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THE

# SPOLIATION OF OUDH,

BY

MAJOR R. W. BIRD.

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REPORT TO THE BOARD

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REPORT OF THE BOARD

REPORT OF THE BOARD  
TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
NAVY

## THE SPOILIATION OF OUDH.

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WHEN a paramount power desires to find reasons in support of any measure it has thought beneficial to adopt, the very circumstance of its superior position gives it a superiority in argument. Every authoritative plea implying the necessity for that measure, every explanation of the efforts made to refrain from this necessity, and every generously expressed desire for the prosperity of those whose benefit is said to be sought, captivates the mind and leads those who see only the face of the political watch to be forgetful of the wheels and main-spring of action.

We are without doubt not singular in our admiration of the high talents which have for so long a period ruled the destinies of our Indian Empire. We must acknowledge that a great and active intellect has been unceasingly exerting its powers in an onward course of progressive improvement, and it may be that some yet unexplained influence may have compelled the Most Noble the Marquis of Dalhousie into a policy which his own mind must convince him to be one fraught with error, untenable in principle, and which, if ever brought to the searching test of an impartial public inquiry, will throw a dimness over the laurels which Lord Dalhousie has in many ways certainly won by his Indian career.

We are not afraid of speaking the plain truth, nor, in the face of all opinions and influences against us, of bringing forward our arguments in support of our opinion, that the policy which, so secretly, so suddenly, and with such force

of armed power, has been exerted against the King of Oudh, is contrary to the law of nations. We are opposed to the opinion that the paramount power has a right to annex and take possession of any smaller dependant territories by a "Para in a Gazette." We do not believe the people of Great Britain, of France, or of America, will look with complacency upon the acts of a Government, which adds a Territory as large as Austria, with half a million of revenue, and 4 million of inhabitants, (vide the *Friend of India*, January 10th, 1856,) to its already enormous possessions, in the summary manner in which Nagpore has been absorbed. We do not hesitate in asserting that the present inertness on the subject on the part of the people of Great Britain, and the late opinion of some portion of the press, will be very materially changed when the public come to view the acts of the Indian Government in their true light—when they see that not only Nagpore is absorbed, because the Heirs to the throne are declared to be extinct, but also Oudh annexed, for the benefit of its inhabitants (!), its King dethroned, and its revenues seized under the presence of a large armed force collected suddenly on the frontier of the unsuspecting Kingdom.

Is this the way in which the faith of nations is to be respected? Is this the manner in which a Supreme Government conducts its measures in reference to its Allies? Is this the policy of a powerful nation, to call upon a crowned monarch to sign a certain new Treaty drawn up by the superior power, to allow him three days to consider, and when he declines, to remove him from the throne? This is *not* a question as to the acts of an individual King, as to whether he has ruled well or ill. It is a question in which the nations of the world are concerned. \*

The cause of the late war with Russia, and the reason why Great Britain set aside all difference of creed, and over-

looked the manifest misrule in Turkey, was that England came to the help of the weak, to prevent the encroachments of all powerful Russia, and to drive her back to her proper limits. The Russians' first plea was to support the Members of the Greek Church in Turkey. The Government of India pleads a desire to ameliorate the condition of the subjects of Oudh.

But we shall perhaps better explain our views of the injustice and impolicy of this annexation, by comparing the different pleas brought forward by the Government of India in their proclamation, with the circumstances of the Kingdom of Oudh, with reference to some of those reasons:—

“The Sovereign of Oudh bound himself to establish such a system of administration to be carried into effect by his own officers as should be conducive to the prosperity of his subjects.”

The Government of India by way of assisting their Majesties of Oudh, impressed upon them from time to time, the necessity of their listening to, and following the counsels of their various Residents from time to time appointed. It was not considered by the Indian Government material to the point whether the Resident was a person sufficiently experienced in the administration of a country to be capable of giving advice. He might be an officer who had held only military command, a civilian fresh from the red tape of a secretariat, or one who might have been very successfully tested in the suppression of some sects of marauders and murderers. In his new position, with every desire to do good, his interference went only to weaken the native Government, for as no man can serve two masters, so can no country obey two masters. The King and his Government was the ally, and one master. The Indian Government with its British Representative was the paramount power, and the other master.

