

thousand rupees, but did not judge it prudent or convenient to make a permanent settlement in the country, as, it is said, he had contemplated.

IX. — *Memorandum on Lahore, the Sikhs, their kingdom and its dependencies.*

Lahore, the capital of the Panjáb and of the territories of Ranjit Sing, is a city of undoubted antiquity, and has been long celebrated for its extent and magnificence. The extravagant praises bestowed upon it by the historians of Hindústán, must however be understood, as applicable to a former city, of which now only the ruins are seen. To it also must be referred the current proverb, which asserts that Isfahán and Shíráz united, would not equal the half of Lahore. The present city is nevertheless very extensive, and comprises many elegant and important buildings; amongst them the masjíd Pádsháh and Vazír Khán are particularly splendid. The Sona or Golden masjíd, claims also attention from the attraction of its gilded minarets and cupolas. The masjíd Pádsháh, is substantially built of a red friable sandstone, and from its size, the loftiness of its minarets, the dimension of its cupolas, and the general grandeur of the whole, is an edifice worthy of the founder said to be the great Aurangzíb. According to popular tradition, Lahore is indebted for this structure to the following circumstance. The emperor ordered his Vazír to raise a masjíd for his private devotions, which should exceed in beauty all others known. The minister accordingly, at a vast expence, completed the masjíd now called Vazír Khán, and announced the consummation of his labours to the sovereign, who proceeded at once to inspect the building and to offer up his prayers. On his road, he heard the remarks of the multitude "behold the emperor, who is going to the masjíd of Vazír Khán." He retraced his steps, observing that his design had been frustrated, inasmuch as the masjíd had acquired not his name, but that of his minister. He then personally commanded the construction of another, superintended its progress when building, and succeeded in connecting his name with it.

The masjíd Vazír Khán, is a sumptuous edifice, distinguished by minarets of great height. It is entirely covered with painted and lacquered tiles, inscribed with Arabic sentences. They have a gorgeous appearance, and it is vulgarly asserted, that the whole of the Korán is written on the walls and various parts of the building. Contiguous is a small bazár, the rents of which were formerly allotted to

the repairs of the masjíd, and to support the necessitous who frequented it. These funds are otherwise appropriated by the Sikhs.

The Sona or Sonára masjíd independently of its gilded domes is a handsome and extensive edifice. It was in a neglected state to the great scandal of the Mússúl nán population of Lahore, until the officers of M. Allard, represented the matter to him, and under his auspices renewed it; the general handsomely contributing the funds required for regilding. The masjíds Pádsháh and Vazír Khán, have been long since desecrated by the Sikhs, who killed swine in them, and converted their courts into stables. The masjíd Pádsháh is generally assigned by the Máhárájá as a residence for some European in his service.

There are also many other masjíds, and some saráis deserving attention, moreover some of the Hindú temples are remarkable.

The streets are very narrow as are the bazárs, which are numerous and distinguished by the names of the occupations carried on in them, as the goldsmiths', the ironsmiths', the saddlers' bazár &c. There are some exceedingly lofty and bulky mansions, well built of kiln burned bricks (the material of which the city is mostly constructed) — many of them recently erected. They have no exterior decorations, opposing an enormous extent of dead walls, which however convey an idea of the large space enclosed. Amongst the most conspicuous of these for size is the abode of the Jemadár Khúshíál Sing, a renegade Bráhmañ of the neighbourhood of Sirdánha, elevated by Ranjit Sing from the rank of a scullion to that of a general. The sons of Ranjit Sing have each of them a large palace within the city, and the Máhárájá, in his occasional visits to Lahore, resides in the inner fort or citadel which occupies the north west angle of the city. Here are extensive magazines of warlike stores, and manufactures of musquets, cannon balls, &c.

Lahore seated within a mile of the Rávi river, is not dependent upon it for water, having within its walls numerous wells. It is surrounded with a substantial brick wall, some twenty five feet in height, and sufficiently broad for a gun to traverse on it. It has many circular towers, and divers sided bastions at regular intervals. Ranjit Sing has surrounded the walls with a good trench, and carried a line of handsome works and redoubts around the entire circumference, which are plentifully garnished with heavy artillery. He is constantly improving the fortifications under the guidance of his French officers, and is removing the vast heaps of rubbish and ruins, which as he justly observes, would not only cover the approaches of an enemy, but form ready made batteries for him. There are many

gates as the Múrchí Derwáza, the Lohár Derwáza, the Delhí Derwáza, the Atak Derwáza, &c. The last is also called Derwáza Tank-sála or the mint gate, an appellation that led the Jesuit Teifenthaler into the error of supposing that in his time one of the city gates retained the name of Taxila. At the Lohár Derwáza is a large piece of ordnance called the Banghí — and at the Múrchí Derwáza are two or three tigers encaged.

Without the walls are scattered on all sides the ruins of the ancient city, which although in some places cleared away by the express orders of the Máhárájá, as I have just noted, and in others for the erection of cantonments and parade grounds for the troops of the French camp, besides the constant diminution of their bulk in the search for bricks and building materials, are still wonderful, and convey vast ideas of the extent of ancient Lahore. Numerous tombs and other structures are still standing, some of them nearly entire, and such is their solidity that they seem, if not absolutely to foil old time, to yield to him almost imperceptibly. West of Lahore on the western bank of the Ráví, is the beautiful and far famed tomb of the Emperor Jehánghír or the Sháhdera. It is classed by the natives of Hindústán amongst the four wonders which adorn their country, and is certainly executed in a style of architecture eminently chaste. Under Síkh domination this delightful specimen of Indian art is neglected, and falling into ruin, besides being subject to desecration. The Máhárájá gave it as a residence to a French officer, M. Amise, who caused its chambers to be cleared of their accumulated filth, and put the surrounding garden in order, when he died. The Mús-súlmáns did not fail to attribute his death to his temerity and impiety in daring to occupy so sacred a place, and they believe that the shade of the emperor actually appeared to him, and announced his death as the punishment for his crime. Whether the Máhárájá credited this tale I know not, but he much regreted the loss of M. Amise, and has since ordered the building to be closed, and the entrances to be built up, while he has forbidden farther dilapidation and desecrations. The situation of the Sháhdera is most agreeable, and has induced Ranjit Sing to raise a garden house immediately to the north of it.

