

LETTERS FROM KATHMANDU:

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the  
kôṭ massacre



edited by

Ludwig F. Stiller, S.J.

Research Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY





Letters from Kathmandu  
**THE**  
**KOT MASSACRE**





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RESEARCH CENTRE FOR  
NEPAL AND ASIAN STUDIES  
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY  
KIRTIPUR

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**To  
My Mother**





## INTRODUCTION

This book, Letters from Kathmandu: the Kot Massacre, belongs to the general category of documentary history. However, dealing as it does with one of the great turning points in the history of our Country, the documentary materials presented have a driving force of special fascination and appeal. As the editor points out, the documents presented here in an edited form describe events in Nepal as they were observed and interpreted by the British Residents in Nepal. Without trying to eliminate their bias, the editor has indicated in his notes and introductory explanations the special areas in which the reader and student of history should be especially alert for distortions or questionable interpretation. The result is a gripping story that develops step-by-step as each document unfolds.

We at CNAS think that books such as this one are useful for the mature reflection on the history of Nepal that they promote. Though no description of events will ever satisfy our desire to know why things happened as they did, each piece of testimony and description we acquire adds to our own ability to propose possible explanations of events in the light of our own experience and national feeling.

If Letters from Kathmandu encourages this sort of reflection, we at CNAS will feel that we have done our task.

CNAS  
Kirtipur  
21 September 1980





## PREFACE

Letters from Kathmandu: the Kot Massacre is a small book I have prepared primarily for the history students at Tribhuvan University. I assume others will also find food for thought in these pages. Indeed, I hope they will. But my primary concern in this book has been the need of the students. I have had their needs in mind (as well as their background) in deciding the mode of presentation, the annotations, and the introductions. The students, I thought, needed a relatively large collection of documents on the history of Nepal that were concentrated on one specific major historical event. The letters produced here are focused on the Kot Massacre and provide a fairly coherent story of the events that immediately preceded the Kot. There is an added bonus in this selection, since these letters form the foundation on which all historical accounts of the Kot Massacre published in modern times have been based. With such a rich background against which to read, the student should be in a much better position to evaluate the individual historian's selection of detail and interpretation of events. Whether my assessment of the students' needs is correct or not is something only time will tell.

Some critics have suggested that Letters from Kathmandu would have profitted the students more if the letters had been translated into Nepali. This is an interesting argument, but it is not really sound. The letters as they are found here are edited, it is true, and in that sense they are no longer the original documents. However, in all critical passages the original language has been retained so that the student will in fact see the documents in their original language and, in addition, will have the exact wording of all policy-connected statements.

The reader will find, however, that this collection contains a number of translated letters. The use of these translations would seem to violate the principle just stated. However, it must be borne in mind that these are the official translations that actually served as the basis of discussion for the Governor General in Council. The original language of these translated letters was, of course, Persian, which was at that time the language of diplomacy in all dealings with the East India Company. Little would be gained by printing the Persian, whereas having the actual text which formed the basis of the Governor General's deliberations offers many advantages.

The question: why edit? is certainly appropriate here. The advantages to be derived from the original text are enormous, as any historian well knows. The problem: to edit or not to edit? was one that I struggled with for some time. I had almost decided to leave the material in its original shape when I began to encounter some of the most turgid prose that as an historian I have ever had to struggle through. Brian Hodgson may have been a great scholar of things Nepali, and he surely remained in Nepal longer than any other British Resident, but his despatches were far from being the most lucid. There were times when I thought that his

reports must have driven the officers of the Political Department in Calcutta to distraction. A paragraph such as this one therefore seemed to require some editing:

Upon this hypothesis, the various extraordinary circumstances adverted to in this despatch become intelligible and from too the consistent sequel of prior events; whilst if it be true that the incidence of the profit of sin may guide one to its perpetrators, we are led by this clue also into the same labyrinth. The Raja even and yet more the Chiefs and the Country are overwhelmed with feelings of indignation, of shame, and of apprehension.

Surely, I thought, something must be done to make this a little more intelligible for the students. I decided:

- 1) to edit the letters where they were especially difficult;
- 2) to retain the most critical passages without change; and
- 3) to preserve as far as possible the flavour of the original.

If Hodgson wished to be a bore, it was his prerogative, but at least I could try to help him be a more intelligible bore. Whether I have succeeded in making him any more intelligible, I cannot say, but I have had the fun of trying. My version of the above paragraph:

Such an hypothesis would explain the various extraordinary circumstances described in this despatch as well as the consistent sequence of events leading up to the mutiny. We also arrive at the same conclusion if we follow the maxim that the guilty are those who profit from the crime. Even the Raja, and yet more the Chiefs and the whole country are overwhelmed with feelings of indignation, of shame, and of apprehension.

I nurse the hope that my work has not done serious violence to the meaning of the documents. For the professional historian I have prepared a copy of the original material, unedited, which will be found in the Central Library of Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur Campus.

The spelling of words has been a minor problem. For such words as favour/favor, etc., I have found that the earlier documents uniformly use the so-called American spelling. In the mid-1840s, however, the change began to take place, and one finds both spellings used. I have tried to retain the earlier spelling for the sake of some sort of consistency.

Capital letters posed an interesting problem. Our correspondents used capital letters as a manner of expressing mild emphasis. Capitals turn up in the most surprising places. Where the ipsissima verba have been retained, the capital letters have been retained. But in the edited portions, I was obliged to follow my instinct. I am sure that some similar manner of dealing with punctuation ought also to exist, but I confess I have not discovered the clue to punctuation as used during this period. To me it seemed that commas appeared in the middle of a thought-line or just appeared at random. I have taken the liberty to re-arrange these to the best of my ability and the skill of my printers

Nepali dates have provided an exceptional challenge. The dates Hodgson cites bear no resemblance to any system with which I am familiar. He fails to specify whether he is following the solar calendar or the lunar calendar. We should expect, of course, the lunar calendar at this period, but if this is what he follows, he has failed to specify which fortnight of the month is involved. I have assumed therefore that he was using a calendar provided by Calcutta (for which he thanked the political secretary from time to time). Quite possibly he used a calendar based on his own calculations. It is also possible, of course, that my own calculations are faulty and that Hodgson even now is chuckling at my ignorance.

The nouns: Nobles, Chiefs, and Bharadars are used in quite interesting ways. After studying the documents, I suggest that Chiefs are lower ranking Bharadars and Nobles are higher ranking Bharadars. As a rule the Residents distinguished between the Bharadars and military officers, from which I conclude that they intended the expression military officers to refer to officers actually exercising line command as opposed to officers serving in the Darbar, who would technically be Bharadars. The word Darbar is used to express three ideas: the place where the King resided, the nobles who were grouped in that place, and a meeting of the King with his nobles. This can be confusing, but the idea is approximately the same as the English 'Royal Court'.

That Hodgson had a sense of humour may come as a distinct surprise to some. He exercised it in his choice of nicknames or code names. At one stage of his career he seemed to have had a great reluctance to naming certain persons in his despatches. For these persons the nickname came into use. Hence Mathabar Singh Thapa was Exul as long as he was in India. Laxmi Devi was Bella. Karbir Khatri was Viator. Samrajya Laxmi was Termagant. We also find Willow, Eugenius, Pontifex, etc.--approximately twenty of these names in all. I found it difficult to identify the personality that went with each nickname and almost impossible to trace out complex plots and counterplots as long as the key personalities were identified only by nicknames. Fortunately Hodgson was not consistent, and it was always possible to find a letter in which he referred to a given personality both by his own name and his nickname. Armed with this key, I translated all nicknames into the real names of the personalities in question. Alas, Hodgson's humour went out the window, and it was a real loss. I took great delight in seeing Rajendra Bikram described as



Willow and Chautaria Fatted Jung Shah described as Phobogenitus (born scarred).

Ranks and positions in the Nepalese Darbar can cause confusion. The following guide, published first by Daniel W. Edwards in his Patrimonial and Bureaucratic Administration in Nepal: Historical Change and Weberian Theory (a dissertation submitted to the University of Chicago, 1977) p. 50, may prove useful:

Bada Kazi  
Kazi  
Sardar  
Mir Subba  
Subba  
Naib Subba  
Khardar  
Dittha  
Naib Dittha  
Bichari  
Mukhiya  
Naib Mukhiya  
Naib Writer  
Bahidar  
Nausinda  
Sipahi

After a bit of reading, however, one develops a sense for the high and low. This is perhaps more important than being able to locate a given individual's rank in the hierarchy. One's importance arose from proximity to the King, and therefore some men enjoying less impressive titles had influence far beyond that which their title suggested.

Preparing the book has been a delightful task. I have enjoyed my vicarious experience of this period, and I hope my readers will enjoy some of this as well. The years 1839-47 were not pleasant, but for me, at least, they came alive and enriched my whole experience of the birth of the Rana period of Nepalese history. I owe rich thanks to Fr. John K. Locke, S.J., who was gracious enough to listen to my babbling enthusiasm day after day while I worked over the manuscript. Such patience must surely merit a great reward. I am also openly grateful to the Executive Director and the staff of the Research Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies for allowing me the time to work on the manuscript as well as constant encouragement. The staff of the National Archives of India were magnificent. May all historians have an opportunity to work with them. Hal Kuloy and the publishers of Kailash have graciously consented to my reproducing the drawings that illustrate the book, for which I am especially grateful. To Ms. Amrita K.C. my special thanks for her patience and dedication in preparing the typescript, and to Ms. Jaya Karky, who was obliged to listen to my theories and interpretation of events from the day the book began to take shape until the last line was

written. Fr. James Donnelly, S.J., of St. Xavier's School has cheerfully undertaken the tedious task of checking the proofs and for this I am deeply grateful.

30 March 1980

Kirtipur



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## ONE

### Samrajya Laxmi Devi's Book

This is the story of the rise and fall of Samrajya Laxmi Devi. Samrajya Laxmi, the Senior Queen of King Rajendra Bikram Shah (1816-47), was a fiercely independent woman who dominated the Nepal Darbar from 1839 to 1841.

Although Samrajya Laxmi enjoyed power for only a short time, she changed irrevocably the politics and the fate of the Darbar. Whether this change in the Darbar was for the better or worse, the reader will have to decide. But change it she did, and all those who are concerned about the Kot Massacre and the events that caused that frightful moment in the history of Nepal cannot but pause to ponder the influence she had on the lives and destinies of men.

Samrajya Laxmi chose to use one branch of the Pandey family, whom Resident Brian Houghton Hodgson insisted on calling the 'Kala Pandeys' (the Black Pandeys), as instruments of her will and her scheming. By the end of Samrajya Laxmi's era, the Kala Pandeys were no longer a party in contention for the power of the Darbar. This in itself was not a total disaster. The Kala Pandeys, under the leadership of Ranjung Pandey, had shown themselves to be remarkably incompetent. They were unable to grasp the changed relationship between Nepal and the East India Company nor could they appreciate the fact that the East India Company had consolidated its power in the years after the Nepal-East India Company War (1814-16). By the end of the decade, there was not a power in the north of the subcontinent that could withstand the Company's military might. One shudders at the thought of what might have happened to Nepal had the Kala Pandeys actually led the nation to war against the British as was their constant pledge. No, the removal of the Pandeys from power was not a disaster to the Pandey family. But the Kala Pandeys suffered a fate much worse than merely being turned out of office. They listened all too eagerly to a rumour that Queen Samrajya Laxmi had died of poisoning, forged this rumour into a weapon of their own, and used it in their struggle against the Ministry of Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah. King Rajendra Bikram, furious at this rumour and its implications, accused the Kala Pandeys of manufacturing it for their own purposes (for he knew the rumour to be a lie) and struck the leaders of the family down. The destruction of the few remaining leaders of the family was completed when Bhim Sen Thapa's nephew Mathabar Singh Thapa returned to Nepal, demanded a confrontation with those who had accused his uncle of poisoning Samrajya Laxmi's youngest son, and forced them to confess to conspiracy and false accusation. The surviving members of the family were banished from Nepal on trumped-up charges in October 1844.

Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah's Ministry had been put forward in January 1841 as an alternative to Ranjung Pandey's Ministry. Resident Hodgson gave this Ministry as much support against Samrajya Laxmi as he dared (and far more than was prudent). He thereby created the belief in the Nepal Darbar that the Company could maintain a party in power in Kathmandu merely by lending that party its support. Such was one result of Hodgson's concern



for the Fatteh Jung Shah Ministry. When the Governor General ordered Hodgson to take a neutral stance, Fatteh Jung's Ministry collapsed, to be replaced by Mathabar Singh Thapa. Mathabar Singh was one of the many to be deluded by the belief that the Company's support was the surest prop a Prime Minister could have in the unstable world of the Nepal Darbar. The Governor General's insistence that the Company supported only the King fell on deaf ears, until it reached Jung Bahadur Kunwar (Rana)...but this is to move ahead of our story.

Hodgson's diplomatic career, also, was blighted by his brief encounter with Samrajya Laxmi. Because he became too involved with the Fatteh Jung Shah Ministry, he was unceremoniously removed from office. And, since his health would not permit him to work in the plains of India, his removal from the Kathmandu Residency was tantamount to retiring him from the Company's service. Unfortunately for Hodgson, he was removed at a time when his studies into Nepalese life and society, his major concern for twenty years, were just beginning to bear the richest harvest.

The violence felt and feared by everyone who was obliged to deal with Samrajya Laxmi did not break out during her lifetime. But she fanned the sparks and encouraged the fires of violence by relentless opposition to Resident Hodgson and to all who sided with him. The tense political atmosphere in the Kathmandu Darbar was as dry tinder to the heat of her anger, and this did indeed flame up after her death until the whole of the Darbar was seared by its heat.

One is not surprised to learn that Samrajya Laxmi's own death was hastened by a flaming row she had with the King and his nobles about the Darbar's policy towards the East India Company. Her body, already in the grip of aul fever, contracted during her last incredible display of independence and self-will, broke under the strain. She died of malaria on 6 October 1841, and Nepal was never the same after her passing.

Too often obscured by her strong will and her political ambitions was her deep love of Nepal and her willingness to struggle against what she saw as the crushing weight of the Company's influence. And Hodgson, with his rules and regulations, customs and traditions--all worked up, as she thought, to confine and hem-in an independent people--was the personification of all that she despised in the Company. He called her 'Termagant.' What name she called him, history has not dared to record.

CHRONOLOGY

1840

- 14 February - Ranjung Pandey appointed Chief Minister
- March - RAMNAGAR INCURSION
- 24 May - Rani attempts to go to Gorkha
- 21 June - MUTINY OF THE KATHMANDU GARRISON
- 21 June - Rani goes to Thankot on way to Banaras
- 22 June - King brings Rani back to Kathmandu
- 24 June - King goes to Thankot on way to Banaras
- 20 July - GOVERNOR GENERAL DECIDES TO SEND TROOPS TO THE NEPAL BORDER
- 29 July - Governor General's Demands
- 11 August - Nepalese troops withdrawn from Ramnagar
- 6 September - Governor General's second list of Demands
- 9 October - KING ACCEPTS GOVERNOR GENERAL'S DEMANDS
- 1 November - Fatteh Jung Shah appointed Prime Minister
- 8 November - RESIDENT PRESENTS GOVERNOR GENERAL'S DEMAND THAT THE PANDEY MINISTRY BE DISMISSED
- 22 November - Rani to Nuwakot
- 2 December - King to Nuwakot, followed by Hodgson
- 7 December - KING, HODGSON, AND PRIME MINISTER RETURN TO KATHMANDU, RANI STAYS AT NUWAKOT WITH COURT
- 10 December - Rani returns to Kathmandu
- 28 December - Rani goes to Nuwakot taking Crown Prince
- 29 December - King goes to Nuwakot
- 31 December - Hodgson goes to Nuwakot

1841

- 3 January - NEGOTIATIONS COMPLETED FOR THE FATTEH JUNG SHAH  
MINISTRY AND DISMISSAL OF PANDEY MINISTRY
- 19 February - Rani goes to Hetaunda
- 14 March - Rani returns to Kathmandu
- 20 September - Rani's violent argument with the King and nobles  
about policy towards the Company
- 2 October - GOVERNOR GENERAL CANCELS WINTER CAMPAIGN AGAINST  
NEPAL
- 6 October - RANI SAMRAJYA LAXMI'S DEATH

## CHAPTER ONE

### The Good Old Gorkha Policy

On 6 February 1840 Ranjung Pandey was appointed Chief Minister of Nepal. King Rajendra Bikram Shah (1816-1847), in keeping with his own desire to retain control of the Nepalese Darbar and its foreign policy, gave Ranjung only nominal powers. This pleased neither Ranjung Pandey nor his advocate, the Senior Queen, Samrajya Laxmi Devi, who continually pressed their own causes.

The activities of the Senior Queen and Ranjung discussed in this chapter are two: the Nepalese infiltration into the Ramnagar area and the mutiny of the Kathmandu garrison on the night of 21 June 1840. In a serious misreading of British intentions, Ranjung permitted Gorkhali troops stationed at Someshwar to infiltrate the Ramnagar area of northern Bihar, well within the British territory. This seems to have been an attempt to reclaim for Nepal lands that had long before been given to a Gorkhali princess as dowry on her marriage to the Raja of Ramnagar. The Raja had died without leaving an heir. Since British policy regularly laid claim to such lands, Ranjung apparently thought that quick action on the part of the Gorkhals would prevent the estate from falling into the hands of the British authorities. Hodgson, who had little respect at any time for Ranjung Pandey, the man who had engineered the downfall and death of Bhim Sen Thapa, was immediately suspicious that the Ramnagar incursion was a test case designed to learn whether Gorkhali troops might raid into the Tarai with impunity. Upon investigation, however, the British discovered that not only Ramnagar but Someshwar itself belonged to them and that Someshwar was of great strategic importance in any British plan to take military action against Nepal.

The second activity of the Senior Queen-Ranjung Pandey alliance was no less significant for its bearing on Nepal-Company relations. Though the mutiny of 21 June 1840 ostensibly dealt only with domestic matters, the fact that the British Residency was left undefended and that threats were openly uttered against the Residency and the Resident alarmed Hodgson. He was defenceless, for all practical purposes, and felt his only security lay in demanding that the Nepal Darbar recognize its responsibility for protecting the Residency.

The Governor General strongly supported Hodgson on both these issues. He insisted that restitution be made for the Ramnagar incident and that the Darbar protect the Residency.

Ranjung thus found he had stirred up a hornets' nest of opposition. His loss of prestige was measured by the extent of his defeat in both ventures. More important for Nepal, Lord Auckland had been shifted in a six-month period from a position of censure of Hodgson's harsh tone toward the Nepal Darbar to a position of almost unqualified support for Hodgson's struggle with the Darbar. Thus, for a short while, Hodgson himself shaped the Company's policy towards Nepal, and this left its mark on Nepal as sure as the Bhim Sen Thapa period had.

Resident Hodgson to Government, 14 February 1840<sup>1</sup>

*Resident Hodgson informs the Governor General of the appointment of Ranjung Pandey as the Chief Minister of Nepal. His letter also refers to Nepalese correspondence with Lhasa, the contents of which has stirred Hodgson's deepest suspicions.*<sup>2</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that Ranjung Pandey was appointed Mukhtiyar, or Minister, on February 6th. The Darbar officially notified the Residency on February 10th.

2. I received the announcement as a matter of course and next day sent to present my compliments to the Pandey. I tried on this occasion to learn what powers had actually been conferred with the Mukhtiyarship and whether the Pandey had been given the management of Residency affairs along with the control of all other departments:

3. In this endeavour, however, I was unsuccessful. Indeed the parties most intimately concerned (the Raja, Rani, and the Minister himself) would not seem to be aware what powers have really been bestowed or received with the nominal Premiership just conveyed to Ranjung. Some time will probably be required to throw light upon the true nature of the appointment. At present it appears to be partly a juggle and partly a compromise. Though the investiture occurred 8 days ago, there have so far been no practical consequences whatever.

4. I have already reported to you that the Darbar, upon the very first rumour of our probable rupture with China, hastened to communicate with the Imperial Viceroy at Lhasa. I have now to add that this step has just been followed up by a second letter, detailing our alleged preparation for war, and renewing the Darbar's expressions of devotion to the interests of the Celestial Empire and to the will of His Excellency the Tibetan Viceroy.<sup>3</sup>

5. Copies of these letters I trust to be able to obtain before long. In the meantime I am sorry to say that the symptoms of presumption and restlessness so ordinarily characteristic of this Darbar have been very considerably aggravated from the moment when it became known that our Government was about to enter into hostilities with the Government of China, which the Nepalese have long considered as the wisest and most powerful Government on earth.

I have, etc.,

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 17 April 1840<sup>4</sup>

*Hodgson intended this despatch to clarify for the Governor General the difficulty of conducting business with the Nepal Darbar. The rebuke it drew from the Governor General must have astonished him, and, in the light of later events, it must also astonish the reader.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to transmit to you translated transcripts of correspondence with the Mahila Guru,<sup>5</sup> who as you are aware is nominally in charge of Residency affairs.

2. My first note to the Guru, more formal than usual, was intended to secure his sincere and able (but often ineffectual) assistance in settling with the Darbar long pending matters of business in a business-like and respectful manner. I owe it to this discerning energetic friend of our alliance with Nepal to state that the reply to my note was prepared entirely without consulting him. He was permitted only to read it before affixing his seal. This he was virtually compelled to do by the Darbar in prosecution of that system of faithlessness and hypocrisy which has long used the Guru's respectable name to cloak proceedings well known by the Darbar to be utterly contrary not merely to his sentiments and views of policy but also to his express and incessant remonstrances.

3. In my reply I have tried once again to explain the need for reason and propriety of conduct on the Darbar's side. Of the six cases dealing with the delay or denial of justice to British subjects which I submitted to the Darbar during the last cold season, only one remains undecided. However, other fresh cases have arisen and, I am sorry to say, are likely to arise more frequently, unless the very rashness of the one responsible for this wrong should itself persuade the Maharaja to take note of and repress that person's activities.

4. I refer here to Krishna Ram Misra, the Raj Guru and our rent-free land holder at Banaras (!!) For many months he has exercised an illegal control over the courts of justice of Kathmandu for the sole purpose of extortion and chiefly at the expense of British subjects.<sup>6</sup> In the past he has acted with more or less reserve. Now, without shame or sense, he has defied decency. He has presumed to arrest one British subject and to threaten another because they have dared to make a quiet and regular appeal to me for official interference--an appeal which the Darbar itself admits is just.

5. This matter was only yesterday brought to my notice, so I do not yet have the full and accurate details. I have little doubt, however, that all and more than all of what is alleged is true; and upon that presumption I beg to solicit your instant though succinct instructions as to the course I am to pursue.

6. In the meanwhile I have with guarded caution merely made a private request to the Mukhtiyar of the Residency for information, as will be seen by my fourth enclosure, the tenor of which will, I trust meet the approbation of Government.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government to Resident Hodgson, 4 May 1840<sup>7</sup>

Sir,

I am directed by the Governor General in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th April with transcriptions of your correspondence with the Mahila Guru on the differences existing between you and the Darbar.

2. In reply I am desired to state that while the Governor General in Council approves the vigilant care which you give to the just rights and interests of British subjects in Nepal, he yet cannot but remark that the tenor of your correspondence is more acrimonious and dictatorial than is suitable to the position of the Resident acting on the part of the British Government at any Native Court, and that it may lead to feelings of irritation and estrangement which cannot but operate prejudicially upon the general condition of the relations between the two governments...

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 22 April 1840<sup>8</sup>

*Hodgson reports the removal of the Mahila Guru from the charge of Residency affairs and the resultant strengthening of Ranjung Pandey's grip on the administration.*

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the Darbar Munshi and the Sardar who ordinarily attends on the Resident came to me on the 17th of April to announce that the Mahila Guru had been replaced in the office of Mukhtiyar for Residency Affairs.

The announcement was made to me in a vague and odd way. It seemed to indicate a wish on the Darbar's part to discover whether I was inclined to oppose the measure. I have since heard that such, in fact, is the case and that the Darbar, somewhat alarmed, and disappointed too perhaps, by my quiet and silent assent, has not yet ventured to entirely fulfil its purpose by communicating to me the reason for his removal.

2. With a view to business I shall not, I think, have much reason to regret the end of the Mahila Guru's merely nominal intervention. As

an indication of the temper of the Darbar, however, I see in this measure a serious proof of increasing impracticableness. For the Mahila Guru's even nominal charge of my affairs was always a pledge that the Darbar had yet some scruples to overcome. That able gentleman had, all his life, been known as the firm advocate of good faith and good manners towards my Government and its representative.

3. I trust I shall be authorized to convey to the Mahila Guru some expression of the Governor General's sense of his merits. With reference to coming events, I would suggest that expediency not less than justice seems to require that the Guru should be assured that his thankless efforts to enforce honest and courteous dealing have at least been appreciated by our Government, if not by his.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Maharaja, 9 May 1840<sup>9</sup>

TRANSLATION

*Hodgson protests the Rannagar 'aggression' to the King of Nepal. The strength of the British reaction reveals the flaw in Ranjung Pandey's assessment of Nepal-British relations which led directly to his replacement as Prime Minister. The effort to resolve this crisis drew Hodgson into Nepalese politics, an involvement which in time would prompt the Governor General to remove him from Nepal.*

\*\*\*\*\*

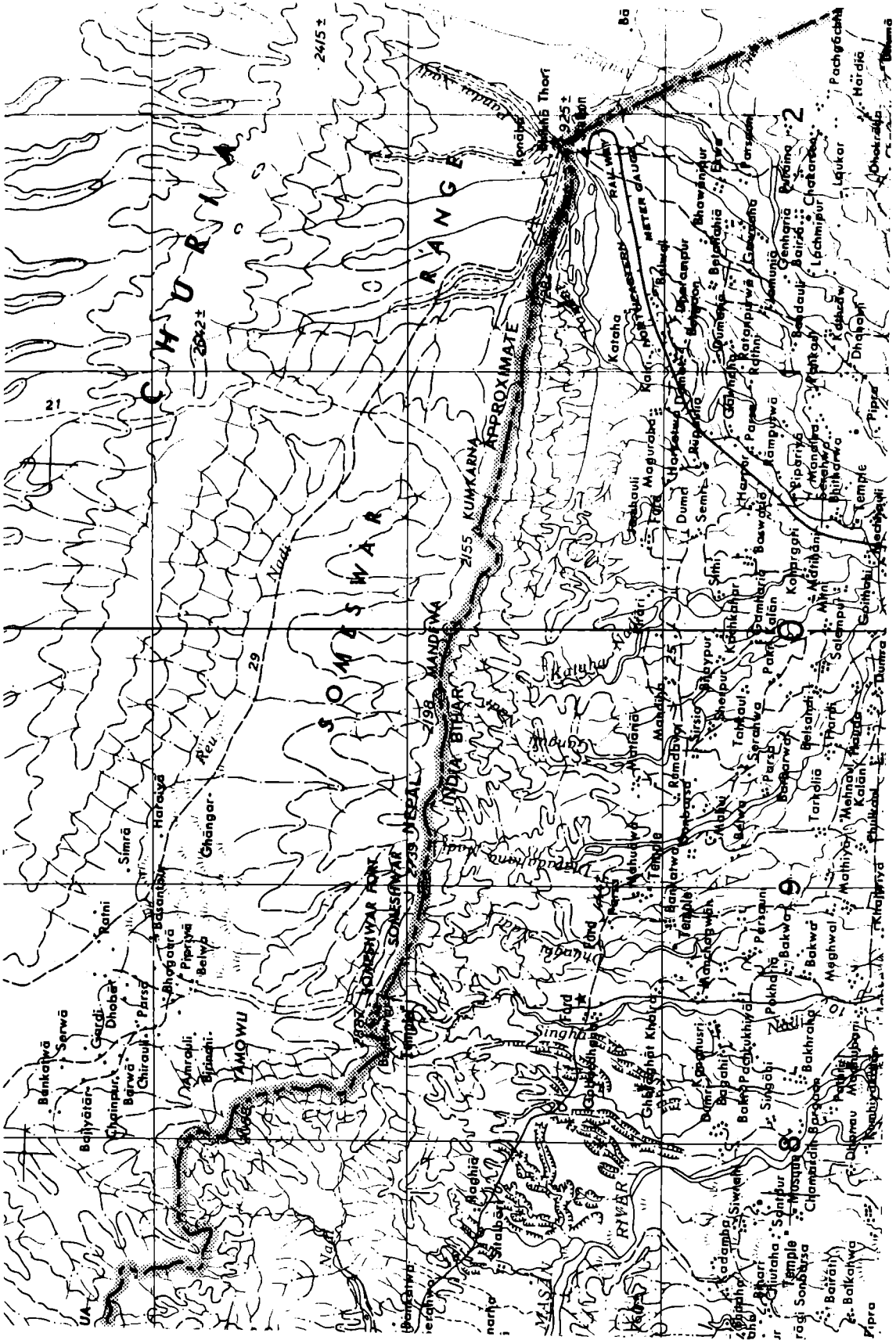
(after the usual compliments)

From a letter of the Joint Magistrate of Champaran dated the 27th April and from another of the Collector of Saran dated the 5th May to my address and also from the reports submitted to those gentlemen by the Thanadar<sup>10</sup> and Tehsildar<sup>11</sup> of Rannagar, it appears that an officer of Your Government named Jasbir Rana, attended by 100 soldiers in arms, proceeded on the 9th of Chait to Sahadra Asthan in Rannagar and forcibly levied the Sair dues payable at the annual fair held there on the day. The said Rana and party also proceeded a second time on the 25th Chait to the south, removed the chowkies at Parsanda and Doodhara (placed there by the renter on the part of my Government), took possession of 29 vil-lages of Tappa Jamolia, and having called together the Mulguzaris,<sup>12</sup> told them that he had come by orders of his Government to collect the public dues which were in future to be paid solely to him.

Adverting to these complaints I have to request an immediate explanation of the irregular circumstances in question.

If Your Highness will turn to the boundary map for Sarkar Champaran, Your Highness will find that in that part of the frontier of the two States the boundary line runs in an even course east and west along the





Someshwar Map

ridge of the first range of Hills, here called 'Churia Ghati' but there 'Someshwar'; and that below the Someshwar range not a foot of the level country belongs to Nepal. If again, Your Highness will cast your eye over the same map in a direction south from Someshwar, Your Highness will find there the major part of the villages named by the Tehsildar of Ramnagar as having been taken forcibly by Jasbir Rana. These villages stand upon the level plain at a distance varying from 3 to 6 cos from the Someshwar ridge, and the villages in question are consequently 6 to 12 miles within the British limits. I trust that some mistake will be found to have been made by the Thanadar and Tehsildar of Ramnagar in their reports above mentioned. But, as there can be none as to the boundary, nor as to the necessity of preserving it inviolate, I have now to request that Your Highness will instantly send orders to your chief authority in that quarter commanding him to withdraw within the Someshwar ridge any officers or men of Your Government who may have transgressed that limit, and instantly to give back to the Joint Magistrate of Champaran any lands or revenues recently seized in the plains south of the Someshwar ridge. Should any question of title be raised, this must be decided by the Darbar in communication with me. Wherever the right and title may be, possession must not be forcibly disturbed by subordinates. If a disturbance has taken place, the status quo ante must be at once restored before any investigation of conflicting claims can be admitted.

B.H. Hodgson, Resident

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Report on the Present State of Taluk Ramnagar<sup>13</sup>

William Sage, Engineering Office, 3rd Division, 10 August 1840

*The Ramnagar area was not an important source of revenue. The original British reaction to the Nepalese infiltration was based on the suspicion that this was but the first of a series of infiltrations planned by the Nepal Darbar and the determination to nip such a policy in the bud. As it turned out, however, Ramnagar, and more importantly the Someshwar Ridge above Ramnagar, was of great strategic importance to the British, as this report of William Sage explains. Although out of chronological sequence, it is reproduced here to provide background for the sharp clash the Ramnagar incident provoked.*

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When the boundary line was drawn by the Commissioners in April 1817, and the surveys of the Gorakhpur and Champaran boundaries were connected with that of Taluk Ramnagar, the Hills and Fort of Someshwar were included in the Taluk, i.e., they were south of the boundary line.

This gave the Raja of Ramnagar, and through him the British Government, possession of the pass of Someshwar, leading into Tappa Manuria. It also opened an uninterrupted route between Mugoraie Khola and Gooseeree

Khola, crossing the Beloo Khola, into the Valley of the Rapti, marching to the westward of the Sidra Range of Hills and fording the Rapti about twenty-five miles nearer its junction with the great Gandak than it was forded by Colonel Nicol's column in 1816.

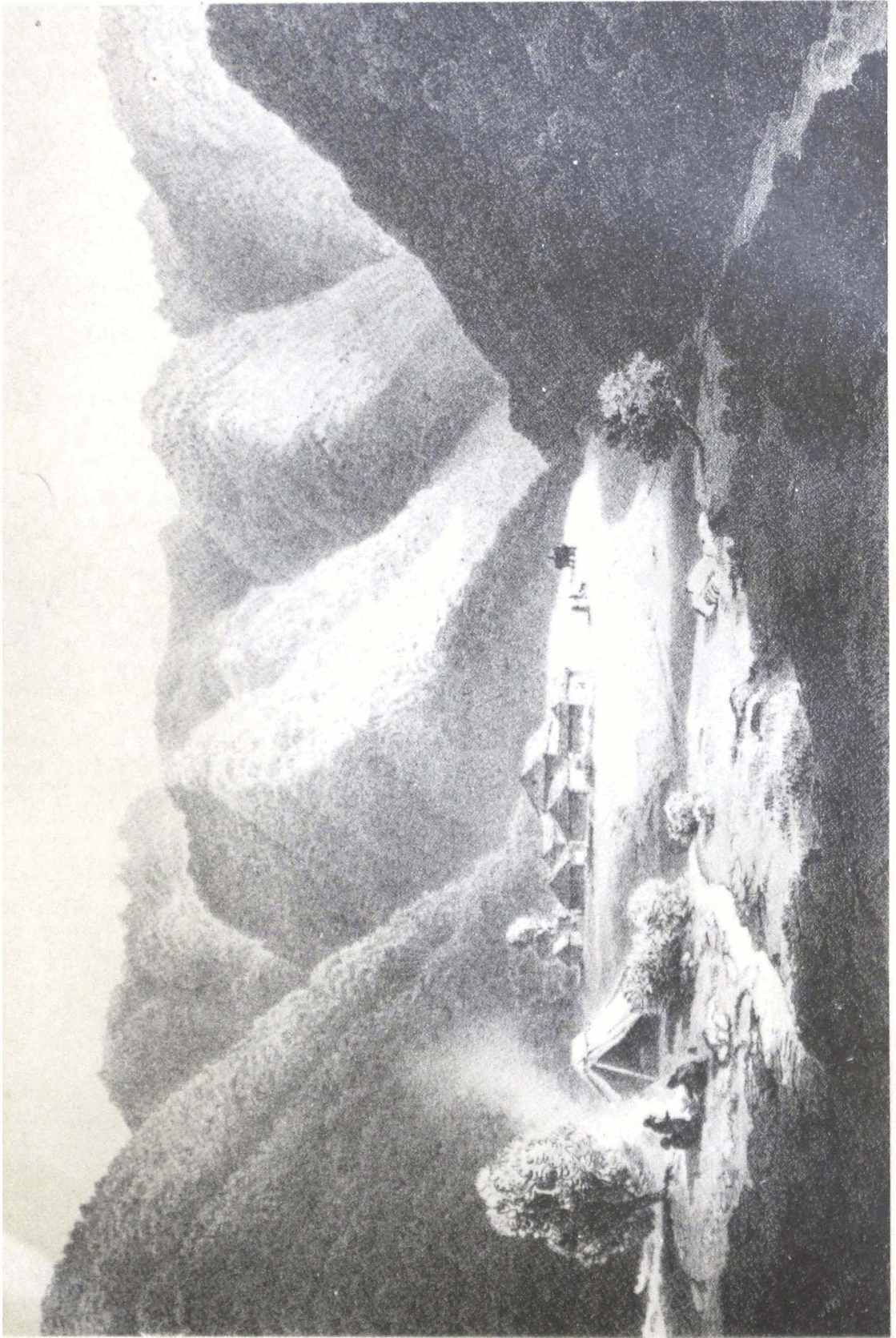
Possession of the Rapti Valley turns all the passes of the Churia Ghati Range. It places Hetaunda and the valley between the first and second range of Hills at the mercy of an invader. For this reason the Gurkhas appear either to have evaded the evacuation of the Fort and Pass, which the Treaty of 1816 required them to evacuate, or subsequently, with the connivance of the last Raja of Ramnagar, to have taken possession of the Fort and Pass of Someshwar. During the last war this pass was found much too strong to be attacked, and was fortunately turned by the sudden seizure of the pass on the Bikna Khola.

There is reliable evidence that when Mr. Brown, the Deputy Collector of Champaran, was assessing the lands of the village of Santpur on the Haria Naddi in 1838, the Gurkhas were in possession of the Fort and Pass and had pushed their people half way down the face of the hill to the south--although our ally, the Raja of Ramnagar, Tej Pratap Sen, had been in the habit of using the Fort as a hunting seat.

How it happened that so important a seizure should have remained unknown to the British Government, as I presume it has, it is not for me to enquire. It does demonstrate the encroaching spirit of the Court of Kathmandu that, although in 1838/9 they only claimed the Fort, saying that the boundary line passed to the south of it, they afterward claimed the sair, or all taxes due to the Raj exclusive of land revenue, in the greater part of Taluk Ramnagar.

Amir Pratap Sen, the last Raja of Ramnagar, died without leaving any legitimate child. On the death of his Rani, the Taluk, for want of heirs, was attached by the British Government. An illegitimate son of the late Raja, by a Gurkha woman, the daughter of one of their Subedars, then claimed the Raj, and the Gurkhas simultaneously advanced into the plains and seized eighty-five villages. The families of Nepal and Ramnagar are connected. When the Government attached the Taluk Ramnagar, the Gurkhas seized such portions of it as had been given to the Ramnagar family previously to the treaty with the British Government in 1816. At the same time it appeared generally understood that if the Chautaria, the illegitimate son of the last Raja, had been recognized as heir to the Taluk, the Gurkhas would not have made the seizures.

So strong is this feeling that one of the Chautaria's followers admitted to me inadvertently that, by using the Raja's name and authority, he could pass through all the posts occupied by the Gurkhas. I am inclined to believe that the Pretender to the Ramnagar Raj is in correspondence with the people who have taken possession of the villages north of the Tarai Road.



THANKOT

The present state of the Taluk Ramnagar is far from encouraging to the subjects of the British Government. The Choraitis, or hereditary police, have been prohibited for the last four months from making their reports to the Thana, under threats of the severest punishment. And the late lessee and present head of the village of Bankatwa, one of the villages seized, has been severely wounded and has little chance of recovery.

It appears to me that although the villages have been given up and the Gurkha Government may be sincere in their present orders to withdraw all interference with Ramnagar, yet as long as the Pretender Chautaria is allowed to remain on the frontier with his mother's relatives (all Gurkhas) the Taluk must always remain in an unsettled state--and the encroachments of the Gurkha Government will, as far as possible, be concealed from the British authorities.

Attaching the importance which I do to the Fort and Pass of Someshwar, I should be wanting in my duty as a public officer, not to express my conviction. It is essential to the peace and security of the frontier that the Pretender Chautaria and his family should be removed from Ramnagar and that a strong detachment of troops be stationed at this place and formal possession taken of Someshwar Ghari.

There is no Sal forest between Ramnagar and the Hills, which are only ten miles distant. The road is open all year round, and communications kept up with the plains. The Gurkha regular troops, according to all I have been able to collect, have been in the Fort of Someshwar these six-months past, and are still in possession of it, despite the recent orders exported from the Darbar. If the British Government, not knowing the importance of this possession, were to fail on the present occasion to demand that the Nepali troops evacuate it, the Court of Kathmandu might consider this omission as a tacit recognition of their right to the Fort and Pass.

The boundary fixed in 1817 gives the command to the British Government of all the passes in the Someshwar range of the Hills, stretching from Tribeni on the left bank of the great Gandak to Bikna Khola on the right bank of the Uria Naddi. At the present I can only name those of Bikna Khola, Someshwar, and Chitwan Joowari, about eight miles farther west, but I have no doubt there are others unknown to any but the Tharus and Parbatiyas.

A glance at the boundary map, in conjunction with one of Nepal, will at once demonstrate the immense value from a military point of view of the possession of the Fort and Pass of Someshwar. It gives, as I have already shown in the commencement of this report, an uninterrupted route along the valleys of the Manuree and the Rapti to Hetaunda and Makwanpur. I trust the importance of the posts on the boundary line will be ample apology, if any be necessary, for my having gone a little beyond the orders I received, in reporting at length on the state of the Taluk Ramnagar, and showing the influence it possesses, as connecting the Nepal and British Frontiers.....

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 5 June 1840<sup>14</sup>

*In 1840 a delegation was sent from Kathmandu to search in northern India for suitable brides for the Crown Prince of Nepal. They returned in May. The prospective brides, tired and unwell from the journey, did not please the women of the Royal household, who declared them unsuitable. Resident Hodgson was summoned as a preliminary step towards requesting passports for a second marriage mission. His report on the sequel is interesting not only because of the solution found for the marriage problem but also for his opinions of the Senior Queen's methods and motives.*

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Sir,

In continuation of my despatch to you of the 25th May, I have the honor to inform you that the uproar so suddenly raised by the alleged discovery that the Crown Prince's brides were unfit for his bed and even for residence within the Darbar was as suddenly quelled, two days after my visit. The supposed inauspicious marks on the ladies' bodies were, in fact, pronounced auspicious and their unhealthiness but temporary. The members of the marriage mission were then released from chains and dismissed with dresses of honor. The new marriage mission, as well as the Rani's pilgrimage to Banaras, were silently dropped. So I presume, at any rate, for nothing further has been said on the subject.

2. What were the Darbar's motives for such an extraordinary proceeding and for calling upon me in such a strange way to participate in them before anything had been properly examined or understood? This I have not yet fully learned. I hear, though, that my participation was chiefly caused by the Raja's inability to control his wife and his belief that my intervention would help him to that end.

3. Hardly had the disturbance caused by this affair settled down when another turmoil was excited within the Palace by the Maharani. Suddenly at midday she set out on foot from the Darbar, saying she was going to Gorkha, and made her way through the town with no other screen than that of a cloth supported by the hands of two Sardars. Nor was she stopped and brought back until she had dragged the whole Court after her for many miles.

4. Those who know as much of the rationale of these doings as anyone but the chief actress herself can know, allege that she intends to keep the Maharaja in perpetual distress and anxiety and thereby to disgust him with the cares of royalty and to induce his resignation in favour of his son, under whom as Regent the Maharani proposes and desires to have her uncontrolled way. As a nearer and preliminary step, Her Highness wishes the full administrative power of the Kingdom to be committed to her creature Ranjung Pandey, now the nominal Premier. The Raja is not inclined at the present to permit Ranjung to make the Pajani (to dispose of all patronage

and appointments) in the unrestricted manner which the Maharani insists is the Premier's right.

4. This explanation of the domestic disputes of the Darbar is probably upon the whole correct. But only more time can fully reveal their real causes, like their probable results. Meanwhile I have the satisfaction to know that my long conference with their Highnesses, as already reported, pleased His Highness without offending the Rani, and happily my words anticipated the sudden dissolution of the charges brought against the young brides of the Crown Prince.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 3 July 1840<sup>15</sup>

*Hodgson's report of the mutiny of the Nepal army is an important document. In brief, Hodgson argued from the fact of the mutiny on 21 June to the ulterior motives of the Senior Queen and the Minister. As Hodgson stated the case, the causes of the mutiny and the fact that it was being planned were well known long before the event. Had they wished, the Queen and the Minister could easily have settled the problem. They chose not to do so but rather to direct the violence of the troops against leading nobles, their opponents. Hodgson's complex analysis of their motives had a very strong influence on subsequent British policy towards Nepal.*

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I have the honor to inform you that on the afternoon of June 21st a general parade of the Nepalese troops was ordered on the Tundikhel to hear some command of the Maharaja. Though the troops were not told in advance the nature of the command, they may well have guessed it from earlier events that were already widely known: a reduction in pay. This measure had been long planned, and Kulraj Pandey had been named Paymaster General on the condition that he implement it. The soldiers neither wanted nor waited for the proclamation, but according to a prearranged plan grounded their arms at once and demanded that their grievances be redressed.

2. It must be admitted that their grievances were enough to try their patience. Soldiers in Nepal are customarily enlisted for one year. At the end of the year they are either reenlisted or paid up and discharged. This, however, has not been done for the past two years. Rather, the soldiers have been kept hanging on in service for eight or ten months beyond the period of their enlistment and forced to suffer the constant threat that fresh troops would be recruited near the end of the year to replace them and, according to Nepalese usage, be entitled to the whole year's salary though serving only a few months. In addition to this anxiety, the troops were continually irritated by repeated rumours that their pay was to be reduced by as much as one-half.

3. It is no wonder that the Government's persistence in these proceedings for two years should have led the soldiers to open mutiny--even though the Gorkhali soldiers are the most obedient and unassuming in the world. What is difficult to credit is that the Minister did not foresee the possibility of a mutiny and that the anxious meetings and debates the soldiers carried on for ten days before the mutiny should have escaped all notice and reprehension. The value of these reflections will become apparent later in this report. In the meanwhile I want to point out that the soldiers--as just as were the complaints that led to their mutiny--attempted no violence for several hours. The single exception to this was a casual fracas between some Gorkhali soldiers and a young recruit belonging to the Residency escort, whose impudence alone was probably to blame.

### The First Violence

4. The circumstances of this fracas were as follows. The young recruit with two of his companions was returning from the City about 7 o'clock p.m. Passing the Tundikhel he was attracted by the spectacle of the mutineers and (so it is said) foolishly went towards them to make some comment on their misbehaviour. Some of the soldiers gave him an angry response and several hot spirits rushed at him, one of whom hit him over the head with a sheathed sword. The force of the blow was so great that the sword cut through the scabbard and inflicted a rather severe wound, from which the blood flowed copiously. When the assailants saw this, they drew back, and, thanks to the intervention of some of their quieter comrades, the wounded man and his two companions were allowed to go off. The Maharaja was immediately informed of the fracas. He sent promptly to apologize to me and at the same time directed that the one who had struck the blow should be arrested. But the mutineers--rapidly growing more unmanageable because of the Darbar's inefficient and elusive attempts to compromise with them--refused to give up the offender. However I, deeply aware of the urgency of diverting from the Residency the attention of so large a body of armed, insubordinate soldiers, promptly quashed the inquiry I was making. I also sent instantly to the Darbar to beg that the Maharaja would no longer trouble himself about this trivial affair, but would give his whole attention to the grave matter of the mutiny; for grave I knew it had already become.

5. In the meanwhile the night had set in, in darkness and in rain. By eleven o'clock the reports I had received from the City and the Parade Ground that the soldiers were acting violently led me to send for the Gorkha Subedar<sup>16</sup> on duty at the Residency. I asked him if he had come from the City. Yes. Were the soldiers plundering and perpetrating great excesses there as well as using threatening language towards the Residency? Yes. Had he received any orders? No. I then directed him to return immediately to the Darbar to report what he had heard and seen in the City, and to say in my name that I relied upon the Maharaja for doing what was proper and necessary in my regard. The Subedar did not return to me until past 12 o'clock. He said that the Maharaja had told him that the soldiers were in a state of mutiny and that I must defend myself but



warned me not to strike first. Was the Raja aware, I asked, of the threatening language being used towards the Residency, of the rumours of an attack on the Residency, and of the mutineers having actually moved this way? The Subedar said he did not know; he supposed so. Then noticing a part of my escort under arms within the Residency, he added 'I am glad to see it. I am glad to see it. The mutineers are, or were only a moment ago, within 400 yards of you, at the Chautaria's house, which they are gutting.' 17

### Defence of The Residency - Violence Spreads

6. Expecting the Darbar to provide protection if it became needful, and most anxious to show no visible sign of fear from the hostility of the mutineers, I had contented myself until 11:30 p.m. with sending scouts in disguise towards the City and with warning the Subedar of the escort to be ready for a sudden summons. Up to that time I had heard nothing from the Darbar, and my scouts reported that a large body of mutineers had left the City and were advancing in this direction. It seemed to me necessary to prepare for a possible attack. Accordingly, as quietly as possible, I got the magazine into the Residency. I also stationed half the escort there and ordered the other half to be assembled at the quarter guard under arms and ready to join their companions in the Residency on my signal. I did not altogether expect an actual attack--at least not by the main body of the Gorkhas. But I did think that some of them, urged on perhaps by mischief-makers or by their own worthless characters, might come to the Residency. If they found me unprepared, they might prove as savage as they were cowardly. Even if a large body came, it seemed that my preparation would give double effect to the protests I planned to make to the men and also give the Darbar time to protect me, if the Darbar were so disposed. The mutineers, I knew, had no ammunition, whereas my handful of soldiers were well supplied. Posted as they were on the broad roof of the Residency, they would certainly have resisted any attack for half an hour or more.

7. Such were my views in making preparation for an attack which, though threatened, was not made. The mutineers halted at the house of Chautaria Pushkar Shah, which stands alone about midway between the town and the Residency on the high road connecting them, and proceeded at once to the work of destruction. Then, after an ominous pause, they went back to the City, where they continued their devastation until about one or two o'clock in the morning. At last the Maharaja himself answered their frequent summons to the Tundikhel. He promised that they should no longer be annually exposed to be tricked out of months of pay nor forced to accept an insufferable reduction in pay. The troops then rapidly re-assembled, shouldered their arms, and resumed their obedience, with the Raja promising a more formal answer to their demands in the morning.

8. The violences of the mutineers were perpetrated between 9 to 10 o'clock p.m. of the 21st and 2 o'clock a.m. of the 22nd. During this period the houses of the five leading Chiefs were entirely or partially gutted of moveables. The doors and windows were dashed to pieces. The

honor of the females invaded, but not a l'outrance. Nothing that could be broken was spared. Yet nothing was stolen. The cry of the mutineers was: 'Woe to those who live in luxury themselves while they advise the starving and the poor soldiers! Down with the Chiefs! Down with the Feringies! We will be Chiefs ourselves. We will have back our old territories. We will conquer the Ganges.' The Chiefs who were thus plundered and dishonored were Rangnath Pandit, Pushkar Shah Chautaria, Kulraj Pandey, Kazi Prasad Singh, and Karbir Pandey. In other words, the very persons who have been simple or greedy enough to take upon themselves, since the fall of Bhim Sen, a part or the whole of the responsibility of affairs, without exercising any real power. This remained in other hands than theirs and in hands which have preferred to work invisibly and to lay the burden of affairs on other shoulders, including those of the Raja himself.

### Suspicion

9. In this regard it is essential to remark that it was on the 21st, at about the same time the general parade was ordered, that the Maharani set out for Thankot declaring she was going to the Plains. Also, throughout that anxious night the Minister, though present in the City, pretended to be ill and never left his house. The mutineers went first to his mansion to demand satisfaction. This is the person who has for some time past been the sole Minister and, ever since Bhim Sen's fate, the most influential man in the Darbar. Yet strange to tell, he was able in a few moments, despite his very recently simulated imbecility of mind, to satisfy the rioters that he was innocent of their wrongs and to convince them that he had been, was, and would be their great advocate and ally. The mutineers left the Minister with cheers. It is certain that he never attempted to repress their subsequent excesses; and it is suspected that he even hinted where their vengeance was due!

10. On the following, or rather on that morning (the 22nd) the Maharaja proceeded at daylight to Thankot to bring back the Rani. All of the troops accompanied him under arms and in perfect order. Throughout the day there was much secret and open debate at Thankot between the Raja and Rani and between them and the soldiery. The troops demanded through their deputies not only a written renewal of the Raja's promise to them of the preceding night but also that the new Paymaster should be given up to slaughter. They were reassured of the formal abrogation of all innovations upon their ancient system of remuneration and a new Paymaster was immediately nominated by the Raja in order to appease them. But they would not accept the new Paymaster (Chautaria Guru Prasad) and they immediately named their own man for the office who was no other than Jagat Bam Pandey, the Minister's nephew, and as is said the Minister's prime secret agent in all late tamperings with the troops. Be this as it may, the soldiery certainly adopted with startling suddenness the Minister's cause and even his sentiments, though till lately he had been very unpopular with them. Also no less suddenly a general opinion went abroad that the troops had obtained not merely forgiveness of their past excesses against the Chiefs but encouragement to fresh and further exorbitances.

11. With regard to the disputes between the Raja and Rani, it was at the same time whispered that the Raja had agreed in writing to the demands of the Rani and that his signature alone was needed to render the Maharaja a complete cypher in regard to the government of his own kingdom.

In the afternoon of this day, or the 22nd, the royal pair returned to Kathmandu, accompanied by all the troops--the Raja in low spirits and the Rani exceedingly gay and very gracious to the troops whom she called her children and to whose cantonment she went before returning to her garden house near the cantonment. Before the Rani departed, the replacement of Guru Prasad by Jagat Bam Pandey as Paymaster General of the forces was formally ratified.

12. The next day, or the 23rd June, Chautaria Pushkar Shah and Rangnath Pandit went (separately) to the Maharaja to demand satisfaction for the plunder of their property and for the insults offered to their ladies by the soldiery. But neither of them could obtain any intelligible answer. The Chautaria, whose family abounds with fine young men, offered, if the Raja would give the word, immediately to drag forth into light the secret instigators of the soldiery and to guarantee their safe and certain punishment with the aid and approval of the very troops who had done the wrong.

#### The Raja Appeals to the Troops

13. The Raja seemed much moved by the Chautaria's offers and assertions, but he could not be brought to act upon them; and in the course of a few hours they were scattered to the winds by a written communication which was sent from the Raja and Rani to the troops to the following effect: The English Government is mighty, abounding in wealth and in all other resources for war. I have remained friends with the English so long because I could not cope with them. Besides, I am bound by a treaty of friendship and have no excuse now to break it. Nor have I money to support a war. Troops I have and arms and ammunition in plenty, but no money; and just now the marriages of my sons are costing me more than I know where to get. This is the reason why I have reduced your pay. I want treasure to fight the English. Take lower pay for a year or two and when I have completed the marriages and got some money in hand, I will throw off the mask and indulge you with a war. But now the English are my friends, and they have done me no harm. Again, the Bharadars (Chiefs) complain that you have plundered and insulted them. What answer must I make?

14. The troops, by their deputies, gave immediate and ample replies viva voce; but presently they said that they would submit their sentiments in writing to the Raja if he would come to the Parade on the 25th. In the meanwhile, when it was reported to His Highness what the soldiery had so eagerly uttered, the Maharaja is said to have become pensive and alarmed. On the following day, or 24th, His Highness proceeded from the Palace to the Queen's garden house close to the cantonment (where the Rani persisted

in staying) and there had a long and angry discussion with her, of what nature may be guessed from the conclusion, which alone was witnessed. His Highness, it is supposed, endured much customary dogmatism and scorn from the Rani. At length he rose and loudly declared that the kingdom was his and that the Rani would not destroy it, or if she did he would not witness it. He would go himself to Banaras. Thereupon he ordered his horse and hurried away to Thankot, the first stage on the journey towards the Plains.

### The Rani Returns to the Attack

15. This spark of decision on the Raja's part is said to have alarmed the Rani, especially as her own favourite ruse of running away was thus made somewhat ridiculous and at the same time turned against herself. She lowered her tone; no longer insisted on the immediate signature of the paper the Raja had given her; and in the course of the next day, the 25th, cajoled His Highness back to Kathmandu. His Highness, however, had no sooner arrived than the Lady resumed her tactics. She had already on the previous day sent to ask me for a translated copy of the Governor General's orders in regard to Her Highness' journey to Banaras. On the 25th a summary of these orders was sent to her in writing through the Raja. Despite the plain tenor of these orders, the Maharani sent me, on her own part, a memorandum demanding that I send her a passport immediately. The Raja at the same time begged me privately to do no such thing. Up to the 1st of July this unintelligible proceeding was continued--the Rani insisting, the Raja forbidding. Perplexed with many doubts, I evaded them both and referred the matter to the Minister, saying this was something in which I could not meddle under the circumstances without incurring a responsibility both to the Darbar and to the Governor General that was more than I could possibly bear.

16. The particulars of these requests for a passport to Banaras (a mere pretense as far as actually going there was concerned) are too trivial for a separate despatch. I mention them here in connection with the mutiny of the troops both to illustrate the fraudulent demands of the Darbar and because they have a direct bearing on the Rani's involvement in the intrigues from which the mutiny arose. Her journey to Thankot on the 21st was designed to conceal her secret activity to intimidate the Chiefs (and possibly the Resident as well) by directing against them the blind fury of the soldiery. Her later insistence on a passport, which she thought I dare not refuse under the circumstances, was intended to blind me yet further to her activity, but also, and chiefly, to alarm her submissive husband into silent acceptance of all that had occurred and all that she proposed to do further on the strength of that acceptance.

### The Troops Speak

17. Returning now to the mutiny and to the 25th of June, I proceed to give the substance of the troops' written answer to the Raja's (really the Rani's) note to them of the 23rd, which the Raja went to their parade to receive, according to their request. The answer was this: 'True, the

English Government is great; but what care the bwanses (wild dogs) how large is the herd. They attack! They are sure to fill their bellies. You want no money for making war. The war shall support itself. We will plunder Lucknow or Patna; but first we must be rid of the Resident. He sees and forestalls all. We must be able, unseen, to watch the moment of attack. It will soon come. It is come. Give the word and we will destroy the Resident, and then war will follow of course. You want an excuse for war. There is one ready made. Let us operate unseen, and we will soon make the Ganges your boundary. Or, if the English want peace and are your friends, as you say, why do they keep possession of half your dominions? Let them restore Kumaon and Sikkim. These are yours. Demand them back, and, if they are not given, drive out the Resident. You talk too of your Chiefs and their wrongs. Of what use are the Chiefs? We want none. We will be Chiefs and soldiers too; The Chiefs shall no longer do business with the Resident. The Munshi is enough and occasionally the Minister, but no others. In the Thapa's time (Bhim Sen) it was so. Let it be so again. Nor should Your Highness any more than the Chiefs do business with the Resident. Leave it to the Munshi and to Ranjung (the Minister). So it used to be.<sup>18</sup> So it must be again.<sup>19</sup>

18. The Raja perused the petition or address, paused for a while, and then said he would consider it. He seemed oppressed with anxiety but presently gave orders that the troops should fall into their ranks. He then marched at their head by a wide circuit around the City, after which he quietly dismissed the troops to their cantonments.

19. Up to the present nothing further has been said upon the subject of this petition. The soldiers, fully satisfied on the matter of their pay and enlistment (the only matters which did or could concern them), have for some days past returned to their usual habits of obedience. This, despite the rash, the insane appeal to them, so formally made and answered, and despite the complete impunity for their unprovoked attack upon so many of their own Chiefs which, I need hardly add, has been granted to them without question or inquiry. The earnest and repeated demands of Rangnath Pandit and Chautaria Pushkar Shah, two of the most eminent men of the kingdom and the chief sufferers, have achieved nothing.

### The Politics Behind the Mutiny

20. The Darbar's refusal to search for the causes and authors of the wrongs inflicted upon the Nepalese Chiefs is strongly indicative. It does not, however, explain the events themselves. Though few persons dare speak, no one at Kathmandu doubts either the Queen's aims or the Minister's aims. These have been on record for years. Thus far, however, these two have not been able to achieve their main objects owing to the opposition of the Chiefs and the Raja, even though this opposition has been largely negative, thanks to His Highness' unexplainable subjection to petticoat rule even when he is afraid that it will be his ruin at home and abroad. For the Queen and the Minister to make further progress, it was necessary to alienate the Chiefs from the troops and isolate the Raja.

And, since these aims could not be accomplished otherwise, it was decided to carry them out under cover of the revolt which the soldiers were known to have been preparing for months owing to wrongs of their own. These wrongs were too gross not to have been corrected long ago by the all powerful influence of the Queen and her favorite, had it not been their further intention to lay the blame for this absurd injustice on their opponents, to take the credit for correcting it on themselves, and thus to bind the soldiery to themselves by all the causes and consequences of the revolt.

Such an hypothesis would explain the various extraordinary circumstances described in this despatch as well as the consistent sequence of the events leading up to the mutiny. We also arrive at the same conclusion if we follow the maxim that the guilty are those who profit from the crime. Even the Raja, and yet more the Chiefs and the whole country are overwhelmed with feelings of indignation, of shame, and of apprehension.

21. I have already mentioned Chautaria Pushkar Shah's offer to the Raja to prove conclusively that the soldiers, left to themselves, would not have committed the excesses they did against their Chiefs. The soldiers were instigated to these acts, and the instigators' names are known. Several of the soldiers attached to the Chautaria's family voluntarily revealed the plot to their patron. Once it was known that the immediate agents were Jagat Bam Pandey, Dal Bahadur Pandey, and Ranbam Thapa, no person conversant with the domestic politics of the Darbar could doubt who directed their actions. These men are the creatures of Ranjung Pandey, the Minister.

### The Residency in Danger

22. Regarding the suggestion that the soldiers fully intended to attack the Residency on the night of the 21st, and would have done so, had I not made preparations to receive them--I doubt this. After comparing and tracing back numberless rumours, it is my opinion that, if such an intention existed, it was merely the reaction of a small group of Gorkha troops to their accidental clash with my sipahi which was abandoned when their companions refused to support them. In short, I acquit the Darbar of any direct knowledge or instigation of so infamous an act. However, I feel obliged to add that, despite the undoubted risks of the night of the 21st and despite the fury and unrestrained threats uttered against us throughout the 22nd and 23rd (threats that made it impossible for anyone to leave the Residency limits safely), the Darbar neither offered assistance or advice nor enquired after our welfare. On this point, I presume, we cannot with safety or honor grant the Darbar complete acquittal, nor upon the additional point of the Darbar's invitation and encouragement to its troops, while in a state of irritation, to discuss the rights under treaty of a foreign Government.

23. So long as I was disposed to rely on the Darbar's sincerity--as I was for a while, owing to the Maharaja's handsome message about the wounded sipahi--I felt the full expediency of silence. I believed that the Darbar neglected me because the mutiny of the Gorkha troops was universal. But I soon came to know that a whole Battalion--the Khas Paltan, or

King's Own--had never participated in any degree in the mutiny and was throughout the night of the 21st on duty, as usual, within the Palace. Why was a Company or half a Company of this Battalion not sent for the protection of the Residency on that night? Why was not some popular Sardar sent? Why was there no message, no enquiry--neither then nor throughout the 22nd and 23rd, during all which time the City was resounding with coarse and ominous threats? Many persons asked these questions. When they learned that the Darbar had done nothing for our protection, they kindly warned me in secret to keep myself and people strictly within the Residency limits. I confess that after the first night had passed I had no great fears of violence. But the Darbar's sincerity was every hour more open to question. To make the Darbar aware of the responsibility which it seemed disposed to evade, on the morning of the 24th I directed my Munshi to write to the Court Munshi and ask simply if the mutiny were or were not put down. The answer was that it had been partially put down. On the next day, or 25th, the Court Munshi repeated the same information to me orally. I then asked that I might have a note from the Minister to this effect. On the 26th a dry response to my question was furnished to me, without one word of explanation, apology, or regret. Nor has any been given to me to this hour.