The assistance was no doubt kindly intended on the part of the Indian Government, but it was in reality a weakening interference, and it is but a few years ago, that His



Majesty of Oudh complained bitterly of the subversion of his authority and rule, when the then Resident (Col. Sleeman) made a tour through some of the districts, with the good intention, we will grant, of seeing the condition of the country, and of thereby giving more competent assistance in the administration, but with the real effect of very materially weakening the hands of the Native Government. That Government did not complain of the lac\* of rupees spent in this tour, but of the lacs of revenue which the cultivators would leave unpaid into the Royal Treasury in the hope that a change of rulers would conceal their arrears. We could bring instance upon instance of a similar nature, of a systematic weakening of the administration of Oudh. Were the Oudh Government desirous of seizing a chuckledar, such as was Maun Sing's brother, who had embezzled the revenue, and who fled across the border, his seizure was refused, as being a civil case. Did they wish to appoint a certain person to be minister, or to any other office, the Resident would object, and desire the appointment of some one else; forgetting that the real basis of all government is not to war with men, but to promote good measures. Was any plan for improvement in the Revenue, the Police, the Courts of Justice or Army proposed to, or rejected by, the Oudh Government? Did any Resident ever submit to them any defined system for the better governing of the country? Was not the advice and assistance, on the contrary, of that nature which alone finds fault?

The very fact brought forward in the Proclamation that the treaty of 1801 "forbade the employment of British officers in Oudh," shows of what nature the assistance rendered was. Does it remain for us to point out that such assistance was desired by the Oudh Government, who at one time were ready to introduce the British system under

British officers? *We call upon Colonel Richmond to declare whether such a desire was not communicated to the Indian Government for their assent, and whether it was not declined?*

The treaty of 1801 could not be set aside when a desire was expressed to employ British officers for the purpose of bettering the administration of the country, but *now it is* declared "null and void" when the Indian Government "chooses to put forth its great power and assume to itself the exclusive and permanent administration of the Territories of Oudh."

We must not be misunderstood; we do not say there was not very great misrule in Oudh, but we declare that misrule was very much increased by the weakening policy of our Government. Our meddling has been a systematic induction of misrule under which no administration could exist with any efficiency. The Indian Government is great, powerful, and enlightened, but no plan for strengthening Oudh by the recommendation of any distinct form of administration, or of any fixed policy, has ever been extended to her; no fair, clear measures of reform have been placed before her. Two points, evidently considered essential, have been brought forward by Lord Dalhousie amongst his pleas for annexation. The first—Lord W. Bentinck's declaration to the Court of Oudh; the second—Lord Hardinge's communication to His Majesty; both of these two warnings were *disapproved* of by the Home Government, yet they now appear to be brought forward as an inclined plane down which the car of annexation is rolled. Having, however, been disapproved and set aside, they are "null and void;" and it shows a want of power, a weakness and deficiency of good reasons for this act of the Government, when such old, rejected documents are pulled from their shelves to enforce and support the right of annexation. We come now to various detailed allegations of the breach of treaty between the Government of India and the Kingdom of Oudh.

1st.—The King took no share in the government of the country.

2nd.—The Powers of Government were for the most part abandoned to worthless favourites of the Court.

3rd.—The Collectors of Revenue had uncontrolled authority, and exacted the utmost payment from the people.

4th.—The King's troops (with rare exceptions) were permitted to plunder the villages.

5th.—Gangs of freebooters infested the districts.

With respect to the two first, the Indian Government did not consider that our most Gracious Queen, God bless her! with all her virtues, and with her heart full of love for her subjects, and desire for their well doing and prosperity, yet has but little to do with direct administration. They did not take into consideration that there were certain men only, and those natives, from whom His Majesty of Oudh could select officers, seeing that British officers were contrary to the treaty of 1801. Under these circumstances, is it well to speak of worthless favourites of the Court? What Court has ever existed, aye, and what Indian Government has ever existed, without favourites. Is Oudh the only country with worthless favourites? Is it a plea recognised by the Law of nations, that a Court having worthless favourites (granting the assumption) is to have its King deposed? Would it not have been better to force upon the Oudh Court (if force were needed) more worthy officers?

