

ODDH
AND THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY,
1785-1801

By
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MAXWELL COMPANY

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TO MY PARENTS

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PREFACE

Oudh deserves a special place in the history of the establishment of British dominion in India. It was after the acquisition of Bengal and Bihar that the East India Company for the first time took any serious interest in Oudh, first as a strong buffer between its dominions and the Mahrattas, the most serious rivals of the British in Northern India, and later as a fruitful source of income at a time when the financial position of the Company was far from comfortable. Oudh was also one of the most important recruiting grounds for the army in India. These considerations led Warren Hastings, and Wellesley and, to a lesser extent, Cornwallis to interfere in the affairs of Oudh despite the general policy of non-interference laid down by the Court of Directors and made into law by Pitt's India Act. The actions of Hastings and Wellesley aroused, as is so well known, considerable controversy at the time, and the passions let loose thereby led to much partisan pamphleteering which, though interesting, nevertheless, clouded the real issue.

No attempt was made until recently to write an impartial history of the relations of Oudh with the British, though the sources of our information are prolific. In the current text books on Indian history the compilers have mostly followed each his own favourite school not always caring to check up their facts. The first serious attempt in this direction was made by Dr. Ashirbadi Lal Srivastava whose book, *The First Two Nawabs of Oudh*, has recently been followed by a monograph on Shujauddaula, the third and the last great ruler of Oudh. Dr. C. Collin Davies of Oxford has followed up with his *Warren Hastings and Oudh*. I have picked up the thread where Dr. Davies leaves it and carried the narrative down to 1801 when practically half of Oudh was ceded to the Company by Nawab Sa'adat Ali. Unfortunately for me I could not make use of the fruits of Dr. Davies' research (as his book was not published until two years after I had completed my thesis) which would have made my work very much easier.

The story I have narrated is one of decline, which was a source of delight to the utterly unscrupulous governor-general Macpherson, of despair to the more honest Cornwallis, and provided Wellesley with a fitting stage on which to play his rôle of a great pro-consul. The conclusion I have arrived at is that the fate of Oudh was inevitable, that it was the natural outcome of a despotic system of government in which the people had neither any share nor interest. Parallels of this are not rare either in India or elsewhere.

It would naturally be idle to say that I have consulted *all* the possible sources, but I may claim that all material sources, both published and unpublished, have been made use of. A select bibliography is given at the end of the book. The book is based on a thesis approved in June 1938 for the degree of Ph.D. of the University of London. I take this opportunity of acknowledging my debt of gratitude to Prof. H. H. Dodwell who brought home to me the importance of the subject and who guided me throughout my work. My thanks are also due to Prof. V. Minorski who helped me in interpreting a number of Persian texts; to Dr. C. C. Davies for several valuable suggestions; to (the late) Sir E. Denison Ross for his help in tracing some of the Persian sources; to the staff of the India Office, the British Museum and the Public Record Office in London; to my friend Dr. D. N. Majumdar of Lucknow University, and to the Director of the Inland Printing Works, Calcutta, without whose help it would not have been possible to bring out the book even as late as now. My wife has rendered invaluable assistance in preparing the manuscript for the press and reading the proofs.

Finally, a word about the system of spelling and abbreviations used. I have not burdened the text with phonetic signs and symbols as I expect that readers of the following pages would be more or less familiar with the names which occur therein. The abbreviations used in the footnotes should ordinarily be easily understood. Where reference has been made to a letter or minute without mentioning the record in which it occurs, or the date or the year, the name of the record, date or year is the same as in the immediately preceding reference.

Lucknow,
June, 1943.

PURNENDU BASU

CONTENTS

| CHAPTERS | PAGE |
|---|---------|
| <p>I. ASAFUDDAULA AND HIS DURBAR</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Nawab—Mukhtaruddaula—Ilich Khan—Almas Ali Khan—Hasan Raza Khan—Haidar Beg Khan—Raja Tikait Rai—Raja Jhao Lal—Tafazzul Husain Khan—Others</p> | 1-25 |
| <p>II. OUDH AND ITS NEIGHBOURS</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(i) SINDHIA—Influence with the Emperor—Effect of Alliance with Company—Fall of Agra—Aligarh—Frontier Forts—Alliance with Sikhs—Fugitive Problem—the Gosain Brothers: Himmat Bahadur and Umrao Gir—Pilgrim Taxes—the Emperor—Rajput Chiefs—Death of Mahadji—Daulat Rao (ii) SIKH SCARE—conflicting views—Forster's letters (iii) Ghulam Qadir Khan (iv) AFGHAN BOGEY—Timur Shah—Advance on Kashmir 1785—Defeated the Sikhs 1792—Death of Timur Shah—Zaman Shah—His Empire and Character—Shore's View—Sir Alured Clarke's View (v) RAMPUR—Treaty of Lal Dang 1774—Dispute with Oudh over Almorā—Nawab's March towards Rampur—Reconciliation with Faizullah Khan—Death of Faizullah—Revolution in Rampur—Nawab's Attitude—Battle of Katra—Treaty of 1794</p> | 26-75 |
| <p>III. DEGENERATION OF THE ARMY</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Nawabi Army Limitations Imposed by Treaty of 1768—Shujauddaula Accepts Company's Military Aid—End of Sovereignty—Asafuddaula's Neglect—The Military organisation—Malversation by the Amils—Cornwallis's Strictures—Cherry's Report—Abercrombie's Report—Question of Reform—Effect of Non-Intervention—Cherry's Plan—Nawab's Apathy—Shore's Attitude—Cherry Recalled—Growing Hold of Company—Position in 1794—Order of Court of Directors—Treaty of 1798</p> | 76-99 |
| <p>IV. BANKRUPTCY OF OUDH</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Revenues of the State—Land Revenue—Methods of Collection—Various Estimates—Farrukhabad Tribute—Customs Duties—Road and Pilgrim Taxes—Corruption in Administration—Charges on Revenue—Military Establishment—Pensions and Wages—Nawab's Extravagance—Efforts to Check—Nawab's Debts—Company's Subsidy—Rapid Increase of Current Dues and Arrears—Hastings's Attempt at Relief—Macpherson's Irregularities—Cornwallis's Settlement with Oudh—Breakdown—Cherry's View—Company's Financial Position—Shore's Efforts to Realise More from Oudh—Arrangement of April 1797—Shore's Settlement with Sa'adat Ali</p> | 100-133 |

| | | |
|------|--|---------|
| V | COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN OUDH AND THE COMPANY | 134-140 |
| | Articles of Trade—Barlow's Report—Trade in Cloth—Exemption from Duties—Cornwallis's View—Commercial Treaty—A Dead Letter | |
| VI | GENERAL ADMINISTRATION | 141-156 |
| | Military Despotism—Sarkar's Functions—Company's Interest—Ministers' Position—Cornwallis's Efforts at Reform—Obstacles to Reforms—Cherry's Efforts—Shore's Suggestions—Nawab's Plan—Cherry's Plan—Nawab's Displeasure—Shore's Disapproval—Cherry Dismissed—Continued Chaos | |
| VII | THE DEPOSITION OF WAZIR ALI | 157-166 |
| | Wazir Ali Becomes Nawab—Acceptance by Oudh and Calcutta—Paternity of Wazir Ali—Shore Orders Inquiry—Sa'adat's Claim—Shore Decides in Favour of Wazir—Changes his Mind—Journey to Lucknow—New Findings—Reasons for Deposing Wazir—Sa'adat's Accession | |
| VIII | SA'ADAT ALI AND WELLESLEY | 167-208 |
| | Sa'adat's Antecedents—Plot Against Asaf—Retires to Benares—The Man—Sa'adat vs. Wellesley—Wellesley's—Official Defence—Wellesley's Attitude—Military Problem—Revival of Afghan Scare—Exploitation of the Scare by Wellesley—Demand of Army Reform in Oudh—State of Nawabi Army—Sa'adat's Difficulties—Wellesley's Apathy—Wellesley's Proposed Reforms—Lumsden Resigns—Scott Appointed Resident—Sa'adat's Non-Acceptance of Wellesley's Plan—Wellesley's Indignation—Sa'adat offers to Abdicate—Wellesley's Qualified Approval—His 'Grand Object'—Draft Treaty—Rejection by Sa'adat—Scott's Memorial—Wellesley's Reactions to Sa'adat's Letter—Nawab's New Proposal—His Bitterness—Scott's Reply—Wellesley's Ultimatum to Nawab—Sa'adat's Final Efforts—Wellesley's Army Reform Effected—His Attitude—Sa'adat's Justification—Fresh Troubles—Financial Difficulties of Nawab—Wellesley and Scott's Interpretation of Nawab's Intention—Efforts to Secure Sa'adat's Abdication—Sa'adat's Refusal—Cession of Territory Demanded—Henry Wellesley Sent to Lucknow—Sa'adat's Last Efforts—Capitulation—Treaty of 1801—Wellesley's Point of View—and Sa'adat's | |
| | APPENDICES | 209-219 |
| | Charges on Oudh Revenue—Nawab's Private Expenses—Allowances Paid by Nawab to Company's Servants—Revised List and Salaries of Above—Financial Settlement 1785-6—Revised Claims of Company—Additional Claims—Private Claims—Salaries of Company's Servants in Oudh—Arrears due to Company—Bibliography | |

I

ASAFUDDAULA AND HIS DURBAR

THE GOVERNMENT of Oudh under its nawabs had been, like that of the other Indian states of the time, a military despotism. The success or failure of the government and the prosperity of the subjects depended almost entirely on the vigilance of the ruler and the ability and honesty of the men appointed by him for the management of the affairs of the country. Nawab Asafuddaula who ruled Oudh up to 1797, was unfitted to shoulder such heavy responsibility and, in consequence, the administration of the state suffered under him. He was served by undoubtedly competent men, men who working under Safdar Jung or Shujauddaula, Asafuddaula's predecessors, would have made a much better job of their work. Asafuddaula became nawab at the age of 26, on the death of his father, Shujauddaula, on 28 January 1775¹. The young nawab was somewhat uncouth of appearance and combined in him a love of pleasure, generosity, shrewdness, vanity and inertia, qualities not uncommon in the rulers of decadent states in India and elsewhere. A contemporary chronicler describes the person of Asafuddaula as follows:²

His features bore a general resemblance to his father's. The upper part of his body was rather long, but the lower part from waist downwards was very short. From his childhood he was obese; his fat ears, neck and double chin were one fleshy mass. His fingers and palm were short and plump. From his boyhood he was addicted to frivolities and his natural inclinations and attachments were for low, ill-born and base-minded associates. He used to laugh unseasonably, fling derisive abuse at others and desire derisive abuse in return. He delighted in meaningless amusements and was immensely pleased with anyone who indulged in filthy language; and the more obscene the conversation was in any company the better he was pleased.

John Bristow, Resident in Oudh when Asafuddaula ascended the masnad, wrote of him,³

1 Faiz Bakhsh, *Tarikh-i-Farahbakhsh* (Tr. by W. Hoey) 12.

2 *ibid* 16-18.

3 *B.S.C.* 26 Feb. 1776, Bristow to Board, 12 Feb.

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

Shujauddaula had made all possible effort to make his eldest son and heir-apparent in every way a worthy successor to himself. The best of tutors were engaged to impart princely qualities to Asafuddaula, but all that he added to his native generosity was skill in archery. Of his generosity tales are still heard in Lucknow and elsewhere in Oudh, and shopkeepers in Lucknow even today open their shops with his name on their lips. Perhaps some vanity was mixed with his generosity, and many a foreign adventurer made fortunes by playing upon this trait of his character. He readily bought from them worthless tinsels for lakhs of rupees and when reprimanded by his ministers, confessed that he did so with his eyes open, but how could he refuse one who had taken the trouble of travelling all the way to Oudh having heard of his generosity !

When of marriageable age, Asafuddaula was married to the daughter of Imtiazuddaula, a nobleman who wielded considerable influence in the Court of the Emperor at Delhi. But the nawab was an invert and the marriage never seems to have been consummated⁴. Towards the beginning of Asafuddaula's rule, men of learning and

4 The testimony of Faiz Bakhsh and Bristow might have been dismissed as exaggerated, as it has been the tendency of one school to do, on the ground that they belonged to a hostile group of critics. Bristow is known to have aspired to wield unfettered authority in Oudh, for which he was recalled by Warren Hastings, and it was in his interest to present the nawab in the worst possible light. Faiz Bakhsh was patronized by the "Begams of Oudh", Asafuddaula's mother and grandmother, who were not well-disposed towards the nawab. But there is overwhelming evidence corroborating these critics. See especially Kamaluddin Haidar, *Sawanihat-i-Salatin-i-Awadh* f. 25; Ghulam Ali, *Imad-us-Sa'adat* 137; Abu Talib, *Tafzih-ul-Ghafilin* (Tr. by W. Hoey) 37-9, 45-50, 91-4, 98-106, 115.

art avoided Lucknow because Asafuddaula "had no regard for such people,"⁵ and gathered round the Begams and their eunuchs' Court at Fyzabad, but later on Asafuddaula took greater interest in such people and induced most of them to attach themselves to his Court at Lucknow⁶.

Faiz Bakhsh makes repeated references to the nawab's indifference to civil and military affairs and to his lack of ambition. Shujauddaula died in the month of Shaban. Four months after came the Muharram celebrations and *taziadari* was observed by Asafuddaula at Fyzabad. After that

he spent four or five months on the banks of the Ghagra in the sand and dust without any reason, and he did not evince the slightest inclination to undertake the discipline of the troops or civil administration, to know the leading military officers or inspect the manœuvres of the regiments, to examine the ammunition and equipment of the artillery or hear the items of negligence in reports. In all these Shujauddaula had been unremittingly employed.⁷

Asafuddaula left the entire work of administration in the hands of Mukhtaruddaula. In 1776 there occurred a serious mutiny among the nawab's regulars at Fyzabad, and although the nawab's and the English intelligencers had dispatched to the sarkar full accounts of the outrages and disturbances during two days and nights, the nawab was so indifferent to public affairs that he remained uninformed⁸. After Mukhtaruddaula's death, Asafuddaula found a new minister in the person of Haidar Beg Khan in whose hands he left all power and authority. Faiz Bakhsh tells of an amusing incident which brings out the difference between Asafuddaula and his father. Referring to Asafuddaula's practice of annually visiting the hill resort of Bitul, he says,⁹

Shujauddaula... had once proposed to go to the foot of the hills. The people of the hills, knowing that he was an intrepid soldier and had an army and artillery, and fearing that he might become acquainted with the mountain paths and annex their country, became greatly alarmed, and they opened an embankment which confined the water in a certain place, and let it flow, so that his tents could not be pitched. He turned back quickly. The mountaineers, however, knew that Asafuddaula did not trouble himself about his dominions, that he had readily given

5 Faiz Bakhsh *op. cit.* 229. 6 *ibid* 231. 7 *ibid* 22. 8 *ibid* 36. 9 *ibid* 232.

up Benares, a rich province [to the British], and this was a gauge of his greed for territory, so they freely allowed him access.

Critical throughout, Faiz Bakhsh pays a somewhat grudging tribute to Asafuddaula's generosity, and while dealing with his last days, makes references to his supernatural wisdom¹⁰, probably more by way of making amends. Mir Ghulam Ali, the author of *Imad-us-Sa'adat*, on the whole agrees with Faiz Bakhsh, but goes somewhat out of his way to justify Asafuddaula. He says that the nawab delegated his powers to the ministers because, in the first place, his heart was so full of the desire to do good that he did not wish to be distracted by the cares of the state; and, in the second place, he was too kind-hearted to be able to harden himself to the extent necessary for carrying out the work of government¹¹. Ghulam Ali mentions Asafuddaula's early fondness for wines which he later gave up in favour first of 'bhang' (hemp, haschish) and towards the end of his life, opium. One of his many acts of generosity was the digging of a canal known as Nahar-i-Asafi in Najaf Ashraf, where the prophet Ali's tomb is, at a cost of about 7 lakhs of rupees¹². The Imambara in Lucknow built by Asafuddaula is popularly known to be a relief work when in 1198 A.H. (1783-84) a famine had overrun Oudh. It is said that anyone assisting in the building was fed for the day, and that every night the nawab had the day's construction partly pulled down lest the building should be finished too soon. Of this, however, there seems to be no reliable evidence, and it also sounds unlikely that an enthusiastic builder like Asafuddaula should have wasted labour in that way instead of employing it in constructing other buildings. For he had one great desire, to have in Lucknow the replica of every famous building in the world. The Rumi Darwaza was built after, as he wrongly supposed, one of the gates of Constantinople, and a bridge over the Gumti was built in imitation of a bridge across the Seine in Paris. It is said that having once heard that Fort William was the best building in Calcutta, Asafuddaula immediately issued orders to have a Fort William built in

10 *ibid* 257.

11 Ghulam Ali, *op., cit.* 135, 157.

12 *ibid* 158.

Lucknow and was stopped only after the greatest efforts of the Calcutta government. Many foreign travellers have spoken highly of the buildings of Asafuddaula, and Lord Valentia¹³ mentions especially two, the Imambara and the mosque attached to it, two really magnificent edifices, with which should be mentioned the Bawli Palace said to have been built according to the nawab's own specifications¹⁴.

Asaf's love of collection of both animals and inanimate objects proved later on to be a curse for him. His menagerie consisted of 1,200 elephants and 3,000 fine saddle horses which he never rode, and various other animals which were kept and fed at an enormous cost. His museum of curios has been described by one Lewis Ferdinand Smith who evidently was in the nawab's employ, and by Lord Valentia¹⁵. Principal items in his collection were clocks, guns, lustres and mirrors of various kinds. Some of these lustres and mirrors can still be seen in the Imambara Asafuddaula, but what happened to the other articles in the nawab's museum is not definitely known. His inordinate passion for collection made him the dupe of adventurers, European and Indian, who sold him worthless things for fabulous sums of money. When Haidar Beg Khan, the nawab's minister, had an interview with Lord Cornwallis, one of his complaints was about the nawab's extravagance. He said that lakhs of rupees were spent on entertaining Englishmen at dinners and illuminations and showing them the spring celebrations like Holi, etc.; and again, English merchants who brought all kinds of goods from England, would tell the nawab that they had come all the way simply for his sake, and Asafuddaula would buy all they had irrespective of the exorbitant prices asked¹⁶.

Ghulam Hussein in *Seir-ul-Mutakhirin* gives some unsavoury details of the nawab's dissipations. All these

13 Lord Valentia, *Travels* I 156.

14 Ghulam Ali *op. cit.* 158. For a full list of Asafuddaula's buildings see Inam Ali, *Ausaf-ul-Araf*, and *Asiatic Annual Register* Vols. II and III.

15 *Asiatic Annual Register* Vol. VI (1804); Valentia *op. cit.* 156.

16 Kamaluddin Haidar *op. cit.* f. 26.

facts, or most of them, are borne out by the letters of the governors-general and the Residents in Oudh, to be found recorded in the Political and Secret Consultations of the Council at Calcutta for the period¹⁷. George Frederick Cherry, Resident at Lucknow (1794-96), however, did not think that Asafuddaula was quite such an imbecile as he was generally taken to be¹⁸. The nawab died of dropsy on 21 September 1797 (28 Rabi I, 1212 A.H.) at the age of 51. It is said that the dismissal of his favourite minister Raja Jhao Lal by Sir John Shore early that year had made him despondent of life and he refused all medicines and precautions¹⁹.

Of the members of Asafuddaula's Court, first should be mentioned Mukhtaruddaula Murtaza Khan. Disliked by Shujauddaula, he had won the confidence of the heir-apparent who, immediately on his accession to the masnad, appointed him his chief minister. But he was very unpopular and was murdered on 7 Safar 1190 A.H. (March 1776)²⁰. During his short term of office disintegration and disorder set in both in the civil and military administration of the state²¹. He first disbanded a good portion of Shujauddaula's efficient army, dismissed competent officers, and appointed his own relatives to various high offices of the state. He "upset in one year the system of government which Shujauddaula had spent ten years in forming"²².

After Mukhtaruddaula's death, Muhammad Ilich Khan was appointed minister, but he died a natural death after little over six months²³. The nawab's choice for a minister

17 See especially *B.S.C.* 7 Oct. 1789 Cornwallis to Ives 6 Oct; Cornwallis to nawab-wazir 6 Oct; *B.S.C.* 30 Oct. 1789 Johnstone to Cornwallis 16 Oct.; Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence* I 256-8 Cornwallis to Dundas 16 Feb. 1787. *B.S.C.* 20 Apr. 1787 governor-general's minute.

18 *B.P.C.* 17 Apr. 1795 Cherry to Shore 6 Apr.; *B.P.C.* 7 Aug. 1795 Cherry to Shore 21 July.

19 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 158; Faiz Bakhsh, *op. cit.* 255-6; Rai Ratan Chand, *Sultan-ut-Tawarikh* f. 215-16; Kamaluddin Haidar *op. cit.* f. 27 verso.

20 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 130; Abu Talib, *op. cit.* 19-23; Kamaluddin Haidar, *op. cit.* f. 22.

21 Faiz Bakhsh, *op. cit.* 21-3.

22 *ibid.* 83. See also Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 121-130; Kamaluddin Haidar, *op. cit.* f. 22-3.

23 Faiz Bakhsh, *op. cit.* 83.

then fell upon Almas Ali Khan, perhaps the most remarkable man in the nawab's durbar. He was the son of a Jat cultivator from a village near Hoshiarpur, and a eunuch from birth²⁴. Originally a slave of Bani Khanam Sahiba, a step-mother of Shujauddaula, he formed part of Bahu Begam's (Asafuddaula's mother) dowry. Unfortunately the very pre-eminence of Almas makes Faiz Bakhsh dismiss him with this laconic remark : "His history is too well known to need mention." The author of *Imad-us-Sa'adat* says that Almas was famous for his charity and kindness, and that early in his life he had had to put up with the greatest hardships.

Almas was a man of great ability and intelligence, and Bahu Begam soon appointed him to manage her estates in Gonda and Fyzabad which Shujauddaula had given her, and in this position Almas won the Begam's entire confidence. Asafuddaula called him 'mamu' (maternal uncle) and as soon as he became nawab, entrusted to him the management of considerable territory including the rich and strategic Rohilkhand and a large portion of the Doab. Almas founded a town called Miangunj, now in Unao district, which he made his headquarters. Sir Robert Montgomery in his report on Cawnpore (June 1848), following a contemporary report of Welland²⁵, first collector of Cawnpore, says that the revenues of the country were anticipated, the tenures by which the amils and farmers held their possessions were most precarious, and the misery of the lower classes, excluded from all protection, was excessive²⁶, that there existed between the nawab's government and the head renters a total want of principle and good faith, and, in

24 C. A. Elliot, *Chronicles of Oonao* 124.

25 Welland to Henry Wellesley, 31 May 1803 : "The policy of the nawab-wazir, and of Meer Ulmas Ally Khan, was to levy and collect by every means practicable, all they could, and at the commencement of each season of cultivation, they granted supplies for carrying it on; even the subsistence, food, raiment and dwelling of the inhabitants were mostly regulated and paid for from the funds furnished by the government." (Quoted by Montgomery, *Statistical Report on the district of Cawnpore*, 1848, 3-4.)

26 Montgomery, *op. cit.* 3.

consequence, the under-farmers were changed and their terms altered three or four times a year. He writes :²⁷

The security of the lives and property of the inhabitants can scarcely be supposed to have formed any part of the consideration of the government, and would have been inconsistent with the general oppression which prevailed through all gradations of the people.

But Sir Charles Alfred Elliott, author of *Chronicles of Oonao*, points out that the system of farming out contracts for rent in any considerable scale was inaugurated by Sa'adat Ali who became nawab in January 1798.

Elliott divides the history of the province into three distinct periods. In the first, *i.e.* under the Delhi rule, there was little supervision and little check on the amils who plundered the farmers at will. In the third period, *i.e.* under the later contract system, the Oudh sarkar drove the amils to plunder the tenants in order to realise what they had contracted to pay into the treasury. But under the earlier nawabs (Sa'adat Khan, Safdar Jung and Shujauddaula) no screw was put upon the amils forcing them to screw the tenants in turn, and the supervision by the central authority was constantly felt. This supervision relaxed under Asafuddaula, but Almas kept up the tradition. Sir William Sleeman speaks very highly of him. He writes:²⁸

Meean Almas was the greatest and the best man of any note that Oudh has produced. He held for about 40 years... districts yielding to the Oudh government an annual revenue of about 80 lakhs of rupees. During all this time he kept the people secure in life and property, and as happy as people in such a state of society can be; and the whole country under his charge was, during his lifetime, a garden. His immense income he had expended in useful works, liberal hospitality, and charity. He systematically kept in check the tallookdars or great landholders, fostered the smaller and encouraged and protected the better class of cultivators, such as Lodhies (lodhs?), Koormies, and Kachies, whom he called and considered his children. His reign over the large extent of country under his jurisdiction is considered to have been its golden age.

Lord Valentia who in the course of his travels arrived at Lucknow on 21 March 1803, and attended the nawab's durbar on 23 March, writes that he met Almas, but he

²⁷ *ibid* 4.

²⁸ Sir W. H. Sleeman, *A Journey through Oudh* I 320-22.

apparently confuses him with one of the eunuchs of the Begams who had been plundered by Asafuddaula²⁹.

Almas was more feared than loved by his master and his ministers, and from time to time the durbar was swept by a panic that the great amil was conspiring against the nawab. Such a case arose in January 1785 when Haidar Beg Khan, then minister, requested the Resident, Maj. William Palmer, to move a British regiment from Cawnpore to Lucknow as a measure of protection against Almas³⁰. Palmer persuaded Almas to come to Lucknow in order to demonstrate his good faith, and Almas readily complied³¹. The Resident wrote to the governor-general:³²

Whilst he was with me, I found means to ascertain his real disposition and intentions, which I have the satisfaction to assure you are entirely dutiful towards his master, and full of confidence in and attachment to the Company's government.

Again—

Almas Ali Khan has been made too powerful and opulent for a subject, and certainly would be too much for the Vizier's government, if he was not restrained by its connection with ours. But as matters are now circumstanced his defection would be attended with many ill consequences, and it cannot be denied that this opulence is productive of some good ones. His punctuality in payment may be relied on, and he frequently assists government with the advance of very considerable sums in its exigencies. We know that he can nowhere obtain such a degree of security for his person and property as he finds in his present situation; it must therefore be very unjust and rigorous treatment that will induce him to desert it, and so long as he continues it, proper management will turn it to the benefit of the state.

The following letter from Almas to the governor-general read along with the Resident's letter just quoted reveals the amil's attitude towards the sarkar and the Company:

By the blessings of God, Maj. Palmer who resides here knows everything good or bad and is the master. Whatever I might say further would be superfluous. I the slave of his Highness will not to the end of my life think of any other place besides this. It will have been represented to you also how steadfastly from my soul I maintain my duty and attachment to the government of his Highness and of the Company, which are the same. I am firmly convinced that during my life no deviation or deficiency will ever be found in my obedience, attachment and labours for the sircar of his Highness and of the Company,

29 Valentia, *op. cit.* 136-7, 141-2; For the episode of the Begams of Oudh see C. C. Davies, *Warren Hastings and Oudh* 163 ff.

30 *B. S. C.* 19 Feb. 1785

31 *B. S. C.* 8 Mar. 1785 Palmer to governor-general 13 Feb.

32 Palmer to GG 21 Feb.

which are the same . . . From your commands . . . I have received the completest confirmation and comfort, both outwardly and inwardly, and I have no thought except those of slavery and obedience to the government. Accordingly I am day and night employed with the greatest exertion of attachment in the concerns of the sircar . . .³³.

When on the death of Ilich Khan in 1776 Asafuddaula nominated Almas for the post of minister, Almas refused being unwilling to bear the heavy responsibility³⁴. He is said to have recommended instead Haidar Beg Khan for the post, who was accordingly appointed. However, no love was lost between the amil and the minister and conflicts between them occurred frequently. Almas often evaded paying his dues in full on the plea of Sikh inroads into his amildari or destruction of the crops by hail or frost, or other such excuses, some of them transparently thin. In 1780 the minister

silenced him with clear and decisive arguments, and demanded seven lakhs of rupees. Reply was vain and he had to pay. He writhed under this, and in his mortification and chagrin.... determined to effect Haidar Beg's dismissal³⁵.

In this however he never succeeded, but Haidar Beg lived in constant fear of him. Later on other causes of disagreement between them arose, *e.g.*, dismissal by Haidar Beg of two dependants of Almas³⁶. Apparently cordial relations were re-established between them by the efforts of Palmer and, later on, Edward Otto Ives (Resident), but neither seems ever to have completely forgotten the grievances against the other³⁷. On 10 March 1786 an attempt was made on the life of Almas as he was going from the house of Haidar Beg at Lucknow. He escaped, however, and the motive of the assassins were not found out, nor was it established that they had been engaged by Haidar Beg Khan³⁸.

A situation similar to that of January 1785 arose in December 1788 when Almas sent his family secretly away from Lucknow. It was apprehended that he intended

33 *B.S.C.* 19 Apr. 1785. 34 Faiz Bakhsh, *op. cit.* 83-4. 35 *ibid* 84

36 *B.S.C.* 8 Mar. 1785 Palmer to GG 13 Feb.

37 *B.P.C.* 3 Dec. 1790 Ives to GG Nov. 22; *B.P.C.* 9 Dec. 1790, same to same 25 Nov.; *B.P.C.* 5 Jun. 1791, same to same 22 Dec.

38 *B.L.* 24 Letter in Secret Department 24 Mar. 1786; *B.S.C.* 22 Mar. 1786 Harper to GG 10 Mar.

to withdraw with his wealth from the nawab's territory or to force from the sarkar terms which the nawab could not with propriety accept³⁹. The nawab, presumably on the suggestion of Haidar Beg, sent a shuqqah to the Resident summing up his charges against Almas and requesting him to send a detachment of the Company's forces to imprison Almas⁴⁰. On 4 January 1789 Ives sent orders to Col. MacLeod of the Company's brigade stationed at Cawnpore to proceed towards Almas's district under the pretext of marching to Fathgarh lest Almas should become suspicious. He thought the step proper since Almas by disregarding the nawab's order to come to Lucknow and having kept a larger army than he had been permitted had technically rebelled, and Cornwallis in his letter of 16 June 1788⁴¹ had said that the Company's troops "could be employed to suppress contumacy, rebellion or reduce a refractory zemindar." The governor-general accordingly approved of the Resident's action⁴². On 15 January, however, Almas arrived at Lucknow in obedience to the nawab's wishes and MacLeod's orders were cancelled⁴³. Reconciliation took place between the nawab and his amil who was permitted soon after to return to his district, his family as well as that of an adopted son of his remaining at Lucknow by way of security⁴⁴.

Again in November 1790 a serious dispute broke out between Almas and Haidar Beg and the latter was so frightened that he fortified his house against possible assault by Almas⁴⁵. But this dispute, too, was soon settled through the mediation of the Resident who reported to the governor-general on 25 November that Almas had been to Haidar Beg's house and though the dispute was not completely settled, the sting had gone out of it, and, therefore, the public affairs were not expected

39 *B.S.C.* 14 Jan. 1789 Ives to GG 4 Jan.

40 *B.S.C.* 19 Jan. 1789 Ives to Cornwallis 11 Jan.

41 *B.S.C.* 16 Jun. 1788.

42 *B.S.C.* 19 Jan. 1789 Cornwallis to Ives.

43 *B.S.C.* 26 Jan. 1789 Ives to Cornwallis 17 Jan.

44 *B.S.C.* 8 Apr. 1789 Ives to Cornwallis 26 Mar.

45 *B.P.C.* 3 Dec. 1790 Ives to Cornwallis 22 Nov.

to 'be disturbed'⁴⁶. Soon after this Almas was honoured with a khilat (robe of honour) from the nawab and the dispute appeared to have been amicably settled⁴⁷.

As to Almas's administration of his districts, the remarks of Sleeman have already been quoted. On that point Ives writes: ⁴⁸

In my late excursion to Agra (November 1791—January 1792), in which the greater part of my route lay through his [Almas's] districts, I found the country in general in a fine state of cultivation. Almas is ignorant of letters... though the extent of his memory and the intimate knowledge of the revenues are such as to counter-balance this disadvantage.

When Haidar Beg died (5 June 1792), the question of appointing his successor arose. Ives wrote to Cornwallis that of the two persons Haidar Beg dreaded most as his serious rivals, one was Almas,⁴⁹ but that "whether his character as a minister would equal his abilities as farmer, may reasonably be doubted." The governor-general's comment was: ⁵⁰

Considering the character of Almas, and the general tenor of his conduct as a subject of the Wazir's government, he would have been a very improper person to fill the station that was held in it by Haidar Beg.

This note was responsible for Shore's rejection of Almas for the same post in 1797, although personally he thought that much good could have been effected by the great amil. Shore wrote: ⁵¹

Almas with the support of our government would in time have introduced a reform in the administration of the Vizier, I have no doubt; under him it would have acquired energy which has been so long wanting. He certainly would have put a stop to the boundless profusion and peculation pervading every department, the revenues would have been well collected, the discipline of the troops would have been improved, and the subsidy to the Company would have been discharged with a regularity hitherto unknown. *In tracing the grounds of suspicion against Almas it appeared to me rather to have been excited by his power than by his conduct, that a long period has elapsed since these suspicions were first entertained, without adequate proof that he merited them* ⁵²

46 B.P.C. 9 Dec. 1790.

47 B.P.C. 5 Jan. 1791 Ives to Cornwallis 22 Dec. 1790.

48 B.P.C. 15 Jun. 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 6 Jun.

49 *ibid.*

20 B.P.C. 3 Aug. 1792 Cornwallis to Ives.

51 B.S.C. 10 Apr. 1797 Shore to Speke 5 Apr.

52 Author's italics.

(unless his secession from the country on one occasion to secure his property and person be deemed evidence of his disaffection) and that for some years they have scarcely been mentioned. Almas is now 70 years old, without relations or connections.... He would not have been the minister of my choice, not from any apprehension which I entertain of his allegiance, but on account of his severe, arbitrary and unaccommodating disposition which might have led him into opposition or inattention to the recommendations of the Residents. The appointment would have been certainly very unpopular, and the Wazir would I think soon have regretted it.

Almas died in 1808⁵³.

It is unfortunate that Shore decided not to approve of Almas's appointment. His objections to Almas, though apparently valid, were not insuperable. In the remaining eleven years of his life the great amil might have extracted the affairs of Oudh from the dire straits into which Asafuddaula had cast them, especially because he would have been unhampered by the vagaries of the nawab who died in September 1797 and was succeeded by a very much abler man, Sa'adat Ali (leaving out the five months of Wazir Ali's nawabi). It is of course too much to expect that by Almas's appointment the whole course of the history of Oudh would have been changed and that Oudh would have to this day remained an independent state. For Wellesley's ideas were different. He was convinced, as we shall see in the last chapter of this book, that the annexation of Oudh was essential for the security of the British dominion in India, and that British dominion was good for India as much as for Britain. But a better state of affairs in Oudh (which would have been brought about by Almas and Sa'adat Ali) than what Wellesley found on his arrival in India, would have given him less excuse to coerce Sa'adat Ali to cede half of his country. Wellesley would have had to act more openly—and more honestly—in the interests of Britain, and much of the later controversy on his Oudh policy might have been avoided.

After the death of Mukhtaruddaula and Ilich Khan in quick succession, Asafuddaula chose Hasan Raza Khan for the post of his chief minister. He was a man who commanded respect from all. The Residents, Ives and

53 T. U. Beale, *Oriental Biographical Dictionary*.

Cherry, write well of him as does Shore⁵⁴. His defects were his pride and illiteracy for which it was found necessary to appoint an assistant⁵⁵. Haidar Beg Khan was chosen for that office which he occupied till his death in 1792. It was he who in fact wielded all the authority leaving the patronage to his chief. Haidar Beg is, therefore, referred to in all the English correspondence of the period as the Acting Minister.

Of Hasan Raza Khan's antecedents little is known except that he was the son of Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, who had perhaps held the post of "superintendent of the kitchen" under Shujaudaula⁵⁶. Ibrahim Khan's father, Jansipar Khan, seems to have been a man of some consequence in Aurangzeb's time. Hasan Raza married the daughter of Ghulam Ali Khan, a courtier of Shujaudaula, and became a close friend of Muhammad Bashir Khan, an influential nobleman. By him he was introduced to the nawab who appointed him "superintendent of the kitchen" (*darogha-i-bawarchikhana*)⁵⁷. He was known in those days by the name of Mirza Hasnu. Gradually he became a favourite of Shujaudaula, and after the death of Mian Basant was appointed "superintendent of the audience chamber" (*darogha-i-diwanikhana*)⁵⁸. After the nawab's death he fell into the background until the time he was appointed chief minister with the title of Sarfarazuddaula Itizamulmulk.

As chief minister Hasan Raza had little to do except accompany the nawab on his tours and hunting expeditions, but he received a handsome salary and nazars from the people on 'Id and other festivals. He was respected as a brother by Asafuddaula who called him 'bhaia'⁵⁹. He can be said to have improved the 'tone' of the Court. He was deeply religious and did much for the instruction

54 *B.P.C.* 15 Jun. 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 6 Jun.; *B.P.C.* 7 Aug. 1795; *B.S.C.* 10 Apr. 1797 Shore to Speke 5 Apr.

55 Kamaluddin Haidar, *op. cit.* f. 24; *B.P.C.* 15 Jun. 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 6 Jun.

56 Mir Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 136.

57 *ibid*; Faiz Bakhsh, *op. cit.* 135.

58 Some popular stories about Shujaudaula's regard for Hasan Raza can be read in *Imad-us-Sa'adat* 136.

59 *ibid* 137.

of the people in the principles and rites of the Shia sect ⁶⁰. He continued to be the chief minister till almost the end of Asafuddaula's days. During the residency of Cherry (April 1794-July 1796) he and his assistant, Raja Tikait Rai, joined the Resident in trying to reduce the influence of the nawab's favourites, Raja Jhao Lal, etc. This displeased the nawab who dismissed the ministers and got Cherry recalled. Hasan Raza was reinstated by Shore after the deposition of Wazir Ali ⁶¹, but Sa'adat Ali who had no patience with inefficiency asked him to retire with a pension of Rs. 25,000 a month. He refused the pension out of pride and lived for some time in great distress, practically on the charity of John Lumsden (Resident) and Almas. Later on, however, he swallowed his pride and applied through the Resident for the pension, but the nawab now offered to pay only Rs. 8,000 a month and the Resident refused to plead for him any more. Hasan Raza indignantly refused and retired completely from public life. He died in great poverty in 1801⁶².

The person really responsible for the internal administration of Oudh during the greater part of Asafuddaula's nawabi was Haidar Beg Khan. As has been said, he was appointed in 1190 A.H. (about August 1776) as Hasan Raza's assistant, but was in fact the working minister. He remained in that post till his death on 5 June 1792. Haidar Beg's career was remarkable. His family had its origin in Fathabad near Kabul. He and his brother, Nur Beg, became friendly with Raja Beni Bahadur when he was diwan under Shujauddaula, and in the raja's service they amassed a sizeable fortune. When Beni Bahadur fell from the nawab's favour and was imprisoned, the two brothers went with him charged with embezzlement. Nur Beg could not stand the rigours of prison and died, but Haidar Beg survived and was later released through the mediation of Bahu Begam. He then led a precarious existence for some time, but gradually improved his position and by the time of Shujauddaula's death had acquired the amildari

⁶⁰ *ibid* ; Kamaluddin Haidar, *op. cit.* f. 28.

⁶¹ Chapter VII

⁶² Kamaluddin Haidar, *Tawarikh-i-Awadh* I 153.

of Kora Jahanabad. Ilich Khan, minister in 1776, did not like him and persecuted him for alleged arrears of rent, but Murtaza Khan Barich, an officer in the nawab's government, took pity on him and stood security for him. Thus he escaped being put into prison but was divested of office.⁶³

Haidar Beg then sought to regain his position with the help of the Resident, John Bristow. For that purpose he used to go every morning to the residency to pay his court to Bristow who after some time became interested in him. On examining him the Resident found him well trained in administrative work. Just about this time the question of finding an assistant for Hasan Raza came up, and on the suggestion of Agha Ismail, a friend of Bristow, the latter prevailed upon the nawab to appoint Haidar Beg to the post. He was then given the title of Amiruddaula⁶⁴. Faiz Bakhsh says he was appointed on the recommendation of Almas who had himself refused the post, but of this there is no corroboration by any other contemporary writer.

The acting minister seems to have been unpopular with men of rank who regarded him as an upstart. He felt this but being an extremely shrewd man kept quiet until he had a chance to strike against his enemies, and then he struck hard. For three years he strove to please Asafuddaula and the Company's officers, and then he had his revenge. A list of his enemies and how he dealt with them has been detailed by Faiz Bakhsh⁶⁵. His lifelong struggle against Almas has already been described. According to Faiz Bakhsh and Abu Talib, he was the prime mover behind the plunder of the Begams and the torture and humiliation of their eunuchs against whom he bore a grudge⁶⁶. According to Ghulam Ali and Rai Ratan Chand, he was responsible for the recall of Bristow in 1781. He resented the assumption of extensive powers by the Resident, and through the medium of Raja Govindram (the

63 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 135

64 Kamaluddin Haidar, *op. cit.* f.24-5

65 Faiz Bakhsh, *op. cit.* 84ff.

66 *ibid.* 100ff; Abu Talib, *op. cit.* 60

nawab's agent at Calcutta) and Claude Martine⁶⁷ sent repeated complaints against Bristow's high-handedness to the governor-general and the members of his Council, which resulted in Bristow's recall⁶⁸. Abu Talib says that gratitude was a quality which was in Haidar Beg prominent by its absence. He was exceedingly cunning, had great knowledge of men, and planned everything so carefully that he rarely failed to achieve his purpose⁶⁹. He was singularly lacking in ordinary courage and his habits of procrastination and extravagance were notorious⁷⁰. On the other hand, he was efficient in his work and had an intimate knowledge of the country⁷¹. Warren Hastings at first suspicious of his honesty and integrity was later on convinced of his worth and his conclusion was that he had not been given a fair chance to display his abilities, having been too much hampered by the nawab's caprices on the one hand, and interference by Bristow, Middleton and Johnson on the other⁷². Cornwallis, too, diffident at first about him later wrote to the Court of Directors that he was "undoubtedly the best man employed by the Vizier"⁷³, and found it difficult to replace him after his death⁷⁴.

The successor of Haidar Beg in the post of acting minister was a Hindu Kayasth of the Saksena Dusre sub-caste named Raja Tikait Rai. In his youth he had been employed by Haidar Beg Khan Naishapuri, a military officer under Safdar Jung. Later he became diwan of Khushnazar Ali Khan Khwajasara, "superintendent of the armoury" (*darogha-i-zanburkhana*) in Shujauddaula's

67 Superintendent of the nawab's arsenal and founder of La Martinière schools at Lucknow and Calcutta. Originally a private in the army, he rose to the rank of major-general. His career is one of the most picturesque, though somewhat lurid in details, of the large number of European adventurers who frequented Indian Courts in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

68 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 137-8; Ratan Chand, *op. cit.* f. 193-4; Gleig III 118 ff. Hastings to Scott 15 Oct. 1783; Gleig III 137 ff. same to same 10 Jan. 1784.

69 Faiz Bakhsh, *op. cit.* 146.

70 *ibid* 147; *B.P.C.* 15 Jun. 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 6 Jun.; also other letters of Ives.

71 *B.S.C.* 16 Jan. 1788 Ives to Cornwallis 7 Jan.

72 Gleig III 118 ff. Letters of Hastings to Scott.

73 Ross I 312-4.

74 *B.L.* 31 Cornwallis to Directors 26 Aug. 1792.

government. During the ministry of Mukhtaruddaula, Tikait Rai was promoted as a clerk in the civil court and after Mukhtaruddaula's murder was appointed assistant to Mir Hasan, "supervisor of the revenue department" (*darogha-i-kachehri*). Tikait Rai continued to rise steadily in service and though apparently attached to Hasan Raza Khan, in fact looked up to Haidar Beg for patronage. He is still remembered for his lavish charities and was known as the Raja Karan⁷⁵ of his time. He granted stipends and pensions to many learned men and other deserving people⁷⁶. On the other hand, he had the ill reputation of being an invert, which probably explains his appointment, when he became acting minister, of many inexperienced and incompetent young men to offices of responsibility⁷⁷. In June 1792 Tikait Rai was selected to succeed Haidar Beg because of his long experience in the revenue department and the complete confidence that the late minister had reposed in him. During Haidar Beg's absence on a mission to Calcutta in 1787 for nine months, Tikait Rai had held the entire charge of the revenue department. He appears to have been a cringing type of man lacking in that dignity of manners which commanded respect and enforced obedience at a time when personal considerations carried great weight. Tikait Rai was also feeble in character and vacillating⁷⁸.

Though in name Tikait Rai was Hasan Raza's assistant, he, like Haidar Beg, exercised uncontrolled authority. The two ministers undertook a journey to Calcutta in 1793 to discuss with Shore the question of reforming the administration of Oudh and the means of liquidating the nawab's debts to the Company. After their return the two gradually fell away from each other. The nawab's debts were mounting steadily and Tikait Rai often troubled Asafuddaula about them, sometimes not meeting his demands for

75 A character in the *Mahabharata* known for his charity and bravery.

76 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 136-7.

77 Abu Talib, *op. cit.* 115.

78 References to Tikait Rai in *B.P.C.* 15 Jun. 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 6 Jun.; *B.P.C.* 7 Aug. 1795 Cherry to Shore; *B.S.C.* 10 Apr. 1797 Shore to Speke 5 Apr.

money promptly. These things annoyed the nawab from whose favour the acting minister fell till at last in 1210 A.H. (1795-96) Raja Jhao Lal, perhaps the greatest favourite of Asafuddaula, persuaded the nawab to believe that Tikait Rai had embezzled large sums of money⁷⁹. He alleged that the practice of the minister had been to appoint his relatives and favourites to the treasury (e.g. Baijnath, treasurer) to embezzle large sums of money with their help, and to lend this money to the sarkar in the names of various bankers and moneylenders at exorbitant rates of interest⁸⁰. Then he realised from the treasury the interest and sometimes the principal, of which a small portion went to the bankers whose names had been made use of while the greater part went to the minister himself. The nawab appointed Rai Balakram, a minion of Jhao Lal, to check up Tikait Rai's accounts, and the result was the reduction of the nawab's debts to the bankers to about a seventh of Tikait Rai's total⁸¹. How far this reduction was fair and how far the result of Balakram's excessive zeal is not known, but that Tikait Rai's conduct had not been above board is proved from a statement of Cherry, a patron of Tikait Rai, suggesting that the minister delayed in delivering to him the accounts of the sarkar for fear of involving himself and his dependants⁸².

The nawab dismissed Tikait Rai and his friends and suggested to Hasan Raza the appointment of Jhao Lal as assistant minister. Hasan Raza, fearing that Jhao Lal being a favourite of the nawab would be too independent of him, induced Cherry to influence the nawab to reinstate Tikait Rai. Thus in May 1796 Tikait Rai was reappointed, but without the charge of the treasury⁸³, but within a month both he and Hasan Raza were finally dismissed by the nawab. Cherry's patronage of Tikait

79 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 153; Ratan Chand, *op. cit.* f. 210-11.

80 Cherry mentions 36 p. c. compound. This charge was true, see *B.P.C.* 18 Sep. 1795 Cherry to Shore 1 Sep.

81 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 153.

82 *B.P.C.* 7 Aug. 1795 Cherry to Shore 21 July; *B.P.C.* 14 Aug. 1795 GG to Cherry 12 Aug.

83 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 153; *B.P.C.* 20 May 1796 Cherry to GG 9 May.

Rai seems to have been due more to his dislike of Jhao Lal (in which he was supported by Shore's definite censure ⁸⁴) than for any particular admiration for Tikait Rai himself ⁸⁵. When Cherry was recalled, Jhao Lal became the principal adviser of Asafuddaula, the offices of diwani and bakhshigari being nominally conferred upon the two reputed sons of the nawab, Wazir Ali and Raza Ali. ⁸⁶

The principal favourite of Asafuddaula was Raja Jhao Lal whose banishment from Oudh is said to have hastened the nawab's death. Unfortunately very little is mentioned about him either by the Indian chroniclers or in the official documents of the time except that his principal means of retaining the nawab's favour were flattery and constant pandering to his caprices. There is in Lucknow a bridge and the surrounding locality bearing the name of Jhao Lal, probably commemorating the favourite. The only mention of him in some detail is found in *Imad-us-Sa'adat* ⁸⁷ where he is described as a Hindu Kayasth of the Saksena Dusre sub-caste. His father had been a servant of Rafi-ud-Darajat ⁸⁸. Lumsden says he was a Muslim though he bore a Hindu name ⁸⁹, but no Indian chronicler confirms that, which they would almost certainly have done if it were correct. He was employed under Shujauddaula as "superintendent of the audience chamber" (*darogha-i-diwanekhana*) which office he held when Asafuddaula ascended the masnad. He was popularly known as Lalluji. Though he was married and had children, he spent large sums of money on dancing girls and prostitutes. Asafuddaula on the day of his accession promoted him to the station of "grand equerry and master of horse" (*khasat-ush-shak aqasigari wa akhtabegigari*) ⁹⁰ along with several other offices, e.g. command of a body of troops and paymaster-

84 B.P.C. 26 Jun. 1795.

85 B.P.C. 20 May 1796 Cherry to Shore 21 July 1795.

86 B.P.C. 17 Jun. 1796 Cherry to GG 1 Jun.

87 Pp. 129, 146-7, 153-7.

88 Ratan Chand, *op. cit.* f. 213.

89 B.P.C. 14 Oct. 1796 Lumsden to Shore 15 Sep.

90 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 129.

general (*mir bakhshi*)⁹¹. He was at that time also given the title of Maharaja.

His influence with the nawab increased every day and the minister Mukhtaruddaula growing jealous had him imprisoned. After the minister's death he was released and retired to Etawah. There he entertained Warren Hastings when he was on his way back to Calcutta after his last visit to Lucknow. Hastings was favourably impressed by him and recommended him to Hasan Raza and Haidar Beg, and thus Jhao Lal found his way back to the durbar. As soon as he got a place there, he exerted his influence with the nawab and started interfering in the affairs of the administration, and grew so conceited that he ceased to pay even the customary respect to the ministers⁹². His influence in Court reached its peak during 1794-6 while that of Tikait Rai declined. When on 31 March 1796 Asafuddaula had an occasion to meet the commander-in-chief, Sir Robert Abercrombie, at Lucknow, he requested him to secure the governor-general's consent to the dismissal of Tikait Rai and the appointment of Jhao Lal in his place⁹³. At the time of Tikait Rai's reappointment with reduced powers in May 1796, Jhao Lal was given the charge of the nawab's household and the headship of the intelligence department⁹⁴. On the final dismissal of Hasan Raza and Tikait Rai in June 1796, Jhao Lal became all-powerful. But at this time he was suspected of plotting with Zaman Shah, King of Afghanistan, Ghulam Muhammad Khan, the Rohilla chief, Sindhia and some other chiefs of India to oust the English from Oudh, which led to his banishment by Shore early in 1797⁹⁵.

Two facts suggest that Jhao Lal was a man of ability. Firstly, he had successfully held office under Shujauddaula, and, secondly, Warren Hastings's recommendation. Lumsden says that he was "eager to work but his talents were unequal to his situation"⁹⁶. He was unpopular both

91 Ratan Chand *op. cit.* f. 172, 182.

92 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 146-7.

93 *B.P.C.* 16 May 1796.

94 *B.P.C.* 20 May 1796 Cherry to Shore 9 May; nawab-wazir to Resident 3 May.

95 Kamaluddin Haidar, *op. cit.* f. 27; Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 157.

96 *B.P.C.* 2 Jan. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 24 Dec. 1796.

with the nawab's and the Company's officials. The reason for the first seems to have been his conceit and the jealousy arising out of his influence with the nawab ; for the latter, his definite hostility towards the English. That he was unsuited for the post of minister is certain for, as Abu Talib suggests, all his time was taken up in humouring the capricious nawab leaving him little leisure to attend to public affairs⁹⁷.

