

Note on the complication with Hunza.

The following information about the geographical and political conditions of Hunza is extracted from Barrow's Gazetteer of the Eastern Hindu Kush.

2. *Physical aspect.*—Hunza or Kanjut is bounded on the north and east by the Hindu Kush and Karakorum mountains, which separate it from the Tagdumbash Pamir; on the west by the mountains which separate it from the Karumbar valley, and on the south by the Hunza river, which separates it from Nagar. The mountains which surround it are of the most rugged, lofty, and desolate nature, generally speaking about 20,000 feet, but there are numerous peaks rising above this altitude.

3. *Inhabitants.*—The northern portion of the territory (Guhjal) is inhabited by people who emigrated from Wakhan and still speak the Wakhi dialect. The southern portion (Kanjut) by Dards who are usually spoken of as Kanjutis, and are of the same race as the people of Nagar. The total population is estimated at about 10,000, and is almost entirely confined to the narrow valley of the Hunza river and one or two of its tributaries.

4. *Communications.*—The communications are desperately bad except in the winter, when the bed of the rivers can be used. In summer they are quite unfit for laden animals owing to the floods.

The principal roads are :—

- (a) From Gilgit *via* Chalt to Hunza, 52 miles in length, along the Hunza river. The road is described by Biddulph as being so bad as to be barely practicable, and between Nomal and Chalt to have been purposely left in this condition.
- (b) From Hunza to Gircha.
- (c) From Gircha on the N. road by the Irshad pass to Wakhan, by the Kilik pass to Sarikol or Wakhan, by the Khunjerab pass to Sarikol.

The Gazetteer says that, while there is no difficulty for troops in traversing these passes and reaching Hunza from the north, the route from Hunza to Gilgit is impracticable for troops. Recent events show that this opinion requires modification.

5. *Town of Hunza.*—The so-called town of Hunza is a cluster of small villages, with a population of 5,000 or 6,000. The residence of the Mir is a fort perched on a hill dominating the whole valley, with only one road up to it, but within artillery range of the Nagar bank of the river.

6. *History.*—On the history of Hunza even tradition is silent. At one time, no doubt, Hunza and Nagar were parts of the same State; one which, Biddulph says, presents the spectacle of a race living under almost the same conditions now as their forefathers did fourteen centuries ago.

The rulers of Hunza and Nagar are both known as Thums, and are descended from twin brothers.

Hunza is a monarchy of the most absolute description. The Thum kills or sells his subjects into slavery at his own sweet will, and there is no law known save the will of the ruler.

The Kanjutis are small and slight compared with other Dards, but have a greater reputation for bravery. They bear an evil reputation amongst their neighbours, as they are given to slave dealing and raiding. Secure in the inaccessibility of their country, they have preyed on all their neighbours

without fear of retribution. The caravans between Yarkand and Leh were regularly plundered in the valley of the Yarkand river by the Hunza people, whilst the Chinese authorities winked at a proceeding which they were unable to prevent or punish. The raids were organized by the Thum, and looked on as a right conferred by the proximity of the caravan route. Besides the plunder carried off, young men were generally seized and sold into slavery, which caused Hunza to become the chief place of resort for slave merchants from Badakshan. During the rule of the Atalik Ghazi in Kashgar a temporary check was put on these raids.

7. The Kanjutis belong to the Maulai sect of Shiahhs, but nevertheless drink wine without concealment, and appear to be altogether very lax in their religion. Firearms were (this was written some five years ago) scarce, the ordinary equipment being sword and shield.

8. *Relations of Hunza with Kashmir.*—With the former rulers of Gilgit the people of Hunza seem to have lived on tolerably good terms, rendering them nominal allegiance in the days of their prosperity, but asserting their independence as the later "Trakhane" grew weak. With the Sikh and Dogra Governors of Gilgit they were constantly at loggerheads, the attacks which the former made on them to compel submission being always foiled.

In 1869 the raids from Hunza (into Gilgit) were at last put an end to by Ghazan Khan (the late Thum, assassinated in 1886 by his son, Safdar Ali,* the present Thum), who agreed to yield allegiance and pay a yearly tribute to the Kashmir Durbar. The tribute has since been paid with tolerable regularity. In return for this, however, Hunza gets a regular subsidy from Kashmir.

9. *Nagar.*—Of Nagar less need be said. It has a population of 10,000 souls. They are less warlike than the Kanjutis and less addicted to raiding, while slavery is unknown. The people are Shiahhs. The ruler, as in Hunza, is known as the Thum. One son of the reigning family holds the lands about Chalt and Chaprot in jagir though the forts there are garrisoned by Kashmir troops.