3rd.—Do the Collectors of Oudh revenue alone hold uncontrolled authority, and extort the utmost? What caused the Santhal outbreak? was there no undue pressure connected with the revenue, no uncontrolled Bankers charging exorbitant and unpayable interest? Is it not notorious to every officer connected with the collection of the revenue of the Government of India itself, that a charge of arrears of revenue (say even for ten rupees) having been made, a "Muskoore"



or belted servant is sent to seize the cultivator, and that the assertion of the landlord is sufficient to send him to prison until the debt is paid? The only check against an unjust complaint being, that the prosecutor has to lodge a pitiful sustenance in Court to support the party accused; there is no trial, no hearing any excuse urged. The cultivator is accused by his landlord, that is sufficient. Is not this equal to uncontrolled authority and worse?

4th.—It appears to have escaped the Government of India, that his present Majesty of Oudh, at the commencement of his reign, did desire to reduce and remodel his troops, but the wish was negated by the Indian Government through its representative. Why could not the paramount power have at that time guided the young King, and shown him in what manner an efficient, though small, force (for the treaty limits His Majesty's army to a certain number) could be best maintained? If the troops plundered it can be no wonder, when the revenue, by which they should have been paid, failed (and we argue the chief cause of failure was undue interference), seeing also that His Majesty's desire to raise a loan to settle and put in order the affairs of his kingdom was negated by the British representative (Col. Sleeman). When we consider that these troops were raised in Oudh, there should be some distinct Court of Enquiry before unlimited credence can be given to the idea that troops raised in a country would make a habit of plundering the villages of their native land. Such a circumstance if possible would raise the country to arms, and bring about a civil war, a wholesome change in the Government, without British interference.

5th.—“Gangs of freebooters infest the districts.” Some time in 1845, the Government of India made serious complaints of the disturbed state of the Oudh border, and the native Government raised, at an expense of about Rs. 125,000 per annum, the Oudh Frontier Police, to which

officers were appointed by the British Resident, and the command was given to the Officer attached to the Thuggie and Dacoitee department. This Police Force has since been employed elsewhere besides on the border, and the Government of India cannot be ignorant that the various Collectors and Magistrates of the districts abutting on Oudh have all declared that from that period the Frontier Districts have been perfectly free from troublesome characters and plunderers, and in as quiet a state as any portion of their own respective districts. Here then the Government could make use of the services of British officers without a breach of the treaty, and its servants acknowledged the trial to have been successful. Is it not then to be equally deduced, that had the administration of the Revenue been equally assisted, that a like beneficial result would have ensued? But no, the truth must be out, why should the Indian Government help to fill the coffers of the "Royal Race who, whatever the fault towards their own subjects, have ever been faithful and true to their friendship with the English nation?" The last sentence, coupled with what follows, is the most painful that any British-hearted commentator could be required truthfully to remark on.

"The obligations which the treaty imposed upon the Honorable East India Company have been observed by it for more than half a century, faithfully, constantly, and completely.

"In all that time, though the British Government has itself been engaged in frequent wars, no foreign foe has ever set his foot on the soil of Oudh, no rebellion has ever threatened the stability of its throne. British Troops have been stationed in close proximity to the King's person; and their aid has never been withheld whenever his power was wrongfully defied.

"But it has hitherto been re-

The Governor General takes for the British Government the credit of having, for more than half a century, observed its share of the treaty, and that though itself engaged in frequent wars, no foreign foe has ever set his foot on the soil of Oudh. We have shown the system of assistance rendered in the administration of the country, let us look to this latter statement. Oudh

luctant to have recourse to measures, which would be fatal to the power and authority of a royal race, who, whatever their faults towards their subjects, have ever been faithful and true to their friendship with the English nation."

is bounded on the one side by Nepal, on the other by the British territories. Nepal was therefore the only foreign foe.