#### The Consequence: Aggression

24. It may be prudent perhaps to inform the Governor General that there is only one Chief in this State with whom I have had any sort of connection, and that gentleman has escaped all question or injury during the recent uproar. No charge of intrigue, can therefore, be made against me. My only offense consists in my presence here as a check upon the hostile plans and wishes of the Darbar and in the support I have given to all well-intentioned persons and more particularly to the Maharaja by the uniform candor and courtesy of my frequent official explanations and intercourse.

These explanations and that intercourse have, again and again during the past 2 years, caused His Highness to pause and draw back when the Queen and Minister had urged him to a course of intrigue or injustice towards the British Government. Thus their hostility to me and their desire to segregate the Raja from me<sup>20</sup> are perfectly explained, since these persons have long blinded His Highness to their traitorous schemes at home by inflaming his vanity in reference to foreign relations.

#### Firm Action Required

25. The Raja lacks neither sense nor prudence. He does, however, misunderstand our forbearance, and is as vain as a peacock of the fancied importance of his martial little kingdom. Unhappily, he is surrounded by those whose aim it is to influence his vanity and so to blind him to the game they are playing in the domestic politics of the Darbar. The Raja's timidity, however, is more than equal to his vanity. He is deeply aware of our power and more than half suspects the sincerity and wisdom of that advice which perpetually urges him to persevere a little longer in his

attempts to deceive and wrong us. If the Governor General in Council took some clear action directly addressed to his fears, I believe that the Raja would awake from his delusion and free himself from the Pandey influence, to the joy and approval of his Chiefs.

26. If, on the other hand, no notice is taken of these transactions, I fear that, before long, the Chiefs will be crushed; the Raja will succumb; and the Maharani as Regent will expel the Residency. This will be the first step towards the systematic renewal of those repeated aggressions upon our territories which the Ramnagar case and the history of the last war so fully illustrate. (See Narrative of Political Relations)<sup>21</sup>

27. Moreover, there is in this State a small and odious faction who, lacking all legitimate influence, have already been forced to appeal to the army for support. If events transpired as suggested, they would probably soon be obliged to surrender more completely to the army's passion for war. Though they themselves eventually came to realize that a policy of war was futile.

28. It is not for me to presume to suggest the sort of proceeding which could most conveniently be adopted towards Nepal. I am reliably informed, however, and fully convinced that almost any firm action would suffice. Two years ago, General Oglander's arrival on the border struck a panic which almost brought the Raja to our feet. So now, when the Palace is yet more divided, the Chiefs far more profoundly disgusted,<sup>22</sup> and the army half-disorganized, the resumption of our former military positions on the frontier (Nullye, Titalya, and Bettiah) with perhaps also Mathabar Singh's simple appearance at Banaras,<sup>23</sup> would at once confound the intrigues of our most active enemies in the Darbar and give us security during the coming eventful year or two.

29. We are not required to explain our motives for replacing our troops in cantonments occupied by them for years. We are even less obliged to explain the arrival in Banaras of a Chief whose private business calls him there. The silent execution of these measures might well be sufficient. However, I can foresee no evil and much good in Government's admitting that the troops were moved to the border because of recent events here--events which have necessarily placed the relations of the British Government with Nepal and the safety of the Residency in a condition of insecurity that is unacceptable. The future safety of the Residency ought perhaps at the same time to be solemnly committed to the Maharaja's care by direct letter from the Governor General to His Highness.

30. From a recent letter to my address from the Collector of Saran, it appears that despite the Darbar's frequent verbal and written assurances to me to the contrary, further aggressions are daily being committed upon our territories in Saran. This will probably be considered additional evidence of the necessity of some such course being taken with the Darbar as I have ventured to point out. Though I might no doubt deal successfully with these new aggressions, yet under all the circumstances I conceive it better to wait for the instructions of Government.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 20 July 1840<sup>24</sup>

*The Secretary to the Government of India outlines for Hodgson the Governor General's plan of action towards Nepal. The Governor General wants the Ramnagar incident settled immediately. His dissatisfaction with the Nepal Darbar's attitude is clear, and his request for further information on the mutiny suggests that Hodgson's report of 3 July has made its impression.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge your despatch of the 3rd July on the recent mutiny of the troops at Kathmandu and on the proceedings connected with that occurrence.

2. The general condition of our relations with Nepal, and the actual state of that Government and Country engage the attentive consideration of the Governor General in Council; but the policy of the British Government must be in so very great a degree dependent on the issue of the demands which you have been directed to make in regard to the forcible occupation of our territory at Ramnagar, that his Lordship in Council will postpone definite instructions, until he has your report of the execution of those orders.

In the meantime you are authorized to intimate to the Nepal Darbar that your Government has viewed the continued usurpation of British territory with extreme displeasure--that by every day's delay the occasions for requiring reparation with satisfaction for that outrage have been multiplied, and that the Government of India will speedily feel itself compelled if satisfaction be not fully afforded to it, to march its troops to the frontier, and to vindicate its honor and to relieve its subjects from the violence to which they are exposed.

3. In the event of the despatches shortly expected from you on the requisitions made respecting the transactions at Ramnagar being of an unsatisfactory tenor, you will be prepared for hearing that a movement of troops, so as effectively to remove all intruders from within our frontier, has taken place, at the earliest period of which the season will admit--and you will act in such a contingency so as to avoid unnecessary risk to yourself as to those connected with the Residency.

The measure will of course in the first instance be resorted to only as one of indispensable local precaution and security, and it is not anticipated that annoyance to you will arise in consequence.

4. The letters which you describe as having been interchanged between the Raja and the soldiery are of so important a character, as affecting the relations of Nepal with the British Government, that his Lordship in Council must desire to receive every proof which you can

furnish of the authenticity of the statements communicated by you purporting to be the substance of that correspondence.

5. On this point and in the position and influence of the persons who have conducted the correspondence on the part of the mutinous troops, and on the numbers and connections of those troops as regards the remaining portion of the army whether at Kathmandu or elsewhere, your letter is silent--and you are requested without delay to transmit the fullest information in your power and sending also complete copies of the correspondence in question if you should be able to obtain them.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 14 August 1840<sup>25</sup>

*In amazing detail Hodgson answers the Governor General's request for additional information about the mutiny of 21 June.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

With reference to the 5th paragraph of your despatch of the 20th July, requiring further information regarding the transactions of the 21st June, I have the honor to state as follows. The Raja's letter to the troops was written by Uma Nath Khاردar, a confidential scribe of the Court and brother of Kasinath, who is head of that department. This letter was delivered by Captain Kirti Bir Khabas, a close personal attendant and almost menial of the Raja's and Rani's. The Sipahis' reply to the Raja's letter was written by the Senior Major, or accountant, of the Sri Nath Battalion, by name Bir Bhadra, a Brahman and brother-in-law of Kasinath mentioned above. This letter was presented to the Raja by Abhiman Rana, a Captain of the Sri Nath and a man much liked by the whole army--formerly a favorite of Bhim Sen and since his fall attached without any special dependencies to the Raja. The substance of the correspondence was procured for me by a Tirhut Brahman called Makur Jha, ostensibly attached to Kasinath but really having his chief source of wealth and trust in the Company's territories at the village of Binow and accessible to me through the friendship of his wife with the wife of a secret agent of mine.<sup>26</sup> The substance of the letters in question was confirmed to me verbally by various respectable persons who had obvious means to know it; and I feel assured of its general truth. I have not yet succeeded in procuring literal transcripts of the letters but still have hopes of success. The mutiny originated with two large and favored Battalions of the Kampu called the Sri Nath and Latur. As far as the soldiers' own grievances, the plot of the mutiny was common to all the troops at the Capital except the Hanuman Dal Battalion. All, with that exception, actually participated in it, but the plundering of the Chiefs and threatening of the Residency were peculiar to the Sri Nath, and the plan for this was known in advance only to a few of the men, who were under the direction of Captain Ranbam Thapa, Jagat Bam Pandey, and Dal Bahadur Thapa. These three persons are

devoted adherents and confidential agents of the Minister and of the Rani but otherwise wholly insignificant. Ranbam, lately a private citizen, is now superintendent of the great magazine. Jagat Bam is the Minister's nephew and favorite and a Captain. Dal Bahadur is the son-in-law and betrayer of the late Minister Bhim Sen, formerly at the head of the Kumari Chowk Adalat and more recently Paymaster General. The number of troops actually engaged in the mutiny was about 6,500 as per annexed note. None but the Metropolitan troops are known to have participated in any way in the mutiny at that time or since. The connection between these troops and the rest of the army is no other than such as arises between our own native soldiers whether serving in the Presidency division or in any other. Lastly, the grievances of which the Metropolitan troops complained are not known to have been experienced by the rest. Perhaps the Government planned to introduce the innovations gradually. More likely the grievances, like their result, were fomented, if not generated, by a political faction for purposes relating solely to Kathmandu.

I have, etc.

N.B.

Troops engaged in the Mutiny:

Sri Nath Battalion	1100 strong
Latur or Lighters	1100 "
Purano Gorakh	600 "
Nayan Gorakh	600 "
Sri Mehar	400 "
Ram Dal (artillery)	600 "
Kali Bax	600 "
Devi Datta	600 "
Brij Bani	600 "

P.S. These questions would have been answered sooner, had I not waited for copies of the correspondence required.

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W. Dampier, Superintendent of Police, L.P., to Government, 24 July 1840<sup>27</sup>

*Superintendent Dampier's police report brings the information that Nepalese troops remain in the Ramnagar area. The report is important for its clear statement of the Nepali position and should be compared with the King's Lal Mohar to Hodgson, dated 8 September 1840.<sup>28</sup>*

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Sir,

I have the honor to transmit to you a copy of a letter dated the 22nd July from Mr. Wilkins reporting that the Nepalese still retain possession of the lands within our boundary.

2. Since I have been at this place I have made particular enquiries regarding the Nepalese aggression. It does not appear that they have now any desire to advance beyond the Tarai Road, although at one time they did and actually threatened our Police with force if they opposed them. Nor at the present do the Nepalese molest any of the villages or residents on the southern side of that line, which I understand they state to be the boundary.

3. Without vouching for the correctness of the following statement, I give it as one of the stories regarding the encroachment which appears to me to be the most probable.

4. The land on the Nepal side of the Tarai Road, it is said, was used by the Nepalese, before the war and the definition of the boundary, for catching elephants, being mostly jungle and considered to be in their possession. This land, they state, was given in a jagir to the late Rani of Ramnagar,<sup>29</sup> who was a connection of the reigning family of Nepal, on her marriage, and since her death they claim this jagir has escheated to them.

5. If this story is correct the encroachment still cannot be justified because the definition of the boundary at the conclusion of the last war in 1817 by Lieutenant Boileau clearly brings those lands within the British frontier, and our Police have exercised jurisdiction over them since that period until now.

6. Mr. Ravenshaw has shown me a map of the line of frontier in his possession, and I understand that he is about to send that to the Government. I have no further remark to make at present excepting that the Poorneah mentioned by Mr. Wilkins as one of the places where the Nepal soldiery are stationed ought to have been spelled Pooreynah, which is the proper name of the place.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 9 August 1840<sup>30</sup>

*Hodgson's report on the continued occupation of the Ramnagar area contains the added suggestion of political cross-currents in the Nepal Darbar.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to submit further reports from Champaran relative to the Nepalese aggression on Ramnagar. I do not think the effect of the peremptory demand that has been made on the Darbar for the evacuation of our territory will be apparent before the 10th or 12th of August. In the meanwhile I can only repeat the opinion I have already expressed that the Governor General's demand will not be ultimately opposed, though the patience of Government may possibly be tried to the extent of showing some signs of military preparation.

2. On the 5th the Mahila Guru was directed to send a Jamadar and 40 men belonging to his Company called the Guru Bax (the greater part of which is on duty at the approximate post of Kandrang near to the site of the aggression), with orders to remove all the intrusive Nepalese. I have good reason to believe that this direction was given by the Darbar in good faith, or its execution would have been committed to another Chief. But the occasion of issuing the order led to the discovery that two patties or half Companies of regulars from the Cantonment here had been previously sent to the spot, apparently to support rather than to remove the intruders. There has never been, however, anything like a force at or near Someshwar. And I still regard this present incursion on our territory merely as an experiment, which this state has never intended to support by war.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to the Nepal Darbar, 10 August 1840<sup>31</sup>

*Hodgson continues to stress the Darbar's responsibility for all economic claims resulting from Nepalese action in Ramnagar.*

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(after the usual compliments)

I have the honor to inform the Darbar that according to a report of the Najir of the Magistrate of Champaran, dated the 30th July, three Nepalese assaulted a British subject in village Bankatwa, Tappa Janouni (which is part of the lands of Ramnagar recently seized by Nepal) and that one of the three struck him on the shoulder with a khukuri. He is

about to die of this wound. The name of the wounded man is Doolar Mahto of Bankatwa. He was struck on or about the 22nd July. No cause for offence was given by him to the Nepalese who compelled him to accompany them as a guide for some distance from Bankatwa southwards, declaring they were going to the Kachahari<sup>32</sup> of Aloa. This, though the most serious, is by no means the only violence that subjects of my Government in prosecution of an aggression upon territory which both the boundary map and unquestioned possession of 23 years proves to belong to my Government--an aggression which by three separate written orders given to me between the 2nd and 14th of June the Darbar pledged itself to put a stop to, but which had not ceased up to the 20th of July, or two months after the first of these orders.

On the 20th of July, or only 10 days ago, the Nepalese were still in the territories of my Government, declaring that they were there by authority and would not retire, though the copy of the Maharaja's hukum nameh<sup>33</sup> of the 14th June was shown to them. I need not remind the Darbar that for every violence that has been and may be committed on the subjects of my Government, the Darbar will be directly responsible, since, at the very beginning of the aggression, I pointed to this liability as the inseparable consequence of the proceeding unless the Darbar instantly put a stop to it.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to the Kathmandu Darbar, 21 August 1840<sup>34</sup>

*The beginning of the negotiations that brought an end to the Ramnagar incident is the focal point of this note of Hodgson's.*

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#### TRANSLATION

The day before yesterday my Munshi, who went to the Darbar on other business but was ordered to ask, regarding the Ramnagar affair, whether the Resident was to expect any further answer to his note of the 29th July, brought back a verbal response that the intruders had retired from the British limits and that compensation would be made when the amount of actual injury had been ascertained. Yesterday the Darbar Munshi and his companion delivered a similar message during a routine visit to the Residency.

In as much as the above messages do not constitute an adequate answer to the demands which, by the direct orders of the Governor General, I made upon the Darbar on the 29th of July, and as the course the Darbar purposes to follow can in no way sufficiently atone to my Government for the Ramnagar aggression, I feel myself compelled, with regret, hereby formally to decline

the above messages and to revert to the express requisitions of my note of the 29th July. Only the first of these has been fulfilled by the Darbar in the retirement of the Nepalese from our territory on the 11th of this month, or just ten days back. I beg particularly to remind the Darbar that the immediate deposit in my treasury which the Governor General expects and requires from the Darbar is intended as a proof of regret for the past and of sincerity for the future--and not to make good the specific loss, which, of course, must be determined before compensation can be paid.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 5 September 1840<sup>35</sup>

*Hodgson's negotiations with the Nepal Darbar reveal his continuing suspicions of what he preferred to call the 'Good Old Gorkha Policy'<sup>36</sup> of Nepalese infiltration into British territory. He also shows an appreciation of the strategic importance of Someshwar that was pointed out in Sage's report.<sup>37</sup>*

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Sir,

Your despatch of the 17th August approving my proceedings in regard to the Nepalese aggression on Ramnagar and reminding me both to draw to a speedy close my discussion with the Darbar regarding Military preparations as well as noting that if the Darbar's obstinancy required such preparations the Darbar would have to bear their cost, reached me on 31st August.

2. In view of the very unsatisfactory attitude of the Darbar, I deemed it my duty, to address the accompanying note to the Darbar without delay. I have assigned ten days for the Darbar to accept the Governor General's demands, failing which they will be liable to defray the expenses of such military preparation as may be required to enforce those demands.

3. Before my Munshi could reach the Darbar with this note, the Darbar Munshi and his companion arrived at the Residency with orders to deliver to me the depositions of two of those involved in the Ramnagar aggression and to ask me what amount of deposit I expected to receive. I told the Darbar's messengers that since they had last visited me I had received fresh orders from my Government, which my Munshi was at that time taking to the Darbar. I suggested they had better go there themselves in order to be in attendance when my Munshi would be summoned to the Raja's presence. I also told them that it was not for me to name the amount of fitting deposit and that until that preliminary had been settled I could not enter into details nor accept the two depositions offered me.

4. When my Munshi reached the Darbar, he found that the Raja had gone out and was directed to come the next morning. I was thus able to instruct him what to say in case, when delivering the note, the Raja should again inquire about the deposit. In that event I told my Munshi to inform His Highness that the Darbar's acceptance of the Governor General's demands could not properly be signified to me verbally but should be made in writing under the Red Seal, should be short and unconditional, and should specify the amount of deposit--as to which, if consulted, he was to add that the point was one the Darbar itself should decide. However, if he was strongly urged, he was to hint that less than 5,000 rupees should not be offered.

5. No definite answer was given to my Munshi, but he was consulted as I had expected, and he responded as I had directed him. The next day the Darbar messengers came with 4,000 rupees to deposit with me and to signify--apparently by the act rather than by words--the Darbar's acceptance of the Governor General's demands. Without objecting to the amount of the deposit I renewed my request for the Maharaja's written acceptance of the Governor General's demands. I noted that since I had made these in writing in the name of the Governor General I could not properly accept a mere verbal answer, especially an answer given by irresponsible persons of the grade of these messengers. In the evening I made my Munshi repeat this in a note to the Darbar Munshi, in which too I directed him to hint that the required deposit should not be below the amount specified to the Maharaja.

6. The following day, on the 3rd, the Darbar messengers again came to me, this time bringing 5,000 rupees and a document bearing the Red Seal which purported to be the required acceptance of the Governor General's demands. I caused the Darbar Munshi to read and re-read the Lal Mohar in the presence of my Assistant and Munshi. It consisted of a recitation only, without expressed acceptance, of the Governor General's demands and then proceeded 'whatever lands south of Someshwar in excess of those long possessed by me (the Raja) have been seized by Bhaktawar Thapa and others, have been unjustly seized. The authors of the violence have been imprisoned. From such doings the Governor General has reasonably felt doubt and I shame. I wish to obliterate the memory of them, and I agree to deposit 5,000 rupees in the assurance of a just adjustment of my claims.'

7. When the reading had been twice completed, I asked the Darbar Munshi to explain the meaning of the words I have underlined in the preceding paragraph. Did these words import or imply any claim on the Darbar's part to certain unspecified lands south of Someshwar? The Darbar Munshi hesitated for a few moments, but, when pressed, frankly admitted that such a claim was meant to be conveyed. What, I demanded, was the reason or meaning of any claim clearly militating against the Treaty and boundary demarcation? And how could the Darbar profess to be subscribing to the Governor General's demands, which rested entirely and irrevocably upon those bases, when it was insidiously introducing matter at direct variance with them?



8. The Munshi and his companion had nothing to say in explanation. I told them, therefore, that I was compelled to return the Lal Mohar and the deposit, both of which I accordingly directed them to take back to the City and to say that I trusted the Maharaja would be pleased to give me a simple acceptance or rejection of the demands of my Government.

9. Your instructions of the 17th August expressly forbid that I permit the Darbar in any way to reopen the question of the boundary. To have accepted this document, which contained the clause which I have quoted, must necessarily, even by the Darbar Munshi's admission, have had that result. I trust therefore that my rejection of the Darbar's pretended acquiescence will be approved.

10. Before the document now in question was presented to me, I saw that the Darbar was determined to claim all the lands of Someshwar that its agents had secretly appropriated from our dominions before the violent aggressions of March and the following months. It was to prevent such a claim from being urged at a later date that I have called attention to this clause and have insisted that the Darbar's acceptance of the Governor General's demands be written, formal, and unconditional.

I have, etc.

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Note of Resident Hodgson to Nepal Darbar, 6 September 1840<sup>38</sup>

TRANSLATION

(after compliments)

In addition to the demands which by command of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council I was instructed to make upon the Darbar on the 29th of July, I am directed by His Lordship to submit the following and to require compliance within ten days from this date.

1st. That the Darbar, abandoning all false pretense of title and adhering to the boundary demarcation, instantly relinquish possession, if it have not already done so, of all the southward lands up to the ridge of Someshwar inclusively of the fort or building called Someshwar Garhi; and that the Darbar moreover pledge itself to maintain no more troops in its own territory in that vicinity than were stationed thereabouts prior to the recent aggression on the zamindari of Ramnagar, viz., no more than the Guru Bax (or other) Company in the forts of Kandrang and Upadrang and none elsewhere.

2nd. That competent provision for life be made to Doolar Mahto, farmer of Bankatwa, if his wound prove to have disabled him, and to his family should it prove fatal; and that the Darbar pledge itself to exert every faculty to discover, convict and adequately punish his maimers or destroyers.

3rd. That full satisfaction be made to Sheudyal for his unjust imprisonment at the hand of the Raj Guru and that the denial of justice to Sheudyal aforesaid, to Casinath Mull, to Bhichuk and his fellow Rakees, and to Hinchu Kulwar be immediately rectified. These wrongs having been done in violation of article 5 of the Maharaja's engagement with the Resident of 6th November 1839, it is further required that the Darbar again and formally pledge itself for the future observance of that article.

4th. That the Darbar instantly put a stop to all that secret intercourse with the allies of the British Government (including Lahore) which has continued up to this day in violation of the engagement above quoted; pledging itself anew to the future faithful observance of that instrument in regard to the States of India.

5th. That the Darbar make explanation and atonement for the unprotected state in which the Residency was left during the mutiny of 21 June and that the Maharaja disavow and disclaim the sentiments understood to have been expressed in writing to His Highness by the soldiery on that occasion, so far forth as they relate to the British Government and the Residency.

(True translation)

B.H. Hodgson, Resident

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Substance of the Maharaja's Lal Mohar to Resident Hodgson, 8 September 1840<sup>39</sup>

#### TRANSLATION

I (the Raja) do not say the Darkhasta (1st series) of the Governor General is refused; but I must affirm that the lands of Someshwar and thereabouts were given by my ancestors to Tej Pratap Sen as a hunting seat and that upon the extinction of his family they were made over by me by Sanad to Chautaria Pushkar Shah in Sambat 1892 (1835-36). I was then little involved with affairs, but Bhim Sen Thapa advised the act. The Sanad and other particulars of the transaction may be learnt by the Resident on enquiry, who will see that the Commissioners of both States ought to be nominated to determine the true boundary. Meanwhile I have stopped collections and withdrawn my people. With regard to the violent aggressions (beyond the limits named in the Sanad to Pushkar Shah). I admit them wholly indefensible. Bhaktawar Kharka and other authors of them shall be punished; and at the Resident's desire I send herewith for deposit in his treasury 5,000 rupees.

(True translation)

B.H. Hodgson, Resident

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The Maharaja of Nepal to Resident Hodgson, October 1840<sup>40</sup>

*The Raja of Nepal makes his formal submission to the demands of the Governor General on the Rammagar incident. The severity of the punishment inflicted on men who were apparently acting under orders must necessarily have reflected a serious defeat for Ranjung Pandey in the councils of the Darbar. As later correspondence will indicate, this defeat was not nearly as final as the present letter seems to indicate.*

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## TRANSLATION

(after compliments)

For the Resident's information are herein sent the particulars of the punishment inflicted on the offenders in the Rammagar aggression, who on their own responsibility took forcible possession of 96 villages in the Company's territories, levying contributions and preventing others from collecting their dues from them. These said offenders, Jasbir Rana, Bhotu Kharka, and Harku Gurung, on the 7th Aswin, Badi 6th day and about the 10th or 11th ghari, had their property confiscated, their faces painted half black, half white, their arms pinioned, and were flogged with a kora at every crossing or corner of the streets--while a proclamation was made that such should be the punishment in future of any who committed the like excesses in the Company's territory. They were in this manner paraded about Kathmandu and then turned out beyond the boundary, and Parwannas were sent to the Commanders of posts at every Chat never to allow the offenders to return.

Furthermore, such aggressions having been made within the Company's territories, and no report of the same having been made to the Nepal Government by Subha Bhaktawar Kharka and Alligunje Khatri, whose duty, as amils, it was so to do--they have been fined for this negligence. The Subha has paid 1,500 rupees (note: the fine was named at 3,000 yet by Nepal law payment of half is always held to satisfy the sentence), and been released, and Alligunje, who was fined 2,500 rupees, being unable from poverty to pay the fine, has been sentenced to one year's imprisonment. Phul Singh agreeably to the Resident's wishes has been sent to Jooree Panee in charge of Sepoys, and the other 8, menial servants of the sepoys, who, in spite of their being according to Nepalese regulations innocent of any crime, have been hitherto in confinement, were this day released.

2. The Resident also desires that the Raja should himself and in the Resident's presence refute the calumnious assertions which excited the suspicions of the Sepoys towards him. I have agreed to this for the sake of amity between the two States, and on Aswin Badi 12 on the 5th day, and 6 or 7 Gharis before close of day, if the Resident will take the trouble to come to the Darbar, I will cause all the officers, Subedars, and Jamadars of the Regiments to assemble there, and in the presence of

the Resident I will myself order promulgation among the Sepoys of such a statement as shall cause their suspicions of the Resident to be done away with. In short, the Resident may rest fully assured that in future no sepoys shall ever speak ill of any of the gentlemen, should one of them hereafter be guilty of so doing, he shall be punished. (countersigned by Dalbhanjan Pandey, Kulraj Pandey, \_\_\_\_\_ Thapa, Fatteh Jung Shah, Prasad Singh Basnyet, and Karbir Pandey).

(True translation)

Tickell, Assistant Resident

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 9 October 1840<sup>41</sup>

*Hodgson's report of the King's compliance with the Governor General's demands carries with it a further attack against Ranjung Pandey, and his partisans. One can see here Hodgson's determination to establish firm contact with the Nepal Darbar through responsible agents. Hodgson's attitude is important, because at this time he enjoys the full confidence of the Governor General. The force of this letter is divided almost equally between Hodgson's struggle to compel the King to exert his influence over a badly divided and contentious Darbar and his own continuing war with the Kala Pandeys.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that yesterday afternoon accompanied by my Assistant, I attended Darbar to witness the Maharaja's fulfilment of his promise to tell his troops, through their officers, that I had not had, nor could have had, any concern with their grievances about pay or anything else.

2. The Raja received me in open Darbar attended by the Chautaria Fatteh Jung<sup>42</sup> and by Dalbhanjan Pandey<sup>43</sup> as advisers, and by many others of his Chiefs, for form's sake. After a while His Highness ordered the officers to be called and the required announcement to be made to them by a note in writing which had been earlier prepared. I objected to this procedure and required His Highness to fulfil his promise of a direct verbal communication by himself. This was granted. I then asked when and where and before whom the officers of the army were to convey to the soldiers the orders they had just received.

3. There was some haggling and hesitation, but in the end it was carried that the Chiefs who had appeared as His Highness' Councillors on this occasion in Darbar (Fatteh Jung and Dalbhanjan) should immediately go to the line of the troops and see the matter properly completed. This was done, and done without exciting the least symptom of that insubordination, the fear of which had been held out to me to scare me from my purpose.

4. Before the Chiefs departed, however, for this purpose, the Raja took me and my assistants into the private audience chamber. There he mentioned to me that, since all matters were now adjusted, he intended to address a Kharita to the Governor General. I replied to His Highness that I must alike deny his premises and conclusion. Matters were not adjusted. I could not, nor would I for a moment listen to any proposition based on that presumption. I told him that I had on the 1st of October stated the case as it really stood to Fatteh Jung, who was now present and to whom I must refer His Highness.<sup>44</sup> To repeat my sentiments would be as fruitless as it was vain to suppose I had lightly adopted, or could alter, what I had then said.

5. It is necessary to remark that the Minister, his brother, and cousin<sup>45</sup> were as usual absent during this important interview with the Raja. Their absence was (as usual) premeditated, and they persisted in absenting themselves despite the remonstrances of Fatteh Jung and Dalbhanjan, who earnestly but in vain pleaded before my arrival that it was madness at such a crisis to provoke fresh suspicion and ill-feeling on the part of the British Government; that the situation demanded the attendance of those who were well known to the Resident to be not merely the official organs but the real instruments of power, whereas they (Fatteh Jung and Dalbhanjan) were neither one nor the other, though they were, of course, always ready to second what was right and proper at His Highness' command.

6. This open evasion of responsibility and practical announcement of bad faith will, I trust, serve to impress upon Government the justice and expediency of the course I have already dared to suggest: a covert demonstration and remonstrance calculated to encourage and bring about a change of Ministry. The Raja's fears and reason have already half convinced him of the need for this change despite his prejudices. The change is now trembling in the balance. Its completion is, I think, as necessary to us as it is certain to result from the comparatively minor pressure from outside to which I have just pointed.

I have, etc.

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## Appendix I Chapter One

## The British Set-Back in Afghanistan

In November 1837 Mohammad Shah of Persia laid siege to Herat, which was looked upon by the British as the key to India. The Russians supported the Persians; and the British, fearful that Persia was falling completely under Russian influence, determined to stem the tide by entering into alliances with the rulers of Herat, Kabul, and Qandahar. A British mission to Kabul under Capt. (Later Sir) Alexander Burnes in 1837 was welcomed by Dost Mohammad, who hoped the British would help him recover Peshawar. Burnes, however, would not give him the required assurances; and when a Russian agent appeared in Kabul, the British broke off negotiations and left for India.

With the failure of Burnes's mission, the Governor General of India, Lord Auckland, ordered an invasion of Afghanistan, with the object of restoring Shah Shoja to the throne. In April 1839, after suffering great privations and guerrilla attacks on the way, a British army entered Qandahar; Shah Shoja was then crowned in the mosque next to the mausoleum of Ahmad Shah. Ghazni and Kabul were captured in the following July and August, Shah Shoja being crowned again at Kabul. Dost Mohammad escaped first to Balkh, then to Bukhara, where he was arrested. The Afghans, however, could tolerate neither a foreign occupation nor a king imposed on them by a foreign power; and insurrections broke out. Dost Mohammad escaped from prison and returned to Afghanistan to lead his partisans against the British. In a battle at Parwandarrah on 2 November 1840, Dost Mohammad had the upper hand; but the next day he surrendered to the British in Kabul. He was honorably treated by the British and deported to India with the greater part of his family.

Outbreaks continued all over the country; and when winter set in, the British in Kabul found their position untenable. Terms of their withdrawal were discussed with Akbar Khan, Dost Mohammad's son. Negotiations were delayed by Sir William Hay Macnaghten, the British Political agent, whose attempts to make headway against Akbar Khan failed, and Macnaghten was killed by Akbar himself. On 6 January 1842 about 4,500 British and Indian troops, with 12,000 camp followers, marched out of Kabul. Bands of Afghans swarmed around them and the retreat ended in a massacre that few survived.

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## Appendix II to Chapter One

## The Opium War in China

The opium question, the direct cause of the first Sino-British clash in the 19th century, began with a late 18th century British attempt to counterbalance their unfavourable China trade with traffic in Indian opium. In 1779 the East India Company's government monopolized the opium trade, and by 1819 the Company had begun to ship large amounts of opium to China. The resulting drain of silver from China involved serious economic and social repercussions. The Peking court repeatedly banned the importing of opium, but without success, because the prohibition itself promoted corruption among the officials and soldiers concerned. There was no possibility of the opium question being solved as a domestic affair.

After the turn of the 19th century, the main vehicle of opium smuggling was the country traders who were allowed to manage the inter-Asian trade only under the Company's license. Without protection from the Company, they cultivated the opium market in China, defied the opium ban, and gradually became defiant toward Chinese law and order in general.

Parliament revoked the East India Company's monopoly in 1834. William John Napier was then appointed chief superintendent of British trade in China. He tried to negotiate with the Canton authorities but failed.

In Peking a proposal to relax the opium restraint, made in 1836, acquired support from many quarters. But the Tao-kuang emperor appointed a radical patriot, Lin Tse-hsu, as Imperial commissioner for an anti-opium campaign. In March 1839, Lin confiscated and destroyed more than 20,000 chests of opium. Skirmishes began after September between the Chinese and the British.

In February 1840 the British government decided on an expedition. Sixteen British warships arrived in Hong Kong in June and sailed northward to the mouth of Pei Ho to press China with its demands. No agreement was reached. In May 1841, the British attacked the walled city of Canton and received a ransom of \$6,000,000, an operation that provoked a counter-attack on the part of the Cantonese. This was the beginning of a continuing conflict between the British and the Cantonese.

The Ch'ing had no effective tactics against the powerful British navy. Moreover, during the war it became apparent that there was a deep rift between the government and the people, of which the British could easily take advantage. The British proclaimed that their aim was to fight the government officials and soldiers who abused the people, not to make against the Chinese population and thus neutralized popular resistance to their cause.

A new British commissioner, Henry Pottinger, arrived at Macau in August 1841 and campaigned northward. Reinforced from India, he resumed action in May 1842. Nanking yielded in August 1842, and peace was restored with the Treaty of Nanking.

## Footnotes to Chapter One

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 23 March 1840, No. 110, moderately edited.
2. Later it was discovered that this letter contained an invitation to be forwarded to the Emperor of China requesting his presence at the Crown Prince's wedding.
3. I.e., the Chinese viceroy in Tibet.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation 4 May 1840, No. 220; moderately edited.
5. Mahila Guru, a member of the Misra family and caste, younger brother of the Raj Guru. Hodgson always refers to the Raj Guru as the Misra or Misser Guru.
6. See below, Chapter Four, Casinath's case.
7. Foreign Secret Consultation 4 May 1840, No. 221, excerpt.
8. Foreign Secret Consultation 11 May 1840, No. 87, slightly edited.
9. Foreign Secret Consultation 8 June 1840, No. 131; slightly edited.
10. An officer employed with a small irregular force for protection and to enforce payment of revenue.
11. A native collector of revenue as opposed to the British Revenue Collector.
12. The persons who owed land revenue; tenants.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 August 1840, No. 83; slightly edited.
14. Foreign Secret Consultation 15 June 1840, No. 57; moderately edited.
15. Foreign Secret Consultation 20 July 1840, No. 59; heavily edited. An arzee of Rai Gopal Sahi, the Tahsildar of Ramgir Jamuni, dated 21st June 1840, describes the Gorkhali impositions on the local people: 'The oppression of the Sipahis of Nepal is such that they take from each village 20 hutties of Rice, one goat, 1 rupee's worth of ghee, and one rupee salami and say that the taking of such is to show their right to the villages and if the malguzars shall pay the rent to anyone except them, they will kill them.'
16. A Nepali military rank, equivalent to the European Captain, usually commanding a Company of soldiers.
17. 'There is no house and only a plain between the Chautaria's House and the Residency.' B.H.H.



18. 'The Raja was then a minor and the Minister quasi Regent.' B.H.H.
19. In point of fact, when this system was in use during Bhim Sen Thapa's time, both Hodgson and the members of the Darbar fought against Bhim Sen's monopolizing the Residency contact.
20. 'See the language put into the mouths of the soldiery.' B.H.H.
21. The note is Hodgson's. However, for these papers, cf. Bikrama Jit Hasrat, History of Nepal: As Told by Its Own and Contemporary Chroniclers (Hoshiarpur, 1970), Chapter Twelve.
22. 'Besides the actual sufferers in the mutiny, 5 more Chiefs have been already marked for plunder, viz, Kasinath, Randhoj Dada, Kulananda Jha, Rawsingh Dada, and Kirti Khabas. But the prospect of such a beginning is what confounds the whole body save only 2 or 3--literally 2 or 3, no more.' B.H.H.
23. Mathabar Singh Thapa was at this time at Ludhiana. As a former member of the upper levels of the Bharadari, his return was always considered a threat to the Pandey party.
24. Foreign Secret Consultation 20 July 1840, No. 60, unedited.
25. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 August 1840, No. 82, slightly edited.
26. Hodgson used several types of information sources: news writers, who observed what happened in the city and made notes of it for him, intelligencers, i.e, agents who made secret contracts with government officials, and his own personal contacts with high-ranking government officials. All details about these sources were highly confidential. Nothing is found in the official correspondence except the occasional intelligence report or a vague reference to one or other source. Even the budget for this service was kept separately from the regular Residency budget.
27. Foreign Secret Consultation 10 August 1840, No. 1; slightly edited.
28. See below in this chapter.
29. Dampier uses the term jagir, though he apparently means daijo birta. Jagir would imply that the Nepal Government maintained its full ownership rights over the land.
30. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 August 1840, No. 78; slightly edited.
31. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 August 1840, No. 80; slightly edited.
32. The court and administrative centre of the district.
33. Order of the King to withdraw.

34. Foreign Secret Consultation 7 September 1840, No. 76; moderately edited.
35. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 September 1840, No. 151; heavily edited.
36. Hodgson's concept of 'The Good Old Gorkha Policy' was that the Gorkhalis systematically raided into British territories. This idea was based largely on the thinking found in Campbell's 'Narrative of Political Relations,' a study of Nepal's relations with the East India Company prepared by Hodgson's Assistant. There is no historical foundation for the Gorkhali philosophy cited there, and Campbell does not even make adequate use of his major source, Henry T. Prinsep, History of the Political and Military Transactions in India during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings, 1813-23 (London, 1825)
37. See this report cited earlier in this chapter.
38. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 October 1840, No. 120; slightly edited.
39. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 October 1840, No. 121; slightly edited.
40. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 October 1840, No. 128, Appendix 4; slightly edited.
41. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 October 1840, No. 132; heavily edited.
42. 'Chautaria Fatteh Jung: head of one great division of the Chautarias and capable of leading them all.' B.H.H.
43. 'Dalbhanjan Pandey: head of the Gora Pandey (the White Pandey), the great opponents of the Kala Pandey, who form the dominant faction, though they comprise hardly a Chief of note and are supported only by the Queen.' B.H.H.
44. Hodgson has resumed his offensive for 'responsible contact' with the Nepal Darbar.
45. 'Ranjung, Karbir, and Kulraj Pandey respectively. The Raj Guru, Kul Chandra Shahi, Jagat Bam Pandey, and Dal Bahadur Pandey are almost the only supporters and adherents among the Chiefs, of the first three named or dominant faction.' B.H.H.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Dismiss the Pandeys

The whole of this chapter deals with Resident Hodgson's struggle to have the Ranjung Pandey Ministry dismissed and a new Ministry with real, power appointed. There are three points in this chapter of special significance:

1. The Governor General's intervention into Nepalese domestic affairs and the limits he places on that intervention;
2. The power of Hodgson's suggestion that the Company may re-occupy the Nepal Tarai, if the Nepal Darbar does not comply with the Governor General's demands; and
3. Hodgson's misinterpretation of the Governor General's instructions and his subsequent involvement in Nepal's domestic politics.

The life of this chapter, however, is provided by the Senior Queen, whom Hodgson frequently referred to as 'Termagant.' She fairly flounces through the pages of his letters, driving him to distraction with her power to disrupt the Darbar and to force King and Court to dance attendance on her. Never was a Queen more willing to dispute her Royal prerogatives in defiance of a mere Resident's plotting and demands.

King Rajendra also stands forth as a man of ability. Despite the shabby scenes in which Hodgson chooses to cast him, he plays his role in trying to hold together the Nepal Darbar with a great awareness of Nepal's internal weakness after the death of Bhim Sen Thapa and an appreciation of British power. To the 'Hotspurs' in the Darbar who saw every difficulty the Company faced in China, Burma, and the North Western Provinces as an open invitation to war and victory, he was the buffer, the foil, the one who suffered the bruises--yet surprisingly, he always survives and Nepal remains at peace with the Company. Deprived of Bhim Sen Thapa's steady hand and burdened with a Queen intensely jealous of the beauty of the Junior Queen, Rajendra struggles on in the only way he knows--delaying, maneuvering, never giving an unqualified 'yes' or 'no' to any proposal--and, after Bhim Sen's death, never, never taking the lead.

Governor General in Council to Resident Hodgson, 26 October 1840<sup>1</sup>

*The Governor General sums up the concessions granted up to this date by the Nepal Darbar and commends Hodgson for his role in the negotiations. However, he also instructs Hodgson that he now wants a more sympathetic Ministry in Kathmandu. To support this demand, the Governor General announces his intention of moving British troops closer to the Nepal border. He further adds that in his opinion the present conduct of the Nepal Darbar places the further existence of the Nepal Government in danger.*

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Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge in continuation of my despatch of October 5 the receipt of your despatches of September 6, 9, 12, 13, 15, 25, 28, and October 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 14.

2. You have in these despatches detailed your proceedings consequent on the demand which His Lordship in Council was compelled to make upon the Nepalese Darbar through you in order to procure an explanation of and reparation for many instances of unfriendly and even aggressive conduct on the part of the Darbar, its officers and retainers. You have also reported in them the surrender of the principal dacoits who took refuge within the frontier of Nepal on being driven from the Avadh Tarai.

3. The Governor General in Council gathers from the above despatches that the demands made upon the Darbar have been in substance complied with.

4. The aggressors, or rather the instigators to aggression on our territory of Ramnagar, have been to the number of five persons publicly visited with disgraceful punishment and banishment or fine.

5. The Darbar has made a deposit in the Residency treasury to the amount of Rs. 5,000 pending an investigation into and adjustment of the extent of damage done in Ramnagar.

6. The Darbar has entirely foregone its claim to the Someshwar fort or to any right of jurisdiction in Ramnagar and is believed to have withdrawn its troops from that part of the frontier.

7. The four gross cases of injustice done to British subjects, or of denial of justice, have been satisfactorily settled.

8. Although the surrender of the refugee dacoits was not included in the demands on which depended the continuance of any friendly relations with the Nepal Government, yet its having been effected in so far as the leaders are concerned gives additional evidence of a disposition, though tardy and reluctant, to submission by the Darbar.<sup>2</sup> While the last concession reported in your despatch of the 9th October, namely disabusing a mutinous soldiery of a mischievous impression that you had recommended the reduction of their pay has been performed in a manner so public and complete as apparently to be perfectly effectual for its object.

9. The Governor General in Council, in reviewing these transactions, has to thank you for the marked ability, firmness, and judgment with which you have met a long course of adverse and evasive negotiation on the part of the Nepalese Darbar, and he begs you to accept the expression of his cordial acknowledgement and approbation of your services on this occasion.

10. His Lordship in Council concurs generally in your view of the tone to be at present held by the Government of India towards the Darbar and a Kharita to the address of the Maharaja prepared in that spirit is herewith forwarded to you for delivery at your discretion.

11. You will observe that this Kharita refers in distinct terms of dissatisfaction to the hollow and insincere conduct of the Darbar--to the absence of any ministry at Kathmandu in which confidence can be placed--and to the intention of placing troops at points nearer to the frontier, in order to repress any indication of teacherous proceedings on the Darbar's part. You will point to these observations as conveying the Governor General's personal view of the guilt which has placed in danger even the further existence of the Nepal Government in the hands of its present rulers, and you are empowered, by every prudent and just means to use the advantage, which a direct statement from the heart of the British Government will afford to you, with a view to effect such a change for the better in the Nepal Councils as shall most promote the prosperity of that state itself and give security to the adjoining territories.

12. His Lordship in Council apprehends that it will not be possible for some little time to form the camp which is contemplated beyond the Ganges. But arrangements for that purpose will be made as soon as they can be effected in the military department and publicity will immediately be given to orders for this purpose.

13. It is announced in the Kharita that the provision made by the British Government for the family of Guru Gajraj Misra has been stopped in consequence of the misconduct of the present incumbent and the necessary orders for this purpose will immediately be issued to the proper officers.

14. On the subject of the surrender of the dacoits of Avadh who have taken refuge in the Nepal Tarai, you will call upon the Darbar to continue its efforts for the seizure of the principal persons and members of these gangs, who may be named to you by the British officers of the department in Avadh. And you will require from it an explanation of the dilatory and imperfect manner in which the seizure of a portion of the gangs has ultimately been effected. The subject is pointedly referred to in the Governor General's Kharita.

15. With respect to the family of General Mathabar Singh,<sup>3</sup> the Governor General in Council is exceedingly desirous of procuring their liberation and he would trust to your discretion as to the means by which that object may be attained. If a change in the administration at Kathmandu should be the result of the proceedings now taken by this Government, the safety of the family might be accomplished by the influence of the new Ministers, and this would doubtless be the most satisfactory mode by which we could aid the General in the attainment of his anxious wishes on this point.

I have, etc.

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Governor General to the Maharaja of Nepal, 26 October 1840<sup>4</sup>

*Though the Nepal Darbar has granted most of the changes the Governor General had demanded, the attitude of the Darbar continues to irritate the Governor General. In particular he is disturbed by the fact that a show of force could achieve almost immediately the very changes that the Darbar had insisted throughout long negotiations were impossible or extremely difficult to grant. Convinced of the justice of his demands, as Governor Generals always seemed to be, the Governor General announces that he will increase military pressure on Nepal until a change is made in the personnel of the Darbar.*

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(after compliments)

I have received from Mr. Hodgson a full report of his proceedings in the execution of the orders sent to him, as announced in my letter to Your Highness of 27th August, for the purpose of procuring redress of the flagrant wrongs sustained by the British Government from the officers and subjects of Your Highness. It must be a matter of great dissatisfaction to me that the result of the recent discussions with Your Highness manifests on the part of the Nepal Darbar not a feeling of friendship and a desire to do justice, but a continuance of that insincere, evasive, and injurious conduct of which I have, so long had to complain, and which at length compelled me to look to the exercise of force, rather than to friendly representation, for the assertion of the rights of the British Government of India. Many days were passed by Your Highness in endeavors to persuade the Resident to accept a partial and insufficient satisfaction for grievances which required instant and complete apology and remedy. Every concession made has been a subject of unworthy and unnecessary debate, and the nominal ministers of Your Highness have taken no part in rendering that reparation for which my representative had to look to them, and to them alone, under the orders which it behooved Your Highness to issue to them. The ill faith of those ministers and the danger to which they have exposed the interests of Your Highness have been strikingly proved in the course of these proceedings. It has been shown that when these persons were at length compelled to satisfy the just claims of British subjects, they were able in a few days to accomplish that which for weeks and months they had, though professing in word the desire to do their duty, yet entirely failed to perform. In like manner, formal orders under the seal of Your Highness for the seizure of bands of dacoits, enemies of the human race, who had fled for refuge into Your Highness' dominions from the hands of justice, have been for months made with no effect, to the ruin of the reputation of Your Highness' Government, although at last, when it was seen that I could tolerate no further delay, those orders were fulfilled easily, though still imperfectly and so as to require much further exertion. While Your Highness so exercises the powers of Your Government and leaves the direction of your affairs in such hands, it is impossible that the British Government can confide in the efficacy of your declarations or in the stability of your measures.

Mr. Hodgson has, from his personal desire to avert as much as possible the displeasure of his Government from Your Highness, consented, contrary to his instructions, to prolong the period fixed for the acceptance of the acquiescence in the demands made upon you. As he has granted this concession to you, I will not recall it--but I must warn you that my feelings of distrust and estrangement have been increased rather than diminished by the recent negotiation, and until it shall be seen that an entire change has taken place in the spirit of the counsels by which Your Highness is guided, these feelings cannot be removed. I must judge of the views and intentions of Your Government not by any verbal concession but by what I may perceive to be its acts, and I cannot suspend the precautionary measures which it is my duty to adopt in the protection of the British territories and of the rights of the British Government and its subjects. I shall with this purpose, cause the advance of troops to points more contiguous to the frontier than the stations at present established--so that no delays may take place in the correction of any disorders and injustice which may hereafter arise--while such counsels continue to be listened to.

I have written to Your Highness with this frankness as it is right that you should understand directly from myself the sentiments which your proceedings have forced me to entertain, but I shall hail with much satisfaction the announcement of any such practical and complete change in the characters and policy of your Darbar, as may enable me to revert to that feeling of confidence and regard towards the Nepal Government, with which the Governor General in Council has been, for many previous years, impressed.

I have only to add, that in consequence of the disgraceful conduct of the Raj Guru in the perversion of justice, which had long been sought by a British subject but in vain at Your Highness' capital, orders have been given for the discontinuance of the provision which he had been receiving from the bounty of the British Government in acknowledgement of services rendered by his father in the establishment of friendly relations with Your Father.

Mr. Hodgson will explain to Your Highness all further details on the subject of this letter, and the requisitions and desires of this Government. Your Highness will consider what is stated by that Gentleman as stated by myself.

Auckland

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Governor General to the Maharaja of Nepal, 2 November 1840<sup>5</sup>

*In October 1840 Karbir Sen and a group of Nepalese bound for Lahore were intercepted in Banaras. Documents, gifts, and anti-British overtures were discovered in their baggage. The papers implicated influential members of the Nepal administration as well as the Senior Queen. The Governor General breaks off normal diplomatic relations with Nepal but does not recall his Resident.*

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(after compliments)

I had scarcely written to Your Highness to state my displeasure at the false and faithless character of the bad advisers to whom the affairs of Your Government have recently been entrusted, when I received intelligence, the announcement of which must overwhelm Your Highness with astonishment and shame--the vigilant police at Banaras have discovered a party of treacherous persons, criminals against both governments, bringing letters and presents in the name of Your Highness and members of your family, bearing the seal of Nepal, together with blank papers bearing the same seal, and have by my orders placed those persons in confinement in which they will be retained while I may think it proper.

I now send the letters and papers alluded to through Mr. Hodgson to you--You will not be surprised that, after the detection of such malpractices at a time when Your Highness has been professing new repentance and making engagements to refrain from all intrigue, the British Government must wholly withdraw its confidence from the Darbar of Nepal,<sup>6</sup> while it shall be guided by its present evil counsellors, and must look to the employment of force, and to no further hollow negotiations, wherever its rights may appear to be in the least degree exposed to injury. Your Highness can in no other way show your abhorrence of these proceedings, the tendency of which must be ruinous to the good name of Nepal amongst all states, than by instantly removing from power and favour the parties who have so signally abused the confidence which you have reposed in them.

I have only in conclusion to beseech you to listen to the friendly advice and warnings of Mr. Hodgson before it is too late.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 8 November 1840<sup>7</sup>

*Hodgson reports the appointment of Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah as Premier of Nepal in the place of Ranjung Pandey. Since it appears to him that the appointment does not yet represent a real change in the Darbar or its policies, Hodgson decides to proceed as if no change at all had taken place.*

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I have the honor to inform you that Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah has been appointed Minister of Nepal to succeed Ranjung Pandey. The change took place on November 1st, and Fatteh Jung's first official visit to me was made on the 4th. So far no definite changes have followed the appointment. Whether this is true because the new Minister has no real power or because he lacks the inclination and firmness to act according to his previously expressed views towards Nepal and the British Government is something that only time can reveal. The little that he has done certainly offended and alarmed Fatteh Jung's friends and his party, who comprise the majority of the Chiefs. However, I suspect the more charitable ex-



planation of Fattah Jung's conduct is the more likely one to be true. It seems pretty evident that he owes his appointment to the fears of the Darbar, in which case they would wish to make his appointment merely nominal, a showpiece. If this supposition is true, a firm and secure policy on our part will bring about a real transfer of power just as it has already brought about his appointment.

2. Since this is a change that I foresaw, foretold, and, as it were, brought about (though I had nothing to do with the actual choice of the individual), I naturally am not anxious to undervalue it. When, therefore, I state my conviction that the change has thus far been merely nominal and possibly in fact also collusive, I have no doubt that Government will see the need to persevere in the policy they have already adopted.<sup>8</sup>

3. I have accordingly, after full deliberation, decided to carry out the instructions contained in your despatches of the 26th October. I intend to deliver the Kharita addressed to the Maharaja today and permit Colonel Oliver to carry out his troop movement to Sagauli as if there had been no change in the administration here. Though one cannot predict the outcome, I nevertheless am convinced that I should persist in a firm though cautious execution of those orders despite every device to which the Darbar may and will resort to prevent their complete fulfilment.

4. Your instructions of the 26th reached me on the 4th, half an hour before the Minister's arrival at the Residency. Though I had time to read through them, there was no time to digest them before meeting the Minister. Their importance, plus other motives for caution, led me to hear and answer the Minister as though I were still in ignorance of Government's views and sentiments. For the same reasons, I have also taken three days for reflection and enquiry before deciding to deliver the Governor General's Kharita to the Raja.

5. I proceed now to mention the incidents of the visit as well as some earlier occurrences, which, though of little importance, tend to illustrate the mood of the Darbar. The Minister arrived attended only by his brother, whereas protocol requires him to be attended by two Chiefs of importance who are his principal advisors and perhaps also fellow Ministers. After a while he retired with me and my Assistant into a private apartment. There, with much apparent frankness, he expressed his wish to maintain good faith and friendship with my Government. He promised that if he should find himself unable to do so, he would inform me of the reasons. At such a time, if I could not help him remedy the mischief, he would resign at once. After apologizing several times, he went on to say that the Maharaja had directed him again to urge me to agree to the Maharaja's sending a Kharita to the Governor General. Also, the Maharani wanted her passport to Banaras, about which Her Highness, he said, had sent to me only the day before without his knowledge or approval. I had answered her at that time, he went on, that I could do nothing in the matter unless the message came in the Raja's name and through the

Minister. The Rani had therefore ordered him to apply to me and to remind me that I had promised in June to let her go to Banaras after the rains. Both the Maharani and the Maharaja had insisted that he press the matter of the frequently rejected Kharita.<sup>9</sup>

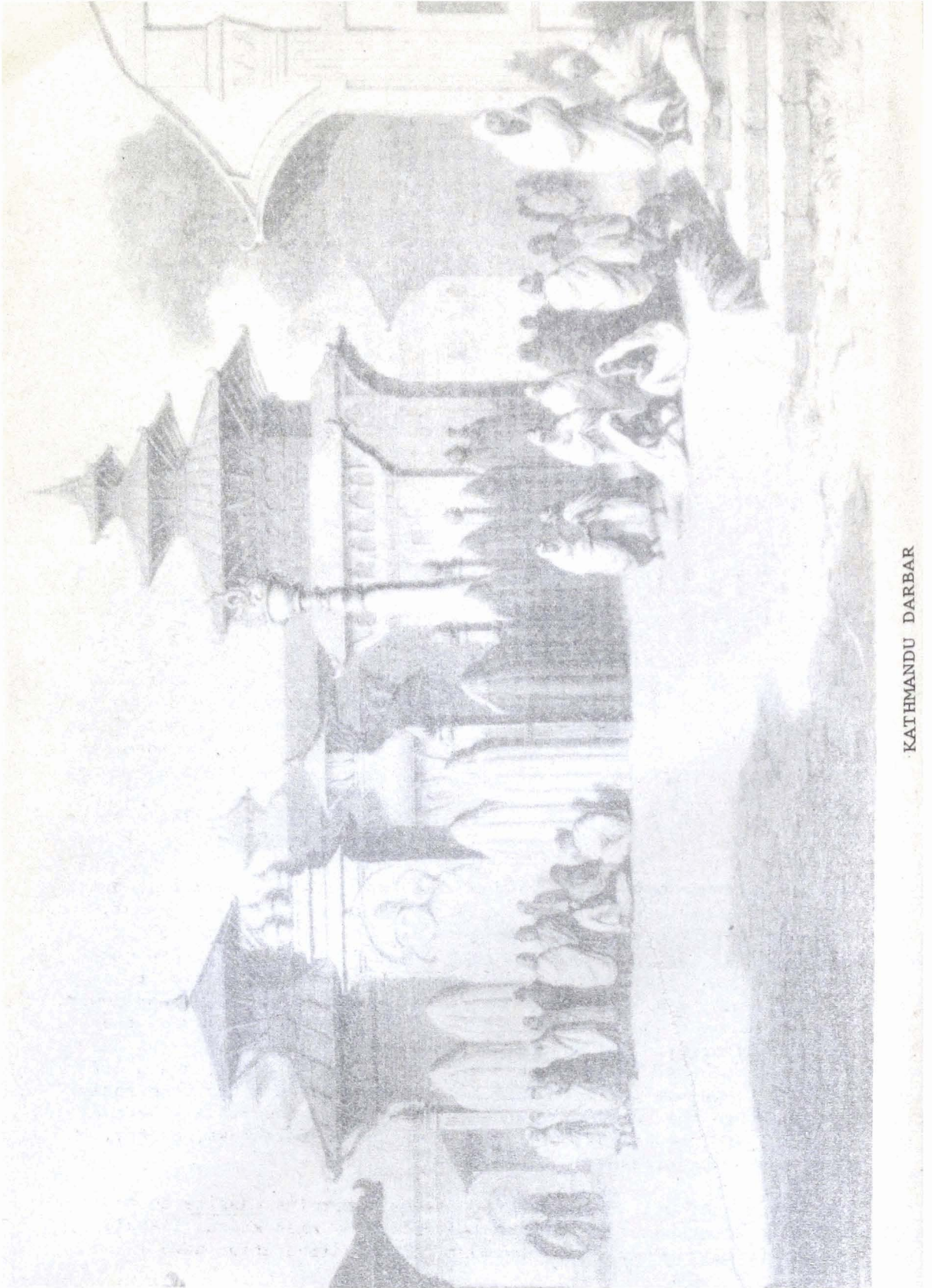
6. It is very true that the Maharani had sent one of her officers on the 3rd with her request for a passport to Banaras. I replied that I did not dare act except officially and that I had express orders from my Government not to listen to any application of this nature. The officer then plainly hinted that the Rani might go without a passport. I quietly replied that I would earnestly advise Her Highness not to think of such a proceeding, which might result in some very unpleasant consequence to her.

7. The fraudulence of these proceedings of the Darbar is obvious. The Darbar is now fully aware that Karbir Sen has been detected and is even now framing its excuses. It can therefore have no other purpose in urging these requests on me than to obtain from me a practical acknowledgment that its offenses towards my Government are trivial.

8. In answer to Fatteh Jung I said that I regretted that he had not overruled the Raja and Rani, since he knew their requests were improper. It was his duty to stand between me and the necessity of repeatedly refusing them. With regard to his own views and wishes, I told him I should always be ready to cooperate cordially with any well-disposed, upright, and able Minister. I said I had the highest opinion of his intentions, but reminded him that the lack of real power might prove as injurious to my Government as the lack of will. I therefore sincerely hoped his fears on that point were mistaken. I also told him I thought his appointment was a good omen for the future, but in regard to the past I had no way of knowing what decision the Right Honorable the Governor General might make, especially since the Darbar had up to that very minute paid little attention to the solemn pledges they had so recently repeated to me.

9. It was necessary to be candid with Fatteh Jung in order to prevent him from deceiving himself or me at the present important moment. If he should prove unequal to the task he has undertaken from lack of energy, of talent, or of sincerity, some one else in his party can take his place. Of course his party and I are anxious that he should prove able and willing; and we will promptly give him all the aid in our power, unless he is discovered to be the mere tool or treacherous ally of the Maharaja and Maharani. The Maharaja's weakness is as deplorable as the Maharani's wickedness. Despite this difference in character, and a difference as well in their aims, these two act together all too frequently --perhaps because the Maharani's stronger mind dominates--in all schemes of avaricious and revengeful cruelty at home and of faithless, crafty, and presumptuous restlessness abroad.<sup>10</sup>

10. My Munshi will deliver the Governor General's Kharita to the Maharaja this afternoon. As soon as the effect becomes known, I shall report immediately. Only after the most mature deliberation have I



KATHMANDU DARBAR

decided to deliver the letter without waiting for Colonel Oliver's troops to approach nearer. At the same time I have decided not to postpone the troop movement until after I shall have learned the effects of the Kharita. These two lines of action are so interconnected and offer such hope for present and future gain that I dare not interrupt their sequence at a time when one cannot safely evaluate the present change in Ministry.

11. In trying to foresee the effects of a strict adherence to your instructions of the 26th October, notwithstanding the change of Ministers, one should not forget that, if Fattah Jung is sincere, only in this way will he gain the support he needs in order to adopt and carry through, despite the threats and allurements of the Maharaja and Maharani, that equitable and humane policy at home and abroad which, before his appointment, he promised his fellow Chiefs he would pursue. On the other hand, if he is insincere, pressing ahead with your instructions is the only effective way to control Fattah Jung, the Maharaja, and the Maharani. In the meanwhile Laxmi Devill and the great majority of the Chiefs of Nepal will continue to work for the gradual development of a policy in which (as they think, and justly think, I believe) their safety and the safety of all Nepal are inseparably involved.

12. In conclusion I beg to express my gratitude for the very flattering terms in which the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council has been pleased to refer to my efforts in the recent negotiations with the Darbar. I wish also to assure His Lordship that I shall do my utmost to realize the aims of Government.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 23 November 1840<sup>12</sup>

Sir,

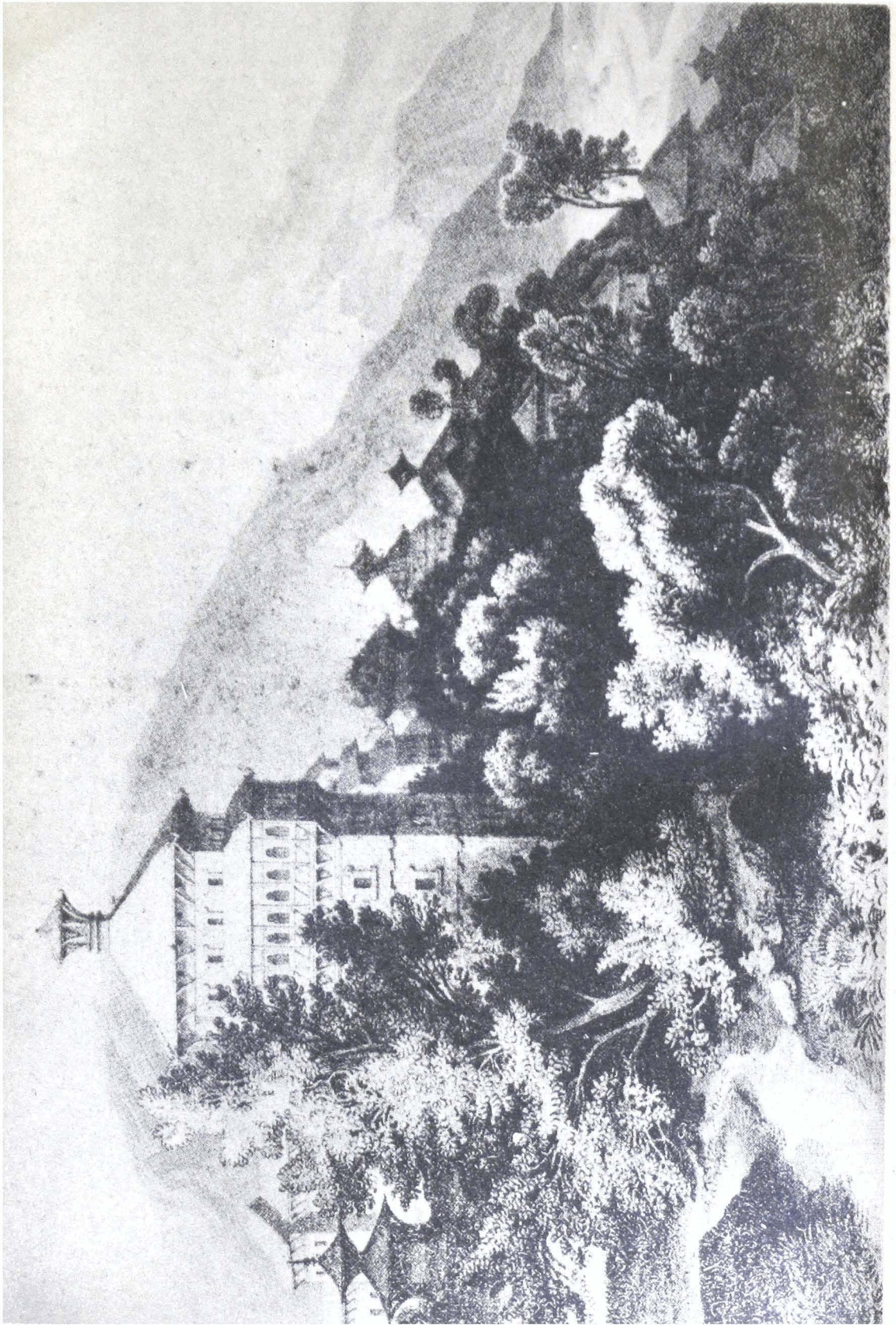
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 8th November reporting the official appointment of Chautaria Fattah Jung as Premier and of a conference with him--also of the proceedings of the Darbar and the policy to be pursued toward it.