In the prosperous times of the Shin rule, the Thums of Nagar acknowledged the Ras of Gilgit as their feudal superior, and tradition relates that several of the villages which now belong to Nagar were given as dowries to different Thums who married daughters of the Trakhane. At the time of the Sikh occupation of Gilgit a very close connection existed between the rulers of the two states of Gilgit and Nagar. Since 1868, Nagar has been tributary to Kashmir to which it makes an annual payment of 21 tolas of gold. Between Hunza and Nagar a great rivalry has always existed, but they are generally ready to combine against an external foe. The present Thum is Jafr Khan, who was described five years ago as being, though only 50 years old, almost in his second childhood, the result of drink and debauchery. UZR Khan, the heir apparent and the ally of Hunza in recent operations, has lately murdered two of his brothers, and was described by the same writer as a sulky, ignorant, grasping young man of about 24 years of age.

Nagar is of less importance than Hunza as it has no outlet to the north, and no relations with China such as those which complicate the problem in regard to Hunza and which should now be noticed.

10. *Relations of Hunza with China.*—In April 1886 the reigning Thum, Ghazan Khan, told Colonel Lockhart in an angry argument that he was subject to the King of China and acknowledged no other master.

Mr. Ney Elias tells us that in 1885 the opportunity was taken of a dispute between the people of Sarikol and the Kanjutis to send down a Chinese

* Safdar Ali communicated the circumstance to the Kashmir Government in the following terms: "By the will of God and the decree of fate my late father and I recently fell out. I took the initiative and settled the matter. I have placed myself on the throne of my ancestors. I have now made friends with my mother's brother, Rajah Jafr Khan, of Nagar, and we are of one mind in all things. Nagar is Hunza and Hunza is Nagar, and we are united in the service of the Maharajah of Kashmir."—S. C. B.

official to the frontier to accept formally the allegiance of the Hunza Khan. "The result," he adds, "was that at the time of my visit (in 1886) the Chinese authorities regarded Hunza as an outlying district of the new Dominion and talked of incorporating it formally into the province." There is evidence that the Hunza Khan was instructed by the Chinese to stop Colonel Lockhart's mission by force.

11. To complete the information as to the relations of Hunza with China and Kashmir, I quote here a summary given in the letter from Colonel Prideaux (Resident in Kashmir) to the Government of India of 12th August 1891.

"So far as can be ascertained, it does not appear that there was any intercourse between Hunza and China until the insurrection of the seven Khojas in Yarkand in 1847, when Shah Ghazanpur Khan of Hunza rendered assistance to China in overcoming the rebellion. In return for this service a jagir was granted to him in the vicinity of Yarkand, and a brass tablet, inscribed with a record of the friendship of Hunza towards Peking and its reward, was placed on the gates of the city. A fixed subsidy was paid by China to the Hunza Chief, who in return gave a nominal allegiance. The connection with China was temporarily dissolved when the Atalik Ghazi turned the Chinese out of Yarkand, but the Hunza Chief appears to have retained possession of his jagir, and the former state of things was resumed after the death of Yakub Beg. A yearly tribute appears to have been paid by the Hunza Chief since 1878, consisting of an ounce and a half of gold-dust, in return for which he receives a present of two rolls of satin. This payment has been periodically notified in the "Peking Gazette."

"As regards the relations of Hunza with Kashmir, it seems that from early times a nominal allegiance was paid to the Trakhane rulers of Gilgit, which slackened as the power of these Chiefs grew weak. This allegiance was continued to the Sikh and Dogra successors of the ancient Gilgit Chiefs, but it is doubtful if it was ever enforced, and the actual relations between Kashmir and Hunza appear to have been uninterruptedly hostile, until the year 1869, when the late Chief Ghazan Khan consented to yield allegiance to Kashmir, and to pay a yearly tribute of two horses, two hounds, and 20 ounces of gold dust, in return for which Kashmir engaged to pay an annual subsidy. The attitude of Hunza, however, has always been one of veiled contumacy; on several occasions the peace of the border has been seriously threatened, and in 1888 the combined forces of Hunza and Nagar ejected the garrison of Chalt and Chaprot, and peace was not restored until the Kashmir Darbar had undertaken active measures at a large expenditure of men and money.

"The position of Nagar differs from that of Hunza in the fact that it has never professed allegiance to China. In its relations towards Kashmir it stands on a similar footing to Hunza, the Chiefs having, in former days, acknowledged the Trakhane Rajas of Gilgit as their feudal superiors, and having submitted to the Sikh power when Gilgit fell into the hands of the rulers of the Punjab. Since 1868 Nagar has paid an annual tribute to Kashmir, consisting of 21 tolas of gold and two baskets of apricots, in return for which it receives an annual subsidy.