Shore experienced great difficulty in removing Jhao Lal; he had still greater difficulty in finding a successor acceptable both to himself and Asafuddaula. He suggested the names of Hasan Raza and Tikait Rai, but the nawab would have neither of them. At last Almas was decided upon and was proclaimed minister, but only for a day⁹⁸. Ultimately a man was found whom Shore whole-heartedly recommended and to whom Asafuddaula had the least objection. He was Tafazzul Hussain Khan, once tutor of Asafuddaula and Sa'adat Ali, and in 1797 an old man. But Tafazzul refused to accept office. It was after a great deal of persuasion by the governor-general and the nawab that he at last consented to be the chief minister.

Tafazzul⁹⁹ was a very remarkable man if not a great minister. His ancestors were Sunnis and belonged to Kashmir from where they had migrated to the Punjab. At the early age of 13 or 14 he came with his parents to Delhi and became a pupil of Mulla Nizamuddin, a famous teacher. When he was 18 years old his parents moved down to Lucknow and there Tafazzul became the pupil of another famous man of learning, Mulla Hasan of Firangi Mahal. He was soon recognised as a student of unusual merit and a keen debater. He embarrassed his teachers so much by raising awkward discussions that Mulla Hasan finally threw

97 Abu Talib, *op. cit.* 125-6. An account of Jhao Lal's supposed complicity in Wazir Ali's rebellion and his later career can be read in a Persian manuscript entitled *Mirat-ul-Ahwal* by Aka Ahmad Babhani, to be found in Oriental Public Library, Patna. I have not been able to consult the manuscript myself, but have seen it referred to by K. K. Datta in an article on Wazir Ali's rebellion in *Bengal Past and Present* Vol. LV. Part III.

98 Ratan Chand, *op. cit.* f. 213.

99 Ghulam Ali *op. cit.* 155-7 ; *Tawarikh-i-Awadh* by Kamaluddin Haidar 117-9.

him out of his school. He continued his studies by himself and soon acquired an intimate knowledge of the works of the great masters of philosophy and various sciences. His fame as a learned man spread quickly and Yaqut Khan, an old eunuch of Burhanulmulk, brought him before Shujaudaula. The nawab was deeply impressed by his learning and high moral sense and promptly appointed him tutor of his two sons, Asafuddaula and Sa'adat Ali. He went with his wards to Allahabad where he came into contact with various learned men, especially Maulvi Mir Ghulam Hussain Deccani, and probably by his influence accepted the Shia faith. Of his two pupils, Sa'adat Ali who was intelligent became his favourite, and Asafuddaula who showed early signs of perversity never cared for his instructions.

On Shujaudaula's death disagreement arose between Asafuddaula and Sa'adat Ali, and Tafazzul seems to have had a share in a plot to overthrow Asafuddaula ¹⁰⁰. Reconciliation was effected between the brothers by Warren Hastings, but Asafuddaula insisted on Tafazzul's dismissal from Sa'adat Ali's service. Sa'adat Ali refused, but Tafazzul solved the problem by himself leaving him ¹⁰¹. Hastings who had a keen eye for talent, appointed Tafazzul assistant to Maj. Palmer who was then charged with conducting some important negotiations with the Rana of Gohud. In this post he did so well that towards the end of 1781 he was appointed assistant to David Anderson, the Company's agent at the Court of Sindhia. The treaty between the English and Sindhia of 17 May 1782 was largely negotiated by Tafazzul ¹⁰². Thence he returned to the service of Palmer who was then Resident at Lucknow. In 1788 reconciliation took place between Tafazzul and Asafuddaula, and the former was appointed the nawab's wakil (agent) at Calcutta in succession to Raja Govindram. He did not like his office and accepted it only because he thought he could not with safety to himself refuse the nawab's and Haidar

100 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 120; Abu Talib, *op. cit.* 19-20.

101 *Asiatic Annual Register* (1803); Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 157.

102 Abu Talib, *op. cit.* 35; *A. A. Reg.* (1803) Letter of D. Anderson.

Beg's offer ¹⁰³. He was very much more interested in the pursuit of learning. He had started reading English while in Sindhia's camp in 1781-2 and soon acquired unusual fluency in that language ¹⁰⁴. At Calcutta he cultivated the society of men like Sir William Jones, Shore and others, and at the house of Shore's friend, Richard Johnson, he got every facility to pursue the study of mathematics, astronomy and the languages. He availed himself of the instructions of Rubens Burrows, a celebrated mathematician, and from him acquired a knowledge of Newton's philosophy. Later, he translated Newton's *Principia* from the original Latin into Arabic. He also translated into Arabic the following works: Emerson's *Mechanics*; Simpson's *Algebra*; *Appollonius de Sectione Rationis*, a work on conic sections by Guillaume Francois, Marquis de l'Hopital; and several short treatises on logarithms, curve lines, etc. ¹⁰⁵. Mathematics was Tafazzul's favourite subject, and before his death he had started reading Greek.

As Asafuddaula's chief minister Tafazzul accomplished little owing perhaps to his own lack of interest in the affairs of state, Asafuddaula's antipathy and the shortness of his term of office. He was greatly instrumental in the deposition of Wazir Ali ¹⁰⁶. On the accession of Sa'adat Ali to the masnad in January 1798 he was reappointed the nawab's agent at Calcutta. He died at Hazaribagh on his way to Calcutta in the beginning of 1800 ¹⁰⁷. As a man and scholar he has been very highly spoken of by every contemporary writer. Even Shore, in whose company he visited England ¹⁰⁸ and who is generally extra severe in his estimate of Indian character, pays him eloquent tribute. ¹⁰⁹

It will suffice to mention here only the names of some

103 *A. A. Reg.* (1803) Tafazzul Hussain to D. Anderson.

104 See his letter in English to D. Anderson in *A. A. Reg.* (1803).

105 *A. A. Reg.* (1803) Rubens Burrows to Teignmouth; Tafazzul Hussain to D. Anderson.

106 Kamaluddin Haidar, *op. cit.* f. 31.

107 *Tawarikh-i-Awadh* 152.

108 Teignmouth, *Life of Lord Teignmouth* I 402-3.

109 *A. A. Reg.* (1803) Letter of Teignmouth; Teignmouth, *op. cit.* Shore's Journal, Shore to Lady Shore 21 Feb. and 3 Mar. 1797.

of the lesser personalities in the nawab's durbar who during the period under review had had a share in the government of Oudh. They were : Surat Singh, Raja Jagannath, Hulas Rai, Buchhraj, Tahsin Ali Khan, Balakram, Bhagwan Das, Dhanpat Rai, Bhawani Mahra, Zainulabdin, Mirza Hasan, Mehdi Ali, Govindram, Ratan Chand, Abu Talib, etc. They possessed varying degrees of ability and power, the two not always proportionate to each other because they were employed either haphazardly or deliberately with corrupt intentions¹¹⁰. Their influence on the administration was, not unnaturally, more often baneful than beneficial. It can, however, be said that the failure of Asafuddaula's government and the ruin and disorder in which it resulted were not due to any dearth of able servants. The neglect from the centre for about a quarter of a century was bound to reduce a despotic state like Oudh to that miserable condition in which Sa'adat Ali found it on his accession. Asafuddaula's negligence and caprices, which could not have continued unhampered so long but for the military protection of the East India Company, ruined the finances of the state and lowered the dignity of the nawabi to an unprecedented degree.

110 I have not found many details about them in the chronicles or official documents I have consulted, where they are only casually mentioned.

II

OUDH AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

EVER since Shujauddaula's war against the Rohillas (1774) a detachment of British troops had been maintained in Oudh at the nawab's expense. Employed at the nawab's will at first, the maintenance of the Company's brigades in Oudh was made obligatory by the treaty of Fyzabad (1775)¹. The avowed object of this was that the sarkar needed these troops for the protection of its territories, but it has been held by the critics of Hastings² that the real object was the maintenance of a sizeable force at the nawab's expense. Whether the sarkar really needed this force is a question which can be answered only after an examination of the relations between Oudh

1 In 1785 the number of the Company's troops in Oudh was as follows:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|-------------------|
| At Cawnpore : | | | |
| 1 regiment of European infantry | .. | .. | 416 |
| 1 company of European artillery | | | 83 |
| 1 battalion of lascars | | | 330 |
| 5 regiments of sepoy | | | 4,101 |
| 1 rissala of cavalry | | | 113 |
| 1 company of gollandazes | | | 130 |
| Total at Cawnpore | | | .. 5,173 |
| At Fathgarh : | | | |
| 1 company of European artillery | .. | .. | 96 |
| 1 battalion of lascars | .. | .. | 340 |
| 1 rissala of cavalry | .. | .. | 113 |
| 5 regiments of sepoy | .. | .. | 4,067 |
| Total at Fathgarh | | | .. 4,616 |
| At Lucknow : | | | |
| 1 regiment of sepoy | .. | .. | 822 |
| Total in Oudh | | | .. 10,611 |
| Expenses charged from the Nawab : | | | |
| For Cawnpore brigade | .. | .. | Rs. 2,60,000 p.m. |
| For Fathgarh brigade | .. | .. | Rs. 1,45,000 p.m. |
| For Lucknow regiment | .. | .. | Rs. 25,000 p.m. |
| Total Rs. | | | 4,30,000 p.m. |

2 It may be said in Hastings's defence that the treaty of 1775 was forced on Asafuddaula by the Majority in Calcutta Council which was hostile to Hastings.

and its neighbours and the efficiency of the nawab's own army. As to the latter point it has already been mentioned that Asafuddaula's first minister Mukhtaruddaula lost no time in dismissing a number of competent officers and disbanding a good part of Shujauddaula's army already depleted by the Rohilla war. No attempt was made by the succeeding ministers, and still less by the nawab himself, to restore the nawabi army to its former state of efficiency, while Oudh's relations with its neighbours were not always cordial.

The principal among Oudh's neighbours were besides the British, the Mahrattas under Sindhia, the Sikhs, several Rajput rajas, and the Rohilla nawabs of Saharanpur and Rampur. To this list should be added the name of the Shah of Afghanistan who though not a neighbour of Oudh in the strictest sense of the word nevertheless often caused panic in Lucknow by his threats of invading India.

(i) *Sindhia*

Warren Hastings in 1784 wrote that Sindhia was the only considerable power which could possibly threaten Oudh. Mahadji Sindhia was an ambitious and successful statesman and generally accepted as a competent warrior. Since 1771 he had usurped all the authority of the Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam, laid claim to various districts and forts in the Doab in the Emperor's name, and received honours from his docile overlord. But Shah Alam, never trustful of Sindhia, secretly encouraged the Doab chiefs to hold out against him, thus encouraging those who were apparently in rebellion against himself. These chiefs, mostly Muslim, sometimes applied to the nawab-wazir for help and there seemed to be a party in Lucknow strongly in favour of going to their aid, firstly because Oudh was a Muslim state, and secondly because the nawab of Oudh was also the wazir of the Empire and it was thought to be his duty to help those who were in fact acting according to the Emperor's wishes. Moreover, the heir-apparent to the Empire, Prince Jawan Bakht, had fled from the Emperor's presence, it is said with his father's connivance,

and had taken refuge in Lucknow. From time to time he received secret messages from the Emperor suggesting that he should march at the head of a combined English and Oudh army to free his father from the thralldom of Sindhia. There existed thus, as will be seen later, a strong anti-Mahratta party in Lucknow, which often led to misunderstandings and wordy duels between the nawab and Sindhia.

There were various other sources of bickerings between the two states. In fact they were universally regarded as natural enemies. They had everything to quarrel about and nothing to agree upon. Oudh was the only large Muslim state left in northern India which Sindhia presumably dreamt of converting into a Hindu Empire as soon as he found himself free to do so. Major Palmer wrote to Cornwallis on 26 August 1789³ :

Sindhia has directed Appa Bhaironath to acquaint us that an amicable arrangement in the affairs of Hindustan will soon be made between him and Holkar (ruler of Indore), and their joint force employed in establishing the peace and security of the country, and the administration of the Maratha government in the name of Shah Alam.

The nawab of Oudh was the wazir of the Empire, a position which Sindhia perhaps coveted. The Mahrattas and the earlier nawab-wazirs of Oudh had been almost constantly at war against each other. Important places of Hindu pilgrimage were situated within Oudh, *e.g.* Allahabad, Benares, Ayodhia, and the Mahrattas had to pass through Oudh territory in order to get to Gaya in Bihar. There were traditional pilgrim taxes at all these places and the Mahrattas resented paying such taxes to a Muslim chief. Then again, it often happened that a discontented or dismissed officer of the nawab's army would collect as many men and as much arms as he could and cross the frontier into Sindhia's territory. Such persons were almost invariably well-received by Sindhia and the same thing happened the other way round. Or, a person having incurred the wrath of either chief fled into the other chief's territory and was as a rule given asylum, it being

³ *B.L.* 28 letter in Political Department 5 November 1789.

the ancient practice of India for the powerful to protect one seeking refuge.

Such were the various causes of the disputes which were constantly arising between the two. On the other hand, from 1784 to the Anglo-Mahratta war in Wellesley's time the Company was on friendly terms with Sindhia and this was a guarantee against active Mahratta hostility towards Oudh. The Calcutta government, however, was not fully confident that this friendship would last, but they continued to maintain, as long as they could, friendly relations with the great Mahratta chief. Had it not been for their mediation it is very probable that Sindhia and Oudh would have come to an armed conflict. The Calcutta government, not wishing to give Sindhia any cause for action against Oudh, always prevented the nawab from taking any extreme step with regard to Sindhia. Sindhia on the other hand, being fully conscious of the military superiority of the English, thought it prudent not to offend them by acting openly to the prejudice of their ally, the nawab of Oudh, until at least he had his hands free from the court intrigues at Poona and from the hostility of the Rajput and other chiefs of northern India.

There occurred quite a number of incidents which would show that, in spite of the mutual distrust between Oudh and Sindhia, there was little possibility of any open hostility between the two. Any advance made by Sindhia for whatever reason towards the frontier of Oudh was looked upon in Lucknow as a threat of attack upon Oudh itself. Sindhia, already in possession of Delhi, wanted gradually to strengthen his hold upon northern India by subjugating the local chiefs, principal among them being Najaf Khan, the qiledar of Agra, who held a large part of the Doab from the Emperor; Jahangir Khan, the qiledar of Aligarh; Ghulam Qadir Khan, the nawab of Saharanpur; and the rajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur. All these smaller chiefs as well as the Sikhs neither paid regular tribute to Shah Alam nor did they always acknowledge his suzerainty, and had thus technically rebelled against him. Sindhia as the Emperor's agent had a technical ground to go to war against them. In doing

so he had often to come near the Oudh frontier, and every time he did so it gave rise to alarm in Lucknow.

Of the strongholds of the refractory chiefs mentioned above the first to fall was Agra. It surrendered to Sindhia on 27 March 1785 ⁴ and Shah Alam immediately afterwards conferred the subehdari on his second son, Akbar Shah, and the deputyship on Ladoji Deshmukh, Sindhia's son-in-law. Sindhia having made arrangements for the government of the province started for Delhi on 4 April.

After the fall of Agra, Major Palmer wrote to the governor-general⁵:

The fort of Aligarh, on the confines of the wazir's dominions and in the possession of the family of Afrasiab Khan, is now the only place of strength which is not under the power of Sindhia, and this place he will immediately proceed to attack.

On his way from Agra to Delhi, Sindhia halted at Muttra and it was believed that he would remain there for some time in order to conclude the negotiations which he had started with the qiledar of Aligarh for the surrender of that fort ⁶. This affair of Aligarh gave rise to what may be called a major crisis in the relations between the nawab and Sindhia. Aligarh was situated at a distance of about forty miles from the Oudh frontier and the advance of Sindhia towards Aligarh alarmed the Lucknow sarkar. Moreover, Sir John Cumming, officer commanding the Company's troops at Anupshehr (25 miles from Aligarh with no natural barrier in between), thoroughly distrusted Sindhia and was convinced that his purpose in taking Aligarh was to prepare a base for a future attack on Oudh. The Calcutta Council wrote to Anderson, the Company's agent with Sindhia, that if he thought that Sindhia's stay at Muttra would be "productive of effects hostile to the wazir" he could "make a spirited representation to him in the name of the Calcutta government against his

4 *B.L.* 23 letter in Secret Department 31 July 1785.

5 *B.S.C.* 9 April 1785 Palmer to GG 29 March.

6 *B.L.* 23 letter in Secret Department 31 July 1785.

encroachments.”⁷ In case that representation failed, Anderson was authorised to ask Col. Ironside (officer commanding at Cawnpore) and Cumming immediately to unite their forces and hold themselves in readiness to check the designs of Sindhia, “defending the territories of the wazir, and stirring up the Sikhs and the Moghul chiefs against him.” But these steps were not to be taken until absolutely necessary. In the meantime all communications between Sindhia and important persons in Oudh, especially the Shahzada (the Emperor’s son), were to be watched.

Another problem in connection with Aligarh arose in the following manner. The widow and family of Afrasiab Khan had applied to the nawab for shelter in case they were displaced by Sindhia⁸. The nawab promised them asylum, and this was a matter to which Sindhia could legitimately take exception. But Palmer (Resident at Lucknow) suggested that the nawab was quite within his rights to give the promise as the members of the family of Afrasiab Khan were neither subjects nor servants of Sindhia. And even if they were so, Sindhia had himself set the precedent by giving asylum to Chait Singh in September 1781 when he had been driven out from Benares by Hastings⁹. Moreover, Sindhia had not always been very mindful of the nawab’s dignity where his own interests were at stake. In fact, Palmer thought it would be better if the nawab exercised his rights oftener against Sindhia as too much forbearance on the nawab’s part had led Sindhia to regard him with contempt. Besides, it would have been impossible for the nawab to refuse asylum to the family of Afrasiab Khan. They had at first applied to Cumming to occupy Aligarh in the name of the nawab or of the Company and give them refuge¹⁰. Cumming not having the authority to comply with the request wrote to the Resident at Lucknow. In the meantime the family got extremely urgent and threatened to leave the fort and come into the nawab’s territory, without permission if necessary. Were

7 *B.L.* 23 letter in Secret Department.

8 *B.S.C.* 12 April 1785 Cumming to GG 29 March; *B.S.C.* 9 April Palmer to GG 29 March.

9 Chait Singh lived in Gwalior till his death on 29 March 1810.

10 Cumming to GG 29 March.

they actually to do so, it would have been a very dishonourable act to force them back, and they would not have gone unless forced. Cumming sent an express to Lucknow saying:

It is an established custom amongst Princes in Hindustan not to refuse asylum to the families of each other in distress. And Sindhia has sufficiently declared his own sentiments on this head by the refuge he afforded to Chait Sing in spite of all remonstrances of the late governor-general.

Cumming's own impression was that Sindhia wanted to control a chain of forts along the frontier of Oudh, consisting of Ghausgarh, Jaitgarh, Aligarh, together with a number of intermediate fortresses of inferior strength. On the nawab's side the entire frontier was defenceless and the tracts on the western bank of the Ganges belonging to Oudh were entirely at the mercy of Sindhia. The Ganges was fordable at a hundred different places along the border of Rohilkhand during the dry season, and from the middle of December to June Rohilkhand, too, lay open to the Mahrattas. For these reasons Cumming thought that Aligarh had a special importance from the point of view of the defence of Oudh and was better not occupied by Sindhia¹¹. He was annoyed at the apparent unconcern of the Resident and the Lucknow durbar who, he wrote, "seem to have no idea of the danger. They think of nothing but the Sikhs who are not worth a thought."¹² The nawab desired Cumming to march back and on 1 April he actually started. At the end of the first day's march he received instructions from Palmer to stay at the frontier. Fearing that that might cause uneasiness in Sindhia's mind, Cumming was prepared to go back to Fathgarh, provided Sindhia recalled such troops as had already crossed the Jamuna and promised to take no further steps on the frontier¹³. But Anderson thought that it would have been inexpedient to make such a proposal to Sindhia for he would not have agreed to it. Mahadji had been for a very

11 *B.S.C.* 12 April 1785 Cumming to Anderson 31 March; Cumming to GG 29 March.

12 *B.S.C.* 19 April 1785 Palmer to GG 7 April.

13 Cumming to Anderson 1 April; Cumming to Stibbert 2 April.

long time looking forward to taking possession of Aligarh where he believed were hidden the treasures of the late nawab Afrasiab Khan, and other forts dependent upon it. He would not have given up the project unless the request to relinquish it was accompanied by threats of armed resistance which Anderson did not feel himself at liberty to offer. And then, the continued stay of Cumming's detachment on the frontier after the refusal of Sindhia would have clearly shown that the company was afraid of the Mahrattas, a fact which Anderson thought it was best to conceal ¹⁴.

Cumming's theory of a "chain of forts" was more a product of his imagination than real; and even if real, much importance could not be attached to it for none of these forts could have effectively withstood the British guns ¹⁵. He was therefore instructed to take orders from the nawab as to his movements, except in cases of emergency when Anderson would instruct him ¹⁶. But in the meantime Cumming had almost precipitated a crisis. He wrote a threatening letter to Anderson that unless the latter remonstrated with Sindhia against his operations on the Oudh frontier, or if Sindhia sent troops across the Jamuna, he [Cumming] "was determined to take part . . . with the whole force under [his] command." ¹⁷ Anderson wrote a stiff reply reminding Cumming that the Calcutta government had clearly indicated its intention of avoiding a rupture with Sindhia, and if Cumming insisted on behaving in the way he threatened to do, he alone would be held responsible for the consequences ¹⁸. This letter and the information that Sindhia had abandoned the idea of reducing the frontier fortresses, had stopped his troops from crossing the Jamuna and had marched towards Delhi by way of Muttra, made Cumming give up his aggressive attitude ¹⁹. Thus was averted what might have developed into a very awkward situation.

14 Anderson to Cumming 5 April.

15 Anderson to GG 5 April; GG to Anderson 19 April.

16 GG to Cumming 19 April.

17 *B.S.C.* 26 April 1785 Cumming to Anderson 8 April.

18 Anderson to Cumming 10 April.

19 Anderson to GG 12 April; Cumming to GG 11 April.

In fact, the English had no right to interfere in Sindhia's affairs unless he committed an act of open hostility against the Company or the nawab. Events proved that Cumming's fears were unfounded²⁰. The governor-general and the commander-in-chief, as well as Palmer and Anderson, were convinced of that, and by the middle of April Cumming reluctantly gave up his fond idea of preventing Sindhia from taking Aligarh. He, however, continued to distrust Sindhia as much as ever²¹.

Aligarh eventually fell into Sindhia's hands. Soon after the withdrawal of Cumming negotiations were started between Jahangir Khan, the qiledar of Aligarh, and Sindhia by which the latter seemed to be willing to leave the fort to the qiledar in exchange for a large sum of money²². The objective of Sindhia seems to have been the treasures said to have been hoarded by Afrasiab Khan and buried in the fort. Nothing came of these negotiations and Sindhia prepared to attack Aligarh but remained inactive owing to the presence of Cumming and his detachment so near Aligarh. He feared Cumming's interference and complained to Anderson that this forced inaction was causing him expensive delay. Anderson assured him that Cumming would not interfere, but as to the giving of asylum to Jahangir Khan, the nawab could not be forced to give up the refugee or his property. Jahangir Khan was a servant of the Emperor, and the nawab as the Emperor's wazir was expected to give him asylum. Moreover, Sindhia and the Emperor had themselves set the precedent by giving asylum to Chait Singh and Sumroo respectively²³. The matter was somewhat complicated because although Jahangir Khan was apparently in rebellion against the Emperor, and Sindhia as his agent had come to punish him, yet probably the Emperor himself secretly encouraged Jahangir Khan to hold out against Sindhia²⁴. Gabriel Harper, who had succeeded Palmer as

20 *B.S.C.* 11 October 1785 Anderson to GG 31 August.

21 *B.S.C.* 13 May 1785 Cumming to GG 9 May.

22 *B.S.C.* 7 June 1785 Anderson to GG 16 May.

23 *B.S.C.* 14 June 1785 same to same 26 May.

24 *B.S.C.* 11 October 1785 arzi from Jahangir Khan to the Prince, received at Lucknow 25 Sep. 1785.

Resident at Lucknow on 13 July 1785, was of opinion that Sindhia should not have been allowed to take Aligarh, but the Calcutta government agreed with Anderson's view. Aligarh surrendered to Sindhia on 22 November 1785. He seemed to take little interest in the fort itself and was greatly disappointed in not finding the treasure he had expected to find there ²⁵.

This success of Sindhia left a noticeable trace of fear in the minds of both the nawab and Harper ²⁶. The nawab had always suspected an alliance between Sindhia and the Sikhs directed against himself. On this point the available evidences conflict. On the one hand, there is the case of a man who came to Calcutta, said to have been deputed by the Sikh sardars, and said that Sindhia had instigated the Sikhs to invade Rohilkhand holding out the nawab's and the Company's territories as bait. On the other hand, when the Sikhs began their depredations in Rohilkhand, Sindhia invited the English to join him to suppress them ²⁷. The nawab, however, had such deep-rooted fear of a union of the Sikhs and Sindhia that early in February 1785 he sent a request to the English commander-in-chief that the whole of the Company's detachment in Oudh should march to the frontier ²⁸. After a short time both the Oudh sarkar and Cumming came to realize that such a combination was hardly possible ²⁹. The alarm felt in Lucknow was natural and somewhat justifiable, for negotiations were going on between Sindhia and the Sikhs which did result in a treaty. It was, however, only a defensive treaty not directed against either the nawab or the Company. In fact, by it

Sindhia had virtually made himself responsible to the Company and the wazir for the peaceable behaviour of the Sikhs, since in the present state of their connections all their inroads must be supposed to be made with his knowledge and approbation; the treaty may in this view be considered as advantageous to the Company and the wazir. ³⁰

25 *B.S.C.* 7 Dec. 1785 Anderson to GG 24 Nov.

26 *B.S.C.* 8 December 1785 Harper to GG 25 November.

27 *B.L.* 23 letter in Secret Department 31 July 1785.

28 *B.S.C.* 19 February 1785 Cumming to Stibbert 4 February.

29 *B.S.C.* 9 April 1785 Cumming to C-in-C 9 March.

30 *B.S.C.* 26 April Anderson to GG & Council 12 April.

On being asked by Anderson about this treaty, Sindhia readily showed him the text of the draft and assured him that it was directed really against the Rajput chiefs of Jaipur and Jodhpur who had not for some time paid tribute to the Emperor. It specifically stated that the friends and enemies of each were the friends and enemies of the other. Therefore, as long as Sindhia's friendship with the Company and the nawab lasted, the non-hostility of the Sikhs was also guaranteed³¹. Anderson insisted on the specific mention of the English and the nawab as "friends" to which Sindhia readily agreed³².

It could hardly be expected that the Sindhia-Sikh alliance would last long. Their common aim was nothing more constructive than plunder, and they had both conflicting claims on the pargana of Meerut³³. There is ample evidence of their mutual distrust. Each had applied to the English for a secret treaty against the other³⁴. Sindhia further showed his distrust of his allies by detaining in his camp Doolja Singh, the Sikh negotiator, until the treaty came back duly signed and sealed by all the Sikh sardars³⁵. Since, however, Sindhia specifically mentioned the wazir and the English as friends in the treaty, they could both feel reasonably secure as long as friendship between Sindhia and the English lasted.

The real point to decide then is whether Sindhia's assertions of friendship towards the Company (and the nawab) were sincere. It can only be conjectured what would have been Sindhia's attitude towards Oudh had it not been known that the English took an active interest in the defence of that country. But knowing the relationship between Oudh and the Company, Mahadji Sindhia was shrewd enough not to precipitate a breach without first making sure of success. Only once were the cordial relations between him and the English threatened, but

31 *B.S.C.* 3 May 1785 Anderson to GG 14 April; also the text of the draft.

32 *B.S.C.* 12 May 1785 Anderson to GG 28 April.

33 *B.S.C.* 13 May 1785 Anderson to GG 10 May.

34 *B.L.* 23 secret letter 31 July 1785; letters from Sikh chiefs to Cumming; Cumming's reply 13 May 1785.

35 Anderson to GG and Council 16 May 1785.

he made haste to make it up. It happened in April 1785 when Sindhia on behalf of Shah Alam demanded from the nawab the Bengal tribute which had been discontinued by Warren Hastings. The Board had decided earlier in the month to recall Major Browne, the Company's agent with the Emperor, on the ground that Anderson (agent with Sindhia) being already there it was not necessary to keep another agent with the Emperor thereby duplicating expenses. When Browne took leave of the Emperor, he was asked to go by way of Lucknow and tell the nawab to pay up the Bengal tribute. Anderson also received a similar report of the interview and prepared to leave Sindhia's camp. Sindhia saw him, partly denied the report and partly explained it away. He in fact secured a shuqqa from the Emperor and a letter to the governor-general saying that he had had no such intention as Browne had made out, that he considered the nawab and the Company as his friends and that he had asked only for a petty sum which the nawab used to pay him. These letters reached Calcutta on 7 May 1785. The Board accepted the explanation and Anderson continued to stay at Sindhia's Court³⁶. The magnitude of the crisis can be judged from two letters written by Haidar Beg Khan and the nawab, whose views were fully shared by Major Palmer³⁷. The eagerness of the Oudh sarkar to go to war may also have been due to jealousy for certain honours that Shah Alam had lately bestowed upon Sindhia, and not due to policy³⁸.

Another factor which was very often responsible for show-downs between Sindhia and Oudh was the asylum given by each to fugitives from the other's state. One of these cases occurred soon after the fall of Aligarh in 1785. A battalion of Sindhia's troops deserted with their arms and three guns and took refuge in the nawab's territory. Sindhia applied to Harper, Resident at Lucknow, for their delivery to him. Having ascertained that they had actually crossed the Ganges and had arrived near Bareilly,

36 *B.S.C.* 12 May 1785.

37 Palmer to GG 26 April 1785.

38 *B.S.C.* 13 May 1785 Anderson to GG 8 May.

Harper approached the nawab with Sindhia's request. The nawab gave lengthy explanations to the effect that the battalion with the arms in question had originally been in his service and had deserted at Etawah in 1779,³⁹ and had gone over first to Najaf Khan and then to Sindhia, that they had returned voluntarily without any encouragement from him because they had not received their pay from Sindhia for a long time and that the commandant of the battalion, Qalandar Sing, had not even applied to him for leave to enter his service. This last part is difficult to believe because unless the commandant had applied and got the nawab's permission, his entry into Bareilly with arms and guns should certainly have been interpreted as an act of hostility. The nawab had not the least desire to comply with Sindhia's request; in fact, he seemed very pleased with the whole affair.

The nawab's attitude was opposed both to reason and his own interests. Although no formal treaty existed between him and Sindhia for the mutual restitution of fugitives, one virtually subsisted between two such powers not at war with each other, especially when they had the Company as a common ally. Nor did the nawab seem to have any illusions about the justice of his stand, for he did not even try to justify himself. He confessed that his action was a retaliation for similar acts done by Sindhia and others. He perhaps alluded to an incident of about a year ago, but then the case has been somewhat different. A number of soldiers had been regularly dismissed by the nawab. They took service under Sindhia and the nawab never demanded their return⁴⁰. Possibly individuals often deserted from the nawab's army and joined Sindhia's, but that was a common occurrence in the armies of Hindustan. In the present case, had the nawab been sincere in his professions he should have punished the deserters on their return rather than welcome them as he had done.

Anderson as a practical man left the question of right in doubt and suggested that considerations of interest should have induced the nawab to act differently. Sindhia

39 *B.S.C.* 29 December 1785 Harper to GG 11 December.

40 Anderson to GG 17 December.

had some time ago suggested to him the conclusion of a definitive treaty for the mutual restitution of fugitives, which the nawab had refused. A treaty between the two was difficult to arrange, but this was a favourable opportunity to negotiate one. The negotiations dragged on for months, the nawab showing no intention of complying with Sindhia's request which was supported by the Calcutta government⁴¹. Anderson was of opinion that the nawab's claim was "in the highest degree obsolete" and that he had been guided more by malice and jealousy than by any consideration of his rights. Harper on the other hand thought that the nawab had acted within his rights⁴². Anderson's seems to be the more correct reading of the nawab's mind ; Harper certainly was prejudiced against Sindhia.

Another typical case is that of Himmat Bahadur, the zamindar of a tract of land in the Doab situated along the banks of the Ganges from three coss below Anupshehr to about twenty coss downwards, including the fort of Jaitgarh⁴³. Sindhia had engaged not to disturb him in his possession, but owing to Himmat Bahadur's intrigues with the Sikhs and Rajputs against him, he decided to put him out of harm's way. Himmat Bahadur was at that time understood to be making overtures to the nawab against Sindhia⁴⁴. To entertain favourably Himmat Bahadur's overtures would amount to an affront to Sindhia. By January 1786 Himmat Bahadur was obliged to deliver up much of his territory and his fate seemed sealed. He fled towards Oudh and made earnest solicitations to the nawab for protection⁴⁵. Himmat Bahadur's brother Umrao Gir with some forces was said to have taken refuge with Almas Ali⁴⁶. Simultaneously with the flight of Himmat Bahadur and Umrao Gir had arisen certain disagreements between Sindhia and Anderson, due

41 *B.S.C.* 22 March 1786 Harper to nawab-wazir 16 January ; nawab-wazir to Harper 6 February.

42 *B.S.C.* 9 March 1786 Anderson to GG 15 February.

43 *B.S.C.* 12 April 1785 Cumming to GG 29 March.

44 *B.S.C.* 13 May 1785 Anderson to GG 8 May.

45 *B.S.C.* 8 February 1786 Anderson to GG 18 January ; *Poona Residency Correspondence* I 43.

46 *B.S.C.* 9 March 1786 Anderson to GG 15 February ; *P.R.C.* I 44-6.

to which the latter left Sindhia's camp. Lest the coincidence should be interpreted to mean that the English had finally broken with Sindhia and were therefore giving protection to Himmatt Bahadur, Anderson wrote to Harper to act in such a way as to dispel any such impression⁴⁷. Himmatt Bahadur had in the meantime crossed the Jamuna with the intention of taking refuge with the nawab. He was followed by a large Mahratta force which was, however, instructed not to enter the nawab's territory⁴⁸. Umrao Gir had defeated the Mahratta forces in an engagement, but he was not expected to hold out long and so he, too, was expected to cross the Ganges and seek shelter in Rohilkhand. Himmatt Bahadur had with him the whole of his family and his effects, and about 2,000 cavalry and 22 pieces of ordnance. He had avoided all acts of hostility during his flight and having arrived at the bank of the Ganges waited for the nawab's permission to enter Oudh. He refused to join Umrao Gir who was collecting forces to fight the Mahrattas⁴⁹. The nawab, under Harper's instructions, issued orders to all the ghats not to allow the brothers to enter Oudh⁵⁰. The Calcutta government also expressed its desire that the wazir should not grant them protection⁵¹, to which the nawab readily agreed⁵². In spite of all this, Sindhia could not be certain of the nawab sticking to his professed engagement⁵³. He was perhaps right, because Himmatt Bahadur did cross over into the nawab's territory and was given asylum. Sindhia's agent, Bhao Bakhshi, had a talk with Anderson about this and the latter assured the Bhao that Himmatt Bahadur would not get any encouragement from the sarkar or the English, but he could not be delivered up. The Bhao then demanded the twenty-two odd pieces of cannon which Himmatt Bahadur had taken with him and he was told

47 *B.S.C.* 29 March 1786 Anderson to GG 2 and 15 March; *P.R.C.* I 47-53.

48 Harper to GG 1 March 1786; *P.R.C.* I 51-2.

49 Harper to GG 28 March 1786, received at Calcutta 5 April 1786.

50 *P.R.C.* I 51-2.

51 Board's resolution, *B.S.C.* 29 March 1786.

52 *B.S.C.* 24 April 1786.

53 *B.S.C.* 4 April 1786 Anderson to GG.

that if those guns did actually belong to the Emperor or Sindhia they would be returned⁵⁴. Anderson's previous views had changed and he now thought that although no good could come of either Himmat Bahadur or Umrao Gir's stay in Oudh, yet they should not be driven out. He suggested a camouflaged system⁵⁵. The brothers eventually continued to stay in Oudh, and Umrao Gir from time to time tried to stir up a rising against Sindhia. The Calcutta government considered that it was absolutely necessary to maintain good relations between Sindhia and the nawab, as the Company would otherwise be inevitably drawn into a war. So Cornwallis wrote both to Harper and to Kirkpatrick (agent with Sindhia):⁵⁶

Whenever any person, who may have agreed to receive pay from Sindhia, whether in his capacity as minister to the Shah or of a Mahratta chief, or any aumil who may have entered into an engagement with him for some particular district, whether in his ancient dominions, or those of the Shah, of which he has assumed the management, shall elope from Sindhia and seek protection with the nawab, it should not be granted. But if any Mussalman chief, etc., out of the dominions of Sindhia, who has never regularly taken service with him, or entered into any formal contract or engagement with him, in regard to his possessions, shall be forced to seek protection with the nawab, I think that it might be allowed, and no regard should be paid to any claims of Sindhia either on the ground of the fugitive's being a tributary of the Mahratta empire, or of his being a sergeant of the King, which are vague and general pleas, that may be used on all occasions.

As to Himmat Bahadur, the governor-general wished that all intercourse between him and the nawab should cease, and that although he need not be expelled from Oudh, he should on no account be encouraged by the sarkar. Sindhia on the other hand was charged not to champion anyone's claims prejudicial to the interests of the nawab, however just those claims might have been⁵⁷. The nawab acknowledged the need for maintaining good relations with his neighbours and accepted Cornwallis's suggestions, but very persistently declared his resentment against various insults which he thought Sindhia had offered him⁵⁸. Harper observed "a propensity in the

54 *B.S.C.* 23 June 1786 Anderson to GG 30 May.

55 *B.S.C.* 31 May 1786 Anderson to Harper 5 May; *P.R.C.* I 56-7.

56 *B.S.C.* 24 January 1787 GG to Harper.

57 *ibid.*

58 Appendix to *B.S.C.* 26 Feb. 1787.

wazir to encourage rather than avoid a dispute with the **Mahrattas.**" The nawab called Sindhia "a man without faith and whose friendship existed on no other principle than convenience and fear."⁵⁹ Sindhia, too, accepted Cornwallis's suggestions in respect to fugitives. He, however, claimed that Himmatt Bahadur fell under the category which was required to be restituted, for he had received 'mawajib' (a pay) from the Emperor and had held a 'jaidad' (assignment for the payment of troops) under Sindhia in the character of retainer to the wakil mutlaq (Sindhia)⁶⁰. Relieved for the moment, the tension between Sindhia and the wazir was, however, too deep-rooted to be removed altogether.

In spite of his distrust and dislike of Sindhia, the nawab, following the advice of the Calcutta government, on various occasions acted in a conciliatory manner towards him. When in the middle of 1787 Sindhia was engaged in a war against the Rajput chiefs of Jaipur and Jodhpur, Umrao Gir tried to raise troops against him in Oudh. The nawab thereupon issued the following order to Umrao Gir⁶¹ :

It is known that you entertain troops and intend to attack the possessions of Sindhia. It has been repeatedly represented to you before that friendship subsists between Sindhia, the English gentlemen and myself. If it is your wish to remain in my dominions without disturbance or dispute, it is well ; and if you make any commotion, you will find no protection in my country and you will quit my dominion. If you stay in my territory, you must not vary from the line of conduct you have hitherto observed.

When Umrao Gir persisted in acting in violation of the nawab's orders, a proclamation was issued on 26 Zilhijah 1201 A.H. (9 September 1787) to the effect that Umrao Gir in defiance of the wazir's orders had tried to raise some disturbance against Sindhia and so had forfeited what claim he had to the wazir's protection, and in whatsoever district he or his children may be, the amil thereof should on finding him keep him in confinement to be punished by the government⁶². Towards

59 *B.S.O.* 26 Feb. 1787 Harper to Cornwallis 14 Feb.

60 *B.S.O.* 13 Apr. 1787 Kirkpatrick to GG 30 May.

61 *B.S.O.* 28 Aug. 1787.

62 *B.S.O.* 27 Sep. 1787.

November it was reported from Etawah that large numbers of men from Oudh, mostly soldiers discharged from the nawab's service, were gathering under Himmat Bahadur for action against Sindhia. Ives, Resident at Lucknow from 1 October 1787, protested, but the minister pointed out that it was very difficult to check private unemployed individuals who sought adventure⁶³. Cornwallis agreed with the minister⁶⁴. Early in 1788 Sindhia requested the nawab to help the qiledar of Aligarh with men and money, claiming that since many men from Oudh had joined Ghulam Qadir Khan who had laid siege to Aligarh, the nawab was morally bound to assist in its defence⁶⁵. The nawab refused on the ground that they, too, were private adventurers. He had already taken exceptional measures in regard to Himmat Bahadur, and had remonstrated strongly with Fyzullah Khan (Nawab of Rampur, tributary to Oudh) for his nephews having joined Ghulam Qadir. Beyond that he would observe strict neutrality⁶⁶. With this the governor-general entirely concurred⁶⁷.

The affair of Himmat Bahadur again came into prominence towards the latter half of 1789. Sindhia accused Himmat Bahadur of making attempts on his life by black magic! He therefore requested the nawab that Himmat Bahadur or any member of his family should not be allowed to live in Oudh. The nawab in consequence issued orders to Almas to secure any property of Himmat Bahadur which might be in Oudh. Almas had allowed Himmat Bahadur's wife to stay in Shahjahanpur and Haidar Beg inquired if Almas should be instructed to order her away. Although according to Cornwallis's letter of 5 May 1788 no protection was to be given to any member of Himmat Bahadur's family, yet to send his wife away at Sindhia's requisition would give Sindhia an opportunity of accusing the nawab of having allowed her to carry away with her all her husband's property⁶⁸.

63 *B.S.C.* 20 Nov. 1787.

64 *B.S.C.* 14 Dec. 1787 Cornwallis to Ives 14 Nov.

65 Palmer to Ives 22 Jan. 1788.

66 Ives to Palmer 5 Feb. 1788.

67 *B.S.C.* 13 Feb. 1788 Cornwallis to Ives.

68 *B.S.C.* 12 Aug. 1789 Ives to GG 30 July.

Cornwallis, however, repeated his previous order adding that if it was thought at Lucknow inadvisable to hand over their person and property to Sindhia, they should be sent outside the nawab's dominions and left to their fate⁶⁹. The Resident was given to understand that they were accordingly sent out of Oudh⁷⁰, but it was found later that they were still there and Haidar Beg on being asked to explain said that it was Almas's doing. Johnstone (acting Resident) was of opinion that Haidar Beg though not actually conniving with Almas, nevertheless had been guilty of his usual slackness. The minister then promised that the family would be sent away within a week⁷¹. Umrao Gir who still remained in Oudh and from time to time collected troops for service against Sindhia, was also finally expelled by the end of 1790⁷².

There occurred various similar cases all of which ended sooner or later in the same way. Whatever the nawab's attitude towards fugitives, he ultimately acquiesced in Sindhia's request, undoubtedly owing to the pressure brought to bear upon him by the Calcutta government. Never were matters allowed to come to a head. Sindhia always desisted from open hostility, for fear of the English, but persisted in urging his point and almost every time the wazir ultimately yielded.

Another source of bickerings between Oudh and Sindhia was the question of pilgrim taxes. Certain important places of Hindu pilgrimage were situated within the wazir's territory, *e.g.* Ayodhia, Benares, Allahabad, and the road to Gaya from western India lay through Oudh. All pilgrims had to pay pilgrim taxes at those places and were sometimes charged excessively and ill-treated by the nawab's officers. Sindhia protested against such treatment and early in January 1787 sent a memorial to the nawab which, among other things, pleaded for indulgence to the Mahratta pilgrims to Allahabad, Benares, Gaya, etc.⁷³. The sarkar did nothing

69 *B.S.C.* 2 Sep. 1789 GG to Ives 31 Aug.

70 *B.S.C.* 2 Oct. 1789 Ives to GG 23 Sep.

71 *B.S.C.* 18 Nov. 1789 Johnstone to GG 4 Nov.

72 *B.P.C.* 15 Dec. 1790 Ives to GG 6 Dec.

73 *B.S.C.* 24 January 1787.

and in April 1789 Sindhia complained to the governor-general that Mahratta pilgrims at those places had been subjected to excessive taxes⁷⁴. The governor-general made inquiries⁷⁵ and Haider Beg assured the Resident that the nawab did not intend to exact more than the customary dues⁷⁶. He made further inquiries as to what had been collected and how much had been remitted in favour of the Mahrattas at Allahabad. The scale of tax had not been regular and sometimes the pilgrims got even complete remission. It was agreed that it was desirable to have a regular scale. The nawab issued on 11 July 1789 a shuqqa which declared:⁷⁷

It was now usual for him, contrary to former practice, to give dastaks of exemption from duties to such of the Deccan Sardars as applied for them, that there had accordingly been granted, from the month of May to this time, dastaks of exemption for thousands from whom his Excellency's officers had not levied anything and that with respect to those who come to perform their ablutions without a dastak...the officers at Allahabad are strictly enjoined to collect no more from them than is authorised by old established usage, and that they in fact exact no more.

On inquiry it was found that at one time all pilgrims had been exempted from the taxes; hence the realisation of even the usual dues was interpreted by some as unjust. This universal exemption which had lasted for several years had been granted out of benevolence by the nawab to all pilgrims to the Magh mela, but not at other times of the year, nor was the concession confined to the Mahrattas. The pilgrim tax was an old custom always submitted to by Mahrattas and everybody else⁷⁸. The details of the taxes were not given until June 1790. The table submitted then showed considerable reductions made by the wazir⁷⁹, the last two items given below being typical:

| | Former duties | Remissions | To be charged in future |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Total at all seasons except Magh..... | Rs. 152-6 | 87-14 | 64-8 |
| Total in Magh..... | Rs. 215-7-6 | 122-7 | 93-0-6 |
| Grand Total..... | Rs. 367-13-6 | 210-5 | 157-8-6 |

74 *B.S.O.* 29 April 1787.

75 GG to Ives 27 May 1789.

76 *B.S.O.* 19 June 1789 Ives to GG 11 June.

77 *B.S.O.* 5 August 1789.

78 Ives to GG 18 July 1789.

79 *B.P.O.* 7 July 1790 Ives to GG 24 June.

The nawab refused to grant indiscriminate remissions in future; that privilege was to be confined to a limited number of men of high rank. The governor-general expressed satisfaction at the reductions and asked the wazir to make the new scale public when the pilgrim season began. He himself wrote to the Mahratta chiefs—Sindhia, the Peshwa and Hölkar—asking them to be considerate and moderate in asking for remissions in future⁸⁰. Thus the matter was settled more to the satisfaction of Sindhia than the nawab.

A point on which the nawab was very sensitive was Sindhia's relation with the Emperor. Although the Emperor was in fact powerless, yet theoretically his authority was unimpaired in Hindustan. The honours bestowed by him were still coveted by provincial chiefs as they vested them with theoretical rights which they could exercise to their advantage. But while the English looked upon the practical side of the question, the nawab was perhaps more concerned with the prestige attached to the Royal titles. Since 1771 the Emperor had been for the most of the time in the power of Sindhia who on 1 May 1785 had the title of 'naib mukhtiyar' (deputy regent) bestowed upon himself⁸¹. It enabled him to exercise the patronage belonging to the Emperor and to carry out his own programme of conquest in the Emperor's name. This naturally gave rise to alarm in Lucknow⁸².

Another thing that made the nawab suspicious of Sindhia was the latter's constant attempts to induce Prince Jawan Bakht (the Emperor's son) who resided in Lucknow to come over to his camp. The Prince with his father's permission had come to stay in Oudh and was given a house in Lucknow and a pension of Rs. 25,000 per month⁸³. He, as the heir-apparent to the Empire, was another emblem of authority in Hindustan and Sindhia wanted to have him too under control. But both the Calcutta government and the nawab were strongly opposed to that. The governor-general wrote

80 GG to Ives.

81 Chronology given by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in *P.R.O. I.*

82 *B.S.O.* 24 Nov. 1786 Anderson to GG 19 Oct.; *P.R.O. I* 83-113.

83 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 146.

to Palmer on 1 April 1785 that the Prince should be kept away from Sindhia⁸⁴. The Prince remained in Oudh till his death on 1 June 1788, at first on very friendly terms with the nawab, but later subject even to grave insults. After his death his place was taken by the next in succession, his brother Mirza Haji or Prince Sulaiman Shikoh, who arrived in Lucknow unexpectedly on 19 April 1789 and asked the nawab for asylum. The possible complications attending his stay in Lucknow were various⁸⁵, but he insisted on staying⁸⁶ and was ultimately given the necessary permission under certain conditions⁸⁷. He like his brother was given a house and a pension by the wazir⁸⁸.

Sindhia was suspicious of the nawab's attitude towards the neighbouring Rajput rajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur. Mild flirtations used to be carried on between Lucknow and the Rajput chiefs, and Sindhia's intelligence department had several times intercepted letters passing between them. In 1786, when Sindhia was engaged in a war with the rajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur, the nawab's indiscretions in this respect gave Sindhia a tangible cause of complaint, but the matter never assumed serious dimensions and Sindhia did not go beyond protesting⁸⁹.

Whatever the nawab's real feelings may have been towards Mahadji Sindhia, his action was invariably determined by the Calcutta government. He had no foreign policy in the sense Shujauddaula had had. Asafuddaula told Harper⁹⁰ in 1787 that

so long as he continued in friendship with the English nation, he was not solicitous to maintain an intercourse with other states, particularly with the Mahrattas, with whom he had much cause to be offended in many instances.

The Calcutta government was avowedly on friendly terms with Sindhia, until at least the arrival of Wellesley, and it wished to remain so. It was convinced of Sindhia's determination to remain friendly with the English and, therefore,

84 *B.S.C.* 19 April 1785.

85 *B.S.C.* 2 Oct. 1789 Ives to GG 22 Sep. ; GG to Ives.

86 *B.P.C.* 3 June 1789.

87 *B.P.C.* 23 and 28 July 1790.

88 Ghulam Ali, *op. cit.* 146.

89 *B.S.C.* 31 May 1786 Anderson to GG 19 May ; *P.B.C.* I 65-66.

90 *B.S.C.* 2 May 1787 Harper to GG 14 April.

with the nawab⁹¹ in spite of Sindhia's distrust of the latter⁹². Cornwallis, when he arrived in India, was somewhat doubtful of Sindhia's integrity⁹³, but later on he was converted to the contrary view and stressed the necessity for the nawab maintaining cordial relations with Sindhia⁹⁴. To ensure this cordiality Himmatt Bahadur was expelled from Oudh, the pilgrim taxes were reduced, and Sindhia was from time to time granted large or small concessions. Towards the end of 1786, Appa Khande Rao, a Mahratta captain, found himself in trouble while engaged against Ghulam Qadir Khan (nawab of Saharanpur). Sindhia requested the nawab to let Appa retreat through Oudh. The nawab was prevailed upon to grant the request⁹⁵. Once or twice when the nawab refused to grant similar concessions he only did so with the approval of the governor-general⁹⁶.

Soon after the departure of Cornwallis from India Mahadji Sindhia died (February 1794). It was feared that the disturbed state of Gwalior after Mahadji's death would result in aggression upon Oudh, but nothing happened⁹⁷. Daulat Rao succeeded Mahadji and no material changes were made in the Gwalior durbar. Bhao Bakhshi, Sindhia's minister, gave emphatic assurances that Mahadji's policy of friendship towards the English and their friends would be continued under Daulat Rao "without the smallest difference"⁹⁸.

(ii) *The Sikhs*

Of the neighbours of Oudh the next in importance to the Mahrattas were the Sikhs. Warren Hastings in 1784 wrote that Sindhia was the only considerable power which could possibly threaten Oudh. He mentioned also the Sikhs who as a rising power were likely to become a menace to the country. The beginning of the year 1785 seemed to be one of Sikh and Mahratta scare. The danger was perhaps less

91 *B.S.O.* 25 Mar. 1785 Palmer to GG 15 Mar.

92 *B.S.O.* 22 Aug. 1786 Anderson to GG 5 July.

93 Cornwallis to Harper 27 Sept. 1786.

94 Cornwallis to Ives 27 May 1789.

95 *B.S.O.* 22 December 1786.

96 GG to Ives 20 June 1788.

97 *B.P.O.* 19 May 1794.

