chiefs through the presence of the envoy of the power (to whom they looked for protection) in his own camp.

The Raja attached no importance to the French invasion but rather feared the new power on his border which might thwart his designs. He frankly told Metcalfe that he would agree to the alliance only on the condition that his Cis-Sutlej project should not be interfered with. In this third expedition he reduced nearly all the Cis-Sutlej States except Thanesar, Patiala and Kunjpura<sup>2</sup>.

The British envoy remained a passive spectator of Ranjit's aggression, except that he made vigorous protests which failed to produce any effect. The Government at Calcutta also wished to avoid a rupture with the Maharaja while the situation in Europe was grave.

The attitude of the British in India, however, changed soon afterwards when news arrived from England from which it became clear that there was no likelihood of a French invasion any longer. With the lessening of that fear the desire for a defensive alliance with the Maharaja became less intense, especially if that was to be achieved at the expense of the hegemony over the Cis-Sutlej lands which had been within the British grasp in recent years. And so the Government at Calcutta determined on its course by October to resist Ranjit Singh in his Cis-Sutlej designs. Mr. Metcalfe was now instructed to avow that the whole country between the Sutlej and the Jamna was under British protection, that although that Government had

<sup>1</sup> A. Seton to Edmonstone, December 7, 1808, Bk. 3, Lt. 1, Copy.

<sup>2</sup> Metcalfe to Edmonstone, November 25, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 32, Copy.

no intention to require the surrender of possessions occupied by the Sikh ruler before its interposition, it must insist on the restoration of all what he had seized during the late expedition, that the extension of his authority over the Malwa territory could not be tolerated, that Ranjit Singh should consider the river Sutlej as the eastern boundary of his kingdom, that a military post would henceforth be established at Ludhiana to protect the interests of that country and, lastly, that non-acceptance of these terms by the Raja would involve the active hostility of the British<sup>1</sup>. A letter from the Governor-General addressed to Ranjit Singh was also attached with the above instructions.

After completing his campaigns, Ranjit Singh returned to Amritsar on December 4, 1808 and was joined there by the envoy a week later. The latter communicated to him the decision of the British Government regarding the Cis-Sutlej States. This check was quite unexpected by the Raja but he pretended to treat it as something which could be modified by negotiations and was not the last word. Metcalfe assured him that it was the definite and final decision of his Government and pressed for an immediate reply<sup>2</sup>. As the Raja was most unwilling to part with his newly acquired possessions, he delayed the negotiations by many an artifice and pretext. A long story of diplomatic negotiations began during which Ranjit Singh and his councillors made desperate efforts to whittle down the British demands but to no effect.

To enforce his demand and give weight to his argument, Metcalfe advised his Government on December 20 that in his opinion the Raja would not agree to any treaty unless the British army advanced to the Sutlej. Accordingly, a detachment of troops was moved across the Jamna on January 10, 1809<sup>3</sup> under the command of Colonel (afterwards Major-General Sir David) Ochterlony and reached Ludhiana in the middle of the next month. On February 9 Ochterlony issued an *Ittilaanama* to the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs, proclaiming them to have been taken under British protection, and that any act of aggression on the part of the Lahore Chief would be resisted with force.

Ranjit Singh seems to have been alarmed by the advance of the British force into the Cis-Sutlej area, fearing the extension of British influence even to the West and North of the Sutlej. He, therefore, made secret preparations for war while continu-

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<sup>1</sup>Instructions from Government to Metcalfe, October 31, 1808, and their acknowledgment, Bk. 5, Lt. 2, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>Metcalfe to Edmonstone, December 14 and 15, 1808, Bk. 5, Lts. 36 and 37, Copy.

<sup>3</sup>Sending of a detachment was decided as early as November 14, 1808.



ing to evade compliance with the Envoy's propositions. He composed his differences with his wife and mother-in-law, strengthened his garrison at Phillaur and called back Diwan Mohkam Chand, his ablest general, from Kangra. On knowing all this, Metcalfe decided to stop negotiations and quit his court, and advised his Government an invasion of the Punjab, assuring them of success, which was based on the expectation that all the discontented Chiefs would fight on the side of the British<sup>1</sup>.

Seeing Metcalfe so adamant, Ranjit Singh sent Sada Singh and Nizam-ud-Din to attend upon Ochterlony and see if that Englishman was more pliable<sup>2</sup>. These men arrived at Ochterlony's camp on February 13 while he was en-route to Ludhiana. They were full of complaints about Metcalfe's reserve as against the pacific and generous disposition of Ranjit Singh. Ochterlony frankly reiterated the intentions of the British Government regarding the Cis-Sutlej States. They, however, persuaded him to make a halt for a few days until some reply was received from the Maharaja<sup>3</sup>. Ochterlony's interview with these people was disapproved by his Government.

Negotiations continued between the British Envoy and Ranjit Singh until the latter was fully convinced of British intentions and made to realize the dangers to which an opening of hostilities would expose him. He ultimately expressed his willingness to concede to the British demands and on February 6 gave orders for the withdrawal of his troops from Ambala. Metcalfe, however, refused to consider any proposals, until every Sikh soldier was withdrawn from the left bank of the Sutlej and every place usurped by the Sikh ruler in his last expedition was restored. Ranjit Singh was particularly reluctant to abandon Khur and Faridkot<sup>4</sup>, and relinquished the former place on March 22 when the British force had reached Ludhiana.

The surrender of Faridkot, held by Diwan Mohkam Chand, proved even more difficult and 'every possible delay was made and every artifice employed to avoid it'<sup>5</sup>. It nearly led to the termination of negotiations once again<sup>6</sup>. At last on

<sup>1</sup>Metcalfe to Government, January 29, 1809, Bk. 5, Lt. 51, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>Metcalfe to Edmonstone, February 15 and 20, 1809, Ludhiana Agency Printed Records P. G. R.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, February 14, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 7, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Metcalfe to Edmonstone, March 4, 1809, Bk. 5, Lt. 57, copy.

<sup>5</sup>Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, page 120.

<sup>6</sup>Metcalfe to Government, March 22, 1809, Bk. 5, Lt. 59, copy.

April 2 this place too was evacuated by the Lahore troops and made over to its rightful owner<sup>1</sup>. After this the negotiations drew speedily to a satisfactory close. The Governor-General sent a draft treaty to Metcalfe which, being accepted by Ranjit Singh in its entirety, was signed on April 25, 1809 and later confirmed by the Governor-General-in-Council.

By this famous Treaty of Amritsar Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave up for ever his cherished ambition of establishing his authority over the Cis Sutlej States which now came under the protection of the British Government<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, April 6, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 11, Original.

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix B for the terms of the treaty.

## CHAPTER II.

### OCHTERLONY'S MARCH TO LUDHIANA.

As I have already mentioned, a detachment of British troops had moved across the Jamna on January 16, 1809 under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ochterlony to confine Maharaja Ranjit Singh effectually to the north of the river Sutlej. A reserve army was placed, in addition, under the command of Major-General St. Leger, ready for any extended operations which Ranjit Singh's hostility might render necessary.

Ochterlony had been a commander of the garrison at Allahabad and was a man of great zeal and ability. Moreover, he possessed that accurate knowledge of the then North-West Frontier of British India which was so rare in British Officers of those days. He was in future to receive all his instructions from the Commander-in-Chief at Delhi and was enjoined to observe utmost secrecy respecting his movements<sup>1</sup>.

Though the instructions issued to him from the Government on December 29, 1808 chalked out for him in broad outline his future conduct, they left a great deal to his own discretion<sup>2</sup>. He was to watch the movement of the Maharaja and to gather information regarding his power, resources and the disposition of his vassal chiefs. He was to be careful not to bind his government by any promise to the Maharaja or by offers of assistance or to demands of protection from the disaffected chiefs on the west of the Sutlej, though he was allowed to make them understand that at some future time their services might be acceptable to the British. As regards the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs Ochterlony was instructed to maintain towards them a system of conduct intended to convince them of the good will of the British Government and to lead them to "appreciate the full benefits of British Protection"<sup>3</sup> which was essential for their very existence; while the only advantage the Government could derive from their connection would be "to have in time of difficulty, a confederacy of grateful chiefs, bound to it by ties of interest and affection"<sup>4</sup>. The protection was to be general at first but was later to be defined more fully. No subsidy was to be asked from them but after some time if it was thought expedient; they would have to contribute towards the expenses of their own

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<sup>1</sup>Edmonstone to Ochterlony, November 14, 1808, Bk. 6, Lt. 1, Original, P.G.R.

<sup>2</sup>Edmonstone to Ochterlony, December 29, 1808, Bk. 6, Lt. 30, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Instructions to Ochterlony from Government, December 29, 1808, Bk. 6, Lt. 3, Original.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.* Also *The Rajas of the Punjab* by Griffin, page 114.

defence. The chiefs might be expected to refer the adjustments of their concerns collectively or individually to the Power which protected them. It was also intimated to Colonel Ochterlony that the detachment under him was to be eventually employed in restoring the territories conquered by Maharaja Ranjit Singh during his last campaign<sup>1</sup>.

After crossing the Jamna, Ochterlony encamped at Dadoo-pur, four miles north of Buriya Ghat<sup>2</sup>. Here he gave an interview to the Diwan of Bhagwan Singh of Buriya and his nephew, the latter delivering a letter from his uncle expressing his satisfaction that the British Government had assumed the protection of the country. Sardar Gurdit Singh of Ladwa, whose hostile conduct and avowed enmity towards the British was well known, now joined Ochterlony to safeguard his own interests and to solicit the confirmation of his own grants made by Ranjit Singh during his last expedition<sup>3</sup>.

On January 20, 1809, Raja Bhag Singh saw Ochterlony and pleaded the case of Sardar Jodh Singh Kalsia assuring the Colonel that Jodh Singh was faithful to the British Government and in case of hostilities would certainly side with them; but that as he had been for long in the service of Ranjit Singh and had received grants from him in the Cis-Sutlej area, he could not join Ochterlony straightaway but was waiting for the arrival of the Colonel at Patiala<sup>4</sup>.

The Chiefs continued their march with the British troops and made enquiries about the future intentions of the British Government towards the Cis-Sutlej States. Ochterlony made no secret of his mission which, he declared, was to restore all the usurpations of Ranjit Singh and the lands conquered by Sardars from each other since September 1808. He informed his Government that the problem of restoration was very complex<sup>5</sup> as Ranjit Singh had given many of his usurpations in grant to some of his adherents, so that while some had suffered at the hands of the Raja others had gained<sup>6</sup>. He added that he was sure that there was no chief on the Cis-Sutlej side who was so blind to his interests as to embrace the cause of Ranjit Singh<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Government, January 16, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 1, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Government, January 18, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 3, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 20, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 4, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 18, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 3, Original.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 16, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 1, Original.

In another letter, he expressed his view that the future conduct of those Chiefs who suffered through his restoring mission would be most probably friendly<sup>1</sup>. He was very careful in his talks with the chiefs who were present in his camp and deferred every discussion of a political nature till their arrival at Patiala where a general meeting of all the chiefs had been previously settled<sup>2</sup>.

Ochterlony reached Patiala on February 2, 1809. He was received by the Diwan of Patiala who assured him that the arrival of British troops was most desirable. He further told the Colonel that Patiala had done away with all the previous engagements with Ranjit Singh; and that all the chiefs on that side of the Sutlej would be prepared to pay homage to the British<sup>3</sup>.

Next day Ochterlony paid a visit to Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala, who during the whole period of his stay 'repeatedly expressed a childish joy in having (been) delivered from all apprehensions of the Raja of Lahore, by the protection of the British Government<sup>4</sup>'. The Raja ordered Diwan Chan (Chain)<sup>5</sup> Singh to join the British detachment with one thousand horsemen.

Ochterlony reached Nabha on February 5, and was received by Raja Jaswant Singh with equal satisfaction<sup>6</sup>. He then proceeded to Malerkotla, where the 'much respected and venerable' Pathan Chief, Ataullah Khan, was the ruler from whom the Raja of Lahore had demanded a large sum of money. The Colonel reinstated the Chief in power who, 'but a few months since anticipated another visit from the Raja of Lahore which would doubtlessly have terminated in his absolute expulsion and ruin<sup>7</sup>'.

On February 9, 1809, Ochterlony issued an *Ittilaanama*<sup>8</sup> declaring that the Cis-Sutlej states were under British protection and announcing the terms on which the British Government was ready to maintain its friendly relations with Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

First, all the usurpations of Ranjit Singh in the Cis-Sutlej area from September 1808 were to be restored. Secondly, "the troops stationed at the Ghat of Phillour must depart on the other side of the Sutlej and, in future, the troops of Maharaja shall never

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 20, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 4, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, February 4, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 5, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 18, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 3, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 16, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 1, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony spells this as 'Chan' while the current spellings are 'Chain.'

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 20, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 4, Original.

<sup>7</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, February 9, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 6, Original.

<sup>8</sup>*Ittilaanama*, Bk. 11, Lt. 6, Translation—See Appendix A, February 9, 1809.

advance into the country of the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs<sup>1</sup>". Thirdly, if a small force by way of a thana Police Post) be stationed at the Ghat of Phillour, it would not be objected to. Lastly "if the Maharaja persevere in the fulfilment of above stipulations, which he so repeatedly proposed to do in the presence of Mr. Metcalfe, such fulfilment will confirm the mutual friendship. In case of non-compliance with these stipulations, then shall it be plain that the Maharaja has no regard for the friendship of the British Government; but on the contrary resolves enmity. In such a case the victorious British army shall commence every mode of defence<sup>2</sup>".

Ochterlony had intended to leave directly for Ludhiana by a north-easterly route so that he might easily form contact if necessary with the army of Major-General Leger. But as already mentioned in the previous chapter, he was persuaded to stop by the arrival of the three Vakeels of Ranjit Singh. They made complaints of the conduct of Mr. Metcalfe and wanted to know the object of his arrival. Colonel Ochterlony informed them in plain words about the intentions of the British Government. In the end they were able to persuade the Colonel to halt for a few days until the whole conversation was made known to the Raja<sup>3</sup>.

On the expiry of the promised time, he marched to Ludhiana which place he reached on February 20, 1809. The Government severely blamed Ochterlony for entering into negotiations with the Vakeels of Ranjit Singh. He was told that he would have acted more prudently in refusing to allow any representation of the Maharaja's Agents to delay the advance of the detachment; that "by his listening to remonstrances founded on an impeachment of the candour and sincerity of the envoy, he had exposed to risk the dignity of the British Government."<sup>4</sup> Ochterlony offered to resign his command at this reprimand<sup>5</sup>, but his services and zeal were so warmly commended that he was induced to withdraw his resignation.

It may be observed that the advance of the British force to the Sutlej was in accordance with what the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs had wished. Ochterlony's march was hailed by the inhabitants also as affording a prospect of protection and tranquility in the future and they 'vied with one another in the display of their gratitude'. But when the Government decided to establish a

<sup>1</sup>*Ittilaanaama*, Bk. 11, Lt. 6. Translation—See Appendix.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, February 14, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 7, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, page 118.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, May 25, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 25, Original.