2. In reply, I am directed to state that till the receipt of your further reports His Lordship in Council has no instructions to give in addition to those conveyed in my letters of the 26th October and 2nd November to your address.

I have the honor, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 15 December 1840<sup>13</sup>

*Hodgson reports an important breakthrough in his negotiations with the Nepal Darbar. It is interesting to note that he suggests the combined possibility of seizing the Nepal Tarai, hampering Nepal's India trade, and forcing Nepal to finance the British troops posted on the Nepal border to convince the King that he must submit to the Governor General's demands. His statements on the Nepal Tarai were, of course, totally mis-informed, as the Governor General would later point out. The Tarai had been returned to Nepal with complete finality in December 1816 and the border surveyed and marked in 1817. Hodgson, however, never retracted his 'hint' which profoundly disturbed the Darbar:*

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Sir,

To continue my despatch of the 24th November, I have the satisfaction to inform you that matters appear to have improved since that date. I no longer have any doubt about the sincerity and good intent of the new Premier Fatted Jung, and his power is becoming more adequate for his purposes. In the present circumstances I have not thought it expedient to give him my full and direct support, nor has he thought it wise to request it. In consequence he is still obliged to move slowly, which is not without its risks and inconvenience.

Ultimately, I believe, a satisfactory arrangement may be worked out. In the meanwhile the Right Honorable the Governor General may be assured that neither the new Minister nor I will lose sight for a moment of the delicacy of our separate or joint positions.

2. I proceed now with my report of the events and debates that have occurred here since my last despatch on this subject.

The Governor General in Council is already aware that the Maharani, in order to prevent any effective change in the policy of the administration of the State, proceeded to Nuwakot on the 22nd of November attended by the new Minister; and that on the following day I challenged this procedure to the Maharaja in Darbar. At that time the Maharaja assured me that the Rani had gone merely to perform some religious ceremonies, which would require only a few days, but that he would order the Minister not even to stay that long but to return immediately. His Highness--perhaps sincerely--attempted to persuade the Rani to return and for that purpose sent most of the Chiefs of both parties to her. She would not be persuaded. The new Minister considered it imprudent to leave her and, since he was anxious for her to return to Kathmandu, seems to have agreed to the Raja's going to Nuwakot himself. This the Raja made arrangements to do on the 2nd.

3. As soon as I learned of this, I sent my Munshi to the Darbar to ask if the rumor were true and to say that if the Raja really went to Nuwakot, I expected to be invited to accompany the Court. Once the Raja went to Nuwakot, I argued, the Court would technically be at Nuwakot as long as the Raja remained there.

The Raja offered many excuses for not inviting me, but to all of these I returned the same answer: according to custom, my place was with the Court, wherever that might be, and the business I had in hand would not permit me to be separated from the Court even for a single day. Twice already the Rani's return had been postponed, and who could say whether the Raja also might not be detained beyond the 3 or 4 days he planned to be away?

4. The objections of the Darbar were thus at length overcome. A convenient precedent was established. At the same time any schemes they might have had for evading the Governor General's immediate demands were defeated.

The Raja set out on the morning of the 3rd. I followed slowly and halted at a bungalow of my own on the way. At length, on the 5th, the Raja's impatience overcame him and he sent an escort for me. When I entered my camp I was received with unusual deference, and in a short while the Raja himself came to visit me. He pretended that he had been in the neighbourhood to look at a fishing party--his own camp being two miles off.

### The First Discussion

5. The Maharaja was attended by Fattah Jung, Dalbhanjan Pandey, and the Mahila Guru. After a time he invited me to a private conference, to which I summoned my Assistant. As usual, His Highness sought to make me open the debate. I declined to do so, saying directly and distinctly that I had come to Nuwakot only in conformity to custom, which assigned my place at the Raja's dwelling wherever it might happen to be and also from a sincere feeling of sympathy with the Raja's apparent blindness to his real situation and my corresponding determination not to be an accessory to this blindness or to its consequences. I told him that every hour and every day were important to me, and therefore the sin of delay should not lie at my door if I could possibly prevent it. These were the motives that had brought me to Nuwakot. Once there, I had nothing to do other than to point as before to the Governor General's letters, the strong language of which needed no comment, and to wait for the Darbar to comply with His Lordship's demand for guarantees of the Darbar's future good faith and good conduct.

6. The Raja said he was ready to do whatever the Governor General required. However, regarding the British force on the frontier, he begged me to intercede--to interfere--to give time--to remove the troops. I told him that it was quite impossible for me to do any of these things as long as I had no guarantee that I could trust the Darbar's official pledges and assurances to me. Up to that moment no such guarantee had been given to

me. Much the contrary. 'Wherefore were we now there,' I asked, 'and could the Minister who stood beside me engage for the prospective validity of any material pledge or promise? Could his companions do so? And had they indeed any sort of even seeming official character and function? They had not, the Raja well knew; and therefore I could only express my surprise at His Highness' persevering and infatuated disregard of not my, but the Governor General's words and acts--words and acts that even a child might comprehend the full drift of.' His Highness said he could and did comprehend them. He begged me to specify the evil counsellors whom I wished to see sent away; that he was ready to dismiss them. I told him that I could not specify any such individuals nor could any of his own worthless advisers such as I saw around me. Both they and I must first see some better evidence of His Majesty's change of heart than was furnished by questions such as these, which no man of sense would at present answer.

### The Tarai Threat

7. At this point the Minister remarked that of course sincere and adequate de facto compliance with the Governor General's demands would alone suffice. It would not do for the Darbar to propose to set aside 'one or two insignificant persons.' I should not have understood the Minister's allusion, had his brother not forewarned me that the mischief-makers had persuaded the Rani, and almost persuaded the Raja, to insult me with a proposal to name Laxmi Das (a Munshi) and another person not more influential or Karbir Khatri as the persons responsible for the Governor General's censure. As it was, I saw the Minister's meaning at once, and at once resolved to give him the support he evidently was seeking from me to quash an offensive project of the Darbar's. I answered warmly that certainly no insignificant persons and mere agents of the Darbar's orders were intended by the Governor General's demands. I was amazed to hear such an idea even discussed. The Darbar could, of course, do as it pleased, but the only thing such a proceeding would achieve would be an increase of suspicion and of insult on the part of my Government. The Darbar, I repeated, seemed infatuated. Rather than feeling disposed or authorized to intercede once again for the Darbar, I might soon be compelled to remind His Lordship that Nepal's tenure of the Tarai was not absolute, nor her commerce with the Plains beyond the reach of our control, nor her privilege to burden us with the cost of military precautions unquestionable.

8. These last hints were not spontaneous. I had given very deliberate thought to them. However, it was the immediate occasion that prompted me to use them, and they evidently produced a beneficial effect upon the Raja. His manner at once became more serious and even anxious. I then told him that the one thing he must do without quibble was to permit and enable the new Premier to proceed without delay to the formation of a Cabinet. Once he had done this, His Highness would not find either myself or the more immediate friends and servants of the state slow to give such advice as might yet solve the crisis brought on (wrongfully to my Government, and traitorously to his) by persons whose real intentions and character would very soon be apparent to His Highness.



### The Beginning of Change

9. The effect of this conversation with the Raja soon began to be visible. Instead of insulting me with propositions to make Munshis and the like the scapegoats of the Darbar's guilt, I received on the next day, or 6th, a message announcing the disgrace of the Raj Guru. On the following day the Raja himself informed me that he had removed from office Karbir and Kulraj Pandey (the brother and cousin of the late Minister) who, with the Raj Guru, were the most influential and mischievous persons in the Darbar.

In the morning of that day, the 7th, the Raja had also informed me that since he had failed to persuade the Rani to go home, he had determined to go himself and settle matters, as he hoped, to my satisfaction. At 3 o'clock p.m. he again came to my camp. After first inviting me to a private debate with himself and his Minister on the way, he begged me to accompany himself on horseback to Kathmandu. This I did. It may be worthwhile to add that that arrogant person, the Raj Guru, when he passed my tents on his way to the City, asked for and failed to obtain permission to visit me. Also, after only three days, that towering lady, the Maharani, found it expedient to return unasked to Kathmandu.

10. During my ride back to Kathmandu with the Raja and his Minister, His Highness said his removal of his Guru and two of the principal Kala Pandey's were proof of his being sincere. His immediate return home must, he thought, also be regarded in that light. I replied that the removals, although they were still only verbal, were good as far as they went, but that the one thing that was really necessary was practical change. I should not expect this until I saw the foundation of a new administrative family firmly laid. During the past year, I said, the Premier had been completely invisible, despite the importance of the Darbar's business with me. If he had to send his colleagues, they appeared in a perpetual rotation. As if that was not enough to destroy the idea of responsibility, they had, when I challenged them, repeatedly and expressly declined that responsibility and had laid the burden for this, against all decency and all admissible doctrine, on their sovereign. This manner of proceeding, I said, was the great source of my complaints. I could not possibly feel confident about the future conduct of the Darbar until this systematic evasion was ended by the establishment of a responsible administration according to the law and constitution of Nepal.

11. The Raja, as usual, promised to comply, and now there was--at least in his manner--some distinct evidence that he had become aware of the nature and the weight of his promise.

### The Minister Talks Strategy

12. On the 10th, at his request, I met the Minister and held a confidential conference with him in the course of a ride. He was alone, and so was I. He began by thanking me warmly for the support I had given him despite the fact that circumstances forced him to act what must have

appeared to me a doubtful role. I must not, he continued, abandon him in the days ahead, and he should then feel confident that his efforts would succeed. This success, however, might not be so immediate as I seemed to desire and expect--unless indeed I was prepared to take the lead: At this point he presented me with an option. He explained that he had followed the Rani to Nuwakot and remained with her there in order to keep her, as much as possible, out of the hands of the mischief-makers. The Rani, he said, was fickle and inconsistent as well as violent--so much so that he feared her understanding had been somewhat impaired. The Raja lacked firmness and was too much under her influence. Nevertheless, he thought his best policy was to try to carry both of them along with him. He asked my opinion and advice on this point and then proceeded to observe that he had made a useful impression on both of them. All things considered, if I were willing to take the lead by insisting on the removal of specific individuals, he could assure me the Darbar would immediately fulfil the Governor General's demands. The mischief-makers were many, he continued. I should probably not choose to meddle directly with any but the chief ones: Karbir Pandey, Kulraj Pandey, Jagat Bam Pandey, Dal Bahadur Pandey, Amar Shahi, Kul Chand Shahi, Ranbam Thapa, and lastly the Raj Guru. Did I wish to denounce these persons myself by name or allow him to have them removed more gradually? And, to what extent did I want these persons removed? from office only? from the immediate presence of the Raja? from the City? or also from the Valley? Did I want them removed shamefully or to allow all possible consideration for the prejudices of the Raja and Rani in their favor? He continued that his own plan--which I encouraged him to follow with no further or more open support from me than he thought absolutely necessary--was to continue pressing upon the attention of the Raja and Rani the critical position of the State, the language of the Governor General, and the pressure of the British force on the frontier. I should help with some further exhortations in the spirit of those which had already done so much good; and, if he proved he deserved it, he would rely on the eventual forbearance of my Government. He did not propose to give the Darbar the least inkling of this at the present. However, the assurance that he might expect this and as well the right to say later that this was something he had achieved by his own power would encourage him and sustain him both now and in the future. He said he realized the importance of what I had said to the Raja about the need for a firm, steady administration. He proposed to call into his ministry Rangnath Pandit and Kishore, his brother, Dalbhanjan, Pushkar Shah, and Guru Prasad, of whom he asked my opinion. He said his chief difficulty would be with the Darbar. Though the army needed reform, as he realized, he assured me that its military qualities had not been weakened by the events of the past few months. Whoever was given the Raja's authority to command the army would have no real difficulty in controlling the troops. He said he first proposed to gain the military Chiefs and officers to his side. He then planned to rotate<sup>14</sup> the officers and afterwards the men and thus to disperse the existing mass of the army according to the law and usage of Nepal. He added that he had already made three very important changes by substituting Captain Abhiman Rana for Kulraj Pandey in the paymaster-generalship,

Bal Bahadur Kunwar for Prasad Singh in the Causi, and Bajra Ban Shahi for Karbir Pandey in the Kumari Chowk, or board of revenue and accounts.<sup>15</sup>

He hoped these arrangements had my approval, which he would be eager to obtain for each particular measure until he had established and set in motion his administration. Finally he informed me that I must soon expect an official visit from him. This would have the double object of again requesting me to name the persons whose removal from Government I desired but also to request a further period of grace for the Darbar. With regard to the latter, he said he had found it useful to tell the Raja that my denunciation of delay in proceedings meant that I had been given a certain period within which to bring about reform. If this had not been my strict meaning, it would be better if I did not go out of my way to clarify my meaning but rather to grant a limited further period according to my judgement and to the terms of his coming request. He suggested that I follow my own opinion in regard to naming unwanted individuals. But I might rely upon him to do his best in the event that I wished to remain in the background on the point.

13. The Minister's explanation seemed to me to be very frank and open. His whole manner and language tended to deepen in my mind the favourable impression which such a conversation would naturally create. Since he had previously told me frankly that he was not able to carry out his views, his present cautious but generally hopeful comments on this point seemed reasonable. I therefore promised him that I would continue to give him the type of support I had been giving him and pointed out that the national sentiment of the Gorkhas fully confirmed the wisdom of limiting my efforts to the background, as he had himself so well suggested. I assured him that if he thought it expedient to dismiss or treat leniently some of those to be dismissed from government, this should have my entire approval. I further assured him that he should have the credit for saving the Tarai and warding off the other threatened penalties, if his policies proved successful. I also pointed out the necessity of his gaining the sympathy and cooperation of all the well-disposed Chiefs. I did not refuse him the extension of time that he had adverted to, but urged on him the need for firmness, decision, and promptitude.

### Evaluation

14. Too little time has passed since my conference with the Minister to judge whether his measures will prove generally successful or not, however, whatever has happened has been promising. It is perhaps too much to say that, if I had acted boldly along the lines suggested to me by the Minister, success would have been certain. The choice, however, has been made, and I would like to assure the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that there is no need to fear complete failure. The Minister is cautious and lenient by nature and appears disposed to act towards his political opponents with a forbearance which deserves success. The opposition seem to be concerned only with weathering the present storm. However, if the Minister loses no time in making common cause with his natural allies, the body of Chiefs, and in forming out of them the administration he has indicated to me, I shall have good hopes that he may be

supported and strengthened in his difficult position with no more interference on my part than a manly prudence need, or ought to, show.

15. Yesterday, the 15th, the Minister paid me the promised official visit. He was accompanied by Dalbhanjan Pandey and Krishna Ram, the Mahila Guru; both well-disposed. Krishna Ram is a very remarkable man who, however, has told me in confidence that he is not yet satisfied as to his own position and that of several others of the Minister's friends and supporters. The Minister repeated the two requests for which he had already prepared me. I agreed to withhold from the Governor General any final report for ten days more. At the same time I refused either to name or to suggest the exact treatment that should be given to the Chiefs to be dismissed. Such a course of proceeding on my part would prevent the Darbar from showing that sincerity which, above all things, was all important. Besides, I argued, this would be a needless interference in the special function of these new and worthy Counsellors of the Raja whom I saw around me. I then pointed, once again and emphatically, to the language of the Governor General's Kharita, supported as it was by the movement of our troops to the frontier, and I concluded by observing that only someone who was wilfully blind could mistake the meaning of such signs of the indignation of a mighty Government.

16. I understand that we may really expect the Raj Guru to depart for Banaras. Also, that the matter of the petitions sent to the Nepal Government will be taken up in a manner designed to create confidence in the outcome of the trials. Jagat Bam and some others of the Kala Pandey's, it is proposed to remove from the Court with honorable banishment under the cover of employment in the districts. Other similar measures are planned and are likely to be carried out. If this does happen, the power of the new Premier may be regarded as somehow in proportion to what seems to me his unquestionable good will.

17. Within the last few days the presence of our troops on the frontier, and their apparent intention to remain, has become a matter no one can doubt. The results of the alarm caused by this troop movement has already been felt in the revenue collections in the Tarai and people fear the future effects will be even greater.

The Darbar, however, is too conscious of its weakness at this moment to dare to make any counter demonstration lest hostilities break out at a time when the Darbar is divided by domestic and political faction and folly. These are the circumstances and effects that I foresaw when I suggested at the beginning of December that Government push its advantage over Nepal to the extent necessary to insure submission on the Darbar's part. I still have this opinion, but I confess that the Darbar's resistance has proved more obstinate than I had anticipated (owing to the military stress upon our remote frontier of the Sutlej) and that the lateness of the season may caution us not to hope for an early success.

18. Total failure of our programme has not yet been announced, nor do I think that we need fear it. The result may indeed, after all, be success and even complete success--and this, too, even though Government should not think fit to further strengthen my hands. At the same time, we should not lose sight of the fact that the results may be less than we hope. In this regard, it may be necessary, I believe, to retain Colonel Oliver's force on the frontier for some months to come. Should this be necessary, Nepal may be compelled during the coming cold season to pay the expenses of the force as well as other penalties in proportion to her delinquency. In the meanwhile, with the present military force at her door and the threat that we will resume the Tarai suspended over her head by the hair of one additional wrong done us, I think we can be sure that the state of our relations with Nepal will continue as satisfactory as it has been during the year which is just closed.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 21 December 1840<sup>16</sup>

*This letter of instructions to Hodgson is undoubtedly the most critical in his career. The Governor General clearly instructs Hodgson to use his influence on the Nepal Darbar to bring about the desired change in the Darbar's personnel and policies. No caution is given Hodgson at this time. That Hodgson misunderstood the Governor General's intentions is clear from later events, but these intentions are by no means clear in this letter, which appears to give Hodgson a free hand to do as he thinks best. By the time the Governor General realized that Hodgson has misunderstood him and clarified his instructions, the damage had been done.*

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Sir,

I am directed by the Governor General of India in Council to inform you that a reply to your despatch of the 24th of November has hitherto been postponed in consequence of its being necessary to examine with care the former records of the Government when the question of the terms on which the Tarai tracts, ceded by the treaty of 1815 were restored to the Nepal Darbar. You have however been confidentially informed of the general views of the Governor General on the state of affairs as described in your communication above referred to.

2. His Lordship in Council now instructs me to state to you that he has perceived with much regret that the expectations of effectual assistance from the well-disposed Chiefs of Nepal, on which you had in the first instance been led to rely have not been realized, and that it appears probable that the whole pressure on the Maharaja with a view to secure a more honest and friendly administration, must proceed directly from yourself as the representative of the British Government.

3. The recent military movements in the British territories by which a great part of our force has been withdrawn to the Northwest Frontier may possibly have contributed to this result and the difficulties of your position have been in consequence augmented--but it appears proper, in the contemplation of the continuance of our unfavourable condition of things at Kathmandu, to explain to you the principles in which recent measures of the Governor General in Council have been founded, and the mode in which it is desired that you should at present act in giving effect to them.

4. The Governor General in Council has directly stated to the Maharaja that the British Government must 'wholly withdraw its confidence from the Darbar of Nepal while it shall be guided by its present evil counsellors and must look to the employment of force, and to no further hollow regulations, wherever it rightly may appear to be in the least degree exposed to injury.' You have been authorized also to use your endeavours to promote, to the utmost degree consistent with prudence, the object of procuring the removal (really as well as in name) of the obnoxious ministers of Nepal, and the appointment of a trustworthy administration in their place.

5. His Lordship in Council is disposed to place every reliance on your discretion, and he would not wish to fetter you in the adoption of the particular tone or language which you may think it best to employ to secure the attainment of the ends confided to you. He yet looks to a satisfactory issue to your exertions but he thinks it right to impress upon you in general terms the necessity for caution and circumspection.

6. So long as the Maharaja may refrain from adopting that real change of counsellors and measures which the British Government has desired, the position of estrangement in regard to the State of Nepal which has been announced in the Governor General's letters must be continued--and you are at liberty to stress this feeling so as to make manifest to the Court that the sentiments and purposes of your Government remain unchanged.

You may decline all national and personal courtesies and civilities, and confine yourself strictly to the formal transaction of indispensable business--while, however, no act is committed by the Darbar directly injurious to British interests, no more menacing or unfriendly proceeding on our part is necessary for the maintenance of our honor or our dignity or would in itself be expedient at this season.

You will feel it also your particular duty to show that the alienation which you may be called upon to display is the effect only of public causes, and has no connection with personal feelings. You see too the propriety of avoiding such direct collision with the Darbar as would be productive of any serious embarrassment to your position, and thus compromise the character of your Government in general estimation, at a moment when it might be impossible to render to you vigorous protection and support.

7. On the subject of the supposed conditional tenure, by which it has appeared to you that a large portion of the Tarai is held by the Nepal Government, and to which you recommend a reference in your further negotiations with the Maharaja, His Lordship in Council directs me to state that, after careful examination he does not find that the view which you have formed is confirmed by the records of the period in which the tracts in question were relinquished. You will observe by letters from the Resident of the 6th and 12th of October 1817 that the cession of these tracts was expressly treated as absolute and final, and that the Governor General in Council was quite willing, had it been agreeable to the Darbar, to execute a formal supplementary treaty embodying the territorial arrangements to which you allude--and that when it was seen that the execution of a new instrument in this form would not be acceptable, the ministers were informed (to use words of Mr. Gardner's despatch) 'that the official notes which he had interchanged with the Government, with the surveys of the common frontier as accepted, are considered as fully sufficiently binding on both States.' The same declaration was made in a direct letter from Mr. Gardner to the Nepal Raja on the 11th of October 1817 and the terms of that letter were approved by the despatch of Mr. Adam in reply, dated October 31, 1817.

8. Under these circumstances the Governor General in Council must be precluded from authorizing the language you have recommended respecting the tenure of the Tarai, but while he would not debar you from a reference to such particular considerations affecting the Darbar as you may think expedient and not prematurely and unduly irritating, he would not, in any event, be inclined to hold out a particular threat of this nature, unless he should see reason at the same time to be prepared to declare a general rupture with the Nepal State. You will be satisfied, therefore, of the care and delicacy with which this subject must be approached by you.

9. Having placed you in possession of these views, His Lordship in Council will not embarrass you by more precise and minute instructions on any of the detached points which your communications have brought under his notice.

I have the honor, etc.

T.H. Maddock

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 4 January 1841<sup>17</sup>

*Hodgson's despatch of 4 January 1841 carries a long description of the events that led up to the installation of the new Cabinet with its strong party of supporters. This letter is important not only for its details of this political maneuvering, in which Hodgson was deeply involved, but also for the description of the government offices which Hodgson saw fit to enclose. His knowledge of the local scene makes this*

*an invaluable addition to our knowledge of the bureaucracy of the Kathmandu Darbar at this time.*

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Sir,

In continuation of my despatches to you of the 8th and 12th of November and the 16th of December on the subject of my negotiations with this Court to secure a real change of attitude and policies of the Nepalese Cabinet, I have the honor to inform you that these negotiations have been closed. Yesterday I accepted at this place (Nuwakot) the documents which I herewith enclose as appendices Nos. 1, 2, and 3.

2. No. 1 is a Memorandum to me under the seal of the Raja. It announces the Darbar's acceptance of the Governor General's demands that the evil Counsellors should be dismissed and good ones substituted for them. The following persons have been discharged and appointed:

<u>Dismissed</u>	<u>Appointed</u>
The <u>Raj Guru</u>	Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah
Karbir Pandey	Guru Prasad Shah
Kulraj Pandey	Rangnath Pandit
Kul Chandra Shahi	Krishna Ram Pandit
Amar Shahi	Dalbhanjan Pandey
Ranbam Thapa	Pushkar Shah
Indra Bir Thapa	Kalu Shahi

3. No. 2 is a personal pledge on the part of the 94 principal and subordinate Chiefs of all parties, but chiefly of the new Ministry's party, to maintain friendship and good faith with the British Government through the Resident, whose safety and honor they engage to see to. The document has been attested by their individual signatures and seals.

4. No. 3 is a Kharita from the Maharaja to the Right Honorable the Governor General in reply to His Lordship's two last severe letters of warning to His Highness. In his reply the Maharaja professes in respectful and apologetic terms to have complied with the Governor General's advice, which he says he realizes was given in a friendly spirit and which has therefore been received and acted upon in that spirit by himself, as the documents furnished and the communications made to me would show.

5. There is no reason to object to either the substance or the tenor of these communications, except the omission of Ranjung Pandey's name from



the list of discarded mischief-makers (he is in fact dismissed from office). Even that omission is understandable in the light of the mental infirmity which, it is generally believed, has afflicted him for some months past. With this important exception, and that of Jagat Bam Pandey, who also ought to have been expressly shut out, the persons excluded and included are precisely those who ought to have been so. Nor can it be denied that these changes have actually begun to take place.<sup>18</sup> There is thus room to hope that the new Premier may succeed in gradually establishing his authority with little or no further direct aid from me. At least he should be able to maintain his present position until next November. If he does so, the Government will be able, both cheaply and easily, to settle Nepalese affairs in whatever way seems best in the then prevailing circumstances.

### Evaluation

6. For this reason there are grounds for satisfaction at what has been accomplished. While one cannot deny or conceal the fact that the concessions, though made in good faith, have not yet been completely carried out and will have no practical value until they are, at least we have a suitable compromise to cover a prudent retreat until next November, when further pressure can be applied if it proves necessary. And, though further pressure may indeed be required, I think the party which has now distinctly placed itself on the side of good faith and friendly relations will prove powerful enough in the interim for its own and my protection. Also, if coercion should later prove necessary, this same party will be the means of reducing to a minimum the cost and trouble such coercion would involve.

7. So far my attempt to carry out the Governor General's instructions by securing a real change of the men and policy of this Cabinet has been only partly successful. Naturally my effort has caused some irritation, and this the opposition have magnified by every trick they know--and with the secret consent of the Palace. In these circumstances, and in view of the Governor General's later instructions of 21st December as well as the lateness of the season, I have completely stopped my efforts until next November. That this was necessary for me, my allies have agreed. But they feel it would not be safe for them to do likewise. They have consequently asked that for the present Colonel Oliver's force remain on the frontier. Convinced as I am of their sincerity and prudence, I have agreed to this.

8. In an effort to intimidate me and the new Ministry, placards and letters have been written in the name of the soldiers. The soldiers, however, have had nothing to do with this campaign and do not support it. At a later date I will probably send a more detailed report on this subject. For the present I need only mention that this campaign is designed to stir up the soldiers against us. The authors of the letters and placards are known, as is the ultimate instigator of the campaign--the Senior Queen and the seven dismissed counsellors. The campaign itself was conceived and is being carried out by Jagat Bam Pandey--and perhaps Ranjung Pandey.

9. The Senior Queen has violently opposed all change in the policies and administrators of the Darbar. One might well wonder why, considering her vehement ill-will and her great influence, we did not postpone our opposition to her until we were sure of success. In answer one can only say that there was a good chance of success, and we may still succeed. In any event, we were not free simply to accept or refuse the struggle, as will be clear if Government recalls that during the past two years--when we did nothing--the number of totally unprovoked aggressions increased rapidly.

10. As it is, we have almost succeeded several times. Success has been postponed rather than lost. And we have kept alive the possibility of a cheap and easy victory if one day it becomes necessary to take extreme measures. In the meanwhile, there is, it is true, increased irritation with the Residency, but there are also stronger safeguards in the declared support and mutual interests of a large body of Chiefs.

### Chronological Narrative

11. I proceed now with a narrative of the principal events that have led to these results:

On the 7th December the Minister's brother and associate in the new Cabinet, Guru Prasad Shah, together with Krishna Ram, Dalbhanjan Pandey, and Kalu Shahi (also members of the new Cabinet) came to me at the Residency to show me a rough draft of the Raja's engagement. With a few alterations in the names of those dismissed or admitted, this forms Appendix No. 1 of this despatch. To the seven members of the new Cabinet mentioned in paragraph No. 2, the names of Jagat Ram Pandey, Prasad Singh Basnyat, and Ranjore Thapa had been added. The list of persons excluded was limited to the first three names mentioned in the same paragraph.

12. This addition of members to be appointed and the reduction of those to be dismissed were equally objectionable. Two of the three individuals the Darbar wanted to have appointed in the new Cabinet were among the chief mischief-makers. And so few people had been excluded that there was no hope that the Cabinet could control the ejected party. All of this had been earnestly stated to the Darbar before the visit to me, as I had been confidentially told in advance by the new Premier and by Krishna Ram Pandit. Their objections however, had been overruled, and the Darbar had insisted the matter be referred to me.

13. In these circumstances, since I was not willing myself to name the individuals to be appointed or excluded, I could only evade the question with the willing aid of my visitors. I answered therefore that a Cabinet of seven members had already been proposed to me and accepted. The admission of any larger number would restore in large part that irresponsibility that had been my chief complaint against the old regime. A Cabinet of seven members therefore ought to be taken as a basis. This arrangement could not be disturbed without the destruction of all confidence on my part. I must therefore assume this basis as settled. Referring to any judgement of the new Cabinet so formed, I said I must beg to

be excused. If I named the individuals who must be removed from office or from the immediate presence of the Raja, I would be guilty of a needless and improper interference with the Cabinet's functions.

14. This was my answer to the Darbar's reference to me. I said nothing to the Darbar or even to my visitors of the wantonly offensive spirit which had persuaded the Darbar to attempt to appoint as Cabinet members persons who were so well known to be opposed to good faith and friendship with my Government as Jagat Bam Pandey and Prasad Singh. They ought clearly to be dismissed and removed.

#### A Proposal to Form a Party

15. I noticed, however, that the members of the new Cabinet were confused as to the way in which the list of admissions and rejections was to be understood. This confusion I cleared for my visitors by explaining that the formation of the administration was a separate question from the formation of a party. The administration should be limited in numbers. There was no objection, however, to admitting as many Chiefs as possible to a declared and written support of the new order of things. This idea was at once understood and made their own by my visitors, among whom Dalbhanjan Pandey quoted his own experience in favour of a general adherence to good faith and friendship with the Company. He said he had been a party to such a declaration in Rana Bahadur's reign, and that this declaration had been signed not only by the Ministers but by a large number of their chief supporters and even by many of the opposition party which was thus prevented in some degree from open opposition, since they had signed a positive pledge to cooperate or at least to accept the change.<sup>19</sup>

16. Dalbhanjan therefore proposed that a general declaration should be prepared on these principles, and this should constitute a second and separate paper to be delivered to me along with the Lal Mohar from the Raja. The Raja's Lal Mohar would list only the names of the Royal Counsellors who had been dismissed and substituted.

17. And thus, the general declaration forming No. 2 of the appendices originated. This solution was so entirely in conformity with past usages and with the constitution of this Government that the Darbar neither could nor did offer any opposition to it, though the Darbar must have realized this would be a bond of strength to the new Ministry. At the same time, the Ministry will be freed at once from the danger of conflicting opinions upon the question of the size of the Cabinet as compared with the strength of the party.

18. A general declaration of support for a policy of good faith and friendship was accordingly immediately drawn up by the new Ministry. With the Court's entire sanction this was freely and frankly signed by most of the Chiefs. At this point the Darbar became eager to have this document delivered to me together with No. 1 of the appendices (in the state in which it then was) and a Kharita for the Governor General. This, they

thought, would close the negotiations and bring about the withdrawal of the British troops from the frontier.

### The Struggle Continues

19. I received a private warning of the Darbar's plan of tactics from the Premier on the 19th and another from Guru Prasad. Though neither of them wanted to involve me farther than I chose, both seemed anxious to impress on me the necessity of having Document No. 1 made more specific in terms of the disposal as well as the number of the ejected bad advisers of the Darbar and of insisting further on practical measures to implement the reforms that were still on paper.

20. Fattah Jung let me know that Ranjung Pandey, his predecessor in the office of Premier, had powerful protection. It might perhaps be advisable to leave him sheltered under his pretended or real mental illness. Jagat Bam Pandey, Ranjung's nephew, though able and more dangerous than the uncle, was so highly regarded by the people and so strongly favoured by the Palace, that expediency might suggest that his name might also be omitted from the black list. Kul Chand Shahi, however (he added), as well as Ranbam Thapa, Amar Shahi, and Indra Bir Thapa must be placed on that list. These were the most energetic mischief-makers. There was proof enough that these four were all involved in projects which even the Darbar could not defend. Amar Shahi was already charged with the matter of the petitions,<sup>20</sup> and Ranbam Thapa soon would be so. Though it might be necessary to overlook the more powerful instigators of these and other offences committed by these two individuals, yet the individuals themselves might be sufficiently disgraced, and punished, to act as a warning to their principals. In conclusion, the Minister asked only a little more time to accomplish these and other objectives without making me too prominent. To give him time for this as well as to enable him to press forward the practical part of the required engagements, he trusted I would not prematurely accept any more papers that the Darbar might press on me against the advice of the Cabinet. He also asked me to remember, when the time for accepting the papers came, the importance of getting the Maharaja to agree to them.

21. On the 21st the Premier, who had in the meanwhile prosecuted Ranbam Thapa and Amar Shahi for presenting the petitions and for other delinquencies which involved Indra Bir Thapa (thus giving a clear warning to the more powerful supporters of these three) found he could no longer deter the Darbar from proceeding. Accordingly on that day Dalbhanjan Pandey, Guru Prasad Chautaria, and Krishna Ram (Krishna Pandit) came to me to present the proposed papers for my acceptance: a Kharita, the Raja's engagement (altered only by the omission of the three extra-Ministers, a substantial change no doubt), and the mutual pledge of the Chiefs nearly as it now is. All these papers were ready to be forwarded to Calcutta at once. The message of my visitors was that the Darbar had thus complied with the demands of the Governor General, and therefore the Darbar expected the British force stationed at Sagauli could be withdrawn.

### The Maharani Must Support the Agreement

22. I replied to my visitors that the Governor General had demanded not words but deeds. Without further comment upon the documents in their present state, I must beg to decline them at present. The documents were premature and unaccompanied by facts, which alone were necessary and sufficient. I also expressed my hope and expectation that when these documents were eventually presented to me in a state fit for acceptance there would be evidence of the Maharani's participation in them, regardless of the manner in which this participation might be expressed.

23. The Maharani no sooner had heard that she was called upon to express formally her support of the new regime than she immediately betrayed her real feelings by her senseless and violent insistence that she could have no official communication with the Resident. This she argued boldly and dramatically despite the well-known recent transaction in which she had not only taken part but had insisted upon addressing me on public matters and in writing, though I had declined and excused myself in every form. In like manner she had insisted upon official conferences with me again and again until I had been forced to accept. She had corresponded in her own name with foreign powers, the proofs of which fact were at the moment in my possession and have been recently shown to the Darbar with reference to the Secret Mission to Lahore which was recently arrested at Banaras. And lastly, she had just countersigned the Premier's sanad or diploma.

24. The Maharani passionately replied to these arguments that I must have forgotten some of these events and that possibly I was misinformed about others. When the Ministers told her that it was pointless for her to imagine so, she (with blind inconsistency) took it upon herself to convince me by opening an official communication in order to prove to me in words that it was impossible for her to do so. On the 23rd Ras Singh and Umakant came to me accordingly, but since I was not disposed to argue with the Lady, I answered by pointing to the Lal Mohar of the 21st constituting certain persons as the sole organs of official trust and responsibility, and by remarking that I did not observe the name of either of the envoys on that list. Therefore I felt obliged, though with many apologies to Her Highness, to refuse all further answer.

25. The next day, or 24th, this ruse of mine was shown to have failed. Three of the new Ministers came to me to repeat the Maharani's argument. To these Ministers, who agreed with me that the point should be carried if possible, I replied by appealing to the recorded facts of which my forgetfulness had been assumed. I urged the Maharani to consider the policy of obliterating the sense of her known support of objectionable proceedings by frank support of this most commendable one, the chief object of which was the welfare of that country in which no one has so high an interest as she, the Mother of the Crown Prince.

26. The Rani, however, could not be won over by arguments such as these. The Premier told me this confidentially in the course of a ride

on the 25th. At that time he opened his mind frankly to me, and I gave him the general advice that he should be guided (cautiously) by events as he and his colleagues saw them. He then promised to visit me officially the next day in company with Krishna Ram Pandit. Their public purpose would be to request that I drop the demand for the Rani's support of the new arrangement, but they really wanted to resume and complete yesterday's review of the past and the prospects for the future.

27. Accordingly on the 26th December the Chautaria and Pandit came to see me officially at the Residency. They at once delivered to me the Darbar's message regarding the Maharani's support of the new order of things. The Raja requested, they said, that as an old friend of the Darbar I would no longer insist upon the point in question, however reasonably argued by me, but would accept His Highness' personal and direct assurance, which he would make when the documents were delivered to me, that the Maharani assented to and would abide by the proposed arrangement.

28. Of course, I agreed with the tenor of this message and responded with many expressions indicating my earnest desire to prove myself indeed the old and true friend of the Darbar. I suggested at the same time that further opposition upon this point was not significant. Further debate about the particular form of the documents might very well be postponed until after the more urgent consideration of what must actually be done before any documents at all were accepted.

29. I thus proceeded to point out to my visitors in confidence that they should insist upon no point which they could not carry. Regarding the case of the Rani's support, I observed that while I saw great advantage in gaining this, I thought it had been a serious error of policy to press the matter so far without an almost certainty of success. Let the Minister be especially careful, I continued, not to suffer a second defeat and especially none in which I was expected to be involved with them. Then, as a precaution against such a second defeat, I asked the Chautaria to repeat his conversation with me of the preceding evening and to restate particularly his position and purposes.

### One Last Strategy Meeting

30. The Chautaria explained in detail the more perplexing difficulties of his immediate situation. He said that the Rani's caprice and violence, however excessive, affected him chiefly as they led her, by leaving Kathmandu, to disturb the progress of events. Also, whatever the duplicity and weakness of the Raja, he thought it was His Highness' extreme fears in relation to my Government, which, just then, chiefly embarrassed the Minister. He wished if possible to keep the Rani at home and to calm the fears of the Raja so as to prevent any blind and hasty action such as the mischief-makers were urging His Highness to take. It was necessary, of course, to keep the Raja and the Rani too in healthy fear, and therefore a few days previously the Minister had agreed with me that it would be useful to move the Sagauli force a little forward. But now he found that he must guard against too much fear leading the Raja to believe the

calumnies of those who were trying to persuade His Highness that the Minister and Resident were in a plot to deliver up the kingdom without a blow being struck in its defence. He asked me therefore not to advance the Sagauli Brigade any nearer to the frontier.

31. More generally the Minister continued to suggest, in regard to plans, that two had occurred to him. First, to request me without further delay to accept the Darbar's documents, but to state when I received them that they would remain inoperative in the hands of the Governor General until they were supported by the Darbar's acts. Until that time, the British force could not be withdrawn. Or, secondly, to take a few more days without any express demand or extension of time from me, in order to push somewhat further the de facto changes already in progress, and to improve the documents I wanted by inserting on the black list the names of Kul Chand Shahi, Amar Shahi, Ranbam and Indra Bir Thapa, if not also those of Ranjung and Jagat Bam Pandey.

32. In reply I told the Minister that the Sagauli force had not yet moved nor would it. With respect to his two plans, I thought that the first consideration ought to be feasibility or the extent of his own power to accomplish anything material in the next few days. I also told him that the period for further effective insistence on my part was passing-- in fact had passed. If he at all doubted his ability either to carry through immediately any fresh changes of importance or to improve immediately the documents intended for me in relation to the number or to the disposal of the prime mischief-makers, he had much better at once give me the papers as they were and I would accept them in the manner he had proposed.

33. Again I urged him to attempt nothing in which I must distinctly participate and which was at all likely to fail. However, I said that if he decided otherwise and wanted to take steps to remove from the Raja's presence any of the chief mischief-makers, I could help him perhaps in regard to one particular individual, the Raj Guru, who had sent me several so far unanswered messages expressing his desire to retire to Banaras. The Chautaria might, I continued, if he thought proper, bring these messages to the notice of the Darbar and give my assurance that the Raj Guru would be allowed a safe and honorable asylum at the Holy City. In this way he might advantageously urge the Raj Guru's immediate dismissal.

34. My suggestion was gratefully accepted by the Minister. After much debate with the Pandit upon the comparative necessity for further measures and his power immediately to effect any, he finally decided to take a few more days with no further aid from me than that of one more renewed demand in my name upon the Darbar for deeds rather than words. This course we accordingly agreed upon.

Off to Nuwakot!

35. My visitors returned to the Palace thus prepared and soon had a long and satisfactory audience with the Raja and Rani. Express orders

were issued at that time for the pajani, or patronage of office, to proceed more rapidly but according to law under the Premier and his colleagues. Numerous offences on the part of Ranbam Thapa, Indra Bir Thapa, and Amar Shahi were quoted and granted, and their names as well as that of Kul Chand Shahi were entered on the black list without further dispute. Even Ranjung and Jagat Ban were only faintly defended, and a message was sent to the Raj Guru directing him to depart for Banaras. During the remainder of that day and all the following one, deeds followed the above verbal assurances, so that the prospect of a very successful result seemed certain. Then, at midnight of the 27th, the Raj Guru managed to obtain a secret interview with the Rani. The effect was seen the next day. That Lady left the Palace for Nuwakot, taking along her son the Crown Prince. Shortly afterwards what was the most serious of the inflammatory placards appeared upon the walls of the City.<sup>21</sup> The following day, or 29th December, after a deplorable exhibition of weakness and duplicity on the Raja's part in a conference with his Ministers who were several times on the point of prevailing with him against the Rani, His Highness followed his imperious consort.

36. Late in the evening this state of things was communicated to me by the Darbar with a courteous announcement that due arrangements had been made for me to follow the Court. I saw the critical nature of the announcement at once. Had I not received your cautionary instructions of the 21st only a few hours previously, I should probably have answered it by demanding my passport, unless the Raja's journey was deferred. I believe that if I had done so, I should have prevailed and have thus terminated triumphantly a most anxious and tedious negotiation. I believe moreover that the Raja himself expected, and was prepared to surrender to such action on my part. It is certain that secret enquiries were made among my people to find out if there were any indications at the Residency that I planned to move southwards. But, as it was, I had received positive instructions which only the most serious political event would justify my ignoring. I therefore met the Darbar's announcement with silent acceptance, asking only that I be given a note certifying that the Chautaria and Pandit's verbal communication to me was valid and stood. This was promised and reached me shortly afterwards.

37. Proceeding slowly, as on the former occasion, I arrived at Nuwakot on the 31st, receiving on my way and on my arrival all desirable attention and courtesy. On the night of my arrival and on the following morning I learned that the placarding campaign was being carried on at Kathmandu with extraordinary bitterness and boldness and that there were no indications that any substantial changes in the way of appointments to the Cabinet would be made in the near future, despite the language of the note so lately delivered to me. I therefore determined at once to search for ways to close my negotiation advantageously. With this in mind, I had interviews with the Premier and Krishna Ram Pandit on the 1st and 2nd of January. Four additional names were added to the list of the dismissed and discarded advisers of the Darbar, and some important Chiefs added their names to the pledge of neutrality. We then agreed that the papers which I now transmit to you should be officially offered to and be accepted by me, in the terms and manner to be presently recorded.



38. There was a frankness, a prudence, and a quiet confidence about the Premier on these occasions which impressed me deeply to his advantage. He is not unaware of the difficulties and dangers of his situation. But, though he admits his reliance on me, he neither incurteously nor ungenerously presses me to share more of his burden than I am willing to take on myself. And while he speaks out strongly against the cowardly and savage placards, he considers these best met by a nearly total and contemptuous silence.

39. One incident may be added to illustrate his character. After Krishna Ram, his compeer, had spoken with reasonable concern about the placards, he suggested in the course of his comments that the party might actually resort to some such personal violence as the opposition were threatening in the name of the innocent soldiery. At this the placid and quiet Chautaria quickly took fire and with emphasis declared if it came to violence his difficulties would be over, because his personal allies and family were larger and not less brave than the Kala Pandays. But, he continued, 'Such thoughts are unworthy of the Statesman, the Minister, the friends of the British Government, and I beg the Resident's pardon for a momentary return to what no doubt occurred in the barbarous times of our fathers, but ought never to disgrace ours. The Resident shall see the placards and act regarding them as he may see best. But, if he take my advice, he will rely upon my vigilance for his safety and make no official mention of the matter to his own Government or to the Darbar.'

#### The Documents Accepted

40. On the 3rd I went to see the Maharaja, as I had arranged, to receive the engagement and Kharita of the Darbar, as finally corrected and as now transmitted to you. When the Minister handed them to me, he made a courteous speech skilfully adapted to favour my reply and concluded with a request on the Maharaja's part that I would accept the documents as now improved and as now in some considerable degree supported (as I knew) by corresponding acts. Wherefore, he observed, the Maharaja hoped dissension between the Governments might cease and the British force be recalled to its cantonments.

41. I tried to frame my reply so as to demonstrate as fully as possible that my past opposition had been compulsory, designed only for the welfare of Nepal, and at all events stained with only a single drop of the gall of personal bitterness. I had to calm the Raja without abandoning the Ministry. With this in mind, I said I did not have the authority to remove the force or to accept the documents unconditionally. At the same time, and with an eye to the future, I declared that I did accept them; that I gladly recognized the improvements in them; and that I still more gladly recognized the actual changes which had now taken place. I added that I fully trusted that what remained to be accomplished would be done without unnecessary delay. At that time I should be joyfully serve as the Darbar's warm and hearty advocate with the Governor General for the removal of the frontier brigade and for the complete restoration of our customary friendly relations.

42. I understand that my speech pleased the Raja and at the same time fully answered the wishes and expectations of the Premier and his colleagues. The Maharaja formally vouched for the Maharani and promised to complete the measures in progress. Thus my audience closed. I will not further intrude upon the time of the Governor General than to suggest that for the present no action be taken on the paper I am now forwarding until we see how far the promised and required changes are in fact implemented under the guidance of the new Cabinet.

I have, etc.

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Appendix No. 1

The Maharaja of Nepal to Resident Hodgson, 2 January 1841<sup>22</sup>

(after compliments)

TRANSLATION

The Governor General Lord Auckland has written stating that it was necessary and proper to dismiss from office the individuals who had disturbed the friendly feeling existing between the British and Nepal Governments and to appoint in their places others who had the good of the two Sarkars at heart, and that until the individuals who had so behaved had been dismissed there could be no real friendship on the part of my Government.

According therefore to the note received from you I have enquired into the matter and have decided upon dismissing those persons who have disturbed the good understanding existing between the two Governments according to the subjoined list. In their places I have selected and appointed Fattch Jung Chautaria as my Prime Minister, associating with him the Guru and Chiefs whose names are written below to assist him in executing his various duties. I have made the above mentioned changes in order that the friendship of the two Sarkars may continue as formerly and whatever the Prime Minister and his colleagues now appointed may see fit to do in order to strengthen the bonds of real friendship between the two Sarkars will meet with my approval. There will be no change made by me in the above appointments unless the persons holding them shall commit any great crime. I have made and confirmed the above mentioned arrangements and they shall always remain so.

Individuals Appointed

Chautaria Fattch Jung

Guru Ranganath Pandit

Guru Krishna Pandit

Individuals Discharged

Guru Krishna Ram Misra

Chautaria Kul Chandra Shah

Kazi Karbir Pandey

Individuals Appointed

Chautaria Puskar Shah  
 Chautaria Guru Prasad Shah  
 Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey  
 Kazi Kalu Shahi

Individuals Discharged

Kapardar Kulraj Pandey  
 Capt. Ranbam Thapa  
 Capt. Indra Bir Thapa  
 Kumedan Amar Shahi

(True translation)

Christie, Assistant Resident

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## Appendix No. 2

Agreement Signed by the Gurus, Chautarias, Chiefs, etc., of Nepal,  
 2 January 1841<sup>23</sup>

## TRANSLATION

We the undersigned Gurus, Chautarias, Chiefs, etc., etc., of Nepal fully agree to uphold the sentiments as written below, viz.

That it is most desirable and proper that a firm and steady friendship should exist and be daily increased between the British and Nepal Governments;

That to this end every means should be taken to increase the friendly relations with the Company, and the welfare of the Nepal Government;

That the Resident should ever and always be treated in an honorable and friendly manner;

That if nevertheless any unforeseen circumstance or unjust or senseless proceeding should at any time arise to shake the friendly understanding which ought to exist between the two Sarkars, or to cause uproar and mischief at Kathmandu, we should be responsible for it:

## NAMES OF CHIEFS

Guru Rangnath Pandit	Guru Krishna Pandit
Chautaria Birbind Parakram Shah	Chautaria Pushkar Shah
Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah	Chautaria Guru Prasad Shah
Chautaria Daksha Shah	Chautaria Babar Jung Shah

Kazi Go Prasad Shah	Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey
Kazi Janghir Pandey	Kazi Singbir Pandey
Kazi Ranjore Pandey	Kazi Jitman Singh Basnyat
Kazi Ranodip Singh Basnyat	Kazi Prasad Singh Basnyat
Kazi Kulman Singh Basnyat	Kazi Abhiman Singh Rana
Kazi Bal Narsingh Kunwar	Kazi Kalu Shahi
Kazi Narsingh Thapa	Kazi Ran Gambir Pandey
Kazi Dal Kesar Pandey	Kazi Kirti Dhoj Pandey
Kajanchi Yaranath Aryal	Sardar Badri Ban Shahi
Sardar Bal Bhadrari	Sardar Bal Bhanjan Pandey
Sardar Dal Bahadur Pande	Sardar Bakhat Singh Basnyat
Sardar Dariyal Singh Basnyat	Sardar Ram Bahadur Basnyat
Sardar Rana Dhoj	Sardar Ras Singh
Sardar Ran Jung Karki	Captain Bir Bahadur Kunwar
Captain Jagat Bam Pandey	Captain Mohan Bir Shahi
Captain Karna Jhing Bogati	Captain Surat Singh Thapa
Captain Sarat Singh Pant	Captain Sunman Singh Pant
Captain Dirgha Singh Bhandari	Captain Sarvajit Bhandari
Captain Bhaktabar Bhandari	Captain Prahlad Thapa
Captain Ahibarna Basnyat	Captain Gagan Singh
Subha Laxmi Dar Pant	Subha Kali Das Pant
Subha Nawal Singh Bhakti	Tharghar Bhagirat Pandey
Tharghar Jaya Dev Pant	Tharghar Harku Aryal
Tharghar Dev Datta Khanal	Tharghar Mardan Singh Rana
Tharghar Hari Bamsha Bohora	Captain Shamsheer Jung Pandey
Captain Chakra Dhoj Pandey	Captain Rana Bikram Shah

Captain Gun Prakash Shah	Captain Rangamardan Shah
Captain Rana Sur Shah	Captain Jad Ranjan Shah
Captain Rana Bir Singh Basnyat	Captain Bakhan Singh Basnyat
Captain Bal Bahadur Pandey	Captain Megraj Pandey
Captain Kanak Singh Pandey	Captain Satru Bhanjan Pandey
Captain Bhuvan Singh Shahi	Captain Bhavani Bhagat Shahi
Captain Gajraj Karki	Captain Kirti Bir Karki
Captain Rabi Dhoj Adhikari	Captain Jaman Singh Khatri
Captain Uzir Singh Thapa	Captain Kirti Bir Thapa
Captain Fatteh Singh	Captain Indra Bir Khatri
Captain Bhavani Singh Khatri	Captain Gaj Kesar Khatri
Captain Him Dal Thapa	Captain Bhotu Singh Basnyat
Subha Hira Lal Jha	Captain Chatar Bhuj Malla
Dittha Umanath Upadhyaya	Dittha Mayanath Upadhyaya
Dittha Ram Nath Upadhyaya	Dittha Sonat Singh Kunwar
Dittha Kanak Singh Basnyat	Munshi Laxmi Das

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List of changes under the New Administration up to the 4th January 1841

#### CHANGES

1. Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah, Premier, in place of Rana Jung Pandey.
2. Chautaria Guru Prasad Shah, to a seat in the Cabinet and the emoluments of a Chief of the first rank.
3. Raj Guru Rangnath Pandit (as with No. 2 above).
4. Pandit Raj Krishna Ram Pandit.
5. Chautaria Pushkar Shah, a seat in the Cabinet.
6. Kazi Kalu Shahi, a seat in the Cabinet; commandant of the fort at Makwanpur and of the Singh Nath Regiment, replaces Jang Bir Pandey.

7. Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey, a seat in the Cabinet and the command of the Nayan Gorakh Regiment.
8. Singh Bir Pandey (Dalbhanjan's brother) Governor of Palpa in place of Rana Dal Pandey (Ranjung's brother).
9. Bajra Bam Shahi, the Kumari Chowk, in place of Karbir Pandey.
10. Kazi Kalu Shahi, the Dukuti, in place of Dal Bahadur Pandey.
11. Kazi Abhiman Rana--the Kausi, in place of Prasad Singh Basnyat.
12. Kazi Bir Bhadra Kunwar, Daftar, in place of Kulraj Pandey (Ranjung's cousin).
13. Prahlad Thapa, the 4 Sadar Adalats, in place of Sinnit Singh.
14. Bhavani Singh Kunwar, the fort and district of Chisapani, in place of Indra Bir Thapa.
15. \_\_\_\_\_, Superintendent of Magazines and Arsenals, in place of Ranbam Thapa.
16. Ran Dhoj Pandey, the fort of Sindhuli, in place of Bhotu Pandey.

#### REMARKS

(Numbers refer to the changes as numbered above.)

1. The emoluments and functions as well as the seals have been fully transferred.
2. This is a new post and not supersession directly, though virtually such as to advise on public matters.
3. Above remarks apply. Has the patronage of the Dev Datta Battalion.
4. Above remarks again apply. Has the patronage of 7 Companies. A New Post.
5. New appointment without supersession. Has patronage of Brij Bani Regiment.
6. The supersession is equally valuable for the man gained and for the man removed, as the fort is the chief and most critically situated one in the kingdom.
7. Ostensibly only a confirmation but really a new appointment in the sense above noted.

8. An important change, Palpa being the chief provincial Government under this State. . . . . Singh Bir and his brother are Gora or good Pandeys, Rana Dal, the late minister's brother, like him, a Kala or bad Pandey.
9. An important change. The Kumari Chowk is equivalent to Revenue Board; the ejected holder, Ranjung's brother.
10. The Dukuti is the treasury.
11. The Kausi is one of the chief offices at Kathmandu, somewhat equivalent to Accountant Generalship. The gain is equal by the removal and by the promotion of the late and present holders.
12. The Daftar is the paymaster General's office; and its transfer out of the hands of Kulraj, a very important benefit.
13. Dittha or president of the 4 courts of the capital.
14. An important post on the high road to the plains, removed out of the hands of Ranjung.
15. Ranbam Thapa, a reckless instrument of Kala Pandey villanies, has been removed and imprisoned on charges. His successor is not named.
16. Another important post placed in safe hands. The Killadar commands the Bhairu Dal or garrison corps.

B.H. Hodgson, Resident

N.B.: It will be observed that in the Cabinet, the only change by direct supercession is in the Premier's office, in which Ranjung Pandey makes way for Fatted Jung, though by the constitution and law of Nepal, the Cabinet or official advisers of the Crown ought to have been several declaredly responsible persons under the late, as now under the present, Premier. The Governor General, however, is sufficiently aware that such was not the case, and hence the paucity of direct supercessions. The Kala Pandey administration was a hole-and-corner administration expressly devised to elude responsibility and therefore no one stood forth distinctly as a member of it: the real members were the Raj Guru, Kul Chandra Shahi, Karbir and Kulraj and Jagat Bam Pandey, and Prasad Singh Basnyat. Its most active whipper-in and tools were Ranbam and Indra Thapa. Nearly all of these have been removed from the several ostensible appointments which yielded them their emoluments.

B.H. Hodgson

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## Appendix No. 3

The Maharaja of Nepal to the Right Honorable the Governor General, 25th  
Paush 1897<sup>24</sup>

## TRANSLATION

(after compliments)

Your Lordship's three letters of dates 7th August, 26th October, and 2nd November have been duly forwarded to me by the Resident, Mr. Hodgson, the receipt of which has afforded me great satisfaction and pleasure, and what your Lordship, from a friendly feeling, has written in each letter concerning the expediency and propriety of upholding and increasing the friendly relation between the two Governments has been thoroughly understood and appreciated by me.

Although misunderstandings have arisen of late between the two Sarkars owing to the bad advice given me by my late Counsellors, so much so as to disturb the ancient friendship of the two States, yet your Lordship in your letters has most kindly showed me how that ancient friendship may be again reinstated and the welfare of my country preserved.

I beg to inform your Lordship that I take great shame to myself for the various misunderstandings which have taken place owing to the wicked advice of my late Counsellors--and that I am determined to take measures for the prevention of such a state of things in future. I therefore hope and trust that your Lordship will kindly pardon and overlook the past.

According to your Lordship's advice I have dismissed from office the several individuals who tried to make mischief between the two States, and have selected and appointed Chautaria Fatted Jung Shah, an individual of high rank and consideration, as my Prime Minister in order that he may clear up all unfriendly feeling between the two Sarkars. I have also associated with him other prudent and wise counsellors--the names of whom as well as my answer to the memorandum sent to me by the Resident have been presented to the Resident, by whom they will be forwarded to your Lordship. I therefore hope, being, as you are aware, an old friend of the British Government and the descendant of Raja Prithvinarayan, who first sowed the seeds of friendship with the Company, that your Lordship will kindly overlook the late unfortunate misunderstandings foolishly allowed by me, and that you will wash the recollections of them from your mind, so that in future the friendship of the two Governments may daily increase and my honour remain.

Your Lordship may also be assured that I will in future be most happy to attend to anything the Resident may propose tending to the good of the two Governments. I also hope and trust that your Lordship will often write informing me of your welfare, the honor of which will always make me happy.

(True translation)  
Christie, Officiating Assistant  
Resident



Resident Hodgson to Government, 6 February 1841<sup>25</sup>

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your despatch of the 25th January conveying to me the highly valued approval of the Governor General in Council of my recent negotiations and desiring me to state my opinion of the time and manner in which they should be completely closed by the transmission of His Lordship's response to the Maharaja's Kharita.

2. In reply I have the honor to state that in my opinion this response of the Governor General should be deferred until the removal or otherwise of the frontier force has been decided upon. This action should then be nicely adapted to the status quo of affairs here and to the Premier's view of his position at that moment.

3. The removal of the troops, I think it probable, need not be deferred beyond the end of March. However as everything will depend upon that measure, I could wish to say no more upon it for a few days than that it should not be hazarded before it has been earnestly solicited as a boon by the Maharaja and assented to as expedient by His Highness' new Ministers who I believe will be found anxious to dispense with this support at the earliest admissible moment.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 15 February 1841<sup>26</sup>

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch dated 6th February and after referring you to my separate letter to your address of this day's date with respect to the presence of Colonel Oliver's force on the frontier, to state that the Governor General in Council, having already expressed his willingness to confide to your discretion in directing the present course of our communications with the Court of Kathmandu, intends to be guided by your advice with respect to the period when it may be most expedient to reply to the Raja's letter received with your despatch of the 4th January.

I have, etc.

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## Footnotes to Chapter Two

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 October 1840, No. 135. This letter has not been edited.
2. The extradition of dacoits was a perennial problem in all areas on both sides of the Nepal-India border. A solution depended on the acceptance by Nepal of the Company's request for a treaty of extradition.
3. The correspondence dealing with Mathabar Singh's years of exile is found below in Chapter Six.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 October 1840, No. 134; slightly edited.
5. Foreign Secret Consultation 2 November 1840, 122; not edited.
6. This indicated that no official correspondence between the Governor General and the Raja would be permitted and that the Resident should make no official appearances at the Darbar. To withdraw confidence from someone implied that confidence would be placed in someone else, and this sentence was thus much more powerful than it sounds.
7. Foreign Secret Consultation 23 November 1840, No. 130; heavily edited.
8. I.e., to move troops to the Nepal border and to break off all official contact with the Darbar.
9. The Governor General had already been informed of the nature of the Raja's letter. The formality of acceptance, however, was an official act, which the Governor General's policy towards Nepal would not permit.
10. Hodgson's vocabulary became quite imaginative when he used it against those who opposed his policies. If one deletes the modifiers, one has a clearer picture of what he is actually saying.
11. Laxmi Devi was the Junior Queen of Rajendra Bikram Shah, whom Hodgson frequently referred to by the code name 'Bella' (Beautiful).
12. Foreign Secret Consultation 23 November 1840, No. 131; unedited.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 11 January 1841, No. 223; heavily edited.
14. Officers and soldiers of the army were regularly rotated, a procedure that usually provided them one year of active service with full pay and two years in reserve without pay.
15. See below, p. 76, note 9 for Hodgson's description of the Kumari Chowk.

16. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 December 1840, No. 109; unedited.
17. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 January 1841, No. 121; heavily edited.
18. 'See the note of the principal changes that have actually taken place in the P.S. to this despatch.' B.H.H.
19. Dalbhanjan Pandey signed such an agreement during the reign of Rana Bahadur Shah. The agreement, however, had nothing to do with friendship with the Company but rather concerned loyalty to the infant King Girbanayuddha Bikram Shah.
20. Hodgson apparently refers here to the petition sent to the king in the name of the soldiers on the 25th of June.
21. For a sample of one of these placards, see below, Chapter Three, Hodgson to Government, 1 August 1841, pp. 113-15.
22. Foreign Secret Consultation, 25 January 1841, No. 121; unedited.
23. Foreign Secret Consultation, 25 January 1841, No. 121; edited for names only.
24. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 January 1841, No. 121; slightly edited.
25. Foreign Secret Consultation 15 February 1841, No. 87; slightly edited.
26. Foreign Secret Consultation 15 February 1841, No. 88: unedited.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### The Queen Goes Forth

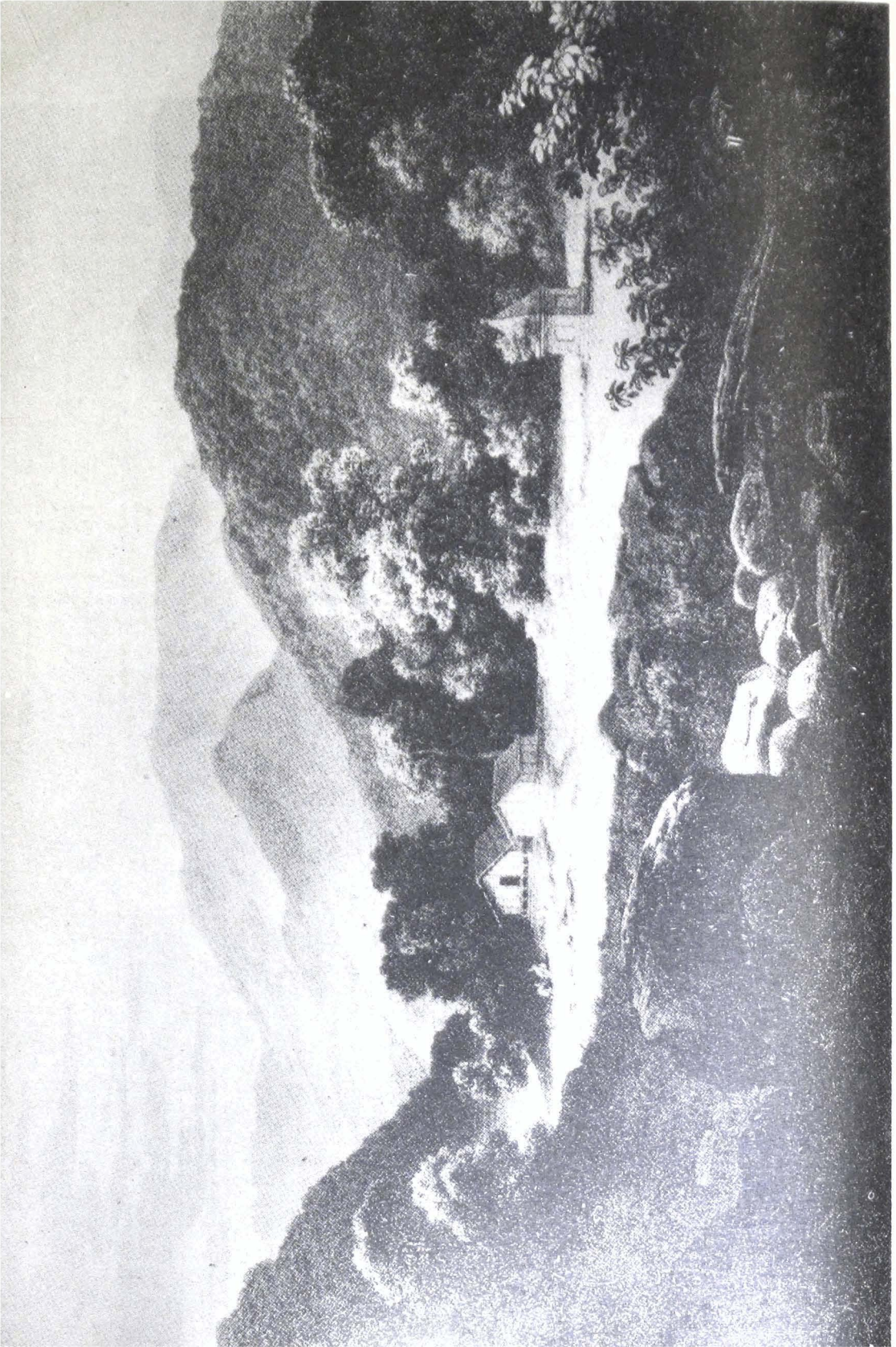
The Senior Queen, Samrajya Laxmi, set off again on one of her journeys, to Hodgson's great distress. Hodgson's case against the Queen is very clear. He sees her as the last hope of the Pandey party in the struggle to gain control of the Kathmandu Darbar. In such a struggle she and the Resident must necessarily be antagonists, because the fate of the Fatted Jung Shah Ministry that Hodgson has chosen to champion hangs in the balance.

A fair selection of the correspondence, both official and private, is presented in this chapter to enable the reader to see the Queen in action. It is something to see! She is far from the compliant, passive 'yes-person' that Hodgson would have wished her to be. She knows her mind; she knows the strength of her position; and she does not really care whose plans she upsets as she sets off for this Tarai excursion.

The question historians may well ask is: 'Was Samrajya Laxmi the great enemy that Hodgson supposed her to be?' Certainly she was not one to dance delightedly to whatever tune the Resident chose to play. She was as independent as any Nepali could hope to be in her attitude towards the Resident and his rules and customs. She was also, however, a saddened and frightened woman. She believed, as only a Mother could, that Bhim Sen Thapa was guilty as charged of persuading the doctors who had treated her youngest son to prescribe the medicine of which she thought her son had died. In her eyes, then, she was the one who had actually poisoned her son, because it was her hand that gave the medicine to the boy. Her remorse knew no bounds, and she was convinced that only the waters of the Ganges would wash away this 'sin'--a belief that may well explain the very strong influence the Raj Guru had over her. Hodgson, on the other hand, was the 'beast' who refused to let her go to Banaras to cleanse her soul. He was the ultimate enemy, and she resisted every effort he made to dominate the Darbar.

At the same time, Samrajya Laxmi was frightened for her eldest son, the Crown Prince. Until this lad was actually on the throne, she could not rest content. The Junior Queen, beautiful and very attractive to the young King, was a rival to be defeated by a fait accompli--the actual enthronement of the Crown Prince. To achieve this, she had to persuade the King to abdicate, a move he was not anxious to make. Hence the elaborate plots to stir up trouble for the King, the moves and counter-moves to destroy his peace of mind and present him with ever fresh crises.

As Samrajya Laxmi struck out at the world around her to achieve her purposes, everyone trembled. The balance of power was precarious. Tensions were great. And in every point of fact the lives of Nepal's Bharadars were at hazard. The Kot Massacre of 15 September 1846 did not just happen by chance. It grew out of this restless search for power in a Darbar that could not find peace because there was no stable point of strong, stable authority around which the Court could move in harmony.



HETAUNDA



Ambitions without strength; great plans without vision; and insecurity without limit. It was a frightening stage on which the Senior Queen played her role, and she played her role with an abandon that made men wonder if she were really aware of the dangerous path along which she forced them to march.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 20 February 1841<sup>1</sup>

*Hodgson reports a new act of defiance on the Senior Queen's part in the struggle between the Resident and the Kala Pandeys. The Queen set off for the Nepal Tarai, on her way, she said, to Banaras. Hodgson's health would not permit him to follow her to the Tarai, so he was forced to rely on his Assistant for on-the-spot reporting and negotiations. The result was less satisfying to him, perhaps, but it has provided us with a wealth of interesting insights into the struggle itself, the Queen's methods, and the Resident's concept of Nepal's political scene.*

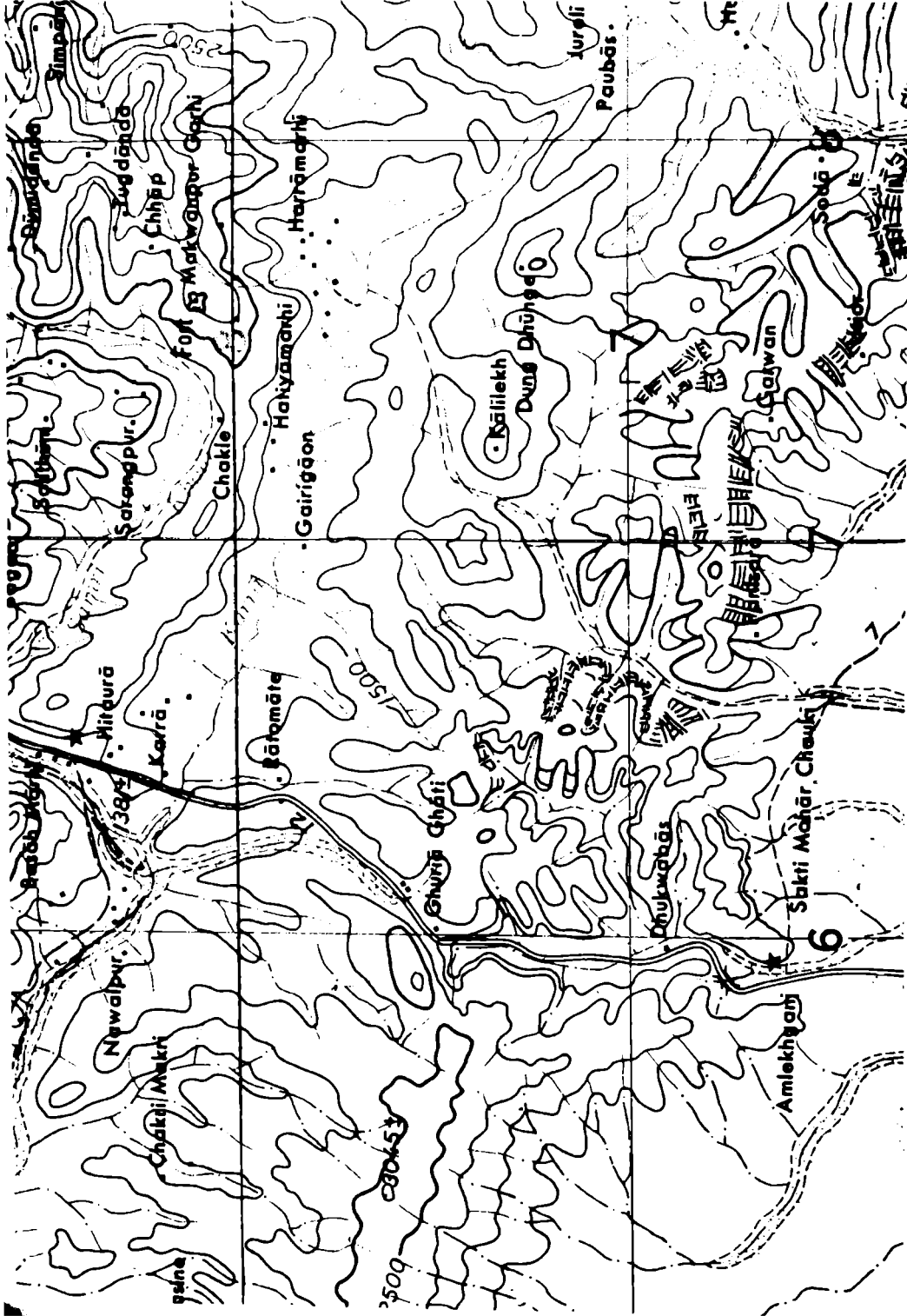
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Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the Maharani last night suddenly set off for the southward, declaring she was going on pilgrimage to Banaras. The Raja, taking with him the Crown Prince, shortly after followed her, attended by three of the Ministers, but not the Premier or his brother. The Raja's declared purpose was to bring back the Rani, though there would seem to be some collusion between them to embarrass the new Ministry, but of what nature I cannot yet tell. No communication of this strange but not novel procedure--which is only the repetition of what was witnessed last June--has been made to me officially. However I have been privately urged in earnest terms by the Premier to veto the Rani's journey, which he seems to consider a device of the Raj Guru for involving him in trouble and for reducing the Raja to unconditional acceptance of the Queen's views and purposes.

2. It is not probable that the Rani will attempt to pass the frontier. But if she even approach it, it is supposed the Raja will submit to all her demands including the present order of things here and the restoration of the Kala Pandey faction to favour. It is also feared that a long absence of the Raja and Rani from Kathmandu may lead to confusion and violence here. Wherefore, since I think that in the existing circumstances it would be both embarrassing and offensive if the Maharani or the Maharaja or both entered our territories, without passports or even applying for them, I have signified my unqualified disapproval of the proceeding.

3. The Maharaja, with his foot in the stirrup, last night told the Premier to send to me a request for passports to Gaya and to Gorakhpur for two small parties deputed by the Darbar to the Plains on account of the marriage of the Raja's second son and of some religious rites respectively. These passports had been previously asked for on the 18th in a



Scale 1:250,000



private manner by the Premier, and I had then agreed to give them in such time and manner as he might suggest. However I mentioned to him that I thought the Raj Guru's contemptuous neglect of the passport lately granted to him, at his own and the Darbar's request, ought to be cleared up before asking for more passports. In this the Premier agreed and he proceeded to secure the Raj Guru's dismissal, so far as all the usual observances on such occasions go. After a secret interview with the Raj Guru, however the Maharani set off, followed by the Maharaja, who, with a typical contempt of protocol did not bother to explain why he requested passports for his subordinate yet said nothing of his own journey.

4. I answered the ordinary messengers of the Darbar who brought me the Maharaja's message by asking where the Queen and Court were going. I requested them to tell the Maharaja that I thought this procedure was unsuitable and would give offence to the Governor General if it was not immediately stopped. At least His Lordship's opinion could be requested.

5. I have ordered my Assistant, who is now en route, to give the message personally to the Maharaja, directing him to remain in attendance upon His Highness until the Court returns to Kathmandu. I have further requested Mr. Wilkins, the Magistrate of Champaran, respectfully but firmly to prevent the Maharaja or the Maharani from crossing the frontier without passports. I will now only add in conclusion my opinion that this last device of the Pandey faction seems to prove their stock of paltry maneuvers to be nearly exhausted, so that a dignified firmness and prudence on our side may be expected, at no remote period, to place the destinies of this state at our discretional disposal.

I have, etc.

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Assistant Resident Williams to Hodgson, 28 February-2 March 1841

*This group of letters includes both private or personal letters and official reports. The private letters are less concise but far more graphic and unrestrained. The Assistant Resident's description of the struggle for dominance between a junior member of the British administration (with a firm conviction of the righteousness of his cause) and a Queen who by all accounts was a Lady who knew her mind and was determined to have her way has its comic aspects. There is also, however, a lingering sadness that such a woman could find no outlet for her strong sense of nationalism other than the stereotyped approach to Nepal-East India Company relations that the Kala Pandey party had adopted.*

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## Hetaunda

My dear Sir,<sup>2</sup>

At 11 a.m. this morning the Raja suddenly started for Kathmandu and the Sahibzada followed soon after. I would have sent you immediate intelligence, but the Raja is so uncertain that I thought it was merely one of his mad freaks. In passing he sent for the Jamadar to say he was forced to return to Kathmandu to perform some religious ceremony and that he begged I would accompany him. I told him that whilst the Rani remained here I could not go, though it might be the death of me, and that I should withhold the passports; that it was because he had promised to return to Kathmandu that I wrote for them. Leave I would not till all was settled. He again sent to beg me to accompany him, but I sent back word to say I had your orders and that I could not leave the Rani, nor would I. He told the Jamadar he had done all in his power to persuade this detestable woman to return, but she persists in remaining out of spite; that he had directed his Darbar to bring her back for he was obliged to return to perform puja. If she was obstinate, he would be back in a day or two. Immediately I desired the Jamadar to go to Guru Prasad with a message for the Rani. He was to tell her that by your orders I awaited her pleasure and wished to know what she intended doing. If she did not return immediately, I should return the passports and report her extraordinary conduct to you. At 4 p.m. the Jamadar is to be at the Darbar and in the presence of Guru Prasad and Ranganath Pandit and in and by their advice deliver from me a very stiff message. After the Jamadar, I shall despatch this by express in the hopes it will yet arrive before the Raja. Such a tiresome person as this mad woman I have never had to deal with. Almost everyone has left her, even most of her servants, and yet she remains here out of sheer spite. I wish they would only let me bring her back. I would astonish her. If I could only get her as far as Chisapani, she might remain there a month, for I would wear her out in the end. If she will not move, I have half a mind to get Guru Prasad to guarantee her not leaving this place, and, as I have a tent pitched at Chisapani, to move there for a day or until the Raja returns, which he will do if I cannot get this woman away. The change of air and scene for a day or two might do me good, for I am worried and worn out by these proceedings. It is disheartening to find, after doing my utmost to settle the matter, that there is some secret reason which I cannot discover for her remaining here. First they would have permission to go to Banaras. After an immense deal of trouble, I managed to persuade them it was impossible. Then, if I could only procure passports for the marriage mission, they would positively return. The Raja pledged his word to me--you have not only granted this but also given a passport for Gaj Kesar--the Raj Guru has got his permission to depart according to stipulation--the Raja professes his anxiety to return and goes off suddenly, desiring me to accompany him but states he will be back again in a day or two--the Sahibzada is sent off one day, returns the next for his Mama--again starts without her, and doubtless will return tomorrow. What can I do with such people? But I will turn over a new leaf. I have just sent a message to the Raj Guru that now the Raja has given him leave

to depart. If he does not immediately fix an hour for leaving (the letters and chaprassis being ready) I will report this circumstance to you for the information of the Government. And how can he expect the other passports will be granted when he treats the one you have given him with such marked disrespect. I have told the Jamadar to consult first with Guru Prasad and then to give him (the Raj Guru) a very severe message, for the detestable wretch is at his old work again and is persuading the Rani to proceed south. Rangnath tells me if she does not return immediately they will threaten to leave her. I shall tell her that such disgraceful conduct, particularly in the absence of her husband, will make her notorious all over India, and that the British Government will never permit her to proceed to Banaras if such is her conduct, and that if at the instigation of any fool she attempts to cross the frontier, she must be aware we are prepared for her. I am so annoyed that I can hardly write so shall wait for an hour.

7 p.m. The Rani was promised to return to Kathmandu, but when I do not know. She would go immediately on my account. I learn however she wishes to see Makwanpur. She has left the Kurroo for the Dharmasala and has even given orders for the march tomorrow, but I can place no dependence on her. I will wait and see what tomorrow brings. I have not stood on much ceremony with her this time, and it has had a beneficial effect: Fortunately, I am not quite well, which is of great service to me, and I have got rid of the Raj Guru. He starts at 4 tomorrow morning, but wishes to remain a day or two at the village near Bissowlea, and as he has a sick wife will not travel at a railroad pace. I have recommended him to make the best of his way to Banaras--he is very contrite and humble as far as words go, but I did not spare him. I have sent Ram Dahal and Chetra to attend and watch him and am monstrous glad to get rid of him. I hear Kul Chand Shahi Chautaria (the blind man) arrived in camp this morning at 5, so I shall not feel satisfied until I get this fair Lady safe in Kathmandu. You have desired three chaprassis to be sent with the marriage mission, two go with the Raj Guru, and I suppose you would wish one to accompany Capt. Gaj Kesar. As I have only six, and one is the sporting gentleman who attends you, therefore if you wish one to be sent to Gaya, those who go to Banaras may afterwards go to Gaya. Otherwise you must kindly send a man who can write, for with each party I send a gent given to scribbling in order that information may be sent of their doings. I write Mr. Wilkins by every Dak and will give him the necessary information officially when the Rani leaves here.

Yours very truly,

G.W. Williams

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Assistant Resident Williams to Hodgson, 1 March 1841<sup>3</sup>

Hetaunda

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your instructions of the 25th February and that agreeably with them I have attached myself to the Rani, the Raja having left for Kathmandu with the greater part of the troops, leaving about six hundred with the Rani. Her Highness has promised me she will return, but is so undecided in her plans that though the Darbar has persuaded her to leave the Kurroo and take up her abode in the Dharmasala in the village for the night and, all preparations made for her departure this morning to Kathmandu, she suddenly started on foot with a few of her female attendants to proceed to Makwanpur, but the troops have opposed her progress. I have remonstrated strongly with Her Highness on this extraordinary conduct and have begged to know what her wishes are, but without success. As I find all remonstrances on my part of no avail, I have the honor to request you will do me the favour of informing me what line of conduct I am to adopt towards Her Highness.

I have, etc.

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Assistant Resident Williams to Hodgson, 1 March 1841<sup>4</sup>

Hetaunda

My dear Sir,

I have just heard the Rani has returned to the Kurroo (alone and on foot). The Darbar and troops have gone after her to bring her back, but I fear she is a wilful woman, what can I do with her? Till 9:30 I had her safe in the Dharmasala. She then was anxious to perform puja, though preparations had been made for her immediate departure to Kathmandu, the Darbar doing their utmost to persuade her that as she had promised me she would go, she ought not to remain. I waited till I heard from Guru Prasad and then sent her a message that I awaited her pleasure and promise until she returned to Kathmandu, the marriage mission could not leave. Now while the troops were at dinner, she has started alone in the opposite direction. I have never heard of such folly, and it is most annoying and wearying. The Raj Guru is still here, though preparing for his departure. He has assured me he will leave today, but he is anxious (according to his own account) to get the Rani to return. The chaprassis have just arrived and as the Dak is not in, I have sent to gain intelligence of the Rani's movements. But what can I tell you that may be depended on, when I do not know what news an hour may bring. She may be on her march to Kathmandu, or to Banaras, it is quite uncertain. I am almost tempted to wish she would make the attempt to proceed to Banaras, for I would astonish her-- but here I can say nothing but remonstrate on her extraordinary conduct, and then I can not be sure she hears half that I wish. You can judge

from the Raja's movements how uncertain their doings are, and it is only by closely watching them that I can learn anything--for they never think it necessary to inform me that they intend going here or there. I shall write officially to know what I am to do with this mad woman, for remonstrating is quite useless, nor does she care for the Darbar. The Rani was making her way in hot haste for Makwanpur when the troops came up with her. What an extraordinary woman. I do not think she will return to Kathmandu, for she appears to be determined to go in any other direction but the proper one. I have therefore written to you for your further instructions, and I need not add that I will do my best to fulfil your wishes, whatever they may be, though I am almost now worn out by this dreadful woman. Guru Prasad tells me not to annoy myself, that he will take care she does not go south. I am not afraid of that, for, as we are prepared for her, it might do her good to see she cannot go just as she pleases. But since I am anxious to get her back to Kathmandu, all these mad freaks (perfectly useless, which arise solely from a wish to give trouble) do annoy and irritate me. I have not yet been quite broken in; I suppose by and bye I shall take it quietly enough. If I can persuade the Rani to return I shall only be too delighted. I hear (from the troops) she has sent her promise to return to the Dharmasala.

Yours very truly,

G.W. Williams.

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Assistant Resident Williams to Hodgson, 2 March 1841<sup>5</sup>

Hetaunda

My dear Sir,

The Dak has just come in, and I write a few lines to say that the Rani is still here and dreadfully obstinate. She last night sent to me for a passport to Banaras and requested to see me. I told her a passport at this season of the year would not be granted her. Though I was reluctant to go, (I was sitting down to dine), I prepared myself because I thought I could tell her my mind and reproach her for so constantly breaking her promises. Shortly afterwards a message came to say she was not quite ready and wished me to wait half an hour--I have heard nothing from her since. Today I intend to say through Guru Prasad that I am here by your orders, and wish to know what she intends doing--that she has so often broken her promises to me and her conduct is so improper that I have reported the circumstances for your information--and that I shall be forced to leave the camp with the passports you have granted, because you granted them on the express condition that they return to Kathmandu. If she was not ashamed of such disgraceful conduct, I was, and that I would not see her till she left here.

As I found that the Raj Guru was still here, I sent to him to ask whether he intended to go or not. It appeared to me he had obtained a passport from you under false pretenses. If I heard of his being in camp after several hours, I would demand his passport and return it to you. I said that I considered him utterly false and that no dependence could be placed upon him. He immediately ordered his zenana and servants to proceed and promised to go by noon. If by that time I find him here, I will request his instant departure or the passport.

I wrote to Mr. Wilkins to tell him that Raja had departed but that I was still with the Rani who would not move. I have just heard from him. He says that as the Raja has left, he has withdrawn the escort, Capt. De Fountain has replaced him and has orders to send express to Motihari, should the Rani attempt to cross the frontier, in order that Mr. Wilkins might meet her. He also begs me to let him know day by day of the Rani's movements. I have written by every Dak. He has requested me to say, if I am writing to you, that he has just received your letter of the 27th. He shall reply and send a progress report tomorrow.

I shall be glad to hear from you in reply to my official letter of yesterday. I really think if I left the camp with the passports it would have an effect soon, for I will not give them till the camp passes Chisa Garhi where I could await them. She will not dare to cross the frontier, and if she attempt to move, I would be with her before she could get far. My being here only makes her more unreasonable for she fancies I can get a passport from you for Banaras. I was in hopes she had given up this mad idea when she forced the Chiefs to promise her a passage next November. I have told her that if she is anxious to go then, her present actions will certainly not get permission from the Government. I have told her in fact everything I possibly could and in severe terms, for I had no patience with her. In great haste as the Dak is waiting.

Yours very truly,

G.W. Williams

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 2 March 1841<sup>6</sup>

*Hodgson's first report to Government on this new development in Nepal is rather restrained. The analysis he presents in his second paragraph is surprisingly accurate. When one compares this with the barrage of letters he would later dispatch, one can appreciate the evaluation pencilled by someone in the Governor General's office on the back of one of his reports: 'If Mr. Hodgson makes such a fuss about a matter of truly little or no importance, what might he not be expected to do in situations of decided emergency?'*

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Sir,

I have the honor to submit herewith a copy of a letter of mine of this day to my assistant in the Raja's camp.

Another day or two of patience and firmness will, I trust, put an end to these extravagant proceedings, the motives of which are now very evidently those explained to my Assistant. In other words, the overturning of the recent solemnly guaranteed arrangements with our Government as a prelude to other iniquities abroad and at home.

2. How subservient soever the Raja be in many respects to the Rani, she yet cannot bring him to deliver over the State to her guidance and the chieftancy to her vengeance. As she finds that his resistance is sustained at Kathmandu by public opinion and by the sentiments of all respectable persons, she wishes to remove him from these supports, provided she cannot break his resolution by other means. Hence her threats of going to Banaras, and hence her purpose to go there if she can and if other means fail. For at Banaras she knows that the Raja would be as clay in her hands, and having bound and vowed him to her aims and ends, she would bring him back in a couple of months to accomplish them--per fas et nefas--all things having been prepared or the necessity of preparations having been superseded in the interior by means of secret instigation of military violence.

3. Such I understand to be the substance, drift, and scope of the Rani's apparently idiotic and really indecent conduct. Any purpose of negotiation with our Government on her part at Banaras is a mere pretence got up to delude the weak and cunning Raja.

At Banaras and by a woman was devised and nurtured the revolution which at the beginning of this century destroyed the connection of this Government with ours and committed the administrators of Nepal to death or exile or opposition to us. The precedent is said to have fixed the Rani's attention.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to the Assistant Resident, 2 March 1841<sup>8</sup>

*Hodgson continues to play his trump card: the ability to grant or refuse passports to India. His actual control of the situation was very weak, but by constantly stressing this formality he was able to convey a sense of imposing authority.*

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My dear Sir,

The Maharaja came in here almost alone and set off again yesterday evening, having heard, I presume, some new freak of his precious wife. While he was here he sent to me for a passport for Prabhu Chand and the other Baboos, our subjects, who are related to his family by marriage and who have been here for some time past. They are now, it seems, to be employed in the new marriage negotiations in their native district of Gorakhpur. I answered the Darbar's messengers by enquiring what had been done and was purposed by His Highness, whose coming in alone was no fulfilment of his promise to you. I presume he meant to keep his promise, or I could not permit you to deliver the passports I had sent to you for him. He desired to have those passports in his own hands. I told him that whenever he fulfilled the conditions of delivery, you would instantly give them to him and that the Baboos would also be permitted to accompany the marriage party.

I send you enclosed the passport granted for the latter at the Raja's request. It is in fact, superfluous, since these persons are subjects of our own who are returning home. The Raja, however, desired the passport and it is therefore sent to you to be presented to His Highness along with the other two, whenever he shall fulfil the conditions by the dismissal of the Raj Guru and by the return of the Court, himself and wife to Kathmandu. In regard to her, I told the Darbar messengers that if she wished to go two things were indispensable: first, the Raja's written consent confirmed by the responsible advisers and second, the Governor General's permission. For me to allow her to go without these two preliminaries would be blindly to involve myself in new responsibilities too arduous for me to bear. The idea of the Rani's going incognito more especially required her husband's sanction and was expressly opposed to the orders of the Governor General, who had declared, on her late application, that the usual forms and a fitting escort must be observed and supplied. With regard to his own consent, I said, the Raja was the judge --but with regard to the Governor General's consent, I must continue to resist all attempts to evade or delay it. I can use no other language than this in the circumstances, though I am quite aware that the Rani has secret motives for her shameless behaviour and that she is in fact aiming at nothing less than the overthrow of the existing administration and the crushing of all opposition to herself and party. Doubtful whether she can accomplish it in Nepal, she would perhaps go to Banaras where her husband would be at her mercy, and where she would drag him with her or soon after her. In the meanwhile she would subdue him by the threat of going. I cannot, must not, even seem to sanction such aims, all fatal to us in their immediate consequences.<sup>9</sup> Nor can I incur the public criticism and suspicion that would instantly attach to me and probably lead to uproar, were I to dispense with forms and usages in order to facilitate this headstrong woman's accomplishment of her real or pretended journey. If I gave way at all, so would the Raja, and he would consign us all to the tender mercies of this Virago, in order to keep her at home. I must therefore maintain the line I have taken until the Governor General's orders reach me. We must be patient, with the consolation of knowing

that the Rani is now pushing a course full of discredit and that may bring its own punishment on her. After what I have said, I need not suggest to you the expediency of supporting the Raja against her by not needlessly referring to his consent to her journey. You need only repeat that the passports, with the additional one now sent, will be given upon fulfilment of the conditions so lately promised to you by His (and Her) Highness. If necessary you may add that before I can submit to the Governor General an application for permission for the Rani to go to Banaras, His Highness must explicitly and in writing declare his sanction of the journey.

Two or three days more patience will, I hope, subdue the Lady's obstinacy, or induce those whose business it is gently to coerce her to return.

Your ever, etc.

B.H. Hodgson, Resident

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Resident Hodgson to the Assistant Resident, 3 March 1841<sup>10</sup>

*Hodgson reveals here his own insecurity in dealing with the Queen. If she simply goes to Banaras without regard for his passport, he cannot stop her. The resultant turmoil would indeed cast into doubt his own ability to control the situation in Nepal—a fact the Governor General would be quick to note.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your public and private letters of the 1st and 2nd relative to the Maharani. In reply I want to inform you that the Maharaja, after having proceeded some way to re-join the camp at Hetaunda, as mentioned to you, suddenly came back. He is still here but preparing now (noon) to return. He has pledged to dismiss the Raj Guru and to bring back the Maharani, the Court, and troops immediately to Kathmandu.

2. The enclosed note which I sent to him at daylight this morning will explain to you what I have said to him. His general reply to me was that he had ordered his equipage. Immediately on his arrival at Hetaunda he will fulfil his promises to you, as above stated.

3. Such being the case, it seems proper to wait and see what will happen when he arrives before positively authorizing you to quit the Maharani and leave her there professing to enter our territories. I shall do that if necessary, but only with great hesitation and only upon the return of the Raja, his camp, and Chiefs; because whether the Maharani seeks (as you have conjectured) to make a rupture between the



Governments or to reduce her husband to her terms in regard to the conduct of affairs here, she might, if left alone, effect one or other object with comparative ease by advancing to the frontier.

4. I have told the Raja that before his wife could go to our provinces his written consent, countersigned by his Ministers, would be indispensable for my security. He has explicitly admitted this and at the same time declared that neither he nor his advisers can or will permit the Maharani to go to Banaras this season. I have desired him to give me, if he please, for transmission to Calcutta the above written consent and he has refused on the plea that the journey is now out of the question.

5. Some very improper language has, I understand, been held at Hetaunda to the soldiery by both the Rani and Raja--language intended expressly to invite the interference of the troops in matters of State and to inflame their minds towards the Raja's Ministers and myself.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to the Maharaja of Nepal, 2 March 1841<sup>11</sup>

TRANSLATION

Your Highness,

Having always been the firm friend of Your Highness and of the Darbar, I think it necessary to write to Your Highness as follows--

1st. The whole present proceedings of the Darbar being very different from what was promised in the pledge to the Governor General of the month of January, viz.--that all business pertaining to my Government should be executed according to the advice of Your Highness' Ministers--I fear if such a state of things continue, the Governor General will think that the above pledge of the Darbar is wholly null.

2nd. Your Highness informed my Assistant at Hetaunda that I had given Your Highness a passport to go to Banaras; but Your Highness must be well aware that I neither did give a passport nor was it even asked for.

3rd. Your Highness told my Assistant that the Maharani had in her possession a passport from me to go to Banaras. No doubt the Rani has a written piece of paper but certainly not a passport. In the paper alluded to, it is distinctly stated that before giving a passport to the Maharani and making the necessary preparations for her reception, the Governor General's sanction must first be procured.

4th. Your Highness told my Assistant that if the Resident would give a passport for the marriage party, the Raj Guru should be dismissed and the Court return to Kathmandu.

5th. At present, when there are misunderstandings between the two States and when a British Army is upon the frontier, it is surely not a fit time for the Maharaja or Maharani importunately to insist upon going to Banaras without first getting the sanction of the Governor General. This is contrary to the universal custom of all Darbars;<sup>12</sup> is very disrespectful to the Governor General; and altogether wrong, because without the sanction of His Lordship it is altogether impossible to pass the frontier. It is, however, most easy for quarrels to arise at the frontier, should the Maharaja or the Maharani go so far. For this reason I ordered my Assistant to attach himself to Your Highness' camp in order to prevent all unforeseen occurrences. I cannot now recall my Assistant until the Maharani returns to Kathmandu, because if anything disagreeable were to befall Her Highness, how could I answer to the Governor General?

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 3 March 1841<sup>13</sup>

*Here Hodgson reveals a second element of his sense of insecurity. Although from the outset he had correctly analyzed the Queen's immediate objectives, he now begins to fret about the reaction of the soldiery, to him always an unknown quantity. One senses here the depth of his reaction to the threat of the Residency during the long night of mutiny of the 21st June 1840. He is vulnerable to violence, and he knows it.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to submit herewith copies of further correspondence with my Assistant in camp at Hetaunda together with a translation of the note this morning delivered to the Darbar. To the observation contained in that note, that the Raja's present conduct had nullified the pledge given to the Governor General to be guided by certain Chiefs, his responsible advisers, he answered by declaring that these advisers had joined him in forbidding the Rani's going and that he would instantly fetch her back! The Raj Guru, he said, had been detained by the non-arrival of his wife, who had proceeded slowly after him from Kathmandu; but that he, the Raj Guru, should now be instantly dismissed. To the verbal remark that it was absurd to suppose I could take upon myself the responsibility of letting the Raja's wife quit him to reside in our territory without His Highness' formal consent, he agreed; and to the proposition that he should, if he pleased, give me such a paper of consent for submission to the Governor General, the Raja replied that he had not, nor ever had, the least intention of permitting the journey. He completely denied that he had told my Assistant that he definitely intended to go. And lastly he repeated again and again that he was then almost in the stirrup and would on his arrival at Hetaunda adjust matters as promised, by the dismissal of the Raj Guru and the bringing back of all others with him to Kathmandu.

2. Whether His Highness will be entirely successful at once may be doubted, as may be the sincerity of a good part of his professions to me and my Assistant. I think, however, that in the course of the next few days the maneuvers of both Raja and Rani will terminate, for the present, in their quiet or unquiet return here.

3. That the Maharani's object was, and is, the overthrow of the recently constituted and solemnly guaranteed arrangement for the administration of this Government seems daily more certain. It is also at least as strongly to be suspected that the Raja has allowed himself to approve, without fully understanding, several parts of her project, as, for example, appeals to the soldiery to induce their irregular and violent interference in politics for the restoration of the Kala Pandey Ministry. The Raja and Rani have complained to the troops that they can be real rulers only under the Kala Pandey Ministry.

4. I do not think that these appeals will now be renewed nor that they will produce any mischief at this time, especially since popular opinion is very strong in favour of the straightforward resistance I have made to these senseless proceedings of the Raja and Rani in regard to Banaras. But one should not underestimate the motives now shown by the Darbar nor the probability that the Darbar will return to this scheme of appealing to the soldiery more seriously and with much more success than might now be considered prudent, once the hot and rainy seasons are here. After carefully considering these possibilities and the impression that recent events have made on the present, more able Ministry, I have reluctantly decided, with reference to your instructions of the 15th February, that no part of Colonel Oliver's brigade can be permitted to be withdrawn from the frontier until next November.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 3 March 1841<sup>14</sup>

*In this despatch Hodgson begins to play with the idea that it may become necessary for the Governor General to intervene militarily in Nepal. He will return to this theme, always in a veiled manner, repeatedly in the weeks ahead, and his strategy will always include the sympathetic support of a substantial number of Bharadars in Nepal. There can be little doubt that his objective was the Nepal Tarai, which for him represented the ultimate threat to Nepal.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 15th February, conveying to me the sentiments and views of the Governor General in Council upon the recent change of men and measures in the

Darbar in relation to the British force now upon the frontier and authorising me (because of His Lordship in Council's conviction of the faithlessness and fickleness of the Raja's character) to detain the whole of this force throughout the coming hot and rainy months, if I think it necessary.

2. I received your despatch more than a week ago. I have not answered it nor acted upon it sooner because I hoped to be able to inform you that I felt that at least a part of Colonel Oliver's Brigade could be recalled. I am sorry to say, I can no longer prudently entertain that hope. I have therefore today addressed letters to this effect, to the Magistrate of Champaran and to Colonel Oliver.

3. The Darbar's activities since its last agreement with me, and more especially the deeds I see unfold before me daily, have convinced me: If we are firm and prepared we can hardly fail, before long, to place the destinies of this Darbar one way or another at our disposal--without, or almost without, an effort. Yet the furious Rani and the weak--but clever--Raja will try every scheme that circumstances will permit to stem (fraudfully or forcefully) the current of events and to restore to the Cabinet both the man and the policies which that current has swept away. In a word, we must expect to face, between now and November, various serious risks arising from anarchy or from the restoration of evil advisers to power. The risks urge us to caution, but they promise results highly favourable to us in many ways whether in peace or in war.

I have, etc.

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Assistant Resident Williams to Hodgson, 5 March 1841<sup>15</sup>

*Williams reports the arrival in the Royal camp of five members of the dismissed Kala Pandey party. The plot thickens, and the Resident's fears are further heightened. The secret intelligence sent him on the same day, however, indicates that the army will stand firm. The scheme will fail, and the Queen will be forced to try another approach--if time permits.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd March and beg to state for your information that the Raja returned to his camp yesterday at 3 p.m. With the exception of a complimentary message, I have as yet had no communication from him--but I intend in the course of the day to urge his immediate return with the Rani to Kathmandu. However, I am doubtful if the Rani will leave this place till she can persuade the Raja to accept her views. I have had information that she has been tampering with the troops for some time and that they have offered to seize and confine any of the Ministers and Chiefs she may wish to arrest.

She is now determined to proceed to Makwanpur and has ordered preparations to be made for her departure, though the Raja and the Darbar strongly oppose her going. In case she should attempt to leave this place, it is my intention to inform her that as I have been desired to attend her by your orders, I shall consider it my duty to follow her, and I will at the same time remonstrate strongly with her on proceeding against the wishes of the Raja and the Darbar. I have had a message from Guru Prasad Chautaria begging me to adopt this plan as the only hope they have of opposing her progress. I think it right to inform you that the following individuals are now in camp and in constant communication with the Rani, viz. Kul Chand Shahi Chautaria, Kulraj Pandey, Jagat Bam Pandey, and the sons of Karbir and Ranjung Pandey. I firmly believe the Rani has no intention of returning to Kathmandu till she has, through the aid of the above mentioned individuals, gained her wishes and that if she is permitted to remain here much longer with the Raja in her power, she will make a serious attempt to subvert the present Ministry. All remonstrances on my part, however strongly worded, have been useless, and the Raja admits he has no power over her. I shall strictly follow your instructions with regard to the passports for the marriage mission, but I believe the Rani is not so anxious on their behalf or to proceed to Banaras, as to keep the Raja here in her power surrounded by her party so as to enable her to gain her own views.

I have, etc.

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Substance of a paper of secret intelligence, dated 5th March 1841<sup>16</sup>

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On the 2nd Rangnath Pandit, Dalbhanjan Pandey, Guru Prasad, and the Raj Guru being with the Rani, and all within hearing of the troops, the Rani fiercely attacked the first named three Chiefs with all sorts of reproaches for having sold the country to the English, invited or suffered their encroachments and prevented recourse to war. Rangnath and Dalbhanjan shortly retired, and Satrubhanjan, the Jagir Kotiya Kazi, Bodhiman Karki with others of the Queen's party, joined her. The Queen then attacked Guru Prasad, asked what his brother (the Premier) was doing at Kathmandu? Why did he not come down? Told him that two of their official colleagues had turned Feringis and the slaves of Feringis, and had delivered over the country, bound hand and foot, to the Feringis, whose praises and the terrors of whose arms they were incessantly singing in the Raja's ears. She then bade them (the Ministers) resign and make way for better men. Guru Prasad answered respectfully that all nations, China included, were obliged to acknowledge the military skill and resources of the English, that when war seemed inevitable they (the Ministers) had taken office at the Raja's entreaty and her's too, to prevent it, and with that view had entered into engagements with the British Government; that faith ought to be kept; that nothing more had been demanded by the English; that they (the Ministers) would not break faith but that their official posts were at the disposal of the Raja, as were their lives and properties, but not

their honors. The Rani broke in upon Guru Prasad's answer by raising her voice and appealing to the soldiers of the Hanuman Dal who were at hand. She said, 'Hear soldiers, how these traitors are even now holding out to me the power of the English. Away with them. They are not fit to administer our Government. Will you have such a Mukhtiyar as this Paji's brother?' The soldiers replied that they were ready to obey the orders of the Sarkar and to seize and bind whomsoever the Sarkar willed, but that they liked what they had seen of Fatted Jung (the Premier) and wished him to be further tried; they would judge him by his acts. The Queen then asked if they did not prefer Ranjung, to which they replied, no, they did not. He was a fool and knave and had spoilt all. But would they take Jagat Bam (whom the Queen produced before them) as Mukhtiyar? No. Whom then would they have? They were content as they were. Some few declared for the Rani and asked what Chiefs they were to confine? Whereupon Satrubhanjan advised the seizing of the Premier and said these bastard Feringis are Pajis and that under the Kala Pandeys the Gorkha troops would make the Ganges the boundary in a very short time. 'Down with the Feringis and their friends! Up with the Rani and Kala Pandeys--war--war--and the Ganga san (Ganges boundary).' Jagat Bam was again asked to take office on these principles, but he declined, declaring his inability.

The Queen is incessantly tampering with the soldiers of the Hanuman Dal and is determined to go to Makwanpur, where the Raja will follow her and be in her power. The Raja is two parts fool and one part knave. He fights under her petticoat. Neither of them ever meant to go to Banaras, but only to rouse the soldiery by the pretense. The Rani is bent on restoring the Kala Pandeys and breaking with the English Government. The Raja dreads the latter, and if the Resident frighten him, he will come round--if not, he will perhaps let the Rani drag him over the precipice. The Rani openly appeals to the soldiers without pardah. She calls all the Chiefs but the Kala Pandeys traitors. Some say she is mad; and some say she will soon be despised by the soldiers themselves.

(True translation)

B.H. Hodgson

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Resident Hodgson to Assistant Resident, 6 March 1841<sup>17</sup>

*Hodgson presents the necessary compromise in the fourth paragraph of this letter: Let the marriage mission proceed, and the Raja will block the Queen. Guru Prasad Chautaria will tell you when the time is ripe to make this concession.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th March reporting to me the designs and proceedings of the Senior

Queen and mentioning your intention to accompany her to Makwanpur, by the advice of Guru Prasad Chautaria, in case your remonstrances and those of the Raja and Chiefs fail to induce her to abandon that step.

2. What you have heard of her designs and wishes and acts is, I am sorry to say, but too true. It is to be hoped, however, that the extravagance of her conduct will counteract her purposes; that the soldiery will not obey her without the Raja's express orders; and that the Raja, however weak and full of duplicity, will still, as before, refuse to sanction or succumb to those extremities on which she would urge him.

3. In regard to the journey to Makwanpur, as the Raja and Court will attend the Rani, if she persist in going, your place is properly by their side as my representative and channel of authentic communication. What you plan to say to the Rani about accompanying her may, under the circumstances and as proceeding from the suggestion of Guru Prasad Chautaria, be necessary, yet, in general, it would be better to state your attendance (now that she no longer seeks to go to our territories) as being upon the Court. This will be the more easy since the Raja will probably not leave her. I mention this as a mere point of form, to be overruled by circumstances at your discretion and with the advice of Guru Prasad Chautaria, by whose opinions I would have you be guided whenever there is no time for prior reference to me.

4. I understand the Raja is very urgent to have the marriage party's passport. I cannot at present sanction its being given, but it may become expedient to concede the matter to the Raja with a view to prevent his falling into the Rani's hands. I therefore would have you follow the deliberate sentiments of Guru Prasad Chautaria and to give this one passport (not the other to Gaj Kesar) if he really would have you do so, including that to the Babus, our subjects.

5. The Rani wishes, I hear, to get rid of Guru Prasad under the pretext of making him take home the Crown Prince. Guru Prasad should on no account fall into the snare. There are plenty of others to take care of the boy, who besides, has shown that he will not quit his Mother--an argument available to draw her back.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 7 March 1841<sup>18</sup>

*Hodgson returns at the end of this letter to his fear of violence. As this fear grows, so does his sense of commitment to the welfare of the Ministry. The future will prove his fears to be as mistaken as his single-minded support of this Ministry was disastrous to his own career as Resident.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to submit herewith a copy of a letter from my Assistant of the 5th of March together with a paper of secret intelligence of the general correctness of which I have no reason to doubt. I trust and hope that the Rani's utter extravagance and indecency of conduct will before long open the eyes of the infatuated Raja or, at all events, prevent the eminently well behaved and well characted soldiery of Nepal from following so blind a guide to dishonor and ruin. It appears to be decidedly the opinion of the Premier that such will be the result of these unparalleled doings. Since all things continue in an orderly and quiet state at Kathmandu, the Premier and his colleagues (Rangnath and Krishna Ram) have determined to wait three or four more days before taking any active measures--if any such be feasible--of counteraction.

2. The Rani will probably not succeed in making the Raja accept her views entirely, nor, without that acceptance will she have it in her power to crush the Ministers or to bring about an open rupture with our Government by means of the soldiery. But, as one or both these issues are possible, I should be very glad to receive, as soon as may be, some indications of the course I am to follow--particularly in the event of the dismissal simply, or of the imprisonment or attempted destruction of one or more of these distinguished Chiefs who have lately assumed the administration of the State under the direct auspices and implied protection (I think) of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council.

3. The pretence of a journey to Banaras is now exploded. The object was to arouse the soldiery. It is thus satisfying to see that my unhesitating and instant opposition to this proceeding before I could learn its drift or sincerity, has met widespread and repeated public applause and a feeling of confidence in the honor and integrity and straight forward policy of the British Government. On the other side, contempt of all truth, of all decency, and all prudence will, I trust, if time be allowed to reveal their full hideousness, prove their own punishment, stripping the Rani gradually of all that authority which she draws from the high loyalty of this Nation. What I fear, however, is some stroke too sudden for such influences, and most anxiously shall I await the events of next week and the deliberations of a Ministry whose fidelity to their engagements with me is now strikingly displayed, and may be fully relied on. Their lives and honour and fortunes they seem to have committed to my care and to have assumed the care of mine.

I have, etc.

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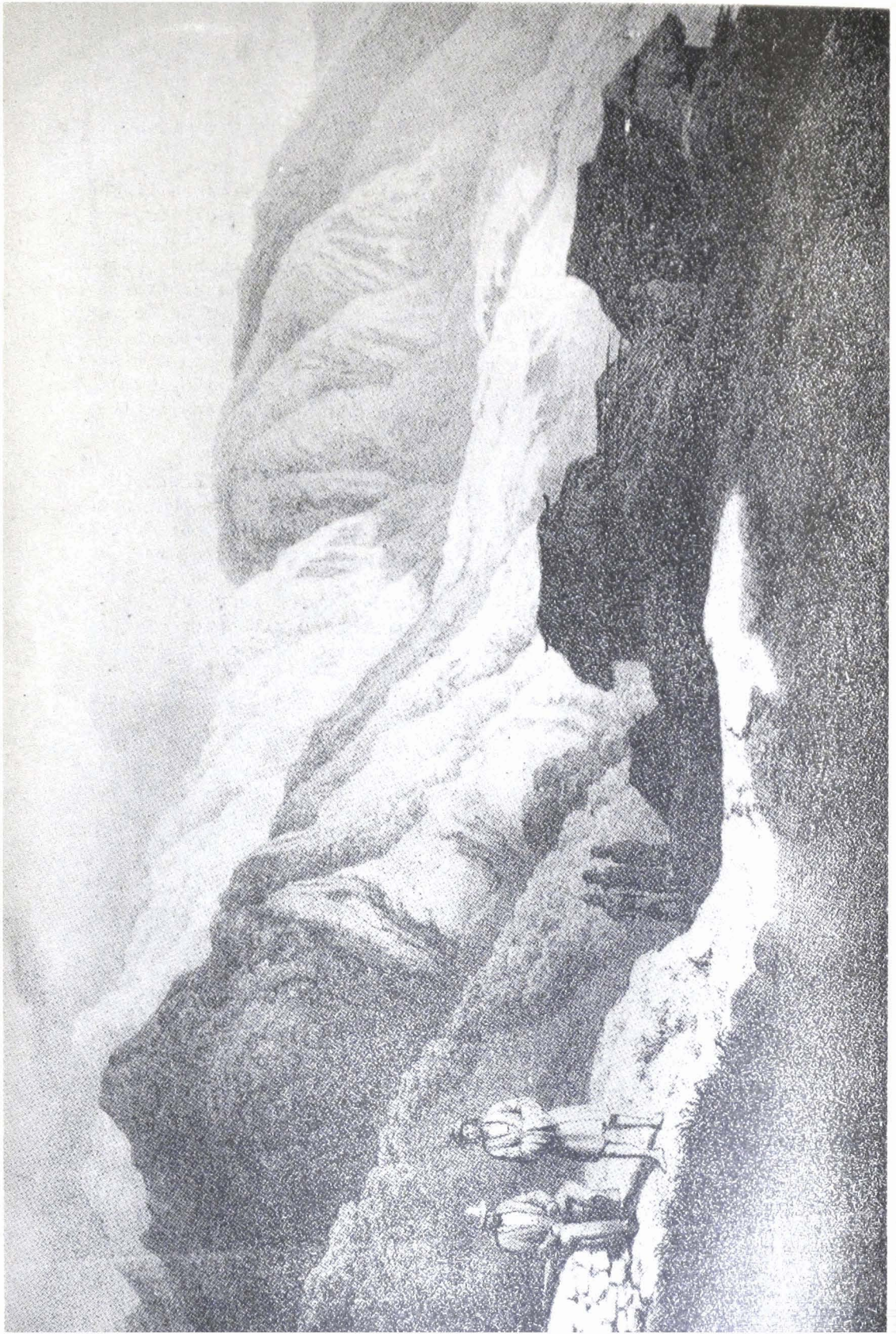
Assistant Resident Williams to Hodgson, 6 March 1841<sup>19</sup>

Hetaunda

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the Raja and Rani of Nepal with





CHISA (SISA) GARHI

their followers left here at daybreak on their return to Kathmandu. I have therefore, in accordance with your instructions, granted the passports to the marriage mission and to Capt. Gaj Kesar and have given them leave to proceed.

I have attached three chapprasis to the party proceeding to Gorakhpur and one with Capt. Gaj Kesar, reporting the departure of the above-mentioned individuals and the number of their followers to the Magistrates of Gorakhpur and Champaran.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Assistant Resident Williams to Hodgson, 7 March 1841<sup>20</sup>

Chisapani

Sir,

Agreeable to your instructions of the 26th February on the Raja and Rani with their followers leaving Hetaunda yesterday morning in progress to Kathmandu, I delivered the passports for the marriage mission and Capt. Gaj Kesar to Guru Prasad Chautaria on the express condition that the Court were to return to Kathmandu. On my arrival here this morning, I found the Raja and Rani preparing for their departure, but the Rani refuses to proceed any further and she has retained in attendance on her Kulraj Pandey, Jagat Bam Pandey, Kul Chand Shahi, and the sons of Ranjung and Karbir Pandey, who are included, I believe, among the recently discarded advisers of the Court. It is said that she plans to go to Makwanpur by the direct route from this place. I have therefore the honor to request your further instructions on this point.

I have, etc.

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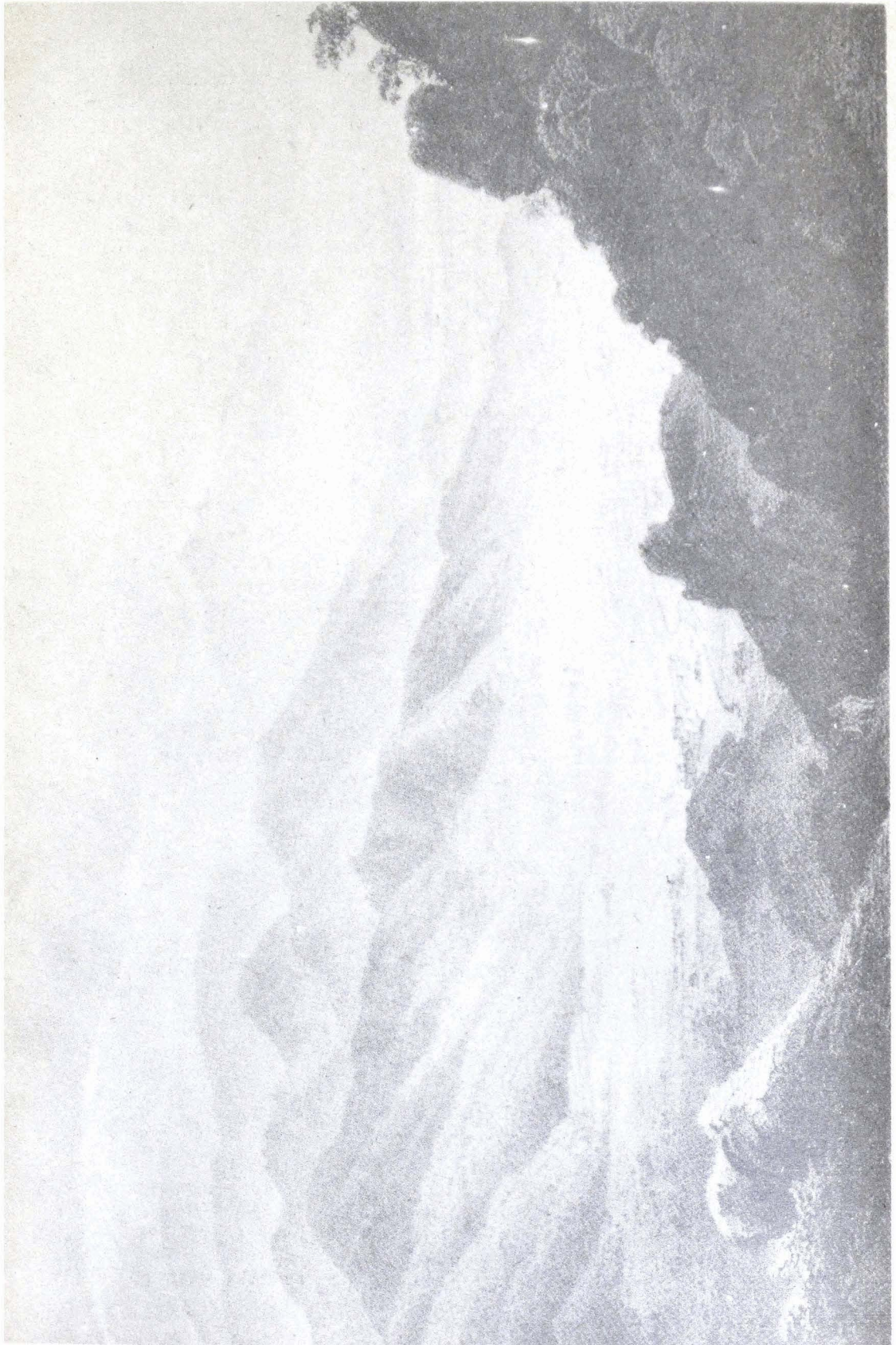
Resident Hodgson to D. Wilkins, Joint Magistrate, Champaran, 8 March 1841<sup>21</sup>  
SECRET

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 2nd intimating your retirement from the frontier, having first left Lt. de Fountain there with some of his troops and with a request that he give you instant notice of the Maharani's approach to the frontier.

Those arrangements you considered sufficient when the Maharaja returned to Kathmandu, and they remain so. Though His Highness had since gone back to Hetaunda, he has once again returned here. The Maharani is still at Chisagarhi and may possibly suddenly appear upon the frontier with no





VIEW OF KATHMANDU VALLEY

disposition to avoid an uproar if, as must be the case, she be refused permission to cross the frontier without a passport.

I suggest, therefore, that for the present you abide by your arrangement and that you will, as already decided, hasten to the frontier upon Lt. de Fountain's summons, prepared firmly, though without resort to actual coercion, to refuse passage. In the last resort, if need be, let the Maharani pass.

My Assistant has been summoned to Kathmandu and will not rejoin the camp unless the Raja returns to it again. Please keep your scouts on the alert. As far as possible I shall warn you of any significant troop movements.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 10 March 1841<sup>22</sup>

*Hodgson makes his strongest appeal yet that the Governor General issue a formal statement to the Raja placing the Fatteh Jung Ministry under the Company's protection. The political impact of this idea was minimal in the Governor General's view of Nepal. He simply brushed it aside. In Nepal, however, it planted the seed that would grow into a vigorous plant of hope in the next few years: the belief that the Company could and, if it wished, would support a faction in Nepal in its search for stable political power.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

In connection with the Maharani's flight to the Tarai I have the honor to submit copies of two letters from my Assistant dated the 6th and 7th of March from Hetaunda and Chisagarhi respectively, together with another addressed by me on the 8th of March to the Joint Magistrate of Champaran, and a fourth of yesterday's date in reply to my Assistant.

2. The Darbar's silent acceptance of the Maharani's proceedings in violation of its personal and public pledges, both verbal and written, has certainly been scandalous. To be specific, the Maharani has refused to return to Kathmandu even after obtaining the passports from my Assistant, and she has summoned to her side at Chisagarhi several of the former advisers of the Darbar who were recently so formally dismissed. She now intends, it is said, to go to Makwanpur with them. However, after attentively considering all the circumstances of the case as now revealed and after referring to the opinions of the Ministers, I have decided to withdraw my Assistant quietly from further attendance on the Maharani or otherwise to take any present official notice of her conduct or of the Maharaja's passive acceptance of it.

3. I have long observed that mere remonstrance with the Maharaja serves no purpose. I could, of course, touch him to the quick by cancelling the marriage party's passport, yet I have decided against doing so at this time. The little good belonging to his character and views constitutes a considerable barrier against the schemes of the Queen and her faction, and the Ministry considers it desirable just now to make a practical appeal to this part of his nature. Not cancelling the passports will place before him in startling contrast the deliberate, forbearing, good faith of my Government and the precipitate, unprovoked faithlessness of his wife and her minions.

4. The complete abandonment of decency and of prudence that have characterized the whole of the Maharani's recent activities, and the Raja's unmanly (and in part fraudulent) acceptance of these are considered to have greatly reduced the influence of both of them--especially of the Maharani--with the soldiery. The Maharani may indeed attempt to go to Makwanpur or elsewhere, attended by her faction, in the hope of dragging the Raja after her, to embarrass or stop the wheels of the administration as a first step in carrying out her plan. It is soundly questioned, however, whether she and the Raja together now possess enough authority and strength to carry through any attempt to remove the present Ministry or to bring about a rupture with the British Government.

5. Short of this, it matters little, comparatively speaking, what the Palace may attempt or achieve before next November. If things continue as they are until then, such attempts can only facilitate the final settlement which must be made at that time. And whatever events take place between now and November will tend to dispose the whole country to welcome such a settlement.

6. The Ministers are already aware that Government has determined to keep Colonel Oliver's Brigade on the frontier. Upon the whole they are confident that the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council should make his meaning absolutely clear to His Highness by answering the Raja's last Kharita in the strongest words of censure and warning that His Lordship can be persuaded to use. If His Lordship does so, the Ministers feel that they can successfully control the fury of the Rani as well as the duplicity of the Raja until after the rains. At that time, regardless of what they do, we can end this situation cheaply and easily.

7. I recommend that such a letter as above described be sent to me for delivery to the Raja without any further delay. I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that in his letter His Lordship should clearly declare to the Raja that all recent occurrences here have combined to place the Present Ministry as well as the Resident in a special manner under His Lordship's direct protection.

8. With regard to the Maharani's present escapade, I am in hopes it will end soon and that she will return (for the present) to Kathmandu. I understand that, as I had suggested, the Premier complained to the Raja against the Kala Pandeys' being allowed to attend openly upon the Rani in her present state of stubborn resistance (for so the Raja admits it

to be) and the Raja has agreed, so that the return of the greater part or all of them from Chisagarhi may be shortly expected.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 16 March 1841<sup>23</sup>

Sir,

... I have the honor ... to report to you the return of the Maharani to Kathmandu. She came in, in a very private manner, on the evening before last, but so far from her spirit having been at all quelled by the shameless, as fruitless, violence of her late proceedings, she is said to have signalized her arrival by a furious tirade against the great body of the Chiefs, and most especially of the Ministers, and by the issue of an order for Ranjung's (the late Premier's) immediate attendance on her at Kathmandu.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government to Resident Hodgson, 22 March 1841<sup>24</sup>

*The Governor General here tries to correct Hodgson's misapprehension about the relationship between the Company and the Ministry in Nepal. In the Governor General's mind it was merely a question of demanding that the old Ministry be dismissed. In Hodgson's practical mind, the problem was more complex. If the old Ministry was dismissed, a new Ministry had to be formed. He strongly believed that without support no alliance could withstand the combined thrust of the Kala Pandey-Senior Queen alliance. As a result, Hodgson never actually understood the Governor General's warnings.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

Your several despatches of the 2nd, 3rd, 3rd, and 7th of March have been received and submitted to the Governor General in Council, and I am directed to state in reply to them that His Lordship in Council can only regard the late extraordinary proceedings of the Rani of Nepal as a last effort to regain for herself and her party that influence in the direction of state affairs and particularly of the foreign policy of the Nepal Government which the accession of the present Ministry threatened to subvert.

2. His Lordship in Council approves generally of the line of conduct which you have thought it right to pursue on this occasion in withholding

your sanction to the Rani's professed intention of travelling to Banaras and His Lordship in Council is happy to learn that your motives for so doing are properly appreciated by the most respectable classes at Kathmandu. The Governor General in Council would however remark that it will not be prudent to raise any nice questions of the degree of support claimable from the British Government to the present friendly Ministry of Nepal. The requisitions of your Government had, you are aware, no reference to the substitution of any particular persons for those obnoxious advisers in whom it was declared that confidence could not be placed, and His Lordship in Council strongly hopes that every object, which we can properly desire, will be effected by the general countenance which you have shown to the Ministry and by the further judicious and firm exercise of your influence to prevent the adoption of bad counsels by the Maharaja.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 29 March 1841<sup>25</sup>

*The Governor General again stresses his intention that no special support or protection be offered to the Fatteh Jung Ministry or any other. His instructions fell on deaf ears.*

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th March and its enclosures relating to the movements of the Maharaja and Rani of Nepal and your subsequent despatch of the 16th March reporting the Rani's return to Nepal.

2. This last announcement would have disposed the Governor General in Council to hope that whatever may have been the intrigues, to prosecute which the Rani's late proceedings were directed, its purpose has been frustrated and that lady must submit to the failure of her plans to have the Ministry entirely under her control. But as it appears that the Rani is indefatigable in her opposition to the present Ministry, and as you have strongly urged in your letter of the 10th March the expediency of the Governor General addressing a letter of the Raja in reply to the last received from His Highness, a letter has been written by His Lordship which you will receive herewith and which you will deliver or not at your own discretion.