98 *B.P.O.* 28 May 1794 Bhao Bakhshi to GG and Council, received 16 April.

real than apparent. Reports came from various sources in January that the Sikhs had entered Rohilkhand and plundered the town of Chandausi and its neighbourhood⁹⁹. In view of the Sikh menace to Rohilkhand, the nawab on 30 January made requisition for a detachment from Fathgarh to march to the frontier¹⁰⁰. Colonel Sir John Cumming, commanding officer of the Fathgarh detachment, accordingly ordered Colonel Knudson on the morning of 1 February to march towards Anupshehr with two regiments of sepoy and four six-pounders, instructing him to keep the detachment constantly on the move on the western side of the Ganges. Maj.-Gen. Stibbert, commander-in-chief, suggested that the eastern side of the Ganges would be a better position for a patrolling detachment to take. He also suggested that the rissala of cavalry could be better employed in patrol work than at the headquarters¹⁰¹.

On 4 February Cumming received information from Maj. William Palmer that the nawab and his ministers feared a combination between the Sikhs and Sindhia and that therefore they wanted the whole of the Fathgarh detachment to march to the frontier¹⁰². Cumming did not consider such a combination likely, but he received information from his intelligence department that large bodies of Sikhs had appeared on the frontier, and so he approved of putting the whole detachment in motion. He requested the nawab to send two battalions of his sepoy to Fathgarh to guard the magazine, cantonments and the city of Farrukhabad during the absence of his detachment. The exact number and the real strength of the Sikhs was a matter of much speculation. In the beginning they were considered rather formidable. The commander-in-chief was of opinion that Colonel Knudson's detachment and the remaining forces at Fathgarh were sufficient to repel any attack by the Sikhs, but not if they were joined by the forces of Sindhia. He therefore suggested that the brigade at Cawnpore should

99 *B.S.C.* 16 February 1785 Browne to GG 22 and 24 Jan. ; *B.S.C.* 15 February GG to Cumming 6 February.

100 *B.S.C.* 19 February 1785 Cumming to Stibbert 31 January.

101 Stibbert to Cumming 13 February.

102 *B.S.C.* 19 February 1785 Cumming to Stibbert 4 Feb. ; *B.S.C.* 1 Mar. 1785 Browne to GG 9 Feb. and enclosures.

move towards Etawah¹⁰³. He, too, however, did not expect Sindhia so readily to join the unorganised Sikh marauders, especially against an ally of the Company while there was an English Resident at his camp.

Cumming intended to march on 12 February to the frontier to join Knudson with two regiments of sepoy, the rissala of cavalry, and the artillery, leaving one regiment behind until the arrival of the nawab's sepoy under Captain Frith, when that regiment would also join the rest of the detachment. He however thought that there was "little foundation for his Excellency's apprehension for the safety of his country."¹⁰⁴ Still he approved of the movement of the troops as a demonstration which would serve as a preventive in case there did exist any real cause for apprehension. Palmer seems to have held the same view¹⁰⁵. He wrote:

The late predatory incursions of the Seiks [Sikhs] has been more discreditable than injurious to the wazir's government; there has certainly been neglect in the aumil of Rohilcund, and the wazir pays for a force in that country more than adequate to its protection against such a despicable banditti as the Seiks; and the ghauts should have been properly guarded as soon as the river became fordable. The depredations made by the freebooters fall upon individuals, and can in no shape affect the public revenues. They retreated across the Ganges on the first approach of the wazir's troops and although they are now assembled to the number as is reported of 20,000 on the western shore of the Ganges, I have no apprehension of their making another attempt to penetrate into the wazir's dominions as Sir J. Cumming detached two regiments on the 2nd inst. to Anoopshire and was to follow with his whole force on the 12th.

He too thought a junction between the Sikhs and Sindhia unlikely, but approved of the movement of the troops to the frontier. That and the solemn disavowal of Sindhia given to Anderson of having excited the Sikhs to ravage Oudh, thought Palmer, were sufficient assurances against Sindhia's hostility. The Sikhs retired on the first appearance of the nawab's troops, without too much booty, nor did they since attempt to disturb the nawab's dominions. On the contrary, their chief who was at this time with a

103 *B.S.C.* 19 Feb. 1785 Stibbert to GG 16 Feb.

104 *B.S.C.* 1 March 1785 Cumming to GG 11 February.

105 *B.S.C.* 8 March 1785 Palmer to GG 13 February.

body of men near the Oudh frontier on the western side of the Ganges, wrote to the amil of Rohilkhand that the late incursion was an act unauthorised by and offensive to their state. The greater part of the freebooters retired across the Jamuna on the approach of Knudson's detachment; those who remained in the Doab would not dare give him any pretext for attacking them. Their purpose was to levy the tribute upon the country of the late Zabita Khan¹⁰⁶. On 24 February Palmer wrote to the governor-general that the Sikhs had entirely evacuated the frontier, and that "everything within them is in a state of tranquility without the least appearance of further disturbance or obstruction in the collections"¹⁰⁷. The nawab, now assured of the security of his frontier, recommended Cumming's return to Fathgarh with the main body of his detachment leaving Knudson with two regiments at Anupshehr until the rise of the river made the passage of the enemy impossible, which would be early in April. On 8 March Hasan Raza Khan and Haidar Beg Khan wrote to the governor-general making light of the Sikh disturbance¹⁰⁸.

Cumming complained against the attitude of the nawab and his officers¹⁰⁹. He said that the reports about the Sikh invasion were true, and that they had plundered Chandausi and parts of Moradabad and Sumbal. They had arrived up to the bank of the Ganges near Anupshehr, "but all the officers of the wazir's government maintained the strictest silence on the subject of their approach as well as of their crossing and subsequent depredations." Having received information from his messengers of the advance of the Sikhs he had kept Knudson with two regiments and some artillery in readiness expecting every day a requisition from the nawab, but it did not come until ten days later, followed shortly after by a requisition for the whole detachment. He complained of the dilatoriness of the sarkar and his own lack of authority to exercise his discretion. He could not even suggest a move merely on the report of private agents unless

106 Palmer to GG 21 February.

107 *B.S.C.* 8 March 1785.

108 *ibid.*

109 *B.S.C.* 22 March 1785 Cumming to GG 23 and 27 Feb.

he was asked by the sarkar. "I am bound to execute but not entitled to advise," he complained. "While the motion of the troops depend entirely on orders from Lucknow, these orders will generally arrive too late." He did not think the Sikh incursion to have been serious, but, he said, in case there did exist any real danger, he would in future take matters in his own hands without waiting for instructions from Lucknow. If he had had his way, he continued, he would have marched to the frontier as early as December 1784, and then even the little looting that the Sikhs indulged in would not have been possible. He further complained of the reluctance of the amil of Rohilkhand to enter into the details of the actual damage done by the Sikhs, there being a tendency on the part of the amil to minimise the extent of the damages. The reason for the nawab's reluctance to call upon him early was in the opinion of Cumming "a wish to convince the Board, and perhaps the country in general, that his own forces were equal to the defence of the western frontier." Cumming repeats however his conviction in the neutrality at least of Sindhia¹¹⁰. When he received the nawab's order to return to Fathgarh with the main body of the troops, he made a representation of the unadvisability of such a step, urging the necessity for keeping the whole detachment on the frontier till at least 12 April, and Knudson's detachment till 25 April. The Sikhs who had plundered Rohilkhand were then at Ghausgarh (in Saharanpur), 35 coss from Anupshehr, and the rabi harvest, upon which the collections chiefly depended, would soon begin. The frontier to be defended was more than 140 miles long and only two regiments were insufficient for the patrolling of such a long line at such an important season. Moreover, whatever the real dangers, such sudden changes of plan were likely to make the inhabitants uneasy and "stamp upon the mind of the neighbours the fluctuating counsels of the wazir's council."

As to the probability of there really existing a combination between the Sikhs and Sindhia, Anderson wrote

110 Also see *B.S.C.* 9 April 1785 Cumming to Stibbert from Anupshehr 9 March.

to Palmer that he was convinced of the sincerity of Sindhia's assertion of his determination to keep his engagements with the English and their allies; and although the growth of Sindhia's power should naturally lead to uneasiness in Lucknow, yet, he thought, there was no real cause for alarm¹¹¹. Convinced of the friendliness of Sindhia, and in order to keep him engaged in fighting the Sikhs, Cumming offered to help him against the Sikhs¹¹². But the commander-in-chief disapproved of this, although he agreed with Cumming that the longer Sindhia and the Sikhs were occupied with each other, the better it was for Oudh, and that Cumming should stay on at the frontier till at least the end of April¹¹³. The Board agreed with the commander-in-chief and wrote to Cumming prohibiting him from giving effect to his promise to Sindhia, should the occasion arise, and that he was not to march back to Fathgarh until the rise of the river¹¹⁴.

Towards the middle of April a strong rumour of a Sikh-Mahratta alliance again got currency. Cumming got the information that the Sikhs had promised not to exact rakhi (kind of blackmail) from the Imperial territories so long as Sindhia kept them in Imperial service, and that this rumour was causing the nawab some alarm¹¹⁵. On the other hand, a man was dispatched to Cumming from the Sikh sardars, who told him that the Sikhs had been encouraged by Sindhia to commit the depredations in Rohilkhand. Cumming did not believe him, but that man promised to bring him a declaration to that effect under the seals of all the Sikh sardars¹¹⁶. The Sikhs assembled between Panipat and Delhi numbered some 30,000 men and there was a strong desire amongst them to ally themselves with the nawab and the English against Sindhia¹¹⁷. These two conflicting

111 *B.S.C.* 25 March 1785 Palmer to GG 15 March.

112 *B.S.C.* 9 April 1785 Cumming to Stibbert 18 March; *B.S.C.* 12 April Cumming to GG 27 and 29 March. Upon the assurance of Cumming the Mahrattas attacked the Sikhs, killed some, and drove the rest beyond Panipat, taking some prisoners.

113 *B.S.C.* 9 April 1785 Stibbert to GG 4 April.

114 GG to Cumming 9 April.

115 *B.S.C.* 26 April 1785 Cumming to GG 11 April; *B.S.C.* 26 May Anderson to GG 10 May.

116 Cumming to GG 4 May.

117 *ibid*

informations at least show that there could have existed no real unity between Sindhia and the Sikhs. A treaty had no doubt been concluded between the Sikhs and Sindhia, but it has already been seen that it was to the advantage rather than otherwise to Oudh. Cumming favoured an alliance with the Sikhs for he thoroughly distrusted Sindhia.

The Sikhs are heard of again in December 1786 when they fought a smart engagement against the Mahrattas on the Oudh frontier and defeated them. The nawab's troops and the Company's Oudh contingent under Knudson kept themselves in readiness in case Oudh was attacked,¹¹⁸ but no attack took place. The Sikhs were similarly heard of almost every dry season of having assembled in numbers varying from a few to forty thousand¹¹⁹. They sometimes even crossed into Oudh and looted a few villages, but the peril was never serious. They generally fled at the sight of a few of the nawab's troops. In July 1786 the governor-general appointed George Forster at Lucknow to investigate into the magnitude of the Sikh menace to Oudh, and to negotiate an alliance with them and the Company if possible¹²⁰. Forster's letters between November 1786 and August 1787 show the following facts:

Firstly, that the Sikhs, fearful of Sindhia and Ghulam Qadir, keenly desired an alliance with the Company, but Cornwallis refused to treat with them¹²¹. Secondly, the three powers, Mahrattas, Sikhs, and Ghulam Qadir, were so engrossed in watching one another that none had the time to pay any attention to the nawab's Doab provinces, even when the Ganges was fordable¹²². Thirdly, if the Sikhs wished they could easily attack Rohilkhand,¹²³ but that it was in the hands of Almas, the most efficient and powerful of the nawab's amils, capable of warding off the danger¹²⁴. Lastly, the Sikhs sometimes harassed the semi-independent

118 *B.S.C.* 8 Jan. 1787 Harper to GG 22 December 1786.

119 *B.S.C.* 27 November 1787 Ives to GG 5 Nov. ; *B.P.C.* 8 Feb. 1792 Ives to GG 27 Jan. ; *B.S.C.* 23 March Ives to GG 12 March ; *B.P.C.* 9 Nov. Ives to GG 30 Oct.

120 *P.R.C.* I 156-7 Macpherson to Forster 19 July 1786.

121 *P.R.C.* I Nos. 98, 94.

122 *ibid* Nos. 97, 99, 100, 101, 102.

123 *ibid* No. 95.

124 *ibid* No. 97.

Raja of Anupshehr, technically under Oudh, not with any hostile intentions towards the nawab, but to realise certain stipulated dues. The raja had some time promised to pay as rakhi (a levy like the Mahratta chaauth, but much less, being 5 to 10 per cent. of the revenue) a sum of Rs. 2,000 annually, in two instalments¹²⁵.

(iii) *Ghulam Qadir Khan*

Towards the end of 1797 a new factor became active on the Oudh frontier. This was Ghulam Qadir Khan Rohilla, son of Zabita Khan, nawab of Saharanpur, whose capital was at Ghausgarh. He had been granted certain districts by the Emperor, which were very much intermixed with the nawab's districts in the Doab. The nawab received in October 1787 six shuqqas from the Emperor asking him to reduce Ghulam Qadir who had rebelled¹²⁶. The nawab immediately ordered these shuqqas to be forwarded to Cornwallis asking for instructions¹²⁷. Intelligence was received in March 1788 that Ghulam Qadir was negotiating an alliance with the Sikhs and that the latter were on the point of passing through Oudh territory to join him,¹²⁸ but these informations remained unconfirmed¹²⁹. Troops were, however, marched to the frontier as a precautionary measure.

Ghulam Qadir succeeded for a very brief period in securing possession of Delhi. He seized the person of the Emperor, deposed him on 1 August 1788 and raised Prince Bedar Bakht, son of Ahmad Shah, to the throne. The rightful heir, Prince Sulaiman Shikoh, was kept in confinement with the members of the royal family. Later, Ghulam Qadir put out the eyes of the old Emperor. This revolution in Delhi alarmed the Oudh sarkar, where it was believed that Ghulam Qadir was aiming at the wizarat. Palmer wrote that a dress of honour was being prepared apparently for Ghulam Qadir. In case he secured the title of wazir,

125 *ibid* No. 96.

126 *B.S.C.* 28 Nov. 1787.

127 Haidar Beg to Cornwallis received 17 Oct. 1787.

128 *B.S.C.* 17 March 1788 Ives to GG 7 March.

129 *B.S.C.* 31 March 1788 Ives to GG 21 March.

what was Asafuddaula to do? If he accepted the change it would be a blow to his prestige; if he did not, he would be in rebellion against the Emperor. Sindhia was expected to apply to the nawab for help to reduce Ghulam Qadir. Cornwallis reminded the Resident of the Act of Parliament which prohibited the Company from participating in Indian wars¹³⁰. Presumably that Act was also to determine the attitude of the Oudh sarkar. In September Sindhia actually made such an application and the governor-general advised the nawab strongly against joining him¹³¹. The nawab received similar applications from Ismail Beg, a Moghul chief, Mirza Bahadur, son of Ahmad Shah, and the rajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur, but the Calcutta government said that no notice should be taken of them¹³². Ghulam Qadir, however, did not get a chance to do more mischief, for his cruelties soon aroused great opposition even among his own followers, and he was obliged to go into hiding¹³³. He was finally captured and put to death by Sindhia.

(iv) *The Afghan Peril*

Until about the end of 1792 another bogey periodically alarmed Oudh. From time to time Timur Shah, son of the famous Ahmad Shah Durrani, was reported to be advancing upon India with the purpose of conquering it either for himself or in order to re-establish Shah Alam to his former glory. Although he never came even very far into the Punjab, the alarm he caused was serious, e.g. when in December 1785 it was reported that he was advancing towards Kashmir, some merchants deserted Delhi and went south¹³⁴. The intention of Timur Shah to march towards Delhi was almost universally believed in Delhi where the camp always buzzed with rumours¹³⁵. After some time the possibility seemed more remote although rumours continued, and on 17 March 1786, Harper wrote to the governor-general:

130 *B.S.C.* 27 Aug. 1788 Cornwallis to Ives.

131 *B.S.C.* 15 Sep. 1788 Cornwallis to nawab-wazir 10 Sept. ; *B.S.C.* 6 Oct. 1788 Cornwallis to Ives 4 Oct.

132 *B.S.C.* 15 October 1788.

133 *B.S.C.* 2 January 1789 Ives to GG 23 December 1788.

134 *P.R.C.* I 36-7 Anderson to GG 21 December 1785.

135 *ibid* 37-8 Anderson to GG 31 December 1785.

“A thousand rumours have prevailed of his [Timur Shah] intentions of advancing to Delhi, but as I judged them to have little or no foundation, I have seldom written to you on the subject.”¹³⁶ In July Timur Shah was reported to have gone back to Kandahar leaving his army at Peshawar, for reasons not known¹³⁷.

The rumour again went round in September-October 1788¹³⁸ and various different reports about the Shah were received, e.g. he had the design of placing his son Mirza Humayun on the throne of Hindustan¹³⁹, that he had concluded an alliance with the Rajputs for whose assistance he had dispatched 24,000 cavalry¹⁴⁰, and so on. In December he was reported to have crossed the Attock¹⁴¹, “25 coss on the other side of Multan.” The nawab received a shuqqa from the Shah dated 5 Safar (5 November 1788) requiring his assistance to reinstate Shah Alam, or, in the event of his death his heir, to the throne of Hindustan¹⁴². Cornwallis wrote to the Shah that Shah Alam had already been restored and thus the firman had been anticipated¹⁴³. On the other hand, a man named Ghulam Muhammad Khan, said to be the agent of Timur Shah, declared at Lucknow that the Shah had no designs upon Hindustan¹⁴⁴, and in fact Timur Shah never came beyond “25 coss on the other side of Multan.”

About the middle of 1791 the probability of an invasion by Timur Shah was again rumoured, but this time even the timid Haidar Beg Khan thought it highly improbable. For if he moved so far from his kingdom, there would be every probability of a revolution breaking out there in favour of his brother whom he had kept in confinement, and in whose favour a revolution had actually broken out on a previous occasion of his absence on an expedition¹⁴⁵. At this time

136 *ibid* 51-2.

137 *B.S.C.* 29 July 1786 Harper to GG 4 July.

138 *B.S.C.* 8 October 1788.

139 *B.S.C.* 28 January 1789 Ives to GG 18 January.

140 *B.S.C.* 25 February 1789 Ives to GG 17 February.

141 The Indus near Attock is locally called the Attock.

142 *B.S.C.* 19 January 1789 Ives to GG 9 January.

143 *B.S.C.* 26 January 1789.

144 Ives to GG 16 January.

145 *B.P.C.* 12 August 1791 Ives to GG 30 July.

a number of men appeared at different courts of India saying that they came from Timur Shah and presented firmans and khilats. It is not known how many of them were genuine agents of the Shah¹⁴⁶. In March 1792 when the Shah defeated the Sikhs in the north and captured the fort of Rohtas, rumours arose that he had assigned that fort and 10,000 cavalry to Prince Ahsan Bakht (a son of Shah Alam who resided in Kabul) for the purpose of driving the Mahrattas back to the Deccan, and that the Prince with that force had arrived at Peshawar. The Resident at Lucknow did not attach much credit to the report¹⁴⁷.

In June 1792 came the news of the death of Timur Shah, which was confirmed in July¹⁴⁸. The bogey of Afghan invasion was not revived until towards the closing years of Shore's and the early years of Wellesley's governor-generalship, when Zaman Shah, son of Timur Shah, threatened the north-western horizon of Hindustan.

Zaman Shah became the king of Kabul in May 1793, some time after the death of his father. Ghulam Sarwar, a man from Lucknow deputed by Cornwallis to report on the affairs of Kabul, gives an interesting account of the immediate disturbances there and the battles Zaman Shah had had to fight on his accession¹⁴⁹. From that time to the middle of 1796 he was perhaps too busy establishing himself on the throne to think of an invasion of India. During late summer of 1796 reports reached India of his intended invasion. They were vague and contradictory, but "it seemed nearly certain that he would move with a very considerable force as far as the Punjab"¹⁵⁰. His objective would presumably have been Delhi. The Resident with Sindhia was of opinion that in order to reach Delhi he would have had first to contend with the Sikhs who, although not likely to come to terms with him, did not consider themselves strong enough to put up an effective resistance. Some of them proposed a junction with the Mahrattas to resist

146 *B.P.C.* 5 October 1791; *B.P.C.* 8 February 1792 Ives to GG 27 Jan.

147 *B.P.C.* 23 March 1792.

148 *B.P.C.* 2 August 1792 Ives to GG 23 July.

149 *B.P.C.* 18 Nov. 1793 Paper of Intelligence from Ghulam Sarwar. 15 Muharram 1207 A.H.

150 *B.P.C.* 8 October 1796 Lumsden to Shore 28 Sept.

him¹⁵¹. The Oudh sarkar was alarmed, for it feared that a section of the Rohilla Afghans and Farrukhabad Pathans would cause trouble in Oudh if the Shah came as far as Delhi, though the greater part of them and all Oudh subjects were expected to remain loyal to the nawab¹⁵². According to Shore's instructions of 5 September to Lumsden, the combined forces of Oudh and the Company were to be assembled at Kanauj and the fort of Allahabad was to be garrisoned by British troops, if the threatened invasion actually took place. But he did not believe it would¹⁵³. In fact there was not enough ground to conclude that the dreaded invasion was imminent. Zaman Shah had not himself left Kabul although it was popularly believed that a large detachment of his troops had assembled on the western side of the Indus and were preparing to throw bridges of boats across the river to cross into Multan¹⁵⁴.

Various conflicting reports, some of them very alarming, kept pouring in from Amritsar, Lahore, Patiala, Bahawalpur and other places, and by the end of January 1797, the nawab made elaborate arrangements enabling him to put 5,200 cavalry and 11 battalions of infantry of 1,000 each, with sufficient draft animals, and a train of artillery in the field along with Company's brigades in Oudh¹⁵⁵. But then reports were received that Zaman Shah had returned to Afghanistan¹⁵⁶. During the course of this panic Shore tried his best to persuade the nawab to place the fort of Allahabad in the hands of the British, assuring him that it would be evacuated as soon as the danger had passed, but the nawab straightaway refused. He was so touchy on this point that Shore told the Resident to give up the attempt for the time being¹⁵⁷. Letters from Sheikh Rahim Ali, who had been deputed from Lucknow to Kabul, dated 5, 9 and 27 Shawaal, and one from Ghanshyam Das, news-

151 *ibid.*

152 *ibid.*

153 *B.P.C.* 17 October 1796 GG's minute.

154 Palmer to Lumsden 4 October 1796. He was taking this unorthodox route, it was said, in order to avoid the Sikhs on his way to Delhi.

155 *B.P.C.* 24 February 1797 Lumsden to GG 20 and 22 Jan.

156 Lumsden to GG 28 January; *B.P.C.* 6 March GG to Provincial Commander, Bengal Army 18 Feb.

157 *B.S. & P.C.* 13 January 1797; *B.P.C.* 6 March.

writer at Patiala, dated 27 Zilqada show that the Shah's invasion of India depended upon the security of his position in Afghanistan¹⁵⁸. Ghulam Sarwar, who returned from Kabul in February 1795, submitted a lengthy but excellent report on the state of affairs in Kabul¹⁵⁹. In the opinion of Shore "it contains the best procurable account of the dominion, forces, revenues, and character of Zaman Shah." The following narrative relating to Zaman Shah is based almost entirely on Ghulam Sarwar's report.

Zaman Shah's dominions were extensive, about 1,600 miles by 1,000. The revenues according to official accounts amounted to Rs. 2,71,78,400 per annum. His forces consisted of 36,750 established troops diffused throughout the kingdom, 9,780 slaves and 24,800 standing with himself, a total of 71,330. His artillery consisted of 26 large pieces and 896 small swivel-guns mounted on camels. With good care the force was capable of considerable augmentation. Zaman Shah was one of 19 brothers and had not succeeded to the throne without opposition. Besides his brothers there were many jagirdars whose loyalty he could not rely on. Most of his brothers were in prison, but the few that remained outside were capable of raising enough trouble. Principal among them were, Shah Mahmud, regent of Herat; residing with him was another brother Firuzuddin; and lastly, Shahzada Humayun who had taken refuge with Nasr Khan Baloch, a jagirdar almost independent of the Shah, holding the country to the south of Kandahar yielding a revenue of 34 lakhs of rupees.

Zaman Shah's relations with his neighbours were not cordial. His principal neighbours were the "King of Turan", the King of Persia, and his brother, the regent of Herat. The "King of Turan" was Abul Ghazi Khan, nominal king of a part of Turkistan, with his capital at Bokhara, the real power being in the hands of his wazir Shah Murad. He had had a quarrel with Timur Shah on the ground of their rival claims to Balkh and some other places. Although the dispute had been settled by a treaty, Zaman Shah was in constant fear of that power. Shah

158 *B.P.O.* 26 June 1797.

159 *B.S. & P.C.* 7 July 1797.

Murad was an ambitious and powerful man, a good soldier, and, in Ghulam Sarwar's opinion, with a good treasury was capable of defeating Zaman Shah. Muhammad Khan Qachar, King of Persia, also was ambitious and powerful, a natural source of apprehension for the King of Kabul. Shah Mahmud, regent of Herat, was in correspondence with Shah Murad and probably with Muhammad Khan Qachar, either with designs of the conquest of Kabul or for his own protection from Zaman Shah. Though less powerful than either Zaman Shah or Shah Murad, he could not be neglected.

Zaman Shah was addicted to pleasure, anxious to collect wealth, avaricious, haughty, and intelligent, and possessed foresight, caution and economy. But, according to Ghulam Sarwar, he had neither the ambition nor the energy of his father. His object and occupation were the establishment of his authority over his paternal dominions and their regulation. He was connected with the Emperor of Delhi by the marriage of his father with a sister of Shah Alam, and a son of the latter, Prince Ahsan Bakht, had resided in Kabul for a long time as a pensioner of the Afghan King.

Shore believed that Zaman Shah would not invade India, and that if he did, he could not succeed. The reasons he gives are as follows:¹⁶⁰ Afghan invasions had been rumoured almost annually for about 20 years of which only a few actually took place and none advanced far beyond northern Punjab. Zaman Shah had undoubtedly occupied Lahore early in 1797, but the odds against his coming further were heavy. In the first place there were the numerous and warlike Sikhs in the Punjab, between Kabul and Delhi. There was no likelihood of the Shah's coming to terms with them, nor could any reliance be placed on them even if an understanding was arrived at. Although they might not have successfully checked his advance, they could have caused trouble in the rear when the Shah had advanced upon Delhi, by cutting off communications between him and his home. Then, after the Sikhs, there were the Mahrattas to contend with. What inducements could the Shah have to undertake such a risky expedition? The plunder of Delhi, much

160 *B.S. & P.C.* 7 July 1797 governor-general's minute.

impoverished in 1797, could not afford compensation adequate to the risk and expenses of attempting it. Re-establishing Shah Alam to the ancient glories of the Moghul Empire was only a romantic and unprofitable dream, also imprudent unless the Sikhs were first effectually subdued. The same arguments prevailed against a permanent conquest of Hindustan; with his forces as they were in 1797, Zaman Shah could not hold it for long. Subsequent events show how correct Shore had been¹⁶¹. After sifting all the informations received (to be found scattered throughout the Public and Secret Consultations from the middle of 1796 to the middle of 1798) Shore arrived at the following conclusions:

It had taken the Shah nearly a month to march from Attock to Lahore despite the fact that he had not met with any serious opposition. The accounts of his forces varied, the most probable one being a detailed list of his troops collected at Lahore—cavalry 32,300; infantry 1,400; 800 camels carrying small guns and 40 cavalry cannons, the artillery being under a Frenchman long in his service. The conduct of the Shah at Lahore had been at first mild and conciliatory, but later his troops committed great excesses. The Shah demanded a contribution of $5\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs from the city of which only about half was realised. During his stay at Lahore he sent out only two expeditions, the first of about 1,000 horse sent against Amritsar returned without making any impression; the second was sent against Sheikhpura, about 20 miles from Lahore, and though reinforced later, returned unsuccessful. Zaman Shah remained in Lahore for about a month and then returned to Kabul by rapid marches on receiving the news that his brother Shah Mahmud had attacked Kandahar. Some reports stated that that was only a pretext, and that in fact his army was disaffected. Later reports show that on his return he had actually to reconquer Kandahar and Kabul. In the expedition of 1797 the army of Zaman Shah was undoubtedly inadequate for conquering and retaining Hindustan or for re-establishing the authority of Shah Alam. He had not negotiated with the Rajput chiefs hostile to the Mahrattas. If the Punjab

161 Chapter VII.

had been his objective, he had prosecuted it without vigour and relinquished it precipitately. No forces remained behind him except a detachment of 5,000 in Rohtas, which had been taken by Timur Shah, reinforced by another 5,000; but this force was defeated very soon after by the Sikhs and the Afghan commandant killed.

In view of the above facts, Shore concluded that an invasion of Hindustan by Zaman Shah was far from probable. He goes on to picture the probable consequence of the Shah's invading Delhi. Had he advanced upon Delhi immediately after taking Lahore, he could have easily done so. The Sikhs were disunited, the Mahrattas alarmed and unprepared. But the latter gradually mustered a very respectable army and made overtures to the Company to unite with them, which the Company would in all probability have agreed to. This force would have been a very serious menace to the Shah. On his arrival at Delhi he would have been joined by numerous adventurers in Hindustan, *e.g.* Bumbu Khan, brother of Ghulam Qadir Khan, who had actually collected some men under the pretext that he had received orders from the Shah to do so. Some Rampur Rohillas and Farrukhabad Pathans also might have seized this opportunity to rebel. But all these would have been unreliable allies. The Rajput chiefs would have availed themselves of this opportunity to shake off the Mahratta yoke, perhaps without joining Zaman Shah. Oudh depended solely upon the Company for defence and would have been kept out of the broil. Of the Oudh army only those under Almas were respectable, the rest more likely to prove a burden rather than of any real assistance. There were rumours that some men of rank in Lucknow had sent out invitations to the Shah, but of this Shore could not discover the least evidence and so he totally desbelieved them. Nor could he discover any foundation for the rumour of the Shah's acting in concert with Tipu and the French.

As to the future designs of Zaman Shah, Ghulam Sarwar's opinion was that he had the desire of invading Hindustan, but that it would have been very difficult to do so owing to the hostility of his brothers and their patrons, Muhammad Khan Qacher, Shah Murad and Nasr Khan Baloch,

and the insufficiency of his forces and resources. His probable objects were the establishment of Ahsan Bakht on the throne of Delhi and realisation of a tribute from India. The first might have been accomplished easily, but in order to ensure the permanence of the new Emperor, he would have had either to stay himself at Delhi or leave a considerable force there, at least for a very long time. But both these were quite improbable.

Palmer communicated from Delhi a report from a man connected with Kabul which said that Zaman Shah did intend to invade Hindustan. Similar was the popular belief, especially among the Muslims, perhaps because it conformed with their wish, *viz.*, release from the overlordship of the Mahrattas. But Shore did not believe in these reports or rumours, for reasons given above¹⁶². So much so that he did not think any elaborate or expensive defensive measures necessary, not even a specific defensive alliance with the Mahrattas. For the time being, he thought, it would be quite sufficient if the Residents at Lucknow and with Sindhia and the Oudh ministers kept their eyes open.

A letter from Sheikh Rahim Ali dated Kabul 2 Zulhija 1211 A.H. (May 1797) reported that Zaman Shah had undertaken an expedition to Kandahar, and that affairs there were such that there was no probability of his undertaking an Indian expedition that year¹⁶³. Sir Alured Clarke, the British commander-in-chief, after considering the matter over did not think an Afghan invasion probable. He thought that even if it did take place, the Company's army in Oudh numbering (in 1797) 12,541 would be quite enough to cope with the emergency¹⁶⁴. On 1 November 1797, Lumsden wrote to the governor-general: "All recent accounts from the westward concur in stating the improbability that Zaman Shah can undertake any expedition into Hindustan this year"¹⁶⁵. The Afghan peril is heard of again with Lord Mornington's assumption of the governor-generalship at

162 *B.S. & P.C.* 7 July 1797 GG's minute.

163 *B.S. & P.C.* 21 Aug. 1797.

164 *B.S. & P.C.* 9 Oct. 1797 minute of commander-in-chief.

165 *B.S. & P.C.* 4 Dec. 1797.

Calcutta. It had serious consequences for Oudh as will be seen in a later chapter.

(v) *Rampur*

Enclosed within Oudh was the state of Rampur which from time to time caused trouble to Oudh in which the Company's government and the Resident had to mediate. Rampur was inhabited by Rohilla Afghans famed for their fighting qualities. Since 1774 its ruler had been Faizullah Khan who had been given by Shujauddaula after the war that year the country of Rampur and some other districts dependent upon it yielding a total revenue of Rs. 14,75,000 a year. The settlement was arrived at by the treaty of Lal Dang (Rajab 1188 A.H. or October 1774) between Shujauddaula and Faizullah, which was witnessed by the English commandant, Col. Champion¹⁶⁶. By this treaty Faizullah was given the above mentioned territories (not specified by name except Rampur) under the following conditions: that he would not maintain a force of more than 5,000 men; that he would have no connection with any person other than Shujauddaula and would hold correspondence with none except the English; he was required to send two or three thousand men, according to his ability, to join Shujauddaula's forces when the latter waged war against anyone, and personally to lead a part of the army, if Shujauddaula went to war in person. This treaty remained in force until 14 Rabi I 1197 A.H. (17 February 1783) when Asafuddaula agreed to remit the obligation of the nawab of Rampur to supply troops occasionally to the nawab-wazir, in exchange of a payment of 15 lakhs of rupees by Faizullah Khan. This amendment was made under English guarantee¹⁶⁷.

Since 1783 the relations between Oudh and Rampur were generally governed by the amended treaty of Lal Dang, but disagreements sometimes arose owing to various reasons. Sometimes the amils of the nawab-wazir in the districts bordering on Rampur would ill-treat Rampur subjects,¹⁶⁸ or Oudh subjects would be ill-treated by Rampur

166 Aitchison C.U. *Treaties and Sanads* II (1930 ed.) 25-26.

167 *ibid* 22-27.

168 *B.S.C.* 8 Jan. 1787 Harper to Cornwallis 22 December 1786.

officials. But these were common occurrences in India in those days and were never regarded as serious. The Resident at Lucknow found it necessary constantly to remind the nawab and his ministers that the English had guaranteed the treaty and could not allow the disregard of it by either party¹⁶⁹.

In 1789 a serious difference took place between Oudh and Rampur¹⁷⁰. The origin of this lay in another frontier of Oudh, *viz.* Kumaun and Nepal. Mohan Chand, the raja of Almora, had been killed by a rival chief Harick Deo Joshi. Lall Singh and Mohinder Singh, brother and son of Mohan Chand, defeated Joshi in May 1789 and regained Almora. Joshi was on friendly terms with Oudh and took refuge in Rohilkhand. Lall Singh, in course of his campaign against Joshi, had ravaged certain villages in the district of Kashipur in the nawab's territory and Mehdi Ali Khan, the amil of Bareilly, was dispatched by the wazir's orders towards Kashipur with the ostensible purpose of guarding against further incursions by Lall Singh. Haidar Beg complained to Ives in about April 1789 that Faizullah had given refuge to certain Rohillas who had come away from Ghulam Qadir's territory and had sent them to help Lall Singh, and that he maintained a force of more than 5,000 men, all of which were in contravention of the existing treaties¹⁷¹. Pending Haidar Beg's submitting the complaints in writing, Ives made inquiries from Roshan Rai, the wakil of Faizullah in Lucknow, who informed¹⁷² that when the nawab-wazir had gone on a hunting excursion the preceding year towards the Nepal frontier, the late Raja Mohan Chand and Lall Singh had paid him the customary homage, had been honoured by him and had obtained from him a written order to Faizullah to apprehend their enemy Harick Deo Joshi. Since then, Joshi having killed Mohan Chand and occupied Almora, Lall Singh, etc., had taken refuge first at Nanakmati in the wazir's dominion and later in Rampur, and claimed Faizullah's assistance in conformity with

169 *ibid.*

170 *B.P.C.* 2 July 1790.

171 *B.S.C.* 12 Jun. 1789 Ives to Cornwallis 15 May.

172 *ibid.*

the wazir's order, but that he had declined. They left Rampur and went to Rudderpur, in the wazir's dominion, and there they tried to raise troops to employ against Joshi. They had taken with them Bhola Singh, a jamadar from Muradabad with 500 piadas, Daljit Singh and Bhawani Singh with 1,500 young men from the neighbourhood of Kohna and Kashipur, Azam and Subhan, Afghans, with 400 piadas from Nanakmati, all in the wazir's territories, but no jamadar or risaldars in Faizullah's service had joined them. As to the Rohilla refugees from Ghulam Qadir's territory, the wazir's country lay between Saharanpur and Rampur and all the ghats were in the hands of the wazir's officers, and it was they alone who could put a stop to their coming. Anyway, Faizullah was not aware of any such refugees having come from Saharanpur. The wakil admitted that a few had come, but they were from Muradabad, Sambal and Amroha, all in the wazir's dominions. Haidar Beg and Mehdi Ali then brought further charges against Faizullah, that he had sent his nephew Mustafa Khan to assist Lall Singh and so on, and they seemed eager to go to help Joshi. But Ives told them that the nawab could not with propriety interfere in the matter, at least not until he had consulted the governor-general¹⁷³.

Cornwallis approved of Faizullah's conduct in general and did not wish to encourage the nawab against him, but he censured the former for having taken part in the affairs of the hill rajas, especially for letting his nephew Mustafa Khan openly to join Lall Singh¹⁷⁴. On this point, however, the nawab could not later complain, for Mustafa Khan was afterwards received at Lucknow through the influence of Raja Puran Chand, a favourite of Asafud-daula¹⁷⁵. As a fact, Mustafa Khan so far succeeded in ingratiating himself with the nawab that the latter ordered Faizullah to continue to pay to Mustafa his usual allowance at Lucknow¹⁷⁶. Faizullah refused as by the terms of the treaties the nawab had no right to make such demands

173 *ibid.* Also Ives to Cornwallis 27 May 1789

174 *B.S.C.* 2 Sep. 1789 Cornwallis to Ives 31 Aug.

175 *B.S.C.* 2 Oct. 1789 Ives to Cornwallis 23 Sep.

176 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1790 Ives to Cornwallis 25 July; *B.P.C.* 3 Sep. 1790 Faizullah to GG recd. 11 Aug.

and represented that the wazir should not encourage such behaviour of a member of his family. The nawab was irritated at this refusal and forbade the appearance of the Rampur wakil at his Court. He requested Ives also not to see Roshan Rai, but Ives protested considering the nawab to be in the wrong¹⁷⁷.

During September-October 1790 the position became threatening. The nawab went towards Rampur, ostensibly on a hunting expedition, but with a large artillery, and Faizullah in alarm started collecting men and arms, ostensibly by way of usual annual muster¹⁷⁸. Haidar Beg complained to Ives that Faizullah had not sent a son to meet the nawab and pay him his respects as was the custom¹⁷⁹. On being asked why the nawab had carried so much artillery, "he smiled and said that it was His Excellency's disposition to be pleased with anything now and that he having had no opportunity of trying the guns [Cornwallis] had sent him up, he had taken them as playthings"¹⁸⁰. In the meantime Faizullah wrote a very proper letter to the nawab expressing his attachment and fidelity to him, and Hidar Beg induced the latter to send a suitably gracious reply¹⁸¹. Soon after Faizullah sent a son to the nawab to pay his respects and everything seemed to be at the point of settlement¹⁸². In May 1791 the raja of Nepal defeated Lall Singh and his supporters, and called Joshi to his service¹⁸³. Faizullah had been receiving friendly letters from the raja of Nepal all of which he sent unopened to the nawab. He received similar letters from another hill chief, the raja of Srinagar (a small state bordering on Kumaon and Nepal), who feared an attack from the raja of Nepal, and these letters too he dealt with in the same way¹⁸⁴. The Company's government approved

177 Ives to Cornwallis 25 July.

178 *B.P.C.* 8 Oct. 1790 Ives to GG 30 Sep. ; *B.P.C.* 22 Oct. 1790 Ives to GG 13 Oct.

179 *B.P.C.* 27 Oct. 1790 Ives to GG 17 Oct.

180 *B.P.C.* 29 Oct. 1790 Ives to Cornwallis 21 Oct.

181 *ibid.*

182 *B.P.C.* 14 Nov. 1790 Ives to Cornwallis 15 Nov.

183 *B.P.C.* 25 May 1791

184 *B.P.C.* 15 June 1791.

of his conduct¹⁸⁵ and got an order issued to him from the nawab not to have any connection with either Nepal or Srinagar¹⁸⁶. Thus through the mediation of the Company was averted a crisis which might have resulted in a war in which there was no certainty that the nawab would have come out successful, for Faizullah was a capable ruler over a vigorous race of warriors, the Rohilla Afghans, and the Oudh forces had by this time degenerated practically to the point of uselessness¹⁸⁷.

In 1794, following the death of Faizullah Khan a war actually took place between the two states. Faizullah died on 17 July 1794. His eldest son Muhammad Ali Khan succeeded him at the head of the administration. His brothers, seven in number, and other Rohilla chiefs acknowledged him as the new nawab. The nawab-wazir also seemed to have accepted him as the rightful heir and to entertain no hostile designs against him¹⁸⁸. On the night of 22 July, Tikait Rai, the nawab's diwan told the Resident that Faizullah had held Rampur as a jagir, that he had held more land than was given him by the treaty of Lal Dang (the grant having been worth Rs. 14,75,000, while the actual holding had been worth Rs. 30 lakhs), that he had not adhered to the terms of the treaty having given shelter to fugitives, and had maintained a force of over 5,000 men, etc.¹⁸⁹. This definitely shows that the nawab was contemplating to realise something out of the Rampur succession, and Tikait Rai was trying to gauge Calcutta's attitude. Cherry pointed out that the word 'jagir' was not mentioned in the treaty and that no boundaries had been defined. In his opinion Rampur had been purchased by Faizullah, for it appeared that after the defeat of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, Faizullah was about to retire with the treasures of Hafiz Rahmat, but Shujaud-daula had offered him the possession of Rampur and some other districts in exchange for half the treasures, which

185 Minute of Stuart (Senior Member of the Council).

186 *B.P.C.* 22 July 1790 Ives to GG 10 July.

187 See Chapter III.

188 *B.P.C.* 1 August 1794 Cherry to GG 21 July.

189 Same to Same 23 July.

offer Faizullah had accepted¹⁹⁰. Asafuddaula now applied to the governor-general for advice in this matter. A perusal of the relevant papers,¹⁹¹ especially called for by the governor-general, leads to the conclusion that no inference of perpetuity in favour of Faizullah's family could be drawn from the text of the engagements, still less from the firman making the grant to Faizullah, where it was expressly stated as 'jagir', a tenure, by established usage, not to extend beyond the life of the jagirdar¹⁹². On this ground Shore advised that the nawab should regrant Rampur to Muhammad Ali Khan on payment of a small nazrana and a reasonable annual tribute.

But before this could be done, a revolution occurred in Rampur. Ghulam Muhammad Khan, a brother of Muhammad Ali Khan, attacked the latter, wounded him and put him in prison (where he ultimately died on 20 August, perhaps shot by Ghulam Muhammad Khan) and assumed the government of Rampur¹⁹³. The nawab-wazir expressed his pleasure at the fate of Muhammad Ali!¹⁹⁴ But the act of Ghulam Muhammad was technically an act of rebellion against the nawab-wazir, who as lord paramount had recognised Muhammad Ali and alone possessed the right to punish Ghulam Muhammad and confiscate his land and property according to the usage in India. To recognize Ghulam Muhammad would have been a disgrace for him. Moreover, the character of Ghulam Muhammad was not such as to engender hopes of continued peaceful behaviour from him.

Ghulam Muhammad tried to popularise himself in Rampur by distributing money¹⁹⁵ and to win the nawab's favour through his favourite Raja Jhao Lal¹⁹⁶. Tikait Rai, however, assured Cherry that the nawab would not take any step without first consulting the governor-general¹⁹⁷. The governor-general advised that Ghulam Muhammad

190 *ibid.*

191 *B.P.C.* 11 August 1794 pp. 319-370.

192 *B.P.C.* 15 August 1790 Shore to Cherry 13 Aug.

193 *B.P.C.* 28 August 1794 Cherry to GG 15 Aug.

194 Cherry to GG 16 Aug.

195 *B.P.C.* 1 September 1794 Cherry to GG 22 Aug.

196 *B.P.C.* 28 August 1794 Cherry to GG 16 Aug.

197 Cherry to GG 17 Aug.

should be expelled from Rampur with the least possible delay,¹⁹⁸ because (a) by the immorality of this act he had deserved exemplary punishment; (b) it would be a disgrace for the nawab to allow such a violation of his authority to go unpunished; and (c) the disgrace would be reflected upon the Company as the ally of the nawab by giving rise to a popular belief that the Company dared not punish rebels, and this might lead to future troubles. Shore recommended that the nawab after expelling Ghulam Muhammad should confer the jagir upon a son of Faizullah, who gave definite proofs of attachment to him, on the same terms as the grant to Faizullah Khan had been made.

On 9 September, Tikait Rai informed Cherry that the nawab intended, subject to the governor-general's approval, to attach Rampur to the sarkar and grant a pension to all members of Faizullah's family except Ghulam Muhammad. He suggested also that if a son of Faizullah was to be maintained as jagirdar, Ghulam Muhammad might as well be the person¹⁹⁹. Cherry pointed out that it was necessary to punish a rebel, and that to leave the jagir in Faizullah's family would result in several advantages to the nawab, *viz.* a handsome nazrana, perhaps an annual tribute, and the retention of the services of an undoubtedly efficient family²⁰⁰. These suggestions were not very welcome to the nawab or his ministers who were aiming at the annexation of Rampur and getting possession of the treasures of Faizullah Khan, which they feared Ghulam Muhammad might abscond with. After some hesitation the nawab agreed to adopt the plan suggested by the governor-general and on 1 October 1794 issued a shuqqa to Cherry which declared that "Ghulam Muhammad Khan, having committed acts repugnant to divine and human laws . . . the measure of his expulsion is befitting a powerful ruler and is highly politic and necessary"²⁰¹. In the meantime Ghulam Muhammad had made a representation to the governor-general offering his allegiance and 15 lakhs

198 Governor-general's minute and letter to Cherry 28 Aug.

199 *B.P.C.* 22 Sep. 1794 Cherry to GG 10 Sep.

200 *ibid.*

201 *B.P.C.* 3 Oct. 1794.

of rupees in return for an English guarantee to a proposed treaty between him and the nawab; but the governor-general thought that no answer need be given to it²¹². Proclamations, composed by the governor-general, were issued to the sons of Faizullah and other Rohilla sardars²⁰³ giving reasons for the nawab's declaration of war, and mobilization took place. An attempt had been made to bring about Ghulam Muhammad's retirement without resorting to arms, by impressing upon him that owing to the close connection between the nawab and the Company he stood no chance of success, but he refused to give up the jagir. He offered money and allegiance in return for his recognition as jagirdar, but the governor-general would have none of it²¹⁴. The Cawnpore brigade started for Fathgarh on 1 October to join the brigade there and the two brigades advanced upon Rampur. The nawab dispatched to Bareilly four battalions, two from Almas's forces reported to be very well equipped and trained, and two from Hasan Raza Khan's said to be as good²⁰⁵. The nawab desired to march in person and requested the commander-in-chief to meet him near Fathgarh²⁰⁶. Ghulam Muhammad offered to come to Lucknow under the Company's protection to offer submission to the nawab²⁰⁷. Cherry encouraged him in this and sent him a permit of travel to Lucknow under the nawab's seal²⁰⁸. For this he was censured by the governor-general who feared that if Ghulam Muhammad got a chance of meeting the nawab, he would succeed in making up with him²⁰⁹. Ghulam Muhammad, however, could not avail himself of this opportunity as he was by that time practically a prisoner in Rampur, and his adherents would not allow him to leave the place²¹⁰. The battle between the Rohillas and the Company's army took place at Katra on the morning

202 *ibid.*

203 *B.P.C.* 10 Oct 1794.

204 Cherry to Abercrombie 23 Sep.

205 *B.P.C.* 17 Oct. 1794 Cherry to GG 4 Oct.

206 Nawab to Cherry 2 Oct.

207 Ghulam Muhammad to Cherry recd. 4 Oct.

208 Cherry to Ghulam Muhammad 7 Oct.

209 Shore to Cherry 16 Oct.

210 Intelligence from Rampur 6-8 Oct.

of 27 October 1794, in which the former were decisively beaten and Sir Robert Abercrombie took 15 pieces of cannon²¹¹. The Company's losses were: Europeans, killed 57 including 10 officers, and wounded 39 of which five were officers; Indians, killed 295, wounded 237 and missing six²¹². Ghulam Muhammad at first fled to Rehr, but on 6 November 1794 delivered himself up to Abercrombie²¹³. Abercrombie issued a proclamation to the other sons and relatives of Faizullah that jagirs would be granted them for their maintenance with proper dignity. The sardars at first replied that their chief Ghulam Muhammad only had the authority to negotiate terms with anyone,²¹⁴ but on Ghulam Muhammad's writing to Nasruallah Khan, the head of the family in the former's absence, asking him to give credit to the commander-in-chief's proclamation and to obey it, reply came from Rampur requesting Abercrombie to conclude a treaty similar to the one that had existed between Faizullah and the nawab under English guarantee. The sardars said that they were prepared to accept Ahmad Ali Khan²¹⁵ the son of Muhammad Ali Khan, as their chief.

On 7 December 1794 the preliminaries of the treaty were signed, under English guarantee, between the nawab and Nasruallah Khan, who was to manage the jagir during the minority of Ahmad Ali Khan, then aged about 9 years.²¹⁶ According to them, hostilities ceased; the nawab granted a general pardon to the Rohillas; all Faizullah's treasures less 14,000 gold mohars already spent by Ghulam Muhammad were required to be delivered up to the Company; the nawab agreed to grant a jagir of 10 lakhs annual revenue to Ahmad Ali Khan; and the combined English and Oudh army was to march back as soon as the above treasures were handed over by the Rohillas. This was soon done, 161 bags containing 3,22,000 gold mohars were delivered up and the

211 *B.P.C.* 7 Nov. 1794 Cherry to GG 26 Oct.; C.-in-C. to GG 26 Oct. For a detailed account of the battle see Ratan Chand, *op. cit.* f 207-8.

212 *B.P.C.* 10 Nov. 1794 Proclamation signed by C.-in-C.

213 *B.P.C.* 17 Nov. 1794 Cherry to GG 6 Nov.

214 *B.P.C.* 5 Dec. 1794 Cherry to GG 21 Nov.

215 His name is incorrectly given as Hamid Ali Khan in *Cambridge History of India* V 348.

216 *B.P.C.* 19 Dec. 1794 Abercrombie to GG 8 Dec.; Aitchison No. IV.

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combined army started on its way back²¹⁷. The final treaty was signed later in that year and ratified by the governor-general in March 1795²¹⁸. Ghulam Muhammad Khan was sent to Benares where he was later joined by his family. The Rohilla treasure was handed over to the nawab according to the governor-general's instructions²¹⁹. Rampur along with Rohilkhand was ceded to the Company in 1801, but the ruling family was maintained by the latter.

From the preceding account of the principal neighbours and the possible invaders of Oudh, it may be concluded that during 1784-1798 that country was not seriously threatened, provided that it retained its friendship with the Company. But however secure it actually may have been, the degree of safety was not generally quite so apparent then as it is now, although some men at the spot realized it even then²²⁰. The Company would undoubtedly have defended Oudh in its own interests, for it could not afford to let the resources of Oudh pass into hostile hands²²¹. But at the same time the financial condition of the Company during that period was not very good, and it naturally expected that Oudh should, in its own interest and in conformity with the treaties, pay for its protection. It is an interesting question what would have been the Company's attitude had Asafuddaula been a capable ruler like his father and had tended to be

217 *B.P.C.* 9 Jan. 1795 Cherry to GG 12 Dec. 1794.

218 Aitchison No. V.

219 *B.P.C.* 9 Jan. 1795 Shore to Cherry 3 Jan.