Another remarkable building south of the city, and between it and the river, is the tomb of Anárkallí as called, concerning which is the following popular story. Anárkallí (Anárgúl probably, or the pomegranate blossom) was a very handsome youth, and the favorite attendant of an Emperor of Hindústán. When the prince would be in company with the ladies of his háram, the favorite page was not excluded. It happened that one day the emperor seated with his females

in an apartment lined with looking glasses, beheld from the reflected appearance of Anárkallí, who stood behind him, that he smiled. The monarch's construction of the intent of the smile, proved melancholy to the smiler, who was ordered to be buried alive. Anárkallí was accordingly placed in an upright position at the appointed spot, and was built around with bricks, while an immense superstructure was raised over the sepulchre, the expense of which was defrayed, as tradition relates, by the sale of one of his bangles. There were formerly extensive gardens, and several buildings connected with the tomb, but not a vestige can now be traced of them. This monument was once occupied by Karak Sing, the eldest and only legitimate son of the Máhárája, but has subsequently been given to an Italian officer M. Ventura, who has converted it into a háram. Adjacent is the handsome house of M. Allard, the principal of the foreign officers in the Lahore service — and in front of it, a parade ground intervening, are the lines of the regiments and battalions under their orders. To the east of the city are the cantonments of the troops commanded by M. Avitabile and Court, with the residences of those officers. The mansion of the former, a Neapolitan, is painted in a singular and grotesque fashion.

In the neighbourhood of Lahore are many large and delightful gardens; the fruit trees, flowering shrubs and plants, are however those common in Hindústán, being very little mixed with the products peculiar to western countries. The fruit trees are the mango, the mulberry, the plantain, the apple and peach, of inferior size and quality, the jáman, the fig, the karinda, the quince, the orange, the lime, both acid and sweet, and the date, the fruit of the last however is scarcely eatable. Pomegranates also abound but are not prized, and there are a few vines. Melons are so abundant that they are scarcely considered fruit, although regularly cultivated; they are moreover very indifferent. There is a large proportion of the lands near the city devoted to the culture of vegetables for the consumption of the inhabitants. Here again the ordinary eastern varieties as bádinjáns, gourds of several kinds, karellas, cucumbers, &c. are chiefly produced, there being no novelties. Large fields of sweet fennel are common, grown I believe for the sake of the seed. The flowers are in no great variety, and selected with reference to the odour, chaplets being made of the blossoms, and sold in the bazár. Gardens here, as in all eastern countries, are open to the public, and individuals preserving due respect for the fruits and flowers, may freely enter and stroll about them; but the mean practice prevails of selling the

produce, from which sale, the proprietor of a garden, be he king or slave, derives a profit.

About three miles north-east of Lahore, is the renowned and once delightful garden of Shálímár. There are still the marble tanks and fountains with costly machinery that once supplied the jet d'eaux. The gay pavilions and other buildings of this immense garden, have suffered not so much from the dilapidation of time, as from the depredation of the Máhárájá, who has removed much of the marble and stones, of which they were composed, to employ them in his new constructions at the favorite religious capital of Amritsir, and the contiguous fortress of Govindghar. Still in its decline of splendour, Shálímár has sufficient beauties to interest and delight a visitor, whose regret will be powerfully excited that desolation should be suffered to obscure the noblest garden which belonged to the imperial family of Taimúr.

Lahore although possessing a certain degree of trade and traffic with its populous vicinity, is a dull city in a commercial sense. Amritsir has become the great mart of the Panjáb, and the bankers and capitalists of the country have taken up their abodes there. It has also absorbed in great measure the manufacturers, and its prosperity has allured to it a vast number of the starving artisans of Kāshmir.

About a mile and half south of Lahore is the small bazár town or village of Noa Kot, in appearance venerable, and worthy of notice, from having been the head quarters of Ranjít Sing, when he succeeded in obtaining possession of Lahore, which, as I was informed, was effected in the following manner.

The city and destined capital of a powerful Sikh kingdom was then occupied by four Sikh chiefs, each independent of the other, and all engaged in mutual warfare. While affairs thus stood, Ranjit Sing presented himself before the place with seven hundred horse. The common danger united the four chiefs, who prepared to defend the city. The young invader unable from the description of his troops to make any impression upon a town surrounded by a substantial wall, took up a position at Noa Kot, whence he harassed the vicinity. He remained some months adhering to the plan he had adopted, when the cultivators of the garden grounds, whose labours were necessarily suspended, became reduced to extremities to procure subsistence. Seeing no probability of a termination to the evil, they applied to Ranjit Sing, and volunteered to conduct him into the city by some unguarded or neglected entrance. He confided in their promises, and his troops were introduced at night, when after the slaughter usual on such occasions, Ranjit Sing became master of

Lahore. Hence may be dated the downfall of the independent Sikh chiefs, and the consequent supreme authority of their conqueror. Noa Kot is now granted as a provision to Ayúb Sháh, the phantom king of Mahomed Azem Khán's creation, who after his deposition and imprisonment at Kábal by Fúr Dill Khán, found his way to Lahore, and where he lives a pensioner of the Máhárájá.