Cantonment at Ludhiana for the two-fold purpose of keeping in check the ruler of Lahore and controlling the mutual feuds and depredations of the chiefs, the latter began to entertain new fears and suspicions of its ultimate intentions<sup>1</sup>. "We were considered by some as uninvited, unexpected and even unwelcomed guests" wrote Ochterlony to the Government, "but they did not know how to refuse what they had once solicited, as the British army was too formidable to be resisted and there were yet many who feared the future visits of the Lahore Chief<sup>2</sup>".

Such fears were further strengthened by the introduction of the Police System in those Cis-Sutlej districts which the Chiefs held by grant from the British Government. "The Sikh Sardars, more immediately connected with the British Government", wrote Ochterlony, "were apprehensive that the new system would be extended to their *jagirs*. They did not know what to urge against the measure respecting those districts which they held by grant from the British Government. But though very reluctant to admit them in either, they exerted all their influence and interest to prevent their being sent (*sic*) into those lands which they had acquired during the administration of General Parron. And, as one means of prevention, they sought to impress on the minds of all the Sikh Vakeels at that Durbar an idea that the introduction of Police into their *jagirs* would soon be followed by its establishment in the Protected territory<sup>3</sup>".

Ochterlony's investigations into the internal affairs of the Cis-Sutlej States and the repair of the fort of Ludhiana made the Chiefs still more suspicious<sup>4</sup>. Moreover Ranjit Singh's agents were also busy in exploiting the Chiefs and in misrepresenting British intentions. Diwan Mohkam Chand had raised the feelings of Raja Bhag Singh against the British occupation of Ludhiana<sup>5</sup>. Jodh Singh Kalsia, suspicious of British intentions, had already crossed the Sutlej and had joined Ranjit Singh<sup>6</sup>.

Further, with the conclusion of the treaty between the British and Ranjit Singh, the 'Cis-Sutledgian Sikhs', being relieved of the dread of the latter's encroachments, began to look upon the former with mistrust. Paradoxical as it would appear, the very fact that no tribute of any kind was demanded from them

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, July 30, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 26, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Government, July 30, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 26, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Government, September 2, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 28, Copy.

<sup>5</sup>Seton to Edmonstone, April 1, Bk. 10, Lt. 24, Original.

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to Seton, February 23, 1811, Bk. 10, Lt. 96, Original.

made them suspect that 'power and inclination would not be separated' and that the protection of their country would ultimately terminate in its absorption in the British dominions.

To dispel this growing atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, therefore, the British Government decided to settle, more specifically than had been hitherto done, the relations that were henceforward to subsist between the protecting power and the protected Chiefs<sup>1</sup>. The views of the British Government on this subject were to be explained by means of a general proclamation rather by entering into any separate engagements with so many Chiefs<sup>2</sup>.

On March 17, Ochterlony submitted to the Government his own views and proposals about such a declaration which were "best designed to remove all suspicion and fear of Cis-Sutlej Chiefs against the British Government". "It would be advisable for the Government", wrote he, "to declare to the Sikh Chiefs through the Resident at Delhi or such channels as is judged proper, in the most clear and explicit terms, the exact nature of relations of protection and dependence, which should permanently exist between them and the British Government; and to what extent and in what cases the adjustment of their concerns, collectively or individually should come under the cognizance, notice or decision of the Resident at Delhi or other authority subordinate to him<sup>3</sup>". He continues, "With the greatest deference I beg leave to offer it as my opinion, after the most attentive observation, that the cordial and sincere co-operation of the Sikh Chiefs, the fertility and resources of the country, the passage and protection of the convoys and all other advantages expected from our connection with this confederacy of Chiefs, can be realized only :—

"Firstly by the declared exemption from all pecuniary tribute. Secondly by a declaration not to interfere further in the internal economy of the country than to insist that they shall abstain from all violence or encroachments on each other and their actual possessions at a defined period shall be considered to constitute a right of property, which will not admit of infringement without an appeal to the Supreme Government or Resident at Delhi.

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Government, March 17, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 9, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Metcalfe had suggested the same thing as early as 29th January, 1809. "There is enough reason to believe", he had written, "that nothing will unite all the chiefs of the Punjab to Ranjit Singh, except if they doubt the designs of the British as ambitious," and had recommended that a declaration should be made to all the Chiefs stating that the British Government did not entertain any views of conquering the Cis-Sutlej States, that "the British Government has not any enmity with the Chiefs of the Sikh Nation, and that those who believed in friendly manner shall enjoy possessions of their territories, without molestation from the British Government." (Metcalfe to Edmonstone, January 29, 1809, Bk. 5, Lt. 51, Secret).

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, March 17, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 9, Original.



“Thirdly that the British Government shall have a right to call on the several Chiefs for a certain portion of their known permanent force for three months in every year, if required, without pay and cordial co-operation with the British troops on any invasion of their country, and other assistance to and their protection of all convoys proceeding to the British detachment or armies.

“Fourthly, that all European articles shall be exempted from duty in passing through the country. Fifthly, that all horses purchased on account of the Company and having the passport of the Resident at Delhi, shall be exempted from the payment of duties to any chief through whose districts they might pass<sup>1</sup>”.

In reply the Government authorized Ochterlony to issue the proposed proclamation to all the Sikh Chiefs mentioning, at the same time, the basic principles of the policy which he was to keep in view in his dealings with the Cis-Sutlej States. “It is to be assumed as a principle”, wrote Edmonstone, the Secretary to the Governor-General, “that the interests of these Chiefs are incompatible with the interests and designs of the Raja of Lahore. It is their object to be independent of his control, but only to the degree to which British protection is necessary for that purpose to be dependent upon us. Obligations between states and individuals must to a certain extent be reciprocal, and true point of the policy is to balance those obligations. It is equally in our interest as well as in the interest of the Sikh Chiefs that the Raja of Lahore should not be suffered to extend his dominions over them and therefore their concurrence and co-operation in the measure, admitted on both sides to be necessary for their purpose, might reasonably be expected. We are not to place them in a condition of absolute dependency and authority<sup>2</sup>”.

Accordingly, on May 3, 1809, an *Ittilaanama* or general proclamation was issued guaranteeing protection to the Chiefs of Sarhind and Malwa against the power of Ranjit Singh, leaving them absolute in their own territories, exempting them from tribute, but requiring assistance and co-operation in the defence of their own country and asking them to exempt European articles and horses of the company from payment of duties<sup>3</sup>.

The above declaration became the Charter of Rights of the Chiefs. It satisfied all the Sardars of the Cis-Sutlej States. It was a sort of defensive alliance in which the British, in lieu of

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, March 17, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 9, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Edmonstone to Ochterlony, April 1, 1809, Bk. 6, Lt. 14, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Sahib Singh, May 2, 1809, Bk. 11, Lt. 8, Translation.

the promised protection, required assistance from the Chiefs in case of an invasion or widespread disorder. Moreover, it guaranteed independence in the internal administration of the States. The '*precepts*' of this proclamation were issued to all the southern Chiefs, who solicited protection and also to all those Vakeels who were present with Ochterlony; but as the conduct of Jodh Singh Kalsia was not satisfactory, he was not supplied with one. The newly restored Chiefs of Khur, Faridkot, Malerkotia and others who were directly under Ranjit Singh but had their possessions on the south and east of the river, also received copies<sup>1</sup>.

Despite the terms of the *Ittilaanama*, the British Government soon discovered that if they abstained rigidly from interfering in the affairs of the Chiefs, the latter were likely to destroy each other. For having been relieved from the fears of Ranjit Singh and made to believe that they would not be interfered with in their other activities, the more turbulent among them began to prey upon one another or upon their weaker neighbours. And although the British Government had never wished them to consider themselves in absolute subjection to the British power<sup>2</sup>, both Metcalfe and Ochterlony had more than once opined that it was necessary to declare to the Chiefs that they were to be protected singly against one another and collectively against Ranjit Singh; for if such a degree of security were not guaranteed, the oppressed would necessarily have recourse to the only other person, who could use coercion with effect, namely the Raja of Lahore<sup>3</sup>.

The justification of these views being admitted, a second proclamation was issued on August 22, 1811, for the information and assurance of the Protected Chiefs of the plains between the Sutlej and Jamna, "warning them against the penalties to which violence and disturbance would render them liable<sup>4</sup>". It began with the mention of the object of the first proclamation which was to "afford every confidence to the Sardars that they (British) had no intention of control and that those having possessions should remain in full and quiet enjoyment thereof,<sup>5</sup>" and then related the circumstances which necessitated the promulgation of the second proclamation. Examples of the encroachments of the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs upon each other's territories were cited, as were complaints of some subordinate *jagirdars* against their Chiefs, the proclamation declaring that the British Government had always discouraged such complaints and that "it

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Government, May 6, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 14, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Government to Ochterlony, April 10, 1809, Bk. 6, Lt. 14, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Metcalfe to Government, January 29, 1809, Bk. 5, Lt. 51, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Metcalfe, September 2, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 28, Copy.

<sup>5</sup>For text of the 2nd proclamation see Appendix D.

may be impressed on the minds of every *Zamindar* and the other subjects that the attainment of justice is to be expected from their respective Chiefs only and that they may not in the smallest degree swerve from the observance of subordination." The Chiefs were at the same time enjoined to court the confidence of their subjects.

The proclamation further stated "that several Sardars, since the last incursion of Raja Ranjit Singh, have wrested the estates of others and deprived them of their lawful possessions and that in the restoration they have used delays—subjecting the owner to irremediable losses. It is therefore by order of the British Government, hereby proclaimed that if any of the Sardars or others have forcibly taken possession of the estates of others or otherwise injured the lawful owner, it is necessary that before the occurrence of any complaint, the proprietor should be satisfied and by no means to defer the restoration of the property, in which however should delays be made—the revenues of the estate from the date of ejection of the lawful proprietor together with whatever other losses the inhabitants of that place may sustain from the march of troops, shall without scruple be demanded from the offending party; and for disobedience of the present orders, a penalty according to the circumstances of the case of the offender, shall be levied agreeably to the decision of the British Government<sup>1</sup>."

Such were the terms of this second proclamation which afforded protection to the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs against one another. Nevertheless, as we shall see in the succeeding chapters, the encroachments of the Chiefs upon one another did not cease for a time and occasionally necessitated the sending of British troops against them to compel the surrender of lands they had forcibly seized. Thus the British Government against its original intention was driven to a position where it was impossible to observe strictly a 'Non-Intervention Policy' in the internal affairs of the Cis-Sutlej States as had been promised to them by the earlier proclamation of 1809.

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<sup>1</sup>For text see Appendix D.

### CHAPTER III.

#### *British Intervention in the internal affairs of the Cis-Sutlej States.*

With the conclusion of the treaty with Ranjit Singh and the publication of the proclamation of protection, the British Government had afforded security to the Cis-Sutlej States at once against the encroachments of Ranjit Singh and of one against the other. More than that, the Proclamation of May 2, 1809, had also secured the independence of the Chiefs in their internal affairs. But in the same proclamation, the British Government had demanded from the Chiefs certain concessions in the form of duties on British goods and a number of troops for the defence of the Cis-Sutlej land generally. These requirements, in turn, led the British authorities, whether they planned it or not, to feel a new interest in the internal affairs of the States. If for example, any state was grossly misgoverned, it might prove incapable of responding effectively to such requirements. This is exactly what happened in the case of Patiala which failed to supply the required number of horses.

Indeed, Ochterlony, Agent to the Governor-General, had felt impelled to address the Government repeatedly on this problem of interfering internally with the States but the supreme authorities were strongly disinclined to do so as that would go contrary to the promises made in the proclamation. On February 4, 1812, Ochterlony submitted his opinion in favour of an authoritative interference in the following words: "But for us there cannot be the smallest doubt, that Ranjit Singh would have been in possession of the whole territory, and if in return for such substantial benefits we cannot derive or hope to derive, the only advantage sought — a body of horses when required — I hereby presume to think, we are entitled to assume such a control as will ensure to us a slight return not merely for security and protection but for actual existence as a government."<sup>1</sup>

The Government's reply was that it considered an adherence to the principle, which had been so often and so solemnly professed, of abstaining from all interference in the internal affairs of the Cis-Sutlej States of greater importance than the attainment of the benefits which a deviation from that principle might be expected to produce.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, Ochterlony was instructed to restrict his role merely to that of advising and recommending to the Chiefs as to what they should do in cases of mal-administration.

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<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, February 4, 1812, Bk. 12, Lt. 41, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>Edmonstone to Ochterlony, April 5, 1811, Bk. 7, Lt. 15, Original.

In spite of such views being held by the Government, it was compelled by force of circumstances, as we shall see in the following pages, to interfere in the internal affairs of the States, the grounds of such interference being invariably gross mis-government, violent disorder and problems relating to disputed successions and rules of inheritance.<sup>1</sup>

### (A)—PATIALA.

None of the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs was perhaps better satisfied with the new relationship created by the proclamations than Sahib Singh, the capricious and almost imbecile ruler of Patiala. It was not long before his own weaknesses and the disorderly condition of his principality, however, came to be revealed, particularly through a wanton attack made in his territory on Captain White and his party while they were engaged in surveying the boundary line.<sup>2</sup> This was done by a large body of irregular horse and foot led by Phula Singh, the man who had attacked Metcalfe's escort at Amritsar. Patiala, at that time yielding a revenue of more than three lakhs of rupees, was called upon to furnish a quota of horsemen for the punishment and expulsion of Phula Singh. But the whole force the Raja could furnish on that occasion consisted of two hundred horse of the worst description, and these too arrived too late on the scene to be of any use.

The confusion and disorder in the administration increased of late years with the growing imbecility of the Raja. He was completely in the hands of unworthy favourites, who were ever busy in aggrandising and enriching themselves. His wife, Rani Aus Kaur, who was really anxious for the welfare of the state in the interests of her son, might have improved matters had she been trusted by her husband who placed reliance on selfish advisers.<sup>3</sup> The conditions of mis-rule in Patiala became so flagrant that several other chiefs of the Phulkian House, e. g., the Rajas of Nabha and Jind and their kinsman, Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal, requested Ochterlony to use his influence for the restoration of order in the administration. The Agent at first declined owing to his reluctance to do anything against the proclamation which had reserved to the Chiefs the right of complete liberty in internal matters. But when Raja Sahib Singh himself invited him to Patiala, he agreed to go there.

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<sup>1</sup>Keeping brevity in view I restrict myself to the mention of British intervention in the internal affairs of some of the major states. In smaller states the intervention was not so important.

<sup>2</sup>White to Resident at Delhi, December 24 and 25, 1809, Bk. 2, Lts. 162, 163 and 164, Copies.

<sup>3</sup>*The Rajas of the Punjab*, Griffin, page 125.