3. You will perceive from the tenor of that letter that the Governor General is not prepared to express any intention of taking the present, or any other named, Minister under the protection of the British Government as recommended by you. My letter of the 22nd March will have shown you the general views of His Lordship in Council on that point, and any expectations of the direct protection of the persons or property of individuals at Kathmandu could only, it will be obvious, be illusions, and if held out, might ultimately lead to very embarrassing consequences and expose your Government to merited reproach.

I have,

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Governor General to the Maharaja of Nepal, 29 March 1841<sup>26</sup>

*The origins of this Kharita are interesting. Here is a clear example of the way in which the Resident normally functioned. His reports provided a regular flow of background material. When extraordinary action was required, he proposed the action and the terms in which it should be presented. The Governor General normally acted according to his Resident's suggestions.*

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(after compliments)

When I received Your Highness' letter of the 25th Paush 1897, it gave me the highest satisfaction to reflect that while expressing shame and sorrow for the past misconduct of the Ministers of Your Government, you afford an earnest of your resolution no longer to be guided by their mischievous counsel in their dismissal and in calling to fill their places men of distinguished loyalty and wisdom who appreciate the blessings of peace, and desire the permanence of harmony and friendship between this Government and the State of Nepal.

But while thus disposed to take for granted the sincerity of Your Highness' expressions, my experience of the past led me to pause a while before I should formally accept the apology offered for past offenses of Nepal against my Government and could feel small confidence of the future steadiness of its chief in adhering to the course which he had promised me to pursue. And I now feel the prudence of having done so, for since the receipt of that letter it appears from the accounts which I have received from the Resident, Mr. Hodgson, that Your Highness has been influenced by some extraordinary motives to give in to projects of the most unbecoming nature for crossing your own frontier and entering the British territory without invitation or permission and without those preparations for your reception, in the absence of which no sovereign prince could with propriety enter the territories of another great and powerful Government. Of the motive which has led to these movements, I know no more than may be inferred from the fact that the late obnoxious advisers whom Your Highness in your letter justly describe as the fomenters of difference between the two states were in attendance on the Court and taking a part, notwithstanding the express declarations and engagements of Your Highness, in all its proceedings.

Your Highness is responsible to foreign states for the acts of your administration, by whatever counsellors directed, and I, on my part, would in no manner disregard the independence which properly belongs to the character and position of a sovereign prince, but under the circumstances to which I have referred, it is at once my duty and the dictate of real friendship, that I should plainly state to you that I cannot receive your tender of contrition and promises of amendment as in the least degree satisfactory or sufficient--that I must further inform you that the acts and intentions of Your Highness continue to be viewed by the British



Government with extreme displeasure and distrust, and that the measures of military precaution which I have been compelled to adopt will be persevered in, and increased as exigencies may require, until I see that Your Highness gives proof of the sincerity of your professions by a steady and consistent course of open and friendly conduct. I have only to repeat my earnest warning to Your Highness against any further resort to insincerity and evasion in your dealings with a powerful government which is willing to be at peace with you. A policy of that nature can only have for its end the most ruinous consequences to the welfare of Your Highness and your family.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 7 April 1841<sup>27</sup>

*Hodgson's letter is a masterpiece of disagreeing while professing to agree wholeheartedly. He appears to accept and agree with the Governor General's directives, but goes on to expose his reasons for urging a change in those directives. It is worth noting that he continues to stress his own fear of violence. The explosive tensions building up among the Nepali Bharadars are becoming painfully apparent. This is the prelude to the Kot Massacre.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of the 24th and 29th of March setting aside the possibility of granting protection to the present friendly Ministry, noting that the Darbar itself appointed those Ministers, and remarking that such protection would be an illusion at best because of the obvious physical impediments to offering real protection. In view of this, according to your letter, the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council has decided against mentioning this topic in His Lordship's enclosed Kharita to the Maharaja.

2. I assure the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that no one can be more reluctant than myself to introduce unnecessary topics into practical politics at any time and most especially when temporization is the primary object and aim. So convinced am I of this opinion that before your last despatch arrived, I had decided not to give the Kharita to the Maharaja if it mentioned the question of protection. At the time I wrote my last despatch I was under extraordinary pressure. At that time, though I had given thought to those objections which have seemed conclusive to the wisdom of Government, it appeared to me on the whole better that the Governor General risk (I use the word advisedly) denouncing those schemes of violence than so vehemently put forward (and intended against me as much as against the Ministry) rather than permit violence to actually occur with all its long train of irremediable evils.

3. If the Governor General will be pleased to note the general tenor of my despatches since the mutiny of last June, I think there can be

little doubt of the existence of a yet unrelinquished hope, plan, or purpose on the part of the Palace faction to crush by some device of sheer violence the advocates of peace and good faith, with small discrimination of persons as between myself and the Native Chiefs of Nepal. Nor can there be any doubt that, in the recent open harangues of the Maharani to the soldiery and in the uninvestigated placards, the Darbar has committed overt acts entitling us to challenge its conduct at our pleasure.

4. How long it may be possible and therefore expedient to ignore (or pretend to ignore) the Darbar's proceedings is, I admit, a separate consideration. I decided to refer this to Government only when it seemed that such pretended ignorance was no longer possible. Since then the pressure has been relaxed, and indeed it is possible that when I wrote I overestimated it. Consequently, even had the Kharita been sent to me in the terms I had suggested, I would certainly have withheld it and requested another Kharita such as the one that has actually been sent.

5. Still, the danger has not passed away forever. Violence may reappear at any moment. On the next occasion it may well be directed against me rather than the Ministry. In such an event I should expect their protection, and in the same way, in certain circumstances and within certain limits, I feel they should be entitled to mine. I am anxious not to go a single inch out of my way in speaking to this point, but emergencies may suddenly arise which I ought to anticipate and submit to Government for confirmation or rejection. Therefore I would like to learn beforehand the course the Governor General thinks I should follow, supposing the Darbar would not be content with the resignation of the present Premier and his colleagues, but also aim at their lives and actually imprison them preliminary to further oppression.

6. If such were to happen, it seems to me that by firm, temperate remonstrance I might recover their personal freedom and protect their lives. I could stress their guiltlessness, their voluntary resignation (which I must be prepared to sanction whenever they see fit to make it), the forbearance they had shown when in power to their political adversaries, and, lastly, the well known sentiments of my Government as a 'protector', particularly of persons specially commended to it by the Maharaja himself. I also believe that if I were not to exert myself strenuously in their favour at least to that extent (even at some possible risk) I should offend the moral sense even of this land. I must then expect to lose completely all those by whose aid, sentiment, and judgement I could ensure to my Government in due season the speedy and cheap punishment of this impracticable state.

7. The failure of the British Government to interfere morally for the protection of the life of the late Prime Minister General Bhim Sen has been often remarked upon at this place with surprise and regret. The present Premier and his brother (the chief objects of wrath) have indeed made liberal allowances for me in the name of political expediency. However, we must expect that they will try to determine how far I will support

them, in order that they may thereby determine what support to give me in the day of peril.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 14 April 1841<sup>28</sup>

*Hodgson's despatch is interesting for the insight into his methods that it provides. Forbidden to state that the Ministry is under the Company's protection, he uses the occasion of the presentation of the Governor General's Kharita to the King to stress the rightness of the Ministry's action and the danger into which the Raja is leading Nepal. Without saying a word about support, he gives the ultimate in support.*

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Sir,

I have already had the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 29th March forwarding to me a Kharita to the address of the Maharaja, and to furnish an explanation relative to the part of the despatch which respected the personal condition of the Ministers. Your despatch reached me on the 7th--or a week ago, but anxious to make no single step without apparently adequate necessity, I have held back the enclosed Kharita so long, on the faint hope that its delivery might possibly be dispensed with.

2. In the last forty-eight hours, however, I have come to know of important developments. The Maharaja was seditiously propagating the notion that the British Government is again motivated by hostility. The Maharani had resumed her turbulent pretense of going to Banaras. The Raj Guru was busy with some device either for evading his promise of retirement or accusing me of intending to violate the safe conduct passport I had given him. I therefore reluctantly came to the determination of delivering to the Maharaja the Governor General's stern, though candid and kindly meant, admonition and warning.

3. Having decided on the delivery of this document, it seemed to me important that its contents should be fully and faithfully made known, not only to the Maharaja but to several of those distinguished Chiefs (including of course the Ministers) who in January last came forward to declare and record their sense of the value of peace and good faith. I accordingly, without naming the express object of my visit, said, when asking a private audience, that as I had matters of moment to communicate I hoped His Highness would be pleased to receive me attended by all his official advisers. I had also communicated confidentially with the Premier. He agreed with my plan and I thereby secured the attendance of all the Ministers and 5 other influential chiefs who held similar views.

I took the precaution too of having prepared beforehand a translation of the Governor General's letter into the ordinary local speech, and, having thus provided that His Lordship's sentiments should neither be concealed nor misstated, I proceeded to the Darbar yesterday evening, attended by my Assistant and Dr. Christie.

4. No sooner were the Company seated than the Maharaja asked me the object of my visit. I then declared I had come to deliver a Kharita of so much importance that I must request His Highness' best attention and that of his Chiefs to its contents. The letter was then read and carefully explained, paragraph by paragraph. The Chiefs were called upon to observe that their pledges of January were not considered to have been redeemed. In addition, the Maharaja, for whom this oblique answer was intended, was earnestly requested to reflect that if he continued to evade the Governor General's demands he would come into conflict with the mightiest power in Asia. Such a course, was pointless since that power was still tendering to him the hand of friendship notwithstanding all his past transgressions.

5. The Maharaja appeared at times considerably agitated--in part by the evident impression made upon so many of his Chiefs--from whom it is his wish to hide his folly and its probable consequences to the kingdom, but also in part by shame and fear on his own account, as the kindly intention or the deliberate denunciation of His Lordship's letter presented themselves to his mind. His Lordship's expression that he sought nothing but good faith and friendship from Nepal made a marked impression both on the Raja and on his Chiefs. When that expression was immediately followed by the declaration of the letter that if the Raja did not desist from the evasive violation of all engagements, His Highness' own ruin and that of His family must be the consequence, the looks of more than one Chief seemed to reproach the Raja as plainly as the Raja's own face manifested both apprehension and shame.

6. Turning to the extraordinary conduct of the Raj Guru, I asked to know its meaning and purpose, asked His Highness how much longer he meant to sanction such conduct and said that if His Highness intended in the future to use my passports, it was absolutely necessary that he satisfy me in this instance, that these passports would not be trifled with--I did not, I said, understand exactly what the Raj Guru hoped to achieve by crossing the frontier secretly or his senseless return but I mentioned the circumstances, so far as known to me, lest the Raj Guru should take advantage of the Raja's lack of information to make comments hostile to me.

7. I may add, in regard to my visit, when I first arrived at the Palace no one came to meet me. I have since learned that the Raja and Ministers were detained in the inner apartments by the Maharani, who had suddenly and loudly declared that she would go to Banaras and that I should be sent for to hear from her own mouth her will and pleasure to that effect. How Her Highness was quieted, I do not yet know, but I did not see her.

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I have, etc.

Government to Resident Hodgson, 26 April 1841<sup>29</sup>

*Hodgson had asked the Governor General to take a moral stand, and the Governor General here takes the position that Hodgson has practically forced on him. The compromise spelled out in this letter is adequate for Hodgson's purpose, but it in no way helps him solve the problem of his own personal involvement in Nepalese politics. As long as Lord Auckland remained Governor General, this was not too serious. Auckland trusted him. Lord Ellenborough, however, Auckland's successor, would be far more imperious and less open to opposition, however well founded, from his Resident in Nepal.*

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Sir,

On the point submitted in your despatch of the 7th April for the consideration and orders of the Government of India, the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council desires me to state that in the contingency contemplated by you, namely, in the event of the present Ministry being ejected from office by the opposition or violent party and the chief members of it being subjected to indignity and danger of life such as occurred on the downfall of the late General Bhim Sen or of their being viciously menaced with such treatment you will certainly be called upon to use the language of earnest exhortation or of firm but temperate remonstrance according as the circumstances supposed may dictate either tone in your address to the Raja.

2. You may appeal to the feelings of the Darbar on the ground of the injury which its national reputation has already suffered from the universally lamented fate of the late Bhim Sen and you may urge on the part of your own Government that the present Ministry having evinced a disposition favourable to the maintenance of peace and friendship with us, the Governor General in Council must regard any deliberate infliction of punishment on them as connected with their political feelings towards us and as proof that His Lordship's late warnings have been disregarded. The effect of such language under the circumstances supposed would probably be as great as any threat that you could hold out, and it would not be proper or expedient that you should hazard the risk of such a collision with the Government as should bring about an actual disruption of the British relations with Nepal upon a ground of this kind, on which we have not a clear right of interference--or in any case, without express instructions from the Governor General in Council--but you need not conceal that the want of confidence in the Raja's intention and Councils, which has been avowed by the Government of India while the former hostile ministry were in power, must be continued and increased by any course of conduct which shows a spirit of violent persecution against men who have been supporters of the British alliance and anxious to maintain peace between the two States.

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The Maharaja of Nepal to the Governor General, May 1841<sup>30</sup>

*The Raja's Kharita to the Governor General seems so reasonable an explanation that it is difficult to believe that he is writing about the same series of events as Hodgson has been describing. There is ample evidence here of the judgement later Residents would make. The Raja was highly competent as a statesman. It was his personal life that troubled him and made him seem erratic.*

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TRANSLATION

(after compliments)

Your letter of March reached me on the 8th Baishakh through the Resident Mr. Hodgson. The news of your good health contained therein gave me great pleasure. Whatever you have therein written in the way of warning and advice from friendly motives I have fully apprehended--as, for example, your disapprobation of my apparent intention to cross the frontier without permission or preparation, and also of my having collected again about me the mischievous counsellors of whose dismissal I had written to you.

My friend, allow me to explain as follows. Since the death, 4 years back, of my youngest son from change of medicine, my elder wife (his mother) has entertained the idea that she would get rid of her grief by going to bathe in the Holy Ganga at Banaras,<sup>31</sup> and she accordingly, this season, requested passports from the Resident. On account of the approach of the Malaria, however, and of the disapproval of the journey by my Ministers, the passports could not be had, and we therefore returned to Kathmandu. Be assured that should we hereafter entertain any such purpose and it be approved by the State Councillors, the Resident shall be first duly applied to, and no steps taken until your leave has been formally asked and obtained.

With regard to my late Councillors, the matter stands thus: all their important employments were taken from them at the time you were apprised of their dismissal from office, but some inconsiderable offices still remained in their hands and on account of these they were in attendance on me in my recent journey. These trivial offices also have now been taken from them so that they can have no further pretext for approaching me; and I now beg of you to rest assured that none of those dismissed and mischievous councillors shall ever again obtain any weighty employment, nor shall be allowed to influence the measures of the Darbar. You need not have the least apprehension that the long standing friendship between the two States shall be violated by their return to office or to influence.

The engagement delivered to the Resident last year (Note: Hindu Calendar. Alludes to engagement made in January at Nuwakot. B.H.H.)

shall certainly remain valid and effective. Let me hear continually of your health.

(True translation)

B.H. Hodgson, Resident

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 1 August 1841<sup>32</sup>

*The anti-Residency placards Hodgson mentions in his despatches have often been cited but rarely quoted. This sample explains what he meant. The tone used throughout the placard would seem to support Hodgson's argument that violence was in the air. It is surprising to note his suggestion at the very end of his letter that it may be time for the Governor General to adopt a more friendly attitude towards Nepal.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to submit herewith a translation of another of those abominable placards. As Government is aware, the Rani and her faction have for some months past used these placards to direct the blind prejudices of the Nepalese soldiery against myself and the present Ministry because they have openly advocated peace and justice and good faith at home and abroad.

This placard was affixed near a parade ground on a gate at one of the entrances into the City a few days back. I received my transcript of it, confidentially, from the Premier on the 24th July. The Minister, in communicating it, expressed his conviction that it was still less worthy of any serious attention on my part than those which had gone before it. Whatever occasional anxiety the Rani's violence had caused him and his colleagues during the past 4 months--as I was well aware--neither he nor they had any immediate fear of her violence or that of her satellites. Some of the meaner sort had probably resorted to this placard as a last futile act of malice. Through his messenger, who brought me the placard, the Minister added that he and his associates regarded the reign of terror as being terminated, for the present season at least, and that they were congratulating themselves upon the happy result of my advice to them. He said threats had ceased to be used as a means of driving them from the administration. Not only this, but the Rani as well as the Raja was now pressing them to resume their offices for the ensuing year,<sup>33</sup> whilst the Kala Pandeys, lately so insolent and impracticable, were not only willing but anxious to be associated with their Ministry. The Premier said he did not understand fully this change in the tone and temper of the Darbar, which he said was likewise extended to the British Government. But he attributed the change, so far as it was real, partly to the Rani's having fallen ill<sup>34</sup> and partly to an impression which he confessed he had been

at no pains to remove, that the Governor General could no longer be safely trifled with. The Chautaria's messenger observed to me in conclusion that his master would probably seek an interview with me in a few days, when he had somewhat further tested the views of the opposite party to some degree of coalition. If the opposition lowered its tone of arrogance a little more, the messenger thought his Master might favour some such form of coalition with them. I returned a suitable answer of thanks merely for this communication. Since then I have, at the Premier's suggestion, personally paid my respects to the sick Rani. She really seems to be somewhat alarmed, though without real cause, and to be determined to ease her conscience for her past cruelties or to reconcile all domestic disputes. Her ultimate reasons are not yet known, but she may well share the common fear that Colonel Oliver's force will soon be increased and set in motion against Nepal. Of the probability, or of the consequences, of the coalition talked of between Pandey's, and Thapas, and between Gora Pandey's and Kala Pandey's, I cannot yet form a distinct judgement. It does seem certain that the earlier arrogances and furious spirit of the Queen and her faction is giving way to a milder view; that the risks of the current season are passed; and that the present Ministry will be enabled to resume their functions before long under more favourable circumstances, with little or no assistance from me. In these circumstances, I should like to know if Government would now be inclined to grant amnesty and to forget the past.

I have, etc.

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Translation of a paper posted up on the Tundikhel Parade 22nd July 1841

Rangnath Pandit,<sup>1</sup> Dalbhanjan Pandey,<sup>2</sup> Sing Bir Pandey,<sup>3</sup> Fattah Jung Shah,<sup>4</sup> Guru Prasad Shah,<sup>5</sup> Ranjore Thapa,<sup>6</sup> Rangambir Pandey,<sup>7</sup> Bir Kishore Pandey,<sup>8</sup> Dal Kesar Pandey,<sup>9</sup> Prasad Singh Basnyat,<sup>10</sup> Bal Narsingh Kunwar,<sup>11</sup> Kazi Kalu Shahi,<sup>12</sup> Badri Bam Shahi,<sup>13</sup> Kirti Bir Karki,<sup>14</sup> Captain Gagan Singh,<sup>15</sup> Kazi Abhiman Rana,<sup>16</sup> Dalmardan Thapa,<sup>17</sup> in all 17 persons have agreed to surrender the Tarai to the Feringhis and presently to pay them 9 lakhs of rupees with other smaller gratuities, on condition that the Feringhis confirm them in their power for 5 years and to that end prevent the Raja and Rani from coming together, or Ranjung Pandey<sup>18</sup> from approaching either of them. All nominations to office in the past year were made at the will of the Feringhis (Resident) who were then assured of the absolute control of the Kingdom in all the reign of the present Raja.

Those who did so last year to obtain office are now humbling themselves to the Feringhis again to obtain office for the coming year. They have enlisted Jyapus,<sup>19</sup> Bhotias,<sup>20</sup> Par Gharties,<sup>21</sup> in the Kampu, in order that such vile wretches may be the instruments of their will. The traitors who act thus must be speedily decapitated, or the Kingdom is lost, for by 22 enchantment and spells they have gained over and subdued the Raja. We will again sack the house of Rangnath Pandit. If anyone presume to destroy or remove this paper before the Raja and Maharani have seen it, may



Pashupati, Guhyeswari, Bhat Bhateni, the Bhim Sen of Dolakha, the Devi of Nuwakot, Manakamana and Kala Bhairav<sup>23</sup> make him a leper and may the sin of killing 7 cows and 7 Brahmans be his. Let this arzi be taken directly to the Raja and senior Rani and let the Raja and Rani be assured that if they destroy not the 17 traitors named above without delay, all is lost, for was not Rangnath's wife lately sent to the Maharani to practice with spells on her affections and health,<sup>24</sup> so that they (the present Ministers) might then obtain office for the coming year. We 8,000 men of the Kampu (or Cantonment) desire that Ranjung Pandey should be Premier, and the Kingdom in general desires the same thing. Let this be, and the rascally Feringhi (Resident) will be glad to be off of his own accord. Let your Highnesses (Raja and Rani) bestir yourselves. Deep frauds are designed. Your treasures are going to the English. Let Rangnath Pandit<sup>25</sup> be shaved and expatriated and let all the rest (of the Ministers) be decapitated. The kingdom is Your Highnesses'. What we (the soldiery) have seen and heard and know to be true, we have spoken. To consider its tenor is your business and duty. Whatever thereafter you may command us to do, we are prepared to accomplish for you. Be not afraid or perplexed. When the 17 traitors we have denounced are disposed of, you will be yourself again. Be bold and rely on us, but beware of delay.

(True translation)

B.H. Hodgson

1. One of the Ministers
2. One of the Ministers
3. Governor of Palpa and brother of Dalbhanjan Pandey
4. Premier
5. One of the Ministers, brother of Fatted Jung
6. Ally of present Ministers and head of one branch of Thapas, Amar Singh's son
- 7,8,9. Three brothers forming a branch of the Gora Pandey family, allies of the present Ministry
10. Head of Basnyats, friend of the late Bhim Sen and of present Ministry
11. Head of the Kunwars, brother-in-law of General Mathabar Singh
12. One of the Ministers
13. Office holder and ally of the present Ministry and relation of Premier
- 14 and 15. Allies of present Ministry and in confidential employ of the palace.

16. Head of Ranas and in chief charge of the army and of the Causi
17. Out of employ but a dependent of the Premier--in a word, the Ministry and their friends
18. Former Premier, head of Kala Pandey faction
- 19,20,21. Castes excluded from military employ and the giving service to them is therefore (falsely) imputed as a fault to the Ministry
22. 'We' is here proved to be the soldiery who did the act in question last June
23. These 7 are the most popular deities of Nepal
24. The Rani is unwell. Rangnath's wife lately visited her and so this vile slander is got up as if the visit and sickness were cause and effect
25. The ablest perhaps of the Ministers and next in consideration to the Premier and brother to 'Eugenius' (Pandit Raj Krishna Ram)--being a Brahmin he could not forfeit his life and is therefore to be shaved and expelled when his colleagues are murdered

B.H.H.

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Government to the Commander-in-Chief (British), 2 October 1841<sup>35</sup>

*This excerpt from the Governor General's briefing of the British Commander-in-Chief on the Company's military plans for the winter campaign season is the only open mention found in the Governor General's letters of the seriousness of His thoughts about intervening militarily in Nepal. Against the background of Hodgson's frequent comments, this possibility of military intervention should not be surprising. However, the secrecy with which the Governor General made his plans in this regard stands out in sharp contrast to the much talked-of movement of troops to the Nepal border under the command of Colonel Oliver.*

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Sir,

.....

Your Excellency is apprised that from the manner in which the Nepal Darbar has yielded to our recent demands and from the course of events on our North Western Frontier, it is no longer necessary to make preparations for a campaign against the Nepal State in the ensuing season. The measures of precaution which will be necessary on the frontier will be referred to in a subsequent part of this letter.....

7. While measures such as are above sketched are in progress in our frontier provinces to the North West, it will be proper at the same time to maintain a respectable force, with a moderate proportion of Artillery and Cavalry, along the Nepal frontier, so as to afford protection from Kumaon to Darjeeling. And Your Excellency will keep this point in view, in pursuing the scheme of reliefs above requested. It may even be expedient, upon political grounds, that a camp should be formed for a portion of the cold season at some point in the Saran or Tirhut districts, but this is a subject which may be reserved for future consideration. The two European regiments expected from Madras and Moulmein cannot yet for some time reach the stations on the Ganges.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 10 October 1841<sup>36</sup>

*Hodgson reports the death of the Senior Queen and the end of an era. The period that was to follow would prove no less turbulent. There was a deep irony in the circumstances following the Queen's death. The British force on the frontier learned of her sickness and death at almost the same time. Some consequently speculated that she had been poisoned. This rumour was picked up and published in Calcutta newspapers, to the dismay of King Rajendra. Foolishly, members of the Kala Pandey party tried to use this rumour as part of their campaign. Ultimately King Rajendra came to believe that they were the ones who had in fact instigated the rumour campaign and lashed out at them in what was to prove the first blow in a series of slashing attacks that destroyed the Kala Pandey party as a serious contender for political power in Nepal.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that the Maharani of Nepal--that remarkable woman whose name has been so frequently before Government in connection with the politics of this State--died suddenly on the 6th of October, in consequence, it is said of the effects upon a weakened frame of a furious discussion with the Maharaja and others respecting public affairs which took place on the 20th September.

2. Doubtless Her Highness did herself much injury and precipitated her decease by this discussion, but the seeds had been sown and allowed to gather strength in her constitution by prior numerous extravagances of like kind--Nor, though her sudden death was certainly unlooked for by herself and others, could they or she, I suspect, have been unaware, even before September 20th, that she was not far from death. I myself now have no doubt that the Raja's extraordinary behaviour towards me about that time was by her command in distinct anticipation of the worst.

3. For nearly a week, just then, I could not move outside the Residency compound without the Maharaja taking possession of me. Against

all custom and even regard to his own dignity, he was daily seen to haunt the vicinity of the Residency in order to make sure of an interview.

4. That the Raja came repeatedly in this way for no other purpose than that of wheedling, or threatening, or deluding me, out of my steadfast adherence to the promised guarantee of the Darbar's future conduct and policy (the immediate and proper completion of the Pajani) at the express command of his imperious Queen, I am now as sure as I am of Her Highness' consciousness that she was thus making through her husband a last effort in favour of her party, soon to be deprived of her support.

5. The Raja's unusual hesitation of manner and language at these interviews yet further convinces me that this was the case--Though accustomed to hesitation in His Highness, I could not then understand the extraordinary degree of it. Since I had learned however from sure sources that His Highness himself was at that very time secretly undermining the very Ministers whom he publicly supported, I was glad to use these meetings for my own purposes. Surprisingly, the Maharaja seemed to expect to accomplish his ends, in good part, by practising upon my habitual personal deference towards him (Note: Twice he came attended by 7000 troops in arms and numbers of Bharadars on horseback. BHH).

6. He failed, as has already been reported, but certainly the effort was of that forced and sustained kind that characterized the imperious, indomitable will of Her late Highness the Maharani. Her death must, I presume, tend to give value and effect to those engagements in support of peace and good faith, which I have so long laboured to complete with this Darbar, I would still request the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council to consider this work as incomplete until we see positive results.

7. Nothing can be done during the period of greater mourning for Her Highness, but that will be terminated on the 20th October. The lesser mourning period which follows will be no impediment to business, so that very possibly before the end of the month I shall be able to report more accurately on these changes which are at present merely speculation.

I have, etc.

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The Maharaja of Nepal to the Governor General, November 1841<sup>37</sup>

TRANSLATION

(after compliments)

I have for some time past been overwhelmed with grief on account of the death of the Maharani. This sad event was caused by my having gone--accompanied by the Maharani and her family--to the jungly district of Hetaunda, where Her Highness caught fever and which daily increased--

notwithstanding the utmost care and exertions of the principal Hakims and large offerings to the Gods--till the 16th of Assun when Her Highness was taken to Pasupatinath and there died after the customary ceremonies had been performed.

Both myself and people feel the sad blow severely, from which indeed I can never wholly recover, but I trust--under the blessing of God--to be able to have patience to bear up against my bereavement and I have performed the funeral obsequies.

Although Mr. Hodgson the Resident has no doubt written to Your Lordship concerning these things, I have thought it right to do so myself, on account of the friendship existing between the two Governments and in order to increase it.

(True translation)

Christie, Officiating Assistant Resident

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## Appendix to Chapter Three

## Recovery in Afghanistan

To avenge the British disaster in Kabul in the winter of 1841-42, General George Pollock forced the Khyber pass and in April 1842 relieved Jalalabad. In September he reoccupied Kabul, where he was joined by General Nott from Kandahar, who had recaptured and dismantled Ghazni. The British prisoners were recovered from Bamiyan, where the Afghans had lodged them, and the army evacuated Afghanistan in December 1842 after destroying the citadel and the central bazaar of Kabul. Dost Mohammad was permitted to return to his country and assumed the government, with the title of Amir.

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## Footnotes to Chapter Three

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 8 March 1841, No. 87; heavily edited.
2. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 124; slightly edited.
3. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 124; slightly edited.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 124; slightly edited.
5. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 124; slightly edited.
6. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 121; slightly edited.
7. See Foreign Secret Consultation 29 March 1841, No. 39, annotation on the reverse, letter dated 8 March 1841.
8. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 121; slightly edited.
9. Fatal? This is a typical example of Hodgson's flamboyance, especially evident in his analyses and argumentation.
10. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 124; slightly edited.
11. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 124; slightly edited.
12. Here we see Hodgson at his authoritarian best. All of these arguments have been put together to suit his purpose and to bolster his weak position; if the Queen tries to cross the frontier he cannot stop her, nor would the Governor General approve of an effort to stop her by force.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 124; heavily edited.
14. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 122; heavily edited.
15. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 125; slightly edited.
16. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 125; not edited.
17. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 125; slightly edited.
18. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 125; slightly edited.
19. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 March 1841, No. 37; slightly edited.
20. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 March 1841, No. 38; slightly edited.
21. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 March 1841, No. 39; heavily edited.

22. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 March 1841, No. 36, heavily edited.
23. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 March 1841, No. 41; excerpt, not edited.
24. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1841, No. 126; not edited.
25. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 March 1841, No. 44; not edited.
26. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 March 1841, No. 44; not edited.
27. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 April 1841, No. 74; heavily edited.
28. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 April 1841, No. 97; heavily edited.
29. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 April 1841, No. 75; not edited.
30. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 May 1841, No. 103; not edited.
31. In the light of what was said later of those who administered to the Senior Queen during her last illness and the Senior Queen's sense of guilt mentioned here, it has been reasonably argued that though the physicians who attended on her son prescribed certain medicines and prepared them, Samrajya Laxmi herself administered the medicines to the boy.
32. Foreign Secret Consultation 16 August 1841, No. 115; heavily edited. The text of the placard has been edited for names only.
33. The Pajani required all officers' tenure of office to be cancelled and each individual re-appointed, dismissed, promoted, or set-aside for later appointment. From the text it is apparent that the Pajani of the Ministry was in process and that the Ministers were reluctant to take up the appointments they were offered because of the terms under which they were to be appointed.
34. The Senior Queen had apparently contracted aul (virulent malaria) while she was in the Tarai. It was to prevent this that travel through the Tarai had been discouraged.
35. Foreign Secret Consultation 5 October 1841, No. 81; excerpt, not edited.
36. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 October 1841, No. 94; heavily edited.
37. Foreign Secret Consultation 6 December 1841, No. 105; unedited.

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## Brian Hodgson's Book

Samrajya Laxmi and the Pandey family controlled the administration of Nepal throughout most of 1840, during which time Hodgson struck up an alliance of convenience with Fatted Jung Shah. In November 1840, the Governor General despaired of getting any cooperation from the Pandeys and insisted that they be removed from office. Hodgson and Fatted Jung were then able to persuade King Rajendra Bikram to appoint Fatted Jung his Prime Minister. Getting the King to transfer real power to Fatted Jung, however, proved more difficult. The King did not actually trust Fatted Jung and his ally, and Fatted Jung himself seems to have been a well-intentioned but hesitant candidate for power. Hodgson proceeded to prop up his friend and ally, and in doing so went far beyond the Governor General's instructions and well beyond his wishes. With Hodgson's support, Fatted Jung learned to handle the day-to-day problems, but in times of crisis he proved totally incompetent. Thus Hodgson was pulled ever more deeply into Nepalese affairs in support of his ally, to the great weakening of his relations with other members of the Kathmandu Darbar. As Lord Ellenborough would later say, to become an ally of one party in the Darbar was automatically to become the opponent of all the others.

King Rajendra Bikram did not trust Hodgson. Combined with the deep suspicion of British long-range views in Nepal which he had learned from his tutor in political affairs, Bhim Sen Thapa, there was also the fact of Hodgson's threat. In December 1840 Hodgson had none too subtly threatened to repossess the Nepal Tarai, without which Nepal's already slim revenues would be slashed to almost nothing. Hodgson had used that threat to force the King to oust the Pandeys from power, and he used that threat to interfere directly in the King's conduct of Darbar affairs. Hodgson had also used his powers to grant or withhold visas to dictate the actions of the King and his Queen and even to interfere in the marriage arrangements of his sons. That the King respected Hodgson as a knowing and clever opponent (and even at times an ally) is clear. Equally clear is his distrust of the man.

King Rajendra Bikram was not a strong, forceful personality. The one time he had been forced into open confrontation (during the second trial of Bhim Sen Thapa, in 1839), his ego had been bruised, and those around him had circumvented his will to bring about the death and disgrace of his old mentor. From that time he adopted tactics with which he felt more comfortable. He withheld powers from his Prime Ministers and used Queen Samrajya Laxmi to mediate power to them. Hidden behind this screen he could manipulate and neutralize the various parties in the Darbar while he himself exercised total control of Nepal's relations with China and India. After Samrajya Laxmi's death, King Rajendra pressed his son into a similar role. He called Surendra Bikram 'Maharajadhiraj' (a title reserved for the King alone), urged others to do the same, tried to cajole the Resident into treating Surendra as the King's equal, and allowed the

boy almost unlimited freedom to do as he pleased. Fattah Jung found he could not cope with this situation and was driven into an even more desperate reliance on Hodgson. But of what value this, if it could not touch the King's own freedom of action or his prerogatives! In the meanwhile the whole of the Darbar was forced to concentrate on the problem of dealing with the wilful and at times malicious young prince who was totally thrown off balance by his newly discovered prestige and power.

This political impasse was shattered by the explosive denouement of the Casinath case (discussed in detail below). The new Governor General, Lord Ellenborough, gave emphatically clear instructions to Hodgson to withdraw his support from all palace factions, maintain strict neutrality in regard to Nepal's domestic politics, and confine his official relations to the King. Lord Ellenborough made it clear that he recognized the King and the King alone as the official power in Nepal. He also made it clear, though it did not become public for some eighteen months, that Hodgson was to be removed from Nepal. Hodgson obeyed implicitly, in the hope that he might win a reprieve from dismissal. And Fattah Jung was left floundering, unsupported and alone.

At this point King Rajendra Bikram saw his own strategy become a liability. On the one hand he need no longer fear Hodgson, but on the other he found that his son had succeeded admirably in alienating everyone of significance in Kathmandu, and the dissatisfaction with his own handling of his son had become general. Nor did the boy have any intention of changing his ways. To press the lad too hard would create a tool that Fattah Jung or any other party could use against him. To leave him uncontrolled was to court popular action against his own position. And so a year passed with both sides trying to find a way out of this uneasy situation. Fattah Jung tried hopelessly to regain the lost support of the Resident, while the King tried to exercise gentle control of his son. Both failed, and the scene was set for Fattah Jung's final move and the King's countermove.

By the end of 1843 popular discontent had reached such a pitch that it was evident to all observers that the King's position was in jeopardy. At that moment Fattah Jung joined the popular movement and added the strength of his official position as Prime Minister to the general clamour for redress against the extravagances of the Crown Prince. He accepted, approved, and became the mediator of the popular demand that the Junior Queen, Rajya Laxmi Devi, be brought into the Darbar with the official authority to control not only the Crown Prince but the day-to-day administration as well. The King was obliged to accept. Laxmi Devi was recalled and given a Lal Mohar specifying the powers she was to exercise--a good deal less than the people had demanded but enough to prevent further outcry.

The King had one more card left to play. In India Mathabar Singh Thapa had been waiting for a favourable opportunity to return to Nepal. Bhim Sen Thapa's nephew, Mathabar Singh was a strong personality and had been a popular leader before his uncle's downfall. The King had only to

summon Mathabar Singh, and he would return immediately. The two had maintained communications over the years since 1837, and Mathabar Singh was anxious to redeem his family's name. There was danger, of course, in recalling such a man. On the positive side, however, the King saw clearly that Mathabar Singh would surely disrupt the balance of forces ranged against him. That Mathabar Singh was considered generally to be an ally of Laxmi Devi, the King surely knew. He also knew his Queen and he knew Mathabar Singh. It was inconceivable that a personality such as Mathabar Singh would play the heavy supporting role to one such as Laxmi Devi.

There was danger in the King's move, of course, but not more danger to the King (and, as he saw it, to Nepal) than the prevailing course of events. Mathabar Singh Thapa was recalled, and Nepal moved one step closer to the Kot Massacre.

### CHRONOLOGY

1841

- 20 October — End of mourning for Samrajya Laxmi
- 4 December — Crown Prince to Hetaunda
- 14 December — Crown Prince returns to Kathmandu

1842

- 23 April — 'Deforcement' of the Residency
- 8 May — Governor General's letter to Prime Minister (suppressed by Hodgson)
- 22 June — Hodgson writes his 'defence'
- 8 July — GOVERNOR GENERAL DETERMINES TO DISMISS HODGSON
- 10 September — Hodgson withdraws support from Fatteh Jung
- 24 October — Governor General sets winter 1843-44 for Hodgson's retirement
- 17 November — Fatteh Jung joins Popular Movement
- 1-5 December — PUBLIC PROTEST MEETINGS.
- 7 December — Public demands presented; King accepts

1843

- 7 January — Queen Laxmi Devi takes power

- 4 February — King sends deputation to summon Mathabar Singh Thapa
- 17 April — MATHABAR SINGH RETURNS TO KATHMANDU
- 30 April — Pandeys punished
- 24 July — King asks Hodgson to remain in Nepal
- 30 November — Major Lawrence arrives as new Resident
- 5 December — HODGSON LEAVES KATHMANDU

## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Case of Casinath

Chapter Four presents the case of Casinath in great detail. So far-reaching were its consequences that nothing less would satisfy the mind. This itself is paradoxical, for the case itself was not very significant. The amount of money involved was not large, nor was the case beyond arbitration. Indeed, it was eventually settled according to the Treaty of 1839 in the courts of Banaras, where it originated.

Yet Casinath's case had consequences that quite shook Nepal. First, it led directly to Hodgson's removal from Kathmandu. Secondly, it promoted a distinct hesitancy on the part of Residents in Nepal to deal directly with the problems they encountered. As we shall see, they grew reluctant to deal with any Nepali unless another European was present as an official witness. Thirdly, the withdrawal of Residency support or encouragement from politicians in Kathmandu led to the suspicion that the Residency secretly supported rival interest groups, whereas in fact the Residents were under strict orders to support no one. A riddle to the Nepali mind! And a riddle that perplexed a whole series of politicians and seekers of office, until Jung Bahadur Rana discovered the solution. The results of that discovery moulded the history of Nepal for the next hundred years.

Had Hodgson chosen not to champion the cause of Casinath, this whole series of events might never have taken place. But Hodgson was incapable of passing over such an opportunity to press for a point that he considered important to Nepal-Company relations. Also, one must remember the times. During the Afghan crisis, the Governor General was most anxious not to give the Nepali army a chance to move against the Company. The best defense was a strong offense, and everything that might keep the Kathmandu Darbar off balance was used. The solution of Casinath's case was one of ten demands, boldly stated and backed by a tiny military force pushed up to the Nepal border as a threat of stronger British intervention. No Nepali, of course, was seriously concerned about a British invasion of the Hills but the suggestion that the Company might seize the Tarai frightened King Rajendra Bikram badly. He capitulated--at least apparently so. But appearances are deceptive. The letters presented here show the calm before the storm, the background, and denouement of the case of Casinath.

Resident Hodgson to Government, 19 October 1841<sup>1</sup>

*The period immediately after the death of the Senior Queen was given to mourning. Fatteh Jung Shah's new administration had not yet been put together after the annual Pajani, but the Prime Minister felt that the majority of his troubles were over and that he could face the future with more confidence. His reservations about the Raja's attitude toward him are, however, well worth noting.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that on the evening of the 15th of October I had a private interview with Fatteh Jung. He began the conversation by expressing to me his warm thanks for the manner in which I had during the whole Spring and Summer prevented him from giving way to the rashness of despair or disgust and pointing to the sudden conclusion in violent death of the fierce and furious career of the Senior Queen whose violence he chiefly dreaded. He went on to say that he felt extremely grateful that Government had accepted patiently the repeated delays that had occurred in the reconstruction of his Ministry.<sup>2</sup> He further said that the Raja's duplicity had been the cause of these delays, but that of late there had existed, first in the Pajani and second in the mourning for the Rani, such plausible reasons for delay that he had no power to urge the matter with His Highness. He added, however, that on the 20th the Darbar would be free to return to business. In a very few days from that time, he hoped to be able to announce to me the completion of the ensuing year's Pajani, and he thought these arrangements would be sufficiently secure to give him the guarantees he needed in order to request the removal of the security force from the border. This, he said, was his conviction, and he mentioned it to me because he knew how anxious I was to learn as soon as possible the probable outcome of his long struggle with the Palace. However, he said he must tell me that he had had occasionally some painful forebodings, not yet subdued, arising out of a close study of the Raja's character, as this was more fully revealed by the illness of his energetic wife. Fatteh Jung then went on to mention to me numerous instances in which the Raja, while professing exclusive support for him and his official colleagues, had tried secretly to undermine them altogether, or to supersede their function. Thus His Highness, Fatteh Jung stated to me, had, for example, sent his own men to Lhasa and to Karover Singh's camp in Nari; had opened a secret correspondence with General Mathabar Singh; and had been for weeks eagerly engaged in complicated intrigues with Ranabir Singh Thapa, Jagat Bam Pandey, Kan Dal Pandey, and other Chiefs, with a view to removing or paralyzing the present Ministry. The Raja had encouraged placards and rumours for the same purpose. And finally, the Raja had put forth his infant son, the Crown Prince, as a screen to his own impracticableness the very moment that the Maharani had ceased to afford him that convenient shelter! Fatteh Jung, while dwelling on these obstacles, on the one hand, and on the other, upon my own desire that the menacing attitude of my Government, which up to the present had been so efficient in controlling the Palace faction, should cease--speedily cease--appeared occasionally during our interview ready to resign. It was only when I promised him all the support he could reasonably expect that these accumulated clouds of despondency seemed gradually to pass away from his mind--I told him to look to the immediate past and to the very picture of it which he had himself just drawn. All our fears of personal violence ended when the Rani died. We must now consider that the Company's auspices and my presence on the spot, joined to his own high rank, extensive connection, eminent reputation, and admirable intentions were sufficient guarantees against political failure and political violence.

An hour's familiar conversation with Fatteh Jung enabled me to re-animate his spirits entirely without in any respect committing myself to new promises or pledges. On the contrary after having obtained from him a sort of promise that the course of ten or twelve days should see him re-seated in the Premier's chair and prepared to dispense with a part, if not the whole, of the frontier brigade. He even assured me that some more stringent measures intended to awe the opposite faction, which his colleagues had urged him to pass before he resumed office, should be postponed until he actually resumed office, in order to lessen the chances of delay, since I appeared to consider further delay, however caused, as the chief evil to be now avoided. I trust that nothing can delay the re-inauguration of my distinguished friend beyond the end of this month and, to judge by his own different sentiments, I conclude that once re-instated he will be able to control the political conduct of this State, in relation to peace or war with us, except under very unexpected circumstances.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 19 December 1841<sup>3</sup>

*Hodgson's report of the newly emerging power of the Crown Prince to disrupt and delay the business of the Darbar is important for its indication of the emerging lines of tension in the Darbar after the death of the Senior Queen, Samrajya Laxmi. Aside from his own personal remarks on the character of those involved (for Hodgson, the 'evil, wicked, unscrupulous, despicable' ones were those who opposed him, whereas the 'good, wise, cooperative, reliable' ones were those who agreed with him), Hodgson's evaluation of this incident was to prove correct. At this time, of course, he has no indication of the seriousness of the tension between the Junior Queen, Laxmi Devi, and the Crown Prince. This report also makes it clear that Fatteh Jung, the Prime Minister, was accurate in his suspicions of the Raja but that he vastly underestimated the Darbar's ability to delay and confuse his own tactics.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that the Court again travelled to Hetaunda in the wake of the Crown Prince on the 4th of December and returned to the Valley on the 10th, to the Palace on the 14th. The ostensible reason of the Crown Prince's journey was his desire to get some loose elephants that were refused him for fear of harm. The real reason is said to have been that jealousy of his stepmother and her sons which he has derived from his late mother and which I have this moment heard has put him in motion again in the same direction, with all the world after him as usual. It is also probably true that this spoiled child, whom nobody restrains, loves thus to show his power, and that, lastly, his cunningly timid father herein makes an instrument of him in

order to harass and humiliate into due subservience a distasteful Ministry whose persons are dragged about, and their proceedings delayed and crossed in and by these sudden senseless journeys. I can get no business whatever done; and perhaps the Raja may calculate that I shall thus become alienated from the present Cabinet and anticipate any declaration on his part in favour of a change. Such safe trickery is like the man, as is also the conjectural absence of all graver mischief in our regard. But the Raja (I need not repeat) is a complete mesh of wiles, and the state of things beyond the Indus is not yet within his assured knowledge.

2. Of the last escapade, I received due intimation, and no doubt shall of the present one. In both, the numbers of armed troops in attendance has been, and will be, limited. Under these circumstances I have not deemed it necessary to join the galloping train following an insolent boy. On the present occasion especially, I could wish son and father unrestrainedly to proceed so that, if possible I may detect the whole scope of this maneuver whilst Oliver's brigade is still on the frontier. On the last occasion I directed Ensign Broughton (?), who was then enroute, to attach himself to the Raja's camp under cover of the pretext of waiting for me.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 14 March 1842<sup>4</sup>

*Lord Ellenborough announced that as of this date he had taken charge of the Government of India as Governor General of India.*

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 7 April 1842<sup>5</sup>

*Hodgson's long rambling report of this date contained little of immediate interest other than this discussion of the Raja's interest in politics, both domestic and foreign. Although the analysis of the Raja's attitudes is important, the report in general is far more important for the sense of relaxed and peaceful discussion that it portrays. There is no indication whatsoever either in that part of the report reproduced here or in that part that has been omitted of the storm that was hanging over the Residency. Yet in two weeks' time, Nepal-Company relations would be again on the razor's edge. It is this, perhaps even more than Hodgson's frequent comments on the inconstancy of the Raja, that emphasises the Raja's abrupt changes of direction. The problem lies in the correct evaluation of the Raja's actions. Was King Rajendra Bikram acting in an arbitrary, unreasonable manner, or was he in fact struggling to assert Nepal's independence in relation to the Resident as Bhim Sen Thapa had taught him but unable to see his way clearly because he lacked the clarity of advice that Bhim Sen Thapa had always given him? Generally speaking, Hodgson's analysis of events provides a good explanation of*



*what was going on. His interpretation of the meaning of events tends to be extremely biased, as we have seen in his interpretation of the instructions provided by the Governor General in regard to the Fatteh Jung Ministry and the support Hodgson should give it.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report to you for the information and orders of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that yesterday the Premier privately communicated to me the substance of a conversation he had just had with the Maharaja. His Highness wished to send, with his consent, a Secret Mission to Lahore, and when the Minister would by no means agree, His Highness directed him to sound me, as from himself, upon my disposition to sanction such a measure if openly proposed to me. Fatteh Jung Shah objected to this course also as ill-timed and calculated to recall the Governor General's attention to the Darbar's so recently defeated schemes to open a political intercourse with the Panjab. But the Maharaja persisted and commanded him to sound me, as directed.

2. He accordingly did so. After applauding his discretion in the advice given to the Maharaja, I expressed to him my impression that by tact and firmness he might (and should make it his special duty to) divert His Highness from again entertaining such projects, which I said I believed proceeded from no feeling of hostility towards my Government but rather from a bad habit that was now indulged in chiefly because His Highness had no other and more innocent recourse of employment and amusement.

3. I therein urged upon the Premier the expediency of finding such sources of innocent occupation for His Highness in the improvement of the internal administration, the projection of public works of utility and ornament to the kingdom, the protection and repair of the numerous and still beautiful, though fast decaying, architectural ornaments of Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhadgaon, the reform of the legal institutions once celebrated even to a proverb...; with a freer participation by His Highness of those relaxations which all Princes save His Highness were accustomed to use.

4. The Premier responded that the Maharaja found pleasure in nothing but domestic and foreign intrigue. I rejoined that His Highness was yet young and free from any deep taint of vice or cruelty and that perhaps no sufficient pains had been taken to remove from his character and conduct the bias laid on it, first by the undue restraints of the Thapas, and secondly by the pandering encouragement by the late Pandey administration to return to the ancient aggressive and fraudulent external policy of Nepal.

5. Much more I urged in the same vein and then pressed the Minister to concede how imminent would be the danger of Nepal, were she again to commence her past wearying attacks on the patience and forbearance of my Government and how many motives he, a Chief of the first rank with children

to succeed him in it, had to attempt with the joint skill and influence of his able colleagues, the reformation of the Raja's political opinions and sentiments... /continued/

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 5 June 1842<sup>6</sup>

*On 23 April, 1842 King Rajendra Bikram came to the Residency with a strong Military force and demanded that the Resident hand over to him immediately one Casinath, a merchant who was at that time staying in the Residency for medical treatment and protection. The case of Casinath was a long-standing one, and its settlement had formed one of the demands the Governor General had made on the Darbar in 1840. Hodgson was obliged to hand Casinath over to the King's justice. He considered, however, that the King's actions had constituted deforcement of the Residency, and he immediately sent off a stiff protest to the new Governor General. This report and the Governor General's reply of 8 May were subsequenly removed from the official files, leaving a gap in our knowledge of this critical turn of events. However, it is clear from the remaining correspondence that the Governor General sent a very strong letter for Hodgson to deliver to the Prime Minister. Hodgson, relying on his own familiarity with events, suppressed this letter because it would seriously weaken Fatteh Jung's position in the Darbar. This act of suppressing the Governor General's letter was the actual cause for Hodgson's replacement as Resident, though this replacement would be postponed for some months, as we will see in subsequent chapters. Besides administering a strong rebuke to Hodgson, the Governor General also began an investigation of the background of the events that had led up to the deforcement of the Residency on 23 April 1841. This demand was partially answered in the story of Casinath as given here.*

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Sir,

It would be convenient to the Governor General if you would make a memorandum stating all the facts in the case of Casinath from its commencement to the day on which you write, carefully excluding from the same everything which cannot be proved and showing in the margin opposite each fact stated by what public document or in what other manner it is to be proved. From such a memorandum all extraneous matter and all observations should be likewise carefully excluded. It should be a plain statement of facts whereon the Governor General can safely act.

2. In a separate memorandum it would be desirable that you should state without colour or exaggeration exactly as they took place all the instances in which the Raja may in your opinion have evinced towards you personal disrespect.

3. In doing this you must remember that any instance of personal disrespect in manner or in language on your part towards the Raja--if any such there should have been provoked by his manner and language or otherwise taking place, will be stated by him probably with much colour and exaggeration, and it will be desirable therefore that you should here too refer in the margin to such evidence as may exist with respect to your interview.

I have, etc.

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Petition of Casinath Mull to Resident Hodgson, 17 June 1842<sup>7</sup>

*Casinath's petition was prepared in response to the Governor General's demand for the full background on this case. The main points that emerge are these:*

1. *Casinath's and Sheobux Puri's families had long been engaged in trade in both India and Nepal. There was a dispute about mutual debts, and Casinath eventually submitted this to the court in Banaras for settlement.*

2. *Sheobux Puri had been serving as a Subha in the Nepal Tarai, where he had contracted to farm a tract of land on payment of certain annual fees to the Nepal Government. He had fallen in arrears in his payments, and had been seized by the Government. After paying what he could, he then referred to the debt that Casinath owed him (which was in fact disputed and under judicial enquiry in Banaras).*

3. *Casinath went to Kathmandu on business and was there seized by the Government and brought to court in connection with his alleged debt to Sheobux Puri.*

4. *Casinath was obliged to deposit with the court the full amount that he was said to owe Sheobux Puri. Casinath made a counterclaim, stating the Sheobux Puri also owed him money, and demanded that Sheobux Puri deposit this sum with the court.*

5. *The judge disallowed Casinath's demand; said he (though judge in the case) would stand surety for Sheobux Puri; and instructed the Panchayat assembled to settle the case to confine their discussion to one of the twelve points constituting the charge.*

6. *After some dispute between the judge and the Panchayat, the case was arbitrarily decided against Casinath, the shortfall in Sheobux Puri's accounts was deducted from Casinath's deposit, and Casinath was fined. The case was then dismissed.*

7. *Casinath made an appeal to the Darbar itself, where after some delay, he was advised to take what was remaining of his deposit and go away.*

8. Casinath fell seriously ill and despite treatment in Fattedh Jung Shah's house, seemed not to improve. He made a will, which, because he was a British subject, had to be signed in the presence of the Resident. His physical condition was noted, and he was told to transfer to the Residency compound, where he would get medical care. Hodgson then used this case in his own campaign to force the Darbar to give justice to the Indian traders in Nepal.

9. Under strong political pressure from the Governor General, Casinath's case was apparently settled, and he was given back his money and permitted to leave.

10. Before Casinath left Kathmandu, Sheobux Puri, who had again been assigned as Subha and subsequently fled to India, returned to Kathmandu and announced that he was ready for the case to be tried.

11. The Resident, however, insisted that this case was already under judicial review in Banaras and that according to the Nepal-East India Company treaty of 1839, the case should be settled there without reference to the courts of Nepal. It was at this point that the King intervened.

The disputed point in Casinath's account was number nine in this summary. The case, in the mind of the Raja, had not been settled by a final judgement, but had merely been restored to its original standing. The Darbar insisted that Casinath had agreed to reappear in court if and when Sheobux Puri returned to Kathmandu. Sheobux Puri had returned. Therefore Casinath had to return to court. Hodgson argued that even if Casinath had made such an agreement, which in fact Casinath denied, it was against the 4th clause of the Nepal-East India Company treaty of 6 November 1839, which stated that:

*It is agreed to as a rule for the guidance of both Sarkars, that in judicial matters where civil causes arise there they shall be heard and decided; and the Nepal Government engages that for the future British subjects shall not be compelled to plead in the court of Nepal to civil actions, having exclusive reference to their dealings in the Plains. (emphasis added)*

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#### TRANSLATION

My distressed condition is thus. Between my father Dhooni Mull and Gosain Govind Puri there had been lakhs of rupees of commercial dealings within the space of about 20 years; upon a balance of accounts 27,000 rupees balance lay on my father's side, and for this balance in the year 1829 A.D. my father made demand on Govind Puri. Govind Puri put him off from time to time, and in the meanwhile my father died at Banaras. On his death, my uncle Jugal Kishore, as manager of the firm, continued the

demand. In 1835 I myself went to Banaras when Govind Puri prepared to leave it without settling our accounts. I pressed him much and at last he agreed to submit the matter to the arbitrament of a Panchayat composed of Gosain Itchपुरी, Gosain Jumna Bharti and Gosain Ram Kishenपुरी.<sup>8</sup>

My papers were already under the scrutiny of this Panchayat but Govind Puri's had not yet been laid before it when in the year 1837 I was obliged by my affairs to go to Kathmandu. Before I went I made my uncle Jugal Kishore and Banarasi Das my attorneys by regular deed on stamped paper for the management of this cause.<sup>9</sup> One month after my arrival in Nepal, the grandson of Govind Puri, by name Sheobux Puri, who had previously been a land renter from the Nepal Government and was then in restraint for default in Kathmandu, induced Govind Puri to address a petition to the Darbar to this effect, 'Dhooni Mull owes me a balance of 36,400 rupees. Let the Sarkar realize it from his son Casinath and putting it to the Sarkar's account with Sheobux Puri, give that person his freedom.' The Darbar sent the petition and Sheobux Puri to the Raj Guru<sup>10</sup> in collusion with whom and with all sorts of false statements, an action was brought by Sheobux against me in the Kumari Chowk Adalat. In reply to the plaint I stated that the matter of action belonged wholly to the Company's territory and that at Banaras a Panchayat was actually investigating it, and that until their proceedings were completed I could give no answer here. The judge of the Kumari Chowk himself rejoined to me that he knew nothing of the rules of the Courts below, but he had the Raja's orders to realize the 36,400 rupees from me by all and by any means. I remonstrated and treated in vain till at last Jaydrath put me in restraint. Not being able to endure imprisonment I, after about 20 days, agreed to plead; and in order to defend my cause procured from Banaras authenticated copies signed by the judge of the Civil Courts there. These I tendered to the Kumari Chowk, but the judge refused to receive them and ordered me immediately to deposit in court the 36,400 rupees, when he would examine the papers and accounts. Seeing such irregular proceedings against all Nepal law I went to the Raj Guru, who took me aside and told me that if I would give him 4,000 rupees he would procure for me a fair trial, which else was impossible, because the Raja himself had commanded the judge to extract from me by any means the balances due to the Sarkar by Sheobux Puri. As I left the Raj Guru I told this to Jaganath and Ram Narayan Misra, the Guru's nephew, who had taken me to him and who replied that such were the Guru's ways and that there was no help. In despair, I returned to the Adalat. Jaydrath, the judge, then said to me if you don't bring the 36,400 rupees, besides confinement you shall suffer much more.

Thereon I delivered the money into Court, but I stated that I also had a claim of balance against Govind Puri to the amount of 27,000 rupees, which ought to be deposited in Court as well as my 36,400, the sum alleged by him as balance against me. The judge called for this deposit from Sheobux Puri and attached retainers of the Court to him pending payment. But two days after, the Raj Guru sent for the judge and scolded and threatened him. Whereon he sent for me, and required me to name my Panch men or arbitrators. I said I would name no Panch till Sheobux's deposit was produced. The judge confined me in the Court and went home and thus

many days passed when the Judge came to me and told me that he was himself security for Sheobux Puri and would be answerable to me for any balance that might be found against him. I told him this was contrary to all law and that in his Court I could not expect justice if he, or in other words the Sarkar, avowed himself thus the other party's backer. On this he got very angry and called on 10 or 12 standers-by to witness that he was Sheobux's security, adding that if I did not proceed to plead the Sarkar would punish me. Being helpless and unable to contend with the judge and the Government I gave in the names of my Panch men and signed the Panjnameh or agreement to refer the case to arbitration. The cause proceeded before the Panchayat thus created when forthwith by the Raja's orders and the Raj Guru's procurement the judge of the Kumari Chowk compelled the Panchayat to take up the 5th item of the several counts which were 10 or 12 in number and to confine themselves solely to this 5th item. Upon this item, by Sheobux's statement, 21,000 rupees were due by me, but the judge insisted that the sum should be stated at 22,500 and produced before the Panchayat a statement of his own to that effect which he insisted I should adopt. I and the Panchayat loudly resisted till a private messenger of the Raja's came to the Court and whispered some things in the judge's ear, whereupon the judge with much passion said to me, the Sarkar is very angry with you and you are fined by the Sarkar 5,000 rupees. Pay it and also deposit 22,500 on the 5th count of the action. I asked why and by what rule of Court I was fined whereon the judge answered 'What rule of court is needed to fine you mean people of the Plains? The Sarkar's order is enough.' This was said in open Court before hundreds of people, and indeed all the proceedings here narrated were witnessed by multitudes as I am ready to prove whenever called on. I next demanded of the Panchayat why and how 22,500 rupees had been stated on the 5th count, and they replied to me that they knew nothing about it; that those who had so determined alone knew how or why and that they would no longer stay in Court. Thereon they all went away. Then the judge said to me, 'till you agree to this 22,500, here you will be confined.' Accordingly I was confined for several days and became ill when the judge attached 10 runners of the Court to me and sent me home. I had been at home two or three days when the judge summoned me into Court and told me that out of my whole deposit of 36,400, 22,500 had been transferred to the exchequer on account of Sheobux Puri's default as revenue contractor. I declared this to be cruel oppression against all law of Nepal, when the Judge in open Court said to me, 'no reason for a command nor medicine for fate. I have only obeyed my orders.' I came home and wrote a petition and took it to many Chiefs for presentation to the Raja. But they all told me that it would be impossible to present the petition without bringing upon themselves the mortal hate of the Raj Guru, so they must be excused. In the end, however, the Chautaria Guru Prasad delivered my petition, whereon Uma Kant Khazanchi, Kazi Bal Narsingh, Bir Bhadra Upadhyaya, Luch Bir Shahi and other Chiefs were ordered to assemble in the Palace to make enquiry. They did so, but the members of this Court were daily changed and when I remonstrated they told me that none of them could endure the abuse of the Raj Guru who would suffer nothing to be established but his own predetermined pleasure. Wherefore no one would continue to sit. Thus months were wasted, when Chautaria Babar Jung Shah,

Kazi Bal Narsingh and others who were in the Raj Guru's interest called on Jaydrath for the statement according to which he had transferred 22,500 of Casinath's deposit to the Exchequer. The judge in question alleged that he had made no such statement and referred them to the Panchayat who declared that the judge certainly had made such a fabricated statement out of their investigation by addition of 5,700 rupees without their consent. The judge and Panchayat were confronted and a long dispute ensued when the judge said, 'I will fetch the statement from the Court if I can find it.' Then the Council broke up. Two days after, the judge told them he could not find the paper. The Chiefs in question told me to let it pass and they would settle the affair otherwise to my satisfaction. The next day the Raj Guru called Jagannath Das, Kishen Jivan Das, and other merchants on the Panchayat to his house and told them to agree to Jaydrath's estimate on the 5th count of 22,500, when he, the Guru, would cause Jaydrath to have his statement aforesaid forthcoming, but if not that he, the Guru, would have them disgraced before the Raja. The Panchayat rejoined that he might do as he would but that they would never countenance such shameful proceedings by including them in their own.