After the lesson she had already received from the British Arms, it was not probable that she would attempt a descent on territories where the British Flag had marked the ground to be under *its protection, for future annexation*. No attempts to dethrone any of the Kings of Oudh have been made by their subjects. Thus then, except the claim made of having afforded protection by the simple presence of two corps of Infantry and a Bullock Train Battery, no very vast efforts have been made by the Indian Government. But when war employed all the available forces of the Indian Government in the Cabul disaster, when Gwalior raised her head, and in the Punjab struggle, when rumours of intriguing and insurrection were rife in Dinapore and Benares, when Nepal threatened the Gorruckpoor Frontier, what was the conduct of Oudh? What position did she assume when reports of drawn battles and doubtful victories created dread and dismay, when Government securities fell to the lowest point ever known in India. Was not her heart with the British Government? Did she not remain steadfast at a crisis when a movement on her part would have been fatal to the supremacy and paramount power of the Indian Government? But more than this; when Irregular Cavalry had to be raised, who was more ready to assist than the King of Oudh? who threw open his Cavalry for men and horses to be picked for Brigadier Mayne, and for Major Davidson's Irregulars? The best men were parted with to fill the British East India Company's Ranks, the best horses sold at a fixed nominal price. Can the Government deny that the then King of Oudh offered, through his Minister,



every assistance that the Paramount Power might require? They cannot; and is this the requital to be sarcastically alluded to merely by a sentence of a line and a half? Is this the return to the Royal Race "who have ever been faithful and true to their friendship with the English nation?" Is it the rule by which nations are guided in their intercourse with one another, that because a mistaken policy or bad system of administration prevails in one, that the bordering nation with whom friendly treaties exist, and with whom "true friendship" has been kept, should annex that Kingdom? Can it then be wondered at that "His Majesty the King of Oudh refused to enter into the amicable agreement whereby the Government of his territories should be vested exclusively and for ever in the Honorable East India Company?"

We do not desire to fall into the same error intentionally that we have charged against the Indian Government, of merely giving advice of that nature which simply finds fault. Had the Government of India felt for the oppression in Oudh, and for the cultivators, and these appear to be the only persons alluded to in the proclamation (Church, Army, Physic, Law, come under the heads of careless King, worthless favourites, uncontrolled Collectors, undisciplined Troops, and gangs of freebooters)—had, we say, the Government of India simply felt for the cultivators, and desired to alleviate their sufferings, what was easier than to tell His Majesty that the British troops would be withdrawn by a certain date if the system submitted for his adoption were not at once put in force. The Santhal system of revenue might then have been handed to His Majesty for introduction, and the people of the country thus taught to revenge their own injuries, when either the King's crown would have been removed from him by his subjects, or he, like the Indian Government, would have introduced stringent measures for



the suppression of wrong, and the introduction of right. The Indian Government would in this way have been saved the disgrace of taking an armed force into the territories of a faithful and true ally, and appropriating the territories of that friendly Government to itself by annexation. It would have escaped the charge of having pitied the sufferings of the King of Oudh's subjects so greatly, as to have very considerably benefited itself by their misfortunes. Had their sufferings been the true and only cause of interference, what was easier than to undertake the management on behalf of His Majesty, his sons, and heirs? Every onward improvement introduced into the Company's territories would have also been introduced into Oudh, and the King and his servants been made acquainted with a system of political education which would have redounded to the good name of the Indian Government; but this measure would have been deficient in pecuniary consideration. It would not have enriched the Honorable East India Company. We firmly believe that every right-minded man considers this act of annexation of the Government a political robbery, and the conduct of the King of Oudh as wise, dignified, and proper; and we feel sure, that if His Majesty follows out the course he appears to have so wisely adopted, that his appeal to Her Majesty the Queen, and to the British nation, for protection and sympathy, will be warmly responded to, and that the present annexation will not be allowed.