220 *B.S.C.* 28 June 1785 nawab-wazir to governor-general: "The protection of my country and of the concerns of government is effected through the blessing of God, and the friendship of the Company. It does not depend upon two risalahs of horse, and a company of European soldiers...."; *Home Misc.* 235. Capt. Frith's letter dated Oudh Nov. 1789. Also see *B.L.* 29. Opinion of Col. G. B. Eyres in political letter dated 8 April 1791; *B.S.C.* 26 April 1785 Palmer to GG 11 April; *B.S.C.* 11 Jan. 1788 opinion of Col. Briscoe in charge of a detachment at Anupshahr, quoted in Ives to Cornwallis 3 Jan; *B.S.C.* 18 Feb. 1791 Maj. Dickson, O.C. at Anupshahr to Ives 31 Jan.

221 Maepherson wrote on 17 Aug. 1786: The Company "are so situated with that country (Oudh) that they must defend it or run the risk of losing their own." *B.S.C.* 17 August 1786 governor-general's minute.

hostile. Would the Company then have been compelled to conquer Oudh in order not to let it fall into the hands of its most serious rival, the Mahrattas? Luckily for the Company, Asafuddaula was incapable of hostility and remained most faithfully friendly, and the Company, too, had no difficulty in abiding by the Act of 1784 with regard to Oudh. It enabled the Company also to maintain a part of its army at the expense of Oudh. This army it could ill afford to dismiss for fear of Tipu and the Mahrattas, at the same time it could scarcely maintain them for it was a period of great financial difficulty for the Company²²².

222 *B.D.* 14. Extract from the original drafts of the Company's general letter to Bengal & East India 21 Sep. 1785: "You must be extremely cautious how you put the Company to so great an expense.... without the most obvious necessity, at a time too when not only the state of their affairs, but the public voice, so loudly calls for every possible retrenchment."

III

DEGENERATION OF THE ARMY

IT HAS been said in the preceding pages that by 1785 the nawabi army had degenerated practically to a state of uselessness. It is remarkable that while Oudh was in those days one of the principal recruiting grounds for soldiers, its own army should have degenerated to that extent. The causes are not far to seek. They were, firstly, the peculiar relationship of Oudh with the Company; and secondly, the character of the nawab. Until the battle of Buxar in 1764, the army of Oudh was reputed to be formidable. P. E. Roberts remarks: "The battle of Buxar...meant that the Mughal Emperor himself, supported by his greatest minister [Shujauddaula], lay prostrate before the victorious armies of the mercantile state...."¹. The foundation of the decay was laid then. The military reputation of Oudh received a severe blow. Shujauddaula, vigorous and able as he was, might have made a recovery, but apparently he, too, felt less confident of his strength and resources than before. In 1768 he even accepted a treaty with the Company limiting the size and equipment of his army. Gen. Sir Robert Barker, the English commander-in-chief, had a special fear of Shujauddaula and felt sure that the latter would some day try to avenge his defeat of 1764. He therefore pressed Clive to do something to limit Shujauddaula's power. A deputation waited on the nawab at Benares and after prolonged negotiations a treaty was signed towards the end of 1768². By this Shujauddaula agreed not to entertain an army exceeding 35,000 men of any denomination whatsoever. Of this, 10,000 men were to be cavalry; ten battalions of trained sepoys including officers, not to exceed a total of 10,000; the najib regiment of 5,000 including matchlockmen were to remain at that

¹ *India under Wellesley* 116.

² Aitchison II. No. XLIII.

number; 500 men for the artillery, that number never to be exceeded. The remaining 9,500 men were to be irregulars, neither to be clothed, armed or disciplined after the manner of the English sepoys or najib regiment. Shujauddaula also engaged to arm none of his forces, except the 10,000 men mentioned, after the English manner, nor to train them in the discipline of the English troops. In 1774 Shujauddaula put himself under further obligations to the Company by inviting and receiving their military aid in his war against the Rohillas. In 1775 and 1777 two brigades of the Company's army were posted in Oudh, which meant that the military duties as well as military authority in Oudh no longer remained exclusive to the nawab, but was henceforward to be shared by the Company's government. These two brigades formed a considerable body of troops numbering 10,611 in 1785, strong and dependable, paid for by the nawab but under the command of the Company's officers³. So they came to be regarded as the principal defence force of the country. Their presence, and the comparative security that Oudh enjoyed owing to the military reputation of the English, so closely allied with the nawab, pushed the original Oudh army into the background, and from disuse and absence of proper supervision it deteriorated very rapidly.

This natural process of decline was considerably accelerated since 1775 owing to the character of the nominal head of the army, Nawab Asafuddaula. As Cornwallis said, the advantages of his predecessors' good conduct had devolved upon him in the forms of a full treasury, a regulated revenue, submissive subjects, and disciplined troops⁴. But Asafuddaula, as has been seen, was not interested in the affairs of the ~~state and~~ there does not seem to have been much to keep the army at an efficient, since 1785.

The army organization und| follows. The main body of the |

³ Chapter II note 1.

⁴ *B.S.C.* 1 Nov. 1793 Cornwallis to na

maintained by the various amils and chakladars, spread all over the country. Each amil or chakladar was required to maintain a certain number of soldiers, infantry and cavalry, properly accoutred and mounted. These troops were placed under the command of risaldars. The amil was granted deduction from his jama or rent to the extent of the amount calculated to be necessary for maintaining his share of the army. He was required to send the troops to the field whenever the nawab required them. Two field pieces used to be attached to each body of troops, but some of the greater amils maintained more artillery. In 1798, when an invasion by Zaman Shah was feared, Almas said that he had 42 pieces of cannon of which 30 were in excellent condition⁵. When not required by the nawab, these troops were employed in keeping in order refractory zamindars who had refused to pay the rent. These regular troops were called the tainati or mutayyana. Besides these, the amils kept a fairly large body of najibs who were well drilled and armed, and were distinguished from the first class by their dress. For ordinary everyday purposes irregulars known as sihbundy troops were maintained, who were neither drilled nor properly armed.

The nawab did not keep a large army with himself. A small body consisting of 4,007 infantry and 1,489 cavalry was attached to his person, mainly for purposes of state,⁶ and was stationed at Lucknow. The heavy artillery also was parked at the capital, where was also the topkhana or the arsenal. Under Asafuddaula the arsenal was in charge of General Claude Martine, a British officer of French birth, whose house at Lucknow, the Constantia, is now used for a boys' school founded by an endowment made by the general.

The first three nawabs of Oudh, Sa'adat Khan, Safdar

⁵ *B.M. Addl. Ms.* 13,531 f 33. Craig to Mornington 7 Nov. 1798.

⁶ In 1190 Fasli (1782-3) the mutayyana maintained by the various amils amounted to 11,663 cavalry and 44,708 infantry, two amils, Almas and Khwaja Ainuddin of Rohilkhand, kept larger forces than the nawab. Their figures are, Almas: cavalry 3,556; infantry 9,053; Ainuddin: cavalry 1,740; infantry 6,492. See Parliamentary Papers re. impeachment of Warren Hastings I 547 ff.

Jang and Shujauddaula, kept strict control over the army. They were often engaged in wars and the army was constantly with them. The work of revenue collection was done entirely by the sihbundy troops. The new system was started by Haidar Beg Khan who became the acting minister in March 1779⁷. It was done perhaps for the following reasons: since the posting of the Company's brigades in Oudh in 1775 and 1777, that country had had very little to fear from its neighbours, and Asaf-uddaula, not having been ambitious to expand his territory and being precluded by treaty from having any connection with any foreign state, had no personal occasion to require the services of his army. So it was found unnecessary to keep the whole of the army near his person in the capital; in fact, that would have resulted in frequent disturbances of the peace in the city and the neighbourhood by the idle soldiers. Therefore, probably, they were distributed all over the country to keep them in some sort of employment. The pay of the soldiers ranged from Rs. 3 to Rs. 8/13 in the infantry and from Rs. 18 to Rs. 426 per man and horse per month in the cavalry⁸. The soldiers and officers were principally Mussalmans, Rajputs, and some Brahmins.

This system naturally led to a gradual degeneration of the army. Although nominally the nawab had the supreme control of the army, yet, owing to its being so dispersed, no centralised control could be exercised over it. The amils almost invariably kept a number considerably less than they got exemption for, and even those troops were not properly clothed, armed or mounted. There was no system of inspection and the amils appropriated to themselves the savings effected in this way. Ever since the death of Shujauddaula, Oudh was not faced with any foreign invasion, nor did any serious internal disorder break out until 1794⁹ to require the services of the Oudh army. During this long period of inaction and due to the absence

7 *B.P.C.* 1 Feb. 1795. Cherry to GG 13 Jan.

8 The soldiers were paid from 6 to 12 months in the year, varying in different amildaries. *Parliamentary Papers ut supra.*

9 The war against Ghulam Muhammad of Rampur.

of interest and control on the part of the nawab, the once efficient army degenerated beyond measure. The extent of the degeneration was perhaps never fully realised until the Rampur affair made it necessary to take the stock of the military state of Oudh. On 20 April 1787, Cornwallis recorded a minute in which he said :¹⁰

... It is well-known that the forces in the service of the nawab are under no discipline, and barely sufficient to preserve the internal peace of his dominions. That his immediate subjects are retained within the bound of duty and allegiance by the respect inspired by the Company's troops, that the character of the wazir, his inconsiderate profusion in his expenses, his inattention to provide for them, and his total disregard to everything but momentary gratifications, rendered it impossible to depend upon his care, either for the protection of his country from foreign invasion or internal commotion.

On 13 January 1796, Resident Cherry wrote¹¹ to the governor-general that the Oudh forces consisted of

55 battalions computed at 1,000 men strong, najibs, and musketry with two field pieces to each corps carrying muskets, and 12,000 cavalry, a large artillery train of heavy and light ordnance with all sorts of stores. The artillery except the field pieces with the battalions is at Lucknow, the infantry except four battalions about his Excellency's person, and the cavalry are stationed with the amils in the country, are employed in the (collection of) revenues, and from long disuse are considered more for revenue purpose than as entertained for the defence of the country ; the muskets are useless, the corps in general badly appointed, and from the pernicious practice of remaining with the amils, subject to no control from the wazir, are incomplete, and those present have acquired the profession of bankers and zamindars more than of soldiers . . .

In July 1795 he had written that the number of the force could not be ascertained and that their condition was more to be regretted than the paucity of men. What they were paid by the amils was unknown, their discipline was not worthy of the name, nor were their arms any better, except of the cavalry, who were armed with swords and spears, etc. Probably only the small detachment with the nawab was regularly paid. Even under each amil the troops did not constitute a solid body, being placed under a number of practically independent risaldars and were spread all over the district. They were almost all the time engaged in subduing refractory zamindars, and if they

¹⁰ *B.S.C.* 20 Apr. 1787.

¹¹ *B.P.C.* 1 Feb. 1796.

were at any time required by the nawab, as happened in 1794, there arose serious difficulties in collecting the revenues¹². Sir Robert Abercrombie wrote on 25 May 1795:¹³

Oudh is inhabited by a hardy and daring race, unused to subordination, inured to arms and discontented with the present government. The late disturbances in Rohilkhand justify these assertions . . . Throughout the extensive boundary of the nawab's dominions there is but one fortress, and that too by no means in a defensible state and without any garrison . . . The nawab's army is weak in cavalry, and though in numbers his artillery and infantry are considerable, they are greatly dispersed without attachment, without discipline and without subordination. Such is the state of the nawab's military establishment and (with an exception in favour of Almas Ali Khan, who has a corps in the Doab, which if collected, might be of some service from their attachment to him and his command over them) I may safely affirm that the nawab's army would be of little, if any, weight in the defence of his country against foreign enemy provided with the necessary resources and bent on views of conquest.

By Article 4 of the treaty of 21 May 1775¹⁴, the English undertook the defence of Oudh and the nawab maintained two brigades of the Company's troops in Oudh. It seems that both the Oudh sarkar and the Calcutta government took it for granted that the defence of Oudh rested entirely with the Company and that the nawabi army did not count at all. But in 1785, while the nawab thought that there was no external danger threatening Oudh and that, therefore, the maintenance of the two brigades was an unnecessary burden on him,¹⁵ the Calcutta government thought the need for a minimum of two brigades existed. And although it is true that as long as Oudh was in alliance with the Company, it had no serious danger from its neighbours,¹⁶ yet in those days of political upheavals the view of the Calcutta government was natural. During the acting governor-generalship of Sir John Macpherson the nawab made repeated private representations to him objecting to be charged with the expenses of the second (Fathgarh)

12 *B.P.C.* 7 August 1795.

13 *B.P.C.* 25 May 1795.

14 Aitchison No. XLVII.

15 *B.S.C.* 19 Jan. 1787 nawab-wazir to governor-general recd. Nov. 1785.

16 Chapter II.

brigade, and his unwillingness to receive a garrison at Allahabad¹⁷. But Macpherson invariably replied emphasising the necessity for maintaining both the brigades, and they continued to remain in Oudh, although Allahabad was not garrisoned by the Company's troops until 1798¹⁸. The Court of Directors also wrote to the governor-general expressly desiring the withdrawal of the Fathgarh detachment,¹⁹ but Macpherson convinced them, too, by the same arguments²⁰. No attempts appear to have been made during that period to reform the military system of Oudh enabling it to defend itself, or to check its further deterioration.

Cornwallis, soon after his arrival in India, received representations from the nawab complaining of the heavy burden of the army subsidy and praying for relief. Haidar Beg Khan went to Calcutta on 4 February 1787, and the questions of the defence of Oudh and its military reform were discussed between him and Cornwallis. Haidar Beg accepted the necessity of maintaining both the brigades in Oudh. As to military reforms, the governor-general only mildly suggested "the propriety of a reduction of the irregular troops maintained by the wazir if necessary in order to furnish the sums required for the pay of the Company's troops . . ." His distrust of Almas led him to instruct the Resident to reduce his military strength,²¹ which was the only part of the Oudh forces that was worth its name. Towards the end of his long letter to the nawab dated 12 August 1793, Cornwallis refers to the military state of Oudh²². He writes :

I have not proposed any regulations for the (army) although perhaps there is no part of the establishments of your Excellency's government that more requires arrangement. I understand them to be an ill-paid and ill-disciplined and disorderly set of people ; that the numbers charged to your Excellency far exceed what are actually retained, and that the excess is a profit participated between the amils and the commanders. The

17 *B.S.C.* 19 Jan. 1787 governor-general's minute.

18 Chapter IV.

19 *B.D.* 14. Company's general letter to Bengal and East India 21 Sep. 1785.

20 *B.S.C.* 17 August 1786 minute of governor-general.

21 *B.S.C.* 8 Nov. 1787 Cornwallis to Ives 1 Oct.

22 *B.S.C.* 1 Nov. 1793.

redress is in your Excellency's power; the principle upon which it ought to be attempted is obvious. That no more should be retained than are actually wanted, that such as are retained should be effective, regularly mustered, and that their pay should be punctually issued . . . Your Excellency upon reflection may also see the propriety of new arrangement of the stations of the 'taynaut' troops in such a manner that those at one place may go to the assistance of another.

Counsel of perfection given just before his departure for England. Perhaps the reason why he had not pressed while he was in India for any specific measures of reform was the order of the Court of Directors not to interfere in the internal affairs of Oudh²³.

A very natural question arises, how could the nawab's military establishment be improved? Asafuddaula himself was not interested in the disciplining of his troops. The security of the country being assured by its alliance with the British, neither the ministers, nor the amils felt any necessity of keeping the army in order, and the latter were more interested in making personal profits by economising on the mutayyana. The only exception was Almas who, besides being the ablest of the amils, was also the one most exposed to the danger of Mahratta or Sikhs inroads. In these circumstances perhaps the only possible way of ensuring efficiency in the nawabi army was training and disciplining under competent European officers. By the treaty of 1775 no Europeans, except those approved by the governor-general, were allowed to take service under the Oudh government. So the provision of such officers rested entirely with the Calcutta government. But Cornwallis laid down the principle that no British officers were to be lent to native princes to command their troops, and in accordance with this principle the services of Capts. Macleod and Sloper, who were supposed to command two bodies of the nawab's troops, were dispensed with²⁴. It should at the same time be noticed that the nawab never sought the advice or

23 *B.S.C.* 20 April 1787 governor-general's minute.

24 *B.S.C.* 15 Jan. 1787. *Beng. Sec. Lett.* letter No. 19; letter in Secret Deptt. 22 Jan. 1787. The nawab had four battalions of his troops (3,000 in number) and 9 guns under an English officer, Capt. Frith. Warren Hastings in 1784 wanted the nawab to disband that body as a measure of economy, but it was not done in view of the Sikh scare

assistance of the governor-general in effecting military reforms in his country, and in accordance with the orders of the Court of Directors, the governor-general could not take the initiative in the matter. So that all Cornwallis did was to suggest to Haidar Beg that the nawab's own troops might be gradually disbanded, not so much by way of military reform as financial relief. He inquired later from the Resident, Ives, how far this had been accomplished. Ives made inquiries from Haidar Beg who seemed very reluctant to discuss the matter and only said that the work had been going on, in fact at a faster pace than Cornwallis had recommended. There the matter ended; Ives noticing the minister's reluctance did not press for further details²⁵. The question was not again raised by Cornwallis until just before his departure²⁶.

The attention of Shore was early drawn to the pressing need for reform in every department of the Oudh government. On 1 May 1794 he wrote²⁷ to Cherry, who had been appointed Resident on 17 April 1794 in succession to Ives, that it was imperative that reforms should be effected on the lines laid down by Cornwallis in his letter of 12 August 1793. He wanted the Resident to find out how far the officers of the nawab were competent to carry out the reforms, and if anything had already been done. But at the same time he sounded a note of warning that the Resident should not in any way interfere in the internal and personal affairs of the nawab. So that, although anxious to see the Oudh administration reformed, what the governor-general wanted the Resident to do towards that end was to be a mere spectator and adviser. The extent to which the administration had deteriorated on the one hand, and the character of the nawab and of his

which soon followed although Frith was dismissed. NW to GG recd. in Calcutta 21 April 1785. *B.S.C.* 26 April 1785. These private commands were, however, often sources of great speculation. For instance, it was found on investigations by Cornwallis that Capt. Sloper commanded no more than a few orderlymen although he charged the sarkar for a fully equipped regiment. Thus it would seem that Cornwallis's intention was not so much to allow the nawabi troops to drift as to relieve the sarkar of expensive but useless British officers.

25 *B.S.C.* 18 Jan. 1788. Ives to Cornwallis 10 Jan.

26 *B.S.C.* 28 Jan. 1793. GG to NW 29 Jan.

27 *B.P.C.* 2 May 1794.

personal friends and counsellors on the other, made reforms impossible in that way. The only way was to compel the nawab to substitute a more efficient system of administration in place of the one that existed. In ordinary circumstances he ran the risk of losing his masnad; but for the protection afforded by the Company's arms, Oudh would either have been the prey of the Mahrattas or the scene of a revolution in favour of some strong amil. In ancient and mediæval India there seems seldom to have occurred popular revolutions, and it cannot be expected that there would have been one in Oudh. Conquest by a foreigner or an internal revolution might not have affected the people of Oudh either for better or for worse, but this is almost certain that without the Company's protection Asafuddaula's nawabi would have been of a shorter duration.

Cherry, who was perhaps more sincere than tactful, seems to have been very keenly interested in the reformation of the nawab's administration²⁸. He held almost daily conferences with Asafuddaula and kept on advising him to change his ways and to take the reins of government in his own hands. In his opinion all the abuses arose out of "the personal neglect of the wazir in the administration of his own affairs".²⁹ Shore also urged on Asafuddaula the need for immediate reforms, but he was especially interested in the solvency of the state and the regular payment to the Company of the army subsidy. He asked Cherry to do the obviously impossible, *viz.*, to avoid all semblance of direct interference in the nawab's executive government, and make the reforms seem to arise from the suggestions of the nawab himself, while maintaining an attitude of "a disinterested well-wisher."³⁰ On 24 June 1795 he sent to Cherry suggestions for the reform of the

28 Cherry's letters to the governor-general show how strongly he felt the unfairness of the fact that Oudh with such great possibilities should be so utterly neglected by the nawab. The letters are collected in *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,522.

29 *B.P.C.* 27 Feb. 1795 Cherry to GG 29 Jan.

30 *B.P.C.* 24 April 1795 GG to Cherry 21 April.

nawab's administration³¹ pointing out that the number of the mutayyana troops maintained by the amils was far less than the number they got exemption for, and that even these were not properly equipped, so this department afforded a good field for retrenchment. He advised that the troops paid for should actually be maintained, properly regimented and stationed, regularly paid and disciplined, properly armed and accoutred, and should be ready for service whenever wanted, and that the nawab should have a body of cavalry well mounted and always ready to march. This was apparently the first serious suggestion made by the governor-general for the military reform of Oudh since the reference to the matter made by Cornwallis. Cherry very eagerly took the cue and drew up an elaborate plan of reform which he submitted to the governor-general on 20 July 1795³². His plan was divided into two sections: (a) reform of the executive government, and (b) reforms in the departments of commerce and justice. The first he said needed immediate attention. This department comprised of (i) civil and (ii) military administration. As to the reform of the military administration he suggested that the nawab, besides being the nominal head of the army, should actually superintend the whole of the military force. He was conscious of the incapacity of the latter personally to do that work, so he suggested that this power should be delegated to one of the ministers. Of the ministers, Cherry did not think that Tikait Rai or Hulas Rai were suitable, but recommended that Hasan Raza Khan should be the chief commander. The chief commander was then to proceed to ascertain the number of troops maintained by the state. They were to be properly regimented and put under the command of efficient men independent of the amils. Suitable cantonments were to be built for them at different places. Whenever an amil encountered resistance from the zamindars requiring the services of the nawab's troops, he was to apply to the nawab who would order the cantonment

31 *B.P.C.* 26 June 1795.

32 *B.P.C.* 7 August 1795.

nearest to that district to send a detachment. Only the nawab, through the chief commander could order the movement of the troops. For ordinary everyday business, the amils were to maintain sihbundy. The army was to be paid from the general treasury at Lucknow under simple and easy regulations to be devised later. As to the equipment of the army, in the opinion of Cherry the cavalry was to adhere to their usual sword and spear, only it was to be seen that they were actually so equipped. Matchlocks were to be substituted for such muskets as they had. How far the infantry was to adopt European discipline and arms was a question which could be decided later.

The plan was practical and the nawab seemed at first willing to adopt it; but his natural indolence prevented him from following vigorously and consistently any particular course of action. The major reforms were being consistently postponed and Cherry justly lays the blame entirely on the nawab himself. He wrote: "Had not the weakness of the nawab's judgment given way to the intrigues of his favourites, the progress would have been quicker."³³ As has been said before, Cherry soon fell into the nawab's disfavour for trying to make him adopt the plan of administrative reforms, and for supporting the case of Tikait Rai who had been dismissed by the nawab on charges of embezzlement³⁴. Cherry had been before admonished by the governor-general for having been too hasty and tactless in trying to bring about reforms in Oudh. On 6 May 1796, Shore wrote to him disapproving of his action because the nawab's acquiescence in the reforms had been, so to speak, extorted, an act "unjustifiable and ungenerous... whatever temporary benefits might result from it." He wanted to leave the whole initiative with the nawab; "the wazir may be left to his unbiassed determination with respect to adoption or rejection of the arrangement," he wrote,³⁵ a very mistaken

33 *B.P.C.* 20 May 1796 Cherry to GG 9 May.

34 *B.P.C.* 13 June 1796 NW to GG reed. 29 May, *supra* Chapter I, *infra* Chapter IV.

35 *B.P.C.* 6 May 1796.

policy if any effective reform was really meant to be carried out in Oudh, knowing the wazir as well as Shore did. The governor-general on 13 July 1796 recorded a minute strongly condemning the conduct of Cherry, and with the concurrence of the Board Cherry was dismissed from the Residency of Lucknow and was transferred to Benares³⁶. Cherry, however, was confident that the nawab completely trusted him and that he had been only temporarily influenced by his evil advisers. He regretted his dismissal because he thought that he could have regained the nawab's confidence and ultimately effected the reforms³⁷.

The question of the nawab's debts³⁸ and the appointment of a minister in place of Hasan Raza Khan and Tikait Rai³⁹ absorbed almost the entire attention of the new Resident, John Lumsden, and of Shore who visited Lucknow during February-April 1797. Shore secured the dismissal of Jhao Lal, the favourite of Asafuddaula and leader of the party opposed to British influence in Oudh. The new minister, Tafazzul Hussain Khan and Lumsden were occupied in reducing the influence of the nawab's favourites who still remained in Lucknow (*e.g.* Bhawani Mahra and Balakram) and trying to effect a general administrative reform. The reform of the military establishment fell into the background. Before it could be revived, Asafuddaula died on 21 September 1797, and Shore was soon faced with a question of quite different nature, the succession question⁴⁰. Soon after that was settled, Shore was succeeded by Lord Mornington, and with him came an almost complete change in the Company's relationship with Oudh.

The steps by which the entire defence of Oudh came into the hands of the Company are comparatively easy to follow. By the treaty of 7 September 1773⁴¹ Shuja-uddaula had become entitled to call for the services of a

36 *B.P.C.* 13 June 1796.

37 *B.P.C.* 8 July 1796 Cherry to Barlow 21 June.

38 Chapter IV.

39 Chapter VI.

40 Chapter VII.

41 Aitchison No. XLVI.

detachment of the Company's troops on condition of paying for their maintenance at the rate of Rs. 2,10,000 per brigade per month. A brigade was to consist of two battalions or one regiment of Europeans, six battalions of Indian sepoy, and a company of artillery. Such a requisition was made in 1774 for the war against the Rohillas. In 1775 the Majority in the Calcutta Council decided that the treaty of 1773 had ceased to be valid with the death of Shujaudaula, and a new treaty was concluded with Asafuddaula on 21 May 1775⁴². The principal negotiator on the part of the nawab was his minister Mukhtarudaula⁴³. The Company undertook to defend Oudh at all times against all enemies (Article 4) ; in return the nawab gave to the Company in perpetual sovereignty the districts of Benares, Ghazipur and Chunar with all their dependencies (Article 5)⁴⁴. The nawab agreed to pay the Company at the rate of Rs. 2,60,000 per brigade per month as long as its troops remained within his boundaries. At this time one brigade was permanently stationed at Cawnpore. In 1777 another brigade called the "temporary brigade" was posted at Fathgarh. Malcolm says⁴⁵ that shortly after the treaty of 1775 the nawab had applied for a body of English officers, six battalions of sepoy, a corps of artillery and some cavalry, intending to employ them in training and improving his own army, and that the required corps was formed in 1777 and sent over to Oudh, for which the nawab engaged to pay about 23 lakhs annually. Warren Hastings thought this new establishment to be useless and extravagant⁴⁶.

In 1779 the nawab stated his inability to pay the whole subsidy and therefore wished for the withdrawal of the temporary brigade, declaring that it had proved itself expensive but of no use. He, however, ultimately yielded

42 *ibid* No. XLVII.

43 This treaty made him so unpopular that he was murdered soon after. See Chapter I.

44 Mir Ghulam Ali says that Benares was ceded as reward for bringing back Sa'adat Ali to Lucknow from Bareilly where he had been trying to set up his independent authority.

45 *History of India* I 100-101.

46 Gleig *op. cit.* II 139-50 Warren Hastings to Alex. Elliott 10 Feb. 1777 and enclosures.

to the Calcutta government's earnest representation that it was necessary to keep both the brigades in Oudh⁴⁷. During 1780-81 the sarkar renewed its agitation for the withdrawal of the Fathgarh brigade. On 19 September 1781 a new engagement⁴⁸ was made by which it was agreed that the Fathgarh brigade and three regiments of cavalry should be recalled within the Company's territories, that various corps of the nawab's irregulars under English officers should be disbanded, and that a regiment of the Company's sepoy should be posted at Lucknow for the protection of the residency⁴⁹ for which the nawab would pay Rs. 25,000 per month. All the terms of this engagement except the most essential one, *viz.* the withdrawal of the brigade, were carried out⁵⁰.

In September 1784, when Warren Hastings visited Lucknow, the nawab again put forward his old request, and Hastings being convinced of its justice promised to comply with it and left orders with the Resident to that effect⁵¹. The Court of Directors approved of his decision⁵², but on his return to Calcutta he found that the members of his Council, Macpherson (governor-general designate) and Stables, were opposed to it⁵³. He submitted to their opinion and made the repeal of his former resolution appear to proceed from his own initiative lest it should put a burden of discredit and unpopularity upon the opposition, one of whom was going to succeed him⁵⁴.

By this time, Haidar Beg, feeling Oudh to be secure under the Company's protection, had disbanded some of the most efficient bodies of the army left by Shujaudaula, most of whom quitted Oudh and joined either Najaf Khan, a semi-independent chief in the Doab, or Sindhia⁵⁵. Some possibly joined the rising bands of the armed Sanyasis

47 Malcolm *op. cit.* 101-5.

48 Aitchison No. XLIX.

49 The Residency was established in 1773.

50 Malcolm *op. cit.* 106.

51 Hastings' memoir. Forrest *Selections from the State Papers of the Governors-General in India, Warren Hastings* II 27.

52 *B.D.* 14. Company's general letter to Bengal and East India 21 Sept. 1785.

53 *B.S.O.* 17 Aug. 1786 minute by Macpherson.

54 Hastings' Memoir 29.

55 Ghulam Ali *op. cit.* 137; Abu Talib *op. cit.* 31.

who carried on depredations all over northern India. Those who remained in the nawab's service were mostly stationed with the amils who utterly neglected their training and equipment. Thus in 1785, when the Sikh scare took place, the nawab found it necessary to call for the Company's troops as a measure of protection⁵⁶. But before this happened, he (or rather his ministers) had thought out a plan for the defence of Oudh in which the nawabi army and one brigade of the Company's troops were to co-operate, and which had been explained to and approved of by Warren Hastings in 1784⁵⁷. It was as follows:

The sarkar was to take out of the hands of the zamindars the command of the two forts of Sartia and Kurnia⁵⁸ on the north-western frontier, which were said to be strong forts well supplied with military stores. A reliable officer with a respectable body of troops was to be put in charge of them. Later on, after the ministers had paid off the Company's dues and the debt due to the bankers, a chain of similar forts were to be built in the Doab along the frontier, and instead of being placed under the amils, they were to be placed under men directly appointed by and responsible to the sarkar. This establishment with one brigade of the Company's troops to support it in times of emergency were, in the opinion of the sarkar, quite adequate for the defence of Oudh against all probable enemies. Hastings having approved of this plan, the Cawnpore brigade and Almas had been despatched to turn out the zamindars who had held these forts, a task soon accomplished. Hastings in the meantime returned from Lucknow, promising to issue, in conjunction with the Council, an order for the recall of the temporary brigade. But that order never came.

When the Sikh scare arose early in 1785, the ministers still intending to implement their plan ordered four battalions

⁵⁶ Chapter II (ii).

⁵⁷ *B.S.C.* 26 April 1785 NW to GG recd. at Calcutta 21 April.

⁵⁸ I have not been able to identify these places. They do not appear in Rennell's map, nor are they mentioned in the list of 25 mud forts in the Doab submitted by Almas at the end of 1798, *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798.

and nine guns, formerly commanded by Capt. Frith⁵⁹ and at that time placed at Khairabad, to march to Bareilly to guard the ghats. Almas was ordered to march to Anupshahr in order to attack and drive away the Sikhs and then stay there guarding that part of the frontier. The sarkar was anxious to work out their plan successfully, probably in order to demonstrate to Calcutta the superfluity of the Fathgarh brigade. But at this time came the representation from Sir John Cumming and the suggestion from Calcutta that the Fathgarh brigade should proceed to the frontier. The nawab in order to please the governor-general countermanded Almas's march and allowed Cumming to proceed to Anupshahr.

Macpherson's ground for rejecting the operation of the plan was that the Company was so closely related with Oudh that "they had to defend the latter or run the risk of losing their own territories,"⁶⁰ and therefore could not risk the defence of Oudh, even partly, in the hands of the nawab's army.

After the Sikh scare had passed, the nawab, still anxious to try the original plan,⁶¹ wrote to the governor-general reminding him of it and pathetically adding, "Now . . . if this matter should be approved, let it be executed. It is very necessary."⁶² The nawab and his ministers believed it was an effective and practicable plan of defence. Macpherson replied, "Your own troops under proper management and discipline, and the Company's brigades animated by the influence of your Highness's attachment to this government, are fully sufficient to command the respect of all the powers of Hindustan united."⁶³ But he was not in favour of reducing the strength of the Company's forces in Oudh, both for the sake of effective defence and relief to

59 *supra* Note 24.

60 Macpherson's minute 17 August 1786.

61 It was much less expensive than keeping the Fathgarh brigade. For that brigade the nawab paid, while they remained in cantonment, Rs. 1,45,000 per month. Extra allowances and contingencies were paid when they went out on duty. Frith's battalions consisting of 3,000 men and nine guns cost Rs. 25,000 per month.

62 *B.S.C.* 26 April 1785 NW to GG reed. 21 April.

63 *B.S.C.* 26 May 1785.

the Company's finances⁶⁴. So the plan was not approved by him and, therefore, was not put into operation. On the contrary, he insisted on the disbanding of Frith's battalion⁶⁵. Thus Macpherson, acting against the desire of the Oudh sarkar and against the recommendations of Warren Hastings, the Court of Directors and the Resident, Lt.-Col. Palmer, continued to keep both the brigades at Oudh, and insisted on the disbanding of whatever efficient troops remained with the nawab. In addition to the two brigades, there had been stationed in Oudh two bodies of the Company's cavalry, one consisting of two risalas of Kandahar horse under Abdul Rahman, one attached to each of the subsidiary brigades, after their return from the Mahratta war,⁶⁶ and a body of European 'chasseurs' from Chunar. Macpherson decided that these bodies should be permanently placed there because they were the only bodies of the Company's cavalry in Oudh and might prove useful.⁶⁷

The abortive attempt by the Oudh sarkar just preceding and following the Sikh scare of 1785 to share with the Company the defence of Oudh, seems to have been its last effort. Towards the end of 1785 the nawab again tried without success to effect the withdrawal of the Fathgarh brigade on grounds of its uselessness and Warren Hastings' former promise,⁶⁸ but after that the process of degeneration described above, which had started with Asafuddaula's accession, went on unchecked.

In order to make the defence of Oudh more secure, and thereby make the Company's territories immune from probable disturbances, Macpherson wanted the nawab to hand over the fort of Allahabad which the Company would refortify and garrison. But the nawab persisted in refusing because "the delivery of it would be considered disgraceful in the eyes of the surrounding states, as well as the impeachment of the firm faith he had ever

64 GG's minute 17 Aug. 1786.

65 *B.S.C.* 26 May 1785. GG to NW.

66 *B.L.* 23 letter in Secret Deptt. 31 July 1785.

67 *ibid.*

68 *B.S.C.* 19 Jan. 1787 NW to GG recd. at Calcutta Nov. 1785; GG to NW 1 Feb. 1786.

manifested towards the English nation.”⁶⁹ He ordered the gates of the fort to be opened and told the Resident that the English might take possession of it, “but that his consent could never go with it.”⁷⁰

Early in 1785 Haidar Beg came to Calcutta to discuss with Cornwallis, among other things, the question of the defence of Oudh and the withdrawal of the Fathgarh brigade. The process of degeneration of the nawab’s army had been steadily going on and Cornwallis became convinced that although Oudh was under no immediate danger of attack, yet the removal of any part of the subsidiary force might precipitate such an event, that a single brigade stationed at Cawnpore was by no means adequate for the defence of the country, and that the nawab’s own army was so ill-disciplined that it was quite inadequate to maintain even internal peace. The Company’s forces were the only respectable body of troops in Oudh⁷¹. He therefore refused to withdraw any part of it, to which arrangement Haidar Beg agreed “cheerfully and readily” and promised to secure his master’s acquiescence. Cornwallis told the minister that the Company’s government would be willing to recall any part of that force whenever it would be found possible to do so without danger to either party, but he confesses in his minute that he foresaw no such possibility. The main reason for the minister’s anxiety for the withdrawal of the brigade he understood to be the financial burden it imposed upon the sarkar. He therefore recommended that the nawab’s own troops should be disbanded, thus relieving the finances of the state. Kamaluddin Haidar says that the governor-general had offered to return Benares, which he admitted to have been taken without sufficient justification, but the nawab refused to take back what he had once given,⁷² but of this there is no mention either in the Company’s records or in Cornwallis’s correspondence.

69 *B.S.C.* 2 Oct. 1786 Harper to Macpherson 18 Sep.; *B.S.L.* I letter in Sec. & Pol. Deptt. 11 Nov. 1786.

70 *B.S.C.* 2 Oct. 1786 Harper to Macpherson 18 Sep.

71 *B.S.C.* 20 Apr. 1787 minute of governor-general; Cornwallis to NW 15 April.

72 Kamaluddin *op. cit.* f 26.

Haider Beg carried out the "reform" of the Oudh army to a certain extent,⁷³ but neglected more the remaining establishment, and for this he has been both directly and indirectly reproached by his compatriots⁷⁴.

There were two points which were at least practically left vague, *viz.* the purpose for which the subsidiary forces could be employed by the nawab, and the extent of the nawab's control over them. Undoubtedly they were there primarily for the protection of the frontiers of Oudh, either by actually taking the field against an invader, or by their presence by inspiring awe in the minds of possible invaders. They also undoubtedly acted as a deterrent force to possible disturbers of the peace in the country itself. But when, in spite of their presence, some zamindars had the courage to rebel, could they be employed by the nawab to suppress him? Requisitions were sometimes made by the nawab's ministers for this purpose, *e.g.* in May-June 1788, when such an application was made for suppressing the zamindar of Anupshahr⁷⁵. Resident Ives told the minister that the Company's troops were not to be employed for any such purpose, it being purely an internal affair of the state. Cornwallis approved of this action, but he seems to have been in doubt as to what the exact principle guiding such eventualities should have been. Because, on the one hand, the Company's troops were the only effective force in Oudh, hence the preservation of internal peace depended upon them; on the other hand, their unrestricted employment in that way would soon lead to open violation of the principle of non-intervention which the Court of Directors had ordered. Moreover, if the nawab's right to employ the Company's forces indiscriminately were admitted, the ministers might abuse that right, and the forces would then be employed in unwarranted oppression of the amils. So Cornwallis laid down the principle that generally the forces were not to be so employed, but if the Resident and the officer

73 *B.S.C.* 18 Jan. 1788 Ives to Cornwallis 10 Jan.

74 Abu Talib *op. cit.* 100; Faiz Bakhsh *op. cit.* 30; Ghulam Ali *op. cit.* 137.

75 *B.S. & P.C.* 16 June 1788.

commanding were fully satisfied that great mischief might arise out of a particular case, they could, after obtaining the governor-general's sanction, comply with the request of the sarkar. "To repress contumacy, rebellion, or reduce a refractory zamindar or renter, the troops may be employed; but when this service is performed, they should be recalled and not continue under any pretence for collecting the revenues."⁷⁶

As to the nawab's control over the subsidiary forces, he may have had some in theory only, but practically none at all. Whenever any service was required of them, he had to apply to the Resident, although these applications took the form of orders (shuqqa), and if the Resident saw that compliance with such orders would not embarrass the interests of the Company, he readily issued orders accordingly to the officers of the forces. But whenever the Resident felt the least doubt on the advisability of acceding to the nawab's wishes, he wrote to Calcutta for instructions, where the ultimate authority lay.

By the time of Haidar Beg's death (1792) the nawabi army came to be universally regarded as of no practical utility, except the troops under Almas. The Rohilla trouble of 1794 was quelled entirely by the Company's forces under Sir Robert Abercrombie who in 1795 recommended that another brigade should be stationed in Oudh, with the control of the fort of Allahabad, on which he laid particular emphasis.⁷⁷ In 1794 the Company's forces in Oudh amounted to the following :

At Cawnpore : a weak battalion of Europeans of 298 firelocks exclusive of invalids, "the men as deficient in size as the corps was in strength"; two companies of European artillery (exclusive of a detachment at Lucknow) of 111 N.C.O.s and privates, with six companies of lascars; a regiment of 228 N.C.O.s and privates; and five battalions of native infantry.

At Lucknow : a battalion of native infantry with its guns.

At Fathgarh : a company of artillery of 59 N.C.O.s and privates, with four companies of lascars; a regiment of cavalry of 186 mounted men; and six battalions of native infantry.⁷⁸

After the Rohilla trouble, the Cawnpore battalion of

76 *B.S.C.* 16 June 1788 Cornwallis to Ives.

77 *B.P.C.* 25 May 1795 minute by the C.-in-C.

78 *ibid.*

Europeans was replaced by a better body of 618 rank and file, and the deficiencies in the artillery were made up. A company of artillery with two of lascars were added to the Fathgarh brigade.⁷⁹ It had been arranged that a detachment of that brigade consisting of two battalions of native infantry with guns should regularly camp at Anupshahr during the fair seasons. The commander-in-chief criticised this system of detaching two battalions at such a distance from the headquarters, which subjected them to the danger of being cut off by the Mahrattas. He therefore recommended that a respectable post be established on the eastern bank of the Ganges to which the detachment might retire in emergencies. He further recommended that a considerable body of the nawab's cavalry be attached to that station. He found the native battalions (of the subsidiary force) to consist of more recruits and undisciplined men than was proper, and the European cavalry at a very low level of efficiency. The regiment at Lucknow, in his opinion, served no useful purpose there, being employed only on guarding the Residency, and he therefore recommended that it should join its brigade at Cawnpore.⁸⁰

Shore agreed generally with the commander-in-chief and recommended that over and above a fresh brigade a body of 5,000 horse should be kept in Oudh, and proposed to go to Lucknow personally to influence the nawab to accept this increase.⁸¹ He went to Lucknow early in 1797, and according to the orders of the Court of Directors⁸² procured Asafuddaula's consent to pay for two extra regiments, provided that their total expenses did not exceed $5\frac{1}{2}$ lakh of rupees annually,⁸³ though no fresh troops were stationed in Oudh itself. The subsidiary forces in Oudh in October 1797 amounted to the following :

79 *ibid.*

80 While at Lucknow, this regiment received from the nawab an extra Rs. 25,000 per month as field allowance.

81 *B.P.C.* 22 June 1795 GG's minute.

82 *Home Misc.* 236. Pol. Lett. from Court of Directors to GG in Council 22 April 1796.

83 *B.S.C.* 27 Mar. 1797 Shore to Speke 21 March ; Aitchison No. LII.

At Cawnpore and Fathgarh :

| | |
|---|------|
| 1 regiment of European infantry rank and file. | 929 |
| 5 companies of European artillery. | 332 |
| 14 companies of lascars. | 1036 |
| 2 regiments of native cavalry. | 924 |
| 4 regiments of native infantry. | 6800 |
| The Hindustani regiment of cavalry. | 367 |
| The 27th regt. of dragoons shortly to be posted at Cawnpore. | 353 |

10,741

i.e. two brigades of almost the same strength as were maintained in 1785. The commander-in-chief expected that another native regiment from Chunar numbering 1,800 would join the forces in Oudh, making the total 12,541.⁸⁴

A treaty was concluded between Sa'adat Ali and Shore on 7 February 1798, on the former's accession to the masnad.⁸⁵ Article 2 of this treaty repeats the Company's obligation to defend Oudh against all enemies. By Article 7 it was agreed that the English forces maintained in Oudh should never fall below 10,000 men including all classes of troops. A clause that caused serious trouble soon after, as will be seen in a later chapter, was that "if at any time it should become necessary to augment the troops of the Company in Oudh beyond the number of 13,000. . . the nawab agrees to pay the actual difference occasioned by the excess." It added that if the number fell below 8,000, the nawab would be granted proportionate deduction in the subsidy. The much coveted fort of Allahabad was at last handed over to the Company (Article 8) "to their exclusive possession. . . with all its buildings and appurtenances, and the ghats immediately dependent upon the fort, together with as much land surrounding the fort as may be necessary for the purpose of an esplanade." By Article 9 the nawab agreed to the restationing of the Company's forces at places more convenient than Cawnpore and Fathgarh. By Article 13 he engaged to have no communication with any foreign power except through the Company, and by Article 15 not to employ

⁸⁴ *B.S.C.* 9 Oct. 1797 minute of C-in-C.

⁸⁵ Aitchison No. LIII.

any European, or permit any to settle in Oudh, except with the consent of the governor-general. This was the position in May 1798 when Mornington assumed the governor-generalship at Calcutta.

IV

FINANCIAL RELATIONS WITH THE COMPANY: BANKRUPTCY OF OUDH

THE AGRICULTURAL wealth of Oudh has earned for it the name of the "Garden of India." Yet the period 1785 to 1798 has been financially one of the worst for the Oudh sarkar. The sources of revenue were neglected and the demands made on the receipts were heavy. By the end of Asafuddaula's nawabi the sarkar was on the verge of bankruptcy.

The principal source of income of the sarkar was land revenue, called 'jama'. The system of collection under Asafuddaula was the same as established by Safdar Jang,¹ which was a slight variation of Akbar's revenue system. The province was divided into large districts which were placed under nazims. Those districts were divided into small units called 'parganas' or 'mahals', with a 'tahsildar' in each entrusted with its collection. Several parganas were grouped together and placed under an amil. The nazims and amils possessed troops, sihbandy only up to the time of Asafuddaula's accession, but after that also bodies of the regular army. Two systems of assessment of revenue were current, the 'amani' and the 'ijara'—by the former, the sarkar dealt directly with the cultivators, while the latter was the much criticised system of farming. According to Elliott² the ijara system did not become common until the time of Sa'adat Ali, and later gave rise to the taluqdars. Settlement was made annually with the amils on the apparent expectation of the harvest. These settlements were elastic, deductions called 'rihai' were sometimes granted when the crops failed owing to some unforeseen causes, and augmentations called 'ziadat' sometimes made, a system often abused by either party. Besides the land under the direct administration of the

¹ A. L. Srivastava, *The first two Nawabs of Oudh* 261-2.

² *op. cit.* 127.

sarkar, there were districts, particularly on the frontiers, held by zamindars who realised the taxes from the ryot, exercised complete civil and criminal jurisdiction over them, and paid the sarkar's revenue in the form of fixed tributes without rendering any account of their collections. When any of these zamindars became refractory, one of the first things he did was to stop paying the tribute. They did not resume payment until compelled and were often dispossessed of the land by the sarkar's troops. The assessment being so unsystematic and collections irregular, it is almost impossible to get at the exact amount of the sarkar's income in any year. Kamaluddin Haidar states that under Shujaudaula the revenue had originally amounted to Rs. 1,15,00,000 annually, but since the annexation of the Doab after the Rohilla war and part of Farrukhabad a few months before his death, it increased to Rs. 1,70,00,000.³ About Asafuddaula's revenue he only says that it was the same as usual.⁴ Abu Talib says that the jama for 1188 F. (September 1780-September 1781) was Rs. 2,85,98,300, exclusive of the nawab's private lands, the confiscated jagirs, etc., which yielded about another 20 lakh.⁵ This high figure, if correct, must have diminished subsequently. In 1783 Nathaniel Middleton (Resident) wrote that the nawab's gross revenue to his knowledge never exceeded Rs. 2,25,00,000 and the net revenue about Rs. 1,45,00,000, but it was never fully realised.⁶ Early in 1784, Warren Hastings when on his way to Lucknow had noticed the country to be in a bad state of cultivation owing to drought. But in the course of his stay there till the last week of August the rains had started plentifully and the prospects of the next harvest were very much brighter. The ministers submitted to him a statement showing the settlement for the next year, *i.e.* 1192 F. (1784-5) to be gross Rs. 2,20,65,689-13-0.⁷ It should be noted that this sum excludes the revenues from Benares, Chunar,

3 *op. cit.* f 22.

4 *ibid* f 29.

5 *op. cit.* 101.

6 *B.S.C.* 28 July 1783 Middleton to GG in Council 30 June.

7 *B.S. & P.C.* 19 Jan. 1787 Hastings to Council 20 Sep. 1784.

Ghazipur, Jaunpur, etc., estimated at Rs. 23 lakh, which had been handed over to the Company in 1775, and that it includes the income from the jagirs confiscated by the nawab during 1781-2 estimated at 20 lakh annually.⁸ From these figures it appears that the revenue of the sarkar had increased since Shujauddaula's death by about 55 lakh. The statement submitted by the ministers also forecast the revenues for the three years succeeding 1192 F.⁹ showing an expected steady increase. How far these hopes were realised is not known. It is probable that in their anxiety to reassure Hastings and make a speedy settlement, the ministers painted the prospects too brightly, but it can be inferred, as will be seen from later accounts, that the gross receipts did not fall below two crore in any year.

In February 1796, Raja Tikait Rai submitted to the Resident an account of the income and expenditure of the sarkar¹⁰ during the last four months of Fasli years 1199 (May-September 1792), 1200, 1201 and 1202, the gross jamas being Rs. 15,63,133-0-2,¹¹ Rs. 2,13,81,154-3-9, Rs. 2,12,35,002-13-3 and Rs. 2,66,47,054-10-9, respectively. It should be noted that in December 1794 after the war with the Rohillas, part of Rohilkhand yielding Rs. 7,11,629-4-3¹² had been added to Oudh. Tafazzul Hussain submitted the following abstract of expected receipts during 1204 F. (1796-7):¹³

| | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Land revenue..... | Rs. 2,25,92,320 | 5 | 6 |
| Revenue of jagir lands under attachment..... | 1,58,917 | 7 | 0 |
| | <u>Rs. 2,27,51,237</u> | <u>12</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Rusum-i-niabat-wa-dasturi i.e. commissions usually received by the minister..... | 10,47,319 | 4 | 3 |
| Total..... | <u>Rs. 2,37,98,557</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>9</u> |

The figure remained practically unchanged in the year

8 Abu Talib *op. cit.* 100-1.

9 For 1193, Rs. 2,44,50,504-6-3; for 1194, Rs. 2,66,05,326-6-9; and for 1195, Rs. 2,87,11,326-11-9.

10 *B.P.C.* 16 May 1796.

11 Abu Talib gives the figures for 1199 as Rs. 2,00,98,263 gross exclusive of the nawab's private lands, confiscated jagirs, etc., *op. cit.* 101.

12 *B.P.C.* 16 May 1796 Cherry to NW 3 April.

13 *B.P.C.* 16 Oct. 1796.

following Asafuddaula's death, the jama for 1205 F. (1797-8) being Rs. 2,37,52,283-11-0.¹⁴

Assuming that the figures given by Kamal, Abu Talib, Tikait Rai and Tafazzul Hussain to be all even approximately correct, it follows that while towards the latter part of Haidar Beg's administration the revenue declined, it revived under Tikait Rai, and remained about the same under Tafazzul Hussain; but never during Asafuddaula's nawabi did it fall below the figure of Shujauddaula's time.

The sarkar's sources of income besides land revenue were an annual tribute from Farrukhabad, customs duties, and road and pilgrim taxes. The Farrukhabad tribute amounted, according to Abu Talib,¹⁵ to Rs. 5½ lakh per annum; but Muzaffar Jang, nawab of Farrukhabad, in a letter to Shore¹⁶ says that he paid regularly to the nawab-wazir a yearly tribute of Rs. 4,50,000 up to the end of 1199 F. The exact sums realised in customs, and road and pilgrim taxes is not known. The customs seem to have been an important item, for when after Haidar Beg's visit to Calcutta Cornwallis ordered that no Europeans, either private individuals or the Company's agents, were to be granted exemptions from paying the duty on goods, the nawab was overjoyed. Harper, who informed the nawab of the governor-general's order, writes, "I have not language . . . to convey to you the joy which the wazir expressed."¹⁷

The road duties or 'sayer' were realised at chowkis established on the sarkari roads from travellers passing and re-passing by them. Cornwallis had suggested to Haidar Beg their abolition for they tended to discourage merchants from travelling in Oudh while the receipts from that source, according to Cornwallis's estimate, amounted to two or three lakh only. Haidar Beg was unwilling to abolish the tax because, according to him, it yielded about 12 lakh annually.¹⁸ The nawab also strongly supported

14 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1798.

15 *op. cit.* 15.

16 *B.P.C.* 6 Dec. 1798.

17 *B.S. & P.C.* 28 March 1787 Harper to Cornwallis 18 March.

18 *B.P.C.* 24 Feb. 1790 Ives to Cornwallis 9 Feb.

the minister; Cornwallis therefore instructed the Resident not to press the point further and it was given up.¹⁹ Whether or not the sayer actually yield 12 lakh there was no means of knowing, for when Ives proposed to appoint his agents at the chowkis to find out the actual receipts, it was vigorously opposed by the minister as an infringement of the principle of non-interference, and Ives had to yield.

