

AFGHANISTAN, No. 4.

A D D R E S S

OF

MAJOR-GENERAL ROBERTS

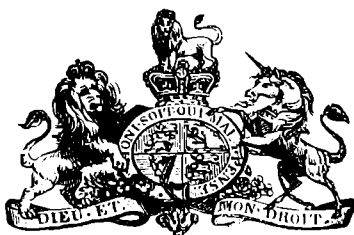
TO THE

C H I E F S O F K U R R A M,

ON THE

26th DECEMBER 1878.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.



L O N D O N :

PRINTED BY GEORGE EDWARD EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

ADDRESS.

COPY of an ADDRESS to JAJI and TORI MALIKS, dated Kuram, 26th December 1878.

KHANS and Maliks.—Since the arrival of the British force in this valley, many of you have received rewards for services rendered; I wished, however, to see you again before I leave Kuram for Khost in order to recognize those services publicly in Durbar.

Generally, I am satisfied with the reception I have met with in the valley; it was natural you should hesitate to believe we intended to afford you permanent protection so long as any vestige of the Amir's authority was before your eyes; you have seen the last trace of that authority swept away, and I have assembled you here to-day to tell you that neither Sher Ali Khan nor any other Amir of Kabul will ever again be permitted to reign over Kuram. Depend upon it you will never have cause to regret exchanging the Durani for British rule. I am not prepared to state what form of Government it may please the Viceroy and Governor-General to establish, but it will be such a Government as is best suited to your habits and customs. You have a right to expect protection to life and property, peace and prosperity, and I think you will all admit that you have a better chance of enjoying these advantages under the British than under the Duranis.

In return for these advantages, the British Government will demand from you implicit obedience to all orders that may, from time to time, be issued; you will be required to live peaceably, at the same time to retain the manly qualities of your race, and assist, as heretofore, to protect your homes and property from neighbouring tribes who are less civilized. The headmen of villages have large responsibilities; so long as they work for the welfare of the people, and in the interests of Government, they will be supported, and everything in reason will be done to increase their influence and power. They will be expected to control the bad characters in villages, and to prevent the escape of criminals; should they be unable to do so, it will be their duty to represent the same to the Government officials in order that assistance, if necessary, may be afforded to them. They will be made available for the collection of the Government revenue, and will receive remunerations for their services.

I wish to impress upon you all who are unaccustomed perhaps to good rule, that the British Government only issues orders which it intends should be obeyed; your religion will never be interfered with; your prejudices will be respected, and you will be allowed as much liberty as is compatible with good order, new roads will be made, existing roads will be improved, markets will be established for the sale of grain produce, and whatever you may be able to provide for the use of the troops will be liberally paid for. Many of you are already reaping the benefit of our advent; on the Paiwar Kotal, at Habeebkillah, and here at Kuram, considerable sums of money are paid daily as wages for labour, or in purchase of wood, matting, &c. &c. From no other Government could you expect such considerate treatment; during the few days which intervened between the flight of the Durani Government and the arrival of the British troops, the Turis and Bangashes plundered and dismantled both the forts at Kuram and to a certain extent the huts at the Paiwar Cantonment; I feel angry with the Maliks every time I enter the forts for not preventing the wilful destruction of property, and instead of punishing the offenders as we might have done, we are paying them for labouring at the restoration of the forts at Kuram. The Jaji Maliks of Lehwanie behaved differently and have reaped the benefit; believing what I told them before the capture of the Kotal, they preserved for our use the stores collected by the Amir for his army; for their service they have been well rewarded, and I am not likely to forget the good work they have done. The Maliks of Ali Kheyl either did not believe what they were told, or do not possess real influence over their villages, or they would have prevented the Amir's grain from being plundered, and would have been proportionately rewarded. The people of Ali Kheyl and Shamu Kheyl are further distant from Kuram, and have consequently come less in contact with us than the other Jajis, and for this reason perhaps feel more uncertain about their future than the Lehwanie Jajis and the Toris: I can only repeat to them the assurance I have already given, that from Thull

to the Shutar Gurdan, not a village, nay, not a yard of land, will be allowed again to come under the control of the Amir of Kabul; neither will the British Government ever again permit the Kabul Government to interfere in any way with the independent tribes bordering on British territory. I hope to see you again in a few weeks; during my absence I hope you will do all in your power to support the officers placed at the Kotal, at Habeebkillia, and at Kuram, and to gain for yourselves the good will of the Government. As a warning to those who are not inclined to listen to my advice I will remind them of the punishment which has recently overtaken two villages at no great distance from Kuram. The entry of the British force into the valley was necessarily rapid, and as being more convenient the road by the right bank of the river was taken; some few villages on the left bank of the Kuram have not yet been visited by our troops; owing to this, the Maliks of Sudda and Ibrahimzai apparently thought we could not exact obedience to our authority, and permitted the line of telegraph running through their lands to be frequently interfered with. The people of Ibrahimzai even allowed a cavalry post to be attacked in the village itself, when a horse and a camel were killed; they gave no information and rendered no assistance; an example was necessary, and fines were inflicted; on Ibrahimzai Rupees 400, and on Sudda Rupees 500, and until these sums are paid, the headmen will remain in confinement; all will understand this warning. Summary punishment will follow any such offences and neglect of duty.

As I have said before, the British Government does not interfere with the religion of any of its subjects, but when Moollas and religious advisers leave religion and preach politics and oppose the ruling power, Government must interfere politically, and prevent the ignorant from being misled. Thus, one Moolla, formerly a Malik, is now in confinement to prevent his doing harm, and another Moolla, who was notorious as an ill-wisher to the British Government, who failed to pay his respects when called upon to do so, and who left his home, has had his house burnt as a warning to others.

I am extremely sorry that I should have been compelled to interfere with either of these men, and hope never to have to exercise my authority in a similar manner again. Moollas, who are dissatisfied with the British rule, should leave the country. Many of you are grey-beards, and have experience and wisdom; you should judge for yourselves whether what I am saying is not such as you would yourselves give to your children.

(Signed) FRED. ROBERTS, Major-General.