"On the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency, Captain Durand, in the course of his negotiations with Safdar Ali Khan of Hunza, obtained from that chief a promise that there should be a cessation of interference on the part of Chinese officials in the internal affairs of his country, the Raja merely pointing out that owing to the long connection of his country with China and to his having a jagir in Yarkand, some communication must still be carried on. It is not clear that Chinese officials had ever interfered in the internal affairs of Hunza, but, however, that might be, the promise was accepted by the Government of India, and an increase was made to the Raja's subsidy in consideration of his future good behaviour and his refraining from giving any cause for complaint.

"The present position of affairs appears to be that, while the Kashmir and British Government have carefully observed their part of the agreement, and have regularly paid the subsidies due to the rulers of Hunza and Nagar, those Chiefs, on the other hand, have done nothing in the way of fulfilling their

reciprocal obligations, with the exception of allowing Captain Younghusband a passage through their country, but have, on the contrary, maintained an attitude of more or less overt hostility, culminating in the recent threatened attack upon Chalt, while Hunza is continually throwing in our teeth its alleged dependance on China, and has taken advantage of the tacit permission to send a yearly deputation to Kashgar to indulge in intrigues."

12. In August last (1891) the relations between Hunza and China were the subject of correspondence between the Secretary of State for India and the Foreign Office, which ended in Lord Salisbury's letter of 31st August to the Chinese Minister, informing him that Hunza lying entirely to the south of the Hindu Kush was held by Her Majesty's Government to be within the sphere of their influence.

13. *Agreement between the Government of India and Hunza.*—This brings me to our own agreement with the Hunza Chief.

On the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency in 1889 the Government of India directed Captain (now Lieutenant-Colonel) Durand to proceed at once to Gilgit and make preparations for visiting Hunza and Nagar, with instructions to counteract the Chinese and Russian attempts to establish an influence in these parts,* to explain to the Chiefs the position of affairs, to acquaint them with the wishes of Government, and to offer them increased subsidies of Rs. 2,000 each per annum, conditional upon the cessation of raiding by the Kanjutis in the Shimshal valley and elsewhere, and the grant of free access to their countries by British officers whenever considered necessary.

* Letter from Government of India, No. 165, dated 3rd December 1889, para. 3.

14. The following is the account given by the Government of India of the result of Captain Durand's visit to Hunza, the Nagar Chief having received him cordially and agreed to all the stipulations laid down by the Government in return for the increased subsidy.

"From Nagar, the British Agent crossed the river to Hunza, where his reception on the first day was all that could be wished. The requirements of the Government of India were fully accepted by the Raja, though he pointed out that, owing to his having a jagir in Yarkand, some communication must still be carried on between his State and China. Before Captain Durand left, however, the Chief's conduct underwent a considerable change. On ascertaining that he was to be treated on precisely the same terms as his neighbour, the Nagar Chief, whose position he considered to be of less importance, Raja Safdar Ali Khan appeared dissatisfied at the arrangements proposed, and demanded a further allowance of Rs. 500 per annum for his son. Captain Durand offered to forward his request to the Government of India, but the Raja continued to send him rude messages and otherwise to behave in an improper manner, and at one time there was some danger of an attack being made on the British party. This was fortunately averted by Captain Durand's tact and good management, and he was able to leave without being molested. Some days later a letter was received from the Chief, apologizing for his conduct and containing a distinct assurance that he would abide by the engagements which he had entered into with the British Government."

15. Captain Durand's own report as to the agreement is in the following words:—

"The Government demands as to the cessation of raiding on the Yarkand road and generally beyond the borders of Hunza, and the free passages of any officers deputed by the British Government through the country were at once acceded to. Further, the exclusion of Russian and other travellers and the cessation of interference on the part of Chinese officials in the internal affairs of the country was agreed to, the Raja merely pointing out that owing to the long connection between his State and China, and to his having a jagir in China, some communication must still be carried on."

I also quote the relevant portions of subsequent correspondence. The Raja wrote to Captain Durand as follows in the letter referred to above by

the Government of India:—"Further, I will never deviate from any engagement that I have entered into with you as long as I live. Should Sahibs come here through the Upper pass, I will serve them, heart and soul, treat them with hospitality according to the means of my country, and make them reach you at Gilgit with safety."

Correspondence between the Government of India and Hunza.—His correspondence with the Government of India followed. The following extract from his letter to the Government is the important portion:—"Then the said officer communicated to me certain matters of the exalted British Government, and I having placed the chain of allegiance and obedience round my neck, have with a pure heart and clean breast agreed to the conditions and compact, through the medium of the said officer, who then returned in safety and good health to Gilgit."

To this the Government of India replied, No. 166 P. O., the 19th October 1889.