As regards the pilgrim tax, a regular schedule had been drawn up in 1790.²⁰ This item should have yielded a considerable amount for thousands of pilgrims visited Allahabad and Ajodhya in the nawab's territory, and passed through Oudh in order to visit Hardwar, Benares, and Gaya. But it seems impossible to arrive at even any approximate figure, for it never appeared as a head of receipt in the few statements of the sarkar's income and expenditure submitted from time to time by the ministers. These statements mention only the land revenue which, according to Middleton, Macpherson and Cherry, was the principal source of income of the sarkar.²¹ From the accounts submitted it appears that on paper the state under Asafuddaula was no less solvent than under Shuja-uddaula; yet actually on the eve of Asafuddaula's death it was on the verge of bankruptcy. The reasons are: firstly, the actual receipts fell far short of the amounts shown in the accounts; and secondly, the expenditure increased beyond measure during the period.

It is certain that a good deal of corruption existed in the administration, which was made possible only by the nawab's slackness. The first three nawabs had been very vigilant with the result that their receipts were regular and the ryot comparatively unoppressed and happy. Under Asafuddaula while the settlements were made for higher amounts than before, giving the amils excuse for realising higher rents from the ryot, a considerable part of it never reached the sarkar's treasury. The amils were

19 *B.P.C.* 19 March 1790 Ives to Cornwallis 5 Mar.

20 *supra* Chapter II (i).

21 *B.S.C.* 28 July 1783 Middleton to GG in Council 30 June; *B.L.* 24 Macpherson to Court of Directors 25 March 1786; *B.P.C.* 7 August 1795 plan of reform drawn up by Cherry.

granted deductions in lieu of the maintenance of the taynati troops which they did not maintain, and thus the sarkar lost in revenue. The amils often applied for deduction by falsely representing failure of crops or extraordinary expense for the suppression of some refractory zamindar. Such requests were invariably granted if the amils succeeded in pleasing the ministers. Frequent complaints of malversation and irregularities reached Cornwallis against Tahsin Ali Khan, the head of the customs department, and Jhao Lal, head of the intelligence and several other departments.²² Cornwallis, acting on the principle of non-interference, could do no more than direct the nawab's attention to these complaints,²³ but the nawab let the matter drop as the men involved were his favourites. Asafuddaula was extravagant and extravagance was the order of the day, and as Abu Talib points out,²⁴ everybody needed money and made it without scruple. Raja Tikait Rai's conduct has already been described.²⁵ Jhao Lal represented to the nawab that Tikait Rai had built himself a palace with bricks of gold!²⁶ Tikait Rai's successor, Raja Buchraj, a friend of Jhao Lal, was found to have been guilty of embezzlement for which he fled the country. When the highest officers of the state acted like this, no better conduct could normally be expected of the lesser ones who were often the creatures of their superiors. Having had to pass through so many possible agencies of diminution, the revenue that ultimately saw its way to the sarkar's treasury must have fallen very much short of the original settlement which appeared on the face of the accounts.

The charges upon this diminished revenue were many and heavy. The result was that heavy deficits occurred every year, loans at exorbitantly high rates of interest were contracted, some at least of which were fictitious.²⁷ And thus another item was added to the heavy liabilities

22 *B.P.C.* 8 April 1793 Ives to Cornwallis 28 March.

23 *B.P.C.* 19 Jan. 1793 Cornwallis to NW.

24 *op. cit.* 98-100.

25 Chapter I.

26 Ghulam Ali *op. cit.* 154.

27 Chapter I.

of the sarkar, *viz.* the repayment of loans and the payment of interests on them.

Like the data about the income of the sarkar, those about its disbursements are also meagre. The statement submitted by Tikait Rai in February 1796²⁸ show that during a period of 3 years and 4 months (1199-1202 F.) the total jama had been Rs. 7,08,26,344-11-11 and the total kharch (disbursement) Rs. 8,12,28,720-7-11. The accounts of the years 1199 F. to 1201 F. show deficits every year; only in 1202 F. a surplus of Rs. 33,14,496-14 is shown. The deficit at the end of the entire period is shown as Rs. 1,01,17,472-3-3 after taking into account a surplus from the first part of 1199 F.

An account rendered by Tafazzul Hussian Khan for the year 1204 F. (1796-97)²⁹ shows that the gross revenue for that year was Rs. 2,37,98,557-0-9 and the current charges Rs. 2,36,82,895-10-4, which would have left just over a lakh surplus, but after taking into account the outstanding arrears for the previous year, *viz.* Rs. 36,60,872-3-10 and gains arising out of conversions in currency (Rs. 3,76,990-5-6), it leaves a deficit of Rs. 31,68,220-7-11.³⁰ It should be noted that under Tafazzul the receipts had been better supervised, disbursements somewhat regulated, and some, though very inconsiderable, economies effected. In the previous years the actual receipts must have been less and the expenses more. It should further be noticed that this account does not mention any interest on loans or principal to be repaid, because a separate arrangement had been arrived at between the nawab and his creditors in September 1796. The above account shows that the principal heads of expenditure were (a) the mutayyana or the nawab's military establishment, (b) pensions and wages, (c) the nawab's private expenses, and (d) the Company's subsidy. To this must be added the interests on loans and principals repaid.

J. Wombwell, accountant at Lucknow in 1783, computes the nawab's mutayyana in 1190 F. (1782-83) at 61,867

²⁸ *supra*.

²⁹ B.P.C. 16 Oct. 1797.

³⁰ Appendix A.

cavalry and infantry, besides the artillery the number of which he does not give. Kamaluddin gives 80,000 as the number of infantry and cavalry, and 30,000 artillery and others.³¹ This is perhaps an over-estimate, for since 1784 the mutayyana tended to diminish rather than increase. Wombwell gives the military expenses in 1782-3 as Rs. 75,22,661-6. Tafazzul's figures for 1796-7 are Rs. 63,25,028-2-3. So that the number in 1796-7 must have been less than in 1782-3. The expenses were not disproportionately large provided the required number of troops were actually and properly maintained by the amils. This item was not a direct expenditure from the sarkar's treasury, but the amils were given deduction in their jama for their share of the mutayyana. As Oudh was, since 1775, well-protected by the Company's subsidiary brigades, large economy could have been made under this head, but in the absence of the nawab's supervision it proved to be the source of great peculation, the fruits of which were shared between the amils and the sarkar's officers.

The pensions and wages consisted of the salaries of the sarkar's officers and allowances granted to the numerous relatives of the nawab. As to who exactly received them and what amount are not known. According to Lumsden no reduction could with propriety be made under this head.³²

The item most open to criticism was the nawab's private expenses. In 1796-7 they amounted to the huge total of Rs. 74,41,732-8-0. The details show their wastefulness.³³ Undoubtedly they could have been reduced considerably without any loss to the nawab's comfort or prestige and with much gain to the efficiency of his administration. Some attempts had been made to economise and regulate his expenses, mostly at the instance of Hastings as well as of Cornwallis and Shore. But such efforts were very unwelcome to Asafuddaula and his favourites, and the ministers in the Company's confidence gave but half-hearted support. The governor-general,

31 *Tawarikh-i-Awadh* 89.

32 *B.P.C.* 16 Oct. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 24 July.

33 Appendix B.

acting on the principle of non-interference, did little more than suggest and remonstrate.

On 14 August 1788 Cornwallis wrote a letter to Asaf-uddaula recommending economy in view of the unsettled state of affairs at Delhi which might any moment involve Oudh in war. When the Resident read this letter to Asaf-uddaula, he heard it quietly till he "came to the part recommending a reduction in his expenses, which put him in an ill-humour," and nothing that Ives could say to him "was sufficient to bring him back to his former temper."³⁴ Haidar Beg, owing to his timidity, had never ventured to do anything effective against the nawab's wishes. After Haider Beg's death, Ives gave Tikait Rai every assurance of his and the governor-general's support if he adopted a vigorous line of action in effecting economy and regulating the nawab's expenses.³⁵ After about a year Ives reports that in a long interview with Tikait Rai he found that very little progress had been made in that direction "owing probably to the minister's not having sufficient courage to do anything effective."³⁶ On that occasion Tikait Rai informed Ives that he had received the nawab's consent to a reduction of 15 lakh a year in his expenses. But an examination of the mode of economy disclosed its hollowness. A saving of Rs. 2,32,000 had been made by intending to pay the servants of the household four months in the year instead of the usual six. In the same way reduction had been proposed in the number of months in the year for which the troops got pay. This would only have aggravated the already existing complaint of irregular payments to the troops. Other savings had been proposed by reducing the pensions to some of the nawab's relatives and others. But nothing had been taken from the jagir of a lakh and other allowances enjoyed by Jhao Lal; nothing from the 60,000 rupees granted to the nawab's barber Ataulah; nothing from the one lakh annually spent on the nawab's 'rumnas' (parks); nothing from the 1½ lakh (approximately)

34 *B.S.C.* 5 Sep. 1788 Ives to Cornwallis 26 Aug.

35 *B.P.C.* 20 June 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 8 Jun.

36 *B.P.C.* 8 April 1793 Ives to Cornwallis 28 Mar.

appropriated to his gardens; nothing from the 1,40,000 on account of his bearers, exclusive of a large allowance to their chief Bhawani Mahra; nothing from the 82,000 spent on the people who attended to a variety of animals which accompanied the nawab in his hunting parties. No decrease was made in the number of his servants, nor in the animals in his menagerie. In the doab (maintenance of animals) expenses a reduction of only 1,40,000 had been made by reducing the quantity of the food for the animals, which cost over 25 lakh annually. Even the false economy of 15 lakh fell far short of the minimum of 40 lakh considered necessary by the ministers and the Resident. Tikait Rai promised to renew the discussion with the nawab. Ives told him and Hasan Raza that they did not make full use of the governor-general's letter of assurance to them,³⁷ that in what had been accomplished, they seemed to have proceeded without any specific plan or principle on which any effective reform ought to be based, and that to him the business appeared "exceedingly plain, and to consist principally in retaining so many servants and animals, etc., as might be necessary to maintain a proper degree of state, in granting to such as were retained... a comfortable subsistence (to be paid regularly) and in dismissing the remainder." The ministers said they had made strong representations to the nawab, but that he would not listen to reason, and took their leave promising further efforts. At a later interview Tikait Rai explained to Ives³⁸ that the purpose of reducing the servants' pay had been to induce them to leave. He further said that the nawab had agreed to reduce by half his garden expenses which had been Rs. 1,43,000. It seemed that Jhao Lal had urged this economy as well as a few other minor ones in order to reduce the odium thrown upon his own character and of his evil influence on the nawab. As to the doab expenses Asaf had agreed to reduce it by Rs. 1,54,000. The heaviest item under that head was the food for the elephants which numbered about 2,000. It was found a problem what

37 *B.P.C.* 28 Jan. 1793 Cornwallis to Hasan Raza and Tikait Rai 29 Jan.

38 *B.P.C.* 19 April 1793 Ives to Cornwallis 8 April.

to do with them; it would have been deemed disgraceful either to sell or to kill them. The servants' wages, after the reduction, still amounted to Rs. 2,80,000 a year.

The ministers seemed to wish for more active co-operation from the Company's government in forcing the nawab to cut down his expenses, but Ives told them that it was not possible for the governor-general to give them more support than he had already signified in his letter to them of 29 January 1793³⁹ "without encroaching on his Excellency's rights as an independent Prince." Nothing was accomplished, and Cornwallis shortly before his departure wrote to Asafuddaula urging him to balance his budget, adding, "this appears to me of the most indispensable necessity, for what can be more evident than that ruin must be the consequence of an excess of expenditure above your income."⁴⁰

In 1795 Resident Cherry took up the question of reforming the nawab's administration with great enthusiasm and encouraged Tikait Rai to procure Asafuddaula's sanction to retrenchments in as many branches of expenditure as possible. On 5 April 1795, Tikait Rai informed Cherry that Asafuddaula had ordered the discharge of six battalions of his infantry, and that he further intended to disband some of his cavalry and discontinue several personal pensions called 'imtiyazi'.⁴¹ These economies actually amounted to very little, but Cherry thought that it was the right moment to push on further economies. His efforts had some temporary effect, and on 1 September 1795 he was able to inform Shore that all round economies to the extent of 40 lakh per annum had been effected, of which 14 lakh were from the nawab's private expenses.⁴² But he in this way incurred the displeasure of the nawab who complained to Shore, and Cherry was dismissed in June 1796. From that time until Shore's visit to Lucknow early in 1797, Asafuddaula and his favourite Jhao

39 *B.P.C.* 28 Jan. 1793.

40 *B.S.C.* 1 Nov. 1793 Cornwallis to NW 12 Aug.

41 *B.P.C.* 17 April 1795 Cherry to Shore 6 April.

42 *B.P.C.* 18 Sep. 1795.

Lal had their way and the expenses increased beyond all limits.⁴³ Tafazzul on being appointed minister found the treasury almost empty and he tried to restore what order he could. It appears from his statement of accounts for 1796-7⁴⁴ that he had not been able to accomplish much. Asafuddaula died on 21 September 1797, and from that time until the accession of Sa'adat Ali, Tafazzul found himself opposed in his attempts at retrenchment by Asafuddaula's mother whose wish evidently was to be considered the source of all authority.⁴⁵

A heavy drain upon the assets of the sarkar was made for the liquidation of debts and the interests thereon. Though, as has already been said, some at least of the loans were fictitious, nonetheless, they were a charge upon the revenue. The rates of interest charged varied from one to four per cent. per month, often compound interest, while on certain loans no interest at all was paid.⁴⁶ Towards the middle of 1792 the ministers informed Ives that the nawab's debts amounted to nearly 75 lakh of rupees.⁴⁷ In July Ives wrote that the debts paying interests at 36 to 48 per cent. per annum amounted to between 50 and 60 lakh, besides which there were debts of another 40 to 50 lakh which paid no interest.⁴⁸ As a means of liquidating these debts he suggested to the governor-general the floating of a loan for the nawab in Calcutta under the sanction and security of the governor-general and Council, at 12 per cent. per annum, payable annually according to the priority of the date of issue. The loan was to be in the form of promissory notes issued from the Company's treasuries at Calcutta, Patna, Murshidabad and Benares, and repayable at the respective treasuries of issue. This plan was obviously not adopted.

Tikait Rai's statement⁴⁹ shows that the principals repaid, exclusive of any interest, amounted in 1199 F.

43 *B.S.C.* 16 Oct. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 28 Sep.

44 *B.P.C.* 16 Oct. 1797.

45 *B.S.C.* 16 Oct. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 30 Sep.

46 *B.P.C.* 18 July 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 6 July.

47 *B.P.C.* 20 June 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 8 June.

48 *B.P.C.* 18 July 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 6 July.

49 *B.P.C.* 16 May 1796.

(1791-2) and the following years to Rs. 21,94,019-10-9, Rs. 78,17,849-7-3, Rs. 1,47,11,983-15-6 and Rs. 1,03,26,337-10-6. A detailed statement delivered by him on 3 November 1795⁵⁰ gives the names of individual creditors and the amounts due to them up to the end of Zilhija 1209 A.H. (18 July 1795). It shows that on that date Rs. 51,88,781 principal was due to the English creditors, and Rs. 50,51,339 to the Indian bankers, making a total of Rs. 1,02,40,120. Cherry from private investigations had found that the debt amounted to Rs. 1,03,15,644-13, but in his account some of the creditors had included the interest also, hence the discrepancy.⁵¹ The accounts during Tikait Rai's administration, however, contained a number of fictitious debts which was the excuse for the nawab's dismissing him early in 1796.

At last in September 1796 a definite settlement was arrived at between the nawab and his creditors.⁵² The Indian creditors agreed to a deduction of three per cent. from their principals in view of the high rates of interest they had received to date, and to accept the repayment of the remaining principal due by equal instalments in six years. They gave up all claims to any interest in future. Obviously the fear of losing all led them to agree to this settlement. Only one of them, Dwarka Das to whom about 2½ lakh were due, refused to accept these terms. The nawab requested General Martine (to whom he owed Rs. 26,05,000) and George Johnstone (to whom he owed over eight lakh) to influence the English creditors to accept similar terms,⁵³ but they refused. Ultimately the nawab discharged the whole of the principals due to them from his own private treasury, half in gold and half in silver, and they each executed a general release and gave up their bonds.⁵⁴ Probably Jhao Lal, who was Asafuddaula's chief minister at that time, prodded the nawab into this sudden energy in repaying the English creditors in order to

50 *B.P.C.* 23 Nov. 1796.

51 *B.P.C.* 16 May 1796 Cherry to GG in Council 14 April.

52 *B.P.C.* 7 Oct. 1796 Lumsden to GG 28 Sep.; NW to Lumsden 21 Sep.; *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 16,849.

53 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 16,849 NW to Lumsden; Col. Martine to NW.

54 *B.P.C.* 7 Oct. 1796 Lumsden to GG 28 Sep.

ingratiate himself with them, hoping thus to make his position more secure. If that was his intention, he was disappointed for soon after Shore secured his banishment from Oudh.

The last item among the nawab's liabilities was the Company's subsidy. Financial obligations of Oudh to the Company dated back to 1765 when, after the battle of Buxar, Shujauddaula had been obliged to pay 50 lakh of rupees as the price for his reinstatement. By the treaty of 7 September 1773, Kora and Allahabad, then in the Company's possession, were sold to Shujauddaula for 50 lakh, of which 20 lakh were paid then and the remainder promised in two yearly instalments of 15 lakh each. At the same time a Resident on the part of the Company was accepted by Shujauddaula. In the following year he employed an English force in his war against the Rohillas, for which he paid at the rate of Rs. 2,10,000 per brigade per month. After the conclusion of the war, he engaged to pay through the Company stipends amounting to Rs. 61,578 a year to certain Rohilla sardars, and a sum of 40 lakh⁵⁵ for the services of the Company's troops. Shujauddaula died in January 1775 and left to Asafuddaula a legacy of a heavy debt due to the Company.

Under Asafuddaula both the arrears and the current dues to the Company tended to increase. In the first place, by the treaty of 1775 the subsidy for the Company's brigade, which was at that time made permanent, was increased by Rs. 50,000 per month. Secondly, Asafuddaula engaged to pay to his brother Sa'adat Ali through the Company an allowance of three lakh of rupees annually. This amount was reduced in 1784 to two lakh. In the third place, in 1777 a "temporary brigade" was added, which in fact became permanent, at the cost of Rs. 17,40,000 a year. When any part of the subsidiary brigades moved out of their headquarters, they were paid extra monthly allowances at the rate of Rs. 25,000 per regiment of infantry, Rs. 20,000 for the company of artillery, and a sum not fixed for the cavalry.⁵⁶ Besides the debts of

⁵⁵ This was known as the "army donation."

⁵⁶ *B.S. & P.C.* 19 Jan. 1787 Macpherson's minute 17 Aug. 1786.

Shujauddaula and the increased army subsidy, Asafuddaula consented to maintain at Lucknow a Resident with a full complement of assistants and clerks. In addition, the Calcutta government often took upon itself, particularly during the administration of Macpherson, the realisation of salaries or debts due by the Lucknow sarkar to private individuals, and these sums swelled the nawab's dues to the Company.

The period up to the end of Macpherson's administration is one of muddled accounts. The Resident and the accountant at Lucknow and the accountant-general at Calcutta all seem to have kept separate accounts of the nawab's dues, and they all varied from each other. Revised accounts were constantly being issued. Middleton wrote in 1783 that when he took charge of the Lucknow residency for the third time in 1781, he found the balance due from the sarkar to the end of 1187 F. (September 1780) to be 32 lakh exclusive of 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ lakh on account of Shujauddaula's 'army donation,' and that during the following year the balance increased by 12 lakh, making it 44 lakh when Hastings met Asafuddaula at Benares in September 1781.⁵⁷ In the same letter he states that the gross amount realised by him during his third residency (up to September 1782) was Rs. 1,46,00,000. This sum includes an item of 26 lakh for military stores said to have been supplied between 1773 and 1779. This the nawab's ministers declined to pay in full because, they said, considerable part of those stores had never been delivered at all. Middleton however succeeded in persuading them to suspend their claim for the time being, but when in the next year's accounts another 14 lakh were added under the same head, the ministers became clamorous. They demanded a deduction to the extent of the value of the undelivered part of the stores, offering that the valuation be made by the Company's government. "They argued," writes Middleton, "that if I would not agree to this, they must conclude that their claims were not meant to be considered, in which case, I might at once

57 *B.S.C.* 28 July 1783 Middleton to GG in Council 30 June.

take the country, since justice was out of the question."⁵⁸ This letter reached Calcutta on 17 May 1782, and the Board laid it aside for consideration.⁵⁹ According to Middleton, the Company's claims on the sarkar, current and arrears, during his last residency amounted to over 2½ crore of which the current claims for 1781-2 amounted to Rs. 70,99,882.⁶⁰

Macpherson in his minute of 17 August 1786⁶¹ states that the total realised by Middleton during his last residency was Fyzabad⁶² Rs. 1,24,89,792-12-7.

Bristow succeeded Middleton in September 1782 and held the post until the withdrawal of the residency at the end of 1783.⁶³ During this period he had realised from Oudh Fyz. Rs. 1,65,39,544-2-8⁶⁴ and he left with Wombwell, accountant at Lucknow, accounts showing the balance still due from the sarkar on 31 January 1784 to be Fyz. Rs. 54,02,165-13-11, and the current demands from 1 February 1784 to September 1784 to be Fyz. Rs. 52,01,052, *i.e.* a total due to the end of 1191 F. (September 1784) amounting to Fyz. Rs. 1,06,03,217-13-11.⁶⁵ But both Larkins (accountant-general) and Wombwell subsequently submitted accounts showing that the actual balance due was somewhat more.⁶⁶ Hastings during his stay at Lucknow (February-August 1784) came to the following terms with the nawab and his ministers: it was decided that the balance due at the end of January 1784 was Fyz. Rs. 73,02,607-9-4, and that the current demands to September 1784 amounted to Rs. 33,31,249-14-10, making the total due to the end of 1191 F. Rs. 1,06,33,857-8-2. Hastings during that stay received Rs. 67,88,927-7-5, leaving a balance of Rs. 38,44,930-0-9 for 1191 F. (1783-4). An arrangement for the next year was made by which the sarkar agreed to pay by the end of 1192 F. (7 September 1785) Rs. 1,05,00,000 in full

58 *ibid.*

59 *ibid.*

60 *ibid.*

61 *B.S.C.* 17 Aug. 1786.

62 100 Fyzabad Rs. = 110 Calcutta Rs.

63 *B.S.C.* 31 Dec. 1783.

64 *B.S. & P.C.* 19 Jan. 1787; Macpherson's minute 16 Aug. 1786.

65 *B.S. & P.C.* 19 Jan. 1787.

66 *ibid.*

liquidation of all claims, current and arrears, to that date. In arriving at this figure, Hastings had struck out the cost of the Fathgarh (temporary) brigade from 1 January 1785. The residency had been withdrawn, but Palmer remained in Lucknow as the agent of the governor-general with a salary of Rs. 2,20,000 a year to be paid by the sarkar. By way of relief to the sarkar, Hastings urged the dismissal of a number of English officers who commanded various bodies of the nawab's army. Having made this arrangement Hastings returned to Calcutta in November and, as has been seen, suspended the recall of the Fathgarh brigade.⁶⁷ He however represented to the Board that since the size of the brigade had by certain rearrangements become smaller, it was unfair that the charge for them should remain as before. Thereupon the accountant-general on 7 January 1785 submitted an account⁶⁸ which showed that the actual expenses of the brigades came to Cal. Rs. 82,064-4-2 per month more than what the Oudh sarkar paid for them. This was strongly criticised by Palmer who wrote⁶⁹ that if the actual expenses of the brigades exceeded the subsidy paid by the nawab,

it ought not in any shape to be ascribed to a necessity of service performed for him. The subsidy was estimated much higher than the actual expenses of the establishment when it was made. An amazing increase of officers has since taken place, and the supernumeraries have been crowded upon the stations within his Excellency's dominions, while there have been great deficiency in the number of privates, particularly Europeans.

Hastings left India in February 1785. The Oudh sarkar got no practical relief from his arrangement: The Fathgarh brigade was not withdrawn, and though the residency had been withdrawn, a very expensive establishment still remained in Lucknow costing Rs. 92,546 per month besides a commission of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. allowed to the accountant on the total receipts at the Company's treasury at Lucknow.⁷⁰

On 5 April 1785 the Board instructed the accountant

67 *B.S.C.* 14 Dec. 1784.

68 *B.S. & P.C.* 19 Feb. 1785.

69 *B.S.C.* 14 Jun. 1785 Palmer to GG 31 May.

70 Proceedings in the Secret Inspection Deptt. 3 May 1785. See Appendix C for the details of the salaries.

at Lucknow to debit the sarkar for Cal. Rs. 1,69,084-3-8 being the additional amount for the two risalas of Kandahar horse and a company of chasseurs from Chunar, and for Calcutta Rs. 84,572-2, paid to Majors Lumsdaine and Gilpin on account of allowance in lieu of contingencies while they had been employed by the nawab.⁷¹ The nawab consented, under protest, to pay these sums in the ensuing year. He wrote:⁷²

The particulars of my distress are well-known to you and you have been favourable for the reduction of my expenses. . . The protection of my country. . . does not depend upon the rissalahs of horse and a company of European soldiers. . . At present I can make no excuses, because it might occur to your mind that I do not choose to obey your will. Their assignment shall be given in 1193 Fasli.

He wrote similarly regarding the claims of Lumsdaine and Gilpin:

As repeated orders have come from the Gentlemen of the Council, compliance is necessary, and you may write it in my account agreeable to their orders. In 1193 Fasli the money will be received.⁷³

During 28 January to 2 February 1785, the nawab had ordered the march of the Fathgarh detachment to his frontier. On 20 February he countermanded that order, but Col. Sir John Cumming, the officer commanding, represented the necessity of the brigade going to the frontier, and so it went. Macpherson says in his minute of 17 August 1785 that the nawab did not protest, but it has been seen that he did.⁷⁴ Besides, it is clear from the tone of the nawab's letters to the governor-general that he almost invariably consented to whatever was desired by the Calcutta government for fear of incurring its displeasure. The extra field allowances for the brigade up to 6 June 1785, when it returned to the cantonment, were added to the nawab's debt.

A corps of "foreign rangers" had also been sent out of the Company's boundaries for service in Oudh, and the additional expenditure of their march and stay beyond the

71 *B.S.C.* 19 Jan. 1787.

72 *B.S.C.* 28 June 1785 NW to GG recd. 21 June.

73 *B.S. & P.C.* 24 Aug. 1785 NW to Acctt. of Lucknow recd. 10 June.

74 Chapter II (i).

Company's boundaries was charged to the nawab,⁷⁵ the amount being Rs. 35,608-9-0.⁷⁶

Since the departure of Hastings the claims of a number of private individuals on the nawab were supported by the Company's government and were added to their account with the sarkar. Reference has already been made to the claims of Lumsdaine and Gilpin. They had applied to the governor-general to secure payment from the sarkar of Fyz. Rs. 76,313-3 on account of contingencies which they had been obliged to spend while employed by the nawab in suppressing the rebel Raja Balbhadar Singh.⁷⁷ They said that Haidar Beg had promised Middleton that this amount would be paid by way of monthly allowances, but it was not done. By the instructions of the governor-general and Council, Wombwell referred this to the sarkar. The nawab replied that this matter had never been mentioned by Middleton—"God knows how these gentlemen can have said so."⁷⁸ But the Board on 5 April 1785 decided that the claims were perfectly in order, and that there was clear evidence of Haidar Beg's having consented to the arrangement. The accountant was accordingly instructed to debit the nawab for that sum.⁷⁹ Similar claims of Lt. Shipton for Rs. 1,503-4-11, of Capt. Dennis of Rs. 19,400-12 and of several others⁸⁰ for about Rs. 5,600 were debited to the nawab's account. A claim of Capt. Norman Macleod⁸¹ for Fyz. Rs. 26,640-6 was also similarly added. He had held the command of a body of the nawab's troops in 1784 when Hastings went to Lucknow. It was resolved that his command should cease from 1 February and he was ordered in the beginning of April to hand over the command to the man appointed by the nawab. On 7 April he wrote that no one had come to relieve him, that the troops were two months in arrear for their pay and

75 Macpherson's minute 17 Aug. 1786.

76 Appendix F.

77 In 1780-2. Abu Talib *op. cit.* 65-8.

78 *B.S.C.* 5 April 1785 NW to Wombwell 4 Mar.

79 *B.S. & P.C.* 5 April 1785.

80 Among them: Lt. Knox Rs. 651; Lt. Brietzipke Rs. 125; Lt. Hutchinson Rs. 340.

81 *B.S.C.* 26 Apr. 1785.

were clamouring to be paid before he left. He was told that since other bodies of troops were more than four to five months in arrear, their claims had priority. Macleod asked for permission to borrow money on his own credit and pay off his troops, on condition of being reimbursed later by the sarkar. This permission was apparently given and Macleod submitted an account of his dues from the sarkar to the accountant. Taylor, dak-master at Lucknow, made repeated requests to the sarkar on behalf of Macleod without success,⁸² so he requested the accountant to realise the sum through the Company's account. The accountant said that he could not do so without orders from Calcutta. On 26 April 1785 the necessary order was given. In February 1786 the Board decided that Macleod should resume his command, and the nawab again acquiesced.

One crore and five lakh of rupees which the sarkar had engaged to pay to the end of 1192 F. were duly and completely paid.⁸³ But owing to the addition of the extra claims and the continuance of the Fathgarh brigade, a balance of Fyz. Rs. 13,40,725-12-8 still remained due.

A reduction in the allowances to the civil and military servants who had been employed in Oudh by Hastings was made by his successor in May 1785. In spite of the theoretical withdrawal of the residency in December 1784, the Company's civil and military servants still remaining in Lucknow drew a total allowance of over a lakh of rupees per month.⁸⁴ By a resolution of 3 May 1785, the Board cut this down to Rs. 1,18,740 a year, the total annual reduction amounting to nearly Rs. 14 lakh.⁸⁵ A number of offices were totally abolished and drastic reductions were made in the salaries of those who remained, e.g. the agent's salary was reduced from Rs. 19,900 per month to Rs. 2,988. Perhaps this was one of the reasons of Palmer's resignation towards the end of May 1785. In

82 *B.S.C.* 22 Dec. 1784.

83 *B.S.C.* 11 Oct. 1785 Wombwell to Harper 20 Sep.; Harper to GG 20 Sep.; *B.L.* 23 letter in Secret Deptt. 25 Oct. 1785.

84 Appendix C.

85 *B.S.C.* 17 Aug. 1786 GG's minute; *B.L.* 23 general letter 31 July 1785.

fact, some of the reductions were so drastic that the new scale of pay⁸⁶ was in certain cases considered even by Cornwallis as inadequate.

After the engagement for 1192 F. was fulfilled, Lt.-Col. Gabriel Harper, who had succeeded Palmer in June 1785, made a settlement for the next year⁸⁷ which showed the Company's claims on the sarkar for that year to be Rs. 74,28,944-0-0.⁸⁸ Having stated the total claim, Harper proceeded to arrange for its payment. About the principle that had guided him in drawing up the claims he wrote to Macpherson, "Knowing the necessities of your government. . . my utmost endeavours shall be executed to make the supplies as considerable as possible".⁸⁹ Feeling, however, that Rs. 74 lakh would be too much to expect immediately after one crore and five lakh paid during the preceding year, he agreed to accept during 1785-6 Rs. 65 lakh, besides Rs. 1,62,164 on account of the Company's servants' pay from 1 May 1785 to 31 August 1786 at the rate of Rs. 9,892 per month.⁹⁰ The Calcutta government approved of this settlement. In order to assist the already overstrained ministers in keeping their engagement, Harper gave up the monopoly of saltpetre, "which had come to be regarded as a perquisite attached to the office of the Resident," a sacrifice, he estimated, of a clear £20,000 a year.⁹¹ In Palmer's opinion this was a gross exag-geration, for his own receipts from the same source during 1783-4, he said, did not quite amount to Cal. Rs. 40,000, and that he did not expect it to have exceeded Rs. 50,000 in 1784-5, which Harper had received.⁹²

On 7 July 1786 the accountant-general submitted a lengthy statement showing how inadequate Harper's settle-ment had been⁹³ and that the total claims of the Company should have been Rs. 87,84,172-13-4,⁹⁴ the total unprovided

86 Appendix D.

87 *B.S.C.* 8 Nov. 1785.

88 Appendix E.

89 *B.S.C.* 11 Oct. 1785 Harper to GG 20 Sep.

90 *B.S.C.* 8 Nov. 1785.

91 *B.S.C.* 8 Nov. 1785 Harper to GG 25 Oct.

92 *B.S.C.* 17 Jan. 1786 Palmer to GG and Council 23 Dec. 1785.

93 *B.S.C.* 24 July 1786.

94 Appendix F.

for being Rs. 21,65,468-13-4. He recommended that this should be taken into consideration when the settlement for 1786-7 was made in October 1786.

The Oudh sarkar failed to keep its engagement ; out of Rs. 66,62,164 only Rs. 37,50,000 were paid by the end of 1193 F. The abstract of accounts for that year shows that whereas certain amounts were subsequently added⁹⁵ to Harper's settlement, the charges for the Fathgarh brigade had been suspended from 1 January 1786. This had been done by a resolution of the Board of 8 August 1786,⁹⁶ perhaps because the nawab had reminded Macpherson of his promise given through Palmer not to charge the sarkar for that brigade after 1192 F.⁹⁷ After adjusting the accessions and the reduction, the total promised to be paid by the sarkar during 1785-6 came to Rs. 69,26,086-2-3 of which only Rs. 37,50,000 were paid ; thus at the end of 1193 F. a balance of Rs. 31,76,086-2-3 remained due.

On 15 October 1786 Harper submitted his settlement with the Oudh sarkar for 1194 F. (1786-87).⁹⁸ In this the army subsidy is calculated less the charge for the Fathgarh brigade. In course of 1785-6 the private claims of several individuals totalling Rs. 1,01,634-14-9 had been added to the Company's demands.⁹⁹ The claims of one Mir Muhammad Hussain for Rs. 32,733-6, arrears on account of an allowance from the sarkar of Rs. 1,500 per month, had also been supported by the governor-general and Council, who on 7 December 1785 directed the Resident to realise the sum from the sarkar.¹⁰⁰ The nawab told Harper that Johnson, assistant to the Resident in Middleton's time, with whom the Mir was very friendly, had granted this allowance to the latter. He added, "The manner in which matters were conducted by that gentleman [Johnson] after his own pleasure is well known. The money was at his command, and he took it also in the

95 Appendix G.

96 Not recorded in the proceedings. See *B.S. & P.C.* 28 Aug. 1787.

97 *B.S.C.* 19 Jan. 1787 NW to Macpherson recd. Nov. 1785.

98 *B.S.C.* 25 Oct. 1786 Harper to Hay 15 Oct.

99 Appendix H.

100 *B.S.C.* 7 Dec. 1785.

name of the said person.”¹⁰¹ After the removal of Bristow and Johnson in 1783, the nawab said, he had discontinued that allowance. The Mir left Lucknow with Johnson and subsequently accompanied him to Hyderabad where the latter was appointed Resident. Johnson said in a letter that the Mir consented to go there only after Hastings had given him the assurance that his allowance would be realised regularly from the sarkar.¹⁰² The nawab’s letter denies Hastings having mentioned this to him. The Calcutta government was interested in the Mir’s claim because he had, by his knowledge of Persian and Indian Court procedure, proved himself useful at Hyderabad, and the Company paid him Rs. 700 per month by way of part payment of his allowance from Oudh. On the nawab’s denial of the validity of the Mir’s claim, the Board asked him to reconsider the matter. This claim, however, was not included in the estimate for 1786-7. Later on Cornwallis found that this amount could not regularly be demanded from the sarkar, and ordered that if any money had been paid to the Mir, it should be carried to the Company’s debit.¹⁰³

Harper’s settlement for 1786-7 included Rs. 94,540 on account of the salaries to the Company’s servants at Lucknow, being Rs. 24,164 less than the amount under the same head in the previous year. This is on account of the discontinuance of the office of dak-master who received Rs. 24,000 a year on account of his salary and the expenses of his department. Small reductions in the other salaries account for the remaining Rs. 164.¹⁰⁴ The total claims for 1194 F. amounted to

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|-----|-----------|----|---|
| Balance for 1785-6 | | Rs. | 31,76,086 | 2 | 3 |
| Current for 1786-7 | | | 38,77,760 | 14 | 9 |
| Total | .. | Rs. | 69,53,847 | 1 | 0 |

The sarkar promised to pay regularly Rs. 3,50,000 a month until the whole amount was cleared.¹⁰⁵

101 *B.S.C.* 8 Feb. 1786 NW to Harper.

102 *B.S.C.* 15 Dec. 1785 Johnson to Hay 16 Aug.

103 *Beng. Sec. Lett.* I No. 25 letter in Secret Deptt. 5 May 1787.

104 Appendix I.

105 *B.S.C.* 25 Oct. 1786 Harper to Hay 15 Oct.

Cornwallis took over charge in Calcutta on 12 September 1786 and almost immediately after received applications from Oudh for an interview. Having granted that, he issued orders suspending Harper's settlement for 1786-7, requiring him only to make temporary arrangements so that the Company's troops in Oudh were regularly paid.¹⁰⁶

Quite a number of the private claims allowed by the Calcutta government must have been mere cases of patronage. Certain appointments were also similarly made—Macleod was asked to resume his command at Lucknow without the Oudh sarkar having asked for it. A similar case was that of Capt. Granby Sloper. The Calcutta government decided in February 1786 that it would be better to have an English officer to command the bodyguard allowed by the nawab to Prince Jawan Bakht, who resided at Lucknow, and Sloper was appointed to the command which he held until his recall by Cornwallis in January 1787. Intending to return to England, he applied to the governor-general for the realisation of his claims upon the Oudh sarkar of Rs. 31,340-9,¹⁰⁷ besides which he expected a lump sum in lieu of his 12 months' service without allowance.¹⁰⁸ Cornwallis's reply¹⁰⁹ gives an idea of the state of affairs under the previous administration. He wrote that although he had expressed his opinion that British officers should not take private service under the sarkar and, therefore, in keeping with his views he could not do much on Sloper's behalf, yet being a friend of his father he had relaxed his rule and had said to Haider Beg that

no demand was to be made upon the wazir, but for your [Sloper's] own pay and allowances and for money advanced by you to the effective men of your regiment. Judge then of my astonishment when Haider Beg answered with a smile that under that condition the payment of Capt. Sloper's regiment would not be very burdensome to his Excellency, for beyond an officer or two and a few orderlymen, he had every reason to be certain that no such corps ever existed. This answer... occasioned my making enquiries

106 *B.S.C.* 2 Oct. 1786.

107 *B.S.C.* 9 April 1787.

108 *B.S.C.* 17 May 1787 Granby Sloper to Cornwallis 19 April.

109 Cornwallis to Granby Sloper 14 May.

through several channels, and I am obliged to say that the result of them has not been so contradictory as I could have wished to the minister's assertions.

He demanded therefore a regular return giving the actual names of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers and privates in Sloper's regiment, attested by some respectable officers residing in Lucknow, and said that if Sloper could satisfy him in that way, he would move further in the matter. The matter was either dropped or decided against Sloper, for the amount was not realised from Oudh. In any case, there appears no further reference to it in the subsequent proceedings of the Council.

One of the first acts of Cornwallis in India was to arrive at a settlement with Oudh. For this purpose he interviewed Haidar Beg at Calcutta during February-March 1787. He explicitly declared to the minister the principles on which, in his opinion, it would be expedient to continue friendly relations between the two governments. They were: (a) on the part of the Company, the government would totally abstain from interfering in the management of the revenue, commerce, and internal government of Oudh ; but that it would undertake the entire conduct of the sarkar's political negotiations with its neighbours, as well as the defence of Oudh from all external enemies ; and (b) that the Oudh sarkar would defray all civil and military expenses incurred by the Company in keeping the above engagements.¹¹⁰ Negotiations were completed by the end of March, and a new financial settlement came into force in October 1787, with retrospective effect from 1 March 1787. In the meantime the sarkar had paid to the Company Rs. 18,59,758-10 to the end of February, which included the following refunds ordered by Cornwallis:

| | | | | |
|--|-------|----------|---|----|
| In January 1787 on account of balance due on Fraser's bonds ¹¹¹ | Rs. | 52,088 | 0 | 0 |
| Money advanced to the Prince by the Resident at Benares and charged to the sarkar's debit in December 1786 | | 1,34,506 | 3 | 11 |

110 Ross I 261-2 Cornwallis to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors 4 March 1787.

111 Appendix E.

According to the old accounts the arrears due on 1 March 1787 were Rs. 34,92,940-7-1. By the new arrangement only Rs. 12,30,505-0-2¹¹² of this were accepted as due from the sarkar and the rest written off.¹¹³

By the new arrangement¹¹⁴ the Oudh sarkar engaged to pay to the Company Rs. 50 lakh a year, which Cornwallis had estimated would cover the expenses of the two brigades and the regiment at Lucknow, the residency and the allowances to Sa'adat Ali and the Rohillas, for which the Company's government were guarantee. It was agreed that if any considerable change in the number of the subsidiary force took place, readjustment in the subsidy would accordingly be made. The 'qists' (instalments) were fixed as follows:

| | | | | |
|---|--------------|----|------|---------------|
| In cash every month | Rs. 3,25,000 | .. | .. | Rs. 39,00,000 |
| In drafts in August | .. | .. | .. | Rs. 5,00,000 |
| In drafts in the last month of the year | .. | .. | .. | Rs. 6,00,000 |
| | | | Fyz. | Rs. 50,00,000 |

Cornwallis observed¹¹⁵ that the sums obtained from Oudh during the last nine years averaged Rs. 84 lakh per year. It is to be noted that formerly the current dues amounted to between 30 and 40 lakh a year; it was the extras added later that made the figures so high. By Cornwallis's arrangement the initial sum engaged to be paid, viz. Rs. 50 lakh, was higher than the nominal engagements of the previous years, but the effective demands were from now on much more restricted. A few accessions were, however, made to the dues of the sarkar after the new arrangement came into force. The sarkar, after having reimbursed the Company for the sum advanced by them to Prince Jawan Bakht, agreed to pay him through the Company a stipend of Rs. 25,000 a month. The Company included the sum in its monthly qists. This charge lasted till the death of the Prince on 1 June 1788, after which a monthly pension of Rs. 13,000 was continued to the family of the Prince.

112 *B.S. & P.C.* 20 Nov. 1789. In discharge of this the sarkar paid separately during July-Aug. 1787 a sum of Rs. 11,18,972-6-10, the balance of Rs. 1,11,532-9-4 was carried over to the new series of accounts.

113 *B.L.* 25 Cornwallis to Sec. Com. of Ct. of Dir. 17 May 1787. See Appendix J.

114 Aitchison II No. L.

115 *B.S.C.* 20 April 1787 GG's minute.

In 1792 another son of Shah Alam, Mirza Haji Shigufta Bakht, took refuge in Oudh, and the nawab, in consultation with the governor-general, granted him a monthly stipend of Rs. 4,000 to be paid through the Company.¹¹⁶ Another accession appears in the statement of the monthly account for October 1791 of a sum of Rs. 1,46,385-10-10 for military stores supplied by the Company from the time of Cornwallis's arrival to the end of 1788. Another addition made in the monthly qists of the Company were the pensions paid to the mother of Muzaffar Jang, the nawab of Farrukhabad, her brother Dil Diler Khan, and Dip Chand, the late diwan. These amounted to Rs. 3,000 a month and were really due from the nawab of Farrukhabad, but since the Company's and the nawab's governments had stood guarantees for their regular payment, it was arranged that the Company's paymaster at Fathgarh would pay the pensions to the grantees, and that the Company would realise it from the Oudh sarkar, who in turn would realise it from the nawab of Farrukhabad as a part of the tribute paid by the latter. Dip Chand having died about April 1790, this sum was reduced to Rs. 2,500 a month.

Several claims were preferred against the Oudh sarkar which were all rejected by Cornwallis, but some of which the ministers accepted as just and paid out of their own accord. One was the claim of Lt. James Anderson for Rs. 29,419-5-8 on account of arrears of salary and allowances as Resident with Sindhia; the other was that of Capt. Kirkpatrick for Rs. 5,000 on account of arrears of salary as agent to the Emperor. The governor-general decided that these were private claims and the Company's government had nothing to do with them.¹¹⁷ But they were allowed by the minister¹¹⁸ and were included in the settlement of arrears due on 1 March 1787. Towards the end of 1789, Haidar Beg paid Rs. 23,000 on account of Capt. Macleod's claim although Cornwallis had refused to put public pressure upon the sarkar in Macleod's favour.¹¹⁹

116 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1792 Cornwallis to NW; *B.P.C.* 24 Sep. 1792 Ives to Cornwallis 14 Sep.

117 *B.S.C.* 24 Jan. 1787.

118 *B.S.C.* 16 July 1787.

119 *B.S.C.* 13 Nov. 1789 Johnstone to Cornwallis 25 Oct.

The claims of Capt. Edwards and Major Darrell were accepted by the Board as well-founded, but being private debts were not countenanced by them.¹²⁰ Capt. Kennaway, who had accompanied Haidar Beg to Calcutta in 1786, applied to be reimbursed for certain expenses he had had to incur during that journey. Both Harper and the governor-general thought that the Oudh sarkar should pay him something, and Cornwallis suggested to Haidar Beg the sum of Rs. 2,000.¹²¹ Probably due to the exultation on the success of his mission Haidar Beg allowed him Rs. 10,000.¹²²

Since Colonel Claude Martine had been paid for some time past through the Company, Haidar Beg thought that the 50 lakh included his salary also, and therefore stopped paying him from March 1787. Martine applied to the governor-general who pointed out to the minister that his salary had not been included in the Company's subsidy, since his services were of a private nature to the sarkar. For the same reason Cornwallis refused to take up Martine's claim.¹²³ Haidar Beg, however, acknowledged his mistake¹²⁴ and settlement was made between him and Martine.

In June 1788 the Resident inquired from the governor-general as to who was to bear the contingent expenses for the march of any part of the subsidiary force in the nawab's service,¹²⁵ to which Cornwallis replied that as those troops were completely provided with cattle and every other requisite for immediate movement, no contingent expenses should arise. If, however, any did arise, it was to be in the first instance charged to the Company's government, and after careful auditing it might be decided whether a claim on the Oudh sarkar should be made.¹²⁶

It took Cornwallis a year to put into order the accounts with Oudh. After October 1787, when the new settlement came into force, the accounts of the next ten years show

120 *B.L.* 29 Military letter to the Ct. of Dir. 5 Nov. 1790.

121 *B.S.C.* 25 June 1787 Cornwallis to Harper 21 June.

122 Harper to Cornwallis 14 July.

123 *B.S.C.* 12 May 1788 Cornwallis to Ives 10 May.

124 *B.S.C.* 9 June 1788 Ives to Cornwallis 30 May.

125 *B.S.C.* 16 June 1788 Ives to Cornwallis 3 June.

126 Cornwallis to Ives 16 June.

considerable relief. Debits, credits and balances tallied and very few extra demands were allowed. Owing to the extraordinary expenses on account of the war with Tipu, the Oudh sarkar offered to help the Company and in June 1791, the governor-general took a loan of 12 lakh of rupees, repayable in four instalments by the end of August 1793.¹²⁷ This debt was duly discharged, in fact before time.

In spite of better regulated accounts, the Oudh sarkar became rather irregular in its payments of the qists to the Company. Letters between the governors-general and the Resident show that the ministers were almost invariably late in paying the qists, and only did so after repeated requests. On the other hand, when pressed they suddenly made an effort and liquidated a large part of the arrears. At the end of the first year of the new settlement (31 March 1788) the arrears amounted to Rs. 7,61,173-12-10, reduced next year to Rs. 3,43,324-0-6. On 31 March 1790 the arrears stood at Rs. 3,07,502-4-11, and on 31 March 1791, Rs. 3,51,099-6-7. In the beginning of 1792, Haidar Beg became seriously ill and the payments became still more irregular. The balance due on 11 March 1792 increased to Rs. 5,98,033-0-5. Haidar Beg died in June and a short period of confusion followed. The nawab's personal expenses and debts kept on increasing and the ministers could not pay the Company's qists regularly. As a measure of relief, Cornwallis in August 1792 gave the sarkar credit for the remaining six out of the 12 lakh of rupees lent to the Company in 1791, which was actually repayable in 1793. Yet the balance due on 31 March 1793 stood as high as Rs. 9,21,607-14-2, the highest between 1788 and 1797. Haidar Beg's successor, Tikait Rai, made great efforts and reduced the debt to Rs. 3,62,683-4-9 on 1 October 1793, just before Cornwallis left India.

Tikait Rai made great efforts to be regular in paying the Company's qists, and for a time he succeeded. But the great laxity of the nawab's general administration and Asafudaula's inordinate demands upon the public treasury for

127 *B.P.C.* 21 Jan. 1791.

personal expenses made it impossible for the minister to keep up the regularity.¹²⁸ The arrears mounted again after October 1793, and on 31 March 1794 it was Rs. 7,07,145-9-8. In December 1794, following the Rohilla rebellion, the nawab obtained 3,22,000 gold muhars from the Rohillas.¹²⁹ This treasure was partly appropriated in liquidating the arrears due to the Company, which was reduced thereby to Rs. 4,46,464-12-0 on 31 March 1795. But the next year it again leapt up to Rs. 6,13,746-15-8. The cause for this lack of margin in the sarkar's finances have been ably expressed by Cherry.¹³⁰ For years past the exigencies of the sarkar had been met with by loans in which the higher the principle, the higher had been the rate of interest. One debt was paid off by contracting another at an increased rate of interest. The revenue was largely assigned over, either as security to some of those debts or in the form of deductions granted to the amils for the maintenance of the mutayyana or for other departments of the sarkar. Thus the resources of the country were no longer at the command of the ministers enabling them to draw upon them in times of emergency. Whatever ultimately came into the public treasury was further depleted by the nawab's demands for his private expenses. After the temporary relief obtained from the Rohilla treasury early in 1795, the difficulties of the ministers were doubled. No assistance could be had from the revenues; no banker would lend money to the sarkar because the Rohilla trouble demonstrated its real weakness and the bankers lost confidence in the sarkar; and yet the nawab's demands did not relax. On 21 July 1795 Cherry wrote to the governor-general that for paying up the arrears the ministers had no resource left except anticipating the ensuing year's revenue, which always meant loss to the sarkar and which, therefore, the nawab had disallowed.¹³¹

Such were the conditions which led Cherry to urge upon the nawab and his ministers the necessity for immediate

128 *B.P.C.* 6 Dec. 1793 Ives to Shore 16 Nov.; *B.P.C.* 22 Aug. 1794 Cherry to Shore 12 Aug.

129 Chapter II (v).

130 *B.P.C.* 27 Feb. 1795 Cherry to GG 29 Jan.

131 *B.P.C.* 7 Aug. 1795.

reform in the administration. He wrote to Shore, "Reform can only be expected to take place through our assistance."¹³² To him was apparent what Shore either did not realise or dared not undertake in defiance of the principle of non-interference, the principle in the name of which indeed he later recalled Cherry. The arrears of the subsidy kept increasing steadily, and on 31 March 1797 it amounted to Rs. 6,98,069-3-10.

War broke out between England and France in 1793. This had its repercussions on the Company's finances in India; the army in Bengal was increased and the resources of the Bengal government were strained. Shore became anxious to realise the arrears due from Oudh and secure the regular payment of the subsidy in future. He could see that it was really difficult for the ministers to produce ready money; he therefore suggested to the Resident that he should induce the nawab to make over the revenues of some of his districts, particularly the Doab and Gorakhpore, in assignment for the discharge of the subsidy.¹³³ Warren Hastings had been the first to suggest such a course to Oudh, and it was repeated by Wellesley. But whereas Wellesley by his insistence on the point was successful,¹³⁴ Shore, not willing to go as far as Wellesley did later, failed to achieve the object. On 21 July Cherry replied that he had not mentioned Shore's suggestion to the nawab as he foresaw that it would be vigorously opposed by the durbar jeopardizing the success of the plan of reform he had suggested to the nawab and his ministers. Moreover, he was optimistic about his plan of reform, and thought that if it was worked out, there would not be any necessity for territorial cession. In January 1796, however, he presented to Asafuddaula Shore's proposal of the cession of the Doab, Gorakhpore and the fort of Allahabad. As expected, he got no encouraging reply, and the proposal was apparently dropped by Shore.