On January 9, 1811, Ochterlony reached Patiala. The Raja appeared most desirous of reform and wished to place the administration in the hands of Rani Khem Kaur, his step-mother, who was as notoriously known for her rapacity as his ministers. Ochterlony desired to see Rani Aus Kaur at the head of affairs — a wish that was also shared by the Rajas of Jind and Nabha ; but he was not willing to press anybody against the Raja's own wishes, not at any rate, till he would receive fresh instructions from the Governor-General.<sup>1</sup>

On March 9, 1811, Ochterlony wrote to the Government stating that his proposed intervention in Patiala, though it would be contrary to the 'letter of Ittilaanamah', which reserved to the Chiefs the right of internal control, was essential for the welfare of the state. He further argued that it was in the real interest and for the welfare of the Raja himself, and that he would endeavour to introduce some degree of order, regularity and economy in the administration, instead of the prevailing irregularity and confusion. Ochterlony also advocated the case of Rani Aus Kaur, showing her great abilities and her anxiety to introduce reforms in the state. He wanted to invest her with administrative powers. He assured the Government that he would take measures to ensure that Rani Aus Kaur would not be able to refuse every request of the Raja, that she would conduct all business in his name and that in case any dispute arose between the Raja and the Rani, the same would be settled by Bhai Lal Singh and Raja Bhag Singh.<sup>2</sup> He stated that his first measure of reform would be to withdraw extravagant revenue-free grants which had been previously made to the Zamindars, that the new grants would be made with reference to the just claims of the grantees, and that the Jagirdars would be compelled to keep their contingents ready for service.<sup>3</sup>

The Supreme Government, while entertaining a favourable opinion of the suggested measures, was averse, on general principles of policy, to any direct participation in their adoption and directed that the Agent should limit his action to giving general guidance and making recommendations.<sup>4</sup> At this Ochterlony left Patiala after suggesting to the Raja the benefits of the proposed reforms. The latter, accepting his advice, placed Rani Aus Kaur at the head of the administration. Soon a marked improvement was apparent.<sup>5</sup> In place of the old abuses, there

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, March 9, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 20 (The Printed Records of Ludhiana Agency, 1808-14. G.R.)

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, March, 9, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 20, Ludhiana Agency, Printed Records.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>Edmonstone to Ochterlony, April 5, 1811, Bk. 7, Lt. 15, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Sahib Singh to Ochterlony, March 14 and 23, 1811, Bk. 11, Translation.

now reigned efficiency and order. But the old and vicious advisers of the Raja were not disposed to sit quiet. Many corrupt officials who lived on the plunder of the state, joined them in misrepresenting the several actions of the Rani, with the result that the Raja saw in every new reform, a fresh proof of her supposed design to bring about his ruin.

Suddenly on December 27, Raja Sahib Singh, in a fit of rage and fear, ordered the arrest of Rani Aus Kaur, her son, the heir-apparent and Misr Noudha, her Diwan <sup>1</sup> But he was as cowardly as imbecile and no sooner had he imprisoned her than he began to fear the consequences of his action. The administration too relapsed into disorder. He, therefore, set the Rani free and asked her to resume the work of administration. To safeguard the interests of her son she consented but not before she had obtained a guarantee that she would not be exposed to disgrace and removal a second time.<sup>2</sup>

As Colonel Ochterlony was about to cross the Sutlej in order to attend the marriage of Ranjit Singh's son, the Vakeel of Patiala, Hameer Singh, waited upon him. He asked the Colonel to send his Head Munshi to Saifabad and assured him that "every hour convinced the Raja more fully of the folly of his late conduct, and that he was willing and most desirous, to give the most solemn pledge in his power, that he would not again be misled, deceived, or even act so contrary to his own interests as to displace Rani Aus Kaur."<sup>3</sup>

Ochterlony, who was thoroughly disgusted with the Raja's untrustworthy character, told Hameer Singh that the Raja's best interests being his only object, he should have relied upon him, and that he (Ochterlony) could no longer trust the Raja's assurances, verbal or written.<sup>4</sup> After much discussion, however, he consented to send Abdul Nabi Khan, an under-munshi, with instructions to tell the Raja that he would not interfere in his administration and leave him free to make any choice in place of Rani Aus Kaur.<sup>5</sup> Abdul Nabi Khan tried to remove the apprehensions of the Raja regarding Aus Kaur, but without effect. Considering it impossible to effect an honourable settlement between the Raja and the Rani, Ochterlony asked Abdul Nabi Khan to leave Patiala.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 19, 1812, Bk. 12, Lt. 38, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>*The Rajas of the Punjab*, Griffin, page 126.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 23, 1812, Bk. 12, Lt. 39, Ludhiana Agency, P.G.R. Copy.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 31, 1812, Bk. 12, Lt. 40, Copy.

There was further deterioration in the administration of Patiala and serious abuses crept into every department of the state. Bhai Lal Singh, Raja Bhag Singh and other Chiefs, repeatedly requested Ochterlony to intervene and save the state from ruin.<sup>1</sup> At last Ochterlony was persuaded to write to Government begging permission to interfere in Patiala affairs for rescuing its inhabitants from the evil effects of bad government.<sup>2</sup> The Governor-General, perceiving that the Patiala State would be utterly ruined unless some support was given to the cause of order, permitted him to make such arrangements as he considered best. Accordingly, Ochterlony arrived at Patiala on April 6, 1812, taking with him a sufficient force to ensure due respect to his advice.<sup>3</sup>

Sahib Singh, being whimsical, had no regard for his own word, nor was he stable in his own views. Coming to any definite solution by negotiation with a man of such a disposition was altogether impossible as the Agent actually experienced. Contrary to his expectations, the Raja interpreted his arrival at Patiala as the result of an organised plan to annihilate his power and freedom. A few days later, the Agent forwarded certain proposals which he urged the Raja to accept. The Raja replied with counter proposals, in which he assented to the appointment of Rani Aus Kaur, though he declined to make it more formal in writing. This was sufficient to reveal his inner intentions. So Ochterlony sent for an additional force to support his authority and to induce the Raja to abandon the short-sighted advice of his counsellors who had repeatedly suggested to the Raja to attack the small British force.

The approach of two regiments from Ludhiana had the desired effect and the Raja promised to bring the Rani<sup>4</sup> back from her *jagir* with all honour and invest her with the conduct of affairs. The Rani was reinstated, but the party of the Raja's favourites never lost its strength. They put every possible obstacle in her way; the officials were induced not to attend her durbars and the usual devices of delay and evasion were practised to hinder her work.

In the meantime an attempt was made on the life of Colonel Ochterlony by an inebriated Sikh, who first shot at him from his match-lock, and failing in that aim, drew his sword with a view to attack. The Colonel, who was at the moment alighting from a palanquin, managed to ward off the attack by seizing the weapon

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, February 4, 1812, Bk. 12, Lt. 41, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, February 4, 1812, Bk. 12, Lt. 46, Copy.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, April 1, 1812, Bk. 12, Lt. 46, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>According to the advice of Ochterlony, the Rani had left Patiala for her *jagir* (Ochterlony to Edmonstone, February 4, 1812, Bk. 12, Lt. 41, Copy.)



from the hilt. It was suspected that some persons around the Raja had their hands in the plot, but Ochterlony himself did not entertain any such suspicion.<sup>1</sup>

Ochterlony now thought that further forbearance on his part might be interpreted as weakness, and that the Raja would not willingly accept any reform contemplated for the welfare of the state. He, therefore, applied for troops to the Officer Commanding at Ludhiana and Karnal.<sup>2</sup>

At the arrival of a British force on June 3 or 4, Ochterlony issued a proclamation that the Supreme Government had intervened in the affairs of Patiala only because of the folly and deceit of the Raja and that henceforth the sole authority in the state would be vested in Rani Aus Kaur.<sup>3</sup> The effect on the Raja, who could offer no opposition, was instantaneous. He delivered all his seals including the official one in Gurmukhi to the Rani after issuing *parwanahs* to all *qiladars* to deliver the various forts to whomsoever the Rani might appoint.<sup>4</sup> This was done at Saifabad and other places, but not at Dhoda which had the strongest fort in Patiala territory. A British detachment had to be despatched against the place which surrendered only after a fierce cannonade, the Commandant declaring that his resistance had been in accordance with the Raja's most positive but secret instructions.<sup>5</sup>

Ochterlony returned from Patiala on June 15. The position of Rani Aus Kaur, now Regent, was not an enviable one. The treasury had been allowed to remain under the Raja's control and he was disposing of valuable property such as jewels and ornaments. She complained to Ochterlony against such an extravagant and profligate conduct of the Raja who seemed bent on parting with everything in the Toshakhana.<sup>6</sup> Under the circumstances, a further limitation of his powers became necessary and with the sanction of the Governor-General, the treasury and the Toshakhana were placed under the charge of the Rani. The monthly stipend of the Raja was fixed at 12,000 rupees.<sup>7</sup>

Raja Sahib Singh fell ill and died suddenly on March 26, 1813. Karam Singh, the son of Rani Aus Kaur, succeeded him and was installed as Raja on June 30, 1813. Ochterlony was present on the occasion. The new Chief allowed his mother

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, May 19, 1812, Ludhiana Agency Printed Records—demiofficial 136.

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, May 31, 1812, Bk. 13, Lt. 3, Copy.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, May 31, 1812, Bk. 13, Lt. 3, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, June 7, 1812, Bk. 13, Lt. 5, Copy.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, June 19, 1812, Bk. 13, Lt. 6, Copy.

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, July 5, 1812, Bk. 13, Lt. 9, Copy.

<sup>7</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam, March 27, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 30, Copy.

and Misr Noudha, her capable Diwan, to remain at the head of affairs. The British Agent determined to withdraw all interference and to go back to the same old relations which had existed between his Government and Raja Sahib Singh before Ochterlony's intervention. The Government at the same time withdrew the guarantee which it had afforded to Rani Aus Kaur for the security of her person and the support of her authority.<sup>1</sup>

In 1818<sup>2</sup> Raja Karam Singh fell into the hands of bad advisers and determined to remove Misr Noudha and the Rani from power. The British authorities under directions from the Governor-General informed the Raja that he would best promote his own interests by not making any change in the existing system of Government. But as the partial abdication of the Rani had been voluntary and Misr Noudha was reinstated as Chief Minister,<sup>3</sup> the British authorities did not consider it advisable to interfere any longer.

In 1821 Raja Karam Singh requested the Political Officer at Karnal to visit Patiala and settle a dispute between him and his mother (Rani Aus Kaur). The Rani had retained in her charge the Toshakhana and had increased the *jagir*, granted to her and her son (Karam Singh) in 1807 from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 7 lakhs, holding it now in her sole possession. The Raja requested the British Officer to force her to return the Toshakhana and restore the newly added districts of her estate. Captain Birch sought the opinion of Major-General Ochterlony, who held that the Rani had no claim, whatsoever, over the Toshakhana and the lands in question, and that the Raja would do well to resume them all. The Rani refused to hand over the Toshakhana and retired to Sunour.

Such was the unsatisfactory state of affairs when Sir David Ochterlony left Delhi. The Raja now referred the whole matter to Captain Ross, the Deputy Superintendent of the Cis-Sutlej States. The Raja complained that the most valuable contents of the Toshakhana had been misappropriated; that by holding a separate court, the Rani had impaired his legitimate authority; and lastly that her officers had meddled with the administration. He, however, agreed to allow the Toshakhana to remain in his mother's custody provided a complete list of

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<sup>1</sup>Government to Ochterlony, April 30, 1813, Bk. 8, Lt. 28, Original.

<sup>2</sup>In the meantime plots and intrigues continued to be the dominating feature of the Patiala State and even after the death of Raja Sahib Singh and the succession of Karam Singh, Rani Khem Kaur, supported by Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha, was constantly scheming against the existing order of things. The British Government did not interfere in the internal affairs at least until 1818.

<sup>3</sup>Misr Noudha died soon after in October, 1818, and was succeeded by Barkat Ali Khan, a native of Oudh, who had long been in the service of Sir David Ochterlony and was well-acquainted with Patiala affairs.

its contents was furnished to him and it was proved that no portion of it had been misappropriated.

Believing that the Rani would not submit without the use of force and to save Patiala from the horrors of Civil War, Captain Murray was sent in October, 1823, with a detachment to assist the Raja in enforcing his legitimate demands. The Rani strongly protested against the decision of the British Government and declared that she would go in person to Calcutta to fight her case, and, if unsuccessful, would spend the remaining part of her life in retirement by the side of the Ganges. She made over the fort of Sunour to the Raja's troops and refused to go to Amargrah, her old *jagir*. She left for Ambala and refused to return unless she was permitted to retain Sunour. At last the Raja yielded and gave up to her the town and fort of Sunour. By the end of October all the differences between the son and the mother were removed.

#### (B)—JIND.

Raja Bhag Singh, the Chief of Jind, was an old friend of the British. As early as 1803, when the battle of Delhi was fought, he was granted a *jagir* to which another was added in the following year. In 1806 he was rewarded with another life-grant yielding more than eleven lakhs of rupees. Raja Bhag Singh had rendered useful services to Lord Lake, Colonel Burn and Sir John Malcolm, for which those officers regarded him with 'esteem and kindness'. But Mr. Metcalfe, the young Envoy to the Lahore Durbar, was not satisfied with his conduct, having suspected him of trying to infuse into the mind of Ranjit Singh "suspicion of hostile designs on the part of the British Government."<sup>1</sup>

Raja Bhag Singh joined Colonel Ochterlony soon after the latter's arrival in the Cis-Sutlej area.<sup>2</sup> His presence at the British camp had a salutary effect on the minds of the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs and the information which he was able to give with regard to the disposition of the several Sikh Chieftains, was of much value. When a British post was established at Ludhiana, he was granted Rs. 500 per mensem as compensation for the loss of that district. His request to the British Government to give him Karnal in exchange for Ludhiana was not conceded.

The circumstances which led to British intervention in the internal affairs of Jind were the following:—When Ochterlony was at Patiala, Bhag Singh had given him the draft of a will in which he had desired his younger son, Partab Singh, to be his

<sup>1</sup>Metcalfe to Edmonstone, August 19, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 3, Secret Department.

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 16, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 1, Original.

successor to the Chiefship, while the eldest son, Sardar Fateh Singh, was to get the small districts of Sangrur and Basia.<sup>1</sup> The Agent, tried to induce the Raja to change his intention, arguing that his Government favoured the rule of primogeniture to any other arrangement. The Raja, however, persisted in his view and desired the will to be kept a secret.

In April, 1813, a paralytic attack, deprived the Raja of the power of speech and almost of motion. This necessitated the appointment of a Regency. Ochterlony now sent his will to the Resident at Delhi for transmission to Government.<sup>2</sup> On May 15, he received a despatch from the Government of India expressing its unwillingness to sanction the Raja's will considering that there was no proved custom in the Jind family of an older son being superseded by a younger one.<sup>3</sup> The tone of the despatch was expressive of a strong determination on the part of the Supreme Power to intervene in support of the rule of primogeniture; and the Agent was definitely told that "whatever doubt the Governor-General might entertain with respect to the justice or propriety of opposing the will of Bhag Singh, if there were good reasons to suppose that, it was warranted by the laws and usages of his tribe and family, His Lordship in Council can have no hesitation under the contrary impression, which exists in his mind, in refusing to afford the countenance of the British Government to the arrangement which is in His Lordship's estimation no less unjust in its principle than likely to be pernicious in its effects. You are authorised, therefore, to declare to the parties concerned and to the surviving friends of the family that after the death of Raja Bhag Singh, the succession of Kaur Partab Singh cannot be recognised by the British Government."<sup>4</sup>

The Raja having a strong dislike for his eldest son, Fateh Singh, neither he nor his mother, could be entrusted with the Regency, while Kanwar Partab Singh was now out of the question.<sup>5</sup> So the only choice left was that of Rani Subrati, mother of the Raja's 3rd son Mehtab Singh. She seemed to be the only person against whose appointment as Regent the fewest objections existed.