After compliments.—"I have received a letter from Captain Durand, the British Agent at Gilgit, informing me of his friendly reception in your State in August last. I have also received and laid before the Viceroy your friendly letter to His Excellency, which Captain Durand has forwarded. Captain Durand has informed you that the Government of India has decided to add to the subsidy, which you already receive from the Kashmir State, a sum of Rs. 2,000 per annum, and you, in return for this proof of the goodwill of the British Government, have promised to prohibit your tribesmen from raiding on the Yarkand road and generally beyond the borders of your State; also that you will allow the free passage of any officers deputed by the British Government to visit your country; and that you will exclude all other foreign travellers and refuse to permit any interference on the part of Chinese officials in the internal affairs of your country.

"Captain Durand also informed you that Captain Younghusband would shortly visit Hunza from the direction of the Shimshal pass, and you promised him that you would give Captain Younghusband every assistance in your power. The Government of India hopes soon to hear that you have fulfilled this promise, and that Captain Younghusband has passed through your State without difficulty.

"Captain Durand will always be ready to give you friendly advice, and the Government of India hopes that his appointment as British Agent at Gilgit will tend to increase the good feeling between yourself and the Kashmir State and the Government of India. Any communication you may wish to make now or hereafter to the Resident in Kashmir or to the Government of India, should be made through the British Agent.

"The Government of India will always be glad to hear of your welfare."

16. *Captain Durand's view of the situation.*—Captain Durand's own view of the value of Safdar Ali's promises is given in the Gilgit agency report for 1889. I extract the following:—

"The success of this visit to Hunza was shown by Captain Younghusband's passage through the country in December. The Raja treated him as well as it is in his nature to treat any body, and went so far as to arrange for the carriage of his loads through a part of his territory, really a considerable attention to Captain Younghusband's wants—for the Kanjutis are very averse to this form of labour.

"It was found to be extremely difficult to get any information as to the engagements, if any, existing between China or Russia and Hunza. As regards the former the Raja has a jaghir in Yarkand, and enquiries show that he is in receipt of a yearly subsidy amounting probably to some Rs. 500 or Rs. 600 a year.

"When Captain Gromchevsky was in Kanjut last year some agreement seems to have been come to. The Raja referred to it during a stormy interview with the bearer of the Government presents sent by the British Agent, but unfortunately did not produce it as he threatened. Captain

Younghusband seems to think that arms were promised, the Raja says money, and that it was not paid.

“The value of the Raja’s protestations of attachment to the British Government is of course of the smallest, and may be judged by the fact that he seems this year, either to have invited Captain Gromchevsky to his country according to the latter’s statement to Captain Younghusband, or at all events to have shown no great desire to keep him out. For from information brought back some days ago by a man in Safdar Ali’s confidence and in the pay of the British Agent, it appears that Captain Gromchevsky wrote asking why he had allowed the British Agent and his party to enter Hunza in contravention of the agreement of last year, and requesting the Raja to send an official to conduct him to Hunza. The Raja is reported to have given the non-payment of the promised Russian subsidy, as the reason for his having made friends with the British Government, and to have refused to send any official, but to have replied that if Captain Gromchevsky chose to come he might.

“In any case the Raja has of course played us false, but as he acted up to his engagement in giving Captain Younghusband a passage through his country, it would be a mistake to press this point, more especially as we cannot prove his having invited the Russian.

“The subsidy has accordingly been paid to him, and in addition the increased grant of Rs. 500 to his son, the letter accompanying the money giving him to understand in very plain terms that the non-fulfilment of his engagements will result in the subsidy being stopped.

“Possibly if we can remain on good terms with him for a year or two the regular receipt of this increased subsidy may keep him fairly loyal to his engagements in the future, but it is unlikely. He has an inordinate idea of his own importance and strength, and he will most likely raid the Yarkand road as of yore. In this case there will be nothing left after stopping his subsidy, but to give him a sharp lesson for which the force at Gilgit will be amply sufficient. The result of such action unaccompanied by annexation would be excellent in these parts. The Kanjut Chief’s is a name of dread all over the Pamirs, and his successes against Kashmir in former days have given him a fictitious importance in the eyes of the surrounding States.”

17. *Events of 1891.*—No fresh development of any importance took place in the affairs of Hunza and Nagar till 1891. On the 25th May of that year

Colonel Durand* received letters from the Rajahs of Hunza and Nagar, and from Uzr Khan, the heir apparent of Nagar, informing him that the latter had murdered his brothers Gauri Tham Khan, and Ding Malik, and explaining that if Rajah Sikander Khan, another brother and jagirdar of Chaprot, returned to Chaprot, Uzr Khan would kill him also. Colonel Durand at the same time learned that Uzr Khan was making preparations to seize Chalt-Chaprot (the two fortresses garrisoned by Kashmir troops on the Gilgit-Nagar road). Colonel Durand determined to reinforce the garrison, and succeeded in occupying Chalt on the 28th. The following extracts from his letter explain the sequel and bring the operations of May and June 1891 to a close.