Cornwallis's financial settlement remained in force

132 *ibid.*

133 *B.P.C.* 26 June 1795.

134 Chapter VIII.

till April 1797 and was strictly adhered to by the Company's government. The Court of Directors having learnt that the nawab was actually reducing his military establishment¹³⁵ wrote on 22 April 1796 to the governor-general in council¹³⁶ after referring to their previous orders of increasing the Company's military establishment in Bengal :

In order to relieve the Company from a considerable part of the expenses which this augmentation will unavoidably occasion, we direct that you make every possible effort to induce the wazir to disband his own useless cavalry, and apply a part of the sums expended in their support to defraying a share of the additional charges incurred by the Company by the proposed augmentation.

Shore visited Lucknow early in 1797, and on 20 March he obtained the nawab's consent to pay the bonafide expenses of two regiments of cavalry, provided it did not exceed Rs. 5½ lakh a year.¹³⁷ Asafuddaula did not very strongly object to this "from an idea perhaps that his acquiescence in this instance might induce the governor-general to relax in others," e.g. the demand for the banishment of Jhao Lal, etc.¹³⁸ It was reported¹³⁹ that the actual expenses of the two regiments exceeded Rs. 5½ lakh a year, hence the sarkar's contribution was fixed at that sum. At the same time, the governor-general agreed to a reduction of Sa'adat Ali's stipend by one lakh rupees a year.¹⁴⁰ The new arrangement was to take effect from 1 April 1797. By it the annual subsidy from Oudh was fixed as follows :

| | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Annual subsidy as before | Rs. 50,00,000 | |
| Less reduction of Sa'adat Ali's stipend | 1,00,000 | |
| | | Rs. 49,00,000 |
| Subsidy for two regiments of cavalry | | 5,50,000 |
| Stipends to the Royal family at Benares and the Begam | | 2,04,000 |
| Total | | Rs. 56,54,000 |

This settlement did not last long. Asafuddaula died

135 *B.P.C.* 1 Feb. 1796 Cherry to GG 13 Jan.

136 *Home Misc.* 236 f. 315-20.

137 Aitchison II No. LII.

138 *B.S.C.* 27 Mar. 1797 Shore to Speke 21 Mar.

139 *B.S.C.* 2 Jun. 1797.

140 *B.P.C.* 8 May 1797 GG's minute of 6 May.

on 21 September 1797, and his reputed son and successor, Wazir Ali, was deposed after four months in favour of Sa'adat Ali, on 21 January 1798. A fresh treaty was concluded with Sa'adat Ali which was finally signed and sealed on 21 February 1798.¹⁴¹ By this treaty Sa'adat engaged to pay to the Company an annual subsidy of Rs. 76 lakh. The excess of Rs. 19,22,362 over what Asafudaula had engaged to pay¹⁴² was in consideration of the Company having largely increased its military establishment in order both to defend Oudh and for the protection of its own dominions (Article 2). The subsidy was to be paid in monthly instalments of Rs. 6,33,333-5-4, the first instalment falling due on 1 February 1797. An annual allowance of Rs. 1,50,000 was made to Wazir Ali, to be paid through the Company, by monthly instalments of Rs. 12,500 (Article 5). Besides the regular subsidy, the nawab engaged to reimburse the Company for the expenses they had had to incur in establishing him on the musnad to the extent of Rs. 12 lakh (Article 10). He also agreed to "advance" sums not exceeding eight and three lakh rupees for the repairs of the forts of Allahabad and Fathgarh, respectively, the first within two years and the second within six months of the signing of the treaty (Article 8). Two articles of the treaty were somewhat vague and, as will be seen,¹⁴³ caused considerable controversy later. Of these, Article 7 has already been referred to,¹⁴⁴ the other was Article 11. By this the nawab engaged,

if, contrary to [his] sincere intentions and exertions . . . the payment of the qist shall fall into arrear, [he] will then give such security to the Company for the discharge of the arrears, and the future regular payment of the qists, as shall be deemed satisfactory.

* * * *

It will be noticed from the above survey that the period up to 1798 can be divided into two broad sections with

141 Aitchison No. LIII.

142 In this treaty this sum is stated as Rs. 56,77,638, whereas in the settlement made in April 1797 it appears as Rs. 56,54,000.

143 Chapter VIII.

144 Chapter III.

regard to the financial relations between Oudh and the Company : (a) up to 1786, and (b) 1786-1798. During the first period very large sums of money had been realised from Oudh. That province had undoubtedly been used as a fruitful financial resource for the Bengal government when the latter was in monetary distress. Such was the case during the whole of the period of Warren Hastings' administration. Under Macpherson's government, patronage added considerably to the Company's receipts from Oudh. During the whole of Cornwallis's administration England was at peace with France, her principal enemy in those days, and that helped him in carrying out his honest intention of not laying extra burdens upon the Oudh sarkar. From 1793, however, the Company's finances in India began to be unfavourably disturbed, but since Shore avoided war, he could still adhere to Cornwallis's settlement until required by the Court of Directors in 1796 to realise something extra, which he did by his last agreement with Asafuddaula. These very considerations guided him in drawing up the treaty of 21 February 1798.

V

COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN OUDH AND THE COMPANY

OUDH WAS more or less a self-sufficient country and did not do much commerce except in cloth. The earliest factory established by the company in Oudh was in 1640,¹ but the trade was never considerable. Besides cloth the other articles of trade in Oudh were (i) salt, of which there were three kinds, *viz.* Lahore, Sambhar and Khari; (ii) cotton, grown mostly on the southern banks of the Jamuna; also the bulk of the cotton from the Deccan passed through Oudh on its way to Bengal; (iii) indigo, grown in the Etawah district; (iv) saltpetre, of which the largest ever made amounted to about 50,000 maunds at about Rs. 2-8 a maund; and (v) a very small quantity of opium near Benares and Ghazipur.² The trade in all these with the Company was much less than that in cloth, which, too, was not very much; in 1786-7 it amounted to only about Rs. 2,90,000.³

In February 1787 Cornwallis deputed G. H. Barlow (later governor-general) to investigate into and report under certain specific heads on "the exact conditions of manufacture of the Oudh cloth and the trade conditions and possibilities of investment in Oudh."⁴ Barlow submitted a detailed report on 27 May.⁵ In this he traces the effects of the Company's investment in the cloth trade in Oudh and finds them to have been highly injurious to the interests of the Oudh sarkar and the native merchants. Previous to the introduction of the Company's investment, the trade of the country had been conducted by local merchants without any interference from the sarkar; the

1 Moreland, W. H. *Agrarian System of Moslem India* (1929).

2 *B.S.C.* 6 June 1787 Report of Barlow on the commerce of Oudh. Appendix VIII.

3 Barlow's report.

4 *B.S.C.* 23 Mar. 1787 Paper of instructions.

5 *B.S.C.* 6 June 1787.

markets were open to purchasers of every description, and the merchant and the manufacturer met on terms of perfect equality. The price of the goods was decided according to the true economic principle of the interaction of demand and supply and the consideration of marginal profit. Pre-emption was practically unknown except in rare commodities, where the first expenses were beyond the means of the manufacturers and advances were made by the merchants. Usually the manufacturers bought the raw material with their own cash or on their own credit. The introduction of the Company's investment, and with it the practice of giving advances to the weavers and the consequent right of pre-emption, brought about a revolution in the commerce of Oudh which acted greatly to the detriment of the country, firstly, by establishing a system highly unfavourable to the weavers, and secondly, by the exclusion of the native merchants.

The Company's cloth had usually been provided at Tanda and Allahabad, at the latter place by advances to the weavers, and at the former, sometimes by advances and sometimes with ready money, but always with the right of pre-emption.⁶ This precluded all competitors and the price was dictated by the purchasers who were not always very honest. Then again, in Oudh there used to be a good demand for cloths cheaper and easier to manufacture than those wanted by the Company, for internal consumption or for export to the neighbouring states, on which the weavers could always make considerable profit. The Company's agents, backed by the Calcutta government, could always compel the weavers to attend to their demands first, employing them for the whole time and thus forcing them to forego much potential profit. Oudh suffered in another way. With the decline of the glory and splendour of Delhi and Agra, the market for the more costly materials produced in Oudh declined. The export of such stuff to Europe could have greatly compensated them had that trade been in the hands of the native merchants, but it had become an English monopoly.

6 Barlow's report Appendix I.

Monopolies and rights of pre-emption are detrimental to the interests of commerce in any country ; they were much more so in Oudh where those privileges were enjoyed by a group of foreigners acting on behalf of a foreign state. The estimated loss in revenue to the sarkar, on account of the exemption from duties enjoyed by the English traders, was considerable. Tikait Rai informed Barlow that at the time of Asafuddaula's accession, the customs realised only in the suba of Oudh (*i.e.* such territories as had descended to Shujauddaula from his father) amounted to five lakh ; in 1785 they had fallen to one and a half lakh. Many of the native traders also transported their goods under the flag of the English merchants, thus evading the duties.

Barlow's conclusion was that in no way was the Company's investment advantageous to the people or the government of Oudh. If the Company intended to continue it, it was to be solely for the Company's own benefit which did not amount to much. The amount invested in Oudh was small and the type of cloth for which the investment was made could be produced with equal facility in Bihar where there was margin for investing three times the sum invested in Oudh with equal advantage. Barlow had intended to trace the increase or decrease of the customs revenue in Oudh from 1764 to 1787 in order to trace the fluctuation in trade in different parts of the country, but his efforts were looked upon with suspicion by the sarkar and he abandoned them. He concluded with the recommendation for an absolute withdrawal of the Company's investment in Oudh, which would confer a benefit on the merchants of Oudh without injuring the Company. If, however, the Board decided to continue the investment, the three possible ways for the provision of the cloth were, (a) contracting with the native merchants, (b) advertising for the purchase of the cloth with ready money, and (c) by making advances to the weavers. As to the first mode, the native merchants unanimously declined to enter into engagement to supply the Company's demands. They maintained that not only the largeness of the quantity demanded, but the obligation to deliver it punctually at

stated times at great distances from the places of manufacture, together with the many disadvantages arising out of the unsettled state of the country, rendered the enterprise too risky for them. It required all the tenacity of the English merchants and the backing of the Company's government to enable one to carry out such engagements. The second alternative, *viz.* buying in the open market for ready money, would tend to raise the prices abnormally and would be unprofitable for the Company. The only practicable mode was the third, *viz.* the making of advances to the weavers, which was the usual practice. Originally the advances had been made by the Company's agents not so much to enable the weavers to buy raw materials as to ensure the purchase. Gradually a right of pre-emption and monopoly came to be attached to those agents, and in some places, *e.g.* Tanda, where all competitors were totally excluded, they even ceased to give advances. Barlow considered that the system of giving advances, not through the Company's agents but through native contractors, to be the least injurious for either party. It is not quite clear how it would have been so, nor does Barlow explain that. It was, however, essentially a compromise, definitely against the true interests of Oudh.

This report confirmed Cornwallis's view that the exemption from duties enjoyed by the English traders in Oudh, a right jealously guarded so far by the Calcutta government, had been detrimental to the interests of the Oudh sarkar and had afforded individuals with opportunities "to practice the most scandalous frauds and oppressions,"⁷ and he determined to give up this privilege as well as to discontinue the Company's investments in Oudh cloth.⁸ Provision for certain exceptions was made by an understanding between the governor-general and the nawab to take effect from 20 October 1787. They were for the grains, cattle, goats, sheep, ghee, beetelnuts, and tobacco passing from the Company's territory into Oudh intended for the consumption of the Company's

7 *B.L.* 25 Cornwallis to Ct. of Dir. 4 March 1787.

8 *Bengal Sec. Lett.* I No. 27 GG to the Ct. of Dir. 16 Aug. 1787; *B.L.* 26 Cornwallis to Ct. of Dir. 16 Nov. 1787.

troops stationed in that country. In addition to the above, the governor-general requested that similar exception be granted to all arms, clothing and military stores similarly intended and despatched under proper certificates signed by the commanding officer or commissary of the bazar at each station. In case, however, these articles were later sold to ordinary individuals, the customary charges were to be made.⁹

One of the instructions from Cornwallis to the Resident, issued on 1 October 1787, was :

In order to revive free trade, which is absolutely necessary for the prosperity of Oudh, as well as of the Company, there is to be no investment in Oudh on the Company's account. Prevent all claims of exemptions from duties, all pretensions to a right of pre-emption, in a word, all undue influence on the part of Europeans tending to create monopolies or any other improper advantages above the wazir's own subjects. At the same time, negotiate a commercial treaty which would save British subjects, European or Indian, from undue exactions.¹⁰

A commercial treaty was signed between the nawab and the Company to come into force from the first of the September following, if not sooner.¹¹ Its main provisions were :

(i) Discontinuance of all exemptions from duty hitherto enjoyed by either party.

(ii) All goods passing from one country to the other were to be accompanied by specifications of their quantity and valuation under the seal of the government of their country of origin. The importing country was to levy import duty on the declared valuation.

(iii) Certain places were named where the collection of the duties were to be made.

(iv) The duties to be levied on the various goods of import and export were specified.

(v) Goods imported from one country to the other, having paid the import duty still to be subject to the established local market or 'ganj' duties if they were sold within that country ; but if intended for re-export, no such local duties were to be charged.

(vi) Heavy punishments were prescribed for illegal exactions and evasion of legal dues.

(vii) The treaty was not to extend to Rohilkhand or Katihar, where the nawab retained the right of levying the customary duties, and to increase and decrease them at his will.

(viii) Disputes arising between the marchants of the two

9 B.S.C. 24 Oct. 1787 GG to nawab 6 Oct.

10 B.S.C. 8 Nov. 1787.

11 Aitchison No. LI.

countries were to be decided by the laws of the defendant's country.

(ix) The nawab of Farrukhabad consented to relinquish the duties on cotton from the Deccan passing through his country on its way to Bengal.

No mention of the exceptions referred to in Cornwallis's letter of 6 October was made in the treaty.

This well-intentioned treaty was never properly carried out by the nawab's government due, no doubt, to the general lack of efficiency. The merchants often under-declared the value of the goods by about half, thus avoiding paying full duty, and the nawab's officers were alleged to be in collusion with them.¹² Some merchants avoided paying duty by loading their goods in boats supposed to be carrying goods for the nawab's personal use.¹³ Duty was sometimes levied, contrary to the treaty provisions, on goods only passing through the nawab's territory.¹⁴ Matters became worse after the death of Haidar Beg in 1792.¹⁵ Johnstone, the acting Resident, blames Tahsin Ali Khan, the chief customs officer of the sarkar, for such irregularities. Tahsin was also the chief eunuch of the nawab and as such possessed great influence. He had obeyed even Haidar Beg with great reluctance and since his death had become absolutely independent. Hasan Raza Khan and Tikait Rai were unwilling to exert their authority at the risk of his enmity, and Johnstone thought that their fears were well-founded, "for such is Tahsin Ali's influence that though numberless exactions and oppressions were proved of Kundan Lal, one of his naibs, the power of Haidar Beg and the representations of the Resident could not procure his punishment, nor to this day has he settled his account with the sarkar." And yet it was the sarkar, not the offenders, that sometimes indemnified the sufferers. The internal trade of Oudh suffered much more from these illegal exactions, being in the hands of men "who possessed not the means of making known their wrongs."¹⁶ Johnstone suggested, and the

12 *B.S.C.* 30 March 1791 Stuart to NW & Haidar Beg.

13 *B.S.C.* 18 May 1791.

14 *B.S.C.* 13 July 1791 Ives to GG 2 July.

15 *B.S.C.* 25 Jan. 1793 Johnstone to GG 8 Jan.

16 *ibid.*

ministers heartily agreed with him, that only the removal of Tahsin Ali could remedy the corruptions in the customs department to any appreciable extent.

Cornwallis in his letter of 12 August 1793¹⁷ referred to the non-observance of the commercial treaty and the corruptions in the nawab's customs department. The chowkies on the rivers in Oudh realised heavy duties and tolls on goods passing and repassing by them—40 per cent. was levied on salt, 30 per cent. on saltpetre, 13 per cent. on indigo and 10 per cent. on sugar.¹⁸ These exactions tended to restrict trade, and the prosperity of the country suffered as a result. Moreover, the 'sayar' or the road tax was let on farm which had very baneful effects. Cornwallis referred to the good effects arising out of the abolition of the internal customs barriers in the Company's provinces and recommended to the nawab the same course. The results would be cheapness of provisions in Oudh and encouragement to traders to transfer goods from where they were in plenty to places where they were wanted. A few chowkies on the frontiers, however, might be retained. He also strongly advised the removal of Tahsin Ali Khan.

Cherry, during his residency, observed that not only were the legal duties evaded and illegal ones exacted, but the sarkar lost heavily from the officers' misappropriation of the customs revenues. He recommended in his plan of reforms that Cornwallis's suggestions be strictly followed. But like all his other recommendations this one, too, was shelved during his disagreement with the nawab which ended in his recall.

17 *B.S.C.* 1 Nov. 1793.

18 By the treaty the duties had been fixed at 5 per cent. for each of those articles.

VI

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION: EFFECT OF THE COMPANY'S ALLIANCE

IT HAS been mentioned earlier that the government of Oudh in the period under review was a military despotism. The sarkar was expected to perform above all two things, to see that the revenues were duly collected, and to keep the country secure from foreign invasions. All questions of local improvement, the maintenance of law and order, dispensation of justice, etc., were left to the amils. In an account of sarkar's expenses for 1205 F., the amount allotted for the officers of the court of justice is Rs. 4,158 of which only Rs. 577-8 was paid out.¹ The nawab was the source of all power and authority and a wise choice of officers and a strict supervision on his part were essential for the good working of the system. The first three nawabs of Oudh had kept a constant watch on these matters, but things became different under Asafuddaula. His lack of interest in maintaining the army's efficiency or even supervising collections has already been seen. The necessary strict supervision being absent, and choice of officers being determined by their popularity with the capricious nawab, the efficiency of the government was generally low during the nawabi of Asafuddaula.

The Company was in more than one way interested in the good government of Oudh. Its share in the military administration of Oudh has been seen in some detail.³ As to the civil administration of the country, its solvency depended on an efficient government, and on its solvency depended the regular payment of the Company's subsidy. As Cherry expressed it, the alliance between

1 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1798. This was only for the capital. In the provinces the amils were responsible for the dispensation of justice and meeting the necessary expenses.

2 Chapters III and IV.

3 Chapters II and III.

the Company and Oudh lost its value to the former unless the latter was "capable of bearing its due proportion of mutual defence, which is the first object of the alliance."⁴ In this way the Company was directly interested in the establishment of good government in Oudh. In the next place, lawlessness in the nawab's dominions, bordering on the Company's territories, might encourage bad characters in those frontier districts to commit crimes in the Company's territories and take refuge in Oudh. And lastly, since the two states were so closely allied, and everybody knew that Oudh depended greatly upon the Company and that the nawab had very little power to do anything without the Company's sanction, a bad system of government in Oudh would bring a stigma on the Company for sanctioning its continuance.

Warren Hastings, hampered by a hostile council and an expensive war, had little chance of accomplishing any reform in the government of Oudh. Macpherson was perhaps not interested, being content with realising as much money as he could from there. The man who first turned his serious attention towards that pressing need was Cornwallis. In his minute of 20 April 1787⁵ he reviewed the administrative chaos in Oudh. Everything depended entirely upon the ministers, the nawab himself taking no other interest besides giving the sanction of his name and authority to the acts of his servants. Even this he did reluctantly, such was his dislike towards anything that had the appearance of business. Furthermore, he was so extravagant that he deliberately shut his eyes to the acts of injustice his servants often perpetrated in order to supply him with funds. In the course of his interview with Haidar Beg in 1787, Cornwallis encouraged the minister to give effect to such reforms as would reinstate the nawab in the public esteem and stabilize the sarkar. He wrote several letters to Asafuddaula to the same effect, offering suggestions at the same time. Had he been left to act according to his judgment, he might have accomplished something, but being confined by the orders of the

⁴ *B.P.C.* 7 Aug. 1795 Cherry to GG 20 July.

⁵ *B.P.C.* 20 April 1787.

Court of Directors to a policy of non-interference he never went the required length. In the beginning he himself believed that mere advice and remonstrances would suffice, and he wrote in the minute above mentioned that not only the orders of the Court of Directors, but motives of policy and justice also led him to decide against actively interfering in the internal affairs of Oudh. But he soon changed his view. On 6 October 1789 he wrote to the Resident⁶ that since the nawab had taken no notice of his repeated advice regarding the government of Oudh, the Resident was to make a strong representation, and should that fail to have the desired effect, the governor-general was resolved "to think of more effectual means of preventing discredit [to himself] and the entire ruin of his [the nawab's] country." As a fact, he had ceased to have any illusion of effecting sweeping reforms only by means of remonstrances. The Resident's representations did not have much effect and on 9 February 1790 he, following the instruction of Cornwallis, spoke to Haidar Beg about the want of the nawab's authority, the oppression of the ryot and heavy exactions by the amils and zamindars, all of which reflected upon the governor-general "for having continued that system of non-interference which has been made so ill use off."⁷

Cornwallis tried to effect reforms in the nawab's government by taking first Haidar Beg, and then Tikait Rai, in his confidence and encouraging them, through the Resident, to make a bold stand against Asafuddaula's habits of dissipation and extravagance. His instructions to the Resident were to avoid, both in reality and in appearance, any interference in the nawab's internal government, but to gain his confidence and that of the ministers, to keep a watchful eye on the latter and make timely remonstrance to the nawab when the people were oppressed in any way. He was also to see that the understanding between the governor-general and the nawab regarding commerce⁸ between the two countries was

⁶ *B.P.C.* 7 Oct. 1789.

⁷ *B.P.C.* 24 Feb. 1790 Ives to Cornwallis 9 Feb.

⁸ Chapter V.

adhered to, and to prevent any undesirable European adventurer from settling in Oudh.⁹ Whenever the Resident thought that the circumstances demanded extraordinarily strong language or action, he was to leave them to the governor-general, except in cases of extreme emergency.¹⁰ But his method of indirect interference failed to achieve the object sought.

Two letters of Cornwallis to Asafuddaula dated 29 January and 12 August 1793 show that the former understood well the problem of reforming the Oudh government, but that in spite of his sincere desire to see it reformed, he failed to accomplish anything owing to his adherence to the policy of non-interference. In the first of these letters¹¹ he mentions that he had early realised that one of the main obstacles to reforms had been the sarkar's financial difficulties, and that he had therefore done his best to relieve it by limiting the subsidy, relinquishing the exemption from duty formerly enjoyed by the Company's agents and private British traders in Oudh, and by suggesting a commercial treaty, but that after five years he found that

the evils which prevailed at the beginning...had increased, that [the sarkar's] finances had fallen into a worse state by an enormous accumulation of debt, that the same oppressions continued to be exercised by rapacious and overgrown amils towards the ryot, and that not only the subjects and merchants [of Oudh]... but those residing under the Company's protection suffered many exactions contrary to the commercial treaty from the customs house officers and from zamindars, amils, etc.

Cornwallis is very outspoken in this letter and openly accused Asafuddaula of extravagance which compelled the ministers to adopt questionable means to meet his demands; his lack of interest in the good of his country; appointment of incompetent, even undesirable, men to important posts, *e.g.* Tahsin Ali Khan as the chief customs officer and Raja Jhao Lal in charge of the intelligence department.* These were, in fact, the chief obstacles to the reformation of the Oudh administration, and these having gone on for a very long time had become rooted in the country. In his letter

9 *B.P.C.* 8 Nov. 1787 Cornwallis to Ives 1 Oct.

10 *B.P.C.* 4 Jan. 1788 Cornwallis to Ives 29 Dec. 1787.

11 *B.P.C.* 28 Jan. 1793.

of 12 August 1793¹² Cornwallis elaborately discussed these problems and suggested the principles of reformation and improvement, leaving the details to be filled in by the nawab and his ministers.

In the first place he suggested that as the nawab was the head of all affairs, he must himself demonstrate his sincere and determined intention to carry out the necessary reforms. If he voluntarily reduced his own expenses, it would serve as example to others and would show his determination to stand no nonsense from his servants. In the second place, the success of the ministers depended solely upon the countenance and support given them by the nawab; he must, therefore, select his responsible ministers very carefully, and having chosen them give them his entire support. Favourites should not be allowed to interfere in public business. In order to inspire confidence in the minds of the bankers, who would be required to supply the sarkar with money in times of emergency, the nawab should arrange speedily to pay up all sums due to them.

Next he recommended the establishment of two courts at Lucknow, one for the distribution of civil and the other for criminal justice. All cases except those that related to revenue should be referred to these courts for trial and decision and to no other person whatsoever. The nawab should take care that these courts were properly regulated, for without control courts could become mere instruments of oppression. Therefore, the judges should be men of acknowledged good character, learning and abilities equal to their duties, and no person brought under trial should be given any special protection. The judges should be liberally and regularly paid to keep them above corruption.

Cornwallis commented on the practice of accumulating several offices in one person which made them free to act as they chose without any check or control. He advised separation of offices. There should be the following officers distinct from each other—the diwan, who was to superintend all affairs relating to revenues; the treasurer, to receive all sums coming to the sarkar from the districts;

¹² *B.P.C.* 1 Nov. 1793.

the paymaster, to issue salaries, pensions and charges authorised by the sarkar; the functions of the treasurer and paymaster should be precisely defined and kept distinct from one another. Under the diwan should be various subordinate officers, to record receipts, enter accounts, etc., and for all these officers distinct regulations should be drawn up. It should be the duty of the ministers to superintend and control the whole system and to see that each officer executed his proper appointed function, to support them in the discharge of their respective duties and to see that they were affected by no outside interference. Cornwallis referred to the administrative systems of Akbar and Aurangzeb as examples.

He next went on to suggest some means for the collection of revenue. He condemned the system of farming it out as being ruinous and "the resource of a weak and indolent government which looked only to temporary convenience without any regard to the interests of the people at large." Added to this there were various undesirable practices current in Oudh, *e.g.* the appointment of the farmers from year to year, and their frequent removal even in the course of a single year; the sarkar's demand of 10 to 15 per cent. on their stipulated rents as 'peshgi' (advance) at the time of the investiture; the issuing of 'tankhwahs' (assignments) upon them before collections began. Moreover, the amils were permitted to entertain and pay the taynat (regular troops) in their districts and nominate all the subordinate officers in them. The results were fairly obvious—an amil on appointment considered the country as sold to him for a short period and it was in his interest to make the most of it while his possession lasted. Often he had to borrow from the bankers, at very high rates of interest, the amount he was required to pay as peshgi or on account of the issue of tankhwahs, and invariably made out of the rents the interest he had to pay on those sums. Sometimes his position was seriously jeopardized, even his life endangered, by the unpaid troops in whose favour the tankhwah had been granted.¹³ The

13 Ghulam Ali describes one such case, *Imad-us-Sa'adat* 121-2.

troops being paid by the amils and their officers having been appointed by them considered themselves the amils' rather than the sarkar's servants. Then again, many of the amils were only nominal, the persons really interested in the collection were some men attached to the durbar at Lucknow. These men by their influence with the nawab or the ministers saved their delegates in the districts from being punished for any enormities committed upon the ryot. Cornwallis sums up the situation thus: "The revenues are collected without system, by force of arms... the amils are left to plunder uncontrolled and the ryot have no security from oppression nor means of redress for injustice exercised upon them." He emphasised the need for appointing really upright men, which was the first step to any reform at all. He recommended the abolition of the farming system and the adoption of the 'amani' system, *i.e.* collection directly on behalf of the sarkar, making the amils its officers rather than contractors, through whom the sarkar could, in due course, rectify the existing abuses. Where it was found necessary to farm out the mahals, it should be done for a number of years. He did not intend the exclusion of the zamindars, but suggested that settlements should be made with them for a term of several years. After the appointment of the amils, the next step should be to fix for them allowances to maintain a sihbundy. Trustworthy officers should be appointed to keep records of all the transactions of the amils, about the sihbundy, of all papers and accounts relating to the revenues, *e.g.* pattas, qabuliats, qistbundies, amilnamas, the daily receipts and issues of money, etc., and the amils should not have the power of dismissing these officers at pleasure. No peshgi was to be demanded by the sarkar, nor should the grant of any tankhwah be made upon the anticipated revenues. The amils should not be permitted to spend anything beyond their establishment, and the revenues as received by them should be duly remitted to the treasury at Lucknow. The qistbundies of the revenues should be made to correspond with the mufassil receipts, *i.e.* the receipt of rent from the ryot, so as to preclude the necessity for the amils to borrow

the amounts falling due to the sarkar before the actual collections were made. The sadar officers (officers at the capital) of the sarkar should be very carefully chosen and they should adjust at the end of every fasli year the wasul-baqi (receipts and arrears) with the amils.

All these Cornwallis stated to be only the beginning of the vast reforms necessary, which, a start being thus made, should be possible to be accomplished successfully. As to the establishment of civil and criminal courts in the districts, the governor-general thought that just at that moment they might act prejudicially to the authority of the amils and upset collections. The people must get used to the idea of public justice, and mufassil courts might be established later. But the power often exercised by the amils of inflicting capital punishment should never be permitted them.

The attention of Shore, too, was early attracted towards the question of the reform of the Oudh administration. On 1 May 1794 he wrote¹⁴ to the Resident expressing anxiety at the nawab's not having adopted any measures in conformity with Cornwallis's letter of 12 August 1793. But whatever desires he had to see the Oudh government reformed was set at naught by his unwillingness to depart from the principle of non-interference. Cherry, who had been appointed Resident on 17 April 1794, took up very enthusiastically the work of reform. He noticed the cumulative effect of years of mis-government, aggravated particularly by the negligence of Asafuddaula. Shore urged him to get the reforms effected along the lines recommended by Cornwallis.¹⁵ Cherry at first tried to do what he could through the acting minister, Tikait Rai, but progress was so slow as to amount practically to nothing,¹⁶ and after about six months he lost all hopes of accomplishing anything through the minister.¹⁷ Economy seemed to him the first step necessary. Having failed to encourage the minister to make a bold stand against

14 *B.P.C.* 2 May 1794.

15 *B.P.C.* 15 Aug. 1794 Shore to Cherry.

16 *B.P.C.* 4 Aug. 1794 Cherry to Shore 25 Jun.

17 *B.P.C.* 29 Sep. 1794 Cherry to Shore 2 Sep.

Asafuddaula's caprices, he thought of directly influencing the latter. Shore gave him a timely warning that all that the Resident was expected to do was to coax the nawab to act more sensibly.¹⁸ Cherry retained some confidence in the nawab¹⁹ and thought that once rid of his evil companions and made to pay attention to the work of government, Asafuddaula could be made to do all that was required of him. He hoped that he could reform him, but he hoped for too much. On 5 April 1794 he had a long interview with the nawab and spoke very frankly what was in his mind. Asafuddaula listened with apparent interest and promised to do all that was suggested. He summoned Tikait Rai and ordered him to consult freely with Cherry on the affairs of the state and to keep nothing secret from him.²⁰ This was a very encouraging start and Shore advised Cherry to avail himself fully of this opportunity, avoiding however all semblance of direct interference with the nawab's executive government, for that would give his counsellors a chance to turn his mind against the English. The reforms should seem to arise from the suggestions of the nawab himself, and the Resident's attitude should be that of a disinterested well-wisher.²¹

On 10 June Cherry saw Asafuddaula and another frank conversation took place between them.²² The nawab accepted everything that Cherry said except that Oudh was really threatened by a Mahratta invasion, of which, he said, there was no fear so long as he remained friendly with the Company. To this Cherry replied that if Asafuddaula wished to retain the Company's friendship, he must do his share as desired by it by making his government

18 *B.P.C.* 27 Feb. 1795 GG to Cherry 25 Feb.

19 He wrote : "He possesses a comprehension sufficiently extensive to include all the grand outlines of the arrangements.. necessary towards the good order of his affairs, and notwithstanding the long period which has passed since his accession in total inattention to them, he commands an authority and respect perfectly ample for all purposes, more probably by virtue of that reverence paid by his subjects to his station than to his person ; but his mind has been so long a stranger to business that it will be wonderful indeed should he devote his time to it now." *B.P.C.* 17 April 1795 Cherry to Shore 6 April.

20 *B.P.C.* 17 April 1795 Cherry to Shore 6 April.

21 *B.P.C.* 24 April GG to Cherry 21 April.

22 *B.P.C.* 26 June Cherry to Shore 13 June.

efficient. Asafuddaula complained of his huge debts and the extravagance of the Court officials who had overgrown in power and whom he dared not reduce for fear of rebellion. Cherry offered to draw up a plan for the discharge of his debts and of general reforms provided he got all the information he wanted. Asafuddaula accepted the offer and promised to supply him with all the required information.

On being informed of this development Shore sent the following suggestions to Cherry:²³

(a) A thorough investigation into the accounts should be made, and detailed statements of all receipt and expenditures of the sarkar were to be drawn up. The disbursements of the nawab, whether public or private, were to be brought within the bounds of his income.

(b) The nawab should make sure of realising the present revenues in time before thinking of augmentation: that is, there should be a better control over the amils before any change in the settlements was contemplated.

(c) The mutayyana charged for by the amils but not maintained provided a wide field for retrenchment.

(d) The Court officials should be made to refund whatever they had made dishonestly. Shore was, however, doubtful whether the Company's government could assist the nawab in this direction.

(e) The payments of the Company's subsidy must be the primary object of all readjustments.

(f) Cornwallis's suggestions were to be followed as far as possible.

(g) Should the nawab ask for pecuniary assistance from the Company, the Resident was to make sure that reforms were actually being carried out on the lines above suggested, and then he was to make his recommendation to Calcutta.

(h) Tikait Rai was not to be dismissed until a better or at least as good substitute was found; Jhao Lal was in no circumstance to be allowed to replace him.

(i) The Resident should try to persuade the nawab to hand over the fort of Allahabad to the Company and make over the revenues of the Doab and Gorakhpore in assignment for the discharge of the Company's subsidy.

Shore was obviously primarily interested in the regular receipt of the subsidy. In the meantime, on 20 June Asafuddaula delivered the following paper to Cherry detailing his own plan of management to begin with 1203 F. (1795-6), subject to the governor-general's approval.²⁴

²³ *B.P.C.* 26 June 1795 Shore to Cherry 24 June.

²⁴ *B.P.C.* 7 Aug. 1795.

(i) The 'bandobast' (settlement) of the country to be made after a thorough 'tashkhees' (investigation) for five years commencing with 1203 F.; increases or decreases to be made after another investigation after the five years.

(ii) He would limit his expenses to his income and see that the Company's subsidy was regularly paid.

(iii) He confessed having no means of paying the arrears of the interests due on his debts. He would, therefore, repay the principal, as should be found to be just after examination. He invited the governor-general's mediation, through the Resident, in this matter, so that the creditors abided by the decision arrived at.

(iv) No tankwahs would in future be granted on the country, either for the troops or for any other purpose. All receipts would be required to be paid into the public treasury, and all disbursements made from there. The tynaty troops to be paid at the spot where they were employed.

(v) The subsistence of the nawab's servants to be decided by the nawab himself. He promised to reduce excessive emoluments, but "no recommendations shall come from the Eastward;" the Resident was to see that none did.

(vi) All correspondence between the nawab and the governor-general, or between the nawab and the Resident, relative to the affairs of the sarkar, to be strictly secret. In the public offices men selected by the nawab were to be appointed.

(vii) The governor-general and the Resident were to see that no Englishman, either in or out of the Company's employ, interfered with the nawab's affairs.

(viii) The Resident was to give his free and unreserved opinion and suggestions to the nawab, who would carry them out properly.

According to Cherry, neither Asafuddaula nor his ministers were capable of controlling the executive, and he thought that that opportunity should be taken "to substitute the Company as the control, for the sole purpose of keeping in force whatever system may be adopted for a limited period until there was found a capable man for taking over control."²⁵

On 20 July 1795 Cherry submitted to Shore for approval an elaborate plan of reforms in both the civil and military administrations of Oudh, of which the military part has already been dealt with. In the civil department the principal work was the superintendence of finance. Cherry recommended that the receipts and disbursements should be centralised and carried out at the same place, so that supervision became easier. Receipts should first be made secure and then only any attempt to increase them should be made. The receipts of Oudh, consisting

²⁵ Cherry to Shore 20 July.

mainly of land revenue, had tended to decline owing to the bad state of agriculture and to the existence of many intermediaries between the cultivators and the treasury. The first should be improved and the latter removed as far as possible. Wherever possible land should be held in 'khas' or as crown land, and where it was found necessary to adopt the 'ijara' or the farming system, long leases should be made, the nawab's suggestion of five years being a reasonable period. For the ijara, the rent should be determined by a thorough investigation of the extent and the productivity of the districts, and convenient instalments settled. For the khas holdings, payments should be made at the Lucknow treasury as far as possible, minute accounts being kept by Tikait Rai and his assistant Hulas Rai. These officers should be kept under the strict supervision of the Company exercised through the nawab, and for this purpose the Resident should be furnished with the terms of the settlements when made and be permitted to post a man on his own part at the treasury or devise some means to acquaint himself of the receipts at the treasury. The details of the process of collection Cherry leaves to be drawn up later, referring to Cornwallis's suggestions for the general principles.

Having dealt with the receipts, the Resident next goes on to tackle the more difficult question of disbursements consisting of two main items, (a) disbursements of the state, *i.e.* "such as are absolutely necessary for preserving order and respect, within and without the Empire, for securing the revenues and for performing stipulated engagements," and (b) the nawab's personal expenses, including those for his relations and dependents. It was desirable to reduce the number of such pensioners, but practically very little could be done towards that end without creating a great outcry and incurring much unpopularity, both by the nawab and the Company. Rather sweeping reductions in pensions was one of the causes of Sa'adat Ali's unpopularity as will be seen in a later chapter. The sums which the nawab was by custom compelled to pay, *e.g.* the

Emperor's and the Prince's allowances, nazars, etc., were also included under the second head.

Cherry recommended that the state disbursements should be first provided for from the receipts. They were (i) military expenses, (ii) stipulated engagements, obviously meaning the Company's subsidy and the debts, (iii) charges of collection and (iv) the policing of the country. The first two items should be paid out of the Lucknow treasury; the payment of (iii) and (iv) to be regulated as the systems for collection and policing might be established, either by transfers in the accounts or by remittance from Lucknow, as it was necessary that they should be paid on the spot. The nawab's personal expenses, he maintained, must occupy a secondary place depending on the balance left after meeting the state demands. In this again the nawab's private expenses, *e.g.* entertainments, animals, household, etc., should come last.

A third and very complicated item of disbursement was the payment on account of the debts and their interest. As has been seen, debts had accumulated tremendously and the interest agreed upon was ruinous. Cherry not knowing their exact amount could not draw up any detailed plan with regard to them. To him the following things seemed to be in general necessary: that the debts be funded; that a sum, depending on the receipts, be set aside annually and the creditors paid proportionately out of that; and that the rates of interest be radically revised.

When these civil and military reforms had been accomplished, attention should be turned towards commerce and the administration of justice. In these matters Cornwallis's suggestions should be followed. Finally, Cherry remarked that the reasons why these obviously necessary measures had not so long been adopted were, firstly, Asafuddaula had never paid any attention to the question of reform, and secondly, the ministers having been absolutely devoid of courage had gone on humouring their master, without ever trying seriously to bring him round. The Company's control, he said, was necessary if it was intended that any reform at all should be carried out. From his observations

Cherry concluded²⁶ that while Asafuddaula was not quite an imbecile and certainly had counsellors capable of dictating the plan of reform Asafuddaula had submitted, there was at the same time a strong force opposing its execution, probably in the person of Raja Jhao Lal and his underlings. He further came to the conclusion that the reforms were not impeded by any doubts or suspicions toward the English and that "reform could only be expected to take place through [the Company's] assistance." Tikait Rai also told Cherry that the first thing to be done, *viz.* the reduction of the nawab's personal expenses, could only be performed by the Company's efforts.²⁷ Asafuddaula gave repeated assurances to Cherry of working out the reforms, but he did nothing. On 18 August 1795 Cherry wrote to Shore that the nawab seemed to be wavering in his good resolutions, but that he still retained hopes of bringing him round. On 12 August Shore wrote to him, "The confidence which he [Asafuddaula] professes in this government, his appeal to its assistance and his declared determination to adopt its recommendations, afford sufficient authority for our interference, in suggesting, promoting and controlling the plan of reformation,"²⁸ and one on 25 August to the nawab encouraging him to stick to the line of reforms he had so well started.²⁹

The statements of accounts which Cherry had asked for were not delivered to him until 26 February 1796, and in another two months he practically lost all hopes.³⁰ It was at this time that Shore, somewhat incompatibly with his letter of 12 August 1795, repeated his note of warning to Cherry against too much interference in the internal affairs of Oudh,³¹ accompanied by a coaxing letter to Asafuddaula asking him to confide completely in the Resident and to carry on the work of reform.³² Before these letters reached Lucknow, Cherry saw Asafuddaula at the durbar

26 Cherry to Shore 21 July.

27 *B.P.C.* 14 Aug. 1795 Cherry to Shore 29 July.

28 *B.P.C.* 14 Aug. 1795.

29 *B.P.C.* 4 Sep. 1795 GG to NW.

30 *B.P.C.* 2 May 1796 Cherry to Shore 23 April.

31 Shore to Cherry 30 April.

32 Governor-general to nawab-wazir.

on 28 April where he had the satisfaction of not finding Raja Jhao Lal. Asafuddaula expressed his confidence in him and asked him to draw up a further detailed plan of reform. This was done the same afternoon and the nawab approved of it. It contained, besides recommendations for military reorganization, the following suggestions: (a) although the revenues of the country had improved yet the sarkar lost much through embezzlement and abuses which prevailed under the pleas of remission, etc. Tikait Rai (who had been dismissed by the nawab early in 1796) had had experience in the revenue department, and he should therefore be appointed diwan with exclusive rights; (b) a fund for the discharge of the debts be established; (c) the treasury, formerly under Tikait Rai and later given in charge of Raja Bachraj, should be strictly supervised by the nawab himself; and (d) the nawab should summon his faithful officers and give them tokens of honour and his confidence.³³ Asafuddaula, according to the Resident's suggestion, defined clearly the duties of the various officers, which would "ensure the most important object of the recommendations of [the Calcutta] government, *viz.* that no dangerous trust is placed in the hands of any individual."³⁴ Hasan Raza Khan was appointed bakhshi (paymaster) of all the forces and was given full power over the military establishment of the state, subject to no control except the nawab's; Tikait Rai was appointed diwan and Raja Bachraj to the treasury. Jhao Lal could not be entirely got rid of, Asafuddaula insisted on appointing him to take charge of his household.

Shore completely disapproved of these arrangements because it appeared to him that the nawab's consent had not been voluntary.³⁵ He was right, and on 29 May he received from Asafuddaula a long complaint against the Resident³⁶ which led him to dismiss Cherry from that post. After having sent to Calcutta his complaints against Cherry, the nawab became openly hostile towards him and

33 *B.P.C.* 6 May 1796.

34 *B.P.C.* 20 May 1796 Cherry to Shore 9 May.

35 *B.P.C.* 6 May Shore to Cherry.

36 *B.P.C.* 13 June Nawab-wazir to governor-general.

conferred the diwani and the bakhshigari on his two reputed sons, Wazir Ali and Raza Ali, aged about 15 and 12, respectively, without even consulting him.³⁷ The ages of the young princes made them necessarily dependent upon some one who would have the real power, and that person was certain to be Raja Jhao Lal.

Lumsden, who succeeded Cherry, found that Asafuddaula apparently identified his own interests with those of the Company, but that he was very fickle, and Jhao Lal, knowing that the nawab's pleasure was the only asset he had, kept him well pleased by humouring every little caprice of his. Asafuddaula, in order to shield his favourite, made a show of attending personally to every business of the state.³⁸ The nawab's administration showed no signs of improving during the months following Cherry's dismissal, and the influence of Jhao Lal remained undiminished. Shore paid a visit to Lucknow early in 1797 and secured the banishment of Jhao Lal and the appointment of Tafazzul Hussain as the chief minister. Asafuddaula never got on well either with Lumsden or with Tafazzul Hussain, and the few months that he lived after Jhao Lal's banishment were spent in continuous squabbles between him on the one hand and the minister and the Resident on the other. In such circumstances practically nothing could be accomplished by way of reforms.

³⁷ *B.P.C.* 17 June Cherry to Shore 1 June.

³⁸ *B.P.C.* 2 Jan. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 24 Dec. 1796; *B.P.C.* 24 Feb. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 23 Jan.

VII

THE DEPOSITION OF WAZIR ALI

SINCE the passing of the Act of 1784 the first active interference by the Company in the affairs of Oudh took place early in 1797 when Shore secured the dismissal of Jhao Lal and the appointment of Tafazzul Hussain as the nawab's chief minister. The year was hardly over when Shore became responsible for the replacement of one nawab by another. Asafuddaula died on 21 September 1797 and on the same day his reputed son Wazir Ali was recognized nawab by the elder Begam (Asafuddaula's mother), the noblemen of Oudh and the Resident. The new nawab expressed to Lumsden his sole dependence on the protection and support of the English and promised to take no step without the advice of the Resident and Tafazzul Hussain.¹ He was then about 17 or 18 years of age and appeared to Lumsden as being of mild disposition and likely to keep his promise. Although it was generally believed that he was not in fact Asafuddaula's son, yet the late nawab had adopted him as such and he had been brought up from his infancy as the heir-apparent to the masnad. "On the whole," wrote Lumsden, "I am persuaded that no person could have been found equally unexceptionable."

Shore, who was aware of the popular belief about Wazir Ali's birth, but of the truth of which he could discover no more solid foundation than hearsay, decided that "it would be very dangerous principle [for the Company's government] to assume to withhold [its] acknowledgment to his succession on the sole ground of popular report in opposition to the repeated declaration and acts of his reputed father for a long series of years."² Besides, he went on, Wazir Ali had been recognized by the

¹ *B.S.C.* 29 Sep. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 22 Sep.

² Governor-general's minute.

elder Begam and the nobility of Oudh, in which circumstances he had the ostensible right of succession and the Company's government had no right, upon any grounds, to dispute it, or to suppose claims or objections which had not been preferred. He, therefore, instructed Lumsden formally to recognize Wazir Ali on behalf of the Company, to inform the officers commanding the Company's troops in Oudh of the succession, to take measures for the maintenance of order in case any rising took place, and ordered a salute to be fired from Fort William proclaiming Wazir Ali's succession. The Resident at Benares was instructed to stop Sa'adat Ali, Asafuddaula's brother and next in succession, who resided in Benares, from proceeding to Lucknow, by force if necessary.

Three days after Asafuddaula's death, Mirza Jangli and other sons of Shujauddaula residing in Lucknow saw Lumsden and told him that they did not wish to dispute Wazir Ali's succession, but knowing his low origin they could not pay him the customary nazars nor show the outward marks of respect which they used to do to Asafuddaula.³ This set Shore thinking and on 30 September he ordered Lumsden to hold a secret inquiry about Wazir Ali's birth.⁴ But on the same day he received letters from Wazir Ali, the elder Begam and Tafazzul Hussain, which signified their total acceptance of the nawab, and Shore had no hesitation in ordering the confirmation of his original resolution of accepting Wazir Ali, and the cancellation of the inquiry.⁵ He also thought that any such inquiry must be incomplete and unsatisfactory and would somewhat discredit the Company's government for being inconsistent. He decided, however, that if any claims were preferred against Wazir Ali, the inquiry might be resumed. A letter of condolence on his father's death and one of congratulation on his accession were written to Wazir Ali.⁶

The order cancelling the inquiry did not reach Lucknow

³ *B.S.C.* 2 Oct. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 24 Sep.

⁴ Shore to Lumsden 30 Sep.

⁵ GG's minute.

⁶ *B.S.C.* 2 Oct. 1797.

till 8 October. In the meantime the Resident had had talks with various persons of note in Lucknow from which he concluded that it was universally believed that Wazir Ali was not born of Asafuddaula, but none could suggest any evidence except hearsay. Undoubtedly he was born in the nawab's zanana about May 1780⁷ and the nawab had declared him his eldest son in the presence of Sir Eyre Coote who was at that time in Lucknow.⁸ On 28 September, Hasan Raza Khan at a private interview with Lumsden had seemed inclined to favour some surviving son of Shujauddaula, though he did not openly denounce Wazir Ali.⁹ On receiving the governor-general's order of the 30th, however, the Resident suspended the inquiry.

On 4 October Shore received a letter from Sa'adat Ali¹⁰ claiming the masnad of Oudh on the ground of his being the eldest surviving member of the line of Safdar Jang, Wazir Ali having no relationship with Asafuddaula. This letter made Shore resume the inquiry, and Bristow, who had been Resident at Lucknow informed him¹¹ that Wazir Ali had been introduced to him by Asafuddaula as his son between 1783 and 1784, and that he was then between two and three years of age. On 17 October the governor-general received another letter from Sa'adat Ali offering to fulfil all the engagements between the Company and Asafuddaula if the former helped him in gaining the masnad. Shore carried on his investigations and arrived at the following facts:¹²

(i) If the right of succession was denied to the "children" of Asafuddaula, Sa'adat Ali, as the eldest surviving son of Shujauddaula, became according to the Muslim law the undoubted successor to the masnad. The fact that his mother was not married to Shujauddaula did not affect his right. (ii) Asafuddaula had notified to the Calcutta government of the birth of three children, in March 1779, and in May and September 1780. The birth of the

7 Obviously an error. See *infra*.

8 *B.S.C.* 16 Oct. 1797 Lumsden to Shore 7 Oct.

9 Lumsden to Shore 28 Sep.

10 *B.S.C.* 20 Oct. 1797.

11 Bristow to Shore 10 Oct.

12 GG's minute.

first was announced by artillery fire and public rejoicing, and although the mother was not married to Asafuddaula, following the usage of the country the child had been accepted as the immediate heir. (iii) All these children had died and their deaths were duly notified. (iv) The birth of Wazir Ali was unnoticed in the proceedings of the time, but Middleton (Resident at Lucknow) mentioned on 8 April 1782 that on 29 March 1782 he had been invited by Asafuddaula to attend the celebration of his son's birth anniversary. Thus Wazir Ali must have been born about 4 April 1781. (v) He had been presented to Bristow by Asafuddaula as his son and heir, and had been brought up as such. (vi) In 1794 his marriage had been publicly celebrated and invitations had been issued to all, including the governor-general. (vii) In 1796 Wazir Ali had been appointed diwan and his younger brother Raza Ali, bakhshi. The former was presented to Shore in 1797 as the nawab's son and was treated as such by him. (viii) The 'hadiya' said that if a person acknowledged a boy, whose parentage was unknown, as his son, and the boy, able to give an account of himself, accepted the parentage, the parentage is established, provided the age of the two persons be such as to allow the relationship of father and son. (ix) In addition to the above facts, the elder Begam had acknowledged Wazir Ali as Asafuddaula's son. (x) Then again, although his paternity had been attributed to several of Asafuddaula's menial servants, none had been able to identify the person. (xi) The belief that he was not the nawab's son was based on another assumption, that Asafuddaula was incapable of having children, an extremely difficult thing to prove. (xii) Sa'adat Ali, while alleging that Wazir Ali was not the son of Asafuddaula, could not offer any evidence to prove his allegation. (xiii) Any inquiry into Wazir Ali's birth must go back 17 years, and it would have to be attended with very intimate investigations which no self-respecting family could permit, and a public inquiry of that kind might throw the whole country into confusion.

For the reasons stated above Shore declared emphatically

in favour of Wazir Ali, and the following instructions, amongst others, were issued to the Resident:¹³

(i) administration must be carried on in Wazir Ali's name; as he was unqualified for administrative work, the direction of it was to be with the minister;

(ii) the Begam was to have no hand in the administration; she should be compelled to retire to Fyzabad; and

(iii) the nawab was to be advised to be guided solely by Tafazzul.