It may be deemed superfluous to allude to the religious belief and opinions of the Sikhs, as those subjects have received the attention of Sir John Malcolm and others, who had access to the best sources of information. My notice on such topics will therefore be brief. It is certain that the Sikhs of the present day have widely deviated from the system of the founder of their sect, and have become in place of harmless freethinkers a nation of infuriated fanatics. This important change dates from the reign of Aurangzéb, whose intolerance led him to persecute the Sikhs, and as persecution naturally begets resistance, the ninth and last of the Gúrús, Govind Sing, who at that time presided over them, ordered his followers to arm, and the sword was drawn which has never since been sheathed. Govind Sing, the Sikhs pretend, predicted to the bigoted emperor that, his kingdom would be wrested from his successors by the men who visited Hindústán in large ships. There is a considerable difference between the system established by the first Gúrú or Teacher, Bábá Nának, and that introduced by the last warlike Gúrú, Govind Sing.

Nának, I believe was born of Mahomedan parents, and was probably imbued with Súfí principles, which closely resemble those he promulgated, as respects the nature of the deity, the kind of homage most agreeable to him, the relative connection of body and soul, and the prospects of man in a future state — they also coincide as concerns the doctrine of equality, a condition of society, which however impossible, is inculcated by both systems. It may be doubted whether Nának ever contemplated that the few disciples congregated around him, were the forerunners of a great and numerous people destined to future command and empire, or that the doctrines he announced were decreed to spread over extensive regions; yet in the political state of his own and neighbouring countries at the time he lived, the secondary laws he prescribed for the regulation of his nascent community, were unconsciously perhaps on his part, the ones best calculated to effect objects so extraordinary, by the organization of a sect, that silently but surely encreasing in strength and numbers, should in the fullness of time develop itself, and assert its claims to power and ascendancy. In the first place his tenets, if such they may be called, could be appreciated by the most ordinary understandings, as they are rather a-

greable delusions than sound and stern truths requiring the pain of reflection to be understood. In the second place he allowed his votaries every indulgence possible in diet and their manner of life, compatible with the prejudices of the Hindú and Mahomedan population around him, and lastly by enjoining conversion he provided for the encrease of his community, by securing the accession of the oppressed and degraded of all faiths and nations. By removing the distinction of caste he decoyed the miserable and ignorant Hindú, and it is notorious that it has been amongst the lowest of the Jet agricultural population of the Panjáb, that the vast proportions of Sikh converts have been made, and nothing is more remarkable at the present day than the want of general knowledge prevailing amongst the Sikhs, even of the highest rank. With regard to articles of food, Nának has merely forbidden his followers to eat the cow, a prohibition due to the indelible prejudices of the Hindús of whom he hoped to make converts. He has permitted unqualified indulgence in wine and other intoxicating liquors. Like most founders of new religions, he must needs forbid something, and he has therefore proscribed tobacco, which his adherents are not permitted to touch; but as he well knew the practice of smoking the condemned herb was general amongst Hindús, and could but be aware that tenacity of old customs and the reluctance to dispense with wonted enjoyments were characteristics in human nature, he wisely enacted, lest the interdiction might prove an obstacle to his favorite plan of conversion, that any Hindú on being admitted a Sikh, who had previously been accustomed to smoke tobacco and to drink wine, might according to his pleasure continue the use of one or the other. In his character as an inspired person, it became him to prophecy. He has done so, and in the various prophetic legacies ascribed to him, his followers view the predictions of the capture of Múltán, Káshmir, Mankírah, Pesháwer, &c. in short of every success that has happened to them. There yet remains to be fulfilled the capture of Kábal, before the gates of which vast numbers of Sikhs are to fall, and their subjection to British authority for one hundred and forty years, (which they suppose will commence on the demise of Ranjit Sing.) At the expiration of that period they are to emerge from thralldom, and being masters of Hindústán, are to cross the sea and destroy the fortress of Lanka. They are also to possess themselves of the holy Mekka, and terminate the Mahomedan religion. The books I have seen containing these prophecies are embellished with many pictorial illustrations. The capture of Lanka is depicted by a number of monstrous looking

men, with maces, demolishing a series of towers placed on the head of another figure equally hideous in appearance.

To allow the sect to acquire consistency, a considerable period of repose was necessary, and it is probable this was secured by the unassuming habits and moderate pretensions of the community under the direction of its first eight Gúrús, as I am not aware that any mention is made of it before the time of Aurangzéb. Up to that period their proud Mahomedan lords, may have considered them as merely a sect of Hindús, objects of contempt but not of persecution. How long they might have continued in this obscure state is uncertain, had not the energetic but intolerant Aurangzéb, amongst other vast projects, undertaken to reform religion, and with this view instituted an enquiry into the various faiths professed by his subjects. In the Panjáb, a land it would appear in all ages fruitful in heresies, there were abundance of innovations and abuses needing the strong arm of the monarch to repress, and the Sikhs with their doctrines, which by him must have been deemed inconceivably impious and absurd, would naturally call for the decided exercise of his zeal. His attempts, by coercion, after argument and command had failed, to compel them to renounce their tenets, induced them, as I before noted, to arm, and by revealing to them their strength and powers of resistance, effected an entire change in the constitution of their community. I am unacquainted with the particulars of Aurangzéb's persecution of the sect, but the Sikhs say, that their Gúrú Govind Sing fell into his power. He may have made many martyrs, but we need not the testimony of his history to be certain that he made little progress in the reclamation of the infidels. When death delivered the Sikhs from so terrible a persecutor, the anarchy which attended the succession must have been in every way favorable to the augmentation of their numbers, and consequently we find them exciting tumults which required the presence of the Delhí sovereigns to repress. From this time they were most likely, according to the temper of the age, or of the governor over them, subject to more or less oppression, as the course of events had made them too prominent to escape notice; and as yet being unable from want of unity to keep the field against their adversaries, they adopted the plan open to them of irregular annoyance, and fell into the condition little better than that of banditti, in which they were found when the campaigns of Ahmed Sháh again bring them forth to observation. During this time however they had resolved into a multitude of little bands under various leaders, and had established strong holds and places of refuge without number. — Their subsequent aggrandizement is so

well known, that an allusion to it suffices;— the rapid decline of the Dúrání empire, and the appearance amongst them of Ranjit Sing, enabled them to assume a regular form of government, and to erect a powerful kingdom from the wrecks of the states and principalities around them.