“The rapid and unexpected move of the troops to Chalt surprised and disconcerted the people of Hunza and Nagar. Finding that we were in possession of Chalt, Wazir Dadu, who had collected a force at Mayun, tried his best to persuade the Nagar Chief to continue with him and attack us, but Raja Jafr Khan refused to join in the enterprise, and it was given up against Raja Uzr Khan’s wishes, who like Dadu, had assembled a number of men at Nilt and was prepared to take the offensive.

“In answer to letters and verbal messages received during the next few days after my arrival at Chalt, I sent in letters to Hunza and Nagar calling for Vakils, and explaining that I had no intention of attacking these States, but had brought troops to Chalt to resist a threatened attack on the part of Uzr Khan.

“The letters received from Hunza in answer to my letter above-mentioned, distinctly announced that Hunza had been from old times subject to

China, and added that the Raja was prepared to fight if attacked, until the arrival of Chinese help. The messengers bringing it disclaimed any right on the part of the Raja to Chalt and Chaprot. The Nagar letters were humble in tone.

“ After some days had passed in the interchange of letters and messages as to the coming of Vakils, Wazir Nadlu of Nagar, and Daulat Shah of Hunza arrived in camp. The latter brought a letter from Safdar Ali, in which he distinctly wrote, ‘ I have nothing to do with Chalt and Chaprot.’ Jafr Khan’s letter was loyal in tone.

“ The Hunza and Nagar Vakils were interviewed separately on the 15th June. Daulat Shah assured me in Safdar Ali’s name of his master’s loyalty, disclaimed all connection with Chalt, Chaprot, or intention to attack them, and declared that he had thrown over the Chinese suzerainty for dependence on the British Government. Wazir Nadlu assured me of Raja Jafr Khan’s loyalty, disclaimed any connection with Uzr Khan or his acts, and promised in the Raja’s name that, if the troops and guns were withdrawn again to Gilgit, Uzr Khan should not be permitted to make any attempt to upset existing arrangements.

“ The nett result of the whole business is that we have strengthened our hold on Chalt and Chaprot by increasing the garrison, improved the fort at Chalt, and destroyed the walls and towers of one which commanded it, and have materially improved the road. All or any of these things I had repeatedly been told both by Safdar Ali Khan and Uzr Khan would lead to fighting, but the unexpected move of troops to Chalt enabled me to carry them out without asking any questions, and both States must either submit to my proceedings or place themselves in the wrong by open acts of hostility.

“ I have very little hope that the settlement is a final one. Every one assures me that at no distant date, probably in the autumn, when the high paths are closed by snow, and they can seize certain points on the road and be secure against attack from above, the Hunza and Nagar people will attempt to gain possession of Chalt-Chaprot. The Raja of Hunza has no idea of his own weakness, and all imagine that a fight would be a repetition of previous affairs, that we might invade Hunza and Nagar, but should be stopped at their first position, and sit down before it spending weeks in desultory shooting and then retire.”

18. *Strengthening of the Agency Staff.*—The only immediate result of these proceedings was an application on the part of Colonel Durand to strengthen the staff of the Gilgit agency by the appointment of three additional officers, which was at once acceded to.

19. *Result of the Russian expedition to the Pamirs.*—Then followed the Russian expedition to the Pamirs and the information received both from Mr. Eliot of the St. Petersburg embassy, and from Captain Younghusband of the mission sent from Hunza to the Russian authorities at Marghelan.

The Government of India in reporting Captain Younghusband’s operations, above referred to, said (letter of 25th October 1891): “ Unfortunately an entirely new aspect has been given to the case by the arrival on the Pamirs of parties of Russians whose avowed object was to annex the Great, Little, and Alichur Pamirs. It has now been ascertained that the Raja of Hunza, who has refused to let correspondence with Captain Younghusband be forwarded through his State, has been in communication with the Russians, as well as with China; and the Government of India therefore apprehend that, unless he is brought completely under control, he may introduce a Russian force into Hunza, within a few marches of Gilgit. In Secret Despatch No. 110 of the 30th June 1888, the reasons for refusing to recognize Chinese rights in Hunza were explained to Her Majesty’s Government who approved the Government of India’s view. The reasons, which led to this decision with regard to China apply with double force in the case of Russia, and I entirely concur in the opinion of the British Agent at Gilgit and the Resident in Kashmir that the Hunza and Nagar Chiefs must be brought under submission without delay.”