We have shown that the assistance of the Government of India to the Court of Oudh was in reality a weakening interference. We will now proceed further to show how it was an interference separating the subject from his Sovereign. It not only undermined the power of the Oudh Government in the Revenue Administration of the Kingdom, but also brought into contempt the Courts of Law. When opinions are intended to carry conviction to the minds of Impartial

Judges, the facts on which they are based are better arguments than can be offered by the highest powers of Logic without such data. For this reason we will refer to one or two cases which are too well known to admit of contradiction. If we are obliged to use names in our statements, we do so from no personal motive, from no desire to attack men, but because the statements on which we base our arguments against the measures pursued by the India Government towards its Ally cannot be brought forward without names. It is a well known fact, and none are better aware of it than the Government of India, that the late Resident, General (late Colonel) Sleeman, was in the habit of encouraging all persons disaffected towards the Oudh Government to come with their complaints to him. The complainants were sure of a ready ear being lent to all their griefs by the representative of the British Government. It will doubtless hereafter appear, when a proper and open inquiry shall have been instituted by the British Government, that the Resident carried his ideas of propriety to such a length, that he encouraged such discontented parties to enter their names on a list complaining of the rule of the Oudh Government, and expressing a desire for the assumption of the country by the Honorable East India Company. We are indeed in great error if this list did not much injure the King's cause, and influence the Court of Directors, in their instructions to the Marquis of Dalhousie. Should this matter ever be brought to light, what will the people of Great Britain think of a British Resident, who did not hesitate to set subjects against their Sovereign, to undermine the Ruling Power, and to produce such a list, clandestinely obtained, as a proof of the disaffection and oppression of the subjects of Oudh? What will the people of Great Britain think of the Government that could accept such proof? Can anything be worse, especially when we consider that this act was

against a "Royal Race who have ever been faithful and true to their friendship with the English nation?"

We will now proceed to show the effect of this private encouragement to complain to the Resident. A certain man complained in private to the Resident that he and a comrade were returning to their homes, and that when passing the village Bigharie, they were seized by Chutter Singh, the brother of the Zemeendar, and taken into Bigharie—that there his comrade's head was cut off, and that he himself was confined in Chutter Singh's house, expecting the same fate, but having a few rupees, he bribed a woman in the house, and escaped. The Resident at once, without either consulting the King, or obtaining his consent, ordered out two of the Honorable Company's guns and a wing of the 10th Regiment N.I., under Captain Hardwicke, to proceed to Bunnee, when the force was to be joined by Lieutenant Weston, commanding Oudh Frontier Police, and Captain Barlow, King of Oudh's service, with about 50 of his cavalry. Sealed orders were given to Captain Hardwicke to proceed to Bigharie, to summon Chutter Singh, and if he refused to come in, the *village was to be destroyed*. The force reached Bigharie, but found no fortifications nor show of resistance. About this time the cultivators of a neighbouring village came to offer assistance to the British force, which was declined by Captain Hardwicke. Lieutenant Weston summoned Chutter Singh, some delay occurred, and at Captain Barlow's recommendation, one of His Majesty's Camel Orderlies—"Shooter Sowars"—was sent into the village, when Chutter Singh came out, and was put into confinement. The Complainant was then called upon to point out where his comrade's head had been cut off, and where he had been confined, but failed to do so—no such act having ever taken place. Had it not been that Capt. Hardwicke was a cool man, and hesitated blindly to carry



out his instructions, and had it not been for Captain Barlow's forethought in sending a subsequent message to the village of Bigharie, by a King's messenger, that village would have been destroyed. We must finish this strange story. The Complainant had been a sepoy of the 55th B. N. I., ignominiously dismissed for theft. The village of Bigharie had long had a boundary dispute with the neighbouring village. The ready ear of the Government Representative was known, and it was hoped that this dismissed sepoy would excite him to give orders, which would cause the destruction of the Bigharie village, and settle the boundary dispute, without further trouble. This was certainly as nearly coming to pass as could be. Was this not separating the subject from his Sovereign? Was this not weakening the Oudh Government? Was this not causing distrust and confusion, instead of upholding the authority of the King and helping him "to establish such a system of administration to be carried into effect by his own officers as should be conducive to the prosperity of his subjects?" Were there no Courts of Law for the Complainant to apply to? Was there no necessity for a previous investigation before such very active measures were carried into effect? Did not this use of a British Military Force lead the King's Cultivators to suppose that the Indian Government would take the country, and Annex it? Was not this the reason that every year they more and more withheld the payment of the Revenue? We challenge denial.