Thereon the Guru and the judge laid their heads together and got up a petition to the Raja to the effect that the excess of 5,700 in Jaydrath's statement of the 5th item was owing to a different way of reckoning interest from that adopted by the Panchayat. Three days after, Kazi Bal Narsingh brought the petition into Court and desired the Panchayat to answer it, assenting to their mode of reckoning interest as that of Merchants but urain that the Raj Guru and Raja had declared for the Government mode adopted by Jaydrath. The Panchayat replied 'if such be the Darbar's will, why summon us as a Panchayat? We can agree to no such ways of stating mercantile accounts. Let the Sarkar do as itself wills; but if the mode of reckoning interest be good for one party it must be good for the other.' Some days after, the Council of Chiefs sat again when it was announced to me that the mercantile mode should stand and the claim against me on the 5th count be reduced to 16,800, but that there were no orders for my counter claims to be examined, and that I must sign a Razinamah<sup>11</sup> to the effect that my 16,800 had been justly appropriated by the exchequer. The Chiefs told me I should have 4 days leave to write the Razinamah but that I had better petition the Raja to let my counter claims be heard when they would gladly investigate those claims. I petitioned accordingly through Kulraj Pandey and my petition was transferred to Jaydrath, the judge of the Kumari Chowk, who abused me for having presented it, told me my counterclaims should not be heard and that I must instantly give in a Razinamah or be imprisoned for such were the Raja's orders. I was accordingly confined, being for the fourth time. When I had been 4 days in confinement Babar Jung Shah came to me and advised me to resist the Raja's determined purpose no longer, but to desist from my demand for having my side of the account examined and admit the settlement as adjusted on examination of Sheobux Puri's side only. I would not write anything to that effect but I verbally said I could not resist the Raja's order, whereon I was released. Some days after, Jaydrath, the judge, and Babar Jung aforesaid sent for me and told me Sheobux Puri had been appointed by the Raja as Sub<sup>11</sup> of Butwal; that the cause was thereof at an end, and I must take away the remainder of my deposit. On

this I called out for justice, for mercy. But no one heeded me, and Sheobux Puri was allowed to depart. And here ends my cause as relates to the Nepal Adalat before petitioning through your honor. But many months (a year and a half about) elapsed before this application to you, and during the interim I fell dangerously ill and was like to die. The Chautaria, the present Premier Fatten Jung Shah, took me to his house and had me tended by his own physician for 8 or 9 months. I derived, however, little benefit from the treatment and thinking I must soon die I made a will in favour of my wife which was witnessed before your Honor by the Banaras merchants here. I also consulted Dr. Christie, the Residency surgeon, about my illness, who ordered me to put up in the Residency Hospital, where I should be treated, because I would need several months to recover and must be under his eye all the while. Very slowly I mended and when I had strength I stated to your Honor the oppressions I had suffered from the City Courts and Darbar. Your Honor forwarded my petition to the Darbar, whereon a Council of State consisting of about 20 principal Chiefs was commanded to assemble and consider it. In this Council Jaydrath's proceedings were decided to have been wholly unlawful and wrongful. Jaydrath was compelled to sign a confession and was fined 1,500 rupees.

The 16,800 rupees taken from me on the 5th count of the action with Sheobux Puri and 1,000 rupees of fine exacted from me were restored. I was likewise told by the Council that Sheobux Puri had run away from Butwal across the frontier and that I must go there if I desired to recover my balances from him, but that if any balances should be there proved due by him and I would pay them into the Raja's treasury, I should get much credit. Hereon I prepared to go home to Banaras and endeavoured to get payment of my numerous debts due me here, amounting to about 40,000 rupees. But the debtors were very dilatory and before I had succeeded, Sheobux Puri, by the Darbar's procurement, again appeared here to renew his action against me, which he did. Whereon I again petitioned your Honor that the Council of State's decree in my favour and which the Darbar and the Governor General in Council had ratified should not be reversed and myself submitted to fresh persecution under pretense of these actions of Sheobux Puri. No notice was taken by the Darbar of this secret petition till the 23rd April, the events of which day are notorious. The way in which I was treated on that day by the Raja and his son with my subsequent helpless surrender of my property a second time to the Darbar, are all recorded in my last petition to you, and I have no more to say but that I am prevented from returning to the plains and all my creditors are interdicted from paying their debts to me. My prayer is that your Honor will forward this petition to the Right Honorable the Governor General so that at least I may have liberty to recover my undisputed debts and return home to my affairs and family at Banaras.

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The Nepal Darbar's Statement of Events of 23 April 1842<sup>12</sup>

*This statement of events was prepared for the use of Karbir Sen, whom the Darbar had sent to the Governor General's camp in an effort to by-pass Resident Hodgson. How Hodgson got this copy is not clear other than that he managed to acquire it through private channels. Several points made in this note are worth comment. First, there is no mention of irregularities in the judicial procedure other than the statement that the judge had acted unlawfully in taking a deposit from one party while not taking a deposit from the other party in a civil case. Secondly, it is clear that the Governor General's demand in 1840 that Casinath's case be settled had been met by withdrawing the earlier decisions against Casinath without making any new settlement of the case. Thus the Governor General's demand was only met by the appearance of a settlement while the Nepal Darbar continued to maintain its hold on Casinath. Thirdly, the Darbar does not deny the deforcement of the Residency but rather defends it as an exercise of the Raja's right and duty to enforce justice. The confidential note to Karbir Sen at the end of this account seems to make it quite clear that the taking of Casinath was as rough as Hodgson reported it to be. The Darbar made no response to the arguments that Hodgson has here included in his notes, though surely all of these arguments had been made at the time the apparent settlement had been decided upon.*

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## TRANSLATION

Gosain Sheobux Puri took from the Nepal Government a contract of lands in Butwal on account of which he fell into heavy balances. When the Gosain was apprehended he paid what he had and, with regard to the balance, stated that the merchant Dhooni Mull owed him money. On this debt the Gosain brought an action against Casinath, son of Dhooni Mull, in the Kumari Chowk, whereon a Panchayat consisting of several merchants of Banaras and of Nepal adjudged that 16,836 rupees were due. Many months afterwards Sheobux Puri went<sup>13</sup> to Butwal, whence he fled to Gorakhpur. Whereupon Casinath petitioned the Darbar through the Resident to the effect that he had been compelled to pay or deposit 16,836 rupees but that the Gosain had been excused all deposit contrary to Casinath's remonstrances. Pending this application of the Resident to the Darbar, the Darbar asked for a passport to go to Gorakhpur in search of brides, and the Resident replied that till the case of Casinath and of other British subjects denied justice in the Courts of the City were adjusted, he could not give any passports. Thereon the Darbar ordered a Council of Chiefs to assemble to investigate Casinath's case. This Council on inquiry determined that the taking of deposit from one party only to an action was unlawful and that the judge of the Kumari Chowk who had done so should be fined. They further determined that a true investigation of the action could not be had<sup>14</sup> in the absence of the Gosain or plaintiff. Wherefore it was proper to take an engagement from Casinath and restore his deposits. Accordingly Casinath gave writing to the effect that whenever the Gosain should come and his claim against Casinath should be produced, Casinath

would pay the money to the Darbar.<sup>15</sup> On this engagement Casinath's rupees were restored. When, recently, the Gosain Sheobux Puri came back to Nepal and presented himself in the Kumari Chowk and was confronted with Casinath, the judge of that court said to Casinath that so soon as he made a deposit afresh, the cause would proceed. Whereupon Casinath went and took refuge in the Residency.<sup>16</sup> The Premier and others were sent by the Darbar to require the attendance of Casinath in order that the deposit might be made anew,<sup>17</sup> to be kept if adjudged due, or to be returned to Casinath if adjudged otherwise. The Chiefs told the Resident that there was no purpose to infringe on the British Government or on the Resident's rights and dignity or to violate any treaties, but that Casinath must be forthcoming according to his pledge, whereupon the Resident answered that the action and the parties both belonged to his territory and that it was contrary to treaty for the Darbar to meddle with this case. The Chiefs rejoined that the engagement of Casinath to plead had preceded the treaty<sup>18</sup> and therefore the latter was no bar. Notwithstanding this explanation and the Resident's continued refusal to send Casinath, there was still no aggression on the honor of the Resident or of his Government. But the Raja, reflecting that Casinath would not abide by his agreement<sup>19</sup> but kept within the Resident's limits, though Sheobux Puri was present and prepared to go on with the cause, at length became angry and himself went to the Residency. The Resident immediately came forth when the Maharaja said to Mr. Hodgson 'I have no intention to quarrel with you or your Government, but Casinath must attend and plead in my Courts according to his agreement.' Casinath was sent for, when Mr. Hodgson caused him to prostrate himself before the Raja, whereon His Highness said he would take Casinath away and see justice done him. Casinath was thereon seized and about to be dragged away when the Resident said, 'This is the Company's subject. He cannot be taken this way. If you Highness means to do violence to me, give me my passports.'

The Raja thereon rejoined, 'There is friendship with you and your Government, but Casinath I will have' and with that His Highness returned towards the City. The Resident attended the Raja as far as the Guru's garden and there was dismissed, and the Raja went on to the City. Afterwards the Raja and Crown Prince came again to the Guru's garden where they laid their commands on the Premier and the Mahila Guru to go to the Resident and positively bring Casinath away. Accordingly Casinath was brought, the Resident having said to the Premier's Guru 'if Casinath be maltreated, on your heads be it. I am helpless. The Maharaja and the Governor General must settle the matter.' When Casinath presented himself to the Raja,<sup>20</sup> His Highness told him his not coming had been the cause of all this and that in future he must give regular attendance at the Kumari Chowk or be punished. Casinath replied that if he got justice, he should not fail to be forthcoming, whereon he was ordered to withdraw.

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At the end of this paper is the following order to Karbir Sen: If you are interrogated, state that you had departed when the uproar of the 23rd occurred; that Casinath is regular in attendance now, though residing at the Residency; and that he will have justice. Say you heard this and only say this or anything in case you be questioned.

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## Footnotes to Chapter Four

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 1 November 1841, No. 78; heavily edited.
2. The Ministry was waiting for the completion of the Pajani, which normally took place in September-October.
3. Foreign Secret Consultation 27 December 1841, No. 92; moderately edited.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 March 1842, No. 8.
5. Foreign Secret Consultation 3 August 1842, No. 69; slightly edited.
6. Foreign Secret Consultation 7 September 1842, No. 76A; not edited.
7. Foreign Secret Consultation 7 September 1842, No. 86; slightly edited.
8. 'These men are forthcoming at Banaras and can certify to the fact of their having formed a Panchayat.' B.H.H.
9. 'Banarsi Das forthcoming: the other died.' B.H.H.
10. Hodgson always used the expression Misra Guru for Raj Guru. Throughout we have used the term Raj Guru as being more clear. This is the same man who had such a strong influence on the Senior Queen.
11. Razinamah: written agreement.
12. Foreign Secret Consultation 7 September 1842, No. 86; not edited.
13. 'He was sent there by the Darbar as its revenue farmer by the Raj Guru's procurement for the second time and without security, though a defaulter already. Whence his defaults fall on the Guru, who was and is determined to extract the arrears of payment from Casinath under cover of the law suit, thereby also avenging himself for the public shame and the loss of his jagir awarded him in 1840 for oppression of British subjects in the Courts of Law. Casinath's and the Guru's affairs formed part of the categorical demands of Government on the Darbar to be satisfied within ten days.' B.H.H. See Hodgson to Government, 6 September 1840.
14. 'True investigation can only be had in Banaras, where the original mercantile accounts of the 2 firms and the witnesses are or can be forthcoming and where the cause was sub judice when the Darbar usurped the jurisdiction. If actions of this sort are to be entertained here, a large portion of the mercantile dealers from Banaras may be fraudfully drawn into the Nepal Adalats. In this case the so-called plaintiff is a creature of the Darbar.' B.H.H.

15. 'Casinath's agreement formed Appendix No. 1 of the Resident's despatch of 29th April 1842. He denies the alleged construction which is clearly not expressed in the paper nor to be put on it without contradiction of the whole tenor of his petitions, nor is there a word of it in the recorded documents.' B.H.H.
16. 'This is false. Casinath has long resided here for medical treatment.' B.H.H.
17. 'Why made anew when the plaintiff neither does nor can make his deposit? The plaintiff is a bankrupt rogue owing large sums to the Darbar for breach of contract. He had not, nor can borrow, a sou. He never had made nor now makes deposits. Is Casinath then to be plundered under pretense of due process? But for this utter cruel oppression, against the law of Nepal, the Resident would neither have originally interfered nor have protected Casinath on the renewal of the pretended action.' B.H.H.
18. 'Not so. The treaty bears date 4th November 1839 and Casinath's agreement 28th September 1840. See Resident's despatch November 12, 1839 and despatch 13 April 1842.' B.H.H.
19. 'If the Darbar proposed to hold by this document, why was it not produced and recorded? ... /This argument is developed at length, but adds nothing to the basic statement/. B.H.H.
20. 'When he presented himself he was brutally maltreated, and but for the Chautaria Guru Prasad might have lost his life.' B.H.H.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Hodgson's Defence

This chapter presents Hodgson's anguished reaction to Lord Ellenborough's sharp rebuke to Fatteh Jung Shah for permitting the 'deforcement' of the Residency on 23 April 1842. The Governor General's reply to Hodgson was no more compromising, and Hodgson realized then that he himself was on trial. His long letter of 22 June presents his defence.

Hodgson traces his version of Nepal-Company relations from the late 18th century up to 1842. This is a very important document. First, it shows clearly the mind-set that Hodgson had in relation to Nepal. Secondly, his data is confused, and even when he refers to Prinsep, the recognized British authority on the Nepal-Company war, he misstates Prinsep's position. His references to the document called 'the political narrative' are to a document prepared by one of his assistants under his own direction. As a document showing the Residency's view of things it was important, but as an historical document showing what had actually transpired, it is of minimal value. One might recall in this connection Lord Auckland's own laconic comment on this narrative, that one could easily imagine the Gorkhalis making the same sort of case against the British. Thirdly, Hodgson's defence is important because it shows most clearly the strong biases that Hodgson had. These were so ingrained that he surely accepted as absolute fact every point he makes in this defence. He had lived and breathed these ideas so long that they were a part of his mentality, and to his last day he must have been convinced of them. Nowhere will one find a more complete catalogue of these biases than in this document.

In view of Hodgson's long service in Nepal, this last point is most significant. The influence he had on Nepal-Company relations was strong, and even after his removal from office, the situations that had grown out of his interaction with the Darbar would perdure, and there was little that subsequent Residents could do about it. Jung Bahadur, however, would certainly do something about it, but the way and manner of his action left much to be desired.

Resident Hodgson to Governme..., 16 May 1842<sup>1</sup>

*Some days after the turmoil of the 'deforcement' of the Residency on 23 April, Hodgson went to his bungalow at Kakani. He had scarcely arrived when the mail runner brought a critical despatch from the Governor General, enclosing a strong letter to the Prime Minister. This letter and all correspondence directly connected with it were later removed from the files. However, it is clear that the letter shook Hodgson badly. Hodgson's letter reproduced here is addressed to the Secretary of the Government of India, an old friend of Hodgson and a former Resident in Nepal, hence Hodgson's familiar tone. Even so, Lord Ellenborough was stung by the 'effrontery' of this plea and decided almost immediately to dismiss Hodgson.*

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My dear Maddock,

I have just got at the Hill Bungalow your despatch of the 8th May and am so pained and puzzled by it that I must take a couple of days to consider deeply what it is best for Government's interests that I should do. For the spirit of the Darbar, the character of the Raja, my transactions with both, their result, the prospects then derivable, I can but point to my official correspondence with you and you with me. Nor can any present transaction be rightly judged unless by the light these records afford. Surely I never countenanced the idea that 'the communications would thenceforth be most amicable.' On the contrary, I took extreme pains, even whilst patching up a semblance of amity to warn you against being deceived by it. I hesitated; I held back; I almost refused; and the Government seemed a while to dissent from my proceedings, eventually I got its most entire approval of them. As to Missions and presents of compliment, you know they are nothing new, and that this most double-dealing Court always has, even when worst inclined, still vacillated under the sway of fear, and thence has sought to be most courteous in appearance when in reality it was most hostile. You know that I have again and again refused to submit to this mixture of sweet words and bitter deeds and that the Ministry nearly split with me in February because I then pressed them to give some more way to compliments than the deeds of the time seemed to them to admit of. But for my urging the Ministry still to adopt the same course, in compliance with the spirit of my instructions, Karbir Sen had never been sent,<sup>2</sup> and his actual departure after the affair of the 23rd was only suffered by the Premier because the Premier and his colleagues like myself were under a reasonable fear of violence.<sup>3</sup> Do you forget what an uphill Sisyphean toil mine has been for three years' past? And that if I surpassed all your expectations--yes all your expectations--it was by patience as well as firmness, by all possible kindness and courtesy personally to the Raja at the same time that politically I would not be deluded. The Raja himself has acknowledged it in the most formal manner in the despatch of the 17th February 1842: and, be it observed, with the whole case of Casinath before him. That case is no new one. Government and the Darbar have alike notified each progressive step, and if therefore either or both are now to disapprove, upon what possible ground is it to be? I have done absolutely nothing as to Casinath or his cause of late save submit his second petition; and was I not to do that? Not to uphold a decision ratified by the Darbar and by my own Government too, and for the abrogation of which the Darbar would give me no proper reason? Why did not the Darbar give me an official answer to my official note? Why the Raja not see and hear me in Darbar? Could I do more than offer him either of these ways of proceeding? And could he by any possibility be justified in the use of open coercion towards me? He had never denied, nor does now, that Casinath is a British subject; nor objected to his abiding at the Residency, nor to any other unquestionable and recorded fact of the case. And was he then publicly to deforce me? To come with 2,000 troops in arms and demand that I would submit British subjects and their causes to his will implicitly? I say the whole case is an old and recorded and ratified and concluded one; and there are my records to

speak for themselves. The getting up the affair afresh is or was a mere pretext, as you would have seen too sadly and clearly but for Sah and Polluck's victories!<sup>4</sup> Already the Raja may be repenting, and even at the moment he was pulled back by fear almost to the staying of his act. I have claimed no privilege for a British subject save that of preferring his plaint to the Darbar, and allowing him to put up within my limits, when sickness and oppression both had him by the throat. No imaginable nor far less actual law of nations can gainsay one or other act, and as for the neglect of personal consideration towards the Raja, even when in his fury he was wronging me so grievously, ask all or any of the spectators! The fact is my extreme patience and deference and entreaties to the Raja are the theme of universal applause! For God's sake, do not distrust your own old tried Resident whose every act heretofore you have applauded, and the last most so; for God's sake don't trust the Raja whose every act heretofore you have denounced. I stand on my records to say that nothing new whatever has transpired in re Casinath. I further say that all the recorded res gestae were approved by, were the work of the Ministers; and that they have only slunk away of late from sheer and avowed fear of violence and from a paltry reluctance apparently to avow the management whereby the difficulties of the Raja's temper were smoothed over when we were on the verge of war.<sup>5</sup> Remember that whatever has been achieved here with so much applause of the Governor General in Council has been achieved by and through the Ministers and against the Raja, and that to show the least distrust of the former so that the latter may perceive it, may be the death warrant or signal of disgrace of one or more of those whose good faith to us has been as conspicuous as the bad faith of the Raja. For God's sake beware of what you do, and do not conceive for a moment that I have other opinions than those of the Ministers upon the present or upon all or any topics. Toward Casinath's case indeed there may have been, it is mere guess, some management of the Raja (when the decision was obtained) which English straightforwardness would reject and which (as I have said) they are ashamed to unsay now. But they cannot and do not collectively or individually deny that I rest on my records as on a rock, and that the Raja is knowingly sinning in the matter against their repeated dissuasions. The lives, the honors, the every thing of the Ministers are now at stake here, and a false step with you may do mischief inevitable. What I have advised as to Karbir Sen has been at the suggestion and desire of the Ministers, whose mandate, though he must obey the Raja, and did so in taking with him a statement of Casinath's case as the Raja views it. I know not what to advise or how to act upon your despatch. Karbir Sen's arrival must preclude the possibility of any steps now taken to stay him. But you may call upon him for explanations and thus hear the Raja's story, if you see fit. But if I show or you show that I am distrusted or the Minister distrusted, or the Raja trusted, a crash may occur which you could not arrest. My acts and advices have been those of the Ministers, and thus I have had all the success that has heretofore been mine. I shall succeed yet further and again if you be firm; but, if not, the deepest hypocrite alive (the Raja) will speedily though softly undo all that I have achieved.<sup>6</sup>

Adieu, B.H. Hodgson

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Government to Hodgson, 5 June 1842<sup>7</sup>

*The argument Government advances here can hardly be disputed. It nevertheless represents a major change in policy. In 1840 and 1841 the Governor General had insisted on recognizing and conducting business with a strong Ministry, not the King. Ellenborough's insistence that the Company will support only the King ignores twenty-six years of Nepal-Company relations and destroys Hodgson's assumption that consistency is the hallmark of the Company's policy, whether that policy is right or wrong.*

Sir,

The Governor General cannot but infer from you letter of the 25th. May that you attach a degree of importance to the continuation in office of the present Ministers of Nepal which the circumstances of the case as made known to His Lordship do not appear to justify.

2. The Governor General desires that the Government of Nepal should maintain peace, for war in itself is necessarily a calamity, and no success in a war with Nepal would compensate the change it would impose.

3. The Raja of Nepal must still desire peace, for he must know that the result of war would be to him utter defeat and ruin.

4. To the British Government it is a matter of indifference who are the Ministers of Nepal, unless insofar as the influence of the Ministers might affect the question of peace or war, in which alone we are interested.

5. But the present Ministers of Nepal appear to have no influence whatever of any sort. They seem to be in a state of perpetual Terror, always apprehending some danger to their own persons from the violence of the Raja and the Crown Prince. Influence cannot co-exist with pusillanimity and fear. It is calm firmness alone which can control the violence of ill regulated minds--of this quality the Ministers of Nepal are avowedly destitute.

6. The interests of the British Government are represented to be identified with those of these Ministers. Yet it would appear from your letters that their influence is not such as to preserve a British subject from oppression and the Representative of the British Government from insult. Neither would it preserve the British Government from a war, if it suited the purposes of the Raja to make war upon us.

7. The British Government when it makes its first object the maintenance in office of certain Ministers in Nepal places itself in a false opposition. We do not desire to give advice to a Nepalese Minister, but certainly there is nothing in our situation which should lead us to receive advice from him, and to move forward our troops and regulate our language according as much movement or such language may be deemed by him to be conducive to his maintenance in office, and his personal security.



8. The British Government loses a portion of its power when it departs from its dignity, and places itself in a state of subordinate cooperation with Ministers of Nepal.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 22 June 1842<sup>8</sup>

*In near desperation Hodgson advances his defence for a policy that the new Governor General has severely censured. His historical summary is inaccurate even when judged by the standard of Prinsep, on whose analysis he 'based' his argument. Nor does Hodgson do justice to the records in saying that at the wish of Government he supported the Chautaria Ministry. For all this, something of the fire in the man comes through these lines of defence that must command our sympathy.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch dated 5 June, intimating to me that in the judgement of the Right Honorable the Governor General the special connection now existing between a party in this Darbar and the Resident is so radically faulty that nothing in the special circumstances of the case as known to His Lordship can justify continuing it.

2. As the connection in question has grown up under the express approval of Government, as it has now stood for some time, and as its sudden dissolution may have far-reaching consequences, it appears to be my duty to make some explanation of these points. After doing so, I beg to add that whatever may be the determination of the Governor General in regard to the future, I shall be found ready to fulfil His Lordship's views zealously and promptly.

3. Since all our recent troubles in relation to this Darbar have proceeded from a party professing to uphold 'the good old Gorkha policy' it may be convenient to study the origin and character of that policy in support of which the whole nation until very lately was united enthusiastically.

4. The Gorkhas are a recent energetic nation of exclusive soldiers. They have no taste for arts, commerce, or literature, and have no idea of profit, pleasure, or occupation, except in arms. Having overrun all the Hill states around them, they bent their whole faculties to discover how they could safely encroach on the rich plains lying below the Hills. They were deterred from open, single-handed attack on us in the plains by the realization of our resources in wealth and military skill. But they deemed their strong mountains a defensible barrier against us. They

thought at least that we should be reluctant to attack them there, however provoked to do it, and they imagined that as the deadly malaria of the Tarai must exclude our approach for 8 to 9 months of every 12, they might by pretended negotiations during the 3 or 4 months available to us, continue to put off the day of reckoning indefinitely.

5. They considered, moreover, that though unable to contend with us in the Plains in all our strength they might by intrigues there raise us up enemies and that whenever we were embarrassed by such enemies, their own commanding position overlooking our best and most vital possessions would give them advantages for attack, or for selling their neutrality, such as they must be dull indeed not to draw profit from, provided always that they kept the secret of their own mountain fastness from us. To do this was declared therefore to be the cardinal principle of their Government.

6. Thus originated the Good Old Gorkha policy. It consisted of fraudulent encroachments on the plains at all times, more open assault in, for us, troubled times, the fomentation of disquiet in the Plains, and the strict avoidance, above all things, of any responsible international intercourse. This policy was matured as early as 1784. Its success was as complete as its operation against us was continual until we were absolutely compelled into that mountain warfare, our dislike for which they had so accurately anticipated.<sup>9</sup>

7. The war with us was a sad blow, and our success in arms elsewhere continued to deepen the impressior of it. Responsible intercourse was forced on the Darbar by the war, and in the course of years many of the more intelligent Chiefs were led to realize that there were no necessary disadvantages in that intercourse such as to justify Nepal in tempting destruction by the resumption of her old, favourite policy, which was, moreover, seen to be no longer practicable.

8. But it was the Chiefs trained to do business since the war and in connection with the British Resident who argued thus and reflected thus wisely. Unfortunately there existed all this while another small class of Chiefs formerly of greater influence but since the war under banishment<sup>10</sup> who had no vocation in their exile except to nurse in their memory the scenes and the affairs of the olden times. They despised and hated the new doctrine of responsible intercourse, friendship, and good faith with the British Government, of which indeed in exile they could know no more than that it was propagated, and upheld, by those who had thrust them out in 1805.

9. In 1837, just as the Raja had reached to years of discretion, this party reappeared on the stage. As it contrived to make itself instrumental in the downfall of the Thapas, it soon was able to gain the entire confidence of the Palace by pandering to the national prejudices and nascent vanity of a youthful sovereign who was perpetually reminded that every one of his royal ancestors had been a soldier and a conqueror, and that if he himself would resume the good old principles of those ancestors he might also be one.

10. Besides their real ignorance and hate of the new and their real attachment to the old polity of the State, the Kala Pandeys<sup>11</sup> had the wit to see that they must delude the nation as well as the sovereign before they could hope to regain their former preeminence. Thus, to a people devoted to arms they held out perpetually the promise of renewed war. They saw that they must be war Ministers or no Ministers at all, for their long exile had stripped them of all legitimate weight among their fellow nobles, and they were besides known to plan the fearful revenge which the savage old manners of Nepal made a certain inheritance in the families of highest ranks.

11. Thus all circumstances of their character and position conspired to make the Kala Pandeys determined opponents of responsible intercourse with our Government at Kathmandu and of that peace and good neighbourhood which only such an intercourse could give us. And it happened most unfortunately that the very period of their appearance at Kathmandu from a 30 years' banishment to their Hill estates coincided with a most disturbed state of the political relations of all the India world. By the basest pandering to the prejudices and passions of their young and weak sovereign they got possession of the symbol of power and their administration of three years (1837-40) was distinguished by ferocious barbarities at home and by incessant wrongs and injuries towards us.

12. There was no talk but that the English, however formidable, were overmatched in their contests with China, Afghanistan, and Persia. And according to the old policy of the State, the Kala Pandey administration began intrigues throughout India in preparation for war. In Kathmandu insults and intimidation were employed to get rid of the Residency in order that the secret system of encroachment might, at all events, be revived, even if open invasion should prove inadvisable.

13. Throughout 1838, 39, and 40, our trading subjects were oppressed with unusual taxes on transit and by delays and denial of justice coming directly from the hand of a power which was unscrupulously used to brow-beat the judges into iniquity and to silence appeals to the Resident by noonday violence.<sup>12</sup> Dacoits and thugs were harboured by authority to be let loose on our provinces.<sup>13</sup> Emmissaries of intrigue were spread over all parts of India and its vicinity from Lhasa and Burma to Scinde and Herat to breed discontent among our more influential subjects, hostile combinations among our protected allies, and assault upon us from our independent allies and neighbours.<sup>14</sup> In April of 1838<sup>15</sup> the Resident received a written demand, 'what was he doing here.' In June 1840 a fictitious mutiny was got up among the troops (who were taught that the Resident had advised the wrongs of which the soldiery complained) in order that the assault they planned on the Residency might be covered by the pretense of their being unable to restrain troops in open revolt.<sup>16</sup> Throughout several months a perpetual series of authorised placards directed a popular license and fury against the Residency, and lastly, the old system of inch by inch encroachment on our dominions below was again put in action and prosecuted until 97 of our villages had been usurped by Nepal.<sup>17</sup>

14. These proceedings were challenged from time to time during their progress, were detected and exposed over and over again, and their formal rejection exacted from the Darbar in November 1839 and again in September 1840,<sup>18</sup> beside several minor renunciations. The satisfaction of all our specific grievances was thus had, and a seemingly inevitable war thus prevented. It was impossible to survey the character and position of the wrong-doers as above portrayed, or to link that survey with due notice of the excessive evasions and delays that had marked every step of their concessions to us, and not remain convinced that for even our immediate prospective security against the recurrence of those evils, a change in the men and measures of the Gorkha cabinet was necessary.

15. Accordingly, in October 1840 I was commanded to begin measures to bring about such a change,<sup>19</sup> and from that date up to February 1842, when my long series of negotiations with the Darbar closed and the military force which had been called to support the latter stages of the negotiation was removed, I was exclusively engaged, under the continued express instructions of Government, in perfecting and maintaining the change.<sup>20</sup>

16. For this purpose only was Colonel Oliver's brigade brought to the frontier--for this purpose only was it retained there, no idea of the physical protection of our provinces being in fact or in reason linked with the troop movement, and all our specific past wrongs having been remedied before it reached there. We had chosen to spare Nepal, notwithstanding her multiplied offenses and breaches of her word, and having done so, we deemed ourselves fully entitled by the law of self defense to enact such security for the future as was to be had without war. This seemed especially desirable seeing that a large proportion of the nobles of the country of high rank were willing and anxious to cooperate with us in fulfilling the eternal claims of mercy, justice, peace, and good faith--all of which had been so recklessly trampled upon by the Kala Pandeys or Palace faction in their domestic and foreign administration.

17. But, it was not merely necessary for us to obtain some guaranty against the immediate repetition of a state of things making war almost inevitable at a very inconvenient season. It was further expedient (in case Nepal, as was too probable, should continue her faithless and un-neighbourly conduct, under the secret instigation of the Kala Pandeys) to be able at a fitting period to place our relations on a firmer, enduring basis, without the vast expense of a long war in the mountains. And whilst the character of the Maharaja appeared to the Governor General in Council to be totally unworthy of our reliance from its weakness and duplicity, it was foreseen that the very numerous distinguished Chiefs whom we had encouraged to pledge themselves to us,<sup>21</sup> would be willing, if their grievances and ours continued unanswered, notwithstanding the admission of the heads of their body to office, to unite with us to achieve our goals.<sup>22</sup>

18. Under these most peculiar circumstances and with these unique purposes in view, the existing coalition between the Resident and the

peace party in this country was introduced and maintained by the express and continued instructions of Government. It was confessedly a pis aller--a temporary measure of urgent expediency, in order to maintain our position here and elsewhere against fraudful or forceful encroachment that might lead prematurely to war, and in order likewise to obtain the means of cheap and rapid victory should Nepal's continued ill will make war necessary.

19. If we look at the fruits of this alliance we can hardly deny that it has fulfilled our expectations. In the three years preceding the change of Ministry, dacoits had been authoritatively harboured all along the frontier;<sup>23</sup> hostile intrigues carried on against us throughout India and its confines; our territory largely encroached on; and our subjects cruelly oppressed. In the 18 months that have followed the change, not one instance of these grievances (not originating with the earlier epoch) can be quoted. If again we look at the condition of the Residency, though affronts have been sustained since the change, they are neither so numerous nor so dangerous as those which went before it. Nor I think, should it on this head be forgotten in defence of Ministerial slackness in the Resident's defence that on the recent occasions the Raja's personal interference in so furious a manner could hardly have been successfully and prudently opposed at the moment without the risk of inducing a crisis, which they and I alike thought had better be postponed.

20. Had indeed the Raja actually done violence against the Residency, I think that the Ministry would and could have interfered with effect; and, whatever their fears in personal opposition to their sovereign under circumstances so completely without parallel, I am thoroughly convinced that if they are forced to suffer the Crown Prince's insults until October, they will then be prepared to redeem, fully if called on, their pledge of cooperation with us.

21. We may thus be saved 30 or 40 Lakhs of rupees at a period when such a saving will have double its ordinary value, and by subsidizing or otherwise we may thereby accomplish our purposes in relation to this Kingdom as advantageously as by its conquest.<sup>24</sup>

22. My recent despatch detailing the tragedy of Bhim Sen must clearly indicate to the Governor General what the friends of peace and good faith have to apprehend at this place, where, as I have already mentioned, the symbol of the centralized administration is struggled for by two parties advocating the old and new policy of the Gorkhas with a hate embittered by hereditary wrongs. One, if not both, parties may thus be led to accept a modified national independence in order to repose under the aegis of British suzerainty.

23. It is difficult to contemplate the characters of the present ruler of Nepal and his son and entertain a hope that satisfactory relations with Nepal will be maintainable in their time upon the present footing. If their present councillors are dismissed, they will speedily

fall back into the arms of the Kala Pandeys, whose views and sentiments, as already explained, cannot change, because they support the ancient policy of the kingdom, a policy more grievous to us than any ordinary war and necessarily leading to one.<sup>25</sup>

24. We should therefore, I believe, be prepared for the worst by upholding our friends here. In quieter times abroad, they might also successfully persuade this sovereign or his son that in the new position of Nepal since the war, her ancient and cherished principles are dangerously unsuitable.

25. At all events it is most desirable that the change from our existing policy towards Nepal to another should, if possible, be quiet and gradual and be deferred until our affairs are adjusted with Afghanistan and China. If we are finally victorious in China, I should not wholly despair of seeing the Maharaja eventually accept the principles of the new school and cheerfully agree to the guidance (for guided he must be) of his future councillors.

26. Otherwise, those councillors should be given, after their resignation, an asylum in our provinces if necessary. But, short of this, their resignation, if voluntary and not too long deferred, may probably suffice for their protection here. Indeed if it be the Governor General's decision that their special connection with me cease immediately, I think I could communicate that intelligence to them in such a way as to lead to their safe resignation and at the same time to retain their good will and voluntary unofficial assistance. This is surely to be desired, for everywhere and always they must be men of great influence (four of the Ministers, viz. Rangnath, Krishna Ram, Fattah Jung, and Guru Prasad are in every respect the most considered men in Nepal). If their official link to me is kindly and carefully dissolved, they will later be found ready to rejoin us in the case of war.

27. In the foregone despatch I trust I have satisfied the Right Honorable the Governor General that there has been nothing whatever in my recent proceedings more than the necessary and consistent sequel of what had gone before, under the direct, repeated sanction and instructions of the Governor General in Council to whom every step of my proceedings was submitted at the moment it was made and from whose wisdom therefore I might have expected the correction of any unintentional error; whether in Casinath's case or in the above which made Casinath's case a bone of contention with the Darbar, viz. its identification with the all-important question of the superiority of one of the two parties in the Darbar.

28. The statement made in paragraph 19 will, I doubt not, satisfy the Governor General that the Ministers are neither powerless nor fearful, though they thought it would be imprudent in the recent, as on former occasions of the sort, directly to cross their sovereign in his fits of intemperance. Nor, I trust, when the whole case has been reviewed, will it be held that there is any subordination on my part to that Ministry whose best hopes rest on my Superiors; nor that there is in my coalition with them any probability of entanglement such as causes difficulties in

Residential-Ministerial administration of Native States in the Plains, because here we have no earthly concern with the internal affairs of the Kingdom. But the connection has nevertheless its evils, so that I shall be glad indeed to learn that the wisdom of Government has devised any substitute for it, and I beg leave to repeat that whatever that substitute may be, or whether any be found or not, I shall, having offered the above explanation, be in the future intent only on the prompt and zealous fulfilment of the Governor General's commands and wishes, whatever they may be.

29. In conclusion, I have the honor to report to you that I have just received from the Maharaja a Kharita addressed to the Governor General in which His Highness amply apologizes for the constraint recently laid upon His Lordship's representative.

I have, etc.

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Governor General to the Secret Committee, 8 July 1842<sup>26</sup>

*The Governor General sets before the Committee in London his reasons for dismissing Hodgson from the post of Resident. The pertinent letter of 8 May has been removed from this file also.*

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Honorable Sirs,

My letter of the 8th June will have served to make your Honorable Committee acquainted with the state of the question arising out of the dispute which had occurred between the Raja of Nepal and the Resident, Mr. Hodgson, and your Honorable Committee will find from the enclosures of this despatch<sup>27</sup> that the Resident instead of laying before the Nepalese Minister the translation of my instructions of the 8th May substituted for that paper a note of his own dated the 11th June in which it is stated that the Governor General wished to give the Raja an opportunity of apologizing for his violent and unusual proceedings and was ready to consider any arguments which His Highness might have to adduce in favour of his asserted jurisdiction in the case of Casinath, but that the Raja's mission and presents would not be received by me till such an apology should be made.

2. In reply to this note the Resident received a note from the Premier dated the 18th of June stating that though the Raja still felt himself justified in insisting on his own jurisdiction in the matter of Casinath, he acknowledged the impropriety of his conduct in the manner in which he had proceeded to enforce this right, requested that the circumstances might be forgotten and promised to abstain from the repetition of such conduct.

3. This paper was accompanied by a copy of the engagement into which Casinath on receiving back in 1840 his deposit money in the case in which he and Sheobux Puri were parties had engaged to appear again in the Nepal Court whenever Sheobux Puri should return to prosecute his suit. This is the same engagement as that spoken of by Karbir Sen when giving an account of this transaction to the Secretary as reported in my last despatch.

4. Mr. Hodgson was not fully satisfied with this paper and intimated to the Minister in his reply of the 19th June that in his opinion it would be proper that the Raja himself should address the Governor General to express his regret for his conduct on the 23rd April and subsequently on the 8th of June and should solicit my forgiveness for his misconduct on both those occasions.

5. The Resident's advice was followed and I have received from the Raja a letter dated the 22nd June containing the most full and ample apology for his late unaccountable conduct and begging in very humble terms that it may be overlooked and forgiven.

6. On receipt of this letter I immediately resolved to accept it as an atonement for the Raja's disrespectful treatment of my representatives at His Court and to accept the presents of which he was the bearer.

7. Karbir Sen was accordingly introduced to me in Darbar on the 5th of July, when he was honorably received and the presents were accepted. I then dismissed this envoy with a few words of exhortation to be conveyed to the Raja with respect to his future conduct, and he is already on his way back to Nepal.

8. The case of Casinath as far as the point of jurisdiction is concerned remains in the same unsatisfactory state as before, and I would wish to refrain from bringing that question just now to issue as there is a prospect of disposing of it in such a manner as may free it from all connection with international law.

9. I am not disposed to attach importance to the cases of boundary aggression which have been brought to my notice in the Resident's late correspondence, nor do I see any greater probability than ordinarily exists of the ill-regulated mind of the Raja prompting him to measures of actual collision with this Government.

10. I have expressed to Mr. Hodgson my disapprobation of the system which has been recently introduced at Kathmandu of depending for the continuance of friendly relations with the State of Nepal on a Cabinet formed on party principles which places the Minister, supposed to be attached to British interests, in constant opposition to a Court party which becomes of consequence opposed to such interests. Such a system can only be productive of irritation in the mind of the sovereign without any certainty of ensuring peace, the object for which it was introduced--as has been made evident in late transactions from the inability of the Minister to prevent exhibitions of violence on the part of the Raja and



his son both in word and action, which were calculated to precipitate us without reason into a war with Nepal.

11. It must be evident to Your Honorable Committee that it is not practicable to retrace our steps to a more prudent and legitimate course of conduct in our relations with the Government of Nepal while Mr. Hodgson, with whom the present erroneous system is identified, remains Resident at Kathmandu. I have reason to think that the gentleman's health will make it expedient for him to resign his office as soon as he can return to the plains. I should otherwise have deemed it my duty to place on record all the grounds upon which I disapprove of his recent conduct and to act according to my view of what the Public Interest requires, by relieving him from the discharge of his present official duty at Kathmandu.

I have, etc.

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#### Footnotes to Chapter Five

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 3 August 1842, No. 88; not edited.
2. Karbir Sen had been sent to the Governor General as a part of King Rajendra's effort to by-pass Resident Hodgson. Hodgson could not block this safely, and he was relying heavily on the Governor General's willingness to support his Resident.
3. Hodgson's constant reference to violence reveals a real fear that what had happened in Kabul could be repeated in Kathmandu. This says much about the tensions then apparent in the Darbar, and subsequent Residents would report much the same attitude, though they seldom considered themselves as possible objects of violence.
4. The reference is to the victories of the British army in their return to Kabul in April of this year, 1842.
5. From references such as this and the letter of the Governor General to the British Commander-in-Chief of 2 October 1841, war had indeed been a distinct possibility.
6. There can be no doubt that Hodgson had far exceeded his mandate as Resident and that he knew it. Only the Governor General's blind support could save his position. Karbir Sen's presence at the Governor General's camp made it impossible for Hodgson to vet the correspondence or interpret it for the Governor General.
7. Foreign Secret Consultation 7 September 1842, No. 75; not edited.
8. Foreign Secret Consultation 7 September 1842, No. 88; heavily edited.

9. 'See Prinsep's first two chapters and the narrative of political relations.' B.H.H.
10. 'Originating with the barbarous internal struggles of 1805 when the Kala Pandey's were thrust out; that is, all who survived the struggle.' B.H.H.
11. 'So these Chiefs are styled here: Ranjung Pandey, Karbir Pandey, and Kulraj Pandey, Jagat Bam Pandey, Dal Bahadur Pandey, the Raj Guru or Misra Guru, Kul Chand Shahi, and Amar Shahi are all the noticeable persons of the party.' B.H.H.
12. 'Cf. Resident's despatch 12 November 1839; also the case of Sheo Dyal and the Misra Guru's confessions.' B.H.H.
13. 'Cf. Resident's despatch 27 September 1840, Appendix A, No. 3 Deposition of the Merchants Jaganath and Kishan Jivan, dated August 14, 1840, repeated in Appendix 5 of despatch of 29 April 1842; cf. also letter of Government to the Resident, 26 October 1840, with annexed Kharita.' B.H.H.
14. 'Cf. Resident's reports to Government throughout 1837, 38, 39, 40. For some time there was a guard posted all along our frontiers.' B.H.H.
15. 'Cf. Resident's despatch 12 April 1838.' B.H.H.
16. 'Cf. Resident's despatch November 30, 1840, appendices 2 and 4, being notes to and from the Maharaja.' B.H.H.
17. 'See the reports of the Magistrate of Champaran to Government and to the Resident between March and September 1840; also the Darbar's surrender thereof, Resident's despatches of September and October 1840.' B.H.H.
18. 'Cf. Resident's despatch 17 November 1839 and 6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 25, and 28 September and 3, 5, 6, 9, and 14 October 1840.' B.H.H.
19. 'Despatch 26 October 1840.' B.H.H.
20. 'Despatch 25 January 1841 and 28 February 1842, Appendix 1 and 2 for the basis of the new regime's sanction.' B.H.H.
21. 'Despatch 14 February 1841, also 26 October 1840 and accompanying Kharita, and 4 January 1841.' B.H.H.
22. 'Despatch 25 January 1841.' B.H.H.
23. 'Captain Holling's statements to Court throughout 1839 and 1840.' B.H.H.

24. 'See despatch to Private Secretary, 28 September 1840.' B.H.H
25. 'See Prinsep and Political Relations as already cited.' B.H.H.
26. Governor General's Secret Despatch to the Secret Committee, No. 21 of 1842, dated 8 July 1842.
27. These enclosures have been removed from this file.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Petition the King

Following the Governor General's direct order, Hodgson withdrew his support from Fattah Jung Shah, and the Premier was forced to rely on his own resources. His frequent attempts to draw Hodgson back into a position of support are more understandable in the light of the advice given him by his friends and colleagues, 'that he must be a goose not to act upon the assumption that if the Resident could not be gained to his party it must be because the Resident had already been secretly gained by some other party.'

Hodgson had more personal problems about which to think. The Governor General had intimated to him that he would be removed from Nepal, and though Hodgson managed to have the date of his removal postponed for one year, the Governor General was definite that he must leave. It was Hodgson's hope that his faithful execution of the new policy of neutrality would impress the Governor General sufficiently to persuade the Governor General to permit him to remain on in Nepal. He refused, therefore, to be dragged back into the political arena.

Fattah Jung, left to his own devices, soon joined the popular movement that sought to put some curb on the activities of the Crown Prince. He and his fellow Chautarias, however, were far from pleased at the solution the leaders of the movement reached: that the Queen should be given broad powers of administration and the authority to constrain the Prince. It would have suited their plans far more neatly if the Prime Minister, as a royal collateral, had been given this authority.

King Rajendra Bikram showed himself quite adept at channeling the energies of the popular movement after he learned most embarrassingly that he could not block it. His Lal Mohar to Fattah Jung conferring on him powers no Prime Minister had enjoyed since the days of Bhim Sen Thapa divided the Ministry and reawakened individual ambitions to the ruin of their united action. More importantly, he sent for Mathabar Singh Thapa, whom he expected to throw all the forces ranged against him into confusion. A man such as Mathabar Singh could not simply be absorbed into any coalition of forces. Personality, experience, and personal ambition would achieve the King's purpose.

Resident Hodgson to Government, 2 September 1842<sup>1</sup>

*Hodgson's report of secret intelligence is interesting. Perhaps more interesting is his comment in paragraph three of his covering letter. It is this sentiment that led Hodgson to urge regular recruitment of Gorkhali soldiers into the Company's army. Also of special interest is paragraph eight of the intelligence report.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to submit (Appendix No. 1) a paper of secret intelligence. I have some reason to rely on its general accuracy and I find it remarkably illustrative of the restlessness of this Darbar.

2. The Raja seems to be almost equally ready to assault Chinese, Sikhs, English or Bhutanese, as circumstances may suggest, and, in fact, the hostile feeling towards ourselves would seem largely to result from the fact that our territories close to Nepal all the Roads to war and conquest.

3. It was perhaps a grave error, or at least an unhappy necessity, which led us after our own war with Nepal to block her on all sides territorially without striving at the same time either to redirect the exclusively military tendency of her institutions and habits, or, to afford employment to her military tribes in our armies.

4. Peace and commerce have failed to work (as was long since foretold)<sup>2</sup> the expected quieting effect on the nation. Nor can there be any doubt that the national bias towards war is the remote sustaining cause of that untired spirit of hostile intrigue on the Darbar's part which during the past 5 disturbed years we have had to wrestle with perpetually. Repeated detection and preventing these intrigues should have put down this spirit, but it has not, and the chances are that one day our vigilance will fail.

5. Government will recall that, some time back, free passage for the Gorkha troops through Sikkim for the seizure of Bhutan was unblushingly asked of our Government as now they ask China for permission to cross through Tibet. Now it is said that the Raja has been incited to tell his Minister that if the English would have peace they should buy it of him by granting that favour--or by the restoration of Kumaon!

I have, etc.

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Appendix No. 1<sup>3</sup>

Translation of a paper of secret intelligence

The Maharaja and Crown Prince went to Nuwakot, following Jagat Bam Pandey, the Darbar's envoy to Peking, in order to prepare without observation their secret despatches for Lhasa and Peking, which were delivered to the Envoy himself at Nuwakot before his departure in June. It is expected that the Envoy's despatches, in reply, from Lhasa will reach Kathmandu shortly, and some answer from Peking may be here by November if the Chinese Viceroy of Lhasa consent to send on the Nepal despatches, in advance of the Embassy, by the Imperial Post and if the same means be used by the Peking authorities to expedite their Court's answer.

The Raja and Crown Prince have both addressed the Viceroy as well as the Emperor, making a variety of propositions and even threatening to use the opportunity against the Emperor should he neglect their entreaties to be allowed to use it for his and Nepal's common benefit. The Darbar's Envoy also carries despatches to the Russian authorities at Pekin, of which the exact tenor is not known; but the despatches are made up in an armet worn by the Envoy and are not to be communicated except under certain circumstances to the Chinese at all, nor to the party addressed without due previous enquiry and investigation after the arrival of the Mission at Pekin.

The Raja's letters to the Viceroy and Emperor lay much stress on the difficulties of the Company, on the losses and expenses in Kabul and on the prospect of troubles greater still and aggravated by revolt and resistance of the Company's subjects and allies. Such an opportunity for striking a blow at the English power in India as the coming season offers will not, it is said, ever occur again. The Raja complains of the manner in which his fidelity to China has exposed him to English oppression and says he longs to throw off the English ally and resume the career of his ancestors. He affirms that he has plenty of gallant soldiers but needs money to employ them with effect beyond his own borders. He asks for a large sum in coin or the cession to him of the district of Taklakot opposite to Humla, where he believes there exists a rich gold mine, and if the money or the mine be granted, he offers to attack the Company's territory in the plains or Hills, or to expel the Sikhs from Naree and Ladakh. He also asks for free passage for his troops through Tibet in order to reach Deo Dharma (Bhutan) whence he could cooperate with the Burmese favourably to the Emperor's interests.

In conclusion, he says his soldiers are wearied of being shut up on all sides by the English and that if he be not permitted to break through his bounds with the aid of China, he shall be forced to do so against China with English aid, which he has only to ask for in order to get.

The above is the substance of the letters for the Chinese at Lhasa and at Pekin. In the same strain, though more concisely, the Russians at Pekin are addressed, it is believed. But such extreme care has been used relative to the latter papers that probably only one or two persons here know what was written, and but a few more are aware that anything at all has been written to that quarter.

The Darbar's Vakil at Lhasa writes that 5,000 more troops under four Sardars left Lhasa for Ladakh in May and that a Sikh envoy to the Chinese camp in Naree had been sent to Lhasa where he was tortured and was still imprisoned at the date of the Vakil's letter, and when also the last advices from the Chinese camp stated the belligerents to be at a stand or balance at or near the capital of Ladakh.

By Dassain (about a month hence) the mourning for the Senior Queen will be over, when it is supposed the Raja will abdicate in favour of his Eldest Son, who is already addressed by the style and title of

Maharajadhiraj and gives what orders he likes. The Raja never opposes him but on the contrary seconds and sanctions all the Crown Prince pleases to say or do; and the iyotishis (astrologers) give out that the Crown Prince is an incarnation, destined to extirpate the Feringies. Wherefore it would be impiety to check him, young as he is. For four years past all this has been concocting. It originated with the late Rani and the Kala Pandeys and under their auspices the iyotishis gave out the tale of the incarnation, also announcing the coming troubles of the English, which prophecy they say has come true and will be completed in the new century that is about to begin. (This year is 1899 of the Sambat era).

The Raja is now seen to have been accessory to those devices, for he is following them out in practice, and it is conjectured that in abdicating in his son's favour he purposes to be prepared for war if his hopes of Chinese aid and the continuance of the Afghani resistance be realized. In that event he will throw off the mask and commit himself to war, trusting in the case of the worst, to save his Kingdom by its alleged transfer to his son and by his own surrender if need be.

True translation

B.H. Hodgson, Resident

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 5 September 1842<sup>4</sup>

*Hodgson reports the beginnings of King Rajendra Bikram's campaign to set up the Crown Prince, Surendra Bikram, as a screen for his own activity. What exactly the King intended has never been clear, but his action caused untold suffering and led to great violence.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that upon September 1st I visited the Maharaja in Darbar by His Highness' request upon a sudden summons through Abhiman Rana, who was sent to escort me to Darbar.

2. I found the Maharaja and Crown Prince in one of the open quadrangles of the Palace and was treated with much courtesy during the short interview I had with them.

3. During this interview the Crown Prince rather than the Raja played the part of Sovereign and as I approached the Crown Prince, hand-in-hand with his father, the Maharaja whispered to me, 'Call him Maharajadhiraj,' to which I whispered in reply 'whatever is done in that matter by me should have the prior sanction of the Governor General.'

4. I contrived to give satisfaction on this occasion by the use of the neutral term Hazoor, but, as all ranks of this Kingdom have been required to address the Crown Prince by the royal title, and as the Crown Prince is daily assuming more distinctly the functions of Sovereign, though there be yet no sign of abdication on his father's part, I request the instructions of the Right Honorable the Governor General as to the course that I am to pursue in matters of form and in matters of business, should the son seek to exact from me with his father's concurrence and without his father's resignation, that full observance which he has already been permitted to exact from all others.

5. Following my own judgement, I would rather concede everything than dispute on this point, were concession likely to be immaterial, and were the transfer of sovereignty less open to suspicion of fraud and less dreaded by the good and wise owing to the violence of the Crown Prince's proceedings.

6. The lapse of a month or 6 weeks will, it is supposed, set this point in a clearer light, involving possibly in its determination the question of the administration. Wherefore I shall be, in the interim, most careful to guide myself in essentials by the spirit of your instructions of the 3rd June and 8th August, and, in trifles, by the utmost disposition to avoid debate with children and madmen, though I badly fear there be too much method in this madness.

7. Though not told so, I was really sent for on the 1st in order thus practically to get rid of rumours of intended violence towards the Residency following some extravagancies of the Crown Prince towards his own Chiefs and people; and to these extravagancies a slight self apologetic allusion was made with much courtesy.

8. I have the honor further to report that the Crown Prince's younger brother was yesterday sent to me to enquire after my health; and that this first occasion of so distinguished a visitor coming to the Residency was marked by me by the presentation of a suitable gift to my youthful guest.

9. The visit went off very well and the gift was graciously accepted, so much so that my young friend could not resist the opportunity of telling me what five things his Brother (the Crown Prince) intended to have included in the Darbar's proposed Khillat to me!

10. I grieve to be obliged to add that perpetual insult and injury is the indiscriminate portion of too many of the Chiefs at this, for me, halcyon moment.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 11 September 1842<sup>5</sup>

*Hodgson's temporizing on the question of the Resident's neutrality towards Nepali domestic politics tends to confirm the local belief that the Company's countenance (support) is essential to any Ministry's stability. Therefore the necessity to court this countenance becomes a factor in Nepalese political thinking.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that yesterday by the Premier's desire I met him and his three chief colleagues. He tried earnestly to extract from me some fresh pledges of support or a declaration of what my government would do.

2. I told him that I considered this attempt of his ill-timed. Until the entirely new and absorbing question of the settlement of the throne should be disposed of, any question as to the Ministry must be pointless.

In reply to an allusion of his to the binding force on my government of the Nuwakot engagement, I returned to the above topic and combined it with a gentle reminder that the failures on his side in regard to the Nuwakot engagement had completely released the obligation of that bond.

3. I then observed that though, under a possible continuance of the old circumstances (viz. the Raja not abdicating nor seeking to change his Ministers) I should not seek to withhold from him the indirect support of my Government's auspices. I must object however to more direct interference unseasonably called for, and, as an instance, I took this occasion to repeat to the Premier that I could not, according to his wish, make any present remonstrances against the reappearance of the Kala Pandeys in Darbar in attendance on the Crown Prince.

4. The Premier argued that such merely implied countenance was insufficient and that he must resign if not better assured as to the future. Whereupon I told him that my Government did not desire to burden him but on the contrary would rather rely on its own resources. If he, looking solely to the welfare of himself and his colleagues, considered resignation expedient, I could not object. Rather as a friend I desired to point out the great advantage he might derive from making a grace of such a proceeding instead of being driven to it.

5. The kindness of this remark was obviously felt. So too when I desired to learn from the Premier, as a man of sense familiar with affairs, how long he supposed an evidently extraordinary expedient would work as an ordinary one with benefit to himself and his friends.

6. This imprudent talk of resignation has given me an advantage that I shall carefully retain. No further allusion can now be made to the obligation of the Nuwakot engagement. If we still give support, it must be taken as a gratuity. I might have pushed the advantage further to the dissolution of the connection at once and altogether. Perhaps doing so would have been most suited to the mere letter of my instructions. But the proceedings and characters of the Raja and of his son constitute a state of things of unparalleled perplexity which no Chief or Chiefs are willing to deal with so promisingly for the maintenance of immediate peace and quiet as the present Ministry, overtaken as they are in the attempt. Therefore I have deemed it most helpful to the real aim and purpose of the Right Honorable the Governor General in relation to Nepal, rather to let the change of Ministry come if it must than to precipitate it and, while watching and prepared to take further advantage of the course of events, to strive to maintain with all parties and especially with that now in office, a reputation for circumspect firmness united with perfect integrity.

7. That reputation will operate powerfully and beneficially upon the Raja and his son; and neither they nor any Chief of eminence can fail to be soon aware that whilst the Right Honorable the Governor General desires only peace and friendship with Nepal, His Lordship has no partiality or preference regarding the Ministers through whom those ends are attained.

8. Guided by these sentiments I maintained at the recent interview with the Ministers a firmness that was not to be shaken by their true and distressing accounts of their internal troubles. At the same time I was at pains to be conciliatory and convincing in regard to their past or future relation to me as a representative of a foreign Government.

9. With the Gurus I succeeded at once,<sup>6</sup> and after I came away, they warmly argued that what I had said was reasonable. Repeating to the Chautarias that unquestionably they ought to await the settlement of the Throne in the first place and in the second, and even if disposed to continue in office, they ought to realize that my support of them could only continue to be effective if it was rarely and prudently given.

10. There had been no need, the Gurus urged, for them (the Ministry) to raise the question of resignation at all with the Resident. Having done so, they had got a fair answer from the Resident and must now rely more than ever on their own resources if they remained in office.

11. Should the Chautarias respond to the clearer thinking coolness of the Gurus, their united Ministry may still perhaps endure awhile, to the benefit of their own country and of ours. If not, and they find it necessary to resign owing to the actual change in the Throne or otherwise, we may yet, I trust, so manage that all four shall retire without risk or diminished good will towards the British Government--very greatly to be desired.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 30 September 1842<sup>7</sup>

Sir,

I am directed by the Governor General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th September and in reply to state that the Lordship entirely approves of the line of conduct adopted by you in the interview which you had with the Ministry as therein reported.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 23 September 1842<sup>8</sup>

*The Governor General sets forth the principle that will guide the Company's reaction to the King's effort to push the Crown Prince forward. The Crown Prince's resentment at this treatment will cause him to demand recognition more and more, both at home and abroad.*

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Sir,

Your letter of the 5th September has been received and laid before the Governor General.

2. In reply to the first Paragraph, the Governor General remarks that it would be contrary to the practice observed in all countries to admit the young Prince's pretension to participate in the Sovereignty of Nepal, or that the representative of the British Government should address him as sovereign till some formal act of the Raja abdicating in favour of his son or associating his son with himself in the Government of Nepal should have been duly communicated to the head of the Government of India.

3. You will on the first occasion which may arise, that in your opinion calls for the announcement of the Governor General's views on this question, make them known to the Raja and the Ministry.

I have, etc.

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Governor General to Resident Hodgson, 24 October 1842<sup>9</sup>

*The Governor General here makes it clear to Hodgson that he will be relieved of his post. The time of Hodgson's retirement had apparently been discussed in private correspondence prior to this, the Governor General opting for the winter of 1842 and Hodgson urging the Governor General to permit him to remain for one more year. The decision made here, however, will not be revoked.*

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Sir,

I received this morning your letter of the 8th October. Under the circumstances stated by you, I cannot press your repairing to my Camp, which is now much more distant from Nepal than I expected that it would be when I expressed a desire to receive you there.

I shall now consider it to be settled that you retire from your situation at the Court of the Maharaja of Nepal at the close of the year 1843, and, that settled, I think there would be an advantage in your making your intention known to the Maharaja at no distant period, in order that there may not appear to be any abruptness in the measure of your retirement.

I shall select as your successor some officer of recent military distinction, and this you may make known to the Maharaja when you acquaint him with your intention of retiring at the close of 1843.

I am anxious to be informed of the effect which the news of recent success in Afghanistan and China may have on the Maharaja and his son.

I am in hopes that the position of strength in which we are now placed will very materially diminish your difficulties and enable you to rely upon the knowledge of our power and upon that alone for the protection of British rights and interests, which can never have any other real security.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 17 November 1842<sup>10</sup>

*Unable to secure Hodgson's continued support, the Fattah Jung Shah Ministry begins to maneuver to force the King either to assume full responsibility for the Crown Prince's acts or to put someone in power who can do so.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that the Premier this morning sent his confidential man to me to inform me that the incessant and increasing cruelties and insults of the Crown Prince towards all classes, together with the Raja's continued acquiescence therein and apparent collusion with his son to an extent rendering it now impossible for anyone to know who is and who is not the responsible occupant of the throne, had determined the Ministers at length to carry the universal complaints to the country to the Raja and to insist on an intelligible adjustment of affairs, conformably to the laws and constitutions of Nepal.

2. The Premier's messenger next stated to me that he was instructed to ask my opinion as to the propriety and expediency of this course, some of the details of which he would probably have proceeded to lay before me; but I promptly though courteously anticipated him with many thanks for the information conveyed--which information, however, I observed, a foreigner in a country full of national prejudices was not in a condition to offer advice upon; and that if I were so foolish as to attempt it, my blunders could only embarrass the Premier, and, yet more so, the prejudices which my supposed interference would excite.

3. Some days before, the Premier himself had endeavoured to see me alone, as well as to draw me into another conference with his colleagues and himself, but I continued civilly to evade him on both occasions, and to move easily on the second, because my disapproval of any such measure was entirely concurred in by the Guru section of the Ministry.

4. I understand that the present proceedings of the Chiefs are widely and thoroughly approved by the civil and military classes, and that, in fact, the Ministry have been almost compelled to their adoption by the general indignation of the country.

5. According to the Premier's statement to me, the Ministers, if their remonstrance succeed not, mean to tender their resignation and to insist on liberty of retirement from the country. The latter, a resolve which hundreds, it is said, are prepared to participate in and abide by.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 24 November 1842<sup>11</sup>

*Fatteh Jung's belief that the Resident could do something, if he wished to do so, brings him back again and again to the Residency. Hodgson is unable to tell him directly that the new Governor General has changed the Company's policy and will not permit the Resident to support any faction.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you, in continuation of my despatch of the 17th November, that the Premier yesterday made another and earnest attempt to engage my concurrence or advice or opinion in regard to the contemplated demonstration of the Chiefs against the Maharaja's evasion of the responsibilities of his place and his permitting the incessant cruelties and insults perpetrated by his son, and to add that I most positively but courteously declined to give even an opinion on the subject.

2. It is rumored that the Chiefs generally are becoming dissatisfied with the Premier owing to his hesitation and delay regarding a measure not permitting delay in their opinion and to which he had fully agreed to begin with. It seems to me not likely that my continued refusal to have anything to do with the matter may lead to its failing and ending in nothing.

3. The Premier (through his messenger, as before) informed me that the Raja and his Son were daily most urgent that he resume his functions for the coming year, but that so long as the Raja continued, as now, to evade the whole responsibility of his throne, yet without resigning it, he, the Premier, could neither answer to foreign governments nor to the suffering country for the conduct of the Darbar. I answered that I felt for him deeply, but with regard to advice could only reiterate what I had said to him and his colleagues at the conference of October, viz., that they must retain or relinquish office according to their own judgment of what was best for themselves.

There is no appearance of any other candidate for the Premiership at present; nor any likelihood of the Raja's immediate abdication or going to Banaras. Kulraj Pandey is still unpunished; disquiet and apprehension are generally excited through the country, which has its eyes turned on the Ministers, who have their eyes turned on the British Representative. The absence of all effective yet temperate, or in other words, constitutional means for the redress of grievances appears thus to fix their attention on external sanctions in order to prevent that violence which the want of all barriers just spoken of is so apt in these cases to generate.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 2 December 1842<sup>12</sup>

*Hodgson points out for the first time the growing desire to bring the Junior Queen into the Government as an alternative to the strange collusion between the King and his Crown Prince.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that all is still quiet, though nothing is yet decided. There is no appearance of the Raja or of his Son having any party at all able to back them. Their Highnesses, though completely insulated, have not yet shown any disposition to comply with the demands of the country. The Maharaja's obstinate adherence to his past system of evading all responsibility under cover of his son's name is said to be operating very unfavourably for both in public opinion, some already requiring that the Queen be called in and made superintendent of the administration of the Palace and of public affairs, though

without detriment to the honorary right and possession of succession of the throne. Others seem inclined to change the succession and make the Queen Regent for the elder of her two sons as the minor occupant of the Throne.