It must be obvious that the religious opinions of the Sikhs are no less at variance with the dogmas of Hindúism, than they are in opposition to those of Islám. Still the inveterate hostility with which they regard the professors of the latter faith, have induced an involuntary inclination in favor of the votaries of Bráhma, which these, although it cost some efforts to overcome their repugnance, allured perhaps by the splendid successes of the Sikhs, and indulging bright expectations from their growing power, have at length thought prudent to reciprocate. By establishing colleges of their sect at Benares, the followers of Nának have in some degree ceased to be a peculiar class, as they have thereby evinced the desire to be incorporated with the great body of Hindús; and the Bráhmans who accorded the permission to do so, must have anticipated some overweaning advantages, or they would scarcely have admitted amongst them a people, whose main principle of conversion and doctrine of equality alike strike at the very roots of the system they uphold. We may suspect that the crafty hierarchy, conscious of the very little chance of the re-establishment of Hindú supremacy, and anticipating the probable extension of the new and vigorous sect, and its eventual domination in Hindústán, were willing in such a case, to have associated themselves with it, and for the preservation of their own dignity and position to have adopted it, as in times of yore, they did the victorious race of Katris or Rájputis.

In ordinary intercourse with Hindús, the Sikhs treat them with little courtesy, and the banya or trader seldom receives a more delicate appellative than kotá or dog. The Bráhman however is more respected, and forms a part of the establishment of every chief, assisting in religious offices. As the number of Gúrús, or teachers of the sect, was limited to nine, who have long since passed away, the Granth or sacred volume containing their précepts, is now the subject of veneration, and for it they have a very great respect. It is lodged on a table in a spacious apartment in most of their villages, all come and make obeisance to it, and any one qualified may open it and read aloud a portion of it. The Sikhs are not enjoined to observe many forms or prayers, I observed that generally in the evening they offered up a short orison, which in conformity to the military complexion thrown over all their acts,

they repeated, firmly grasping with both hands their swords, and which concluded with a vociferous invocation to their Gúrú, for victory and the extension of the faith. The cattle they employ as food, are slaughtered by having their heads severed by a stroke of the sword. They wear the Hindú string or cord around their necks, and use the tasbí or rosary. They generally style the Supreme Intelligence, Sáhib, and call themselves Singhs or Lions. Those who respectfully address them, salute them as Khálsajís or men of the commonwealth.

It was long since foretold by a celebrated traveller (Mr. Forster,) that the Sikhs would become a powerful nation, whenever some enterprising chief, should, by the destruction of their numerous petty leaders, unite them under his sole control. We have witnessed the accomplishment of this prediction by Ranjit Sing, and the Sikhs have become an independent and powerful people. The system of numerous distinct but confederated chieftains arose from the patriarchal institution recommended by Nának, who merely directed that his followers should in any particular crisis, assemble at the holy city of Amritsir. Hence the assumed authority of Ranjit Sing must be considered as an infraction of the fundamental laws of the Sikhs, and although it has been rendered agreeable to the majority of them, by their advancement to wealth and command, in consequence of his manifold and splendid conquests, its establishment was long strenuously opposed, and was effected only by the subversion of a multitude of chiefs attached to the old order of things. Ranjit Sing's policy has led him to make a new creation of chiefs and leaders, selecting them generally from the lower classes, thereby forming a set of men attached to himself, and the new system to which they owe their elevation. That the usurpation of Ranjit Sing has been favorable to the encrease of Síkh power, no one can doubt, for anterior to him, so far from having any common object or bond of union, sufficient for the preservation of tranquillity amongst them, they were, if not coalesced by the necessity of providing against danger from abroad, perpetually engaged in strife with each other. That the consolidation of their power, and their subjection to authority has improved the state of society with them, is also undeniable, as it has conferred upon them a reputation to sustain, which they did not before enjoy. Time was that a Síkh and a robber were synonymous terms, now few thefts are heard of, and seldom or ever those wholesale forays to which the chiefs were once so much addicted. If the predatory propensity still lurk amongst some of them, the restraints of justice prevent its indulgence. At this day the operation

of the laws is so effective, that there are few eastern countries, in which the solitary traveller can pass with more safety, than the Panjáb.

In the reign of Ahmed Sháh, the first Dúraní sovereign, the Sikhs were prodigiously increasing the number of their converts, and were excited by all the phrenzy and confidence of aspiring sectaries. That great prince gave it as his opinion, when urged to attempt their control, that it was prudent to defer attack upon them, until the fervor of their religious enthusiasm had diminished. Zemán Sháh in pursuance of his designs upon Hindústán, several times visited the Panjáb, and was extremely anxious to have duly subjected the Sikhs. He seems to have employed both harsh and conciliatory measures, and so far succeeded that the several chiefs, and amongst them Ranjit Sing, who was even then powerful, were prevailed upon to visit Lahore, and pay homage to him. The prince farther conceived, (or it was suggested by some of his advisers,) the project of making Lahore his capital, an arrangement which if carried into effect, would have materially changed the train of events, but which was overruled by his principal Sirdárs, who would not consent to abandon Khorasán. In one of Zemán Sháh's expeditions, Ranjit Sing with his troops, it is said, sought refuge at Patíála, east of the Satlej, and repaid the Rájá for the asylum granted to him by the seizure of many of his guns and other warlike implements, with which he had before been unprovided. It is commonly asserted in the Panjáb, that the Sikhs became masters of arms and horses by the plunder of the Mahratta armies, which flying from the pursuit of Lord Lake entered within their borders. From the deposition of Zemán Sháh, the politics of the Afgháns were too distracted to permit them to interfere with the Sikhs, who finally defeated and slew the Dúraní governor located at Lahore, and possessed themselves of the city. Ranjit Sing who had received a kind of diploma as chief of the Sikhs from Zemán Sháh had no ostentible part in this transaction: and eventually, as I have already related, acquired the city from those who had. The capture of the capital led to the general acknowledgment of his authority, and besides reducing the contumacious of his own sect, he directed his arms against the petty Mahomedan rulers bordering on the Satlej, and always contrived to subdue or to circumvent them.