Rani Subrati was installed as Regent in the presence of the Agent, Bhai Lal Singh and other confidential servants of the state, and the Raja showed by most unmistakable signs, his full

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam (Chief Secretary to Government), April 21, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 41, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>J. Adam to Ochterlony, May 15, 1813, Bk. 8, Lt. 33, Original.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>J. Adam to Ochterlony, July 9, 1813, Bk. 8, Lt. 47, Original.

Also Metcalfe to Ochterlony, August 23, 1813, Bk. 8, Lt. 69, Original.

concurrence in the measure. The Rani was told that she was expected to respect and advance the wishes of the British Government with regard to the succession and to abstain from any interference with the eldest son and his mother.<sup>1</sup>

Kanwar Partab Singh was not satisfied with such an arrangement though an ample provision was guaranteed to him.<sup>2</sup> He had for long hoped that on the death of his father, the power would become his, and now the iron hand of the British had appeared to oppose him. He, therefore, began intriguing against the Regent and raising troops secretly. He took the fort of Jind by a sudden surprise on August 23, putting to death the Rani, her principal adviser, Munshi Jaishi Ram, the Commandant of the fort and several other persons.<sup>3</sup>

Ochterlony, after being informed of these atrocious events, asked for instructions from Charles Metcalfe, the Resident at Delhi. The latter took instant action by issuing a memorandum of instructions for the re-establishment of a legitimate authority at Jind.<sup>4</sup> After mentioning the circumstances which had led to the Regency of Rani Subrati and her ultimate murder at the hands of Kanwar Partab Singh, the Resident desired the following arrangements to be made :—

Kanwar Fateh Singh, the eldest son of Raja Bhag Singh, was to be entrusted with the entire management of affairs, but the administration was to be run in the name of his father, the Raja. Suitable provision was to be made for the dignity and comfort of the Raja. Kanwar Partab Singh was to be seized and sent to Delhi to await the orders of the Governor-General. Any possible opposition was to be defeated by the most prompt, decisive and energetic measures.<sup>5</sup>

Kanwar Partab Singh tried in vain to implicate the Raja in the murder and knowing that the British troops were marching from all sides left Jind for Balowali, but was closely pursued by the troops. He later abandoned that place and fled to Lahore. Maharaja Ranjit Singh refused to shelter a murderer and gave him up to the British authorities who placed him in confinement at Delhi, where he died in June, 1816.

The British Government did not interfere in the internal affairs of Jind any further.

<sup>1</sup>Resident at Delhi to Secretary to Government, November 28, 1813.

<sup>2</sup>J. Adam to Ochterlony, March 15, 1813, Bk. 8, Lt. 33, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam, August 24, 1814, Bk. 13, Lt. 80, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Metcalfe to Ochterlony, February 2, 1814, Bk. 8, Lt. 73, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Metcalfe to Ochterlony, February 2, 1814, Bk. 8, Lt. 73, Original.

## (C)—MALERKOTLA.

Ataullah Khan, the Pathan Chief of Malerkotla, died in August, 1810. A dispute for succession to the *masnad* arose between Rahmat Ali Khan, his eldest son and Wazir Khan, the eldest son of Behkam Khan,—the late Chief and elder brother of Ataullah Khan.<sup>1</sup> When the news of this dispute reached Ochterlony, he sent off directly Maulvi Mukhoom Bux,<sup>2</sup> Vakeel of the late Ataullah Khan, to Malerkotla to advise the two claimants to make an amicable adjustment amongst themselves, urging that it would look ill in the eyes of the Government, “if it should appear that they were divided and torn by family dissensions, so soon after they had been delivered from the oppression of the Raja of Lahore and the general enmity of the Sikh Chiefs surrounding them.”<sup>3</sup>

The advice was not accepted and discord increased daily. Preparations were being made by each party to resort to arms. There appeared but one way of quieting the commotion and preventing unnecessary bloodshed which might ensue, namely through British intervention. Accordingly, Ochterlony despatched a British detachment under his Assistant, Captain Birch, to Malerkotla to prevent the impending civil war. At this the two disputants sent their respective claims to the Chiefship to the Agent who forwarded them together with his own comments, to the Supreme Government.<sup>4</sup>

“Taking it in a retrospective view”, submitted Ochterlony, “there can be no doubt that Wazir Khan, is the eldest son of Behkam Khan, was entitled to the succession to the Chiefship on the death of his father, and accordingly we find from his own statement, that the immediate dependants of his father and those who might be supposed most interested in his favour, did wish to place him on the *gaddi*. But this intention was frustrated or over-ruled by his tender age and most probably by the prevalent opinion that their situation and the times required a leader of years and experience and in consequence of this idea, we find the three brothers Omar Khan, Assadullah Khan and lastly Attaullah Khan, successively assuming the authority.”<sup>5</sup> After so reviewing the case he upheld the claim of Rahmat Khan as it was based upon the ‘custom of the family’, namely, that whosoever was the eldest would obtain the Chiefship.

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, September 2, 1810, Bk. 10, Lt. 73, Original.

<sup>2</sup>I mention this name as it is found in Ochterlony's letter, though in all probability it should read “Makhdoom Bakhsh.”

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, September 2, 1810, Bk. 10, Lt. 71, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, September 18, 1810, Bk. 12, Lt. 2, Copy.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

Contrary to the recommendations of Ochterlony, the Governor-General in Council decided in favour of Wazir Khan on the ground that his right to the *gaddi* had been recognised but superseded due to tender age, and that it had not extinguished altogether. Therefore, after the death of Ataullah Khan, the last brother of Behkam Khan (the father of Wazir Khan) the *Mansad* should go back to the elder branch of the family, i.e., to Wazir Khan.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Birch was once again despatched to Malerkotla with a sufficient force to carry out this decision. He installed Wazir Khan on the *Masnau* and presented him with a *khilaat* on behalf of the Government.<sup>2</sup>

Wazir Khan died on March 20, 1821. The dispute for succession again arose, this time between Rahmat Khan and Amir Khan, the eldest son of Wazir Khan<sup>3</sup>. The Government rejected the claim of Rahmat Khan and decided in favour of Amir Khan and his male heirs.<sup>4</sup>

#### (D)—KUNJPURA.

Kunjpura was one of those states which survived the attack<sup>5</sup> of Ranjit Singh of 1807-08.<sup>5</sup> The ruler, Rahmat Ali Khan, and his brother, Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din Khan, had been squabbling ever since the death of their father which had occurred in the year 1805.<sup>6</sup>

Captain William Murray, Assistant Agent to the Governor-General, reported this quarrel to Metcalfe, the Resident at Delhi. He had just assumed the charge of the Residency in 1811, and this was one of his first acts, namely, to endeavour to effect a reconciliation between the parties, which was seemingly effected with some difficulty by the arbitration of their uncles, Karam Sher Khan, Nawab Nighat Ali Khan and Faizullah Khan. Both parties assented to the arrangement, but of the two Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din Khan alone felt satisfied with it while Rahmat Ali Khan considered it a hardship.<sup>7</sup>

Metcalfe instructed Murray to try further for an adjustment of these differences through arbitration by the friends of the family. The Resident preferred this method to the passing of any authoritative orders in the case. In case of an amicable settlement not

<sup>1</sup>Edmonstone to Ochterlony, September 29, 1810, Bk. 6, Lt. 55, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, October 22, 1810, Bk. 12, Lt. 4, Copy.

Also to the same October 27, 1810, Bk. 12, Lt. 5, Copy.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Birch, March 26, 1821, Bk. 21, Lt. 104, Original.

<sup>4</sup>A. Ross to Captain R. Ross, October 22, 1822, Bk. 22, Lt. 14, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Metcalfe to N. B. Edmonstone, Esq., November 20, 1808, Bk. 5, Lt. 32, Copy.

<sup>6</sup>Metcalfe to Captain W. Murray, December 19, 1815, Bk. 17, Lt. 70, Original.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

forthcoming, however, the decision of Captain Murray was to be given, which would be binding and final.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Murray tried arbitration but did not succeed. So he gave his decision in favour of Rahmat Ali Khan and ordered Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din Khan to contribute from his property one-third towards the maintenance of his younger brother, Ghulam Rasul Khan.<sup>2</sup> Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din Khan appealed against this decision to the Governor-General, but the appeal was rejected.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Metcalfe to Captain Murray December 19, 1815, Bk. 17, Lt. 72, Original.

<sup>2</sup> A. Ross to R. Ross, June 25, 1822, Bk. 22, Lt. 76, Original.

<sup>3</sup> W. Fraser, Acting Agent to Governor-General to Captain R. Ross, December 19, 1822, Bk. 22, Lt. 164, Original.



## CHAPTER IV.

### *British Administration of Cis-Sutlej Affairs.*

We have seen above how Major-General Sir David Ochterlony, the Agent to the Governor-General and the Superintendent of the Protected Cis-Sutlej States,\* was forced to intervene in the internal affairs of some of the states. But this was by no means his main occupation. From 1809 to 1823 the British functionaries were mainly engaged in the settlement of territorial disputes between Chiefs of equal rank and between Chiefs and their confederates or dependants. Whenever such differences arose, they required a speedy arbitration and adjustment by the British Officers on the spot and formed the subject of frequent reference to the higher authorities at Delhi and Calcutta. The questions of succession, inheritance and escheat also provided heavy work for the British Agent and his assistants. Besides, there were other matters of a miscellaneous nature, such as, for instance, the defining of the common boundaries between the Sikh States and the British territory; settling the question of lands transferred from one bank of the river to the other through the change in the course of the Sutlej and the Jamna rivers, and jurisdiction over Cis-Sutlej States by virtue of paramountcy. The present chapter deals with these important topics. I first take up the territorial disputes and their settlement.

#### *A.—Territorial Disputes.*

Despite the fact that the British guarantee of protection to the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs had included the latter's immunity from their mutual encroachments, the stronger or more turbulent of the Chiefs continued to lay their hands upon the territories of their weak neighbours.<sup>1</sup> Some Chiefs had, since the last invasion of Ranjit Singh, wrested the estates of others and were not willing to restore them to their rightful owners. British detachments were, therefore, to be employed to bring about such surrenders. Again, certain Chiefs had received estates from Ranjit Singh (during his last expedition) on the Cis-Sutlej side and their restoration proved a task of the utmost difficulty and was effected by the British Agent with the greatest tact.<sup>2</sup>

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\*Ochterlony had requested for this title in addition to the title of Political Agent, which was consequently granted to him. (Ochterlony to Edmonstone, September 3, 1812, Bk. 13, Lt. 10, Copy.)

<sup>1</sup>The Proclamation of August 22, 1811 (See Appendix).

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January, 18, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 3, Original.

It may be stated at the outset that Ochterlony was definitely instructed to restore all the usurpations of Ranjit Singh in the Cis-Sutlej area since September 1808. But the enforcement of this order was not an easy matter. "The problem is", wrote Ochterlony to the Government on January 18, 1809, "that Ranjit Singh made grants of the usurped lands to some of his adherents, so that while some suffered at the hands of the Raja, others gained as in the case of Gurdit Singh Ladwa."<sup>1</sup> Continuing the Colonel further writes: "I feel at loss what to answer those who had acquired some territory from Ranjit Singh and how to restore them; for instance the territory of Rai Ilias of Kot Jagranwa of Ludhiana had been divided amongst Raja Bhag Singh, Gurdit Singh, Jaswant Singh and Fateh Singh Alluwallia, in different proportions."<sup>2</sup>

There were other embarrassing problems too which taxed the ability of the British Agent to the utmost. For instance, there were petty Chiefs of a few villages who time and again brought their land feuds to Ochterlony for adjudication. He complained of their conduct in his letter to Government written on December 15, 1811, in the following words: "It is with these petty landlords, or as they call themselves Sardars, that I have most trouble, for whether from invincible ignorance or excessive obstinacy, they turn a deaf ear to the best advise and are blind to their true interests"<sup>3</sup>.

Most of the correspondence between the Agent at Ludhiana, the Resident at Delhi and the Government at Calcutta deals with these territorial disputes. It will not be profitable to mention all of them here; but a few of greater significance may be stated briefly.

(i) *The Estate of Chamkoian*.—With regard to the estate of Chamkoian, there are no English records extant between the years 1809 and 1815 except the translations of Persian letters exchanged between the British Agent and the local Chiefs. On December 28, 1809, Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala informed the Agent that he had been obliged to resume control of the village of Chamkoian, owing to the misconduct of Nanda Singh.<sup>4</sup> Ochterlony, in return, ordered its immediate restoration, referring to the Pro-

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 18, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 3, Original.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, December 15, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 36, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Sahib Singh to Ochterlony, December 28, 1809, Bk. 11, Lt. 30, Translation.

clamation of 1809, which guaranteed to all Chiefs their respective possessions<sup>1</sup>.

The Raja tried to justify his action by arguing that Nanda Singh was one of his own feudatories.<sup>2</sup> The Agent after making necessary enquiries came to the conclusion that Nanda Singh was not a dependant of the Patiala State and adhered to his decision. Nanda Singh was at the same time made to agree to the return of the cattle plundered by him and offer security for good behaviour in the future.<sup>3</sup> Finding Raja Sahib Singh evasive, the Agent warned him that he would be compelled to report the matter to the Government for action if the village and the fort in question would not be immediately restored.<sup>4</sup>

The Raja obeyed and withdrew all his men from the disputed places.<sup>5</sup> Next year, however, in consequence of fresh aggressions on the part of Nanda Singh, Ochterlony suggested to the Government that he should be deprived of his possessions which should be made over to the Raja of Patiala.<sup>6</sup> At last the estate of Chamkoian was transferred to the Patiala State.<sup>7</sup>

(ii) *Saidoki and Bhagta*.—Before the arrival of Metcalfe at the Court of Ranjit Singh, Saidoki and Bhagta, the two villages situated in the Cis-Sutlej area, were under the control of Ranjit Singh as a result of his earlier conquests.<sup>8</sup> But the original proprietors, Beer Singh and Dip Singh, the dependants of the Patiala ruler, taking advantage of British advance in the Cis-Sutlej area, reoccupied these villages. The British Government in accordance with the decision reached between itself and the Maharaja, which guaranteed Ranjit Singh his earlier conquests, decided to restore these villages to him.<sup>9</sup>

Messrs. Metcalfe and Ochterlony were to mediate and use their influence in securing the return of Saidoki and Bhagta to the

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Sahib Singh, December 29, 1809, Bk. 11, Lt. 31, Translation.