Shore received various reports of oppositions to the existing government in Oudh, but he ascribed them to the unpopularity of the Anglophil minister and declared that "no part of this opposition is to be ascribed to the opinion entertained of Wazir Ali's spurious birth—it would have been felt with equal force, whoever had been placed on the masnad."¹⁴ Personally also Wazir Ali was unpopular, especially when he degraded himself by his undignified familiarity with his menial servants. But Shore thought that allowance should be made for his youth, his sudden elevation to the masnad, the bad example set by Asaf-uddaula, degraded courtiers and his neglected education. During his visit to Lucknow early in 1797 Shore had noticed Wazir Ali's "docility and apparent mildness of disposition.. that he was not deficient in understanding and that his general behaviour was decorous and suitable to his station." But later he showed signs of "levity and insensibility, even viciousness," and not unnaturally Sa'adat Ali and the other sons of Shujauddaula were now making use of his unpopularity and that of his government and of the popular rumour about his birth.

In order to render Oudh, and thereby the Company's possessions, more secure, Shore had already contemplated, following the instructions from the Court of Directors, an increase of the subsidiary force in Oudh and the repair of and securing the control over the fort of Allahabad. He therefore decided to go to Lucknow personally, to get the above done and at the same time examine the succession question on the spot. He went quite convinced that he

¹³ *B.S.C.* 23 Oct. 1797.

¹⁴ *B.S.C.* 17 Nov. 1797 GG's minute.

was going to support Wazir Ali. He dismissed as inconclusive the statements received from Tahsin Ali Khan, the chief eunuch of Asafuddaula, that Wazir Ali was the son of a 'farrash', that the latter's wife had been introduced into Asafuddaula's zanana when carrying and that Wazir Ali was born in Tahsin's house, as proofs of Wazir Ali's parentage.¹⁵ But while on his way to Lucknow, he received two letters from the Resident dated 29 November and 1 December,¹⁶ which stated that Wazir Ali had grown suspicious of the English and was assembling troops in Lucknow, and was perhaps planning to assassinate Tafazzul. Certain incidents were detailed to show Wazir Ali's inflammable temper and the cruelty of his nature. A letter from Tafazzul, too, dated 27 November saying the same thing was received. These letters made Shore anxious and he decided to have in his attendance six companies of regulars. He was definite on one point, that Oudh could not be permitted to drift out of the Company's control, nor could the nawab be allowed to act contrary to the advice of the Resident and the minister who enjoyed the Company's confidence.¹⁷

Shore reached Lucknow on 23 December. The next day Wazir Ali fell ill, and while he was confined to bed, the governor-general carried on his investigations (23 December 1797 to 7 January 1798) and came to the following conclusions:¹⁸

(i) that Wazir Ali was undoubtedly the son of a farrash; that he had no title to the masnad and was by character and conduct unworthy of it;

(ii) that to support him would not only be a disgrace to the Company, but would ultimately prove disastrous to Oudh and to English influence there;

(iii) that both justice and the Company's political interests required the establishment of the rightful heir;

(iv) that none of the reputed sons of Asafuddaula having been born of him, the line of succession must revert to that of Shujauddaula;

(v) that, therefore, Wazir Ali ought to be deposed and Sa'adat Ali placed on the masnad.

The evidence on which Shore based the first of these

15 *B.S.C.* 24 Nov. 1797 GG's minute.

16 *B.S.C.* 11 Dec. 1797.

17 Shore to Speke 4 Dec.

18 *B.S.C.* 30 Jan. 1798 Shore to Speke 14 Jan.

conclusions was no more conclusive than what he had had before. There were, however, two material points which he noticed while at Lucknow; firstly, that Wazir Ali's unpopularity was in fact much greater than he had supposed; and secondly, that the Begam's support of Wazir Ali was not absolute. The reports of the Persian translator's apparently casual conversations with various men of rank in Lucknow¹⁹ all show that they resented Wazir Ali being their nawab. They and many others like them did not openly show their dislike because they believed that the Company backed Wazir Ali and because he was popular with the soldiers owing to his munificence towards them. The Begam had supported him perhaps because she, too, thought it unwise to oppose the Company or because she expected to have a hand in the administration, the nawab being so young. But her affections were not inalienable, and she now offered Shore an additional 20 lakh annually in subsidy if he would raise Mirza Jangli to the masnad.²⁰

As to Wazir Ali's birth, "the only positive information," Shore admits, "was collected from Tahsin Ali Khan," which he had before rejected as being inconclusive. Tahsin's statement given on 31 December²¹ and the result of his cross-examination on the 25th,²² if true, only make for a strong presumption that Wazir Ali was not Asafuddaula's son, but proves nothing conclusively. On the other hand, Tahsin stated that Asafuddaula had two sons both of whom had died early, which, if true, rules out the foundation of the popular belief. As to Tahsin's veracity Shore says that "his character has never been impeached," a statement hardly correct considering the many complaints received against him of illegal exactions, evasions of legal dues and malversations while he was chief of the customs department, and the strong condemnation of him by Johnstone (acting Resident) and Cornwallis.²³ On other hand, the details given by Kamaluddin

19 Nos. 22-25.

20 Paper written by Shore 13 Jan.

21 No. 17.

22 No. 18.

23 Chapter IV.

Haidar²⁴ of Wazir Ali's misconducts ending in his seriously insulting Tahsin, and even threatening to kill him, could have given the latter every reason to do all in his power to effect the former's overthrow.

Shore certainly had other reasons besides a revised view of Wazir Ali's claim to the masnad for deposing him and setting up Sa'adat Ali. He writes towards the end of his paper of 13 January 1798:

We are so implicated in our connection with Oudh that we cannot withdraw from it, and we are so situated in it, that without a decisive influence in its administration we cannot have any security, the consequences of such a situation might be fatal if the government of the country were secretly hostile to us, and such in my judgment would have been the situation of the country under the administration of Wazir Ali.

While Shore was on his way to Lucknow, Tafazzul met him at Jaunpur and confirmed the reports he had had about Wazir Ali's violence of temper and hostility towards the English. The minister said that "the conduct of Wazir Ali from his accession had exhibited a series of actions mean, profligate and vicious," that he had said that he would submit to no authority and that no one would dare annihilate his authority and dignity, that he would oppose all interference by the Company and had for that reason required all his commandants to take an oath of personal allegiance to him, and had directed himself to the degradation of the minister whom he considered as an agent of the English.

Tafazzul was entirely trustworthy and the above informations from him set Shore thinking once again whether his original decision had been wise. On his arrival at Lucknow he found the general opinion to be that Wazir Ali was

fearless, debauched, of a sanguinary and uncontrollable disposition. . . his conduct fully proved his inclination to maintain his independence at all risks; on this principle he was considered as the determined enemy of the English.

Shore also found that the Begam was not persistent in her support of Wazir Ali. Considering that in these circumstances it would not be safe to leave Oudh in his hands,

²⁴ *op. cit.* f. 30-31.

Shore instructed Cherry, then Resident at Benares, to sound Sa'adat Ali.²⁵ Sa'adat Ali, who had already made overtures to Shore, signed a paper of agreement²⁶ promising the observation of all Asafuddaula's engagements besides additional and substantial advantages to the Company, *viz.* territorial cession in lieu of the subsidy, the cession of the fort of Allahabad, the cost of its repair and that of the fort at Fathgarh, the immediate payment of 15 lakh of rupees and more later if necessary by way of compensation for the Company's troubles and expenses in raising him to the masnad. Everything was to be gained and nothing lost by the Company by substituting Sa'adat for Wazir Ali, and the revolution took place on 21 January 1798. Shore had taken sufficient precautions against any risings, and perfect peace reigned in Lucknow. Policy had dictated the revolution and in the public eye it was also an act of justice. Whether it was really so or not there is no way of ascertaining.

On 21 February 1798 a treaty was signed between the new nawab and the Company²⁷ based generally on the agreement signed at Benares. At Benares Sa'adat had agreed to (i) the cession of the Doab in lieu of the subsidy, (ii) the dismissal of the nawabi troops, (iii) the discharge of the just debts of Asafuddaula, and (iv) pay Rs. 15 lakh to the Company for raising him to the masnad. In drawing up the treaty Shore relinquished the first, because it would have been a very unpopular step. He, therefore, deliberately substituted the vague terms about satisfactory security (Article 11), aiming at territorial cession when convenient.²⁸ He also omitted the clause requiring the dismissal of the nawabi troops, as that might have given rise to rebellion and created a situation dangerous for a new ruler to start with. Instead he increased the subsidy to 76 lakh (Article 2), which he thought would compel Sa'adat to reduce his military establishment, thus indirectly securing the desired end.²⁹

25 *B.S.C.* 20 Jan. 1798 Shore to Cherry 9 Jan.

26 No. 28.

27 Aitchison No. LIII.

28 *B.S.C.* 5 Mar. 1798 Shore's minute.

29 *ibid.*

He omitted the clause requiring Sa'adat's payment of Asafuddaula's just debts, as that would have been an interference in the private affairs of the nawab; and he considered that Rs. 12 lakh (Article 10) would more than cover the whole of the Company's expenses in establishing Sa'adat on the masnad.³⁰

30 *ibid.*

VIII

SA'ADAT ALI AND WELLESLEY

WHEN Sa'adat Ali ascended the masnad he was over 50 years of age. He had been the favourite son of Shujauddaula and the favourite pupil of Tafazul. Just before his death Shujauddaula had wanted to nominate him the acting nawab while Asafuddaula would have borne the title and the outward dignity of the nawabi,¹ but Asafuddaula's mother would not have it. Kamal laments that thus a woman's interference in the affairs of the state became the cause of the ruin of Oudh. Shujauddaula, however, gave Sa'adat the suba of Bareilly, where Sa'adat retired after his father's death. Asafuddaula objected to his holding the suba, for the fear that he might gradually aim at the nawabi itself. The minister Mukhtaruddaula warned Asafuddaula that Sa'adat was abler than him and more popular. Asafuddaula requested Major Polier, who had entered Shujauddaula's service on Hastings' recommendation, to induce Sa'adat to give up Bareilly and live in Lucknow like his other brothers, but Polier refused saying that he had no business to interfere in Shujauddaula's will. Asafuddaula thereupon offered to retire himself with a small jagir and leave Oudh to Sa'adat. Polier wrote of this to Hastings. It is said that Mukhtaruddaula offered Benares, etc., to Hastings if the latter could effect Sa'adat's recall to Lucknow. Hastings wrote to Sa'adat, who seeing that the governor-general was on his brother's side, obeyed the summons and went to reside at Lucknow. He could not, however, bear Asafuddaula and his ways for long and arranged with the governor-general to retire to Benares.

Before he left for Benares, he was involved in a plot against Asafuddaula. Muktaruddaula was unpopular with the people for the transfer of Benares and other districts

¹ *Tawarikh-i-Awadh* 910. For the earlier career of Sa'adat see pp. 91-99; *Imad-us-Sa'adat* 120, 130-2.

to the British and with the army for his numerous dismissals. In 1776 Basant Ali Khan, an adopted son of the minister, headed a plot against the life of both Mukhtaruddaula and the puppet nawab, murdered the minister, but on approaching Asafuddaula, was shot by him. There followed confusion during which it was said that Sa'adat's servants had killed the minister and had aimed at the life of the nawab himself. Tafazzul advised Sa'adat to leave Lucknow, which he did staying at first with Umrao Gir in the Doab. He then crossed the Jamuna and took shelter with Najaf Khan. Through the efforts of Hastings and Tafazzul, however, reconciliation took place between him and Asafuddaula, and he retired to Benares. He lived there in a house he built at Durgakund on a pension from the nawab guaranteed by the Company. The pension at first was fixed at three lakh a year, but was reduced to two lakh in 1786, and to only one lakh in 1797. He was shrewd and intelligent, but was generally believed to be suspicious of others and fond of money. He succeeded to a chaotic state, pledged to heavy payments, and with its resources depleted. Soon after his accession Shore was succeeded by Wellesley, and there ensued between the new nawab and the new governor-general a long struggle which ended in the cession to the Company of practically half of Oudh. Wellesley differed from Shore almost as much as Sa'adat Ali differed from Asafuddaula. It should, however, be noted that Shore had anticipated practically the whole of Wellesley's Oudh policy, but he lacked the vigour and confidence of support in London which enabled Wellesley to complete what Shore had only suggested.

The Dean of Winchester remarks that the treaty with Sa'adat Ali, by which the latter was made to cede about half of Oudh to the Company, is said to be the most high-handed of all Wellesley's actions, a thing which Wellesley would hardly have denied but would have justified.² In an official narrative of the circumstances leading to that treaty Wellesley's actions have been justified on these grounds: the common benefit of Oudh and of the Company;

² *Camb. Hist. of India* V 354.

the moral obligation of the Company to guard the interests of Oudh; political expediency; and the rights inherent in the Company by the existing treaties.³ This narrative is obviously written as a case for the governor-general to be presented to the public, and a comparison with the actual correspondence between the men involved and the later history of Sa'adat Ali's rule show that the nawab has been misrepresented in the narrative. Wellesley was actuated in his policy by his belief that the political and financial security of the Company's possessions depended very much on the well-defended and orderly state of Oudh, and that only British rule could ensure those things. The whole transaction up to the conclusion of the treaty on 10 November 1801 can be split into two, the governor-general's demand for the military reform of Oudh and his demand for territorial security for the regular payment of the subsidy. Both led to long discussions, the first ending in the posting of a large British force in Oudh, and the second, in the cession of the Doab, Gorakhpore, Azamgarh, etc., territories yielding a minimum of 135 lakh gross revenue, to the Company.

The military changes were suggested to the nawab from Calcutta in June 1799. On the 21st, Sir Alured Clarke, under the instructions of Mornington who was then in Madras, wrote to Sa'adat Ali⁴ pointing out the immediate need for military reforms, both for the sake of guarding against foreign invaders and the internal tranquility of Oudh. For the details of the plan of reform the nawab was referred to the Resident, Lt.-Col. William Scott,⁵ who had in turn been referred to Mornington's letters of 23 December 1798⁶ and 25 January 1799⁷ to the late Resident, Lumsden, for his guidance. In those letters the governor-general had expressed his strong belief that the only possible way to ensure the security of Oudh was

3 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,524.

4 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,528 f. 3-6.

5 Scott was originally appointed Lumsden's assistant especially to advise on military reforms in Oudh. He succeeded Lumsden after his resignation.

6 Martin, *Wellesley: Despatches, Minutes and Correspondence* I 386-9.

7 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 No. 54.

the wholesale disbandment of the nawab's army and its replacement by the Company's troops to be paid by the nawab but under the control of the Calcutta government. In the official narrative mentioned above, the nawab is charged with having refused to put those measures into practice after having himself invited suggestions and having accepted them. It further states that whatever the nawab's views might have been, the existing circumstances demanded those measures and that the treaty of 1798 had given the Company the right to insist upon their adoption. The circumstances the governor-general referred to were the danger of an invasion of Oudh by Zaman Shah or some other power, and the inefficiency and utter unreliability of the nawab's own army whom he himself completely distrusted.

As to the danger of Zaman Shah's invasion of Oudh, Shore had to the time of his departure rejected its probability.⁸ Soon after Shore's departure, however, there arose another rumour of the Shah's intended invasion. Ghulam Muhammad Khan Rohilla, after his defeat in 1795, had found his way to Afghanistan, and it was rumoured at this time that he had succeeded in interesting the Shah in his claim to Rampur, and that he was proceeding to that state to be followed by the Shah himself.⁹ Towards the end of July 1798, Nasrulla Khan, regent at Rampur, informed Lumsden that news had reached him of Ghulam Muhammad's arrival at Nahaun,¹⁰ and that he feared a partial, if not wholesale, rising of the Rohilla sardars of Rampur in Ghulam Muhammad's favour in case he actually reached Rampur.¹¹ Newsletters from the north-west reported that Zaman Shah's advance-guard was already on the move towards the Punjab frontier and that he intended this time to stay in Hindustan for eight years.¹² Mornington had come to India with a preconceived idea that the danger from the north-west was not so remote as Shore

8 Chapter II (iv).

9 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1798 Nasrulla to Lumsden.

10 200-250 miles from Oudh.

11 Nasrulla to Lumsden recd. 27 July; *B.P.C.* 1 Oct. 1798 Nasrulla to Lumsden recd. August.

12 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1798.

had made out, and that there was every possibility of a combination between Tipu and Zaman Shah.¹³ On receiving these reports, therefore, he hastened to instruct Maj.-Gen. Sir James Craig and Maj.-Gen. Stuart, officers commanding in Oudh, to keep themselves in readiness to meet Ghulam Muhammad, should the latter come near Rampur, and advised the nawab to place a part of his army at Najibabad and to see that all persons in Oudh and Rampur suspected of favouring Ghulam Muhammad were immediately apprehended.¹⁴ Although later newsletters from Nahaun stated that Ghulam Muhammad had not been even heard of there,¹⁵ yet, in accordance with the governor-general's instructions, arrangements were made for the defence of Oudh.¹⁶ The nawab suggested that his second son Muhammad Ali Khan, "a young man of sound judgment and some parts,"¹⁷ should personally proceed to the frontier. By the middle of October some more unconfirmed reports reached Lucknow that Ghulam Muhammad was fast approaching Rampur and as a result Prince Muhammad Ali Khan with the whole of the nawabi forces at Bareilly, accompanied by a detachment of British forces under Lt.-Col. Reyne, proceeded to Bissaula where they were joined on 19 October by Stuart with the whole of the Cawnpore brigade, the combined army then proceeding towards Rampur.¹⁸ They found perfect quiet there and saw no sign of Ghulam Muhammad. He was believed to have with him a band of 3,000 unreliable Gujar adventurers and Bambu Khan, brother of Ghulam Qadir Khan.¹⁹

In November a man, also named Ghulam Muhammad Khan, who declared himself to be the agent of Zaman Shah, arrived at Lucknow and delivered to the Resident a letter said to be from the Shah addressed to governor-general Clive (*sic.*), desiring the latter to help Ghulam Muhammad Rohilla to recover a half share of the jagir of

13 Martin I 26-9 Mornington to Dundas 28 Feb. 1798.

14 B.P.C. 6 Aug. 1798 Mornington to Lumsden.

15 B.P.C. 1 Oct. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 23 August.

16 Hussain Ali Khan to NW.

17 Lumsden to Mornington 16 Aug. Muhammad Ali was later King of Oudh (1837-42).

18 B.P.C. 12 Nov. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 24 Oct.

19 Lumsden to Stuart 2 Oct.

Rampur.²⁰ This letter was accompanied by one from Ghulam Muhammad Rohilla saying that he had no hostile intentions towards the English, and requesting that if the governor-general found it impossible to allow him a share of Rampur, his family might be restored to him so that he might retire with them to Kabul and spend the rest of his life there.²¹ Mornington had ordered Ghulam Muhammad's family to be transferred to Benares lest they should form a centre of intrigues,²² and they had accordingly been taken charge of by Muhammad Ali and Stuart early in November²³ and were escorted to Benares which they reached early in December.²⁴ Ghulam Muhammad was at that time reported to be stopping by the Shah's order at Nahaun to await his arrival.²⁵

In August 1798 Lumsden had written that Ghulam Muhammad's approach was not a thing to be feared unless he was actually followed by Zaman Shah.²⁶ This view was shared by Craig who ordinarily seems to have been overcautious. He had objected to Muhammad Ali's marching to Rohilkhand with a regiment of the Company's forces on the ground that it would be hazarding too much. At that time reports from Nahaun said that Ghulam Muhammad had not even been heard of in the neighbourhood, that he was probably in Kashmir being detained by the raja there, and that Zaman Shah was still in Afghanistan preparing for the invasion. Craig said that the reputation of the British army had recently suffered considerably and that it must be recovered at the next encounter, otherwise the existence of the British in India would become precarious.²⁷ In September he said that four to five battalions of the Company's forces should be sufficient to crush Ghulam Muhammad and his Rohilla supporters, should they arrive at Rampur, and thought that the danger was not after all as grave as he had

20 *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798.

21 *ibid.*

22 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1798 Mornington to Lumsden.

23 *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798 Stuart to Lumsden 7 Nov.

24 Lumsden to GG 11 Dec.

25 Newsletter from Najibabad recd. 5 Dec.

26 *B.P.C.* 1 Oct. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 16 Aug.

27 Craig to Lumsden 24 Aug; same to same 28 Aug. *Home Misc.* 236.

supposed, especially in view of the fact that Zaman Sháh had shown no signs of approaching.²⁸ Craig's confidence lasted but few days; three days after writing the above he submitted to the governor-general a memoir on the probable invasion of Zaman Shah²⁹ in which he favours the popular rumour and recommends elaborate precautions. Six days later he wrote to the commander-in-chief³⁰ that he did not see a single reason why the Shah should not put his project into operation that season, and after another four days to the governor-general that "unless the Company's forces in the Upper Provinces were increased to 20,000 besides the garrison at Allahabad, their number would be less in proportion to the magnitude of the work in front of them."³¹ There hardly seems to have been any justification for this sudden panic.

News had been received of Zaman Shah's advance-guard being on the move in July 1798. No regular news service was established until November when Lumsden's reporters reached the Shah's camp.³² Until that time the reports often conflicted in their details, *e.g.* in October two news-letters from Jaipur stated that the Shah had arrived at Peshawar, while letters from Patiala and Najibabad reported that differences having arisen between him and his wazir, Shah Muhammad Khan, he had been prevented from starting on the expedition and that his future plans were uncertain.³³ A letter from Patiala to some Lucknow bankers gave 21 Rabi I (3 September 1798) as the specific date on which Zaman Shah had decided to start from Kabul, and that he had issued orders for a bridge of boats to be thrown across the Indus at Attock.³⁴ Several letters of Craig say that he had received the news of the Shah's having reached Peshawar in September.³⁵ A man called Islam, who said he had come from Kabul, reached Lucknow on 8 November and told a fruit merchant that Zaman Shah had crossed

28 *B.P.C.* 8 Oct. 1798 Craig to Lumsden 23 Sep.

29 *Martin* I 661-71.

30 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,531 f. 19.

31 *ibid* f. 23-4.

32 *Home Misc.* 236 Lumsden to Mornington 3 Dec. 1798.

33 *B.P.C.* 12 Nov. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 24 Oct.

34 *B.P.C.* 29 Oct. 1798.

35 *ibid*.

the Indus on 20 or 21 October,³⁶ a later report from Delhi³⁷ somewhat corroborated Islam's report, but another from Patiala³⁸ made no mention of it, which, in Lumsden's opinion, showed that the report was not true.³⁹

The first news from Lumsden's reporters, dated 19 Jamadi I (30 October) and received at Lucknow on 14 November⁴⁰ state that the Shah had reached Peshawar on 20 Rabi II (1 October) and that he stayed there till the 24th. This shows that both Islam and Craig's informants had been wrong. This report then says that the Shah was still finding it difficult to throw a bridge across the Indus owing to the swelling of the river, that his commandants seemed to be at variance with each other, and that he had sent orders to the raja of Kashmir and other hill chiefs to supply him with money. Six days later news came from Amritsar⁴¹ that the Shah was four coss beyond the Indus, his troops encamped on the bank of the river and the bridge ready, that at Peshawar his troops had numbered 1,32,000 although he had given it out as two lakh, and that the Sikhs were in great panic. In the middle of December news came from Zaman Shah's camp⁴² that he had entered Rohtasgarh on Friday, 7 Jamadi II (16 November) with about 1,33,000 followers, of whom only 40,000 were actually fighting men, some light camel artillery and 22 pieces of cannon. He had sent an expedition of 12,000 men against Dunianagar, about 140 miles from Gujarat at the foot of the hills, where many Sikh families and bankers had taken refuge. He was next expected to advance to Gujarat. Newsletters from Amritsar and Lahore, dated 10-19 November and received at Lucknow on 3 December, stated that Ranjit Singh and other Sikh sardars with 2,000 horse had given the Shah battle and had been repulsed. The Shah was managing well the country he had occupied, not permitting any loot or plunder, but the people were

36 *B.P.C.* 23 Nov. 1798.

37 *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798.

38 *ibid.*

39 Lumsden to Mornington 12 Nov.

40 *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798.

41 *ibid.*

42 *ibid.*

still panic-stricken. The Sikhs, if united, could put 50 to 60 thousand men in the field, but jealousy and discord amongst them deprived them of their power of effective resistance. Col. Collins, British Resident with Sindhia, had received reliable information that the Afghan army had occupied Lahore on 20 November⁴³ and that Zaman Shah himself arrived there ten days later.⁴⁴ The Shah did not attempt any further advance; he stayed at Lahore till early January 1799 when he issued peremptory orders for the return march.⁴⁵ The actual scare seems to have subsided even before he had reached Lahore, for it had been found out that the number of his fighting men was only between 30 and 40 thousand, the rest of his followers being vagabonds of whom he was himself afraid,⁴⁶ that he was short of money which he could not make up while in occupation of northern Punjab, and that a rift had taken place in his army, one section led by Wafadar Khan and the other by Sher Muhammad Khan, the latter secretly urging the Sikhs to hold out and harass the Afghan army by guerilla warfare.⁴⁷ Zaman Shah had not been able to collect more than one lakh of rupees in his march of about 300 miles from Attock to Lahore.⁴⁸ Having arrived at Lahore, he stopped there trying to collect money by reconciling the local people by an unprecedented mildness and issuing orders to the Sikh chiefs and the hill chiefs in Kashmir to join him with men and tribute. This situation encouraged the Sikh sardars who, through the efforts of Bibi Sadda Koer,⁴⁹ concentrated their forces at Amritsar, encouraging them by saying that anybody dying in that holy city was sure to go to heaven.⁵⁰ On 23 November an indecisive engagement lasting three hours took place between the Afghans and the

43 Lumsden to Mornington 6 Dec. 1798.

44 *B.P.C.* 11 Jan. 1799 newsletter d. 25 Jamadi II (5 Dec.)

45 *B.P.C.* 25 Jan. 1799 newsletter from Lahore d. 24-27 Rajab (2-5 Jan. 1799).

46 *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798 newsletter from Amritsar d. 18 Jamadi II.

47 News from Amritsar d. 18 Jamadi II.

48 Newsletter from the Shah's camp d. 21 Jamadi II.

49 Mother of Ranjit Singh, a woman of great personal courage. She used to lead the army in person, and when any sardar showed signs of unwillingness to advance, she shamed him into activity by asking him to change dresses with her.

50 *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798 news from Amritsar 12 Jamadi II.

Sikhs in which each side lost between 200 and 500 men.⁵¹ By this time there were assembled at Amritsar about 20,000 Sikh horse, besides foot and 21 pieces of cannon, under the command of Ranjit Singh and Sadda Koer.⁵² Besides this, three forts beyond Lahore with garrisons of 500 each were still in the possession of the Sikhs, the Shah having left them alone not wishing to spend time or money over their siege. The raja of Jammu (Kashmir) seeing that the chances of the Shah's success were poor, willingly gave shelter to the Sikh refugees, though still pretending to be faithful to the Shah. The Sikhs successfully fell upon some Afghan reinforcements coming from Kabul, looted their stores and put some of the Shah's choicest cavalry to flight.⁵³ The Shah obviously wavered as to his future plans, and that was promptly reported to the bankers in Lucknow where all panic seemed to subside.⁵⁴ Following another successful Sikh raid on the Afghan supplies,⁵⁵ the price of foodstuffs in Lahore began to rise.⁵⁶ The Sikhs now preparing for a pitched battle sent a proposal to Lumsden for an offensive and defensive alliance.⁵⁷ Within a few days, however, the news of the Shah's retreat was received, confirmed by Col. Collins,⁵⁸ the reasons given for it being his shortage of money and supplies, and the outbreak of trouble in Afghanistan.

The years 1799 and 1800 did not pass without the usual rumours of Afghan invasion, but much more feeble than before. In June 1799 the governor-general ordered the expulsion from Oudh of all wakils, newswriters or other persons known to be emissaries of Zaman Shah.⁵⁹ In June 1801 came the news of Zaman Shah's defeat in the hands

51 Newsletters from Amritsar and Lahore d. 18 Jamadi II.

52 News from Amritsar 19-20 Jamadi II; news from Patiala d. 24 Jamadi II.

53 *B.P.C.* 11 Jan. 1799 newsletter d. 25 Jamadi II.

54 *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 15 Dec.

55 *B.P.C.* 11 Jan. 1799 news from Najibabad 1 Rajab (10 Dec.)

56 News from Lahore 2 Rajab.

57 Bariar Singh to Lumsden 27 Dec.

58 *B.P.C.* 28 Jan. 1799 Collins to Mornington 15 Jan.

59 *B.S.C.* 3 June 1799 Barlow to Lumsden.

of his brother Shah Mahmud⁶⁰ and finally of his imprisonment.⁶¹

From the above survey it appears that in 1798 there actually existed a real alarm of Zaman Shah's invasion, but it passed off before the year was over; that the chances of his success were very small, a fact realised in Hindustan by the end of 1798, after which, though the usual rumours arose, the people were no longer panic-stricken as before. As to Mornington's fear that there existed a concert between Tipu and Zaman Shah which might have engaged the Company on two fronts, there was little ground. The letters between the Mysore chief and the Shah, which had been seized during the time of Shore, had been found to be approaches made by Tipu and haughty answers from the Shah, neither encouraging nor specifically friendly.⁶² After the fall of Serigapatam papers were said to have been found there which proved that there had been correspondence between Tipu and Zaman Shah, but the exact contents of that correspondence is not known. But whatever the degree of friendship between the two might have been, Tipu ceased for ever to be a menace after early May 1799.

Towards the end of 1798 the governor-general had sent Mehdi Ali Khan as agent to Persia to effect a diversion for Zaman Shah in Afghanistan by encouraging his brother Shah Mahmud to rebel,⁶³ in which mission he seems to have been successful.⁶⁴ At the end of 1799 the governor-general despatched another mission to Persia under John Malcolm with the object "to relieve India from the annual alarm of Zaman Shah's invasion, which is always attended with serious expense to the Company, by occasioning a diversion upon his [Zaman Shah's] Persian provinces; to counteract the possible attempts of those villanous but active democrats, the French."⁶⁵ Malcolm left Bombay on 29 December 1799, reached Teheran on 13 November 1800 and had his

60 *B.S.C.* 9 Jul. 1801 paper of intelligence from Amritsar 28 Muharram (11 June) and 7 Safar (19 June).

61 *B.S.C.* 23 July 1801 paper of intelligence 11-13 Safar.

62 *B.S.C.* 7 July 1797 GG's minute.

63 Martin I 432-3 Mornington to Duncan 13 Feb. 1799.

64 *Factory Records (Persia)* 22 pp. 218ff Mehdi Ali Khan to Malcolm 12 Zilhija 1214.

65 Kaye, *Life of Malcolm* I 89 Malcolm to Ross 10 Aug. 1799.

first interview with the King on the 16th.⁶⁶ Before he had left Bombay, news had reached there of the continuance of the civil war in Afghanistan which had broken out at the end of 1798.⁶⁷ He found on his arrival in Persia that those reports were true and that the King of Persia had already joined Shah Mahmud who was at that time fighting Zaman Shah in Khorasan.⁶⁸ Malcolm left Persia in February 1801, having in January concluded two treaties with the King, one commercial and the other political.⁶⁹

When, therefore, in June 1799 Mornington asked Sa'adat Ali for an immediate army reform, he probably had not the possibility of Zaman Shah's reappearance in mind.⁷⁰ It is much more likely that he thought of probable enemies much nearer Oudh, namely Sindhia and Holkar. When Mornington first came to India, he certainly had the intention of concluding an alliance with Sindhia,⁷¹ but as he found that Daulat Rao continued to stay in Poona and that his position was uncertain, he became less eager for his alliance.⁷² Also he could not feel sure of the co-operation of Sindhia's army under the command of the Frenchman Perron. It is doubtful if at any time he had any form of treaty other than a subsidiary alliance in mind. He probably gradually despaired of concluding such an alliance with Sindhia, for Craig refers to a suggestion of

66 *Factory Records (Persia)* 22.

67 *Home Misc.* 470 Nathan Crow to Duncan 7 Dec. 1799 and enclosed report from the merchants of Herat.

68 *Home Misc.* 470 Malcolm to Duncan 25 Feb. 1800 and enclos; *Factory Records (Persia)* 22 Malcolm to Wellesley, 14 May 1800; from Shiraz 15 Mar. 1800; paper of intelligence from Yezd 26 Mar. 1800.

69 *Cambridge History of India* V 486.

70 Probably the impracticability of Zaman Shah's project had always been realized by Wellesley. In a private letter to Dundas on 28 Feb. 1798 he wrote: "It is very difficult to form a conjecture with respect to the probability of Zaman Shah's being able to execute his romantic design. That he entertains such a design is unquestionable; and whatever may be the result, it is prudent to be on our guard, and in the meanwhile to derive every collateral advantage from his declaration." *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,455 fol. 50. These "collateral advantages" seem to have been at first to induce Sindhia to accept a subsidiary alliance, and later to induce the nawab of Oudh to maintain a large British force in his country at his own expense.

71 Mornington to Dundas 23 and 28 Feb. 1798; Mornington to Sindhia 28 July 1798; Mornington to Collins 15 Sep. 1798 *Martin* I 12, 28, 684-5, 257-61.

72 *Martin* I 311-3 Mornington to Collins.

the governor-general of a defensive league with the Sikhs and the Rajputs to which Sindhia need not necessarily be a party.⁷³ In March 1799 Mornington expressed his belief that Sindhia would actually be hostile though not known when.⁷⁴ By the time the war with Tipu took place, the governor-general had not succeeded in concluding an alliance either with the Peshwa or Sindhia. The latter, moreover, awakened suspicions in his mind by receiving agents of Tipu and not giving any satisfactory answer when a protest was made by the Resident at Poona.⁷⁵ After the quick overthrow of Tipu there remained only the Mahrattas, especially Sindhia and Holkar, who could seriously challenge the British supremacy in India or intrigue with the French. Negotiations for alliance with them having failed, the governor-general probably foresaw a struggle between them and the British for supremacy. The military weakness of Oudh would have afforded the Mahrattas with an excellent target; the British could not afford to let Oudh be overrun by a hostile power, and Mornington considered that left to itself it certainly would be so overrun. The best solution to him appeared the complete transfer of Oudh to the Company, at least of the Doab, which would bring the British to the frontier of the Mahratta dominion, and the complete replacement of the nawabi army by the Company's troops. Compared with the situation in 1785, Daulat Rao was now much more powerful and less afraid of the English, and the nawabi army worse.⁷⁶

The low standard to which the nawabi army had been reduced by the time of Asafuddaula's death has already been described. Their pay had fallen into arrear and they were discontented. Not unnaturally, therefore, a number of them mutinied after the revolution of January 1798, perhaps more because the new nawab Sa'adat Ali was known to be parsimonious. The Resident reported a

73 *ibid* 283 Craig to Mornington 1 Oct. 1798.

74 *ibid* 487-91 Mornington to Clarke.

75 *ibid* 557 Mornington to Palmer 25 April 1799.

76 *Home Misc.* 836 f. 569-606 Capt. Frith to James Law Nov. 1799.

number of such mutinies during April-May 1798,⁷⁷ discontent about money being at the root of every one of them, and they were all easily and peacefully settled as soon as the claims of the soldiers were equitably adjusted.⁷⁸ These mutinies "neither proceeded from any dislike to the person and administration of the . . . nawab nor from the machinations of others to excite discontent amongst the troops."⁷⁹ The Resident ascribed them to the defective military system, the sale of commands, etc., which had so long prevailed, "encouraged perhaps in some degree by [Sa'adat Ali's] . . . elevation to the masnad," and he thought that had the mutinies been the result of a concerted plan of opposition, there would have been a general rising, and not small isolated ones as had actually happened while the majority of the army remained loyal to the sarkar. Sa'adat Ali had early set himself to the task of military reform, had abolished the sale of commands and saw to it that the soldiers were paid with the utmost regularity.⁸⁰ But it was only the beginning and, as Lumsden said, "where the system had been defective for a series of years, time must be required to correct its abuses." Sa'adat still had in his service Almas, Mehdi Ali and Prince Muhammad Ali Khan, all of them undoubtedly competent men. Given sufficient time and opportunity, and with the assistance of the governor-general and the Resident, he could have, in all probability, effected the necessary reforms. But from the very beginning he laboured under many handicaps, and as to time he hardly got any breathing space.

His first handicap was financial. He succeeded to an empty treasury and an almost bankrupt state, with reduced income and heavy outstanding liabilities.⁸¹ He was further burdened with the expenses of the revolution,⁸² the repairs of the forts of Allahabad and Fathgarh, the giving of

77 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1798 Lumsden to Clarke 13 April, 18 May.

78 Lumsden to Clarke 14 and 18 April, 21 May.

79 Lumsden to Clarke 18 May.

80 *B.P.C.* 1 Oct. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 16 Aug.

81 His liabilities consisted of the arrears of the Company's subsidy, Asaf's debts and the arrears of pay to the troops.

82 He paid on this account Rs. 12 lakh in February and Rs. 6,000 in May 1798, NW's account, *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. and 4 May 1798.

rewards and khilats, and a considerably increased subsidy to the Company. He had to adopt every possible means of retrenchment and he started with himself. He told the ministers, in the presence of the Resident, that he would not require a single rupee from the public treasury for his personal expenses, and to this voluntary promise he adhered strictly.⁸³ He had at that time only 11 lakh left in his private treasury⁸⁴ from which he had already paid out about 20 lakh to the Company besides maintaining himself and his family.⁸⁵ From the account drawn up by the Resident for 1205 F. (1797-8) it appears that although the revenue then was 13 lakh more than in 1783, and that the nawab had exercised every possible economy since his accession, yet there was a deficit of Rs. 62,33,127-12-11, but the Resident expected that in the way Sa'adat was going on, he should be able to 'balance the budget' in two or three years.⁸⁶ Sa'adat was already known to be miserly, and his all round retrenchments which affected particularly those who had enjoyed Asafuddaula's lavish patronage did not improve his reputation. He is said to have had a suspicious nature; it is not surprising that having been compelled to displease a large number of men, most of them with position and influence, he suspected intrigues and plots against himself.

While he was struggling under these handicaps, there arose the panic of Zaman Shah's invasion and he, in consultation with Craig and Lumsden, made elaborate and expensive preparations to meet the threat. Lumsden writes:⁸⁷

The nawab-wazir continues to exert himself to the utmost to enable the army to act with energy if necessary, and it is but justice to acknowledge that I have found in his Excellency the readiest disposition to accede to every proposition suggested to him, having that for its object. He has instructed Almas...to keep his whole force in readiness to perform any services that may be required...and is busy in preparing a considerable train of his own artillery to be employed as circumstances shall

83 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1798 Lumsden to Barlow 23 May.

84 NW to Lumsden 23 May 1798.

85 NW's account.

86 Lumsden to Mornington 21 June 1798.

87 *B.P.C.* 23 Nov. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 12 Nov. For details of the military preparations see *B.P.C.* 24 Dec. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 6 Dec.; *Home Misc.* 236 f. 99-120.

dictate. He has ordered large depots of grains to be laid at Anupshahr, Mehdighat, Bissaula and Sandee, and has consented that the fort of Anupshahr shall be garrisoned by the Company's troops.

All this time the governor-general was pressing the nawab to clear the arrears due to the Company. Although the Resident wrote that it could only be done by anticipating the next year's revenue,⁸⁸ and corroborated the nawab's statement that the latter had not received the arrears of rent from any of the amils and had only 7½ lakh left in his treasury,⁸⁹ yet the governor-general wrote that he was "persuaded his Excellency possesses ample means of discharging the whole arrear without waiting the receipt of the collection from the country," and instructed the Resident to urge the nawab in the strongest terms "immediately to resort to whatever measure of any description he can command for the purpose of fulfilling his engagement."⁹⁰ The nawab persisted in asserting that he had no other funds at his command than some gold muhars and obsolete 'rakavi' rupees, which he had once before sent to the Resident in payment of the subsidy, but which the latter had refused because they were not accepted in the bazar.⁹¹ He offered them again either to be accepted at their nominal value or to be converted into or pledged in exchange for current rupees. Lumsden accepted the second alternative, but it was found impossible to have them converted before several months, and no banker agreed to advance money on those as security. The nawab then turned to Almas who after some hesitation agreed to lend the sum due to the Company to the end of the past preceding month, provided that he was given an undertaking in writing that he would be granted exemption for that amount from his jama for the ensuing year. The nawab accepted his terms and the money was paid into the Resident's treasury. On Lumsden's suggestion the rakavi rupees were utilized in paying the huzuri troops (troops attending the nawab's person), who had been clamouring for pay, to the end of

88 *B.P.C.* 6 Aug. 1798 Lumsden to Mornington 21 June.

89 Lumsden to Mornington 30 June.

90 *Martin I* 154 Mornington to Lumsden 6 Aug. 1798.

91 *Home Misc.* 236 Lumsden to Mornington 13 Oct. 1798.

June. Sa'adat also accepted Lumsden's proposal of appropriating the gold muhars in paying the pensions to the Emperor, the Princes and his own brothers, and the debts owing to the supply of grain for military purposes. He was not willing to part with the gold muhars, but he had to in order not to become more unpopular with those influential pensioners. By November, however, the subsidy fell into two months' arrear, and the governor-general wrote to the nawab asking him "not to wait for the supplies from the revenue but immediately borrow from whatever sources possible in order to liquidate the entire arrear."⁹² Sa'adat, it is not known from what sources, paid in cash between November and January a total sum of Rs. 34,70,066-9-2, leaving no balance.⁹³ The regularity of payment lasted two months, then the nawab failed to pay anything for one month, and remained, until the treaty of 1801, throughout one month in arrear but not more.⁹⁴ Since January 1799 he had stopped paying Wazir Ali's allowance (Rs. 12,500 p.m.) as on the 14th of that month the latter had, after having caused the murder of Cherry and several other Englishmen, fled from Benares. This item, however, continued to be included in the accounts until 18 November 1801, when the governor-general ordered it to be struck off the public accounts, after charging the nawab for the actual expenses incurred in seizing Wazir Ali, and maintaining him and his family to date. The nawab was told that by Article 5 of the treaty of 1798 he was bound to pay the whole stipend regularly and that this concession was being given him as a special favour! The future expenses of Wazir Ali and his family were to be borne by the sarkar.⁹⁵

Faced with such financial difficulties, the nawab could hardly be expected to be able to carry on the reforms he had started, especially because the first step towards the military reform was the paying of the arrears of pay to the troops, which required ready money. There is no doubt

92 *B.P.C.* 4 Jan. 1799 GG to NW 24 Nov. 1798.

93 NW's accounts, *B.P.C.* Dec. 1798 to Feb. 1799.

94 NW's accounts in *B.P.C.s* for the period.

95 *B.P.C.* 18 Nov. 1801 Lumsden to Scott.

that the nawabi forces could not be relied on when Zaman Shah's invasion seemed imminent. Battalions in the outlying districts supposed to be each 500 strong, when mustered were found to consist of no more than 300 men, many of whom were 70 to 80 years old and remained at home throughout the year.⁹⁶ Lumsden lamented their want of discipline and subordination, and observed that in the event of a war on the Oudh frontier, "the troops in the pay of his Excellency... will be found entirely useless."⁹⁷ The nawab himself put little faith on his army.⁹⁸ The rebellion of Wazir Ali afforded further proof of their unreliability. After his flight, the Kandahar cavalry in the nawab's service were despatched to apprehend him. They were a body of Afghan horse who had served in the first Mahratta war. An action took place between them and Wazir Ali's men, but the latter escaped. Maj.-Gen. Stuart later inspected the scene of the action and found conclusive proof of the Kandaharis having deliberately allowed Wazir Ali to escape.⁹⁹ Lt. Lumsden, brother of the Resident, who also was engaged in the pursuit, heard the Kandaharis speak openly in favour of the rebel.¹⁰⁰ Wazir Ali must have sent letters to many zamindars of Oudh and the commandants of the nawabi army were asked by the sarkar to submit all such correspondence; but none except one complied with that order. This leads to a strong presumption that they could not be relied on.¹⁰¹ Raja Rajendra Gir Gosain of Sheorajpur (about 10 or 12 miles below Cawnpore on the southern bank of the Ganges) who had in all about 300 armed followers, was suspected of aiding Wazir Ali. The Calcutta Government desired his apprehension and Sa'adat Ali immediately issued orders for his seizure, adding, "he could not depend on his own people for carrying them into effect."¹⁰²

When in June 1799 the specific military changes were

96 *B.P.C.* 1 Oct. 1798 Hussain Ali Khan to NW. recd. 21 Aug.

97 Lumsden to Mornington 16 and 23 Aug.

98 *Home Misc.* 236 Lumsden to GG 31 Oct. and 30 Nov. 1798.

99 Stuart to Lumsden 19 April 1799.

100 Lumsden to Barlow 14 Feb. 1799.

101 Lumsden to Barlow 12 Feb. 1799.

102 Lumsden to Craig 25 June.

proposed to Sa'adat, their necessity was urged on the grounds of the unreliability of his own army and the possibility of another Afghan invasion. Mornington had decided, while the latter danger had been more real, to increase the British forces in Oudh. On 27 October 1798 he had written to Craig that he had no reason to doubt that the army in Oudh would very soon be increased to about 20,000, probably more,¹⁰³ and by December he had raised 17 new regiments of infantry with the purpose of transferring some of them to Oudh.¹⁰⁴ After Zaman Shah's retreat he thought that a period of at least nine months, which must elapse before the Shah could reappear, should be utilized in effecting the proposed changes in Oudh. He expected that the late panic, the nawab's want of confidence in his own army, and the prospects of the economy resulting from the new arrangement would induce Sa'adat to accept it without objection.¹⁰⁵

In May 1799 Lumsden resigned¹⁰⁶ and was succeeded by Lt-Col. William Scott, who had been originally appointed assistant to the Resident especially to advise about military reforms. Scott arrived in Lucknow on 3 August and took over charge on the 5th. In his preliminary instructions he had been made aware of the governor-general's desire of procuring the Doab for the Company and the complete replacement of the nawab's army by that of the Company.¹⁰⁷ These proposals were not acceptable to the nawab and he wrote a very humble letter¹⁰⁸ in reply to the commander-in-chief's letter of 21 June 1799, drawing attention to his great exertions to clear the arrears and to pay punctually the regular subsidy and the extras demanded on account of the emergency defence measure. He referred to his letter of 18 August 1798 in which he had explained his difficulties (his financial embarrassment, lack of authority and the opposition of influential men to his measures of economy), and had asked for the governor-general's help to

103 *Martin I* 315.

104 *ibid* 387. Mornington to Lumsden 23 Dec. 1798.

105 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 Mornington to Lumsden 25 Jan. 1799.

106 *B.P.C.* 3 June 1799 Lumsden to Barlow 18 May.

107 *Martin II* 54 Mornington to Scott 18 June 1799.

108 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 No. 58.

solve them, but to which no particular answer had been given. He requested that now that the governor-general was free from the affair of Tipu, he should help him to effect the necessary financial, administrative and military reforms. The governor-general replied on 26 September¹⁰⁹ expressing his satisfaction at the nawab's "entire concurrence in the sentiments" contained in the commander-in-chief's letter. He emphasized the necessity and the timeliness of effecting the proposed changes. Scott was instructed to press on the nawab the proposals "with unremitted earnestness."¹¹⁰

Sa'adat Ali denied that he had agreed to the specific proposals made verbally through Scott though he had accepted the principles contained in Clarke's letter.¹¹¹ But Scott had written on 8 September¹¹² that he had presented to the nawab the governor-general's letter containing the proposed changes, and that "his Excellency perused the letter with apparent satisfaction and declared his thorough concurrence on the sentiments therein delivered."¹¹³ This contradiction in the nawab's and the Resident's statements annoyed Mornington and he wrote a strong letter to the former on 5 November.¹¹⁴ In this letter, and the covering one to Scott,¹¹⁵ are given his formal reasons for wanting to hasten the military reform of Oudh and his right to demand its adoption by the nawab. He says that Zaman Shah was a probable enemy, but besides him there were others; in any case, it was time to be prepared for defence. The nawab's own troops were useless in the event of an invasion. By the existing treaties the Company was bound to protect Oudh against any invaders. The state of the Company's finances did not permit it to maintain such a large army as would be necessary for the defence of Oudh. Therefore, the only way was to maintain these forces in Oudh at the nawab's expense. For that purpose the governor-general had one regiment of native cavalry and 2½ regiments

109 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,526 f. 7-10.

110 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 Mornington to Scott 26 Sep. 1799.

111 NW to Mornington recd. 24 Oct. 1799.

112 *Home Misc.* 236 f. 631-41.

113 Scott however later said that the nawab had not definitely given his consent, see *infra*.

114 *Martin II* 132-5.

115 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 No. 62.

(numbering 5,000) of native infantry with the necessary complement of guns, European artillery and lascars ready to take up their post in Oudh, and he proposed a further addition of three regiments of cavalry and $3\frac{1}{2}$ regiments (numbering 7,000) of infantry, and European artillery and lascars completing one battalion. The nawab could not obviously bear the expenses both of the increased British force and his own existing army, and the latter being useless, it was best to dismiss them and thus provide for the extra subsidy. As to the Company's right to demand the nawab's acquiescence, he referred to Article 7 of the treaty of 1798. It ran :

The English forces maintained in...Oudh for its defence, shall never consists of less than ten thousand men...If at any time it should become necessary to augment the troops of the Company in Oudh beyond the number 13,000...the nawab...agrees to pay the actual difference occasioned by the excess.

Mornington argued that although it was not mentioned in the treaty who was to determine the necessity of increasing the army, it followed that only the Company being bound by treaties to defend Oudh against all enemies could decide "the amount of force necessary to the effectual permanent defence of the Wazir's dominions, whether on a view of the immediate and obvious, or of remote and contingent danger." He considered that the increase he was proposing was absolutely necessary and the time most propitious. His arguments were all right so far as they went. Oudh was in fact a dependency of the Company, and the governor-general could not sacrifice the Company's interests for the sake of the nawab. The nawab was obviously required either to acquiesce or repudiate the treaties. He, however, not unnaturally expected to have a voice in the direction of his affairs, and having been punctual in his payments and having done all that was possible to drag the affairs of the sarkar out of the quagmire into which they had fallen during the previous quarter-century of disorder, he probably expected some indulgence. But Mornington did not think he could allow him either a share in deciding the policy or any indulgence. The nawab must have felt extremely disappointed, which

probably made him express to Scott on 12 November his wish to abdicate,¹¹⁶ proposing that if the governor-general should accept it, he would with his own hands raise one of his sons to the masnad and himself retire with what private money he had left. He did not object to the succession of his eldest son Ghaziuddin who was "quiet and of rather a heavy disposition," although he did not like him. On being told this, Scott withheld the governor-general's letter of 5 November. He inquired from the governor-general if he should try to secure the abdication for Sa'adat's posterity as well. He conjectured that Sa'adat had probably secured Asafuddaula's jewels and that he wished to ascribe his resolution to the pressure put upon him by Mornington to proceed against his will in the matter of the military reform. Two days later the nawab seemed still to retain the wish to abdicate, though not so strongly as on the 12th.¹¹⁷ Scott asked him to decide quickly whether he would abdicate or immediately proceed with the military changes. Scott, who on his arrival had found Sa'adat secretive and jealous of his authority in his own affairs,¹¹⁸ had developed a dislike for him. He wrote now that the mere abdication of Sa'adat, even with the whole wealth of the state, would be a blessing to the country—a statement hardly justified in view of the reports of Lumsden mentioned before.

After several conversations with the Resident, Sa'adat on the 21st forwarded to Calcutta a letter addressed to the governor-general drafted by Scott but corrected by his own hand.¹¹⁹ In it he wrote that "the dissensions, enmity, disobedience and the negligence of the people here, and certain causes" had induced him to offer to abdicate. He expressed the hope that by the elevation of one of his sons to the masnad his line would remain, and promised not to stay in Oudh or interfere in the smallest degree in the affairs of the country. Scott asked him how he expected a young man to perform what he himself had failed to do, to which he

116 Scott to Mornington 12 Nov. 1799.

117 Scott to Mornington 14 Nov. 1799.

118 *Home Misc.* 236 Scott to Mornington 7 Sep. 1799.

119 Martin II 152-3.

replied with a dry smile that his successor would have the benefit of that advice and assistance so often proffered to himself.¹²⁰ Scott suggests that having for long lived a carefree life Sa'adat had probably intended to abdicate at the very moment of his accession, and further observes that ever since his accession he had exercised his power only in one direction, namely, the accumulation of money, employing every means of making it and avoiding spending it. He expected that Sa'adat had accumulated treasures and cash worth a crore of rupees, consisting of Asafuddaula's jewels, nazars and the full monthly personal allowance drawn by Asafuddaula, which Sa'adat too had regularly drawn but never spent. In view of the previous Resident's reports none of these assertions seems correct.