We will mention one other little anecdote—Rajah Hunwant Singh of Kalla Kanker, Elaka Salone, would not pay the assessed Revenue. Khan Ali Khan, the Aumil, or Native Collector, tried to coerce him. The Rajah, well aware of the Resident's ready ear, came over to Lucknow, and attached himself to that officer, who listened to his statement, and not only gave him the protection of daily riding by the side of his carriage, so that the Oudh authorities



might see the small chance of success likely to result from their attempt to recover the King's Revenue, but also went security for him for a house which the Rajah took in Cantonments, within the precincts of which the King's authority did not extend. The security paper is in our possession, and a copy of it will be found in the Appendix, page 24. Was this maladministration on the part of the Oudh Government, or an improper and weakening system of interference on the part of the British Representative?

We will now proceed to show how the Courts of Law were brought into contempt. Mohomed Hussein, the Aumil, or Revenue Collector of the district of Baraitch, came in the course of his collections to that portion of his district, which belonged to the Talookdar Ram Dutt.\* The Talookdar visited the Aumil's office tent, in the front of which a large space of ground, some 60 yards by 40, was enclosed as usual by a Kanaut† to keep off the crowd. At the interview with the Aumil, Ram Dutt refused to pay the Revenue assessed. He was told that he could not take his leave without doing so, but he got up, and with his followers, some 13 men, left the tent and went into the enclosed space outside where the Aumil's guard was in attendance. He was again told that he could not leave that enclosure without coming to some arrangement, on which he drew a pistol, and fired on the Aumil's guard. On this a disturbance took place, and Ram Dutt was killed in the fight by some of the Aumil's followers. The Talookdar's Lawyer Sudhan Lall, and Adjhoodia Pershad, head man of Ram Dutt, complained to General Sleeman. In the meantime the servants of Mohomed Hussein continued collecting the Revenue in the Pergunna towards the Gorruckpore Frontier, and here again were opposed, and a fight took place between Kissun Dutt, brother of Ram Dutt, with his people and the Aumil's followers. The former retiring, as is often done, to evade payment,

\* Landholder.

† Canvas partition.

towards the narrow river Raptce, which at this point separates the two countries, and the Aumil's followers endeavouring to arrest them. In this struggle a shot went across the river and killed a Brahmin, named Biswas Mitter. Mr. ———, the British officer, addressed the Resident, who forthwith called upon the Oudh Court to dismiss the Aumil, Mohomed Hussein, and in this official document complained of the murder of Ram Dutt. His Majesty, influenced with a desire to keep on terms with the British Government, dismissed the Aumil, and with the concurrence of the Resident, made him over for trial on account of the murder of Ram Dutt to the highest Court of Justice in Oudh, that presided over by the Moohjtahid-ool-Ussur, the High Priest. An investigation was commenced, and, whilst it was progressing, Mohomed Hussein sent a Lawyer over to Gorrukpore, asking the officer in charge of that district to institute inquiries regarding the death of the Brahmin Biswas Mitter, caused by the shot which had crossed the river, and complaining that he had been summarily dismissed without inquiry, simply on the British Magistrate's complaint. The Officer in charge of the Gorrukpore district declared that this dismissal was not influenced by him, and verbally acquitted the Aumil of all blame, but refused to place his opinion on paper. Mohomed Hussein Vakeel proceeded and related the circumstances in full to the Commissioner of the district, who, after due inquiry from the Gorrukpore officer, gave papers acquitting the Aumil Mohomed Hussein of all blame, and forwarded copies of the same to His Honor the Lieutenant Governor. Thus then the influence of the Resident so far caused the removal of the Aumil Mohomed Hussein from his position, without sufficient reason as regarded the shot fired across the river, and the death of the Brahmin Biswas Mitter. But more than this, the Aumil was, we see, punished before any investigation was made into the merits