<sup>2</sup>Sahib Singh to Ochterlony without date, Bk 11, Lt. 33, Translation.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Sahib Singh, January 13, 1810, Bk. 11, Lt. 34, Translation.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid*—also to the same of February 19, 1810, Bk. 11, Lt. 41, Translation.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to Sahib Singh, Bk. 11, Lt. 37, Translation. No date.

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, November 15, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 34, Copy.

<sup>7</sup>On June 12, 1811, the Supreme Government granted the estate of Chamkoian to Prince Karam Singh.

<sup>8</sup>A. Seton to Ochterlony, March 17, 1810, Bk. 14, Lt. 133, Original.

<sup>9</sup>C. Lushington (acting Chief Secretary) to Ochterlony, March 20, 1810, Bk. 6, Lt. 33. Original.

Maharaja and were to use force if necessary.<sup>1</sup> Raja Sahib Singh who strongly advocated the cause of his dependants showed evasiveness at Ochterlony's decision that the villages should be restored to the Sikh ruler. It was only after the Agent decided to send out a battalion to carry out his orders that Sahib Singh fell in with the decision.<sup>2</sup> He, however, presented certain facts in support of his claim on the villages which might have influenced the decision in his favour if presented earlier. As it was, the Government did not alter its decision except that the zamindars of Saidoki and Bhagta were compensated with a grant of equally valuable land situated in the Hariana Taalluqa.

(iii) *Jaitoki village*.—The village of Jaitoki belonged to Nabha State.<sup>3</sup> It was situated in the vicinity of Kot Kapura which belonged to the Raja of Lahore. Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha complained to Ochterlony that Ranjit Singh made collections from the village of Jaitoki.<sup>4</sup> The zamindars of that village refused to make any payments to Ranjit Singh who sent his troops to occupy the place.

Ochterlony brought the matter to the notice of Diwan Mohkam Chand. The Diwan explained that Jaitoki had formed a part of Kot Kapura.<sup>5</sup> The Agent did not accept this claim on the ground that the Raja of Nabha had produced before him two documents, one from Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the other from the Diwan himself which clearly proved that the Chief of Nabha had been in actual possession of the disputed village for 15 years, i.e., prior to the coming of Metcalfe.<sup>6</sup>

(iv) *Zamindars of Raipur*.—The zamindars of the village of Raipur, taking advantage of the advance of the British forces into the Cis-Sutlej area, had declared themselves independent and now sought the protection of the British Government.<sup>7</sup> Diwan Mohkam Chand wrote to Ochterlony on December 19, 1809, asserting the claims of the Lahore Darbar, on behalf of Karam Singh, to the village of Raipur.<sup>8</sup> The Agent declined to accept

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, May 10, 1810, Bk 10, Lt. 62, Original.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, June 19, 1810, Bk. 10, Lt. 66, Original.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>Diwan Mohkam Chand to Ochterlony, without date, Bk. 11, Lt. 17, Translation.

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to Mohkam Chand, Bk. 11, Lt. 18, Translation (No date).

<sup>7</sup>Mohkam Chand to Ochterlony, received on December 19, 1809, Bk. 11, Lt. 23, Translation.

<sup>8</sup>Mohkam Chand to Ochterlony, received on December 19, 1809, Bk. 11, Lt. 23, Translation.

this claim explaining that in the presence of the Diwan's Vakeel the zamindars of Raipur had produced documentary evidence which showed that the village in question had always been independent of the Gugrana Taaluqa.<sup>1</sup>

(v) *Dharmo of Tira*.—On the death of Sangat Singh, the Chief of Tira, his two nephews, Jit Singh and Fateh Singh, dispossessed his widow Dharmo of her husband's property. She brought forward a complaint before the British Agent against Jit Singh and Fateh Singh for the usurpation of Tira.<sup>2</sup>

Ochterlony at once called upon these men to explain their conduct<sup>3</sup> and ordered them to release the widow of Sangat Singh (she was kept in confinement by them) and restore her possessions. On receiving an unsatisfactory reply, he ordered a detachment under Captain Elliot to proceed to Tira and enforce the execution of his orders. Captain Elliot, with the assistance and co-operation of Gopal Singh of Mani Majra, expelled Fateh Singh and Jit Singh and released the widow restoring her possessions.<sup>4</sup>

(vi) *Jodh Singh's usurpation of the Taaluqa of Chiloundi*.—Jodh Singh had usurped the Taaluqa of Chiloundi from the widow of Bhagal Singh. The Rani appealed to the British Agent for help. Thinking that she had a strong claim on British interference, because of the fact that usurpation was made after the coming of Mr. Metcalfe, Ochterlony wrote to Jodh Singh Kalsia for the restitution of the above Taaluqa to the rightful owner.<sup>5</sup> Jodh Singh did not pay any attention to this order. So the Agent informed him that a detachment would be sent against him, if he did not comply with the wishes of the British Government. Jodh Singh's argument was that the place belonged to Ranjit Singh and he was holding it on his behalf.

The Vakeel of Rani Bhagal Singh also informed the Agent that Jodh Singh Kalsia had obtained help from Diwan Mohkam Chand whose force was attacking her fortress of Narain Garh.<sup>6</sup> The Agent sent a protest to Ranjit Singh who was warned that not only would his forces be expelled from Chiloundi but that his ancient possessions would also be confiscated.<sup>7</sup> At last a force was actually sent.<sup>8</sup> Jodh Singh, on hearing of the advance of British troops, evacuated Chiloundi.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Mohkam Chand, without date, Bk. 11, Lt. 24, Translation.

<sup>2</sup>Dharmo to Ochterlony (without date) Bk. 11, Lt. 51, Translation.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Jit Singh and Fateh Singh (without date) Bk. 11, Lt. 55, Translation.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, November 17, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 9, Copy.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, January 6, 1819, Bk. 10, Lt. 19, Original.

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to A. Seton, October 29, 1810, Bk. 10, Lt. 323, Original.

<sup>7</sup>Ochterlony to A. Seton, July 7, 1810, Bk. 10, Lt. 325, Original.

<sup>8</sup>Ochterlony to C. Lushington, May 5, 1810, Bk. 10, Lt. 60, Original.

<sup>9</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, November 5, 1810, Bk. 12, Lt. 6, Copy.

(vii) *Villages of Dabri and Danouli*.—In 1817 a case occurred regarding the villages of Dabri and Danouli in Jind State. Mr. Fraser, a revenue officer, discovered that the two villages, according to the ancient register of the Pargannah of Mohin, belonged to that pargannah. As the two villages were 10 miles away from any other village of that pargannah, Mr. Fraser came to the conclusion that the villages did not belong to Jind and, acting on his own responsibility, placed them under attachment.

Raja Bhag Singh of Jind made strong protests against this procedure arguing that the two villages formed part of the conquests of his father, Gajpat Singh, which had been maintained and confirmed to him both by the Marathas and the British. The arguments advanced by the Raja were indisputable and the scheme of attachment of the two villages was accordingly abandoned.<sup>1</sup>

(viii) *Charat Singh—a petty Chief*.—Charat Singh, a petty land owner of two or three villages, had deprived his elder brother of his share while he was away on duty with Ranjit Singh.<sup>2</sup> On his return the elder brother brought the matter before Ochterlony, who wrote to Charat Singh to relinquish the share he had so seized. But the latter delayed the matter on one pretext or the other.<sup>3</sup> At last Ochterlony informed Charat Singh that in case of non-compliance with his wishes, coercion would be used and he would be deprived of his own property along with that which he had refused to his elder brother.<sup>4</sup> Charat Singh had to acquiesce in the decision.

(ix) *Wandhni Crisis*.—In 1822 a more important dispute arose between the British and the ruler of Lahore over a place known as Himmatpur-Wandhni. This place is situated in the Cis-Sutlej area and had been granted by Ranjit Singh to his mother-in-law, Sada Kaur, in 1808. The British had always treated Rani Sada Kaur as an independent Cis-Sutlej Chief.

In 1822 a quarrel arose between Sada Kaur and Ranjit Singh. The latter took her into custody and sent troops to occupy the fort of Wandhni. At this the Agent ordered a British detachment to proceed to Wandhni to eject those troops.<sup>5</sup> Ranjit Singh was prudent enough to avoid a collision by evacuating the fort. But at the same time he referred the matter to the Governor-General at Calcutta. The latter recognised the Agent's mistake and the fort was restored to Ranjit Singh.

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Resident at Delhi, April 27, 1817. Also Captain Birch to Ochterlony, December 26, 1818.

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, December 15, 1811, Bk. 10, Lt. 36, Original.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, December 15, 1811, Bk. 10, Lt. 36, Original.

<sup>5</sup>A. Ross to R. Ross, June 23, 1822, Bk. 22, Lt. 73, Original.

*B.—Jurisdiction over Lands affected by Avulsion.*

The land belonging to a number of States had changed from one bank of the river to the other, owing to the change in the course of the rivers Sutlej and Jamna. The attention of the Government was drawn to this fact as early as 1809, when the Resident at Delhi advised his Government to define the boundaries of every state, the territory of which had been affected by the change in the course of the Jamna, and also to chalk out the boundary line between the Cis-Sutlej lands which had been transferred to the east of the Jamna and the British territory. Mr. J. Pattorn, a Magistrate at Saharanpur, prepared a list of all these villages which originally belonged to the Cis-area but had changed to the other side of the Jamna due to avulsion. The Government at Calcutta decided that the river Jamna, wherever it might be at that time, should be considered as the boundary between the British territory and the Cis-Sutlej area. It was made clear at the same time that the avulsion would not deprive any person of the ownership of his land, but that the land would come under the laws of the country to which it was annexed due to the change in the course of the river.<sup>1</sup>

A similar problem arose on the bank of the river Sutlej when Ochterlony submitted for the decision of the Government a question which had been raised by Diwan Mohkam Chand. It concerned the jurisdiction of Budh Singh Faizulpuria<sup>2</sup> over the lands of his zamindars, which had been transferred from one bank of the Sutlej to the other.<sup>3</sup> The Government directed the Agent to ascertain the local usage in regard to such lands.<sup>4</sup> The latter's investigations led him to state that according to custom prevailing in the days of the Emperors and since the establishment of the Sikhs, such lands continued to be owned by former proprietors<sup>5</sup>, while the paramount rights were transferred to the chief to whose territory the land was annexed.<sup>6</sup> The claim of Diwan Mohkam Chand was accordingly rejected.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A. Seton to Pattorn (Magistrate, Saharanpur), April 9, 1810, Bk. 4, Lt. 130, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>Budh Singh Faizulpuria was a prominent Sardar in the Jullundur Doab and was expelled by Ranjit Singh. He fled to this side of the Sutlej. Ochterlony to Adam, September 21, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 60, Copy.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, July 26, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 52, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Adam to Ochterlony, August 20, 1813, Bk. 8, Lt. 83, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam, October 30, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 66, Copy.

<sup>6</sup>Adam to Ochterlony, November 26, 1813, Bk. 8, Lt. 68, Original.

<sup>7</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam, October 30, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 66, Copy.

*C.—Jurisdiction over criminal Offences.*

In the middle of 1812 the Supreme Government asked Ochterlony's opinion with regard to the possibility of establishing a tribunal for the trial of certain criminal offences committed in the territory of Sikh Chiefs between the Sutlej and the Jamna against persons residing within the limits of the Cantonment of Ludhiana. The Agent made the following submission on September 3, 1812: "There would be none who would show the slightest displeasure at the proposed establishment of a tribunal, nor there would be any who would not regard it with aversion and horror."<sup>1</sup> He continues: "However guarded and however explicit as to its limited jurisdiction it would be universally considered as a prelude to the introduction of our whole judicial system, the forerunner of their subjugation or extirpation and the annexation of their country to the British dominions." To calm down the fears of Protected Chiefs the Agent further suggested that whatever form or shape the proposed tribunal assumed, it should be established without any previous consultations and that the Sardars be left to discover its limited operations in its practical effects.<sup>2</sup> "And that it (the tribunal) may be established so simply", added the Agent, "that it may be known that this tribunal is to punish such and such crimes which may occur at Ludhiana and for the redress and punishment of wrongs committed on British subjects passing through the Sikh territory and that it will be the duty of every Sardar to use his utmost endeavours to discover and seize the offenders and send them for trial to Ludhiana."<sup>3</sup>

The Government fully realized the importance of the suggestions made by the Agent, and he issued a circular in 1814 to the Protected Chiefs that they would be held responsible for the person and property of British subjects living within their jurisdiction. This Circular also claimed the British Government's right to demand compensation for losses through theft committed on its subjects in the protected territory.<sup>4</sup>

A regulation (No. X of 1817) was passed by the Governor-General-in-Council to provide for the administration of criminal justice in the tracts of territory situated between the rivers Jamna and Sutlej and retained under the immediate authority of the British Government.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Master, the judge of the

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, September 3, 1812, Bk. 13, Lt. 66, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Metcalfe to Murray, January 5, 1816, Bk. 17, Lt. 78, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, September 3, 1812, Bk. 13, Lt. 10, Copy.

<sup>5</sup>From W. B. Bayley (acting Chief Secretary to Government), to Ochterlony, July 22, 1817, Bk. 19, Lt. 99, Original.



city of Dacca was appointed first Commissioner for the trial of offences under this regulation.<sup>1</sup>

*D.—Rules for Succession and Inheritance in Cis-Sutlej States.*

Prior to British protection there was no definite rule for inheritance and succession among the Cis-Sutlej States. The Muslim States differed in their custom from the Sikh States and the latter differed among themselves from Misl to Misl and from family to family.

The British authorities on the spot had to interfere from time to time to settle the question of succession and inheritance. This was by no means an easy task, for they had to "reconcile the Hindu Law of inheritance with the varied customs of different races and with the alleged family usages of peasants suddenly becoming princes."<sup>2</sup> The British Government generally adhered to the rule of primogeniture and preferred older branches of families to the younger ones for succession as already shown in the case of Jind, Patiala and Malerkotla States.

*E.—The Bhatti Territory or Bhattiana.*

A strip of waste land situated on the west of the Jamna and to the south of Patiala, Kaithal and Jind States was known as Bhattiana. It can now be identified with the Sirsa and Hissar districts. It was inhabited by the Bhatti tribe who mostly lived in villages. When the British succeeded the Marathas to the possession of this tract in 1803 no attention was paid to its boundary line against the various adjoining Sikh States. In 1810 an expedition was sent against Khan Bahadur Khan, a Bhatti Chief, for frequently raiding the territories of the British and other Sikh Chiefs, and his place known as Fatehbad was seized and annexed to the British possessions. No further attention was paid to Bhattiana until 1818 when Zebta Khan, another leader, attracted the notice of the British by his aggressive raids and forays on neighbouring lands. An expedition was sent against him also and the territory now known as Sirsa was brought under British rule.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime while the British Government had paid no attention to the question of the boundary of Bhattiana, the adjoining Cis-Sutlej Chiefs had not been idle. They had been fully utilizing the opportunity which the British neglect had provided. Patiala in particular had been constantly pushing its boundaries into Bhattiana, and the overthrow of the Bhattis by

<sup>1</sup>From W. B. Bayley (acting Chief Secretary to Government) to Ochterlony, July 22, 1817, Bk. 10, Lt. 90, Original.