It is certain that during the reign of Sháh Sújah, the Sikhs called their great military chief, Pádsháh or king. The expulsion of that Dúraní prince, and the confusion in the countries of the west, presented opportunities of aggrandizement, too tempting to be neglected by the Lahore ruler, whose authority at home had become sufficiently estab-

lished to allow him to direct his attention abroad. Yet even under these circumstances, he displayed much forbearance and moderation, and it was only after much provocation that he commenced to profit by the anarchy prevalent in the states of the Afghán empire. He possessed himself of Atak and Káshmir, of the provinces of Múltán and of Líya, and constituted the Indus the boundary of his kingdom, while he made tributary the several petty chiefships on the western banks. He also seized Déra Ghází Khán and Déra Fatí Khán, which had been in a manner evacuated by their owners. While thus employed in the south and west, he was equally industrious and successful to the north amongst the various independent Hindú states of the hills, subjecting Jamú, and establishing his claims to tribute in Mandéh, &c. He moreover obtained the strong hill fort of Kot Kàngrah, which he much coveted, from Rájá Sensár Chand of Sújahánpúr, as the price of expelling an army of Gúrkas, that besieged it. On the demise of this Rájá some two years since, he invaded the territory of Sújahánpúr on the most unjustifiable plea, and annexed it to his own dominion; the son of Sensár Chand seeking an asylum in British Hindústán. Ranjit Sing has moreover invaded Baháwálpúr under pretence that the Khán had assisted his enemy Sháh Sújah ul-múlk, and he has exacted a tribute of nine lákhs of rupees, or one half of the revenue of the country. The fertile province of Pesháwer has also been devastated by the Máhárájá, who not only requires an annual tribute of horses, swords, jewels, rice &c. but sends large bodies of troops to ravage the country, apparently with the view of keeping it depressed. In the same manner, his hordes annually visit the Yúsafzai districts on the plain, and carry off a tribute in horses. In most cases, if the proportion of tribute be fixed, it is little acted upon, and in the instance of the petty states west of the Indus, is very much dependent upon the will of Harí Sing, Ranjit Sing's commander on the western frontier. As regards the collection at Déra Ismael Khán, Ták, and such little chiefships where opposition is out of the question, sixty or one hundred horsemen, without previous intimation, arrive at the residence of a chief, and present an order from Harí Sing for forty, fifty or sixty thousand rupees, as the case may be; and they remain, giving themselves many airs, and entertained at the expence of the chief, until the sum is made up. At Pesháwer, the evil of collection is more seriously felt, for ten or fifteen thousand men sometimes march, and destroy the whole cultivation. The levy of the Baháwalpúr tribute also calls for the dispatch of a large force, which does not however pass beyond Milsa, on the northern bank of the Gárrah. To the east Ranjit Sing cannot pass the Satlej without

violating his engagements with the British; on all other sides he is at liberty to act, and contemplates the conquest of Sind, from which he has been in the habit of receiving annual presents since his invasion of Baháwalpúr, when his troops were pushed on to Sabzal Kot, the frontier post of the Sindian territory. Since I was at Lahore, the treachery which put him in possession of the Baloch provinces of Hárand and Dhájl, has materially advanced the prosecution of his designs, by laying open to him the road to the wealthy city of Shikárpúr. This important acquisition has induced a complete change in the arrangements hitherto adopted as to the conquered states in that quarter. The town and territory of Déra Ghází Khán, before farmed to the Khán of Baháwalpúr, has been resumed, and M. Ventura has been appointed governor with orders to build a strong fort, evidently intended for a place d'armes in the intended operations against Sind. The petty chief of Sanghar has been also expelled, and his lands annexed to the government of Múltán.

The revenue of Ranjit Sing, I believe may be accurately estimated at two and a half crores of rupees, or about two and a half millions sterling. It is calculated that after defraying the expences of his government and army, he is enabled to place in deposit one crore of rupees annually. It is farther believed that he has already in his treasury ten crores of rupees in money — and his various magazines of military arms and stores are annually increased in a certain ratio.

The military force of Ranjit Sing demands attention, and I believe it may be estimated in round numbers at seventy thousand men, of whom perhaps twenty thousand are disciplined after the French and other modes. I do not pretend to speak positively as to the position and numbers of the Síkh troops, but generally speaking the following particulars may be nearly depended upon.

In Káshmir	10000	Under orders of Súparsád, the Bráhmín governor.
With the King	3000	
Karak Sing	2000	} Sons of the king.
Shír Sing	3000	
Tárah Sing	1500	
Rájá Daiyan Sing	5000	
Hári Sing	10000	In command of the frontier on Indus.
Khúshíal Sing	3000	Gúrcheris, generally near the king.
Shám Sing	800	One of the old chiefs.
Fatí Sing	500	In authority towards the Satlej.
Ganda Sing	800	Garrison of Múltán.
Officer commanding at		
Mankírah	500	In garrison.
Nájib Regiment	1000	Ranjit's first raised Battalion.