of the original case, *i.e.*, the firing a shot into the British boundary, and thereby causing the death of a British subject. The second accusation, that of the murder of Ram Dutt, was brought to a conclusion by the Moojta-hidool-Ussur, who pronounced the Aumil Mohomed Hussein not guilty of the murder of Ram Dutt, on two grounds: Firstly, that the Aumil was not present in the affray between Ram Dutt with his followers and the guard of the Aumil; Secondly, he had given no orders likely to cause such affray or death. He was neither the principal nor accessory to the death of Ram Dutt. This decision of the highest Court of Justice in Oudh was communicated to the Resident, who disapproved of and refused to acknowledge it, and demanded that the Aumil Mohomed Hussein should either be made over to him for trial or sent to the Magistrate of Gorrukpore. The King declined to accede to this measure, and the Resident (General Sleeman) reported the circumstance to the India Government, who very properly decided, that as the Resident had himself agreed to the trial of the case before the Oudh Court, he could not now raise an objection, but we are much mistaken (and time alone can show when the documents are produced), if there was not a hint given that the Resident should have taken the case into his own hands from the commencement. In this case, then, there was a direct interference in the decision, and sentence, of the highest Court of Justice in Oudh. Was this likely to inspire confidence in either the officers who had to preside, or the people who had to appeal to their Courts? Was this not sufficient to impress upon the minds of the King's subjects that the will and pleasure of the British Resident was more powerful than their Laws? Was it not placing the King's Government in a false and weakened position in the eyes of the King's subjects?



## APPENDIX A.

## PROCLAMATION.

*Fort William, Foreign Department, the 11th Feb., 1856.*

By a Treaty concluded in the year 1801, the Honorable East India Company engaged to protect the Sovereign of Oudh against every foreign and domestic enemy ; while the Sovereign of Oudh, upon his part, bound himself to establish "such a system of Administration, to be carried into effect by his own Officers, as should be conducive to the prosperity of his Subjects, and calculated to secure the lives and properties of the inhabitants."

The obligations which the Treaty imposed upon the Honorable East India Company have been observed by it for more than half a century, faithfully, constantly, and completely.

In all that time, though the British Government has itself been engaged in frequent wars, no foreign foe has ever set his foot on the soil of Oudh ; no rebellion has ever threatened the stability of its throne : British Troops have been stationed in close proximity to the King's person ; and their aid has never been withheld whenever his power was wrongfully defied.

On the other hand, one chief and vital stipulation of the Treaty has been wholly disregarded by every successive ruler of Oudh : and the pledge which was given for the establishment of such a system of Administration as should secure the lives and properties of the people of Oudh, and be conducive to their prosperity, has, from first to last, been deliberately and systematically violated.

By reason of this violation of the compact made the British Government might long since have justly declared the Treaty void, and might have withdrawn its protection from the rulers of Oudh ;



but it has hitherto been reluctant to have recourse to measures which would be fatal to the power and authority of a royal race who, whatever their faults towards their own subjects, have ever been faithful and true to their friendship with the English nation.

Nevertheless, the British Government has not failed to labor, during all that time, earnestly and perseveringly, for the deliverance of the people of Oudh from the grievous oppression and misrule under which they have suffered.

Many years have passed since the Governor General, Lord William Bentinck, perceiving that every previous endeavour to ameliorate the condition of the people of Oudh had been thwarted or evaded, made formal declaration to the Court of Lucknow that it would become necessary that he should proceed to assume the direct management of the Oudh Territories.

The words and the menace which were then employed by Lord William Bentinck were, eight years ago, repeated in person by Lord Hardinge to the King. The Sovereign of Oudh was on that day solemnly bid remember that, whatever might now happen, "it would be manifest to all the world, that he had received a friendly and a timely warning."

But the friendly intentions of the British Government have been wholly defeated by the obstinacy, or incapacity or apathy of the Vizeers and Kings of Oudh. Disinterested counsel and indignant censure, alternating through more than fifty years with repeated warning, remonstrance and threats, have all proved ineffectual and vain. The chief condition of the Treaty remains unfulfilled; the promises of the King rest unperformed; and the people of Oudh are still the victims of incompetency, corruption, and tyranny, without remedy or hope of relief.

It is notorious throughout the land, that the King, like most of his predecessors, takes no real share in the direction of public affairs.

The powers of Government throughout his Dominions are for the most part abandoned to worthless favourites of the Court, or to violent and corrupt men, unfit for their duties and unworthy of trust.

The Collectors of the Revenue hold sway over their Districts with uncontrolled authority, extorting the utmost payment from the people, without reference to past or present engagements.