<sup>2</sup>*History of the Sikhs*, Cunningham.

<sup>3</sup>*The Rajas of Punjab*, Griffin, page 165.

the British further facilitated the Patiala Chief's designs. In 1821, passing over a belt of waste lands, he planted a small military outpost in the village of Gudab, within 14 miles of the British police post of Sirsa ; and finding that it was not noticed by the British, strengthened it in the following year. In 1823 cultivators were persuaded to come from the interior of Patiala and settle there.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. William Fraser, the District Officer, was the first among the British to discover this change in 1818, and invited the attention of higher authorities to the unsettled condition of the boundaries. But no notice was taken and the different Chiefs continued stealthily their onward march into the region of Bhattiana. Messrs. Gardner and Brown, who successively succeeded Mr. Fraser, reported to the same effect but it was not till 1835, when Sir Charles Metcalfe was Lieutenant-Governor of the North Western Province that the question was permanently settled.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*The Rajas of Punjab*—Griffin, page 161.

<sup>2</sup>*The Rajas of the Punjab*—Griffin, page 166.

## CHAPTER V.

### *The Hill States of the Cis-Sutlej Area.*

Among the Cis-Sutlej hills there were Chiefs who bore the title of Raja. They were mostly of Rajput descent and their history was little more than of an 'antiquarian interest'. There is little mention of these rajas in the British records before 1814. But when the Gurkhas attempted the conquest of these hills, which embroiled them in a formidable war with the British, these chieftains appeared for the first time in official British correspondence. The records of the Ludhiana Agency from 1814 to 1816 mainly deal with the affairs of the Cis-Sutlej hill chieftains. I shall first deal briefly with Gurkha relations with the protected states and their encroachments in the Cis-Sutlej Hills. These form the necessary back-ground to the Anglo-Gurkha War of 1814 and the ensuing concern of the British in the fortunes of the Chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej hill area.

#### *A—The Gurkhas and the Protected Hill States.*

Driven from the Kangra valley by the superior power of Ranjit Singh, Kajee<sup>1</sup> Amar Singh Thappa, the Gurkha leader, had established himself at Arki, in the small state of Bhagal, the Chief of which he had driven into exile. Amar Singh wrote to Colonel Ochterlony requesting assistance in his designs against Kot Kangra, which the latter flatly refused.<sup>2</sup>

This, however, led Ochterlony to look at the presence of the Gurkha Commander in such close proximity with considerable apprehension. At the close of 1809 he wrote to the Government "—but the important point lies in, that they (the Gurkhas) might extend their attack on the land which we think is in British protection. There is no yet fixed limit and the scarcity of the British knowledge of the geography might enable them to advance further while the British were quite unaware of the fact—"<sup>3</sup>

These fears were not unfounded as the Gurkha encroachments were being insidiously extended against the Protected Hill States. The Gurkhas now advanced their claim on the valley of Pinjura. Captain Birch prepared a sketch map of the valley, showing that the claim was inadmissible; and recommended it on the other hand as a suitable outpost for the united forces of Karnal and Ludhiana.<sup>4</sup> So the Gurkha claim was declined and

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<sup>1</sup> Kajee means a Commander in the Gurkha Army.

<sup>2</sup> Ochterlony to Lushington, December 16, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 38, Original, P.G.R.

<sup>3</sup> Ochterlony to Lushington, December 30, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 43, Original.

<sup>4</sup> Ochterlony to Lushington, May 3, 1809, Bk. 10, Lt. 59, Original.

they were definitely told that the British Government would not allow any interference with the territories of the Sardars bordering on the hills, who had come under British protection.<sup>1</sup>

Kajee Amar Singh Thappa would not accept this position. His contention was that Pinjour, Naraingarh and Lahurpur were appendages of Sirmur and Hindur, places which were already under the Gurkhas.<sup>2</sup> He continued his steady advance into the Cis-Sutlej Hills, conquering and annexing several places upto the kingdom of Nepal. By the year 1814 the Gurkha conquests between the Sutlej and the Jamna had included Nahan otherwise known as Sirmur, Hindur, Khlur (Bilaspur), a large portion of Bassahir, the Thakaries dependent on Sirmur, besides twelve other smaller Thakaries.<sup>3</sup>

The British Government were constantly protesting to the Nepal Government against the raids and usurpations of the Gurkha generals in the Cis-Sutlej Hills, but with no effect. Ochterlony wrote to Kajee Amar Singh Thappa, demanding the restitution of the villages recently usurped by him.<sup>4</sup> The Gurkha Commander plainly told the Colonel that he had no intention of acceding to the British demands.<sup>5</sup> At this Ochterlony warned the Chiefs of Mani Majra, Patiala and others who owned tracts on the borders of the hills, to hold themselves in readiness to act against the Gurkhas.<sup>6</sup>

On September 3, 1814, a Proclamation was issued by Ochterlony to the several Sardars whose possessions were immediately below the hill frontier. "Understanding that the garrison of Nalagarh", ran the Proclamation, "and other places belonging to the Gurkhas, prevent any produce of the hills being brought into your territories, this is by way of proclamation to you to direct that you give the most particular orders to your thanadars and public servants of every description, not to allow a single article to be sent into the hills—and if they detect any attempting to convey grain or anything else, immediately apprehend him—you are responsible for the conduct of your servants and will be called to account if they disobey the foregoing instructions."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Amar Singh Thappa (without date) Bk. 11, Lt. 49, Translation.

<sup>2</sup>Amar Singh Thappa to Ochterlony (without date) Bk. 11, Lt. 50, Translation.

<sup>3</sup>These Thakaries were :—Keonthal, Mylog, Bhogi, Bhogal, Bhagal, Kothar, Konihar, Dhami, Jubbal, Balsan, Mangal and Kumharsen.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, June 16, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 49, Copy.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, July 23, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 50, Copy.

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, June 16, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 49, Copy P.G.R.

<sup>7</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam, October 2, 1814, Bk. 13, Lt. 13, Copy.

This was a prelude to the war which was declared on November 1, 1814. Ochterlony marched into the hills *via* Rupar and captured Nalagarh and Taragarh on November 5 and 8, respectively. After a long and desperate struggle, Ramgarh, the strongest fort of the enemy, was taken by assault on February 11, 1815. On April 15, Ochterlony completely defeated Amar Singh and compelled him to retire to the fort of Malva, where reduced to extremity, he signed a Convention on May 15, 1815, by which he agreed to withdraw the Gurkha army from the Cis-Sutlej hills and to surrender all the possessions and forts situated between the Sutlej and the Jamna.<sup>1</sup> The treaty of Sagouli, which finally confirmed the above Convention, was signed on December 2, 1815.<sup>2</sup>

### *B.—The Sequel to the Gurkha War.*

As a result of the Gurkha War, the States of Sirmur, Bilaspur, Hindur, Jubbal, Keonthal, Kumbharsen, Balsar, Bashar, Kotgarh and Bhagal were restored to their rightful owners.<sup>3</sup> The chiefs of these States were granted sanads, confirming them and their heirs for ever in the possession of their territories, binding them to construct roads twelve feet wide in their territories and to furnish a certain number of begar labour.<sup>4</sup> The Raja of Hindur was granted a special sanad for incorporating a small district of Barouli in his possessions as a reward for his zealous services during the Gurkha campaigns.<sup>5</sup> In recognition of the help of his troops, the Governor-General-in-Council granted the Raja of Patiala two sanads conferring upon him and his heirs for ever the sixteen pargannahs<sup>6</sup> in exchange for a nazrana of two lacs and eighty thousand rupees.<sup>7</sup> These pargannahs, which were to be included in the hilly districts of Patiala, were taken from the Raja of Keonthal and Bhagal on account of their unfriendly conduct during the war.<sup>8</sup>

The Proclamation of Protection issued to the Cis-Sutlej States in 1809 was also applied to the hill states. The Chiefs were guaranteed full enjoyment of their territories under the general control of the British Government, to which power they had to submit their mutual differences for arbitration. Unlike the Cis-Sutlej Sardars, the hill-chiefs were put under certain

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam, May 15, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 27, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Aitchison's Treaties, Volume II, No. XLIX.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Government, July 28, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 36. Also of September 28, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 41, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam, September 23, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 40, Original.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>These Pargannahs were :—Waholee, Kuljoun, Bunthura, Koosala, Chabrote, Kehmulee, Budd Hur, Sangrur, Torastogawa, Jubbal, Pollahotti, Bhagat, Parleekhar, Kearatin, Gagat Guru and Taksal.

<sup>7</sup>Ochterlony to Government, September 23, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 40, Original.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

obligations in return for this protection. They were to allow free passage to the British merchants and their goods; they had to furnish a certain number of begar labourers and had to construct twelve feet wide roads in their territories.<sup>1</sup> Three battalions, called the Nasiri Battalions, were stationed in the Protected Hill States. Military Cantonements were made at Sabatee, Nahan and Malown. Certain areas around these stations were ceded to meet the expenses of the British troops. Owing to the difficulties of supervising the whole of the protected hill area, the petty principalities were placed under the general surveillance of the bigger Chiefs.<sup>2</sup>

(i) *The State of Nahan (Sirmur)*.—As stated above, the Records of the Ludhiana Agency of the years 1815 and 1816 mainly deal with the affairs of the protected hill states and especially with the State of Nahan. These are in the form of the correspondence of Captain G. Birch, Assistant Agent to the Governor-General at Nahan, where he was deputed on special duty in July 1815. He stayed there until December, 1816.

Raja Fateh Parkash, the imbecile Chief of Nahan, was deposed by the British Government owing to his bad administration of the State. Ochterlony describes him as "little superior in intellect to Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala."<sup>3</sup> The Colonel being averse to the succession of the Raja's minor son, Fateh Singh, repeatedly urged the "expediency of the British Government of acquiring the State". "Should His Excellency the Governor-General still be unwilling", the Colonel further suggested, "he would recommend that a stipend be allotted to Karam Parkash the ex-Raja and that the entire control of the Sirmur country be assumed by the British Government for 10 years during the minority of Fateh Singh."<sup>4</sup>

The Government accepted the latter view. On September, 28, Fateh Singh under the name of Fateh Parkash,<sup>5</sup> was installed on the gaddi of Sirmur. During his minority, the administration was to be carried on by Rani Goleri, his mother, subject of course to the supervision of the British Government. Captain Birch had come to Nahan in July 1815, to maintain an effective control over the state. To compensate for the heavy expenditure which the British had incurred in the Gurkha War, they annexed the tracts of Jansour and Bawar which formerly belonged to the chieftainship of Sirmur. Moreover, Captain Birch was allowed to appropriate the whole of the custom duties of Kalsi and the Kiarda valley for the improvement of these tracts.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>R. Ross to Metcalfe, November 6, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 64, Original.

<sup>2</sup>R. Ross to Metcalfe, November 9, 1816, Bk. 18, Lt. 14, Copy.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Government, March 1, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 26, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, July 27, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 35, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to J. Adam, September 28, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 41, Original.

It was not long before Captain Birch was forced to interfere actively in the internal administration of the State. On July 30, 1815, he wrote to Ochterlony suggesting the dismissal of certain officials of the Nahan Chief who, by their character, were unfit for any position of trust.<sup>1</sup> Birch formed a council to help the Rani in the administration and removed and expelled Kishen Singh, the Diwan, from the State.<sup>2</sup> As no other person could be considered fit for the post of Diwan, he with the consent of the Rani, appointed his own Munshi to that post.<sup>3</sup> This had visibly good effect, as the Rani, with the help of the new officials, introduced several reforms in the police and other branches of administration.<sup>4</sup> Serais were constructed,<sup>5</sup> stealing and gambling was checked and several other improvements made.<sup>6</sup> The revenue of the state increased. Captain Birch himself prepared a scale of state expenditure for public establishments.<sup>7</sup> He also reformed the 'form of custom duties'. He rejected the tenders offered for the farm of Nahan, not because the highest offer was too low, but principally because a radical change was required in the system which could only be effected by retaining the collection into the hands of British officials.<sup>8</sup> Grain and cattle were exempted from taxation and steps were taken to promulgate the abolition of the tax on the capture of elephants.<sup>9</sup>

The ex-Raja, Karam Parkash, lived at Tilakpur, a place near Nahan, and he and his Ranis were granted stipends of three hundred and one hundred rupees, respectively. On January 20, 1816, Captain Birch had occasion to complain to the Resident at Delhi of the misconduct of the ex-Raja, stating that he was carrying on intrigues and exercising an evil influence upon the Rani, which hampered her in her duties to the State. "He had got many hundred private servants", added Captain Birch, "and some others to keep up the air of durbar."<sup>10</sup> He suggested that the ex-Raja should be removed to Karnal. The Government issued an order for his removal there but its execution was postponed through a marked improvement in his conduct.<sup>11</sup> He, however,

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<sup>1</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, July 31, 1815, Bk. 15, Lt. 53, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, October 12, 1815, Bk. 15, Lt. 85. Also his letter to the same, October 14, 1815, Bk. 15, Lt. 87, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Birch to Metcalfe, February 10, 1816, Bk. 15, Lt. 106, Original, P.G.R.

<sup>4</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, September 15, 1815, Bk. 15, Lt. 75, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Metcalfe to Birch, December 21, 1815, Bk. 17, Lt. 74, Copy.

<sup>6</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, August 10, 1815, Bk. 15, Lt. 63, Original.

<sup>7</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, October 1, 1815, Bk. 15, Lt. 80, Original.

<sup>8</sup>Ochterlony to Birch, August 11, 1815, Bk. 17, Lt. 26, Original.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>Birch to Metcalfe, January 20, 1816, Bk. 15, Lt. 88, Original.

<sup>11</sup>Birch to Metcalfe, April 24, 1816, Bk. 15, Lt. 126, Original.

relapsed again to his usual ways and was removed consequently to Karnal where he was kept in reasonable comfort.<sup>1</sup> His removal from Tilakpur was a great shock to his wife and son, Raja Fateh Parkash. They left Nahan for Karnal to join the ex-Raja, but were persuaded to return to Nahan.<sup>2</sup>

(ii) *The Kiarda Valley*.—This valley was annexed by the British Government from the Sirmur Raj to meet the expenses of the British troops stationed at Nahan.<sup>3</sup> Captain Birch suggested to Government that grants of land should be made in the Kiarda Valley to Gurkha soldiers in lieu of their pensions,<sup>4</sup> but the proposal was declined for the time being. The valley had a very fertile soil, but due to the neglect of its rulers, it was mostly uncultivated. Birch, therefore, began to seek the best means of bringing it under cultivation and of improving the status of the Zamindars.<sup>5</sup> He offered every inducement to them to improve cultivation and declared certain terms which were to regulate portions of land in the valley. In the first year there was to be full exemption from the payment of revenue, in the second 1/15th of the crop was to be paid, in the third 1/12th, in the fourth 1/10th and in the fifth 1/8th was to be paid.<sup>5</sup> The terms were, no doubt, very moderate and yet they did not attract many cultivators.