Regulars.	M. Allard's Cavalry . . .	3000	1 Regt. Lancers 2 Regt. Dragoons.
	M. Ventura's Infantry . .	4000	2 Battalion Regt. 1 Regt. Light Infantry and 1 Regt. of Gúrkas.
	M. Court's Infantry . . .	1000	Battalion Regt.
	M. Avitabile's Infantry . .	1000	Battalion Regt.
	M. Mevius's Infantry . . .	1500	Battalion Regt.
	Mr. Campbell's Cavalry . .	1200	These officers were dismissed when I was at Lahore : the Regt. Light Cavalry.
	Mr. Garron's Cavalry . . .	600	
	Dowkal Sing's Paltan . . .	1000	Battalion Regt.
	Newly raised Battalion . .	1000	Under drill.
	Camp of the late M. Amise.		
	Infantry	4000	Battalion Regt. } at present without commander or European Chief.
	Cavalry	2000	
Artillery reckoning broadly ten men to every gun, and supposing 200 Guns . . .	2000	Principally horse Artillery, and now in course of training by M. Allard.	
Allowance for the troops of Rájá Gúlab Sing of Jamú and the several petty Sikh Chiefs dispersed over the country, and not otherwise included	10000		
Total 73400			

The disciplined troops of Ranjit Sing have a highly respectable appearance, are well clothed and equipped, and appear to be in want of no necessaries. Their value in the field remains yet to be ascertained. On the few occasions they have seen service, their enemies have not been of a stamp to establish a criterion. The regiments are indiscriminately filled with Mússúlmáns and Sikhs, and wear for head dresses the pagrí of the Panjáb, each regiment adopting a distinguishing color as red, blue green, &c. In other respects they are clothed similarly to the native troops in the British Indian service. The Gúrkas alone wear caps. As soldiers the natives of the Panjáb are extremely patient of fatigue, and capable of making prodigious marches with apparent ease; on this point they pride themselves, and they evince not only willingness, but pleasure and mutual emulation in learning military exercises. But they are prone to plunder; and it is invariably their custom at the close of a march to separate from their camp, and to rove over the country for four or five miles, armed with cudjels, and making booty of any thing that falls in their way.

As men, physically speaking, the natives of the Panjáb are superior to those of Hindústán Proper. Their limbs are muscular and well proportioned, and they have a stoutness of leg and calf seldom seen in the Hindústání. Instances of very tall stature may be rare, the general standard being a little above the middle size. The Sikhs are certainly a fine race of men, particularly the better classes. Their females being seldom permitted to go abroad, I can scarcely speak decidedly concerning them, but the five or six, I have by chance met with, would justify the supposition that they are very attractive. They wear extraordinary high conical caps producing a curious effect with trowsers. The dress of the men is peculiar but not inelegant, consisting of the Panjáb pagrí for the head, a vest or jacket fitting close to the body and arms, with large bulky trowsers terminating at the knee, the legs from the knee being naked. Chiefs occasionally wear full trowsers, which however are recent introductions, and many people remember the time when the Máhárájá and his court could scarcely be said to wear trowsers at all. Over the shoulders a scarf is usually thrown. Generally speaking these articles of dress are white. The Sikhs to their honor are very cleanly in their linen, in which particular they advantageously differ from their Mússúlmán compatriots. Their scarfs are usually trimmed with a colored silk border, and sometimes scarlet shawls or other shewy fabrics are employed. The Sikhs allow the hair of their heads to attain its full growth, and gather it up into a knot at the crown, agreeably to the old Jetic fashion. By pressing it tightly back from the forehead, they somewhat elevate the upper part of the face, which imparts a peculiar cast to the countenance.

The Sikhs are almost exclusively a military and agricultural people. They pay much attention to the breeding of horses, and there is scarcely one of them, who has not one or more brood mares. Hence amongst the irregular cavalry, a service to which they are partial, nearly every man's horse is bonâ fide his own property, and even in the regular cavalry, a very trifling proportion of the horses belongs to the Máhárájá. It must be confessed that the Sikhs are barbarous, so far as the want of information and intelligence can make them, yet they have not that savage disposition which makes demons of the rude tribes of the more western countries. They are frank, generous, social and lively. The cruelties they have practised against the Mahomedans in the countries they have subdued, ought not I think, to be alledged against them as a proof of their ferocity. Heaven knows the fury of the bigotted Mahomedan is terrible, and the persecuted Sikhs in their day had been literally hunted like beasts of

the field. At present flushed by a series of victories, they have a zeal and buoyancy of spirit amounting to enthusiasm, and with the power of taking the most exemplary revenge, they have been still more lenient than the Mahomedans were ever towards them. Morality, I believe is scarcely recognized amongst them, and chastity, I have been told, is neither observed or expected to be observed by their females. It is no unusual arrangement for the many brothers of a family to have a wife in common, and I have known the soldiers of M. Allard request permission to visit their homes, alledging that their brothers had gone on a journey, and their wives were alone. The plea was considered a good one. Such customs must not be imputable to them as Sikhs, they are rather the remains of an ancient and rude state of society. It must also be observed that trespasses on the rules of decency must be made by themselves, and amongst themselves: liberties taken by strangers would be held as crimes, and resented accordingly. Should the Sikhs continue an independent nation, it may be supposed that increased civilization will gradually remove these traces of barbarism. Though professed converters, they are perfectly tolerant, and though singular in some of their usages, they never require others to imitate them. On the whole, having seen the turbulent tribes of Khorasán, and the frivolous races of Sind and Baháwalpúr, I was pleased with the Sikhs, and could believe that when in course of time they grow a little more enlightened, they will become a superior people.