20. *Colonel Durand's recommendations in regard to Hunza.*—Colonel Durand had in the meantime been summoned to Simla to give his opinion on the action which should be taken in regard to Hunza. He did this in two Memoranda, one dated 4th September and the other 14th September. The first begins by saying that the last Russian move on the Pamirs necessitates our strengthening our position at Gilgit, which he would do first by bringing Hunza and Nagar under complete control, and goes on to suggest various subsidiary operations in connection with the agency guard and agency staff at Gilgit, with the improvement of the mountain battery there, the deputation of an officer to Chitral, the establishment of a telegraph line between Kashmir and Gilgit, &c.

The second Memorandum is more important, and deals specially with the action to be taken for the purpose of bringing Hunza and Nagar under control, and as the acceptance by the Government of India of the policy proposed in this Memorandum has led to the recent military operations, I give it here *in extenso*, with one or two marginal comments.

“The reasons which seem to necessitate our taking in hand and settling the Hunza and Nagar question are two-fold.

“**Firstly.**—The Chiefs of Hunza and Nagar, especially the former, owing to their isolation, and the natural difficulties of their country, have the most exaggerated idea of their own power and importance. This has led them to assume a tone of insolence in dealing with Kashmir, and, since they have been brought in contact with the officers of the Supreme Government, towards the latter, which has up to the present time received but slight checks. Their independent position, and the numerous defeats which they have inflicted on Kashmiri troops in past days, have given them a fictitious importance in the eyes of the neighbouring tribes. An alliance exists between them and the Shin tribes of the Indus valley, who look to Hunza and Nagar for support in case of any attack on Shinaki by the British Government. The Chiefs have, therefore, the power at any time of raising disturbances in rear of Gilgit, and of bringing about an attack on our line of communications at Ramghat, at present the weakest link in our line, and on Bunji.

“Until the Chiefs of Hunza and Nagar have been brought into complete subjection, and have felt or realized our power, their attitude will always remain the same, and they will be a cause of constant anxiety and of possible disturbance on the frontier.

“**Secondly.**—The Hunza Chief has for some time past been intriguing with China and Russia. In view of the Russian position on the Pamirs, it is impossible to regard such conduct with indifference. For unless completely under our control, he might, and most likely would, introduce a Russian force into Hunza within a few marches of Gilgit, on the least disagreement with us.

“The justification for subduing Hunza,—Nagar which has no outlet to the north need not here be considered,—is a double one. In the first place it may be argued that the Chief has broken every one of his agreements with us, in return for the fulfilment of which he receives a subsidy from the British Government, and that we are therefore fairly entitled to punish him. His agreement with us is to abstain from raiding on the Yarkand road, to exclude foreigners from his State, not to allow Chinese officials to interfere in the internal affairs of Hunza, and to give free passage to British officers. In direct contravention to his engagements he has received Chinese officials in Hunza, has invited Russian officials to enter (Captain Grombchevsky showed Captain Younghusband letters from the Chief to this effect in 1889), has extorted black mail through his representative in Kashgar under threats

* This is inferred only. We know he sent a mission both to Kashgar and to Marghelan last autumn, but we have no knowledge of what they were instructed to communicate.—S. C. B.

of raiding the trade route, and has called on the Chinese and Russians* to aid him against us. In June last, when the Kashmir troops were on the frontier at Chalt, he collected his tribesmen to attack them. Twice his force was on the point of starting, and he was only dissuaded from carrying out his intention by the Nagar Chief holding aloof. He openly, in a letter received in June last, proclaimed his

allegiance to China, and his trust in the support of Chinese troops against us. Finally, his disloyal attitude was clearly emphasised by his declining to pass letters through his country for Captain Younghusband either to or from Gilgit, by the extreme discourtesy of his messengers in Kashgar, who refused to pay their respects to Captain Younghusband, and by the reported issue of

orders† to murder Raja Kushwakht Khan, an employé of the British Agency, who had been sent in June on

a mission to the Pamirs. This conduct alone would justify us in moving troops into his country, and in bringing him to complete subjection.

“In the second place, putting aside all question of misconduct, punishment, and the like, there remains the fact that the Russians have now advanced to the crest of the passes of the Hindu Kush. Under these circumstances, we clearly must place ourselves in such a position as will enable us effectually to stop their further advance. For this purpose it is necessary that we should have real control of the country to our north up to the crest of the passes of the Hindu Kush. This has always been recognized in Chitral on the west, and lately in Ladak on the east, and the establishment of a similar control over Hunza is only a consistent application of the general principle. Hunza is a “feudatory” of ours, as has been distinctly ruled more than once by Her Majesty’s Government, and receives a subsidy, in return for which it has undertaken to exclude all foreigners. We have, therefore a right to demand that the Raja should loyally co-operate with us in our preparations to safeguard the passes. If the Raja assumes a doubtful or actively disloyal attitude, we should be clearly justified in overriding his opposition, and in making such arrangements as seem desirable, if necessary by force.