He then adopted another scheme—offered taqawi advances to the Zamindars, who would come forward to cultivate the valley, and put Kanwar Dalip Singh formally in charge of it. The scheme proved very successful.<sup>5</sup>

(iii) *Jubbāl State*.—Raja Puran Chand had been driven out of his State by the Raja of Sirmur, before the British extended their protection to the Hill Chiefs. The expelled Raja had rendered valuable help to the British Army during the Gurkha War. When the war was over, and general restoration followed, he was also reinstated in his principality. A sanad was granted to him, making his state independent of the Sirmur Raj.

Since his reinstatement on the Jubbāl gaddi, the imbecility<sup>6</sup> of Raja Puran Chand worsened and his administration fell into

<sup>1</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, December 15, 1816, Bk. 15, Lt. 160, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, December 24, 1816, Bk. 15, Lt. 163, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, September 28, 1815, Bk. 14, Lt. 41, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, October 4, 1815, Bk. 15, Lt. 82, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Birch to Metcalfe, December 16, 1815, Bk. 15, Lt. 97, Original.

<sup>6</sup>Ross to Metcalfe, June 3, 1816, Bk. 18, Lt. 95, Copy.



disorder. His mean and selfish officials enriched themselves at public expense. The Raja failed to supply the promised quota of begar labour and was fined rupees eight hundred.<sup>1</sup> In spite of repeated warnings from the British Government, he took no pains to improve his affairs. At last the British Government decided to interfere and placed the administration in the hands of Dangi Wazir.<sup>2</sup> Dangi was a wise administrator who made many improvements, but his career was cut short by death, with the result that the administration relapsed into disorder a second time.<sup>3</sup>

There were now two ways open to the British Government for solving the problem of the Jubbāl State; one was to annex it to its own territories and the other to hand it over to the Sirmur Raj. Both these alternatives are discussed at length in the British official correspondence. In the end it was decided to annex Jubbāl to Sirmur, provided that the Raja of Sirmur assured the British Government that he would be able to rule Jubbāl without their aid and provided he continued to pay the usual nazrana.<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that though this arrangement was sanctioned by Government, it was not put into effect by Major-General Sir David Ochterlony, who had reasons to doubt the efficiency of the Sirmur administration.<sup>5</sup> The Government later cancelled its decision and appointed a trustworthy minister and guardian for Rana Puran Chand of Jubbāl.<sup>6</sup>

### *C.—Administration of Criminal Justice.*

There were frequent outrages upon the person and property of merchants and travellers passing to and from the hills. Complaints of these crimes were often made to the British authorities. The problem grew more serious when it was disclosed that many Sikh Sardars on the frontier were in league with these criminals. They permitted and even encouraged the plunder of merchants passing with their merchandise through their territories.<sup>7</sup> So the British Government determined on an immediate step to establish peace and security in the hills by severely punishing the criminals.

Captain Birch at Nahan was consulted in the matter. He submitted his proposals on January 20, 1816. "These outrages are so injurious," he wrote, "to the great object of secure intercourse between the hills and the plains: that a Proclamation

<sup>1</sup>Ross to Metcalfe, March 3, 1816, Bk. 19, Lt. 91, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>Ross to Metcalfe, June, 3, 1816, Bk. 18, Lt. 95, Copy.

<sup>3</sup>Adam to Ochterlony, May 18, 1818, Ludhiana Agency Printed Records, P.G.R. Also Ross to Metcalfe, June 14, 1818, Bk. 18, Lt. 185, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Birch to Ochterlony, September 21, 1816, Bk. 15, Lt. 154, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Ross to Metcalfe, June 15, 1818, Bk. 18, Lt. 170, Copy.

<sup>6</sup>Ross to Metcalfe, June 30, 1818, Bk. 18, Lt. 186, Copy.

<sup>7</sup>Birch to Metcalfe, March 20, 1816, Bk. 15, Lt. 119, Original.

should be issued to all the Sardars and land-holders on the frontier, that they shall be held responsible for acts of outrages committed in their respective lands ; and if the plunderers do not belong to them they cannot escape with their booty without the knowledge of their villagers."<sup>1</sup> He further recommended a penalty of the entire value of the property plundered (besides its restoration) to be exacted from the Sardars, in whose territory the crime was committed. If the plundered goods were traced, one half would be given to the owner, in consideration of the loss of time and the other half to those instrumental in the detection of the thieves or the property.<sup>2</sup>

On November 8, 1816, a tribunal was established for the trial of offences committed in the hill districts retained by the British. Lieutenant Ross wrote a few days later to Ochterlony on the necessity of introducing the system of administration of Criminal Justice, not only in the hill districts occupied by the British Government, but also in those places which were governed by independent chiefs.<sup>3</sup> The Government accepted this view and its jurisdiction was extended to the independent States.

The Government decided in October of the same year that persons accused of murder were to be tried by a general court martial, assembled either at Sarhind or at some place in the hills and, if convicted, were to be executed on the spot, instead of being sent to Saharanpur.<sup>4</sup> In spite of this change the courts were not quite accessible and their procedure was slow. To remove these defects, Major-General Ochterlony suggested to Government on May 5, 1817, that the local officers in the hills might be invested with magisterial powers, which in his opinion, would prove beneficial for the people. He further urged that measures should be taken for ensuring a speedy hearing of cases, which did not come under the cognizance of local magistrates ; that in all cases, where prosecution and witnesses were subjected to delay, a subsistence allowance should be granted to the latter.<sup>5</sup>

#### *D.—Abolition of the Begar System.*

In the beginning of the 19th century, the practice of begar was universal in India with some exceptions where British Thanas of police had been established. In many villages the chumars were given small areas of land, in lieu of which they had to do begar.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Birch to Metcalfe, March 20, 1816, Bk. 15, Lt. 119, Original.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Ross to Ochterlony, November 30, 1816, Bk. 18, Lt. 152, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, May 5, 1817, Bk. 14, Lt. 63, Original.

<sup>5</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, December 18, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 67, Copy.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*

The practice is not quite unknown in the villages even in these days but the element of compulsion is being rapidly lost. The British Government gave official recognition to this arbitrary practice. We have seen that when after the Gurkha War, it reinstated the Chiefs in their hill possessions, they were asked to furnish a quota of begars in proportion to the revenue they raised from their territories.<sup>1</sup> Besides, detachments of British troops or even individual officials drew upon such labour while passing through the countryside.

The attention of the British authorities in the Cis-Sutlej area was drawn for the first time to this cruel custom in December 1813. Ochterlony, while touring the Cis-Sutlej hill states, met with complaints, wherever he went, against this practice of begar. He was thus induced to try to abolish the evil. He issued orders to the Commanding Officers at Ludhiana and Karnal to stop the use of begar labour by making adequate arrangements for the conveyance of the luggage of the troops. In order that an army on the march should suffer no inconveniences, the Chiefs, who lived along the road, were asked to furnish every assistance, while the British troops were to pay for what they received.<sup>2</sup> The Thanadars on the high way were also required to help the officers with men who were to be paid four pice per man for one march.<sup>3</sup> By these measures a real hardship was removed.

This was, however, one aspect of the Begar System that was removed. There was another which was yet in vogue, namely, that the hill Chiefs were required to furnish a number of begars. This was not always possible for them to provide. They often failed to do so and the British authorities on the spot had to use rigorous measures before they could obtain the necessary begar labour.<sup>4</sup>

The Supreme Government was not blind to the hardship and injustice which this system caused to the hill Chiefs and their subjects. On May 25, 1816, the Governor-General-in-Council decided to abolish the system, i.e., of claiming a quota of begar from the Chiefs. "With reference to the effect," wrote Mr. Adam to Metcalfe, "which the system of compulsory service must produce on the prosperity of the inhabitants of the Hills, His Lordship-in-Council apprehends that it cannot fail, even with very humane and judicious precautions to prevent abuse, to be a source of great oppression and hardship; and that the ultimate abolition of the system is an object of very desirable attainment. His Lordship in Council is aware that it is established usage in the

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, December 2, 1814, Bk. 13, Lt. 12, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, December 18, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 67, Copy.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid*,

<sup>4</sup>Adam to Metcalfe, May 25, 1816, Bk. 17, Lt. 143, Original, P.G.R.

hills, and on that account as well as from the difficulty of substituting at once any other mode of effecting the same object, considerable objections exist to an attempt to effect its immediate abolition."<sup>1</sup>

To get rid of this difficulty the Governor-General further directed Mr. Metcalfe and Major-General Ochterlony to devise means of gradually extinguishing the practice and of substituting some other mode of supplying carriage for military requirements.<sup>2</sup> Negotiations were opened with the Hill Chiefs and it was finally decided that they should commute their quota of begar labour for a money payment.<sup>3</sup> The money thus raised was to be spent on hiring labour and on carriage by mules.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Adam to Metcalfe, May 26, 1816, Bk. 17, Lt. 143, Original.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Ross to Ochterlony, September 28, 1816, Bk. 18, Lt. 125, Copy.

<sup>4</sup>Ochterlony to Adam, October 8, 1816, Bk. 14, Lt. 55, Original.

## CHAPTER VI.

### RETROSPECT.

We may now consider retrospectively the general principles or policy which the British Government pursued from 1809 to 1823 in its relations with the Cis-Sutlej States with a view to be able to judge how far the underlying objects of that policy were achieved.

The main object of that Government in assuming the protection of the Cis-Sutlej States had been to confine the activities of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to the western side of the Sutlej and thus to safeguard the North-Western Frontier of the Company's dominions. At the same time the majority of the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs, who feared the designs of the Raja of Lahore, had sought British protection. Thus the aims of the British and the Sikh Chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej area were identical. The British had no design of annexing these States and hence were not slow in issuing the two Proclamations guaranteeing their rulers' independence in their internal affairs as well as security against foreign aggression. Though 'Non-Intervention' in internal affairs was thus declared as the basic principle of British policy, yet ere long it was found that it could not be strictly maintained and had to be departed from in practice in several ways. This departure from the declared policy was due to two main factors—practical expediency and moral obligation.

The British plan was to establish in the Cis-Sutlej region an autonomous and loyal confederacy of Chiefs who would be helpful to the protecting power in time of need. This consideration itself was real enough to compel the Government to interest itself in their internal affairs. For, if a state was grossly misgoverned, it could not possibly fulfil its political obligations,<sup>1</sup> either to the supreme power or even to other states whose boundaries were conterminous with it.

The second factor leading to British intervention in the internal administration of those states was that of moral responsibility. It was impossible for the Suzerain to ignore the perpetuation of unbounded oppression and injustice on their subjects by the rulers who owed their position and stability to the British overlordship. In affording security to the Chiefs against Ranjit Singh and their mutual encroachments was implied an obligation on the part of the British to see that the Chiefs administered their states progressively or at any rate avoided oppression in any violent form. Nor could the overlord remain indifferent to situations in which gross mal-administration and misery prevailed among

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<sup>1</sup>The Protected States were asked to supply some portion of their permanent force for three months in a year without pay.

the subjects of a state, as the result of its ruler's blatant extravagance and waste. For that would have had the effect of perpetuating oppression among the people through the agency of the Chiefs whose own authority had acquired permanence through the British connection.

The intervention of the British, whenever it occurred, naturally pleased the inhabitants, though it offended their Chiefs. "Among the lower classes of inhabitants", wrote Colonel Ochterlony, "it (intervention) is as earnestly wished as anxiously expected, while Chiefs regarded it with jealousy; yet as their belief reconciles them to all events, I am of opinion that amongst the Sardars it is only a transient or occasional idea and that the interference of the Government is generally felt and acknowledged as a blessing. If there are a few, who think otherwise, it is only those who possessing the means would gratify their inclinations in the commission of injuries, injustice and crime, and it cannot be regretted that such men should be crushed in their career of plunder, depredation and oppression."<sup>1</sup>

Feelings of suspicion and alarm ran high among the Chiefs when Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala was compelled by the British to abdicate. In this connection, it may also be mentioned that Ochterlony had interfered in the internal affairs of that State, only after he had been repeatedly requested by Raja Bhag Singh, Bhai Lal Singh and other well-wishers of Patiala, to which place he desisted from proceeding, until he was actually invited by Raja Sahib Singh himself. Moreover, the Agent had withdrawn his intervention as soon as his purpose was achieved. All this caution and restraint on his part, however, did not stop the fears of the Chiefs.

In spite of the solicitude of the British Government towards the Patiala State, this policy of intervention failed even in that particular case. "However salutary the arrangements and however uninterested the cause which led to them", wrote Ochterlony to Government admitting the failure of his policy towards Patiala, "and though carried into effect with the concurrence and advice of the truest friend of the house of Raja Bhag Singh, yet the measure did not laterly receive that generous applause in Patiala, which he and Bhai Lal Singh predicted and with which I had flattered myself."<sup>2</sup>

This should not however mean that British intervention had the same effect in all cases. This was by no means so. The subjects of tyrannical rulers mostly favoured British interference as a blessing and whenever it occurred to relieve the people from

<sup>1</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, July 30, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 26, Copy.

<sup>2</sup>Ochterlony to Edmonstone, March 29, 1813, Bk. 13, Lt. 31, Copy, P.G.R.

the wrongs and evils of thoughtless rulers, it was received with unmixed satisfaction and gratitude.

The British Government observed strict neutrality and disinterestedness in bringing about the restitution of usurped lands and in settling land disputes. When Ochterlony entered the Cis-Sutlej area in 1809, many of his adherents and friends expected that they might escape with their plunder, but they soon were made to realise the futility of their hopes. "The excessive measures we have used for the restitution of property," observed Ochterlony, "have only excited regret in the aggressors, whilst the justice and disinterestedness of the transaction have either been openly applauded or beheld with silent admiration and astonishment."

It will be incorrect to say that the British were always disinterested in their motives. As a matter of fact no suzerain power can afford to be in that position. The states were taken under British protection and their independence and indeed their very existence were preserved and no tribute levied upon them. The trouble and complications which this connection involved were enormous. It was not to be supposed that so great a charge had been accepted out of consideration of mere benevolence. The British Government never made such a pronouncement, and, in practice, insisted on the rights claimed by every sovereign power. Of these the most important because of the greatest material benefit was its right of succession of estates, in which the heirs were only distant collaterals. In this way Ambala, Chamkoian and other estates lapsed to the British dominions.

Nor are cases unknown in which justice was sacrificed for the sake of political expediency. One such example may be stated. Mere political considerations<sup>1</sup> led the Government to refuse the restoration of the district of Ludhiana to the family of Rai Ilias, the original owner, which would have been an act of justice. The refusal is amply explained by the Governor-General who wrote on the above case: "To pursue the dictates of abstract justice and benevolence by the indiscriminate redress of grievances beyond the admitted limits of our authority and control, would be to adopt a system of conduct of which the political inconveniences and embarrassment would not be compensated by the credit which might attend it."