2. The Ministers retain their popularity and complete control over the sympathies and actions of the Chiefs and army but seem to follow rather than lead the general movement and to be divided sectionally in opinion with reference to the degree of change that is now necessary for the public security and their own.

3. The Guru part of the Cabinet with the Chiefs generally and the army are alleged to be growing anxious to bring in the Queen and to place her at the head of affairs, she being a prudent, well-esteemed person and the Raja's now sole and legitimate wife, who alone they affirm is able to manage the interior of the Palace and to keep in order her husband and his eldest son. The Chautarias are understood to be averse to this measure as tending too much towards a change of the succession or as likely to hurt their personal interests. However, as they state no valid public grounds for their opposition, nor suggest any other feasible course, their opposition will, it is supposed, soon cease or be overruled as clearly selfish.

4. The Raja has two sons by his first and deceased wife; but no heed seems taken one way or the other of the second son by this marriage. His Highness has also two sons by his second and living wife, the lady above mentioned and who now is with them at Banepa, about 12 miles east of the capital.

5. Yesterday a general meeting of the Chiefs and officers of the army (as its representatives) took place on the Tundikhel in the open air. The Raja came there, an unexpected and uninvited guest. His Highness, by argument, entreaty, and even threat tried to persuade the Chiefs or the officers to accept the existing state of things, pledging himself that no further cruelties or insults to anyone should result from it. He was answered separately by both bodies, who boldly told him that they could not and would not any longer obey two masters and that he had broken his word too often to be further trusted. Numerous instances were assigned in which the Raja had allowed them to be punished by his son for obedience to his own express commands. Whilst for all the murders, maimings, beatings, and insults perpetrated by his son he was told that he had evaded giving or authorizing atonement or prevention in any single instance.

6. The debate was long and animated and had hundreds of auditors in its course from among the passers-by whose access was unmolested; and I hear that the Raja's equivocations and obstinacy at length elicited from the crowd loud murmurs of disapprobation, amid which His Highness in vain ordered the several components of the assembly to break up and disperse. None would sever themselves, nor an individual of any one body. In the end His Highness departed with but one follower for the

Palace, where he and his son have each 4 Sardars assigned for attendance on them and to prevent the personal freedom of either father or son.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 3 December 1842<sup>13</sup>

*Hodgson's report reveals him once again being swept away by over-identification with local politics. Here he begins to refer to the popular discontent as a 'Great National Movement.'*

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Sir,

In continuation of my despatch of the 2nd, I have the honor to report to you that yesterday another meeting took place under precisely similar circumstances with the mode of the preceding day and that the Raja in like manner again repaired to it. His Highness urgently pressed upon the assembly, as before, that his son should be recognized as Maharajadhiraj without his own abdication, and the Chiefs, civil and military, steadily reiterated their refusal.

2. The Maharaja then brought his son forward, but the boy appeared extremely reluctant to face the meeting, and it cost his father so much pains to inspirit him that the spectators are said to have become convinced by witnessing the scene that the son has been all along and is, essentially and in the main, the tool of the Father.

3. When the Crown Prince had at length been encouraged by the Maharaja sufficiently to address the assembly, he told them that he would be content for the present with the title and station of Yuvaraj;<sup>14</sup> and that his own accession and his father's abdication should take place in April, but that, if no auspicious aspect of the heavenly bodies could be found by the astrologers in April, he would then withdraw his pretensions till his 16th year, nor interfere with the Government in the meanwhile in either event.

4. The assembly having professed its satisfaction with this preliminary, it was next moved that the arrangement should be reduced to writing and that the father and son should be bound by articles of agreement designed to prevent the recurrence of the past savage and irresponsible system of government. But night being by this time at hand, the drawing of these papers was deferred till the morrow.

5. What effective security by the Chautarias as heads of the administration at once and of the movement can reasonably expect to find in mere paper bonds, I do not understand, and still less the entire drift and scope of these doings. So soon as I shall deem it prudent to see



some of the Ministers, I may hope for some insight into the real matter. In the meantime I may add for the ad interim information of the Right Honorable the Governor General that my intelligencers gather from the remarks of the numerous groups of listeners scattered round the meeting a good many signs of dissatisfaction with the proceedings of yesterday in relation to the Chautarias. Why, it was asked, was the Raja or his Son allowed daily to intrude on the assembly and give the initiative to its proceedings? Who could now trust the Raja and his Son? Why was the abdication deferred till April? And why not the Queen called in and restored to her undoubted rights, she being evidently the only person to manage the Palace upon which the management of the Government had always depended and would still. Murmurs and even threats were occasionally mixed with the mention of the younger Chautaria's name,<sup>15</sup> who it was said was disposed to neutralize the efficacy of a great national movement because the Queen, if brought-in, might perchance rate such a mountebank at no more than his worth.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 4 December 1842<sup>16</sup>

*Hodgson's description of the origins of a petition that is famous in Nepalese history is most interesting and useful. It should be noted that the Gurus back the Junior Queen, while the Chautarias back the Crown Prince.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

In continuation of my despatches to you of yesterday and the day before respecting the internal politics of this State, I have the honor to report to you that another meeting was held yesterday, as before, but without the Raja's or his Son's attendance. A committee of 6 Kazis,<sup>17</sup> 2 Sardars,<sup>18</sup> 2 Captains commandant,<sup>19</sup> and 3 confidential scribes<sup>20</sup> was constituted, with orders from the meeting to frame a set of articles of agreement for presentation to the Maharaja, designed to afford future satisfaction and security to all parties and persons and to ensure a responsible administration of the Government.

2. The committee's draft is to embrace the due protection of the legitimate rights, public and personal, of all the aggrieved, whether within or without the Raja's own family, and, of course, to include the condition of the Queen and of her two sons (for some months past miserably exiled from the capital) and, not less so, the preservation of the legitimate rights of the Raja and the Crown Prince. It is to be corrected by the meeting and to be presented to the Maharaja in two days, if possible.

3. It seems generally felt that a common sense of wrongs and danger will keep the chiefs united and enable them to carry through their proposed reform successfully, though it is no longer doubtful that the Guru and Chautaria sections of the Ministry lean respectively to a somewhat exclusive preference of the Queen's and Crown Prince's separate interests.

4. The pressure from without, however, and consequent necessity of impartial dealings will, it is said, permit no bias to be laid on the proposed settlement, and will ensure its being quietly accomplished, whatever may prove to be its duration and practical efficacy and there too the prospect is thought good.

5. The composition of the committee indicates that these prognostics are well founded, at least for the present. The country generally is warmly disposed to protect the injured Queen and her sons, and the prevailing sentiment, it is alleged, will ensure for a time that object from which more may eventually follow for the public benefit as well as theirs.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 6 December 1842<sup>21</sup>

*Hodgson describes from his sources this truly historic moment in the history of Nepal. It is clear, however, that Hodgson himself is far too strongly taken up in the emotion of the moment to function well as a neutral observer.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

In continuation of my despatches of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of December respecting the internal politics of this State, I have the honor to report to you that yesterday the Ministers, the Chiefs, the principal authorities of all the towns of the Valley, the chief merchants, and the whole body of the officers of the army at Kathmandu (8,000 strong) as its representatives, met as before at the Tundikhel to hear, to approve or modify the draft of the petition of right as prepared by their committee, and that this document was unanimously sanctioned and directed to be presented to the Maharaja on the 7th, or tomorrow.

2. During the sitting, the Maharaja, attended by his eldest Son, made his appearance at the meeting, and tried to carry things his own way with the high hand; but the assembly remained unmoved, desiring His Highness to depart from among them and expect their respectful petition, which would be shortly delivered to him.

3. His Highness next attempted to intimidate the meeting through his Son, but the Crown Prince was himself too much alarmed to undertake

to frighten others, and the Maharaja, having failed in this point also, soon after returned to the Palace.

4. Considerable curiosity has been excited by the Maharaja's demeanour on this occasion, on the supposition that someone must have instigated His Highness thereto, and vengeance is said to be vowed against the instigator, should his practise be continued to the extent of inducing the Raja to refuse his assent and signature to the country's demands, as now proposed for his ratification.

5. The general belief, however, is that the Lal Mohar, or great seal, will be affixed to this document tomorrow, when the Maharani is immediately to be brought in by a splendid deputation and to be reinstated in the Palace, which it is hoped her prudence and good disposition, her undoubted light, her sex and popularity will suffice to control, at least for a year or two, the Raja being by nature flexible, and the Crown Prince not yet 13 years complete.

6. Perfect order and peace and quiet continue to be maintained throughout the capital and country, nor are any apprehensions seemingly entertained that the provinces and off-role soldiery will attempt to undo what may be done (and now is said to be sure of completion) at the metropolis, with an unanimity and absence of violence so surprising as to appear somewhat suspicious to the stranger and spectator merely.

7. I beg to add that these daily reports to you are founded entirely on ordinary intelligence--respecting events however in themselves sufficiently open and notorious, and that I have (as already reported) purposely avoided any communication with persons of rank, in or out of office, from whom I might have gathered more surely the scope and probable issue of these events. I have reason to believe nevertheless that the main facts have been correctly gleaned by my intelligencers, but though their tendency up to this moment is strongly to indicate a successful and quiet issue to this extraordinary movement, yet it cannot escape the Right Honorable the Governor General's penetration that, from the nature of the thing, a day, an hour, may yet produce a reaction; that the reaction, if it come, would probably be violent; that violences of this sort are apt to seek an external vent, and lastly, that whilst there are within these Hills some 30,000 trained soldiers for all of whom arms are forthcoming in the arsenals, in the plains as far south as the Ganges we have scarcely a single soldier from the Arrah to the Brahmaputra.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 8 December 1842<sup>22</sup>

*The event Hodgson describes here was truly historic and fully in accord with previous practice in Kathmandu Valley during Malla times.<sup>23</sup> During the modern period, after 1769, this seems to be the only known*

case in which the people and military leaders combined to present demands to their sovereign.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you, in continuation of my despatches on the internal affairs of this Darbar, that yesterday, according to prior arrangements, an immense deputation waited upon the Maharaja in Darbar to present their committee's draft of the petition of right (or whatever it should be called) which had been approved of by the country on the 5th and which was, after a little delay, sanctioned and ratified by the Maharaja on the 7th, amid the loud applauses of the multitude around the Darbar, and the less noisy but not less sincere mutual gratulations of the whole city, whose inhabitants collected together in groups, were seen all yesterday expressing their joy at the happy change so peaceably effected after 12 days of peril and anxiety.

2. So soon as the Maharaja had set his seal to the paper or papers presented to him, a splendid cortege set off to escort into Kathmandu the Queen who is expected to arrive at 4:00 p.m. today.

3. I understand that the rules just established for the government of the Palace and the Kingdom are founded mainly on those of Drabya Shah, the grandfather of Prithvinarayan; that they are much applauded by the sagacious, and that sufficient guarantees are supposed to have been taken, for their practical validity and endurance, by the share of executive authority assigned therein to the Queen.

4. An attempt was made on the night previous to the ratification of this compact, to get up a reaction and, with the aid of 300 soldiers won over by Bodman Karki, the Raja's secret agent in the affair, to make the Kampu or mass of the soldiery the instruments of seizing the heads of the 'movement.' But the design was frustrated by the vigilance of the popular Chiefs, who had the magnanimity to screen and pardon Bodman and four associates of his who would else have been sacrificed by the incensed Kampu.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Hodgson, 11 December 1842<sup>24</sup>

*The Governor General holds fast to his policy of not interfering in Nepal's domestic affairs, regardless of the outcome. His policy is to recognize the legitimate authority in Nepal and let the chips fall where they may.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th November and to inform you that the Governor General is perfectly satisfied with your declining to give any opinion to the Minister with respect to the course which the party with which he is connected should pursue in the present state of Nepal.

2. However distressing may be to the people of Nepal the enormities which are occasionally perpetrated by the Crown Prince by the sufferance of his weak father, those excesses of insane cruelty regard the people of Nepal alone; they have no bearing upon the relations of Nepal with the British Government, and the Governor General would least of all desire to make the British Government in any manner responsible through the advice its Minister at the Court of Nepal might give, for events of which it would be impossible to control or foresee the course, and which would not improbably ultimately involve acts of violence towards the Crown Prince and a change in the line of succession to the throne of Nepal.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 23 December 1842<sup>25</sup>

*This letter exposes some of the problems the new arrangement of Palace affairs is meeting. It is clear that the King has agreed to some generalities, but on specific aspects of power he is vague. For the first time Jung Bahadur is mentioned in relation to Palace affairs.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that on the 19th December two Chiefs (Jung Bahadur and Kulman Basnyat) waited on me to desire that I would convey to the Right Honorable the Governor General the Maharaja's congratulations upon the eminent success of our arms in Kabul and in China.

2. I have the honor further to report that I yesterday accompanied the Maharaja in a ride about the environs of the City, and that His Highness informed me of his having heard from the Governor of Jumla that the Sikhs and Chinese had made peace on the basis of prior possession, that is, leaving Ladakh to the former and Naree to the latter. The Maharaja had not been previously abroad for some time. He was almost unattended, and his face bore numerous marks of (as I am told) his son's nails.<sup>26</sup> He seemed anxious to speak to me confidentially, but I did not encourage him; and if he had any such desire, he did not fulfil it.

3. The Queen likewise and the Guru and Chautaria sections of the Ministers have each shown a disposition to confer with me confidentially upon passing events here, but under the circumstances I have deemed it most prudent civilly to evade all parties alike.

4. Since I had last the honor to address you on the internal affairs of this State, nothing very material has occurred. For some days after they had accepted the engagement then reported, the Maharaja and his Son continued with much childish petulance to manifest in concert their spleen and aversion, but without the least ability to give their disapproval practical effect. Within the last few days, however, the Maharaja is said to have somewhat mended his own position in the eye of the country by abandoning his Son as incorrigibly vicious and insane.

5. The above-alluded-to imprudences of Father and Son have, it is alleged, deepened the prior conviction as to the incapacity of both to exercise any authority whatever over the affairs of Government; and but for the jealousy of the Chautaria section of the Ministry, the Queen would before this have become virtually and de facto, as well as on paper, the sole responsible head of the State, acting with the counsel and aid of the present Ministers and leaving the Raja only the honors and ensigns of his rank, at least for the present.

6. Three more meetings have been held owing to the extravagances of the Crown Prince and his Father's accession thereto, and it is reported to me that, as the result of these meetings, two Lal Mohars have been framed and are now ready for the Raja's signature. By the one of these, His Highness is required to consent to his Son's being placed under proper restraint as non compos, and by the other the Raja agrees that for a limited period to come, he will in no way or degree interfere with the domestic or foreign administration, the superintendency of which he makes over at once to the Queen.

7. The precise written extent, and practical immediate admission of the Queen's authority, appear to be now and likely to remain, matters of latent contest, owing to the Raja's name being upheld and used by the Chautarias both as a shield and a sword to check the rising of Her Highness' chief friends; and it will be happy for Nepal should this latent struggle not generate open violence.

8. The several leaders show from time to time, as this scale or that preponderates, a disposition to refer themselves to the arbitrament of the British Government. But, whatever the merits and popularity of the Queen, it is apt to become increasingly difficult to remain neutral among such jealous actors, and on the other hand, apparently tempting opportunities are apt to present themselves, yet upon the whole and thus far I see no actual or prospective proposition for us equal to that of the existing rigid neutrality.

Before long, I trust, I shall be able to procure and forward to you copies of the engagements entered into by the Maharaja and in the

meanwhile have only to add that order and tranquillity continue to pervade the Capital and Kingdom.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 10 January 1843<sup>27</sup>

*Hodgson's letter and the accompanying Lal Mohar indicate that the King indeed is handing over less power than was assumed in the first flush of the popular victory.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that on the 8th January the Chautaria Guru Prasad and Kazis Ranjore Thapa and Jung Bahadur waited on me at the Residency to communicate officially the intelligence that Lakshmi Devi, the now sole surviving wife of the Maharaja, had been established in her full right as Queen and had been moreover invested with some political powers, the nature and extent of which did not seem to me very clearly defined, or, if so, not to be fully understood by my visitors, or else to be purposely veiled by them.

2. I answered the communication by customary words of courtesy, and added that if any political responsibility in regard to foreign states had been conveyed to the Queen, as the message itself for my Government from the Darbar seemed to imply, usage and expediency alike suggested that such change should be made known to the Right Honorable the Governor General by Kharita.

3. I apprehend that the vagueness of the message was not accidental, nor the circumstance of its being conveyed by Guru Prasad, who is rumoured to be the chief obstacle to the conferring of such decided authority upon the Queen as most of the Chiefs and the country at large allege to be now indispensable for the public weal.

4. The conjecture is confirmed by the dubious tenour of the accompanying (Appendix No. 1) Lal Mohar of the Maharaja which is said to have transferred the virtual direction of the Government entirely to the Queen, but does not really do so in clear terms. nor I suspect will now suffice to effect it in fact, though the Queen's party hopes it will.

5. I procured this document through a private channel; and in my answer to the Darbar's message of the 8th I was careful to seem incurious and indifferent to all but the point of form requiring that a message of such apparent tenour be ever communicated directly from the head of one Government to that of another.

6. The Crown Prince continued his extravagancies within the narrow limits of mischief to which he is now circumscribed: a Lal Mohar formally sanctioning his being put under restraint is talked of. The Maharaja appears to have mended his position considerably since he ceased to identify himself wholly with the boy: all is quiet throughout the city and country.

I have, etc.

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### Appendix I

Lal Mohar of the Maharaja of Nepal to the Maharani of Nepal, 1 Paus 1899 B.S., January 1843<sup>28</sup>

### TRANSLATION

The Maharani is aware that formerly the Crown Prince and myself had equal power and that the Crown Prince without provocation gave great trouble and punished and disgraced people without cause, and that I did not interfere with him. Everything in this way became disordered. In consequence the Gurus and priests, my relations, my Ministers, all the Chiefs, the army, the regiments, each company, the Palace wet-nurses and warders and other confidential menials, the on and off-role servants of the State, the ryots, both of the Plains and Hills of all castes petitioned saying that if such things were allowed, the Kingdom could not last and that justice must be done to all, as was formerly customary in Nepal, or else that they (the petitioners) demanded their dismissal from office and leave to quit the country.

Therefore, to put a stop to such irregularity and to serve the Kingdom, I, in the month of Marg, Sudi, Sambat 1899, agreed to the above petition and for the Crown Prince and myself put my seal to it. This petition was required and had I permitted the Crown Prince further to practice his cruelties without interference on my part, the Nation would all be angry, and if these things continue, my throne will be unsafe, and besides the Crown Prince will have no throne to sit on: what will he say? I was a child. My father took no care of me and did not prevent my doing what I did, and it is no fault of mine. To prevent this, the Gurus, Chiefs, and troops have requested my interference. Also that they may have all rights due them and that there be some settlement made, I direct therefore that all duties connected with the Palace internally be conducted entirely by you and that the Country and Government be managed by me with your advice and concurrence according to the suggestions of the Ministers. Should anyone come to me to complain of, or interfere with, this arrangement, let it not be attended to, and it shall be immediately enquired into by the Ministers and Chiefs, and as they decide, the transgressor shall be punished with your concurrence and advice, either by dismissal or any other punishment his crime deserves. In short, whatever you advise or suggest for the government and welfare of the kingdom or do



in the administration of the Palace shall not be opposed by me nor by anyone else. This order for the future government of the Kingdom according to its ancient laws, my Gurus, Ministers, Chiefs, and soldiers will strictly adhere to. Should anyone disobey it, according to his caste and by your orders, shall be punished.

This is my order.

A true translation

Lt. Smith, Assistant Resident

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 23 January 1843<sup>29</sup>

*In reporting the latest complex political maneuver, Hodgson once again shows remarkable insight, almost without being aware of it. His suspicion that Rangnath Pandit really intends to meet with Mathabar Singh Thapa is probably prompted by his sense that the situation is ripe for Mathabar Singh's return.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you for the information and orders of the Right Honorable the Governor General, that at a recent interview with the Maharaja, His Highness asked me whether the Governor General would probably come so far this way as Banaras? And whether His Lordship would like to receive there a complimentary mission to be headed by Rangnath Pandit and by three young Chautarias, cousins of the Premier, all of whom have lately set off for the Plains under my passport, ostensibly as pilgrims and without any mention to me of this political use of their travels. Wherefore, and in pursuance of your instructions about the travel of the Maharaja and his son, I objected, though then suspecting no artifice, to the excessive military trains with which these Chiefs at first proposed to go. It has since their departure been whispered to me that the young Chautarias already have with them, in secret, presents and other requisites for approaching the Governor General. That Rangnath disapproved, and still does, of these paltry tricks of the Darbar which he only gave a seeming assent to in order to get away; and that the Seniors of the Chautaria family have only been led into the scheme by an apprehension (unfounded, I think) lest Rangnath should go alone to the Governor General secretly in order to push the interests of the Queen's party as opposed to their own allies who are now said to censure Rangnath's departure at such a crisis. He himself is alleged to have soothed them with promises to gain over the Governor General, cajoling in almost the same breath the other party with like promises to promote theirs or the Raja's and Crown Prince's interests.

2. In fact, the recent national movement seems to have dwindled for the present at least into a mere strife of Court intriguers who are beginning to pursue separate interests. As the Resident has steadily refused to have anything to do with any party whatever, several of them are said to be anxious to try if they can move the Governor General. I suspect that Rangnath principally desires to see and converse with Mathabar Singh, and considers the game of his party is up at this place till next Pajani, unless Mathabar Singh can presently be produced so as at once to counterpoise the Chautarias. The Queen is, I believe, somewhat dissatisfied with Rangnath's recent conduct and much more so with that of the Chautarias, who are alleged to have not merely refused to let her new status be announced to the Governor General by Kharita but to have exacted from the Raja the grant of powers inconsistent with those originally given to Her Highness.

3. Thus it is at once not less difficult but more difficult than it was before the movement began to say who is the responsible organ of this Government either now or in the immediate future. This same uncertainty, though less in degree a few months ago, disappointed my hopes of safely warranting the Darbar's good behaviour even pending the Camp mission of Lt. Smith which I then agreed to send to the Governor General. I have therefore felt it my duty on the present occasion of a similar offer to engage for no more than simply reporting the fact of the offer for His Lordship's information and orders, and such accordingly was in substance what I replied to the Raja's question.

4. I really cannot ascertain whether this mission, if sanctioned, would turn out a King's or Queen's or Chautarias' or Gurus' or mixed embassy in effective scope and aim. I fear it might on that account give inconvenience to the Governor General, whilst the petty scheming with which it has been set afoot appears to indicate that all parties are sensible that it is ill-timed and in bad taste as a compliment to my Government, and is little likely to do credit to this state or to satisfy its conflicting proposers and seconders.

5. Impressed with these sentiments I at first thought of sending publicly or privately a message to the Premier to the effect that I did not like the time or manner of this proposal that I desired to know what security the Darbar has to offer me that if the mission went, no simultaneous outrage of decency like that of last spring should occur that I considered the ranks of the envoys too low. And lastly that I thought it more becoming and worthy of the Darbar, first by a steady, consistent course of some months of de facto friendliness and good faith to redeem its soiled name than to seek to pass at once from open affronts and notorious ill-will (the themes even of the newspapers) to public and special demonstrations of friendship.

6. A message or note of some such tenor as the above would have had the useful effect of compelling the Darbar to indicate to me its responsible organ or organs--the sole point relative to its internal politics that it behooves me to be at all solicitous about. But as there is no

particular hurry on that point I have deemed it my duty rather to refer the whole question of a mission inclusive of some such message as the above to the wisdom of the Governor General.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 30 January 1843<sup>31</sup>

*Hodgson here falls into his old habit of philosophizing on the Nepalese political system in a despatch to the Governor General. His comments are interesting, but the Governor General did not find them so.*<sup>32</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your despatch of the 17th January relative to the recent movement at Kathmandu, and am exceedingly happy to find that upon an important occasion the conduct of a Nation with which my public life has been so much associated has merited the concern and generous applause of the Right Honorable the Governor General.

2. I regret to say that the conduct of some of the Chiefs of that nation has lately been far less interested than it was at first, but I will endeavour to convey this high tribute to past merit in a way calculated to sustain the Chiefs in well-doing for the future. Such applause had been infinitely more valuable but a short time ago, and I heartily trust it is not yet too late to do much good.

3. The first noble impulse of patriotism is too apt to pass away from the breasts of leaders before one has time even to admire it; and selfish ambition and partizanship, before one can counsel them, ruin themselves.

4. The Premier in particular among the chiefs appears to have been disheartened by my steadfast refusal of counsel and aid to him during the incipient stages of the movement. Wanting entirely in its progress the advantage of an honest and impartial advisor, he seems to have gradually fallen more and more, amid the temptations of the crisis, under the influence of low counsellors, who have taught him that in the eyes of the British Government as of his own the patriotism of statesmen is a farce. That he must be a goose not to act upon the assumption that if the Resident could not be gained to his party it must be because the Resident had already been secretly gained by some other party. And that, finally, his (the Premier's) business was to delude both Governments for his own profit.

5. Without violating the spirit of your despatch now under acknowledgement, I think I can yet do something with its aid to disabuse the Premier of these notions, for, I hope and trust, he has not yet irrevocably committed himself to any course inconsistent with the real welfare of the Kingdom at large, though I cannot deny that there is a strong impression of the kind prevailing throughout the country. With reference to it and to the actual state of things now, I must be wary what I say.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 31 January 1843<sup>33</sup>

*With the political scene in Kathmandu somewhat more settled, Fattah Jung Shah's Ministry resume their offices after the Pajani. It is interesting to note that for six months there was no legally constituted Ministry in Nepal, despite the urgent political questions that had to be solved.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to submit herewith (Appendix No. 1) a translation of the Lal Mohar said to have been granted by the Maharaja to the Premier and which I obtained through a private channel.

2. The grant of this instrument appears to have been the immediate cause of the dissolution, for the present, of the recent union among the Chiefs whose exertions for themselves and country it is thought to have nullified for the time, at the very moment when those exertions were on the point of becoming realized by an adequate concession of controlling authority to the Queen.

3. The Queen's Mohar, which was forwarded to you on the 10th January, is said to have been altered from its original completer form by the same influence that immediately afterwards obtained the issue of the present document which is moreover said to be radically inconsistent with the true purpose and effectual working of the Queen's Lal Mohar.

4. Had the Queen's authority, it is alleged generally, been placed on the designed and prepared foundation, the recent movement would have proved really and effectively successful and competent to secure the terms and conditions stipulated for, on behalf of the country. The work is alleged to be now left incomplete and wholly void of the necessary guarantee for the practical admission and duration of the boons conceded on paper.

5. What these boons may be I am not yet able to state with any detail, having not yet obtained a copy of the very much longer paper containing them. Nor can I justly state how far the complaints so prevalent against the Chautarias for having marred a noble project from selfish ambition and jealousy of the Queen, just in the moment of its happy completion and when no obstacle but themselves stood in the way of such completion, are entirely fair and incapable of valid counter-statement by the Chautarias.

6. But this much is certain, that the movement was suddenly and unintelligibly arrested. Not even its general result as this affects foreign relations through its operation on the responsibility of Government, has been made known to me, privately or officially, whilst the partial communication made to me on the 8th of January (my despatch of January 10th) coupled with the evasion of my question thereon, have, under the circumstances, left me more doubtful than before as to the composition and prospective conduct of the Government.

7. Upon further consideration of this last named point, I do not think it would be prudent to carry out your instructions of the 17th January--as I yesterday proposed--without hearing further from you on the subject.

8. It is said that this Lal Mohar to Fattedh Jung can have no other effect but that of making him giddy and odious and that it was granted by the Raja with that secret intent and wish--additional reasons for caution.

I have, etc.

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Lal Mohar of the Maharaja of Nepal to Premier Fattedh Jung Shah, Paush Sudi 5, 1899 B.S. January 1843.<sup>34</sup>

#### TRANSLATION

Be it known to you, Fattedh Jung Shah, that I hereby grant to you as Mukhtiyar the entire direction of all matters relating to the 4 branches of the Government, viz. the revenue, judicial, military, and household, also the nomination of the Dharmadhikars, Purohits, Chautarias, Kazis, Sardars, Kapardars, Captains, treasurers, Subbas, Kumedans, Dwarias, Ditthas, Subedars, Kharidars, Jamadars, Majors, adjutants, Kothias, standard and colour bearers, and other military grades down to the sipahis, also the arrangement of the Civil List and the Chiefs attached to my person, also the supervision of the country from the Kali river to the Mechi; also the direction of all forts and places of defence, and of all Chiefs at the capital, and officers and privates of the army here, also the appointment and dismissal of all

public contractors and security givers, and heads of villages and of districts; also the management of foreign relations and the affairs of the British Government--of all I hereby give you the direction as Mukhtiyar. With loyalty and fealty you will inquire and consider what persons are fit for office in all several departments and grades, and you will present all such to me and to the Queen for installation.

Looking straight forward to the welfare of the country, you will also ascertain who of all my subjects are transgressors requiring to be punished and you will bring them into my presence that I may determine their several penalties according to their castes.

You will consider and represent to me who among the Chiefs and dependants of the State are worthy and are poor, that I may order provision to be made for them. You will keep all the defences and forts of the kingdom in perfect repair.

You will likewise determine who shall and who shall not come into my presence or into the Palace or into the precincts thereof.

Maintain all good things established and state to me what new things are required to be established that I may order them, for the happiness of my subjects and soldiery.

Besides yourself no one shall make representations to me about public affairs civil or military. State to me whatever affects my throne, and I will give you authority to do it. See that you do it for my welfare.

In exerting yourself in your office according to the warrant thereof, should you involuntarily transgress in this or that point, I hereby agree to forgive it. Do as is herein written. If anyone backbites you, I will confront him with you.

Should any nominee of yours offend, and you seek to displace him and I dissent, and you thereupon resign your place, no shame shall fall on you. Do your duty as Mukhtiyar with confidence.

True translation

B.H. Hodgson, Resident

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 6 February 1843<sup>35</sup>

*Hodgson reports that on the 4th a deputation was sent to India to bring Mathabar Singh Thapa back to Nepal. Although the full story of Mathabar Singh's return is reserved for a later chapter, it is important to note here how King Rajendra Bikram maneuvered the political scene rather than accept the role that the politicians and public had prepared for him.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

With reference to my despatch to you of the 28th January about the Lahore mission and its conductor, I have now the honor to report to you upon unquestionable authority that in the message sent to me by the Darbar Rajyalaxmi Devi's<sup>36</sup> name was used without her knowledge or permission, that she was informed of that message only after it had been sent and answered by me; that she is not prepared to warrant the safety of Captain Karbir Khatri if he now returns, as liable to engender embarrassment and perhaps affliction to himself and to others of greater note--herself included, though she did not say so.

2. In fact, that net might, I suspect, be made to involve in its meshes herself and many of her ablest friends, Mathabar Singh not excepted, for Karbir Khatri is but an inconsiderable person and one who might be tempted as well as frightened into numerous and various revelations.<sup>37</sup> That the matter is so viewed as a possible contingency at least, I think certain, because my enquiry from the Kanchi Maharani,<sup>38</sup> which otherwise would have been deemed little of, was acknowledged earnestly, and the general caution was added to me in answer to it, never to assume her sanction or even knowledge of requests and messages of the Darbar because her name was used without her knowledge and also against her wishes and interests when she might know it was so used but could not expediently protest.

3. All this is very deplorable and seems to confirm whatever is surmised here to the disadvantage of the Premier. If he has in any serious degree abandoned the strong ground of good faith with the nation, the Premier must, of course, support himself in his new and most perilous position by complying with, instead of opposing, the evil prejudices and humours of his Master. This is exemplified in relation to the British Government in the case of the Lahore Mission and explained in my despatch of the 28th January on that subject.

4. I have the honor further to report that Captain Aibaran Basnyat with others left Kathmandu for Gorakhpur on the 4th February under my passport granted at the Darbar's request, in order to bring up General Mathabar Singh. The Queen and her friends were reluctant to join this public invitation to the General to return in exact proportion to the eagerness lately manifested by less assured well-wishers of his.

5. His real friends and friends of the peace and happiness of Nepal desire thus to test the General's present disposition and character. They anticipate that if misfortune and travel have made him wise, he will not hasten up at the first call of his less safe, but defer and refer to his more safe, counsellors who will then come forward. If he has not learned this caution, they choose to refuse all responsibility for the consequences to himself and to others of his returning precipitously and prematurely.

6. It is remarkable that the Premier, whose aversion to Mathabar Singh's coming is real and strong and who believes (correctly or not)

that his Master, in this matter also, is following the evil impulse of passion, nevertheless did not quash the measure. It would seem that the Premier's recent and ample powers for administering the Kingdom for the Kingdom's welfare have been granted under circumstances which already disable him from making a just or safe use of those powers. That, whether the Premier's own humour chances to be crossed or coincided with, he is already under the miserable necessity of acting in his capacity of Prime Minister solely or chiefly according to the humour of his Master.

7. The honest-hearted many and the body of the Chiefs are, I am assured, decidedly with the Queen whom the soldiery consider their Mother and called for incessantly under that name throughout the recent movement. But she is prudent, and prudently advised. She will support the Premier as long as he will allow her. Nor will she permit Mathabar Singh prematurely to disturb her purposes in her name; nor permit any fresh appeal to the expectant Nation without adequate necessity.

8. At present she has great hopes of gaining the Raja, who is inclined to excessive uxoriousness and never looks at strange women, by her own feminine resources. If she thus succeed she will be doubly blest in the consciousness of owing her success to herself and in her consequent ability more easily to control her scheming friends and her erring opponents. She certainly may (and of all persons here I think is the most likely one to attempt it) ensure herself from harm in that eminent place by vindicating its sacred privilege of soundly counselling and guiding the Maharaja for the general benefit of the Kingdom at home and abroad, instead of selfishly pandering to his passions and prejudices.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 18 February 1843<sup>39</sup>

*Hodgson finds himself once again in the now familiar position of having to explain his remarks to the Governor General. It is a sign of the Governor General's unhappiness with Hodgson that he cannot resist opposing Hodgson's theories.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your despatch of 1 February in reply to mine of the 23rd January. I beg permission to explain that I never dreamed of affixing censure, direct or implied, upon the recent national movement here, but intended to state the facts. That the movement had been suddenly and unintelligibly arrested. And that, under a suspicious renewal of the ordinary action of the former government, its ordinary spirit in regard to foreign affairs was at once sought to be



revived, with increased uncertainty as to the responsible persons in the administration.

2. What I inferred from the proposition of the Darbar then reported to you soon received more light from the Darbar's second proposition immediately following the first. The true character of this proposal also I thought it right to explain to you at once lest, under a sudden call to act, in relation to the actual Government of Nepal, the Right Honorable the Governor General should suppose that the brilliant and promising movement of the Nation had provided any practical beneficial effect in the Darbar.

3. I inferred the contrary from the style of the proposal made to me and from direct information then hourly coming to hand, but not testable at the moment. It appeared to me that the offered mission to His Lordship was expressly intended to create delusion on that point whilst I was obliged to report this proposition immediately, as well as the one which followed it, before I had been able to understand clearly how the nation had so suddenly disappeared from, and the Darbar reappeared upon, the stage. Under such circumstances I thought it my duty, if not myself to rebut, yet explicitly to state to you the intended delusion and also its apparent source and apparent connection with the instantaneous and unexplained merging of a noble national effort in the paltry plan of common Darbar intrigue.

4. It seems probable that the national bond, though in abeyance or dissolved for the time, is capable of being resumed, rapidly and effectually, if need be--that is, if the Raja and his Son renew the oppressions of the past two years. But in the meanwhile, the Raja has been anew and formally presented to me by the Premier as the head of the State. Viewing His Highness in that position, I have just thought it expedient cheerfully but guardedly to accept from him in my public capacity a public manifestation of courtesy ending on the spot and with the moment. I cannot now, however, any more than I could a month ago, vouch for such a steady strain of good conduct on His Highness' part in his external (or internal) policy as would seem to be a prudent condition of the acceptance of the compliments which the Maharaja wishes to make towards the Right Honorable the Governor General.

5. To the administrative assistance to our provinces which you mention have been freely given by the Darbar upon the Resident's representations, I have pleasure in recording the more recent manifestation of much courtesy and kindness towards the Residency both by the Maharaja and the Premier. But the Darbar's frequent sudden change from such commendable ways to their very opposites must instruct us--especially at a critical time like this for the future government of Nepal--to think less of passing good acts themselves than of the means of finding for them a tolerably durable basis.

6. I do not presume to hint anything further respecting such means, negative and positive, now available to the Governor General in connection with the transitional state of this Government at the present moment.

But it must always be remembered that the cold weather attitude of the Darbar at home and abroad is always passable in most respects; that when the malaria recurs in March its hostile spirit is manifested. Then alone, both the effect of past doings on the part of the nation and the prospect of further ones, will be but clearly understood.

7. In the meanwhile, the very persons who helped stop the recent national movement, before obtaining any practical guarantee that its achievements would last, seem to be repenting of their proceedings. The much larger body which disapproved those proceedings look yet more gloomily forwards.

8. What may be the results for themselves and country (for to us it is of far less moment) God only knows. The doubts and suspicions I expressed on the spur of the occasion, with reference to the Darbar's propositions to me (as reported on the 23rd and 28th), certainly then found an echo in the breasts of most of the Chiefs, and are now recognized as sound even by those whose conduct I felt regretful that I must censure.

9. Indeed I suspect that the self-condemnation of the latter already far exceeds mine. The evil consequences to themselves and country of pandering to the mere humours and tricks of the Darbar (lat ko puja garnu is the expressive phrase of the angry country for this practice) are likely to exceed whatever can accrue to the British Government. The Crown Prince has within this week reappeared on the stage. Agitation has already been resumed pretty much in the style which led to the events of December. And the Premier and his brother have already shown a disposition to resume their position as heads of the movement.

I have, etc.

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#### Footnotes to Chapter Six

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 14 September 1842, No. 82; heavily edited.
2. 'See the Assistant Resident's memoir of the Gorkha Army, A.D. 1823, with appendant queries and replies.' B.H.H.
3. Foreign Secret Consultation 14 September 1842, No. 83; slightly edited.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 September 1842, No. 78; slightly edited.
5. Foreign Secret Consultation 5 October 1842, No. 148; slightly edited.

6. 'The senior is old and really seeks retirement; the junior is well known to Government as perhaps the ablest man in Nepal but for his disabling hauteur.' B.H.H.
7. Foreign Secret Consultation 5 October 1842, No. 149; not edited.
8. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 September 1842, No. 79; not edited.
9. Foreign Secret Consultation 8 March 1843, No. 87; not edited.
10. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 December 1842, No. 82; not edited.
11. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 December 1842, No. 84; slightly edited.
12. Foreign Secret Consultation 4 January 1843, No. 54; slightly edited.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 4 January 1843, No. 55; not edited.
14. Yuvaraj: Crown Prince or Heir Apparent.
15. Guru Prasad Shah?
16. Foreign Secret Consultation 4 January 1843, No. 56; slightly edited.
17. 'Ranjore Thapa, Abhiman Rana, Bhagat Bam Shahi, Kulman Basnyat, Kalu Shahi, Singh Bir Pandey.' B.H.H.
18. 'Jaidnath, Bhupal Thapa.' B.H.H.
19. 'Ahibarna, Fatteh Singh.' B.H.H.
20. 'Umakant, Laxmi Das, Kasinath Kharidars.' B.H.H.
21. Foreign Secret Consultation 4 January 1843, No. 58; slightly edited.
22. Foreign Secret Consultation 4 January 1843, No. 60; not edited.
23. Malla times: 1200-1769.
24. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 December 1842, No. 84A; not edited.
25. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 March 1843, No. 72; slightly edited.
26. This apparently was not an isolated case.
27. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 February 1843, No. 73; slightly edited.
28. Foreign Secret Consultation 22 February 1843, No. 73; not edited.

29. Foreign Secret Consultation 1 March 1843, No. 53; slightly edited.
30. Premier: Chautaria Fattah Jung Shah.
31. Foreign Secret Consultation 1 March 1843, No. 58; slightly edited.
32. See below, Hodgson to Government, 18 February 1843.
33. Foreign Secret Consultation 1 March 1843, No. 59; slightly edited.
34. Foreign Secret Consultation 1 March 1843, No. 60; not edited.
35. Foreign Secret Consultation 1 March 1843, No. 61; moderately edited.
36. Rajya Laxmi Devi: the Junior Queen, now installed as Maharani.
37. 'Both of the persons just named, when they left this place, professed, and I believe truly, to be Rajya Laxmi's friends really, only ostensibly friends of the Darbar. Rangnath Pandit has lately followed the same course, and he too, I think, is true to Rajya Laxmi. As to those tricks (and they are merely such) for getting away out of this place, before we condemn them, we must recollect and allow for the next to impossibility of escape except with permission, which is never accorded fairly to a person of any note.'  
B.H.H.
38. Kanchi Maharani: the Junior Queen.
39. Foreign Secret Consultation 8 March 1843, No. 88; heavily edited.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Farewell, Brian Hodgson

Three themes, distinct but related, are presented in this chapter. The downfall of the Pandey family. Hodgson's plea to be permitted to remain in Nepal, its refusal, and his farewell. And the efforts Major Lawrence the new Resident was forced to make in order to overcome the handicap of following in the footsteps of Brian Hodgson.

The downfall of the Pandey family is presented in two movements. The first of these has been brought forward from its proper place in the temporal sequence to assist the reader to see the overall picture. The leaders of the Pandey family were caught up in the slander charge, tried, and convicted. Thus began their fall. Mathabar Singh Thapa's return to Kathmandu, some months later, completed it, since he insisted on a confrontation with them over the charges they had made against his uncle, Bhim Sen Thapa. After a summary trial, the leaders of the Pandey family were sentenced and executed. This served neither justice nor good politics and undoubtedly added to the great tensions already existing in the Darbar. For better or worse, however, it happened,

Mathabar Singh Thapa's return and early activities in Kathmandu are presented briefly. Much more could have been added, but the picture is already quite clear: that he felt the need of the Resident's countenance, and not receiving it, he felt unsure of himself and exposed.

The most dramatic section of this chapter, however, is the departure of Brian Hodgson, Resident and scholar of Nepal. His plea to remain in Nepal is absolutely touching, and the meetings with the Kathmandu Darbar which he describes are the most spontaneous outpouring of affection that this period of Nepal's history witnessed. The sternness of the Governor General's order that he go, the Darbar's affection, the King's attempted intervention, and the long walk to Thankot as he began his journey out of the land he loved are important for our perception of this period.

Lawrence was not sentimentally inclined, but even Lawrence found it difficult to disregard the impact that Hodgson's farewell had made on the Darbar. His effort to establish himself as a friend rather than as the man who forced Hodgson out in order to punish the Nepali Court are indicative of the weight of emotion that had overlayed Hodgson's farewell.

Lawrence was not the only one to suffer from the mythologizing of Brian Hodgson. There can be no question that Hodgson's interference in domestic politics did great damage. In particular one must single out his opposition to Bhim Sen Thapa in the 1830s and, even more significantly, his open support of the Fatteh Jung Shah ministry in 1840-42. The search for 'countenance' tended to destabilize the administration and created abnormal relationships within the Darbar. The discontinuation of the policy created a vacuum into which Jung Bahadur found it easy to step.

Resident Hodgson to Government, 25 May 1842<sup>1</sup>

*In the winter following the death of the Senior Queen, Samrajya Lasmi Devi, the rumour that the Queen had been poisoned reached the Calcutta newspapers. The Governor General questioned Hodgson on this, and Hodgson's reply is noted in this excerpt.*

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Excerpt

When the Rani died I was sent for and was expressly told by the Raja that every imaginable care had been taken of her. No soul save himself, his eldest son, her father, and three other Chiefs of high rank in his utmost confidence and whose names he gave, had been allowed to administer to her a particle of food, of drink, or of medicine. Nor had some one or more of these six ever for a moment--His Highness on that occasion added--been absent from her side during all her long illness. That illness had lasted, the Raja said, for from 4 to 6 months, and from His Highness' description of the symptoms, Dr. Christie, who was present at the interview, had no difficulty in inferring organic disease regularly progressing to a fatal close. Notwithstanding therefore the vulgar prating about poison which had never ceased since Bhim Sen's fall, I reasonably concluded in the present case no such imputation could possibly find admission except from the herd, and least of all could be sanctioned by the Raja from any sincere conviction of suspicion of its truth.

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Governor General to the Maharaja of Nepal, 3 June 1842<sup>2</sup>

*King Rajendra Bikram complained bitterly to the Governor General about the slander regarding the Queen's death. The Crown Prince also sent a Kharita to the Governor General, and thereby created some confusion, since only the head of state was entitled to address the Governor General directly. The Governor General ignored the Crown Prince's Kharita, but wrote the King in an effort to soothe his feelings.*

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(after compliments)

It is very natural that Your Highness should express indignation at the circulation in English Newspapers of a false report that the late Rani was poisoned.

2. For myself, I view with regret and indignation too the conduct of those who, reckless of the effect which may be produced in estranging

the hearts of friendly Princes, circulate reports affecting the honor of their families--They are the enemies of both countries who do so.

3. If I were enabled to lead Your Highness' servants to the discovery of the persons by whom the false report was first circulated, I would do so, that Your Highness proceeding according to the laws might obtain the infliction of such punishment as the laws might justly impose, but the punishment threatened by Your Highness is so cruel in its character which our laws do not recognize.

4. I advise Your Highness not to allow your mind to be any longer distracted by this false report. It may have been read, but it will long ago have been forgotten and by few indeed will it have been believed, and in any case it is unworthy of a noble mind to be affected by the slanders of the base.

Ellenborough

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 31 October 1842<sup>3</sup>

*When King Rajendra Bikram decided that the Kala Pandey party was keeping the slander about the Queen's death alive for political purposes, he began to suspect they were responsible for spreading the slander. He brought them to trial and thereby accelerated the downfall of the Pandeys.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

In continuation of my despatch to you of the 12th October relative to the Maharaja's communication to me about the libel case, I have the honor to report to you that His Highness yesterday sent me a messenger of his own to apprise me of the fuller progress of the trial. Fourteen subordinates had been convicted. Seven of them had distinctly implicated Ranjung Pandey and Karbir and Kulraj Pandey, the two former immaterially, the third most materially. The houses of all the three had been searched and guards had been set over them. Kulraj had been imprisoned and manacled, had demanded and been refused the proof by ordeal,<sup>4</sup> and his confession alone was wanting to his punishment, his guilt being made clear by the evidence of several witnesses. Lastly that Amar Singh Das, his confidential scribe and the proven author of several infamous papers, had been sentenced to lose his right hand.

2. As on the former occasion, my answer to this communication was merely by a civil message of thanks for the information conveyed.

3. I understand from private sources that the Maharaja and Crown Prince have thus far refrained entirely from interrupting the course

of justice or screening the higher offenders now distinctly involved. Therefore those who hope the best for the welfare of the kingdom now begin pretty confidently to anticipate that the result of this trial will be the discrediting of the political principles, if not the infliction of penalties on the persons, of a party whose influence has since 1837 produced so much private suffering and public risk to the Kingdom, and the revival and extension of which influence was lately boldly predicted as the consequence of British humiliation in China and the Celestial Emperor's direct interference to uphold such honest haters of the British name and power as the party in question.

4. Should the combined effect of our victories and their own errors discredit the old or Kala Pandey policy<sup>5</sup> either immediately or gradually, the consequent advantage to Nepal and its peaceful allies must be immense. Whatever the Maharaja's supposed bias towards the advocates of that policy, it may well be believed possible that His Highness has become, as is alleged, greatly disgusted with the Kala Pandey's on account of, lastly, the now demonstrated falsity of all their political predictions, 2ndly their reckless instigation of the Crown Prince to the last extremities of power against his father, and 3rdly of the blundering clumsiness with which in the libel affair they have exposed themselves and him, too, to the censures of even the least discerning at home and abroad.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Government, 20 April 1843<sup>6</sup>

*Hodgson reports the return of Mathabar Singh Thapa to Kathmandu. His return made further pressure on the Pandey's inevitable, and Hodgson shows his concern for this spirit of revenge.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that General Mathabar Singh, who had reached the confines of the Valley some few days previously, on the 17th entered the city and had an audience of the Maharaja the same day, and that he yesterday paid me a visit at the Residency.

2. Mathabar Singh's reception has been distinguished, and his carriage is that of a person entertaining no doubts of his position.

3. When he waited on me he was attended by Kazi Jung Bahadur Basnyat [sic!] who stated to me, on the part of the Maharaja, that the Kala Pandey's had just made a judicial confession of the falsity of that charge of poisoning under cover of which the Thapas had been crushed. Atonement has been and would be made to the letter, as far



as possible, by the Darbar. In proof of this the Maharaja had already invested Mathabar Singh with the dress of honor he then wore and had directed the restitution of his confiscated property and the proclamation throughout the country of his innocence.

4. A more infamous political crime has seldom been perpetrated than that which appears now, after the lapse of 4 years, to have been brought home to the effectual workers of it, who, however, had an atrocity of like kind to avenge against the Thapas, its perpetrators in 1805. But from the unbecoming haste with which the Pandey's have been condemned, I am only afraid the Maharaja still fails to realize what I told him in 1838 regarding the immense importance to the welfare of the Kingdom of diminishing the personal risks of statesmanship and of putting an end to the harmful inheritance of revenge among his prime nobles, which must ever diminish the sovereign's field of selection for the public service and destroy the quality and character of that service.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 30 April 1843<sup>7</sup>

*Hodgson reports the conviction of the leaders of the Pandey family for their involvement in the false charges against Bhim Sen Thapa. His letter highlights some of the dangers in this summary judicial proceedings.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that Chautaria Guru Prasad, Kazi Jung Bahadur, and Kazi Sing Bir Pandey yesterday visited me at the Residency. In the Maharaja's name they told me for the information of Government that since his return General Mathabar Singh had demanded a confrontation with the former accusers of his late uncle and family upon the charge of poisoning, under colour of which the family had been ruined. A plenary court of Chiefs had accordingly sat, by the Maharaja's commands. The charge had been proved groundless. And Karbir Pandey and Kulraj Pandey with Indra Bir Thapa and Ranbam Thapa and Amar Shahi<sup>8</sup> had confessed and recorded their guilt in having instigated and deluded their Sovereign, to the destruction of an able and worthy servant and the persecution of his family and followers. The Court of Chiefs had fully and honourably acquitted Mathabar Singh, and the Raja had thereon proclaimed through the kingdom Mathabar Singh's successful vindication of his late uncle and himself. All possible atonement had been made and would be to the Thapas. The Chiefs, having been required to state whether, with regard to their accusers, the Kala Pandey's, blood should not be atoned for by blood, had answered that the law permitted it. The principal

offenders were in prison and manacled. But the extent of punishment to be inflicted on them was still under deliberation as well as the particulars of their criminality. Finally, the Maharaja proposed to communicate the substance of this matter by Kharita to the Right Honorable the Governor General.

2. I answered my visitors that I was obliged to the Maharaja for the information conveyed, although being entirely relative to the internal politics of Nepal, it was no concern of the Resident's. That the ultimate triumph of innocence and detection of guilt were sure to be brought about by Providence in His own good time. That I rejoiced in General Mathabar Singh's clearance and in the vindication of the memory of Bhim Sen. But with respect to the Kala Pandeys, I trusted Mathabar Singh and all the Chiefs would realize the necessity of judicial proof full and formal in proportion to the enormity of the guilt charged. They would do well to set aside all angry feelings and hasty informal punishments such as the Thapas had suffered so fearfully and from which any and every Chief might suffer in his turn. They should counsel the Maharaja, no matter how shamefully his youth and inexperience had been abused by the Kala Pandeys, to remember mercy in his judgement on them, and to recall what I told His Highness when Bhim Sen had just been struck down, regarding the need of putting an end to the hereditary revenges so prevalent among his leading nobles to the extreme detriment of his service.

3. I told my visitors that I thought my merely friendly advice might now be listened to because the evils caused by its former neglect had been just acknowledged; because my long connection with Nepal made me regard her honor and the happiness of her sovereign and Chiefs as my own; and lastly because I could not be supposed favourable to the Kala Pandeys seeing that their external policy had been so wrongful towards my Government and insulting towards its representative as their internal had been bloody and cruel towards the Thapas and many others.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 1 May 1843<sup>9</sup>

*Hodgson reports the sentence passed against the Pandeys and the execution of sentence. He is still deeply concerned with the spirit that motivated this and the growing tension among the Bharadars. This is all part of the build-up to the Kot Massacre.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that I have just received a message from the Darbar to the effect that in accord with the unanimous opinion of the Bharadars and Kampu (Chiefs and soldiers) at a renewed

sitting, in favour of an immediate and unmitigated sentence upon the Kala Pandey and their adherents, Karbir Pandey and Kulraj Pandey, Indra Bir and Ranbam Thapa, and Kanak Singh Mahat have been decapitated. Bodman Karki deprived of his lips and nose, and Bamsraj Basnyat of his nose.

2. My advice therefore on behalf of more judicial and more merciful proceedings has a second time proved insufficient to divert the Darbar wholly from the ancient violent customs of the country. But there has at least been an absence of the torture and protracted persecution of the victims on the present occasion which were so fearfully exhibited on the last, as well as a greater semblance of trial, in the three meetings of the Council of Chiefs. And, whereas there was no guilt in the former case (at least not the guilt charged) there certainly was in the present case, and that of the deepest dye. Nor do I think that the sentiments expressed by me on either occasion will be wholly forgotten, though it were hardly to be expected that they should at once practically prevail against the national habits, urged as those sentiments necessarily were with so much reserve by me upon my own responsibility.

3. At all events I trust I shall not be considered by the Governor General to have acted wrongly in thus seizing an important moment to hold up to Nepal the experience and example of enlightened Europe. Nations can often venerate what they cannot imitate; and they learn imitation by degrees.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Government, 12 May 1843<sup>10</sup>

*Apparently anxious to prove that his efforts at neutrality are succeeding and that he has weathered the storm that centred on the Residency for the past year, Hodgson reports his presence in the Royal wedding party and the diplomatic contracts made there.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report to you that I yesterday and the day before, attended by the gentlemen and establishment of the Residency, accompanied the marriage procession of the Crown Prince from the city to Balaju and back again.

2. The rains caused considerable inconvenience, but the thing went off very well. The Resident was treated with universal distinction and courtesy, and he was able to pay attention to a large circle of distinguished Chiefs without reference to party, as well as to the Royal family by yielding up his horse to one of the Maharaja's sons and by looking

to the accommodation of His Highness himself, who sadly suffered from the rain.

3. General Mathabar Singh played a prominent part on the occasion, and I think already is pretty evidently the most influential person here. His rapid elevation will not, I trust, cause him to forget that all greatness not founded on the sense of this nation and directed to its welfare, in open council, according to the ancient usage of the Raj, is but a tremendous snare for the puppet of the hour, and worthless in every public way.

4. No change in the Ministry, I fancy, will take place before the Pajani (September), but if the present Minister continue in office even so long, he will owe the decorousness of his dismissal as well as his subsequent safety to the magnanimity and regard for the public interests distinguishing those to whom he so strongly separated himself from in January--not to the forbearance of those to whom he then in vain sought to identify himself.

5. General Mathabar Singh has, owing to the defection just mentioned, been welcomed by the former party not less than by the latter, so that the few who have the real welfare of this Kingdom at heart are now anxiously speculating upon the comparative slowness of the General's accession to power as the Minister of the country or as the mere instrument of the Court. He has every conceivable reason for pursuing the safe and honorable path--every conceivable temptation for pursuing the other, into which the Crown Prince is said to be now sedulously employed in alluring him.

6. There seems to be a growing feeling of respectful consideration of the British Government whose claims, occasional and merely friendly suggestions for the welfare, peace and respectability of all, the rapid course of events has brought into prominent view, by realizing so much that was foretold to the eager occupants of an arena, already since 1839, wet with the best blood of both parties.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Lord Ellenborough, Personal, 22 May 1843<sup>11</sup>

*This series of letters has survived to underscore Hodgson's efforts to remain in Kathmandu as Resident. They are a touching testimonial to his love for Nepal and an indication of the firmness with which the Governor General was rejecting him.*

\*\*\*\*\*

My Lord,

The improved state of my health, the low state of my purse, and the superior opportunities for research here opened by the general and glorious pacification of India under Your Lordship's auspices afford to me such strong reasons for remaining another year in India that I am persuaded Your Lordship will not exact my retirement. My general acquaintance with the institutions, manners and national career of this Kingdom is necessarily extensive, such as no man living possesses or could acquire save by years of residence here; and it has long been my chief ambition to produce such a Report on Nepal as could not fail to be publicly useful in the very probable event of our being sooner or later compelled to subdue and occupy this country. But My Lord, the jealousy of the existing Government together with the prevalent contempt for, and neglect of, all records and statistics has heretofore occasioned so much obstruction that, under the past political necessity for scrupulous caution I have found it impossible to do anything effectual except in particular times of investigation. I now possess, however, the clue to every sort of knowledge, and I have contrived to conciliate and gain the confidence of various men of all parties who may and must under existing circumstances be willing to aid me. I therefore entertain a reasonable hope of at length succeeding in what has been my earnest desire for years past, whilst the resolute self-denial with which I have so long refused myself the license of inquiry when it seemed possible to become productive of mischief, will, I trust, satisfy your Lordship that my discretion may be relied on in the prosecution of an object however interesting to me.

It is with very great satisfaction I am now enabled to state to Your Lordship that I have lately received from men of all parties marks of confidence and kindness for which I was not prepared but which seem to have flowed from the rapid completion of the cycle of public events here, whereby all parties have been forced to feel that the friendly counsels they each in turn neglected, would, had they attended to them, have contributed to the safety and respectability of all.

My Lord, each of us in his place and degree cherishes the idea of being remembered by good and able men, and I confess that, under the influence of this sentiment, I abhor the idea of quitting Nepal, after so long a residence, without leaving behind me some proof of that disposition and power to be useful which weak health and unpropitious events must otherwise afford the sceptical so much room to smile at the assertion of in his own case by, My Lord.

Your Lordship's most faithful servant,

B.H. Hodgson

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Lord Ellenborough to Resident Hodgson, Personal, 2 June 1843<sup>12</sup>

*The Governor General makes it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that he will not entertain the idea that Hodgson remain in Nepal. At no time does he explain why he prefers another man other than to say, as he did to the Court of Directors' Secret Committee, that he does not think Hodgson can introduce the policy of neutrality in Nepal's domestic politics that he wishes. Hodgson's efforts to impress the Governor General with his success in this line have totally failed.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I received here today your letter of the 22nd May intimating your wish to remain still longer at Kathmandu. I have already twice, against my own better judgement, acquiesced in your remaining there, first, when I consented that the public letter of animadversion upon your conduct should not be placed upon the public records, it being then distinctly understood by me that you would retire during the last cold weather, secondly when I was further induced to consent to your remaining till the ensuing cold weather. I do not think it desirable that you should remain beyond that period and I shall then appoint your successor. If you desire to remain on service in India, I will endeavour to find some other fit situation for you, but you ought to leave Nepal.

I remain, Sir,

Your Faithful Servant,

Ellenborough

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Lord Ellenborough, Personal, 20 June 1843<sup>13</sup>

*In this second letter Hodgson pleads his inability to work in the Plains (because of his health) and his intimate knowledge of the Nepalese Darbar as reasons for retaining him in his present post. He also reports the reaction of the Darbar to his announcement that he would leave during the coming winter.*

\*\*\*\*\*

My Lord,

I have the honor to acknowledge Your Lordship's letter of the 2nd which I need not say pained me more so than I trust Your Lordship designed with reference to Your Lordship's very handsome letters to me of autumn last and to the official approbation subsequently bestowed on the measures taken to restore our relations with Nepal to their former basis of neutrality, without risk and without offence. I have remained thus long,

My Lord, in the earnest hope of convincing Your Lordship alike and the Darbar of the sincerity of my efforts for the satisfaction and the respect of both States; and when I last addressed Your Lordship with a further tender of my services here, it was because the recent course of internal events at Kathmandu had seemed to me to have placed me in an advantageous position for realizing that hope.

At His Highness' marriage I was very pleasantly impressed with the conviction of a degree of general good will for which I had not been prepared and I thought that I might turn it to account for the benefit of Your Lordship's service.

Against the soundness of Your Lordship's general objection to the continued residence of a British functionary at one place I have nothing to urge but that feeble state of health which has disabled me, and must now, from serving in the plains. But, My Lord, the general objection holds less in regard to this place than to any other owing to the purely diplomatic function discharged within the limits of that Chinese wall with which it is the pleasure of this Darbar to surround the Residency. Never was there so impassive and impersonal a relation as this between two Governments or a place where a British functionary might less expect to create personal ties, so much so that the recent manifestations of personal regard towards myself have surprized me much, long as I have resided here.

Soon after I received Your Lordship's letter now under acknowledgement, I announced to the Darbar my purpose of returning to Europe at the close of the year with reference to the infirm state of my health for some time past. The Maharaja's reply to the announcement was very handsome and kind, and it was speedily echoed by several of the prime Chiefs of all the parties.

Yesterday I was called on officially by the Chautaria and the Rana and Pandey Kazis, whose apparent sincerity and real politeness struck both the gentlemen of my suite who were present at the interview. These Chiefs spoke in the Maharaja's name and in their own, desiring me to postpone for a short while my departure; and I have reason to believe that the unsettled state of their own affairs and their anxieties connected therewith may make them more solicitous about external changes than they would be otherwise.

I answered my visitors by pleading the state of my health--an apparent and unanswerable argument and truth. Thus each of us has done what courtesy and good feeling required, and that the Darbar will go further on behalf of the 'Feringi' and 'Resident' is hard to believe. As, however, the Darbar threatened to do so and to solicit Your Lordship, I desire to know 1st whether Your Lordship would wish me to endeavour to get rid of the talked of Kharita? And 2nd whether, though that be admitted as a compliment, Your Lordship is at all disposed to be influenced in regard to my stay by such apparent proof of personal good will? I can always fall back on the plea of ill health; and though I should be a brute not to prize any expression of public feeling that

seemed to be sincere, I know my duty too well to heed it otherwise than as it obtains Your Lordship's sanction. Till I hear from Your Lordship I will endeavour to repress any purpose of the kind: and I will adhere to my true plea of broken health, both before and after such procedure, if admitted, should Your Lordship wish it. Nor can such a plea at any time fail to be effective and graceful, seeing that its truth is legibly written on my face and form.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Lord Ellenborough to Resident Hodgson, Personal, 30 June 1843<sup>14</sup>

*The Governor General informs Hodgson that no appeal of the Kathmandu Darbar will persuade him to permit Hodgson to remain in Nepal as Resident, yet he places the burden of not accepting King Rajendra Bikram's Kharita upon Hodgson.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I received here this morning your letter of June 20th.

It is my wish that all the Representatives of the Government should make themselves personally acceptable to the Sovereign to whom they may be accredited, whenever this can be done consistently with their duty to their own country and with their own characters as honorable and respectable men; but no British Minister ought to place himself or even to appear to place himself under any obligation whatever to the Sovereign at whose Court he resides or to the Ministers and Chiefs of that Sovereign. I need hardly inform you therefore that I would pay no attention to any wish expressed by the Raja of Nepal that you should remain as the Representative of the British Government at Kathmandu. I must add that I do not think any wish to that effect should be expressed by the Raja.