The King's Troops, with rare exceptions, undisciplined and disorganized, and defrauded of their pay by those to whom it is entrusted, are permitted to plunder the villages for their own support; so that they have become a lasting scourge to the country they are employed to protect.

Gangs of freebooters infest the districts; Law and Justice are unknown; armed violence and bloodshed are daily events; and life and property are nowhere secure for an hour.

The time has come when the British Government can do longer tolerate in Oudh these evils and abuses, which its position under the Treaty serves indirectly to sustain, or continue to the Sovereign that protection, which alone upholds the power whereby such evils are inflicted.

Fifty years of sad experience have proved that the Treaty of 1801 has wholly failed to secure the happiness and prosperity of Oudh; and have conclusively shown that no effectual security can be had for the release of the people of that Country from the grievous oppression they have long endured, unless the exclusive Administration of the Territories of Oudh shall be permanently transferred to the British Government.

To that end it has been declared, by the special authority and consent of the Honorable the Court of Directors, that the Treaty of 1801, disregarded and violated by each succeeding Sovereign of Oudh, is henceforth wholly null and void.

His Majesty Wajid Ali Shah was invited to enter into a new engagement, whereby the Government of the Territories of Oudh should be vested exclusively, and for ever, in the Honorable East India Company; while ample provision should be made for the dignity, affluence, and honor of the King, and of his family.

But His Majesty the King refused to enter into the amicable agreement which was offered for his acceptance.

Inasmuch, then, as His Majesty Wajid Ali Sha, in common with all his predecessors, has refused, or evaded, or neglected to fulfil

the obligations of the Treaty of 1801, whereby he was bound to establish within his Dominions such a system of Administration as should be conducive to the prosperity and happiness of his subjects; and inasmuch as the Treaty he thereby violated has been declared to be null and void; and inasmuch as His Majesty has refused to enter into other agreements which were offered to him in lieu of such Treaty; and inasmuch as the terms of that Treaty, if it had still been maintained in force, forbade the employment of British Officers in Oudh, without which no efficient system of administration could be established there; it is manifest to all that the British Government had but one alternative before it.

Either it must altogether desert the people of Oudh, and deliver them up helpless to oppression and tyranny, which, acting under the restrictions of Treaty, it has already too long appeared to countenance; or it must put forth its own great power on behalf of a people for whose happiness it more than fifty years ago engaged to interpose, and must at once assume to itself the exclusive and permanent administration of the Territories of Oudh.

The British Government has had no hesitation in choosing the latter alternative.

Wherefore Proclamation is hereby made that the Government of the Territories of Oudh is henceforth vested, exclusively and forever, in the Honorable East India Company.

All Amils, Nazims, Chuckladars, and other Servants of the Durbar; all Officers, Civil and Military; the Soldiers of the State, and all the Inhabitants of Oudh, are required to render henceforth implicit and exclusive obedience to the Officers of the British Government.

If any Officer of the Durbar, Jageerdar, Zemindar, or other person, shall refuse to render such obedience: if he shall withhold the payment of Revenue, or shall otherwise dispute or delay the authority of the British Government, he shall be declared a rebel; his person shall be seized, and his Jageers or lands shall be confiscated to the State.

To those who shall immediately and quietly submit themselves



to the authority of the British Government, whether Amils or Public Officers, Jageerdars, Zemindars, or other Inhabitants of Oudh, full assurance is hereby given of protection, consideration, and favour.

The Revenue of the Districts shall be determined on a fair and settled basis.

The gradual improvement of the Oudh Territories shall be steadily pursued.

Justice shall be measured out with an equal hand.

Protection shall be given to life and property; and every man shall enjoy henceforth his just rights without fear or molestation.

By order of the Most Noble the Governor-General of India in Council.

G. F. EDMONSTONE,

*Secretary to the Government of India.*

## APPENDIX B.

(COPY.)

*Lucknow, 27th June, 1851.*

SIRS,

Should you have any doubt about Rajah Lall Hunwunt's Singh's paying for the Bungalow when the money becomes due in September next, I have no objections to pledge myself to pay it if he does not.

Yours obediently,

(Signed) W. H. SLEEMAN.

Messrs. Brandon and Co.

True Copy.  
H. Mc Ivor.

True Copy.  
R. W. BIRD.