Whatever be the motives of the British Government in extending protection to the Cis-Sutlej States, it is indisputable that it proved a blessing both for the Chiefs and for their subjects.

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<sup>1</sup> These considerations were the British Cantonment at Ludhiana and the pleasing of Raja Bhag Singh who was in its possession and who was granted five hundred rupees per mensem as a compensation.

The former gained security and the latter better rule. The petty warfare among the Chiefs, which had occurred constantly in former times disappeared under the patient and impartial investigation and insistence on what was right and equitable by the British Government. Many material improvements were made. New roads were constructed and the old repaired both in the plains and the hills. Serias were built and wells were sunk. One great difficulty of easy and free communications in the hills was, 'the fewness of bridges and their unfitness in the rainy season. The British Government advanced money to the hill Chiefs for building bridges or sangas and for keeping them in repair.<sup>1</sup> Vaccination was introduced in the Cis-Sutlej area for the first time.<sup>2</sup>

Many social reforms were also introduced. Efforts were made to do away with cruel practices which were deeply embedded in the social traditions of the past, e.g., Rani Goleri of Sirmur was prevented from Sati.<sup>3</sup> The Begar system was abolished. Officials were checked from accepting presents from the Chiefs,<sup>4</sup> and to ensure this as far as possible, an oath was required from all the public servants.<sup>5</sup>

To estimate the British policy towards Cis-Sutlej States and to sum up the benefits of British protection, I cannot do better than quote the authorities of Ochterlony and Griffin.

"It is impossible to pass through the country", writes Ochterlony, "without hearing and seeing the beneficial effects of our interference in the increased and still increasing agricultural improvement of the lands and industry of the inhabitants. The farmer sows with confidence what he hopes to reap in security."<sup>6</sup>

Griffin writes: "—the policy of the British Government so far as the Sikh States are concerned has been uniformly liberal, enlightened and just; that in no single instance has it abused its strength to oppress its weaker neighbours; but that on the contrary, it has taken less than its undoubted right; and had decided disputed questions with a generosity and disinterestedness which would be looked for in vain in the administration of any other country."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Kennedy to R. Ross, January 11, 1823, Bk. 23, Lt. 9, Original.

<sup>2</sup>Kennedy to R. Ross, March 11, 1823, Bk. 23, Lt. 32-33, Original.

<sup>3</sup>Kennedy to R. Ross, January 12, 1823, Bk. 23, Lt. 10, Original.

<sup>4</sup>Elliot (Agent to Governor-General at Delhi) to W. Murray, April 21, 1823, Bk. 23, Lt. 49 Original.

<sup>5</sup>Elliot to Murray, May 15, 1823, Bk. 23, Lt. 06, Original.

<sup>6</sup>Ochterlony to Government, July 30, 1811, Bk. 12, Lt. 26, Copy.

<sup>7</sup>Griffin—Preface to the *Rajas of the Punjab*.



In the end a brief mention may be made of the British officials who remained directly related to Cis-Sutlej States for a considerable portion of the period, 1809—23.

The British Government was fortunate in being represented by such men as Major-General Sir David Ochterlony<sup>1</sup>, Superintendent of Political Affairs and Agent to the Governor-General in the Cis-Sutlej States, and his Assistants Captain Birch, Captain Murray and the two Ross brothers. These men, by their personal character and influence added to the general reputation of their countrymen and gave adoption and flexibility to the rigid and impersonal nature of a foreign and civilized supremacy. Sir David Ochterlony will long live in the memory of the people of Northern India as one of the greatest of English pioneers and as one of the last of the British leaders who endeared himself both to the army which followed him and to the princes whom he made to bow before the colossal power of his race.

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<sup>1</sup>He was born on February 12, 1758. He came to India as a Cadet at eighteen and was made Lieutenant-Colonel in 1803. In the following year he defended Delhi against Holkar. As a reward for his services in the Gurkha War he was created a G. C. B. He rendered excellent services in the Pindari and Maratha Wars of 1817 and 1818. He died at Meerut on July 15, 1825.

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<sup>1</sup>The office of the Agent to the Governor-General was moved from Ludhiana to Karnal in October, 1815.

<sup>2</sup>The Headquarters of the Agency were moved from Karnal to Ambala in March, 1822.

## APPENDIX A.

*Ittalahnama, 9th February, 1809.*

The British army having encamped near the frontiers of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh it has been thought proper to signify the pleasure of British Government by means of this precept in order to make all the Chiefs of the Maharaja acquainted with the sentiments of the British Government which have solely for their object and aim to confirm the friendship with the Maharaja and to prevent any injury to his country. The preservation of friendship between the two states depending on particular conditions which are hereby detailed.

The Thanas in the fortress of Khur, Khanpur, Faridkot and other places on this side of the Sutlej which have been placed in the hands of the dependants of Maharaja, shall be raised and the same places restored to their ancient proprietors.

The force of cavalry and infantry which may have crossed to this side of the Sutlej must be recalled to the other side of the country of the Maharaja.

The troops stationed at the ghat of Phillaur must depart on the other side of the river as described and in future the troops of Maharaja shall never advance into the country of the Chiefs situated on this side of the river who have called in for their security and protection.

Thanas of the British Government but if in the manner that the British have placed Thanas of moderate number on this side of the Sutlej, if in like manner a small force by way of Thana be stationed at the ghat of Phillaur, it will not be objected to.

If the Maharaja preserve in the fulfilment of above stipulations which he so repeatedly proposed to do in presence of Mr. Metcalfe such fulfilment will confirm the mutual friendship. In case of non-compliance with these stipulations, then shall it be plain that the Maharaja has no regard for the friendship of the British but on the contrary resolves enmity. In such case the victorious British army shall commence every mode of defence.

The communication of this precept is solely with the view of publishing the sentiments of the British Government and to know those of Maharaja. The British are confident that the Maharaja will consider the contents of this precept as abounding to his real advantage and affording a conspicuous proof of their friendship, that with their capacity for war they are also intent on peace.

A True Translation.

(Sd.). R. B. STUART.

(Sd.). Sr. LEGER,

Seal and Signature of  
Colonel Ochterlony.

## APPENDIX B.

*Treaty of Amritsar, 25th April, 1809.*

Whereas certain differences which had arisen between the British Government and Raja of Lahore have been happily and amicably adjusted and both parties being anxious to maintain the relations of perfect amity and concord the following articles of the treaty which shall be binding on the heirs and successors of the two parties have been concluded by Raja Ranjit Singh on his own part and by the agency of Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, Esquire, on the part of the British Government.

*Article I.*—Perpetual friendship shall subsist between British Government and the state of Lahore. The latter shall be considered with respect to the former to be on the footing of the most favoured Powers and the British Government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of Raja to the Northward of the River Sutlej.

*Article II.*—The Raja will never maintain in his territory occupied by him and his dependants on the left bank of the river Sutlej more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of that territory, nor commit or suffer any encroachment on the possessions or the rights of the Chiefs in its vicinity.

*Article III.*—In the event of a violation of any of the preceding articles or of a departure from the rules of friendship on the part of either state this treaty shall be considered null and void.

*Article IV.*—The treaty consisting of four articles having been concluded and settled at Amritsar on 25th day of April, 1809, Mr. C. T. Metcalfe has delivered to the Raja of Lahore a copy of the same in English and Persian under his seal and signature; the said Raja has delivered another copy of the same under his seal and signature; and Mister Charles Theophilus Metcalfe engages to procure within the space of two months a copy of the same duly ratified by the Right Hon'ble Governor-General-in-Council on the receipt of which by the Raja the present treaty shall be deemed complete and binding on both parties; and the copy of it now delivered to the Raja shall be returned.

Seal and signature of  
C. T. METCALFE.

Seal and Signature of  
MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH.

Company's Seal.

Ratified by the Governor-General-in-Council on 30th May, 1809.

(Sd.). MINTO.

# APPENDIX C.

## *First Proclamation of Protection, 3rd May, 1809.*

- (1) The country of Chiefs of Malwa and Sirhind having entered under the protection of the British Government in future it shall be secured from the authority and control of Maharaja Ranjit Singh conformably to the terms of the treaty.
- (2) The country of the Chiefs thus taken under protection shall be exempted from all pecuniary tribute to the British Government.
- (3) The Chiefs shall remain in the exercise of the same rights and authority within their own possession which they enjoyed before they were taken under the British Protection.
- (4) Whenever a British force for purposes connected with the general welfare shall be judged necessary to march through the country of the said Chiefs, every Chief within his own possessions shall assist and furnish the British force to the full of his power, with supplies of grain and other necessaries which may be demanded.
- (5) Should an enemy approach from any quarter for the purpose of conquering this country friendship and mutual interest require that the Chiefs join the British Army, with their force, and, exerting themselves in expelling the enemy and act under discipline and obedience.
- (6) Any European articles brought by merchants from the eastern districts for the use of the army shall be allowed to pass by Thanadars and Sardars of the several districts belonging to the Chiefs without molestation and demand of duty.
- (7) All horses purchased for the use of cavalry regiments, whether in Sirhind or elsewhere, the bringers of which being furnished with sealed rahdarees from the Resident at Delhi or officer commanding of Sirhind the several Chiefs shall allow such horses to pass without molestation or demand of duty.

(Sd.). R. B. STUART.

(Sd.). OCHTERLONY.

## APPENDIX D.

*Second Proclamation of Protection 22nd August, 1811.*

On the 3rd May, 1809, a proclamation comprised of seven articles, was issued by the orders of the British Government purporting that the country of the Sardars of Sirhind and Malwa, having come under their protection, Raja Ranjit Singh agreeably to the treaty, had no concern with the possessions of the above Sardars; that the British Government had no intention of claiming tribute or fine and that they should continue in the full control and enjoyment of their respective possessions. The publication of the above Proclamation intended to afford every confidence to the Sardars; that they had no intention of control and that those having possession should remain in full and quiet enjoyment thereof.

Whereas several zamindars and other subjects of the chiefs of this country have preferred complaints to the officers of British Government who having a view to the tenor of the above proclamation have not attended and will not in future pay attention to them; for instance, on the 15th June, 1811, Dilawar Ali Khan of Samana, complained to the Resident at Delhi against the officers of Raja Sahib Singh, for jewels and other property said to have been seized by them; who in reply observed that the village of Samana being in the territory of Raja Sahib Singh, any complaint should be made to him; and also on the 12th July, 1811, Dussownda Singh and Gurmukh Singh complained to Colonel Ochterlony, Agent to the Governor-General against Sardar Charat Singh, for their share of property, and in reply it was written on the back of the petition that 'since during the period of 3 years, no claim was preferred against Charat Singh by any of his brothers, nor even the name of any co-partner mentioned and since it was advertised in the Proclamation, delivered to the Sardars that every Chief should remain in the quiet and full possession of his dominions, their petition could not be attended to.' The insertion of these answers to complainants is intended as examples, and also that it may be impressed on the minds of every zamindar and the other subjects that the attainment of justice is to be expected from their respective Chiefs, that they may not in the smallest degree swerve from the observance of subordination. It is, therefore, highly incumbent upon the Raja and other Sardars on this side of the river Sutlej that they explain this to their respective subjects and court their confidence, that it may be clear to them that complaints to the officers of British Governments will be of no avail and that they consider their respective Sardars as the Source of justice, and that of that free will and accord be observed uniform obedience.

And whereas according to the first Proclamation it is not the intention of the British Government to interfere in the possessions of the Sardars of this country, it is, nevertheless for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the community particularly necessary to give general information that several Sardars have since the last incursion of Raja Ranjit Singh wrested the estates of others and deprived them of their lawful possessions and that in the restoration they have used delays until detachment from the British army have enforced restitution as in the case of Rani of Zeera the Sikhs of

Cholian, the talooks of Karowali and Cheloundy, and the village of Cheeba; and the reason of such delays and evasions can only be attributed to the temporary enjoyment of revenues and subjecting the owners to irremediable losses. It is, therefore, by order of the British Government, hereby proclaimed that, if any of the Sardars and others have forcibly taken possession of the estates of others, or otherwise injured the lawful owners, it is necessary that, before the occurrence of any complaint, the proprietor should be satisfied and by no means to defer the restoration of the property in which, however, should delays be made, and interference of the British authority become requisite, the revenues of the estate, from the date of the ejection of the lawful proprietor, together with, whatever other losses the inhabitants of that place may sustain from the march of troops, shall without scruple be demanded from the offending party; and for disobedience of the present orders, a penalty according to the circumstances of the case of the offender shall be levied, agreeably to the decision of the British Government.

(Sd.) COLONEL OCHTERLONY.

## APPEDIX E.

*Rajas and Chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej States, 1809—23.*

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| ✓ 1. Patiala    | .. Sahib Singh, 1809—1813.<br>Karam Singh, 1813—1823.                                 |
| ✓ 2. Jind       | .. Bhag Singh, 1809—1819.<br>Fateh Singh, 1819—1822.<br>Sangat Singh, 1822-1823.      |
| ✓ 3. Nabha      | .. Jaswant Singh.   |
| ✓ 4. Kaithal    | .. Bhai Lal Singh, 1809—1818.<br>Partap Singh, 1818—1823.                             |
| ✓ 5. Kalsia     | .. Jodh Singh, 1809—1819.<br>Sobha Singh, 1819—1823.                                  |
| ✓ 6. Ladwa      | .. Gurdit Singh, 1809-1810.<br>Ajit Singh, 1810—1823.                                 |
| 7. Malerkotla   | .. Attaullah Khan, 1809-1810.<br>Wazir Khan, 1810—1821.<br>Amir Khan, 1821—1823.      |
| 8. Kunjpura     | .. Nawab Rehmat Khan.   |
| ✓ 9. Mani Majra | .. Gopal Singh, 1809—1817.<br>Hameer Singh, 1817—1821.<br>Gowardhan Singh, 1821—1823. |
| 10. Nahan       | .. Karam Parkash, Fateh Chand, Rani<br>Goleri.  |
| 11. Jubbal      | .. Puran Chand and Amar Singh Thappa<br>and Son.                                      |
| 12. Bilaspur    | .. Mohan Chand.   |
| 13. Bashahr     | .. Mohinder Singh (Rani Regent).  |
| 14. Nala Garh   | .. Raja Ram Saran.  |

## GOVERNORS-GENERAL.

1. Minto, 1807—1813.
2. Hastings, 1813—23.

## CHIEF SECRETARIES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

1. A. Edmonstone, 1803—12.
2. J. Adam, 1812—1818.
3. C. Lushtington.
4. W. B. Bayley.

## PERSIAN SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

1. J. Monckton.



## RESIDENTS AT DELHI.

1. A. Seton, 1803—1809.
2. J. Adam, 1809—1812.
3. C. T. Metcalfe, 1812—1818.
4. Sir David Ochterlony.

## AGENTS TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

Sir David Ochterlony, 1809—1819 at Ludhiana.

## ASSISTANTS TO THE AGENT.

Captain Birch.

A. Ross.

W. Murray.

R. Ross.



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