“If the Chinese mean to assert their claims to the Pamirs, and we desire to support them, our control over Hunza proper, *i.e.*, that part of the country south of the Hindu Kush, should be a support to the Chinese Government. It will show that we are decisively insisting on the claim which we have always advanced, that our frontier is the Hindu Kush, that it thus marches at this point with theirs, here the Tagdumbash Pamir, and that we are thus blocking out the Russians from a broken flank in their frontier line. It should also give them a moral stimulus for standing to their ground on the Pamirs.

“Under these circumstances, then, what I would propose is as follows:—

“(1.) To move troops at the end of October to Chalt, improve the road between that place and Gilgit, and build a small fort at Chalt.

“(2.) To write at the same time to the Chiefs of Hunza and Nagar, saying nothing about their former misconduct, but informing them that, as the Russians have now advanced to the Hindu Kush, it is necessary for their safety and that of Kashmir, as their States are within our border, that we should now have free access to their territory, in order that we may make all requisite arrangements for holding the line of frontier. They should be told that there is no intention to interfere in the form of their government, but that these arrangements will of necessity include the making of such roads as will enable us, in case of emergency, to throw British troops rapidly into the passes of the Hindu Kush. That, in the case of Nagar, we must make a practicable mule road as far as Nagar itself, and in the case of Hunza from Chalt to Hunza, and so much further as seems necessary, possibly to Gircha—a point where the roads from the Kilik Mintaka and Shimshal passes join. Finally, that as tributaries of the British Government they will be expected to give any aid in their power.

“If the Chiefs refuse to allow the roads to be made, they should be informed that there is no question of their having any choice in the matter, that the roads must be made, and that unless they instantly comply with our demands, troops will enter the country, and the roads will be constructed in spite of them.

“In this case, or in the case of the Hunza and Nagar Chiefs collecting their forces with a view of preventing the construction of the Chalt fort, I think an immediate move should be made across the frontier, and all opposition broken down. It would then be advisable to depose the ruler of Hunza, and to substitute his son, a boy of five or six years old, under the guidance of the ex-Wazir of Hunza, now a refugee in Chitral, who is ready to throw in his lot with us. Uzr Khan, the eldest surviving son of the Raja of Nagar, who is extremely badly disposed towards us, should also be removed from Nagar, and one of the younger sons of the Raja, or one of his grandsons, recognized as the heir. Steps should then be taken to establish a system of guarding the passes, and certain positions might be prepared for defence. It would probably be unnecessary to do more than this. In the case of Nagar, it may be necessary to remove Uzr Khan even if no resistance is offered. He is dangerous to the ruling Chief, who would be glad to get rid of him.”

21. *Approval of these proposals, and reference to Foreign Office.*—These proposals received the approval of the Government of India, and of the Kashmir Durbar, so far as they affected that State, and they were reported to the Secretary of State in the Viceroy's letter of 25th October. The Secretary of State had previously on 14th September approved by telegram the strengthening of the Gilgit agency by the despatch of 200 Gurkhas and some more British officers, but this was in consequence of the disturbances at Chaprot in June, and without any reference to subsequent operations.

Lord Cross communicated the Viceroy's letter of 25th October to the Foreign Office with Mr. Godley's covering letter of 27th November 1891, which explained that while no forcible measures were at that time contemplated, yet there was every probability of the Rajah of Hunza refusing to allow free access to our officers and the right of making roads, and of his preparing for resistance. The relations of Hunza with China were explained and it was stated that while, in Lord Cross' opinion, the measures contemplated by the Government of India were justified by the circumstances of the case, he would defer conveying any expression of his views to the Viceroy, till he could receive Lord Salisbury's remarks with reference to the complications which operations in Hunza might cause with China.

22. *Foreign Office reply.*—Lord Salisbury's remarks were conveyed in Sir Philip Currie's letter of 5th December 1891, and were to the effect, that while he recognized the necessity of bringing the ruler of Hunza under control, he deprecated if it could possibly be avoided, the dethronement of the Rajah and the occupation of the country, as being likely to cause serious complications with China; nevertheless he would leave the Government of India to adopt such measures as they deemed necessary after giving full consideration to the objections indicated.