In the meantime, Mornington had received Scott's letter of the 12th. He did not quite approve of Sa'adat's abdication, for it impeded his "grand object, namely, the acquisition by the Company of exclusive authority, civil and military, over the dominion of Oudh,"¹²¹ by bringing up the formal question of succession. He proposed a secret treaty between the nawab and the Company by which on a fixed date the complete government of Oudh should be transferred to the latter. He wished to explain the special weaknesses of Sa'adat, his anxiety for personal safety and his love of money. The Resident was to impress upon him that the governor-general's plan would provide for the maximum security of his person, and that he would be permitted to take with him his treasures if he agreed to it, but not if he insisted on his son's accession. A draft treaty¹²² was sent to the Resident with explanatory notes¹²³ for his guidance. On receiving the nawab's letter of 22 November, Mornington recorded a minute on 16 December¹²⁴ stating that the nawab's offer had been entirely voluntary but was not acceptable to him in the form it was made. He pointed to the disadvantages of nominating Ghaziuddin for succession.

120 Martin II 149 Scott to Mornington 22 Nov. 1799.

121 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,526 f. 42-5 Kirkpatrick to Scott 21 Nov. 1799.

122 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 No. 66.

123 Nos. 68 and 70.

124 Martin II 159-67.

The Prince was young and inexperienced and thus the interests of the country would suffer, and that Sa'adat Ali would lose personally by being required to leave a large portion of his treasure behind, for he could not in fairness burden his son with his responsibilities while depriving him of the means of discharging them. Moreover, history afforded no instance of an abdicated prince having remained content in his retirement; hence Ghaziuddin would be in constant fear from his father, and in consequence, the person of Sa'adat would ever be in danger. From all these considerations it was evident that Sa'adat could not have peace of mind by abdicating in favour of his son. It had further been seen that the divided administration of Oudh had done the country more harm than good and Sa'adat should not desire to perpetuate that evil by nominating his son to succeed him. So that, in Sa'adat's own interest and in the interest of his country, the complete transfer of Oudh to the Company, said Mornington, was the best plan. Scott was instructed to present this minute and the draft treaty to the nawab if the latter did not accept his verbal representations. Mornington perhaps felt that Sa'adat's offer to abdicate had arisen out of the pressure put upon him for the payment of the arrears and effecting the military changes, for he desired Scott to write a letter to him (Mornington) making out more explicitly than he had done before that the nawab's offer had not arisen out of any measures the governor-general had adopted with regard to Oudh, adding that this letter should be "expressly designed for record."¹²⁵ Scott complied.¹²⁶

By the time the draft treaty and the governor-general's minute reached Lucknow, the nawab seemed to have given up entirely his intention of abdicating. Scott constantly tried to lead him to a discussion on that point, but he invariably wriggled out of it.¹²⁷ Scott seems to have been at this time rather over-enthusiastic about the necessity of immediate increase of the British forces in Oudh and was greatly annoyed at the nawab's apparent intention to

125 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 Kirkpatrick to Scott (Private) 17 Dec. 1799.

126 Scott to GG 29 Dec. 1799.

127 Scott to Mornington 29 Nov. 1799.

demonstrate his ability to manage his civil and military affairs. He gauged the attitude of the amils in case the nawab's abdication did take place and concluded that the greater ones were not likely to oppose the Company. Probably they resented the greater vigilance of Sa'adat, which deprived them of the profits they used to make under the previous administration. Scott's eagerness to secure the abdication of Sa'adat is shown in his private letter to Kirkpatrick of 2 December.¹²⁸ He received on that day the draft treaty and the other papers, but did not immediately deliver them to the nawab in order to allow a decent interval after the despatch of Sa'adat's letter of 22 November lest it should appear that he and the governor-general had threshed out the whole matter between themselves even before Sa'adat had communicated his intentions to Calcutta. He utilized the interval in consulting with Craig, drawing up a memoir as to the steps to be taken if Sa'adat abdicated unconditionally,¹²⁹ and posting troops at places where risings could possibly break out in consequence.¹³⁰

On the morning of 15 December the draft treaty was presented to Sa'adat, which he kept without saying much.¹³¹ Scott thought that he wished to retain the hereditary title of "Nawab of Oudh", but to this both he and the governor-general were opposed, because it might retard the full establishment of the Company's sovereignty in Oudh and prove to be a source of dangerous pretension later on of some ambitious descendant of Sa'adat.¹³² After the conference in the morning was over, the nawab showed signs of great perturbation and was reported to be drinking heavily. On the morning of the 19th he called on the Resident and said that he had referred to "certain causes" in his letter and had expected that the governor-general would inquire what they were, instead of which the governor-general had sent the draft treaty. This, he said, had caused him great disappointment, and that the terms of the

128 No. 96.

129 No. 97.

130 Scott to Kirkpatrick 10 Dec.; Craig to Scott 9 Dec.

131 Scott to Mornington 15 Dec.

132 Scott to Mornington 16 Dec.

draft treaty were such as were entirely repugnant to his feelings because they "departed so rudely in a most essential point from the principle on which he wished to relinquish the government and would, were he to accept it, bring upon him such indelible disgrace and odium that he could not voluntarily subscribe to it."¹³³ He added that since Mornington had rejected his terms on which only he was prepared to abdicate, he now withdrew his offer. He was probably glad to find an excuse to withdraw. Scott thereupon said that in that case he would immediately have to set about the military reform. Sa'adat at first protested saying that the proposed measures would annihilate his own authority—the idea, Scott thought, he may have had in mind when he wrote about the "certain causes." He remained unconvinced, with apparent reason, that the substitution of the Company's forces for his own would strengthen rather than annihilate his authority by "putting at his command a force that would be a check on the amils."¹³⁴ He also feared that the British troops might interfere in the collections, though Scott did his best to assure him that they would not. Ultimately, however, he consented to what increase of the Company's forces the governor-general proposed and to the dismissal of such of his own battalions as could be spared.

Although not instructed to do so, Scott presented a memorial to the nawab on the 23rd¹³⁵ stating in strong and concise language the governor-general's disappointment at Sa'adat's rejection of the treaty. He then demanded his confidence and asked what those "certain causes" were.¹³⁶ They turned out to be the disobedient conduct of amils such as Almas. There ensued then a long but inconclusive discussion as to how far the Resident had been really diligent in suggesting ways and means of controlling the amils, and how far the nawab had followed his suggestions. On the whole it appeared that Sa'adat had definitely given up the

133 Scott to Mornington 19 Dec.

134 Scott to Mornington 22 Dec.

135 No. 105.

136 Scott to Mornington 25 Dec.

idea of abdicating, so Scott ended the discussion by delivering to him Mornington's letter of 5 November.

In the meantime Mornington had received the nawab's rejection of the treaty and the withdrawal of the offer to abdicate. He expressed great disgust at the "duplicity" of Sa'adat,¹³⁷ a remark which perhaps arose more out of his disappointment, because, as the events above summarized show, the nawab cannot really be accused of any duplicity. Mornington gave up the hope of the transfer of Oudh to the Company and ordered the first instalment of the increased forces to march towards Oudh. He approved of Scott's memorial to Sa'adat of 23 December and required the nawab immediately to provide funds for the expense of the extra troops.¹³⁸

Sa'adat was at this time reported to be drinking more than usual; his actions indicated an agitated state of mind and he seemed at times even unable to articulate properly.¹³⁹ Scott scarcely saw him until he called on 4 January and said that he wished to make a proposal within two or three days.¹⁴⁰ He had suggested that the Company's forces should be concentrated at one place, but Scott thought they should be dispersed all over the country, especially at Azamgarh, Manikpur, Gorakhpur, Bahraich, Khairabad and Bareilly, in view of possible disturbances following the disbandment of the nawabi forces. On the 6th morning the nawab was told that the extra troops were ready to enter Oudh.¹⁴¹ He said that he had not yet formally given his consent to the increase, and requested that they should wait a few days until his proposals were submitted to Calcutta. Scott explained that according to the governor-general's interpretation of the treaty of 1798, his consent was not necessary, that the only point open to discussion was the means to be adopted for disbanding his own army. Mornington had ordered in the strongest possible terms

137 Kirkpatrick to Scott 27 Dec.

138 *B.M. Add. Mss.* 13,526 f. 51-3 Kirkpatrick to Scott 2 June 1800.

139 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 Scott to Kirkpatrick 3 Jan.

140 Scott to Craig 4 Jan.

141 Scott to Mornington 6 Jan

that not a single day's delay in posting the extra troops in Oudh was to be made, whether the nawab liked it or not.¹⁴²

On the 8th the nawab sent to Scott a draft of his proposals, he himself going out of Lucknow for two days. This letter¹⁴³ states very concisely the nawab's case. He frankly admits his complete dependence on the British. He then states his objections to the replacement of his own army by British troops. A good portion of his troops were faithful, he said, but were victims of a bad system; it would be unfair to deprive them of their subsistence owing to the misconduct of others. They would be certain to seek service elsewhere and spread the nawab's infamy. The few that would remain in the nawab's service would never feel secure thinking that their turn would come next; in such circumstances maintaining discipline would be impossible. Moreover, the spreading of the Company's troops all over Oudh would create an impression in the minds of all people that the English, who had tolerated a much worse state of affairs under Asafuddaula, did not trust Sa'adat and had therefore posted their troops all over the country. This feeling at home and abroad would completely annihilate his authority and his commands, however trifling, would be disobeyed with impunity. It was not possible to go through the lengthy formalities of calling on the Company's troops for every trivial matter, and thus the collections would probably be seriously dislocated. With the Company's co-operation he felt fully capable of reforming both his civil and military establishments and carrying out his financial obligations. He then points out that Asafuddaula had engaged to pay for the British troops maintained in Oudh a sum of Rs. 50 lakh a year, which had been increased early in 1797 to 56 lakh and by the treaty of 1798 to 76 lakh, without any corresponding increase in the subsidiary force. These increases had been made in order to enable the Company to keep in readiness a larger army in view of the common danger to

142 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,526 f. 50 Kirkpatrick to Scott 11 Jan. 1800.

143 *B.S.C.*, 12 June 1800 No. 120.

themselves and Oudh from a possible invasion by Zaman Shah. This was the permanent increase to which he had agreed; Article 7 of the treaty of 1798 provided for temporary increases in emergencies, which in his opinion had not arisen at the time of the negotiation. He then refers to Article 17 of that treaty which left the nawab "full authority over his household affairs, hereditary dominions, his troops and his subjects." He concludes with a request to the governor-general to abide by the terms of the treaty and to instruct the Resident to co-operate with him for a genuine reform of his army, to render them active, efficient and obedient.

While waiting for the nawab's order to forward this letter to Calcutta, Scott on the 9th presented Sa'adat with a memorial¹⁴⁴ in which he repeated that it was the Company's government alone that could determine the necessity of increasing the forces, and that the dismissal of the nawabi forces had been suggested only as a measure of economy, which the nawab might accept or reject according to his will; that for the last five months he (Scott) had been trying to get a detailed statement of the nawabi forces for the sake of reforming them, but the nawab had not supplied him with it. By "reforming" Scott obviously meant "disbanding", for that was the instruction given him when he had taken up office. He added that the nawab's procrastination had led the governor-general to adopt the only alternative, who had for that purpose already raised extra troops and had decided that to listen to the nawab's objections would not be conducive to the welfare of Oudh; hence the march of the extra troops had been ordered and could not now be stopped.

On the 11th morning Sa'adat called on Scott and told him that since the march of the troops had already been decided on there was no longer any occasion to consult him. As to their expenses, Scott informed him that the first instalment would cost him about $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakh per month,¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ No. 118.

¹⁴⁵ One regiment of native cavalry (per month) Rs. 29,372-15-6 and five battalions of infantry (@ per month Rs. 24,326-9-3) Rs. 1,21,632-14-3 —total per month Rs. 1,51,005-13-9.

but that the full complement would cost 58 lakh a year. Sa'adat said that it was against his principle to promise anything until he was sure he could keep it, so that he could not promise more than four lakh per month until his own troops were actually disbanded. He then struck out of his draft of proposals the usual heading and conclusion, and asked it to be forwarded to the governor-general. Mornington received it on the 19th but refused to accept it in reply to his letter of 5 November and paper of 16 December on the ground that it was not properly addressed,¹⁴⁶ and demanded a formal reply from the nawab stating clearly his reasons for not accepting the governor-general's proposals. Sa'adat readily apologised and wrote a proper letter.¹⁴⁷ In the meantime, on 12 January, he had written a letter to the Resident, very bitter and sarcastic,¹⁴⁸ in which he said that he had never approved of the proposed measures and it was useless asking him over and over again to say that he had; that he had ultimately acquiesced solely to please the governor-general, but that he still would like to propose certain conditions. They were:

(i) Since the increase was to provide against Zaman Shah or someone else's invasion, the extra troops should be posted at places from where they could easily get to the frontier, and while not required on the frontier, they should remain at the headquarters. If the amils required their help, they should apply through the nawab. They must not have any direct communication with the British commandants nor should the latter give protection to any zamindar or amil.

(ii) The British commandants should not interfere in the revenue settlement of the country.

(iii) Scott should arrange for the speedy dismissal of the nawabi forces, "letting it to be contrived so as to include provision for the payment of the sihbändies, as well as the present increase of the Company's forces; letting it provide for the old subsidy, for the troops of the huzur, and in conformity to Lord Mornington's letter, after satisfying the aforesaid demands, let there be a saving."

(iv) The increased subsidy and the payment of the arrears to the troops to be dismissed would render the nawab unable to pay the 17 lakh demanded by the governor-general on account of the extraordinary military expenses on account of Zaman Shah's late proposed invasion and Wazir Ali's rebellion.

(v) Persons banished from Oudh should not be given countenance by the Company.

146 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,526 f. 57-61 Secy. to Resident 19 Jan. 1800.

147 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 Nos. 80 and 81.

148 No. 122.

(vi) Troops retained by the nawab for the purposes of state must be adequate to his rank.

(vii) There was likely to be some irregularity in the collections due to the amils being deprived of the services of the mutayyana; hence the Company should put up with occasional delays in receiving the subsidy.

(viii) The governor-general and the Resident should help the nawab in effecting retrenchments, and quell any troubles arising out of them.

It must be understood, he continued, that he consented only to please the governor-general, and that he should not be troubled with similar proposals again. He concludes by asking for specific answers to each point, and "not blending the whole together and answer them by asking for an increase of the troops or importuning [him] into compliance." To this Scott replied¹⁴⁹ accepting that the nawab had never definitely consented to the proposed military changes, but objecting to his saying that he now consented only to please the governor-general. That suggested that he was not convinced of their necessity, whereas the governor-general had wanted to impress upon him their utter and immediate necessity. The nawab should either accept it or absolve the Company of their obligation to defend Oudh. He then gives his answers to the nawab's points:

(i) The nawab might provide for such of his dismissed soldiers as he thought deserving; the British forces should be spread over the country in order to preserve the internal tranquillity by "their presence but not interference"; complete guarantee would be given against the British officers interfering in local affairs.

(ii) Answered in (i).

(iii) Scott promised complete co-operation, provided that he was given every information and facility he asked for. This article embraced the general financial system, and he was prepared to assist in founding a good one; mere retrenchment was not enough, the resources must also be improved.

(iv) On this point Scott says only generally that no embarrassment would be caused to the nawab while heavy demands were being made upon his treasury in paying off the arrears of his troops.

(v) Should not give rise to any difficulty.

(vi) Scott probably deliberately misunderstands this article and remarks, "they will not exceed what may be sufficient for that purpose."

(vii) On this point Scott is very firm, saying that the Company's troops were used to regular payment which was one of the means of ensuring their loyalty. Therefore the subsidy must be paid with absolute punctuality.

- 1 (viii) Scott repeats that proper retrenchments must be made, but that resources must also be developed; does not promise any specific help in effecting the unpopular retrenchments.

As to troubling the nawab with fresh demands, he says that whatever had been done had been done solely for the benefit of Oudh itself, and that that consideration would guide the Company's policy in the future also.

The nawab's revised letter and the report of the above correspondence between him and the Resident reached Mornington with several complaints from Scott as to how the nawab hindered the military arrangements by not issuing orders for the provision of grain, etc., for the extra troops, and by not giving him the detailed account of his own.¹⁵⁰ Scott was instructed¹⁵¹ to give an ultimatum to the nawab that unless he complied with what he was asked to do within an hour of receiving the ultimatum, friendly relations between the Company and Oudh would be considered to be at an end. Mornington also wrote a strong letter to Sa'adat¹⁵² charging him with having contradicted himself and having generally followed a policy of obstruction towards his benefactors.

The nawab made a final unsuccessful effort to stay the execution of the governor-general's proposals by repeating to him what he had written to the Resident on 12 January.¹⁵³ Having failed, he ultimately accepted the inevitable, though not very graciously,¹⁵⁴ and was reported to indulge in "more than ordinary excess of drinking."¹⁵⁵ The military reforms went on, and on 18 March 1800 Scott was able to inform Mornington that the nawab adopted without delay every proposition made to him relative to the reduction of his own troops and paid up as soon as demanded the expenses of the additional subsidiary troops.¹⁵⁶ Scott went on steadily with the work of disbanding the nawabi army;¹⁵⁷ the amils in charge of the

150 Scott to Mornington 20, 28 and 31 Jan. 1800.

151 *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,526 f. 62-74 Secy. to Resident 9 Feb. 1800.

152 *Martin II* 208-19.

153 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 NW to Mornington recd. 19 Feb.

154 Scott to Mornington 10 Feb.; to Kirkpatrick 12 and 18 Feb.

155 Scott to Mornington 18 Feb. 1800.

156 No. 138.

157 Scott's letters to GG. Nos. 132-144.

mutayyana were duly notified, the dues of the soldiers and officers scrupulously calculated and paid, and the corps were disbanded. By the end of November 1800 the total reduction amounted to 1,271 horsemen (out of a total of 10,859) and 23 battalions of sepoys (out of a total of 33 battalions), effecting an annual saving of 16,56,540 (out of a total of 61,41,138) rakavi rupees, which were less in value than the current rupees. Scott expected to be able to dismiss very soon more infantry, cavalry and artillery costing Rs. 14,20,477, thus bringing the annual saving to Rs. 30,77,017.¹⁵⁸ As against that, the increase of the British troops by November amounted to three regiments of cavalry, seven battalions of infantry and part of a battalion of artillery,¹⁵⁹ the annual expenses of the first two alone being over 31 lakh. The additional troops were gradually introduced, and the total additional subsidy paid by the nawab during February-December 1800 was Sicca Rs. 24,74,730-9-9.¹⁶⁰ But later on more money was demanded and paid.

Wellesley was evidently actuated in his policy by his belief that the security of the Company's interests depended on a well-defended Oudh. He wished to see the British the paramount power in India,¹⁶¹ and to him the French appeared to be the most serious rivals. Having got rid of Tipu, possibly the most dangerous of the probable allies of the French, he next thought of the Mahrattas before whom Oudh, one of the best recruiting grounds for soldiers and possessed of great agricultural wealth, lay open. Nor could the Company dispense with the subsidy from Oudh which in the words of the governor-general formed a considerable part of its revenues. The Company was by treaties bound to defend Oudh, but the measures proposed by Wellesley were more than adequate for mere defence, in

158 *B.S.C.* 29 Jan. 1801 Scott's report 5 Dec. 1800.

159 Secy's letter of 5 Nov. 1800.

160 NW's accts. in *B.P.C.* March 1800-March 1801.

161 See his private letter to Fred. North, Governor of Ceylon, dated 20 Jan. 1800: "The news of our Eastern triumph [over Tipu] reached England on 13 September. The sensation far exceeded my expectation ... All is glorious in Europe, and if we live two or three years, we shall see Great Britain arbitress of the world." *B.M. Addl. Mss.* 13,473 f. 20.

fact enough for a decisive engagement with any power. In any case, Oudh could not be permitted to remain weak, and Wellesley thought that under Sa'adat Ali it was bound to remain so. He could not afford to experiment, and therefore offered to Sa'adat the two possible alternatives, either to accept his proposals or to absolve the Company of its obligations. He was probably certain in his mind that Sa'adat would not choose the second alternative; it is difficult to say what his decision would have been had the nawab chosen it. On the other hand, it appears from the correspondence summarized above, that Sa'adat was not guilty of double dealing or hostility towards the English, of which Wellesley accused him. He had made an honest start towards civil and, as Scott also admitted,¹⁶² military reforms. The danger of Afghan invasion, represented to him as serious and imminent, appeared to him, as it actually was, less real. The difficulties he had predicted in effecting the proposed military change in Oudh were found to be true.¹⁶³ Given every facility it took Scott well over a year to effect it, and its cost to the sarkar was considerable, while the subsidy shot up. In the face of many handicaps Sa'adat Ali had, in the first few months of his nawabi, done much, and probably would have done more but for the panic of Zaman Shah's invasion. In spite of all his difficulties he had punctually paid the Company's subsidy, a thing which had been unknown for a long time. That panic over, he had hoped for another chance and had expected some indulgence from the governor-general, but in these he was disappointed. He can scarcely be blamed if in these circumstances he sometimes acted impulsively, sometimes vacillated, or took to drinking heavily.

The tug-o'-war between Sa'adat Ali and Wellesley was not yet over. The governor-general's first choice would have been the complete transfer of Oudh to the Company; his second choice was the possession of Rohilkhand and the Doab,¹⁶⁴ which would serve two purposes. In the first place, it would make the subsidy secure,

162 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 Scott to Mornington 10 Feb.

163 Scott to Mornington 18 March, 19 April, 2 June.

164 *Martin I* 387 Mornington to Lumsden 23 Dec. 1798.

and in the second, it would give the Company a better frontier in view of their possible struggle with the Mahrattas. What was actually secured in 1800 was the third best. Soon, however, Sa'adat himself gave Wellesley the chance of renewing his efforts to obtain the complete control of Oudh, which ended in the treaty of 10 November 1801 by which Wellesley's second choice was secured.

On 29 Jamadi the nawab wrote a letter to the Resident, in which he is said to have declared his probable failure to provide for the additional troops posted in Oudh during 1800.¹⁶⁵ Sa'adat later explained¹⁶⁶ that what he had meant was that the governor-general had during the late negotiations repeatedly suggested that the savings from the dismissal of the nawabi forces would more than make up for the additional subsidy, but in fact while the subsidy increased, the dismissals failed to keep pace with it; therefore he had desired the Resident to find from the source suggested by the governor-general the means to pay for the additional troops. It is more than probable that Sa'adat's letter was meant to convey his feeling of angry disappointment. It has been seen that it was to no easy task to which he had succeeded on his accession. In order to meet his obligations he had denied himself any share in the public revenues and had proceeded to cut down the salaries and pensions of many useless men of rank, *e.g.* Hasan Raza Khan, a thing which had been several times suggested to Asafuddaula. He had also stopped recruiting new soldiers or officers to posts falling vacant in the army¹⁶⁷ in order gradually to curtail his military establishment. These measures of retrenchment vitally affected many noblemen and commoners, who had seen better days under Asafuddaula, and with them Sa'adat became very unpopular. The only people he had sought to please were the Company's government, to whom he owed his accession, but the late transaction had shown that they had no special kindness for him. Six months after his accession he had been faced with a

165 Martin II 422 Wellesley to Scott 22 Jan. 1801. I have not been able to trace the nawab's letter referred to.

166 Martin II 474-5,

167 *B.S.C.* 12 June 1800 Scott to Mornington 10 Feb.

deficit of Rs. 62,38,127-12-11;¹⁶⁸ during 1798 he paid the Company Rs. 77,89,354-12-3¹⁶⁹ besides over 12 lakh immediately on his accession. In the course of 1799 and 1800 he paid them Rs. 80,12,498-8 and Rs. 1,00,97,667-8-7, respectively,¹⁷⁰ for forces for which he saw no necessity. Added to these were the current expenses of the mutayyana in which Scott had succeeded by November 1800 in effecting a saving of only 15 lakh, which was very much reduced by the payment of the arrears of the dismissed troops. Then there were the salaries and pensions, many of which he had dared not reduce for fear of opposition, and the expenses of the remnants of Asafuddaula's various establishments, e.g. his menagerie, etc., which could be reduced only gradually. The gross revenue in 1797-98 had been Rs. 2,37,52,283-11; this amount could not have increased much as Zaman Shah's scare and the nawab's controversy with the governor-general which followed had not left Sa'adat much time to devote to the regular affairs of the state. He had had to borrow from Almas several times and the native creditors of Asafuddaula remained still unpaid. As has been said, Sa'adat was probably fond of money, but he certainly was also hard pressed for it during the first three years after his accession. In spite of all these difficulties he had paid the Company's subsidy with a punctuality unknown before. When he received no concession from the governor-general, nor always the due deference from the Resident,¹⁷¹ it is not surprising that he was left in a bitter mood and wrote to the Resident with a feeling of injured triumph that after all the governor-general had been wrong and what he himself had predicted had come true.

Whatever Sa'adat may have written, the Resident and the governor-general interpreted it as his declaration

168 B.P.C. 6 Aug. 1798 NW's account for 1797-8.

169 B.P.C. Apr. 1798-Jan. 1799 NW's accounts.

170 B.P.C. Feb. 1799-Jan. 1801 NW's accounts.

171 The following incident is related by Kamaluddin. During the negotiation of the treaty of 1801, Sa'adat sent his agent, Maulavi Sadan to Scott to discuss certain matters. Scott became impatient, took the bayonet off his rifle, placed it before the Maulavi and asked him to get an answer from Sa'adat to that. Sadan quietly replied that it had been answered in 1764 on the field of Buxar. *Tawarikh-i-Awadh* 157.

of the probability of his failure to pay the increased subsidy. Wellesley immediately decided to try once more to secure Sa'adat's abdication in favour of the Company, or failing that to secure Rohilkhand and the Doab, preferably with Azamgarh and Gorakhpur thrown in. Accordingly he wrote to Scott¹⁷² instructing him to present the nawab with these alternatives. He also wrote to Sa'adat direct¹⁷³ that the probability of his failure had arisen entirely out of his own negligence, and that only British rule could make Oudh solvent again; that, therefore, he should, for the sake of his own peace of mind and for the welfare of his country, transfer Oudh to the Company. If this was not acceptable to him, he must immediately cede sufficient territory to ensure the realisation of the total subsidy from their revenue after deducting the charges of collection and administration. With the letter to the Resident was enclosed a draft treaty for the cession of Oudh.¹⁷⁴ Then followed another long discussion¹⁷⁵ in which Wellesley tried to make his first alternative as attractive and the second as repulsive to Sa'adat as possible. In the case of the nawab's accepting the second alternative, he was required to pay up immediately all arrears. The arrears at that time amounted to one month's subsidy (about 10 lakh) and the extraordinary military expenses in connection with Zaman Shah's invasion and Wazir Ali's rebellion. The latter amount had originally been stated as just over 17 lakh, but was at this time increased to Rs. 38,13,590 on the ground that although most of the extra troops had in October 1799 marched back into the Company's territories yet some of them continued to stay in Oudh, and the rest had been ever since maintained for the sake of Oudh, therefore their expenses from November 1799 to 31 March

172 22 Jan. 1801 Martin II 422-9.

173 Martin II 429-36.

174 *B.S.C.* 24 June 1802. No. 4.

175 The correspondence relating to this part of the transaction are entered in the Proceedings of the Bengal Govt. in the Secret Deptt. of 24 June 1802, under the introduction that it was a negotiation "for the conclusion of a treaty . . . on principles calculated for the security of the British interests in Oudh."

1801 amounting to Rs. 11,09,369 should 'be borne by the Oudh sarkar.¹⁷⁶ The nawab was further required to pay a share of the expenses of the two missions to Persia as their purpose had been to divert Zaman Shah from invading Oudh. In case he elected to abdicate, he was promised concessions on all these items, as well as permission to carry away what treasure he had accumulated.

Sa'adat gave an unqualified refusal to the first proposal. The second he tried to avert by representing over and over again that he had paid the subsidy regularly, and, though disputing the justness of the 38 lakh arrears and the part cost of the Persian missions, he offered to pledge his private means to pay them also. But Wellesley argued that Sa'adat had declared his probable failure to pay the subsidy, and that the Company could not take the risk of waiting till he actually failed to demand the territorial security to which they were entitled by Article II of the treaty of 1798. He refused to accept any other security than the districts he had named. Ultimately the nawab declared that he had neither the inclination nor the power to resist Wellesley's demands, but he could never voluntarily consent to these proposals; that all his land and money were at the governor-general's disposal, who could take them if he liked, he himself could only passively obey.¹⁷⁷

In July 1801 the governor-general appointed his brother Henry Wellesley to reinforce Scott, expecting that the new agent's close relationship with himself would impress the nawab more. On 15 July the nawab gave his consent to the territorial cession, but on certain conditions.¹⁷⁸ Henry Wellesley arrived at Lucknow early in September and opened negotiations with the nawab on the 6th. He tried once again to induce Sa'adat to abdicate, either in favour of the Company or of his eldest son, but the nawab absolutely refused. Sa'adat put forward his case once more to Henry Wellesley,¹⁷⁹ but was met with a firm refusal from the latter to accept anything less than the immediate

176 *B.S.C.* 30 Apr. 1801 Scott to NW 13 April.

177 *B.S.C.* 24 June 1802 Scott to Wellesley 8 June 1801.

178 Scott to GG July 1801.

179 NW to H. Wellesley 15 Sep. 1801.

territorial cession proposed. On 19 September Sa'adat delivered his formal acceptance.¹⁸⁰ It took some time to adjust the total demands of the Company and the revenue of the districts to be ceded, and on 10 November the final treaty was despatched to the governor-general for ratification.

By this treaty¹⁸¹ Sa'adat ceded to the company in perpetual sovereignty territories yielding at that time a gross revenue of Rs. 1,35,23,474-8-3, in commutation of the subsidy, expenses of the additional troops and the Royal and the Ferrukhabad pensions. The nawab engaged to dismiss all his troops in his pay, except four battalions of infantry, one battalion of najibs, 2,000 horsemen and golundazes not exceeding 300, besides such armed peons as might be deemed necessary for the purposes of collections, and a few horsemen and najibs to attend the persons of the amils. He also engaged to establish good government in his reserved dominions, and to consult with the Company's government for that purpose. The terms of the treaty were to come into force with retrospective effect from the first day of 1209 F. (22 September 1801).

Both Wellesley and Sa'adat Ali have been severely criticised for their respective actions. If Wellesley could have publicly proclaimed at the very beginning what he privately believed, and what in fact was the case, that Oudh had long ago ceased to be an independent state and was only a province of the Company's empire in India, the nawab being no more than a governor with some special privileges, this long controversy might have been avoided. His view is well expressed in his Secretary's letter of 10 September 1801 to Henry Wellesley and Scott:¹⁸²

The right of the Company to secure the British interests in the province of Oudh must be considered as the fundamental principle of every arrangement. It is the bond of connection between the dominions of the Company and those of his Excellency, and exists independently of his Excellency's will. The inference to be drawn from this undeniable position is, that the British government would be justified in pursuing the measures necessary for the security of those interests, not only without his Excellency's consent, but even in opposition to his endeavours to counteract them.

180 H. Wellesley and Scott to GG 25 Sep. 1801.

181 Aitchison LV.

182 *B.M. Add. Mss.* 13,526 f. 81-89.

It goes on to say that in case the nawab refused to accept the Company's proposals, the only course left was either to cut off all connections with him or to coerce him into accepting those proposals. But situated as the Company was, it could not in its own interest sever connections with Oudh. Therefore the only alternative left to the Company was to maintain that connection in such a way as would "render it an effectual barrier against the enemy."

But Wellesley could not entirely disregard public opinion, particularly in England, and he had to take for granted the theoretical status of the nawab and the terms of the existing treaties. He had, therefore, to fall back upon the pressing necessity for Oudh, the moral obligation of the Company, the political expediency for both, and the rights vested in the Company by the spirit if not the letter of the existing treaties as justifications for his policy. He failed to convince Sa'adat Ali, a shrewd man scarcely willing to make great sacrifices for his ally by whom he with justice thought that he had been shabbily treated. The nawab desperately clung to his theoretical rights and the letter of the treaties and tried his utmost to save what he could for himself. His subsequent rule of 13 years over his reserved dominions justifies his claim that given a fair chance he could have improved the government of his country. Mir Ghulam Ali and Kamaluddin¹⁸³ pay high tribute to his hard work, impartial justice and the maintenance of law and order. His rule has been criticised as having been oppressive, and in evidence of that it is said that in spite of his diminished income he was known to have left about 14 crores of rupees when he died. But this may have been due to economy rather than oppression, for the revenues of his reserved dominions never exceeded Rs. 115 lakh,¹⁸⁴ about as much as the same areas had produced at the time of his accession. On the other hand, his military expenses had been reduced to insignificance and though he established three courts of justice at Lucknow¹⁸⁵ the expenses of general administration did not increase

183 *Tawarikh-i-Awadh* I 185-7.

184 *ibid* 181-2.

185 *Imad-us-Sa'adat* 173.

much, he having concentrated all work in his own hands. Kamaluddin says that he let the land as far as possible under the amani system (*i.e.* land held by the amil on behalf of the sarkar) though some districts were given on ijara (contract). Elliot says¹⁸⁶ that the ijara system became more prevalent under Sa'adat than before, but the amils could not oppress the ryot under his vigilant eyes. Kamaluddin describes¹⁸⁷ his routine of daily conference with his agents from the provinces, and meetings twice a week with the Resident, occasional personal inspection of the ganj and the rates of market prices. He did not allow much authority to his officers and the common people had easy access to him. No amil was given districts worth more than four or five lakh of rupees lest they should grow too powerful and independent. At the time of settlement the amils were required to execute a bond to keep the country in a good state of cultivation and the revenues undiminished. If after a period it was found that without sufficient cause the country had deteriorated the amil was put in prison. The amils used to be attended by some najibs and sihbandy, but had no power of appointment or dismissal. They could not employ them against anyone without first explaining the case to the nawab and getting his permission. Sa'adat had a large number of agents or spies who constantly reported to him the happenings in the provinces. This seems to have been the principle system of inspection.

The system was defective and it is more than probable that it did not always work satisfactorily. The amils, compelled to pay up the jama fully and regularly, must have tried to make good by screwing the ryot whenever they got a chance. But it seems that while Sa'adat Ali was alive, they did not get many chances. Undoubtedly the old abuses cropped up again in the nawabi of his son and successor Ghaziuddin Haidar (1814-27) who was half-witted and whom perhaps Sa'adat wished to disinherit in favour of his second son, Muhammad Ali, who was a man of capacity. Muhammad Ali, during his nawabi (1837-42)

186 *Chronicles of Oonao* 127.

187 *Tawarikh-i-Awadh* I 183-7.

revived the state somewhat, only to let it relapse to its former condition under his son Amjad Ali Shah. The malgovernment of Oudh after Sa'adat arose more out of the inherent defects of a system of hereditary despotism rather than from the personal defects of Sa'adat Ali himself.

APPENDIX A

*The sarkar's accounts for 1204 F. rendered by Tafazzul Hus-
sain Khan:*

| | Rs. | as. | p. |
|--|-------------|-----|----|
| 1. Mutayyana and their contingent charges for which deductions were granted to the amils | 63,25,028 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. The nawab's private expenses | 71,41,732 | 8 | 0 |
| 3. Pensions and wages | 39,97,600 | 15 | 6 |
| 4. Company's subsidy | 50,79,175 | 1 | 7 |
| 5. Miscellaneous, details not given | 11,39,359 | 0 | 0 |
| Total for the current year | 2,36,82,895 | 10 | 4 |
| The balance of the arrears outstanding for 1203 F. was | 36,60,872 | 14 | 10 |
| Total charge upon the revenue for 1204 F. amounted to | 2,73,43,767 | 14 | 2 |
| Deduct amount gained in certain conversions in currency | 3,76,990 | 5 | 6 |
| Net charge upon the revenue for 1204 F. | 2,69,66,777 | 8 | 8 |

APPENDIX B

The following sums were paid to the nawab and are not accounted for:

| | Rs. | as. | p. |
|--|-----------|-----|----|
| Regular instalments paid to the nawab at the rate of 1½ lakh per month | 18,00,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Paid through Tahsin Ali Khan | 3,36,341 | 0 | 0 |
| " Bhawani Mahra | 27,720 | 0 | 0 |
| to the nawab, rent of a village under attachment | 3,000 | 0 | 0 |
| to the nawab a/c purchase of fruit, etc. | 1,60,000 | 0 | 0 |
| " " " " purchase of carriages | 10,000 | 0 | 0 |
| " " " " purchase sundries | 2,06,089 | 7 | 3 |
| " " " " buildings | 1,00,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Total paid to the nawab | 26,43,150 | 7 | 3 |

The following sums were paid by the nawab's order from the public treasury:

| | | | |
|---|-----------|----|---|
| (a) Khasa and Doab, or the expenses of the animals in the nawab's menagerie | 28,09,652 | 12 | 9 |
| (b) Toshakhana or wardrobe | 3,00,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (c) Ice houses | 12,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (d) Korekhana or armoury | 13,887 | 0 | 0 |
| (e) Tazia-khana | 6,376 | 15 | 9 |
| (f) Quran-khwan or expenses at the tombs of the nawab's father, grandmother, etc. | 25,921 | 0 | 0 |
| (g) H.E.'s gardens | 1,12,337 | 6 | 9 |
| Carried over | 32,80,175 | 3 | 3 |

| | | Rs. | as. | p. |
|-----|--|------------------|-----------|----------|
| | Brought forward .. | 32,80,175 | 3 | 3 |
| (h) | Kheddah or catching elephants .. | 24,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (i) | His Excellency's rurnnah (park) at Baiswara .. | 1,200 | 0 | 0 |
| (j) | Shagird pesha or H.E.'s household servants .. | 4,30,432 | 10 | 0 |
| (k) | Palki, howdah, etc. .. | 24,492 | 14 | 6 |
| (l) | Dak charges .. | 79,576 | 7 | 0 |
| (m) | Zururiat, including hire of coolies, etc. .. | 4,39,196 | 13 | 0 |
| (n) | Constructing bridge of boats over the Gogra .. | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (o) | Repairs in the fort of Allahabad .. | 80,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (p) | ▲/c females in the zenana .. | 1,37,508 | 0 | 0 |
| | TOTAL .. | 44,98,581 | 15 | 9 |

About 45 lakh over and above the 26½ lakh (approx.) paid directly to the nawab. All these items generally, and items (a), (g), (j), (k) and (m) particularly seem to be extremely wasteful, especially when the budget showed a deficit of nearly 32 lakh.

APPENDIX C

List of allowances from the Nawab of Oudh to the servants of the Company, civil and military, employed in his dominions, from the Proceedings in the Secret Inspection Department, 3 May 1785:

| | Rs. | as. | p. |
|--|--------|-----|----|
| 1. Maj. Palmer, agent to the governor-general at the durbar upon an average per month .. | 19,900 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Mr. Wheler, asstt. to the paymaster and accountant .. | 5,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Commanding officers at Cawnpore and Fathgarh in lieu of bazar-customs .. | 16,666 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Lt.-Col. Martine, keeper of the arsenal .. | 3,730 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Mr. Blaine, surgeon to the nawab and to the civil establishment .. | 5,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Mr. Bruce, surgeon to the military establishment .. | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Mr. Scawen, auditor-general .. | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Mr. Gall, asstt. to above .. | 1,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. Maj. Browne, on deputation to the Emperor .. | 3,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 10. Mr. Bird, secretary to above .. | 1,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. Lt. Anderson, on deputation to Sindhia .. | 3,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 12. Commanding officer of regiment at Lucknow .. | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 13. Capt. Frith, commanding 4 battalions of sepoys, in lieu of all charges, etc. .. | 5,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 14. Mr. Gregory, asstt. in the civil establishment .. | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Carried over .. | 71,296 | 0 | 0 |

| | Rs. | as. | p. |
|--|--------|-----|----|
| Brought forward .. | 71,296 | 0 | 0 |
| 15. Messrs. Grant and Johnstone, assistants, each Rs. 2,000 .. | 4,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 16. Mr. Taylor, dak-master, salary and dak expenses .. | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 17. Mr. Orr, employed by Mr. Wombwell .. | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 18. Capt. John Mordaunt .. | 8,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 19. Mr. Willes, resident at Farrukhabad, on an average .. | 5,250 | 0 | 0 |
| 20. Mr. Wombwell, paymaster and accountant received $1\frac{1}{4}\%$ commission on the total receipts. | | | |
| TOTAL .. | 92,546 | 0 | 0 |

APPENDIX D

Posts retained and the new scale of salaries allowed to the Company's servants in Oudh, by the resolution of 3 May 1785 :

| | Rs. | | |
|---|-------|------------|---|
| 1. The Resident .. | 2,988 | per month. | |
| 2. Mr. Wheler, asstt. to above and accountant .. | 512 | " | " |
| 3. Lt.-Col. Martine, pay and double full batta .. | 1,488 | " | " |
| 4. Mr. Blaine, surgeon .. | 684 | " | " |
| 5. Mr. Bruce .. | 684 | " | " |
| 6. The commanding officer of the regiment at Lucknow .. | 1,536 | " | " |
| 7. Mr. Taylor, as before .. | 2,000 | " | " |
| TOTAL .. | 9,892 | " | " |

For further reductions in 1786-7 see Appendix I.

APPENDIX E

The sarkar engaged to pay the Company during 1193 F. 1785-6) :

| | Rs. | as. | p. |
|--|-----------|-----|----|
| Current : | | | |
| (a) Cawnpore brigade for 12 months .. | 31,20,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (b) Regiment at Lucknow .. | 3,00,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (c) Fathgarh brigade .. | 17,40,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (d) Sa'adat Ali's stipend .. | 2,00,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (e) Rohilla stipend .. | 61,578 | 0 | 0 |
| Arrears : | | | |
| (f) Fathgarh brigade 1 Jan.-31 Aug. 1785 .. | 11,60,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (g) Fraser's bonds and interest .. | 1,70,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (h) To Majs. Lumsdaine and Gilpin, Capts. Dennis and Macleod, Lt. Shipton, etc. .. | 1,29,456 | 0 | 0 |
| (i) Interest due to the shroffs .. | 4,00,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (j) Abdul Rahman Khan for the Kandahar cavalry .. | 76,000 | 0 | 0 |
| (k) Batta to a shroff on the balance due to him .. | 71,910 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL .. | 74,28,944 | 0 | 0 |

Items (g), (i) and (k) need explanation. As to the first, James Fraser, a private trader, had applied to the Calcutta government in December 1780, to procure the payment of a debt due to him from the sarkar which had been acknowledged by the nawab, on account of elephants and army clothing supplied by Fraser. In order to induce the Company's government to support his claim, he offered them this sum in liquidation of a debt due from him to the Company, for which a suit had been filed against him. On his offer being made this suit was suspended, and the Board ordered the Resident at Lucknow to recover this sum from the sarkar as well as another sum due on a bond of the nawab to one Mr. Pison, which also Fraser assigned to the Company. These two bonds totalled Rs. 1,89,305. A letter from Major Palmer says that while Hastings was at Chunar in November 1781, he accepted these bonds from Fraser, and gave him the Company's bonds in exchange of the value of Rs. 1,95,746-6-6, the extra being on account of certain sums due to Fraser from the Company.

A similar offer was again made by Fraser in January 1784 on behalf of one Mr. Burgh, a debtor to the Company, and whose trustee Fraser was. This offer was rejected, but on the recommendation of Mr. Wheler it was resolved that the Board would exert its influence in procuring the payment of this bond, and would therefore include the amount in the estimate of the Company's claims on the Oudh sarkar.¹

Item (k) was a claim by a banker named Gopal Das who had in June 1783 lent certain sums of money to the Company. In 1785 the Oudh sarkar paid an instalment of the Company's subsidy in bonds, which the Company handed over to Gopal Das in part liquidation of its debt of June 1783. Gopal Das said that he had lent to the Company in terms of Fyzabad rupees, whereas the nawab's bonds were in terms of Lucknow rupees, that he therefore lost at the rate of Rs. 5-9-3%, the total loss being Rs. 71,910-2-7. He further said that although in May 1784

1 *B.S.C.* 15 Dec. 1786 Secy.'s report on Fraser's Bonds.

Hastings had declared the two currencies to be equal in value, yet, since his loan had been given before that declaration, he should be repaid at the old rate. On 12 May 1785 the Board resolved that Gopal Das's claim was just, and that the nawab should bear the loss.² On being informed of this resolution, the nawab strongly objected³ on these grounds, firstly, that the amount of silver in the 1785 Lucknow rupee was more than in the Fyzabad rupee, hence whatever might have been the case in 1783, in 1785 Gopal Das was getting more than he had given. In the second place, the nawab argued that he was the Company's debtor and paid to them their dues; if the Company chose to transfer those sums to somebody else, how should he be held responsible for any losses in exchange? The governor-general and the Council curiously enough insisted that the difference was justly due from the Oudh sarkar and instructed Harper to convince the nawab accordingly. But the nawab naturally refused to be convinced, and although he consented to include this sum in the settlement for 1793^f., he did so only under protest.⁴ In March 1786 the nawab lodged a formal protest against it under his seal with the Resident.⁵ The Board ordered further inquiry into the matter, and Bristow, who was Resident at the time when the loan was contracted and when the two currencies were declared to be at par, was asked to report on it.⁶ He reported on 26 April 1786,⁷ quoting a letter of Hastings to the Board d/- 25 May 1784, and stated that Shujauddaula had engaged to pay his dues in Fyzabad siccās; that Asafuddaula having transferred his capital to Lucknow, had struck a new coin which had originally contained less silver than the Fyzabad siccās. Therefore, while he paid the subsidy in Lucknow siccās, he paid 'batta' (exchange) @ Rs. 5-9-3%. But since 1781 the Lucknow siccās contained one rati more silver than the Fyzabad siccās, yet the batta had been uniformly charged and paid. Hence in May 1784 Hastings declared that in future

2 *B.S.C.* 12 May 1785 Larkins to GG & Council 10 May.

3 *B.S.C.* 24 August 1785 NW to Wombwell reed. 22 June 1785.

4 *B.S.C.* 8 Nov. 1785 Harper to GG 25 Oct.

5 *B.S.C.* 22 March 1786.

6 *B.S.C.* 5 April 1786.

7 *B.S.C.* 22 May 1786.

no batta would be charged. So that if the nawab paid any due of the Company in 1785, he could do so in either currency, and no batta should be charged. As to Gopal Das's claim, Bristow added, that his loan had been made in Lucknow siccas, and therefore he was actually getting much more than he had given, and that his claim was by no means tenable. If the Board decided to grant him the batta, it should be considered as a voluntary gift, and the Company should pay it. In spite of this report, however, the accountant-general includes this item in his suggestions about the settlement for 1194F.⁸ and it appears as still due in the abstract for 1193F. drawn up in October 1786.⁹

As to (i), it probably refers to the interest on the debts from those bankers for whose loans the Company had stood guarantee.

APPENDIX F

The following claims were stated as not included in Harper's account :

| | Rs. | as. | p. |
|--|-----------------|-----------|----------|
| Of the current dues : | | | |
| 2 risalas of cavalry @ Rs. 1,08,000 p. a. .. | 2,16,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Pay of the civil and military servants @ Rs. 9,892 p. m. | 1,18,704 | 0 | 0 |
| Of the arrears : | | | |
| 2 risalas of cavalry to the end of 1192F. .. | 3,02,860 | 7 | 8 |
| Expenses of the Foreign Rangers .. | 35,608 | 9 | 0 |
| Arrears of salaries to the Company's servants | 46,460 | 0 | 0 |
| Balance due at the end of 1192 exclusive of Rs. 11,60,000 for the Fathgarh brigade which Harper had included | 1,80,725 | 12 | 8 |
| TOTAL .. | 8,97,358 | 13 | 4 |

It overlooks, however, that the last item includes the claims of several military officers of which Rs. 1,29,456 had been included by Harper. Thus this sum is counted twice in this statement. The accountant-general further stated that a bill given by the sarkar on Surat for Rs. 5 lakh had not been fully discharged and a balance of Rs. 4,57,870

⁸ B.S.C. 24 July 1786 Larkins to GG 7 July.

⁹ B.S.C. 25 Oct. 1786.

remained due on account of it. Thus the total dues according to the accountant-general for 1193 should have been

| | | | Rs. | as. | p. |
|---|----|----|------------------|-----------|----------|
| As per Harper's account | .. | .. | 74,28,944 | 0 | 0 |
| Not included by Harper | .. | .. | 8,97,358 | 13 | 4 |
| Unpaid part of a bill | .. | .. | 4,57,870 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | .. | .. | 87,84,172 | 13 | 4 |
| By Harper's settlement the sarkar had agreed to pay | .. | .. | 66,18,704 | 0 | 0 |
| The total unprovided for being | .. | .. | <u>21,65,468</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>4</u> |

APPENDIX G

Additions to the Company's claims on Oudh during 1193 F. :

| | | | Rs. | as. | p. |
|--|----|----|----------|-----|----|
| On account of Fraser's bonds and interests, over and above 1,70,000 included in Harper's account | .. | .. | 13,819 | 11 | 11 |
| On a/c sundry contingent bills | .. | .. | 36,303 | 13 | 4 |
| „ „ unpaid part of a bill | .. | .. | 4,57,870 | 0 | 0 |
| „ „ interest paid to the shroffs over and above 4 lakh in Harper's account | .. | .. | 11,714 | 5 | 6 |

The reduction allowed on account of the Fathgarh brigade was for 8 months @ Rs. 1,45,000 p. m., i.e., Rs. 11,60,000

APPENDIX H

Private claims on the nawab :

| | | | Rs. | as. | p. |
|---------------------------------|--|--|-----------------|-----------|----------|
| Richard Chicele Plowden's claim | | | 54,810 | 14 | |
| Capt. Peter Murray's | | | 16,170 | 0 | 0 |
| Maj. Nichol's | | | 11,833 | 0 | 0 |
| Maj. Scott's | | | 6,471 | 0 | 0 |
| Maj. L. Grant's | | | 9,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Maj. Buchanan's | | | 3,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Lieut. Grand's | | | 350 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | | 1,01,634 | 14 | 9 |

APPENDIX I

| | | | Rs. | as. | p. |
|-------------------------------|----|--------|---------------|----------|----------|
| Resident @ Rs. 2,988 p. m. | .. | .. | 35,856 | 0 | 0 |
| Lt.-Col. Martine 7 mo. @ 1488 | .. | 10,416 | | | |
| 4 „ @ 1440 | .. | 5,760 | | | |
| 1 „ @ 1344 | .. | 1,344 | | | |
| Carried over | .. | | <u>53,376</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |

| | | | Rs. | as. | p. |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------|--------|-----|----|
| | Brought forward .. | | 53,376 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. Blaine, surgeon | 7 months @ 696 .. | 4,872 | | | |
| | 4 ,, @ 680 .. | 2,720 | | | |
| | 1 ,, @ 648 .. | 648.. | 8,240 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. Bruce, surgeon, | same as Blaine .. | | 8,240 | 0 | 0 |
| Johnstone, asstt. to Resident | @ 512 p. m. .. | | 6,144 | 0 | 0 |
| The O. C. at Lucknow | 7 months @ 1,566 .. | 10,962 | | | |
| | 4 ,, @ 1,530 .. | 6,120 | | | |
| | 1 ,, @ 1,458 .. | 1,458 .. | 18,540 | 0 | 0 |
| | TOTAL .. | | 94,540 | 0 | 0 |

This shows that further reductions in the salaries except of the Resident were made.

APPENDIX J

The accepted arrears on 1 March 1787 consisted of :

| | | Rs. | as. | p. |
|--|----------|-----------|-----|----|
| Due to the troops of the Company .. | | 6,20,944 | 8 | 10 |
| ,, ,, ,, civil and military servants at Lucknow .. | | 2,84,861 | 0 | 0 |
| ,, ,, Sa'adat Ali .. | | 1,00,000 | 0 | 0 |
| ,, on account Rohilla stipends .. | | 20,526 | 0 | 0 |
| ,, on account advanced to the Prince by the Resident at Benares, which the ministers subsequently agreed to pay .. | | 2,04,173 | 7 | 4 |
| | TOTAL .. | 12,30,505 | 0 | 2 |

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