The Síkh irregular cavalry have a peculiar exercise at which they are very expert. In action, their reliance is not so much upon the charge, as upon a desultory species of warfare, to which they are well trained. It consists in advancing upon their enemies until their matchlocks can take effect, discharging them and precipitately retreating to reload, and to repeat the same manœuvre. They are considered good shots, and their plan has generally answered, but they have had to encounter no opponents provided with strong divisions of artillery. Yet it must not be forgotten that in two or three actions with the Afgháns, when these latter thought fit to fight, the Sikhs have been unable to withstand the fury of the Dúrání charge.

There is, amongst the Sikhs, a class of military fanatics, called Akálías, who clothe themselves in black, and are always armed in a most profuse manner, some of them have half a dozen swords stuck about them and their horses, and as many pistols and other arms. They carry round the top of their pagrí, a circular steel disc, with a rim perhaps an inch broad, the edge of which is very sharp. I at first supposed this instrument was intended to break the cut of a sword,

but learned that it was an offensive weapon thrown by the hand, and I was assured that these men could eject it with such force, that they could divide the leg of a horse or even of an elephant.

The pay of the troops provided for by *jághírs* or the assignment of lands is of course very variable. That of the regular infantry, is said to be one rupee higher, to the private soldier, than in the British service. The pay of the officers in the regular battalions is also fixed, but still fluctuates, as those made by the *Máhárájá* himself receive extravagant allowances, while those promoted by the commanding officers receive only the regulated stipend. The troops are not paid with punctuality, but they are certain of receiving all arrears once during the year. The Sikhs are allowed every year the indulgence of leave for three months to visit their homes. They return at the annual festival of *Dassérah*, when the *Máhárája* reviews the assembled force of his kingdom. *Amritsir* is usually the spot selected for this review. The Sikhs being permitted the free use of wine, it is much to their credit, that during the nine months they are present with their regiments, the greater part of them abstain from it, and make up for their forbearance during the revelry of the liberty season.

Ranjit Sing is the son of *Máhá Sing*, and was born at *Gújarán-wála*, a small town about sixty miles west of *Lahore*. In his early infancy he manifested a predilection for war, and all his amusements had reference to that art. Such was the barbarism of the Sikhs at that period, that the young son of a chief was not taught to read or to write, accomplishments which he has never since acquired. On the demise of his father, being yet a minor, his mother assumed the authority, but suspecting that she intended to keep his patrimony from him, he slew her, and by so terrific a deed, acquired the government of his native town and the command of two thousand horse. From that moment he commenced his plans of aggrandizement. It was one of his first objects to raise a disciplined regiment of foreigners, a singular proof of sagacity in a country, where every one was a horseman. This regiment, his present *Najib Paltan* was of eminent service to him, and now enjoys many privileges. He was some years employed in the reduction of his own countrymen, and finally by taking advantage of the disorders in *Afghánistán*, has become a powerful prince; and the only absolutely independent one in what may be termed *Hindústán*. *Ranjit Sing* owes his elevation to his own ability and energy, favored by the concurring circumstances of the times. He has always been his own counsellor, and at present surrounded with officers and ministers he takes no opinion on important

state affairs. As a general, setting aside his good fortune, he has exhibited decisive proofs of great personal valour, quickness of conception, and promptitude of execution. He exemplified, in the investment of Múltán, an acquaintance with stratagem, and in the siege of Mankírah, remarkable perseverance and a possession of resources to meet difficulties that would have done honor to any general. In his campaigns, on the Indus, his achievements were of the most brilliant kind, and no commander could have surpassed him in the beauty and celerity of his movements. In his relation with his troops he appears to great advantage, enjoying the general esteem which his kindness and liberality have secured. Not a day passes without thousands of fervent aspirations for the continuance of his life. He is equally popular with the generality of his subjects, and rules with an equal hand both Mússúlmán and Hindú. The only hardship of which the former complains is the interdiction of Azán or summons to prayers. His devastation of countries on their subjection, a measure seemingly injurious to his own interests, does not originate so much in cruelty, as it is in obedience to a barbarous system of warfare long established in these countries.

The annual visits to Pesháwer, and other dependent states, are evidently made with the political view of keeping them depressed, and of preventing the possibility of reaction. Although himself illiterate, he has a respect for acquirements in others, and when occasion presented itself during his first visit to Pesháwer of shewing his esteem for literature, he did not neglect it, and issued positive orders for the preservation of the extensive library of the Mússúlmán saint at Chamkanní. He must be deemed charitable, if we may judge from the large sums daily lavished upon faquírs and others, and his bounty extends to the Mahomedan, as well as the Hindú. He is undoubtedly gifted with liberality of mind, as evinced in his deportment to his Mahomedan subjects, who are admitted to all posts and ranks. His confidential physician is faquí Azzíz-al-Dín, and no man perhaps is more trusted by him. Although he has elevated some of his menial servants to the highest commands in the state, it must be admitted that they have proved men of high merit, witness Harí Sing, Khús-síál Sing, and others. The former of these was however a towns fellow, and playmate of the Máhárájá in his childhood, and the prince has not a more devoted subject or a more intrepid general. Mír Dhaiyán Singh, it is said, was found a stripling in the jangal on some ravaging expedition, his personal attractions pleased the Máhárájá, and his subservience to his impure desires has affected his promotion to the dignity of minister and Rajá, and the advancement of all his

family. He has not proved deficient in talent, although much so in moral excellence, unless he be belied. Mír Dhaiyán Sing has two brothers, Gúláb Sing and Súchít Sing; both have been created Rájás, and Gúláb Sing, as governor of Jamú, possesses very great power. Súchít Sing, it is asserted, was once as much a favorite of the Máhárájá as his brother Dhaiyán Sing. These three brothers, called the Rájás, have been raised to more influence than perhaps is agreeable to Ranjit Sing, but it was his own act, and however repentant, he scruples to acknowledge his error by degrading them. Yet it is popularly believed, that if he could get them together, he would not hesitate to seize them, but they, aware of the probability of such an accident, take care never to attend the court at the same time.