23. *Renewed attack on Chalt threatened.*—Lord Salisbury's views were telegraphed out to the Government of India on the 9th December, but this message was crossed by one from the Viceroy, dated 8th December, in which he said:—

“The Hunza and Nagar people having again threatened Chalt, Colonel Durand advanced to that place, from which he telegraphed on 29th November, as follows: Ultimatum sent in to-day. Bridge being built over Hunza river. I shall advance on 2nd December, unless attacked before. The forces of both States are assembling, and mean fighting, and though everything has been done by me that possibly could be done to prevent hostilities, I think they must come.”

24. The Government of India have, moreover, reported (letter of 6th January 1892, paragraph 20) that “the Hunza forces had assembled at Mayun, and the Nagar people at Nilt by the 16th November, before work had been begun upon the Gilgit-Chalt road, and even earlier than this Colonel Durand had certain information from a captured spy that an attack on the Chaichar Pari and Chalt was intended.”

A further telegram from Colonel Prideaux was received by the Government of India on the 9th December, as follows: "Colonel Durand telegraphs from Chalt, 1st December. Begins: Chiefs have decided on fighting. Force crossed Hunza river this afternoon, and will attack Nilt to-morrow. All well. Ends."

25. *Ultimatum*.—The ultimatum* is contained in a letter from Colonel Durand, sent in identical terms to Hunza and Nagar from Chalt on 29th November 1891:—

"The Supreme Government, whose feudatory you are, has directed me to make you the following communication: You are well aware that a Russian force this year moved on to the Pamirs, and explored the passes leading from them southwards over the mountains. Your State lies to the south of these mountains, which here form the boundary of the Indian empire, and is within the borders of British India. Considering these facts it is necessary for the protection of Kashmir and your State, that the troops of the Supreme Government should have free access to your country. By this means alone can the requisite arrangements be made for safeguarding here the frontiers of the Empire. It is not the intention of the Supreme Government in any way to interfere with the form of rule in your State, but the arrangements for protecting its frontier necessitate on the part of Government the making of roads which will enable it, should occasion arise, to place troops rapidly in positions guarding the passes leading from the Pamirs. The Supreme Government has therefore decided to make a road from Gilgit to Chalt, where a fort will be built, and from Chalt to Hunza-Nagar, or so far beyond that as may be necessary. As a feudatory of the British Government you are now called upon to give any aid in your power towards the construction of the road. I am further directed to inform you that, so far as regards the road beyond Chalt, which will pass through your territory, no refusal on your part to permit its construction will be accepted. The road must be made. Unless you instantly comply with the demands of the Supreme Government troops will enter your territory, and the road will be constructed in spite of any opposition you may offer. Three days from this date will be allowed you, during which your answer will be awaited, and I warn you that should it not be completely satisfactory the troops under my command will move forward and carry out the orders of the Government. The British Government has ever treated you with marked consideration and generosity. I trust that the remembrance of this fact will influence your counsels, and that by a wise compliance with the wishes of the great and magnanimous Government, whose loyal servant you have constantly professed yourself to be, you will avoid bringing on your country and people the calamity of war."

26. From a diplomatic point of view this ultimatum leaves much to be desired. It does not touch on the previous breaches of agreement by Hunza, nor on the unprovoked hostilities which were attempted in the previous May. It deals only with the rights conferred on us by their previous agreements. Those rights which were granted in return for a fixed subsidy are specified in previous correspondence, and they do not include either the right to make roads or to march troops through the territories of the two Chiefs. If we did not intend to punish them for previous aggressions, or breach of agreement, we ought surely in demanding new concessions to have offered new terms in the shape of an increased subsidy.

27. Of the answer sent to the ultimatum we have no exact information, but the Government of India, in their Despatch of 6th January 1892, say that "Colonel Durand's messenger was insulted and threatened, and deprived of his horse; and a defiant and abusive reply was sent by Safdar Ali Khan."

* *Note*.—The ultimatum has not been sent to this Department, but the text of it is contained in an enclosure received in the Military Department.—S. C. B.

28. *Military success.*—The sequel is rather military than political. The force advanced on the morning of the 2nd December, and captured the fort at Nilt after some sharp fighting, with the loss of three officers severely wounded, six men killed, and one Native officer and 17 non-commissioned officers and men wounded. The column were not able to advance till the 20th, when they succeeded in piercing the very strong position of the enemy, with a loss to the latter of 70 killed and 180 prisoners. Nagar was occupied on the 21st December and Hunza on the 22nd. The Raja of Nagar made full submission, while his son, Uzr Khan, and Safdar Ali Khan of Hunza fled to the mountains. The result is largely due to the cordial co-operation of the Kashmir Durbar, and “the loyal energy shown by the Maharaja and his brothers in the matter.”

Arrangements for the future administration of Hunza and the control of the passes have still to be made.

S. C. B.

25th January 1892.