Ranjit Sing has but one son, Karak Sing, who is considered legitimate, or who is believed by himself to be so, according to report. This prince has proved incapable of command, and his father has been obliged to remove most of the troops he placed under him, owing to the disorders his son permitted or was unable to control. He is esteemed imbecile, but I suspect is merely of a mild, placid disposition, averse to cruelty as to exertion. He has frequently remonstrated against the violent measures of his father, particularly against the occupation of Sújáhanpúr, with the young Rájá of which he had contracted friendship by the exchange of tarbans. Rájá Dhaiyán Sing, it is said, presumed to intrigue with his wife, an injury which might have passed over unnoticed by him, but was resented by Shír Sing, who castigated the offender in open darbár. Karak Sing has a young son, No Nihál Sing, of whom Ranjit Sing and the Sikhs generally, entertain great hopes and high expectations.

Shír Sing is the son of one of Ranjit Sing's wives; whom he married for political purposes, and whose turbulent spirit has occasioned him much trouble. In his cups, the Máhárájá declares her offspring to be due to some dhobí or washerman. The young man has however merit, which procures his being treated with respect. He is brave and generous, and very popular with the soldiery. He attaches himself a good deal to the French officers and to Europeans generally, and many people looking at the incapacity of Karak Sing, consider his prospects favorable, but he is extremely dissipated.

Besides these there are three others, Tárrah Sing, Pesháwar Sing and Káshmirí Sing, by universal opinion pronounced suppositious, the sons of various females whose fortune has located them in the Máhárájá's háram. By the little notice he takes of them, the prince plainly shews that he coincides with the public sentiment.

It is already foreseen, even by the Sikhs, that the succession will be disputed, and the death of Ranjit Sing will inevitably involve the Panjáb in all the horrors of anarchy. In person the Máharájá is a little below the middle size, and very meagre. His complexion is fair, and his features regular with aquiline nose. He carries along white beard, and wants the left eye. Though apparently far advanced in years, I believe he has not completed fifty. On the right side of his neck, a large scar is visible, probably the effect of a wound. In his diet he is represented abstemious, but has always been perniciously prone to copious cups of the strongest spirits, which with his unbounded sensuality has brought on him premature old age, with a serious burthen of infirmities. For some ailment he makes daily use of laudanum. Simple in his dress, which is of white linen, he wears on his arm the celebrated diamond Kohí Núr, of which he deprived Sháh Sújáh al Múlkh, who had promised it to him, but first attempted to dupe him, and then to withhold it altogether. His attendants, domestics, &c. are splendidly clad, and display a profusion of gold and jewelled ornaments. Although Ranjit Sing, in his relations with the Mússúlmáns to the west, assumes a high tone; at home he simply styles himself Sirkár. The principal fault of this prince is ambition, the ordinary failing of kings, which sometimes leads him into unjustifiable measures, of which the most flagrant was the expulsion of the Rájá of Sújahánpúr, on no better plea than that he would not consent to degrade his rank and descent, by giving his sister in marriage to the minister Rájá Dhaiyán Sing, a Dogra of low cast, and a man of questionable character. In his affairs with the Afgháns he has always received ample provocation, and the shameless deceit and perfidy constantly played off upon him by their shortsighted and unprincipled chiefs and politicians, deserved the vengeance he has inflicted upon them.

To sum up his character, as a public man, he is a prince of consummate ability, a warrior brave and skilful, and a good but crafty statesman. In his private or individual capacity he has many shining qualities, but they are obscured by many failings, and by habits so grossly sensual, that they can scarcely be excused, by the knowledge, that they may be attributed to the barbarous period at which he was born, or by the fact, that in such respect he is not worse than many of his compatriots. If there be a prince of antiquity to whom he may be compared, I think it might be Philip of Macedon. Both claim our admiration as public characters, and our censure as private men. On a review however of their actions, their means, and

advantages of birth, it may perhaps be conceded that the more splendid career has been run by the conqueror of the Panjáb.

X. — Observations on the Political Condition of the Dúrání States and Dependencies.

[It may not be improper to state the circumstances under which this paper was written. In 1829, residing with the late Colonel David Wilson, then Resident at Búshír, he laid before me the work of the Hon'ble Mr. Elphinstone, and requested me to note freely in the margins of the respective pages, any remarks I choose to make. I accepted the task, but soon found my ability at fault, for the work contained more information than I possessed; and this was only natural, as the scanty knowledge I could acquire in a brief transit through a country, and with no very favorable opportunities, could not, of course, be comparable with that gained by the highly popular chief of a favored mission, to augment which even the monarch of the day was proud to exert himself. In this case, finding I could not do exactly what Colonel Wilson desired, the great political changes which had occurred in Afghánistán since the time of Mr. Elphinstone's visit to Pesháwer, enabled me, in another mode, to oblige him, and the wish to do so led to the composition of this document. In the original paper there were some inaccuracies, which I have now corrected. I have also made a few additions with the view of presenting with tolerable accuracy the state of Afghánistán up to 1830, in other respects there is no material alteration.

C. MASSON. 1841.]

When we reflect on the former power, and extended authority of the Dúrání empire, and contrast it with its present feeble condition and limited sway, we cannot but be impressed with humble ideas of earthly prosperity. The sword which had triumphed in many a conflict on Persian and Indian soils — which had wrested the fairest gem from the diadem of the vanquished descendant of Taimúr, and which even was supposed to menace the existence of European power in Hindostan, is now drawn only within the contracted limits of a few spared provinces, and in inglorious intestine commotions. The dependent states, whose chiefs obeyed the behests of the Sháh of Afghánistán, and heaped his coffers with tributary gold, are now independent, or reduced to subjection by Ranjit Sing, who once appear-