His Highness may be assured that being sincerely desirous of remaining on terms of friendship with Nepal, the Government of India will always select as its Representatives at his Court, Gentlemen who will endeavour to perform their duty in a conciliatory manner.

I remain, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Hodgson to Lord Ellenborough, Personal, 17 July 1843<sup>15</sup>

*Hodgson argues that if he were permitted to stay as a result of the Darbar's request, this would enhance his value and give him greater scope for activity. It is clear from his tone, however, that he knows his letter will fail to convince the Governor General.*

\*\*\*\*\*



My Lord,

I have the honor to acknowledge Your Lordship's letter of the 30th of June from Chunar and beg to assure Your Lordship that the idea of placing myself under any obligation to the Sovereign, the Minister, or Chiefs of Nepal is as completely repugnant to my own sense of right and expediency as to that of any man living. But, My Lord, the Darbar's proposition must surely in all reason be held to import not a favour conferred on me but a favour conferred by me. Else, My Lord, I had crushed it in the bud as promptly as anyone who has the honor to serve you and without the necessity of a reference to you. Let me beseech Your Lordship to look at the matter as it is: The Darbar, wholly unaware of the peculiar grounds of my wish to remain another year or of the wish itself, must needs take for granted the sincerity of my declaration of a desire to retire and go home founded on my long absence and on my feeble and broken state of health, which last is too apparent to admit of doubt. Now, home is dear to the highlanders, and why not to me; and health is dear to all, and why not to me? This is all the Darbar has to judge by, and surely the Darbar must feel that he who incurs the risk of irrevocable infirmity of health and defers the pleasure of returning to his friends and country merely to gratify their wishes is their creditor, not their debtor. There is little in the situation of Resident at Kathmandu that can seem to the Raja, the Minister, or the Chiefs any longer desirable to me now that I am known to be able to go home, while no one knows so well as the Darbar the great extent of the vexations it has caused me to endure or the small extent of pleasures it has suffered me to enjoy, for years past. Let the Darbar's conceit therefore be what it may, the Darbar can hardly suppose me other than a willing departer, and if after its long experience of my services and character it be really anxious to stay me a while, or to proclaim its sense of my general conduct, the circumstance would seem to be as creditable to the Darbar as to me to be as much the concern of my Government as of myself.

Let Your Lordship consider the extent of official opposition to the whole external policy of Nepal made by me under the express instructions of the Governor General in Council between 1837 and 1841, and Your Lordship will, I think, perceive in the Darbar's present motion something like a practical solution of the important question--how far can the exact discharge of the most stringent diplomatic duties be reconciled with the preservation of the kindest feelings on the part of a proud and independent nation? And does it not likewise appear to Your Lordship that the Darbar in soliciting Your Lordship to let me remain is really offering to Your Lordship sureties for its future good conduct? Your Lordship however appears to wish that no such manifestation of the Darbar's sentiments should have place. I will do what I can to prevent it and have already, in compliance with Your Lordship's desire, once evaded and once positively refused the Kharita. I may however be yet obliged to give way to the compliment. But Your Lordship can readily answer it by referring the Maharaja to the state of my health and to the necessity I am under of seeking the climate of Europe. Your Lordship, I am sure, would not have me rudely repress genuine good feeling if such be steadily manifested--especially as Your Lordship might have avoided this discussion altogether by suffering me to remain silent as to my

departure until the time for it had arrived. It is a question of concept merely, if Your Lordship desire to keep it so limited: for in every event Your Lordship may be assured that I could only be induced to prolong my stay by discerning some small prospect of utility to arise out of the good will and confidence of both Governments as honorably and kindly expressed to me. That the Darbar is prepared to express itself with univocal tokens of sincerity, of which Your Lordship would be, to the last, the judge, I am disposed now to believe. That Your Lordship is not inclined to sanction the Darbar's movement, I shall not soon cease to regret, having remained over the present year chiefly in the hope of conquering Your Lordship's esteem and confidence as I took the liberty to tell you this time last year.

In conclusion, allow me, My Lord, to repeat that you may rest satisfied that my own honor and that of my Country will remain in my hands unimpeachable and unimpeached. I might consent, with Your Lordship's leave to confer an obligation on the Darbar, but I am incapable of subjecting myself to the reality or semblance of obligation received from it or any of its Chiefs.

I have, etc.

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The Maharaja of Nepal to Lord Ellenborough, July 1843<sup>16</sup>

*Though the King's letter was not officially forwarded, Hodgson sent this copy for the information of the Governor General. The last paragraph is probably unique in the history of Nepal-East India Company relations and represents a great triumph for Hodgson as well as a touching insight into King Rajendra Bikram's nature.*

#### Translation

(after compliments)

Mr. Hodgson has recently mentioned to me his intention to retire from the service and return to Europe in the coming cold season.

Since that day I have been perpetually reflecting upon Mr. Hodgson's perfect knowledge of the customs and institutions of my Kingdom and of the Parbattia language, and likewise upon his long and zealous, kind and patient labours in the late troubled times, whereby the designs of evil persons inimical to both Governments were foiled and peace and true friendship with your State preserved.

The more I think upon these invaluable qualifications and exertions, the more am I pained at the idea of his departure. It is therefore my earnest request and hope for the benefit of my kingdom, that Mr. Hodgson may be persuaded by Your Lordship to remain a while longer with me. Let me constantly hear of Your Lordship's welfare, etc., etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Lord Ellenborough, Personal, 20 July 1843<sup>17</sup>

*The broad spectrum of Bharadars who supported the King's request for Hodgson's remaining in Kathmandu is impressive. One might submit this to a very cynical analysis, but the feeling is strong that at this time everyone in Nepal was setting aside politics in an outpouring of affection for a man who had lived among them longer by far than any other European in the history of Nepal had done.*

\*\*\*\*\*

My Lord,

Since I had last the honor to address Your Lordship, I have received another visit from three of our Prime Chiefs, who came without announcement of their intention and brought me the Kharita of which I enclose a copy. I received the Chiefs attended by Dr. Christie, Mr. Smith being unwell. I stated strongly my regret at the proceeding required by the State of my health and added that without more assurance as to the prospective conduct of the Darbar I could not but apprehend lest the compliment might prove worse than nugatory. I was answered by many kind expressions and in the end obliged to let the Kharita remain with me as a token of kindness, but with the declared intention on my part of not forwarding it to Your Lordship.

Should the Maharaja after this send for me to insist on its being nevertheless transmitted, Your Lordship will, I think, agree with me that His Highness' desire should be complied with to that extent when Your Lordship can deal with the Kharita at your pleasure. If His Highness insist on its despatch under a pledge of future good behaviour, the pledge may be of some service. The Rana Kazi,<sup>18</sup> a distinguished soldier and the most popular man here with the army, was one of my visitors, and he distinctly and repeatedly said that the Maharaja and the Chiefs of all parties were earnestly and sincerely united in their wish to keep me among them and that I should be compelled by their joint urgency at least to forward the solicitation to Your Lordship. I mention this because the Rana Kazi is a man universally respected and because the names of Chiefs cited by him as being concurrent in this proceeding afford the most decisive proof that party has nothing to do with it. Indeed, such cannot be the case; for the Minister who proposed it has already tendered his resignation and yet the thing holds on, as before. Though the Kharita be forwarded, Your Lordship may rely upon it I will reserve to Your Lordship the option of treating it in any manner that may seem most proper to Your Lordship.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Lord Ellenborough, Personal, 24 July 1843<sup>19</sup>

*Hodgson, overwhelmed with emotion, writes of his treatment by the Darbar and his deep concern for the Nepali people. But even in this moment of deep feeling, he cannot resist a sharp criticism of Nepalese politics.*

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My Lord,

Yesterday evening I waited on the Maharaja at his repeated request, attended by Messers Smith and Christie. His Highness received me in a fuller Darbar of distinguished men than I have seen collected these 5 years, and he spoke to me with such extreme and genuine kindness that I confess myself to have been moved.

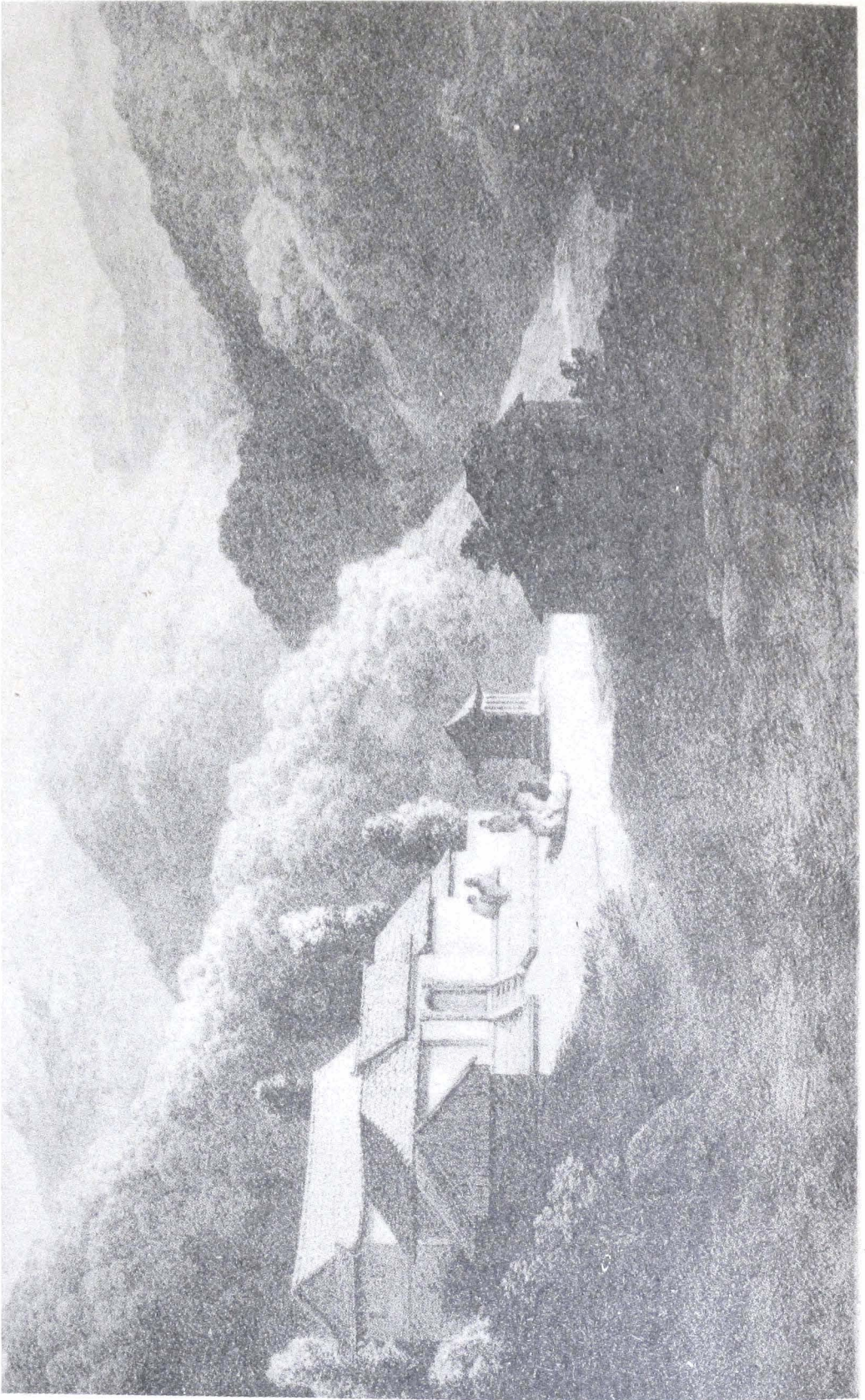
The Chiefs of all parties around me, seconded His Highness and altogether the scene was quite remarkable as both the gentlemen who were with me can testify.

The Maharaja reverting to the two visits made to me at the Residency pressed me to remain by every argument and consideration that good taste and kindness could suggest. I told him that my health was broken, my strength decayed, and desired him to look at me for the proof it.

I urged that the principles and proceedings of my Government were well known to be so steady and determined that no change of functionaries could affect the Resident's conduct and that my successor would certainly be a considerate and conciliatory person, the Governor General being entirely desirous of peace and friendship with Nepal. The Maharaja responded that he was aware of the steadiness of the Company's maxims of Government nor doubted the Governor General's good feeling, but asked me what could compensate to him for the loss of so familiar and severaly tried a friend whom he had known since his childhood. I urged at last my apprehension lest some contre temps should convert the compliment into a stigma when His Highness emphatically declared that he took upon himself to say nothing of the kind should occur. 'Neither wrong nor affront shall come near Your Government' said the Maharaja and his allegation met with murmurs of applause.

Still I adhered steadily to the declaration that I had neither hope in my heart nor strength in my limbs, and I said that I should never forget the events of this meeting in which His Highness' flattering graciousness was so handsomely sustained by the presence of the nobles and gentlemen of the land, yet that I must and did again and again entreat His Highness to desist from his requisition relative to the forwarding of the Kharita, suffering me to retain it as a treasured memento of this day. His Highness would not be so silenced: he said that himself, his Son, the Queen, his Chiefs (as I might see) were all of one mind and that if I did not forward the Kharita immediately he should nevertheless send it through another channel; for that he and all were thoroughly in earnest.





CHITLANG VALLEY

The Crown Prince reiterated his Father's sentiments more briefly but courteously and quietly and at length I was suffered to depart, as much affected as a man of my years and conversance with India Courts could be.

Your Lordship will smile at the above narrative. I cannot help it, for the kind words and looks of that immense room full of gallant Chiefs of all parties and opinions--some of whom even the recent royal wedding sufficed not to bring together demand at least the record of my gratitude. Other and official record I do not purpose to make of it till I have heard from Your Lordship in answer to this. I am absolutely at Your Lordship's disposal but I cannot well eventually avoid forwarding the Kharita and am afraid (if I can rightly read Parbattia's faces) that were I even to do so, Your Lordship would not be so rid of my kind and honest-hearted mountaineers--and such they are, apart from their detestable politics.

I have, etc.

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Resident Hodgson to Lord Ellenborough, Personal, 29 July 1843<sup>20</sup>

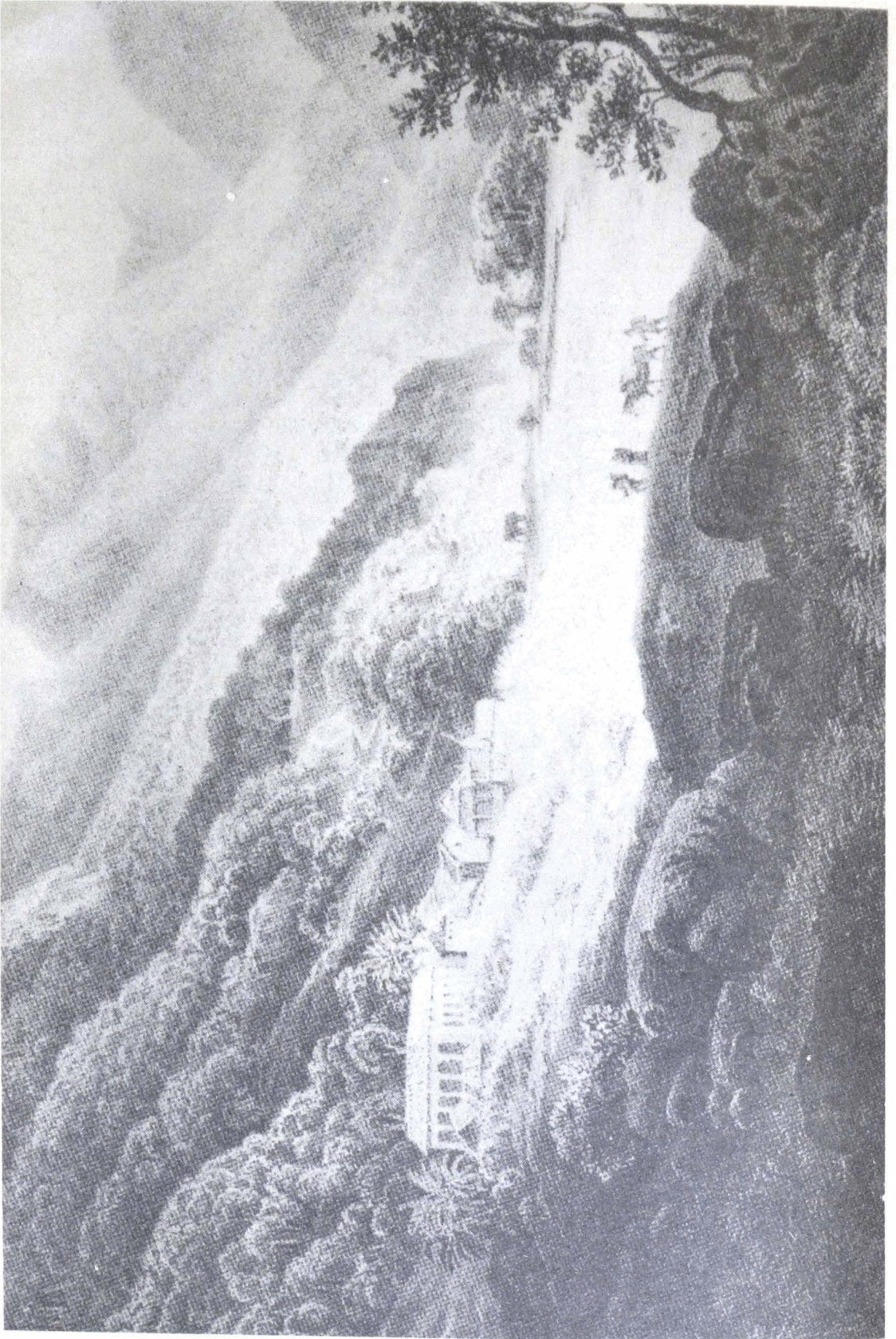
*Hodgson informs the Governor General that he is unable to prevent the King's Kharita from being forwarded. It is interesting in terms of the British long-range interests that that King's assurance of improved relations made no impression on the Governor General.*

\*\*\*\*\*

My Lord,

Yesterday evening the Maharaja came past the Residency on Horseback, and sending to me to join him, His Highness took me to the Magazine. No one was with him save menials. He said to me that he was sure from my manner rather than from my words that I had not forwarded the Kharita. I acknowledged it, pleading that the state of my health rendering the thing a compliment merely, I must confess my fear lest the compliment, however prized by me, might be purchased too dearly owing to the unsteadiness of the Darbar's public conduct. His Highness protested again and again that the Darbar's public conduct towards my Government should and would square with his personal expression of good will towards me, that I might dismiss every fear on that score, and that in fine I must forward the Kharita or that he would certainly seek other means of making his sentiments known to Your Lordship. I put off the Maharaja as best I could, nor must I trust myself with any attempt at repeating the courteous and kind things said to me by His Highness. But it seems proper that I should mention to Your Lordship the fact of His Highness' having shown so much spirit and independence of action as well as so much semblable sincerity of good will to me as thus seeking me indicates.





BHIMPHEDI

On rare occasions he had done the like previously, thereby satisfying me that he always felt sure there was no Chief in the Country who would claim a particle of undue consideration from me.

I have, etc.

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*On 19 August 1843, Lord Ellenborough had the whole of this personal correspondence written into the public record.*

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 13 December 1843<sup>21</sup>

*Major Lawrence's report of Hodgson's farewell from Kathmandu is far more touching than he imagined it to be. The difficulty he experienced in replacing a man such as Hodgson, whose reputation was so enhanced by the circumstances of his leaving Nepal, is also especially interesting.*

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Sir,

(after compliments)

On the 8th December I reported Mr. Hodgson's departure on the 5th and that he had that day been much complimented in Darbar and accompanied for a mile by General Mathabar Singh and the whole of the soldiery in undress; I have now the honor to enclose a translation as also a Persian copy of a Lal Mohar presented to Mr. Hodgson by the Maharaja and read in open Darbar on the day of that gentleman's departure.

I am as yet incompetent to judge of the true feelings of the Maharaja and Darbar; that of the people (by which Mr. Hodgson designates the soldiery) is of course the mere echo of the Darbar, or rather their acts are strictly in accordance with the Maharaja's orders, as not a man ever visits the Residency but as a messenger from the Court, and individuals meeting the Resident on the high road have not been in the habit of saluting or noticing him.

I have considered it necessary to notice these facts that the conduct of the Darbar should in the present circumstance pass for what it is worth and no more.

I doubt not in the least that the Maharaja very much regretted Mr. Hodgson's departure, more especially as from the newspapers and other sources he had been informed that the late Resident was removed from Nepal for saving the country from invasion; with this opinion I found the whole Darbar strongly impressed, and that I had been sent as a sort of punishment to them and to Mr. Hodgson, and that my coming was a prelude to a change of measures on the part of the British Government.



This feeling I hope has already been allayed, as in a separate despatch will be explained, and trust that while the Maharaja and his Court continue to pay all respect to the memory of Mr. Hodgson, the regret for that gentleman's departure will in no manner be increased by any conduct of mine inconsistent with my duty.

I have, etc.

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The Maharaja of Nepal to Brian Hodgson, 1 December 1843<sup>22</sup>

*The last paragraph of this Lal Mohar must surely have been one of Hodgson's most treasured mementoes and represents an enduring testimony to personal concern that can grow despite the formalities and legalisms of diplomacy and politics.*

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#### TRANSLATION

It is well known to all the world that during my grandfather's reign Commander-in-Chief General Bhim Sen Thapa by his wisdom, forethought and prudence kept peace and friendship between the two Governments and governed my own Country well at the same time.

When you were appointed Resident at my Court I was very young, but by your kindness and wisdom and advice to General Bhim Sen, friendship was continued between the two Governments.

But in the year Sambat 1849 (1837) evil advisers and wicked Chiefs ruined General Bhim Sen. They also caused dissension and anger with the Governor General and nearly caused a war.

But you from being many years here and entirely owing to your kindness, wisdom, and forebearance, you caused the Governor General's anger to be abated and instilled wisdom into me, and by God's blessing and your kindness friendship was once more established between the two Governments --and for your kindness I shall ever be grateful, and wherever you may go and whatever you do, May God bless and prosper it, and to hear of such will always give me pleasure.

True translation

H.M. Lawrence, Resident

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 15 December 1843<sup>23</sup>

*Major Lawrence makes his first attempt at analyzing the various trends in the Nepal Darbar. His initial reaction to King Rajendra Bikram is very important, and agrees in substance with the reactions that other Residents experienced on first contact. Major Lawrence was essentially right in his comments in paragraph 26 on the confusion his planned policy would create in the minds of those contending for power in the Darbar.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to enclose a translation of a note given in by me to the Maharaja on the 11th December and then read in open Darbar with its enclosures, the Government Circular to Residents of the 26th April 1842 and the Governor General's Kharita regarding myself on the 27th October 1843.

2. I took occasion as the Munshi read the paper to explain each particular paragraph to the Maharaja, dwelling especially on the Government's orders to Residents that while Residents were forbidden to interfere in domestic matters, the Governor General looked to Sovereigns of India to make such arrangements within their respective dominions as should secure the happiness of their own subjects and the peace of their borders.

3. I instanced the present condition of Lahore and Gwalior as consequent on long internal mismanagement.

4. The Maharaja and assembled Chiefs appeared pleased with my frankness, and I have since been informed that the business of that day has given pretty general satisfaction.

5. Nine principal Chiefs were in attendance that day besides Military Officers, the latter forming a large majority of all Nepal Darbars. Among the Chiefs were, I am given to understand, some of the most respectable in the country. General Mathabar Singh was, however, absent; and I have reason to believe that the step taken that day was altogether contrary to his views.

6. Mathabar Singh had previously overwhelmed me with politeness and offers of service. He was one of five Chiefs who met me at Thankot, a march beyond Kathmandu, on the 30th November and accompanied me on the elephant that day to the Residency.

7. At Darbar again on the 1st, when being introduced to the Raja, and also on the 5th, when Mr. Hodgson took leave, Mathabar Singh was equally polite and was the only Chief who on the latter day accompanied us from the Palace, he with all the soldiery in undress going for a mile

beyond the town and thence returning, whilst the Residency party went with Mr. Hodgson.

8. On all these occasions Mathabar Singh was full of professions of good will, assuring me that he looked upon me as an old friend and that he was delighted to renew my acquaintance. He told me that he was very awkwardly situated between the Raja and the Crown Prince and hoped for my support. I replied that I remembered him well and was disposed to evince my friendly disposition in all points consistent with my instructions. But on the 30th November and afterwards I remarked, 'You know I am forbidden to interfere in domestic matters.'

9. On the 7th December Mathabar Singh called at the Residency and opened out very freely and incautiously, so much so that it seemed to me that he spoke loudly with a view to be heard outside.

10. He advised me strongly against allowing myself to be treated with disrespect, or to be sent for to have interviews with the Raja or his son on the high road, or to be called by grooms and such like low people. I thanked him and said I should certainly take his advice if needful, but that I did not anticipate any such slights. He added, 'Yes Sir, stand out firmly and in all points you can depend on me for support.' It struck me that there was some latent motive in all he was saying and therefore I simply thanked him for his good advice and kind attentions.

11. Mathabar Singh then apologized to me for the Guru Krishna Ram Pandit having been sent to the Governor General with presents and a letter requesting that Mr. Hodgson might not be relieved, and assured me that no offence was meant to me and that the Guru had been dispatched before my arrival. I laughed and said that I had met the Guru on the road and that I could in no way object to any such act committed before my arrival. The General then entered into many particulars of the tragedies of the last five years, dwelling with much feeling on what his family had suffered and remarking that the late Resident had actually witnessed the dogs devouring his father Bhim Sen's (his uncle) carcass, and added significantly as he rose to depart, 'I will support your position and honor, Sir, and do you the same to mine.' Thus in fact offering an offensive and defensive alliance.

12. I simply replied that I looked on him as a friend, but that I had already explained the extent of my power of interference, and the subject dropped.

13. Mathabar Singh then asked the Residency party to go with him and see his house. We did so and were treated with much politeness, an English organ, a piano, and a Seraphiore being played for our amusement; and during our stay of an hour or more, no further allusion was made to politics.

14. During the next three days while I was expecting a public interview with the Darbar to deliver the Governor General's instructions and endeavour to expel certain doubts from the Maharaja's mind, I received messages from Mathabar Singh advising me against the interview and insinuating more than actually stating that it was intended to be at Balaju and in improper form.

15. I replied that whether it was at Balaju or Kathmandu was immaterial to me so that the Chiefs were present and a proper person came for me.

16. As already stated, Mathabar Singh was not present, nor was the Crown Prince. The former sent in the evening to excuse his absence as having been in attendance on the Prince. This I ascertained was not true, and that as I went to Balaju, he (M.S.) went out to Patan and returned much about the time I did and then went to the Palace.

17. The above detail is intended to show that for some purpose Mathabar Singh, the most energetic and European-like Chief here, has an object in estranging me from the Raja; perhaps that he may be the medium of reconciliation; or perhaps he has so far committed himself with the Crown Prince that he fears the open expression of my opinion in favour of the Raja, or as he is supposed to be inclined towards the Rani, and finds that I cannot accept his alliance, he is disposed to make me quarrel with the Raja.

18. It is with much hesitation that thus early I venture to offer an opinion; but from the records of the Residency for the last two years it appears to me that there has been a long fostered attempt at removing the Raja and his eldest son and substituting the name of the present young Rani. That the Raja was aware of this intention and, fearing openly to act, set up his son as a means of drawing forth opinions and perhaps in his name of committing atrocities.

19. I perceive no symptoms of insanity in the Raja, though many of cowardice and low cunning; the latter perhaps has now overreached itself, and it is possible that he never intended to bring forward his son to the extent he has done.

20. Nor does the Boy appear to me mad; he is vicious and cruel; and having been indulged to excess is now inclined to run riot. I talked to him on the 1st, 5th, and 13th of December and found him sufficiently intelligent, quickly comprehending my meaning. He talked to me freely, chiefly of affairs of State, to which I briefly replied, and talked to him of lighter matters more suited to his years and I learn gave satisfaction to the listeners who afterwards expressed surprise at my not being afraid of the Boy.

21. The Rani is still absent, though her friends are not idle. Mr. Hodgson informed that her character is good, though her capacity is untried. I trust that both will continue as reported, for under any

circumstances I can see no real advantage to the Lady in her being forced into the political arena.

22. What possible reason there is for the Raja to resign I cannot perceive, and should he do so, having two sons taking precedence of both of those of the present Rani, why he should entrust her with the Regency is equally beyond my comprehension, causing, as such a step would do, bloodshed in his family and probably anarchy in his dominions.

23. The Raja, I may add, is the best informed man in his country. He knows not only the status of Hindustan, but is familiar with the names of European Monarchs and has some knowledge of the power and resources of each. His Highness seems to have been long impressed with a notion that the British foreign policy is aggressive--his intrigues during the last three years may in a measure be attributed to such feeling and to a belief that as we are only waiting our time to attack him, it was only wise to take his opportunity of forming a confederacy to attack us.

24. With his knowledge however of our power at any moment to take possession of the Tarai and of his own inability to act offensively in the Plains, I am satisfied that, however he may talk of war, he would never enter on it single-handed with Great Britain.

25. Most of the Chiefs are equally well informed as to the relative resources of the two States, and I am persuaded that none but desperate bankrupts in character and hopes at home would recommend a war. Some of them will talk if listened to, but a map of the world and a few undeniable statistical facts must at any time silence them.

26. Desperate characters there are here as elsewhere, who exist only by commotion, and more desperate intrigues perhaps the world could not produce, but I doubt not that perfect straightforwardness will very much puzzle them.

27. The people and soldiery are stated to be particularly loyal. The latter however and many of the Chiefs are much dissatisfied at the follies of the Raja and the cruelties and petulancies, both I believe exaggerated, of the Crown Prince. These acts, if not speedily put a stop to, may bring on a crisis, but I hope that as the Raja's fears cease he will put down the Prince and appoint a Minister.

28. The Country is properly quiet and the people in the large and populous Valley industrious and contented. More beautiful cultivation on a Hill country cannot be conceived. Every inch of cultivable ground being under the plough, and the water courses trained to every field, however small.

29. It is evidently by order of the Court that the people have always kept aloof from the Residency, but both Dr. Christie and Lt. Smith tell me that neither at Kathmandu nor in their rambles about the Country have they ever met with an affront.

30. The views contained in this letter are offered with much deference, and indeed are only presented thus early because I believe an undue opinion of Nepal power and Nepal aggressive intentions prevail.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to the Maharaja of Nepal, 11 December 1843<sup>24</sup>

*Major Lawrence presents his case to King Rajendra Bikram for being accepted as a man of peace. He argues that peace was the Governor General's policy, which he intends to carry out, and tries to show that he is as much, or more, a man of peace than Hodgson. However, the mythologizing of Hodgson had already begun, and his task was by no means an easy one. For all of their difference of opinion, Hodgson cared, and the Darbar knew it.*

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#### TRANSLATION

(after the usual compliments)

I was happy to observe the cordial manner in which Your Highness took leave of the late Resident, and the handsome compliments that you paid that gentleman.

One friend has departed, but I trust Your Highness will consider that another has taken his place, and if evil disposed persons tell Your Highness that as a soldier the new Resident came to your country with other purposes than those of friendship, believe them not. Your real friends will not so talk to Your Highness. They will rather strive to dispel all doubts from your mind. They will tell Your Highness that the British Government--and she is the strongest, the richest, the wisest on earth--is also the most forebearing. She is indeed so strong that it has not always been necessary to resent injuries and affronts put on her by weaker nations. Your Highness has heard what happened to Burma, Scind, etc. In like manner it was with China, where after more than half a century of peaceful intercourse, the Government insulted and plundered British subjects; and were in consequence beaten in many battles, their cities and islands taken, and eventually obliged to make a treaty very favourable to Great Britain, to cede several places and to indemnify the losses of British subjects and to pay the expenses of the war. Peace and friendship now prevail with Burma, China, and indeed throughout Asia. The British troops are now inured to war and are therefore well able to fulfill their purpose of preserving peace. The British Government therefore needs no subterfuges, nay it abhors them. It is very strong. It is equally honest. I mention all this to dispel doubts from Your Highness' mind. People, I understand, tell Your Highness that a new Resident has been appointed because Mr. Hodgson kept

peace between the British Government and Nepal. Such persons speak falsely. If the Governor General had intended otherwise than friendship, His Lordship would not have written as he has done. He has told Your Highness I am a soldier, but he has added that my orders are to act with conciliation and cordiality. His Lordship has added that as a soldier of some experience I can appreciate the merits and feelings of a nation of brave soldiers. The Governor General has thus truly and wisely written. And for myself I may add that I am not only a soldier, but the son of a soldier and the brother of several soldiers. That I have taken part in the victories of the British armies in Burma and Afghanistan, but, while in the field I have studied war, I have done it as the means of securing peace. Your Highness' Bharadars are soldiers. So are many of those of my Country. And while we are ready for a just war, we always prefer peace. We study, in short, war that we may insure peace. Your Highness' friend has been engaged in war, but he has much more been engaged in the work of Peace. He has seen many countries in Europe and Asia, he has visited China, for the last ten years indeed he has been almost entirely engaged in peaceful avocations, and for the last five years in preventing disturbances between British and Sikh subjects. Your Highness is aware with what success such conduct has been crowned, and that under many temptations and several rulers. There has been cordial relationship between the British Government and that of the Panjab, in proof of which I may say that 500 soldiers of the Sikh State accompanied the British Army to Kabul and behaved in a manner that drew on them the respect of the British Government. My labours, therefore, with the Sikhs, Your Highness will observe, were not thrown away, and I must have conducted myself as a friend and well-wisher to Maharaja Sher Singh, his Government, and his army, or the Maharaja would never have trusted me with his army, and that army would never have followed me to a distant and difficult field of battle. But all that I have said must be well known to a wise Prince who hears what is going on in Hindustan and has wisdom to separate the truth from the falsehood of what is reported. It was quite natural that Your Highness should regret the departure of so kind and good a man as Mr. Hodgson and that when losing a friend of 22 years standing you should hesitate to take at once a stranger to your confidence. But let me again assure Your Highness that the policy of the British Government is not shifting and variable, and depends in no manner on the pleasure or whim of any Resident. It is one and consistent, founded on good faith and a sense of its own strength and of the rights of its neighbours and allies. To convince Your Highness beyond shadow of doubt of what I say, your friend now encloses the original circular order to Residents dated April 26th 1842, as also His Lordship's Kharita introducing myself. These two documents and other letters of a like tenor being the only instructions your friend has received and consequently being the orders by which his conduct must be guided. Mr. Hodgson did not present this document, thinking it best no doubt not to do so, but I consider it necessary that Your Highness should possess a copy. Mr. Hodgson meant to be a friend of Your Highness and of the brave people of Nepal. Before many months are over, I trust that you will have reason to believe that I am no less your friend and their friend. Confidence and friendship are not the fruit of a day, but I again beg Your

Highness not to look on me simply as Major Lawrence but as the British Resident, as the representative of a great and powerful nation that has no possible object in offence and has no other end to serve but to consolidate its vast territory, to seek the welfare of Hindustan, the honor and happiness of its subjects, its friends, and its allies. Look on me as the organ of a friendly Government and as furnished with instructions based on truth, friendship, and cordiality from which I dare not and cannot deviate. I will add, that as directed in the Governor General's instructions I shall always be happy to give Your Highness advice to the best of my ability, when you are pleased to require it, or when I consider that Your Honor or welfare demand it.

True translation

H.M. Lawrence, Resident

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#### Footnotes to Chapter Seven

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 3 August 1842, No. 90; slightly edited.
2. Foreign Secret Consultation 7 September 1842, No. 74A; not edited.
3. Foreign Secret Consultation 30 November 1842, No. 34; slightly edited.
4. 'By the penal law of Nepal, the accused is debarred from ordeal if two or more competent witnesses affirm his guilt; his confession is still indispensable.' B.H.H.
5. 'See Resident's despatch 22 June 1842.' B.H.H.
6. Foreign Secret Consultation 17 May 1843, No. 88; slightly edited.
7. Foreign Secret Consultation 24 May 1843, No. 64; moderately edited.
8. 'These are the very individuals who in the recent crisis of '38-42 attempted to crush or paralyze the Resident in the discharge of his duties, first by impelling the disorganized soldiery on the Residency, etc., and secondly by a series of savage placards, one of which declared that 15 soldiers from the rank of Subedar downwards had sworn to murder the Resident if within a short, given period he did not abandon the negotiations on the 10 claims preferred by the Governor General against Nepal. These are the matters adverted to in the concluding words of this despatch and which my visitors were well aware of and seemed to feel properly my allusion to.' B.H.H.
9. Foreign Secret Consultation 10 May 1843, No. 69; slightly edited.
10. Foreign Secret Consultation 7 June 1843, No. 98; slightly edited.



11. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 Aug st 1843, No. 2; slightly edited.
12. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 August 1843, No. 3; not edited.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 August 1843, No. 4; not edited.
14. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 August 1843, No. 5; not edited.
15. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 August 1843, No. 6; not edited.
16. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 August 1843, No. 8; not edited.
17. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 August 1843, No. 7; not edited.
18. Kazi Abhiman Rana.
19. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 August 1843, No. 9; not edited.
20. Foreign Secret Consultation 19 August 1843, No. 10; not edited.
21. Foreign Secret Consultation 27 January 1844, No. 49; not edited.
22. Foreign Secret Consultation 27 January 1844, No. 49; not edited.
23. Foreign Secret Consultation 20 January 1844, No. 1; not edited.
24. Foreign Secret Consultation 20 January 1844, No. 1; slightly edited.

### THREE

#### Mathabar Singh's Book

In response to King Rajendra Bikram's summons, Mathabar Singh returned to Kathmandu on 17 April 1843. As the King had suspected, Mathabar Singh was initially a strong partisan of Laxmi Devi, but when Mathabar Singh came to know more about the group that had formed around this lady, in particular Gagan Singh and Abhiman Rana, he withdrew. Later he claimed that these two had planned to make him Prime Minister but to keep all the power to themselves.

As soon as Mathabar Singh withdrew his support, Queen Laxmi Devi's power began to wane. The dynamics of Darbar politics then made it impossible for her to continue to resist the King's efforts to reduce her political prerogatives. The King's alternative to the Queen was the Crown Prince, and the King once more urged his son forward. Mathabar Singh found he had no difficulty in supporting the boy, whom no one else would touch politically, and the field lay open to his maneuvers. Unfortunately, the King insisted on sharing power rather than giving power completely into Surendra's hands.

The impossibility of directing the administration when there were two de facto rulers proved to be a situation with which Mathabar Singh could not cope. On a number of occasions he approached Resident Lawrence with his problem, but Lawrence dare not offer even the semblance of support. The Governor General adamantly insisted that the Resident was accredited to the King, and that no discussion that in any way questioned the King's position or authority should be tolerated. In May 1844 Mathabar Singh resigned from the premiership, too frustrated with the perplexing political situation to attempt to carry on. The post was to remain vacant for six months. What Mathabar Singh dared not do, no one else dared to try.

It is evident that up to this point King Rajendra Bikram's strategy had worked quite well. He had completely overturned the arrangement that had resulted from the popular movement of December 1842; he had broken up the party that had grown up around the Queen; and, although he had few open supporters of his own, he was still King, the power of the throne was intact, and no one had been able to rally around a group strong enough to challenge his powers.

Mathabar Singh's resignation had not been a happy move, as far as the King was concerned. With the Premier's post vacant, there was scope for a coalition or a cabal to press for power. Far better to have Mathabar Singh as Prime Minister and keep him dancing at the end of a string pulled now by the prince and now by the King himself. Mathabar Singh was too strong for any other potential rival to challenge, and as long as he saw some hope that the situation would improve, he might well be willing to endure a fair amount of pulling and tugging.

And this the King did. He re-appointed Mathabar Singh as Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief and promised him that after the Dasserah celebrations there would be one ruler. That was on 18 October 1844. Mathabar Singh accepted, but he made one more attempt to gain 'countenance' from the Company. When this failed, he made his most desperate gamble.

The Crown Prince, increasingly restive over his father's failure to hand over to him more of the real power of the throne, was open to suggestion and influence. Mathabar Singh secretly backed the boy, and the boy responded warmly. Mathabar Singh discussed openly his plans to go elephant hunting in the Tarai. The boy would go, too. When the King tried to block this trip, the boy stubbornly stepped up his plans. At length, unable to prevent the hunt, the King joined it. With a large retinue of soldiers he, the Crown Prince, and Mathabar Singh left for Hetaunda and the planned hunt. At Hetaunda, after a showdown with his father, the Prince announced that he would take his army and his wives (apparently in that order) and go to Banaras. He marched off, with the troops following along behind--everyone well aware that if the boy crossed the border at the head of an army of this size there would be very dangerous consequences. The King, not unlike a latter day King Lear, tried helplessly to stop the tide of marching soldiers as they swept out of camp. Once they reached a distance, the troops finally convinced the Prince that they would accept him as their King. It seems that at first they meant only to cajole him into returning to Kathmandu, but having been proclaimed King by this large section of the Army of Nepal, the Prince immediately ordered the execution of sixteen petty officers and the outcasting and exile of three Brahman petty officers. If the troops had been bluffing, the Crown Prince called their bluff with an amazing forthrightness. His orders were executed, and officers and men of the army were now more firmly committed to him than had been their plan.

The 'Maharajadhiraj' returned in triumph to Kathmandu, was met at Thankot by Mathabar Singh who had rushed ahead to prepare a suitable reception, and the two of them gambled that the coup would succeed. Farther back in the procession a worried King Rajendra tried to work out his answer to this new challenge.

Everyone was swept along by the speed of events except the Resident Fearful of taking any step without the Governor General's approval, he could only write to Calcutta about the events that had transpired and ask for instructions. Meanwhile the King and the Crown Prince had reached a working agreement which gave the King control of foreign affairs, but made the Crown Prince responsible for the administration. This the Governor General rejected. The King could resign or he could stay on the throne, but the real ruler of the country must have charge of foreign affairs. And so the coup failed. The Governor General had spoken, and the King would remain King as long as he wished.

Mathabar Singh's fate was sealed, but he did not yet know it. On 20 January 1845 Mathabar Singh was appointed Minister for life, given the power of life and death, with the right to execute without question seven persons, and provided with golden lockets on which the King's own protection of Mathabar Singh was clearly proclaimed--Mathabar Singh wore them around his neck to make doubly sure of their protection at all times.

On the night of 17 May, Mathabar Singh was called to the Palace. The Queen had fallen and needed his help. He hastened there immediately and learned in the King's inner chamber that the reward for failure in a coup was death.

No one could have been surprised at this final turn of events. Mathabar Singh had gambled and lost. It is clear that Lawrence had been half-inclined to recognize the boy King just to introduce some order into the politics of the Darbar. Restrained in absolute terms by the Governor General, who gave to the King that countenance (and the strength that the Company's countenance bestowed) which he himself had insisted should be given to no one, Lawrence had to refuse the only support that could have saved Mathabar Singh.

The violence of Mathabar Singh's death added a new dimension to Darbar politics. Former Prime Ministers had been killed on one pretext or another. This step up the ladder to the killing of a Prime Minister while still in office was desperate. The spirit of the Darbar after Mathabar's death beggars description. Tension, violence, ambition, and fear.

King Rajendra Bikram next summoned Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah. Hodgson had called him 'hesitant'. Lawrence called him 'timid'. The irony of making such a man Prime Minister at such a time can only underscore the desperate plight that had befallen the Bharadars of Nepal--those who supposedly carried the burden of the State.

#### CHRONOLOGY

1843

25 December -- Mathabar Singh appointed Prime Minister and Command-in-Chief

1844

May -- Mathabar Singh resigns

22 September -- Kala Pandeys arrested

18 October -- Mathabar Singh appointed Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief; promised there will be ONE ruler

- 17 November -- Pandeys exiled
- 4 December -- King, Crown Prince, and Mathabar Singh go to the Tarai to catch elephants
- 10 December -- TROOPS 'ACCEPT' CROWN PRINCE AS KING sixteen petty officers killed, three outcasted and exiled
- 13 December -- Mathabar Singh returns to Kathmandu to organize 'reception' for Crown Prince
- 14 December -- 'Maharajadhiraj' Surendra returns to Kathmandu
- 18 December -- King hands over 'authority' to Crown Prince
- 28 December -- Governor General refuses to accept new arrangement
- 1845
- 20 January -- Mathabar Singh appointed Prime Minister for life
- February -- Jung Bahadur's brother becomes vakil in Calcutta
- 17 May -- MATHABAR SINGH THAPA PUT TO DEATH (Jung Bahadur reported to be involved)

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### The Frustrations of Mathabar Singh

If vengeance was Mathabar Singh's plan when he returned to Nepal, he accomplished it with ease. The leaders of the Kala Pandey family (and party) were executed. Almost all the remaining members of the family were exiled, even the small children.

No one, however, of Mathabar Singh's calibre could be totally taken up by such a motive. Nor was he. It was his ambition, stated many times in conversation with the Resident, to be a Prime Minister in the style of his uncle, Bhim Sen Thapa, who had held all the powers of the State under the nominal control of the Regent and, after he came of age, the King. In a word, Bhim Sen Thapa had been the Government. And this was what Mathabar Singh aimed to become.

Clever, shrewd, handsome and with a strong personality that attracted men of the rank and file, Mathabar Singh had all the characteristics of an outstanding military leader. But as a politician in the Kathmandu Darbar he showed little sign of the intellect and insight that survival at the pinnacle of power required.

One principle that Mathabar Singh enunciated clearly was to have an impact far beyond his dreams. He had stated clearly that the King had all power and that whatever the King ordered would be done.

There was surely no ear more attuned to this comment than that of Jung Bahadur. Jung had little enough to learn from the style and intelligence of Mathabar Singh, but there is no indication whatsoever that Jung Bahadur rejected any man's wisdom if it taught him a lesson that he saw was pertinent.

Resident Lawrence to Government, 25 December 1843<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General that General Mathabar Singh has this day been formally appointed Minister and Commander-in-Chief of Nepal, and I am given to understand that the nomination was made at a very full Darbar, all the Chiefs including even the late Ministers being present and professing approval of the arrangement.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 30 December 1843<sup>2</sup>

*Major Lawrence reports the Darbar's continued pressure to have him recognize by some small formality the anomalous position of the Crown Prince. Major Lawrence's personal reflections on the Kathmandu political scene are reminiscent of Hodgson's.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General that General Mathabar Singh accompanied by Rana Kazi paid me a visit of ceremony of the 27th instant to announce his formal acceptance of the office of Minister and Commander in Chief of Nepal.

The General expressed his hope that during his administration the friendship of the two States would increase, to which sentiment I gave my cordial assent, and after some little conversation during which in reference to the Gwalior news, Mathabar Singh remarked, 'Oh yes, who can withstand you?' he withdrew.

The previous evening General Mathabar Singh sent me his installation Lal Mohar (orders) for inspection but with them was an impress of the Maharaja's hand in vermilion on a sheet of paper; which the Minister is ordered to place on his head and then to disobey any unlawful order he may receive from the Maharaja; the meaning of all this is at present a riddle to me, but appears to be part and parcel of the Raja's scheme to act irresponsibly.

Yesterday afternoon by appointment I waited on the Raja in Darbar; the Prince, as has been the custom for the last two years sat on his father's right hand on the same elevated throne, I being on a chair on the right of the Prince. The Prince tried to monopolize the conversation, and seemed annoyed when I addressed the Raja. Many questions were asked and much joy expressed at the news from Gwalior.<sup>3</sup> The Raja asking who was to pay the expenses of the troops, I replied that nothing yet was settled, but I concluded that Gwalior as having been in the wrong would at least have to pay all expenses.

The Raja then expressed a hope that the report of a misfortune in Scind was untrue on which subject I relieved His Highness' mind and added that all was quiet in China and elsewhere. I then stated that I had that day heard from England, the news having been only fifty-two days.

I presented a picture of Sir Hugh Gough to the Raja who immediately asked if His Excellency was not the conqueror of China, asked his age and that of Generals Nott, Pollack, etc. I told him he had omitted in his list the greatest warrior of all, Sir Charles Napier, who alone was equal to ten regiments. After some little general conversation, the

Raja and his son speaking together addressed me and the Minister telling us that in two days whatever the General asked me I was to do. Understanding the purpose, I said the question had better be put now; and if possible, I will consent; but if (addressing the Raja) it refers to what Your Highness has 4 times already required from me, I must again decline, my reasons for so doing have been fully given. I came here as your friend and not to injure you and I will not do so by agreeing to give the memorandum to the prince.<sup>4</sup>

The Raja and his son both seemed annoyed, and Mathabar Singh whispered to me that he should have to pay the penalty. I said, 'No, I will tell them it is useless sending you.' So I again addressed the Raja and asked seriously what I had done that I should be so annoyed, that I could not consent, and requested not again to be asked, as what was wanted could only be injurious both to the Raja and the Crown Prince. The Prince replied, 'No harm can ensue; we two are equal.' The Raja said, 'Give it once.' I replied that the Raja himself might give it or anything else, but that it was out of my power. The Raja seemed glad to close the discussion, he looking excited and anxious and the Prince, although throughout civil, beginning to look black.

On leading me to my elephant, Mathabar Singh told me he would be beaten, and be sent to me; I told him his coming would be useless. 'You are right' was his reply, 'but what can I do?'

During the day I had been warned that something of the kind would occur, and Lt. Smith, just as we were starting from the Residency, was told that there would be a disturbance in Darbar, and Guru Prasad Chautaria, while leading that officer into Darbar, whispered to him that he would presently see a scene.

Such is the crookedness of this Darbar, and so little dependence is to be placed on the word of any individual in it that I am not without doubts as to Mathabar Singh's participation in the scheme of annoying me, perhaps to force me into an alliance, perhaps because he has committed himself to the Prince.

I pretend, however, not to understand the thoughts and intentions of this Darbar. After having been permitted to have almost daily and unwitnessed interviews with the late Resident while Fatteh Jung Chautaria was still Minister, and while he, Mathabar Singh, was prosecuting the Pandays to the death. I can readily believe that it will take some time to enable Mathabar Singh to believe my assurances of holding aloof from all, and even dealing with him (now the Minister) and the Raja officially, or at least before witnesses. On my return from the interview I told the Darbar Munshi who accompanied me to tell the Maharaja and General Mathabar Singh that it was not proper to trouble me as had been done.

Yesterday the Munshi told me that he had delivered my message, but that the Raja had given no reply.



I have heard however that my resistance has given much satisfaction to the Chiefs and it is not impossible that the Raja himself may be pleased. The whole affair may have been got up to try me to see whether I could be teased into a deviation from what I had stated to be my orders.

I find that I have omitted to state that besides the special mission reported in my letter of the 15th to ask for a copy of the memorandum, I received three several messages by my own Munshi who was specially sent for by the Raja and told to ask for a copy of the paper for the Prince.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 31 December 1843<sup>5</sup>

*Major Lawrence forwards a summary of his conversation with Prime Minister Mathabar Singh Thapa on the occasion of the Resident's first official visit to the Prime Minister. Hodgson has been gone from Kathmandu shortly over three weeks, and the new Resident shows himself very wary of the politics of Nepal.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report that attended by the Gentlemen of the Residency I yesterday returned General Mathabar Singh's visit.

2. The interview having been a long one, and much conversation having passed, I requested Lt. Smith on our return, briefly, to commit to paper his recollections, which as appearing correct I enclose in original.<sup>6</sup>

3. What is stated of Mathabar Singh's having purchased the Chautarias agreed with what has been reported to me from other quarters. He has perhaps acted prudently in dividing the spoils, though I doubt if he could have taken up his office without so doing. The Chautarias being the most powerful faction in the country, though divided in itself.

4. Having held aloof from Mathabar Singh until he was officially announced as Minister, I listened patiently to all he chose to say yesterday and replied as satisfactorily as I could without committing myself; though the General showed more skill in trying to draw me into such committal than I gave him credit for.

5. The detail of the sufferings of his able uncle, and of the barbarities committed on the whole family and on the person of the narrator himself (in appearance a noble specimen of a man) was the prelude to a skilful exposure of the difficulties of his present

position; and to an attempt to show that much of his difficulties arose from his efforts to protect me.

6. This is all nonsense, but for once I would not contradict him. Nor did I notice his opinions as to the course that should be pursued towards the Raja and the Crown Prince, but I will not again allow him to talk in such a strain.

7. Mathabar Singh's narrative of yesterday shows what value is to be placed on such compliments as he has been paying Mr. Hodgson. As further specimens of the Minister's sincerity or perhaps it may be said of the practise of this Darbar, I may add that no sooner had we left him at 7 p.m. yesterday than he went to Darbar and remained there till near midnight and that he has just dispatched an embassy to Lahore and another to Gwalior. Not that I believe he dreams of war with Great Britain but that while he talks to me of peace and friendship he considers it necessary as Minister of Nepal to talk of foreign alliances to the Raja and to divert the latter's thoughts from home affairs to foreign intrigues.

8. I shall report these missions more fully when I have further information but would not recommend their being noticed. It seems to me that the multitude of them, real and fictitious, during the last few years was mainly owing to the attention paid them, and to the stir they caused.

I have, etc.

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Notes of an Interview between Resident Lawrence and Mathabar Singh Thapa, 30 December 1843<sup>7</sup>

*This summary is important not only for the insight it provides into Mathabar Singh's attitude at this time but also for Mathabar Singh's analysis of the Kathmandu political scene. Mathabar Singh's reported comments on Hodgson are particularly interesting.*

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The Minister sent his son and a Captain to fetch Resident and party, and on the Tundikhel parade we were met by the Minister, who was surrounded by off-role men anxious for service.<sup>8</sup> He then accompanied us to their arsenal and foundry and his gardens, and also at his request we paid a visit to his uncle, Ranbir Thapa,<sup>9</sup> who has turned Fakir and dresses as such.

The Minister very politely then took us to his house, where he had an organ and piano play for our amusement.<sup>10</sup> He told us that in his arrangements as Minister he had liberally provided for the Chautarias and contrasted his present conduct with theirs to his family.

He then entered very fully into what his family had suffered on the downfall of his uncle, General Bhim Sen, saying that an interference or remonstrance would have saved his uncle and that when applied to by the Raja as to what he should do, the late Resident's answer was: the country is the Raja's, and he is sole master here and can do as he likes.<sup>11</sup> That when he, Mathabar Singh, was seized at Ludhiana, Captain Wade declined having anything to say to him, saying he was an outlaw and charged with serious crimes against his Government; that when he effected his escape to Lahore, he was denounced to Ranjit Singh as a bad subject by Captain Wade from the information he had received from the Resident of Nepal. Ranjit was advised not to countenance him but to send him back, which he did. The General then said that had he been permitted to proceed to Lahore and not interfered with after his escape, he might have saved his uncle's life. Whereas his detention at Ludhiana was represented as voluntary and stated to be a further proof of the treachery of the Thapas, and he commenced relating his and his family's sufferings by saying 'Risa dugga hoa,' saying that his uncle and himself had been treacherously treated by the late Resident, 'contrast that with how I treated him on his departure from here.'

This Minister then alluded to Sher Singh's mode of receiving Mr. Clerk and afterwards Major Lawrence and that the latter was then a Chota Sahib, that Sher Singh was a Bad Shah and the Ruler of Nepal but a Raja and that he treated the late Resident in a way he never ought to have done, in fact used to send for him by a syce at all hours to interviews on the High Road.

The Crown Prince, he said, was anxious to provoke a quarrel in some quarter in the hope of getting his father dethroned and first of all directed his attention to the Residency but has given that up, and now calls for a reduction of 2 regiments as the most likely way of attaining his object. The Minister said he had received an order to reduce 2 regiments but had protested against it--that the sepoy's hearing of it talked of destroying Father and Son. He then added that he considered the best thing that he could do would be to confine Father and Son in one house, giving them all they required and to establish a regency. That in 15 days after the pajani had commenced something would occur. He then said that the Raja came to the arsenal to meet the Resident, but was hunted out and driven home by the Crown Prince. The Minister then said he was a true and well-wisher of the British Government, and adding 'what could a little place like Nepal do against such a power as yours, even were she inclined.' He said his enemies had made much of the fact of the late Ministry having forwarded a Kharita from the Crown Prince to the Governor General and got an answer: whereas the memorandum given by the Resident to the Raja was much wished for by the Crown Prince and that the Resident having refused, it would be used against him.<sup>12</sup> The Resident replied that if the Raja would give a Lal Mohar stating that he personally wished it to be presented to the Crown Prince, he then might be induced to reconsider the propriety of presenting it for once, but with the understanding that he was never again to be asked to do so. The General replied that in a

day or two he would let him know, and that perhaps it might be forgotten in the meantime. The Resident then said that anything consistent with his duty and instructions he should always be happy to do.

The Minister also said that he had prevented the Crown Prince coming to the Residency 15 days ago and insulting the Resident, but that Guru Prasad offered to accompany the Crown Prince and that Guru Prasad was cautioned by him as to what he was doing. He then said that they now had a very different man to deal with from the late Resident, as he (Mr. Hodgson) had been always here and nowhere else and that his political views were confined to Nepal, having no experience elsewhere except from hearsay and books, but that Major Lawrence had served from Bareich to Kabul as a soldier and politician and had done as much in the latter as former. He said besides, you had Mr. Clerk for an example and served under him. Again alluding to the late Ministry he said I do not think they wish me ill further than they would be happy to show that I could not manage state affairs better than they did. That Fattah Jung was a good man but his brother Guru Prasad was a great mischief-maker and would be a thorn in any Minister's side except his own.

L. Smith, Assistant Resident

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 23 January 1844<sup>13</sup>

*Major Lawrence makes a conscientious effort to remain neutral towards the different parties in Nepal, but even this early report shows his curiosity and personal inclination, both of which will compromise his neutral stance.*

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Excerpt

Sir,

... ..

6. Last night there was a second commotion among the soldiers, again induced as was that of the 1st of January by Mathabar Singh. Fifteen hundred of the adherents of the Minister surrounded the Palace and clamoured out that they would have one master. The Raja is said to have gone out and greeted them, saying that today he would give up the throne and retire to Banaras.

7. Two or three houses belonging to parties supposed to carry tales between the Raja and his son were plundered.

8. At 9 p.m. Mathabar Singh sent to inform me that a disturbance was taking place and houses being plundered. Within the minute, the

Residency Subedar returned saying that a house in our direction was attacked. I asked him the meaning of the disturbance. He replied that it was occasioned by the Prince ordering the troops to seize the Minister, and they refused to obey the order as being an improper one. I replied that it was an affair of their own.

9. While I am writing, the Subedar has come to report the night's proceedings: being mainly as above, but with exaggerations. He told me that Mathabar Singh had placed a Captain on the road leading to the Residency to prevent any stray rioters coming this way, and added that the whole of the troops, the Chiefs and merchants are now being assembled on the Parade to decide what is to be done.

10. I am inclined to believe that affairs have come to such a pass that either Mathabar Singh will be replaced and perhaps further suffer or that the Prince will be set aside or perhaps both Father and Son. I cannot see that the Minister has any party among the Chiefs, but his uncle Bhim Sen Thapa managed the country for twenty years unsupported by them and only fell when the soldiery abandoned him.

11. The Prince has probably been instigated to late violence to Brahmans to render him the more offensive to the Chiefs and soldiery. It is possible that the Raja, finding his son has gone further than intended, is employing the Minister to put him out of the way, thinking thereby to preserve inviolate the oath sworn at Pasupatinath.<sup>14</sup>

12. It is however no easy matter to discern the intentions of the Raja, though the Minister by his incautious manner and speech does give some clue to his intentions.

13. In this letter and its enclosures, I have sufficiently confirmed my former communications that Mathabar Singh's great anxiety was to draw me into an alliance. Considering the difficulty of his position, I hope it will be considered by the Right Honorable the Governor General sufficient that I took him to task through Lt. Smith and again personally called him to account yesterday for his conduct on the 10th and 11th. I have clearly made him understand that he is chiefly responsible for the conduct of Nepal subjects towards the Residency. I was mainly led to so tell him in the belief that the Residency is perfectly safe from all violence and that the only chance of any persons ever threatening us would be at the secret instigation of Mathabar Singh himself with a view of gaining credit by coming to the rescue, or perhaps throwing the blame on the Raja and thus forcing the British Government to coerce the Raja and guarantee the Minister.

14. This however is only a surmise founded on the repeated and various efforts of Mathabar Singh to draw me into his views and procure some expression of support.

Mr. Hodgson's letters of the last three years will have shown that Mathabar Singh is not singular in his anxiety for support of the Resident. I may add that on the 19th of January I met the two brothers

Fatteh Jung and Guru Prasad Chautaria, the late ministers, on their road to Palpa and although our interview was in the middle of the road and did not last three minutes, they told me that it would be long before they would return unless I recalled them, that they were our sincere friends whatever might be said to the contrary.

A mile in my rear, they met Dr. Christie and said to him much what they had done to me in their favour.

In short, it is no easy task to convince the Chiefs that I wish to keep aloof; or that the orders of my Government are to let the Raja and his Chiefs manage their own affairs.

I have etc.

P.S. Since writing so far, I have heard that the Raja early in the day called a Darbar at which many of the Chiefs attended, but Mathabar Singh sent to say he could not come as he was kept a prisoner by the troops who wished the Raja to come among them to redress their grievances. He accordingly went out to the Parade and spoke to the troops asking them what they wanted. They replied, one master to be put on the same footing as in Bhim Sen's time. The Raja asked who was now instigating them and why they could not remain satisfied with the system that had prevailed for five years. They would not say who was stirring them up, but said they had now for the first time a General since Bhim Sen Thapa's death and must have all else as in his time. They pretended to keep Mathabar Singh in restraint, and Mathabar Singh pretended that the soldiers would not allow him to go to the Darbar. The Raja is said to have upbraided the troops for destroying his subjects' property and to have observed rightly that in so doing they were plundering him.

He ordered them to their barracks telling them that in a day or two a satisfactory arrangement would be made.

Thus quietly for the time has the affair ended, but in the present temper of parties quiet cannot long last. I believe that the Minister was feeling his strength today and failed to muster the support he expected. He is supposed to be acting in communication with the Rani. The Minister's visit to me of yesterday was doubtless with a view of ascertaining my sentiments. Had I encouraged him in the slightest, violence would probably have been committed today.

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Government to Resident Lawrence, 8 February 1844<sup>15</sup>

*The Governor General is quick to reprimand Major Lawrence for his attitude towards Mathabar Singh. The difficulty with which each British Resident in Kathmandu carried out the Governor General's instructions on this neutrality indicates in part the difficulty of remaining a neutral observer at a time of strong political crisis.*

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Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd January with its several enclosures, amongst which is a memorandum of a conversation held by you with General Mathabar Singh, the Minister of Nepal, on the preceding day.

2. In that conversation the General appears to have intimated the probable early occurrence of events which could not take place without the perpetration of acts of violence towards the Maharaja.

3. You will not permit the General again to touch upon such subjects in any conversation with you.

4. It is not enough for a British Minister to caution the Minister of the Sovereign to whom he is deputed against committing himself, nor is it enough that he should declare 'he can take no part in any arrangement such as the Minister proposed or interfere in any way.'

5. In the event of General Mathabar Singh again adverting to similar topics you will inform him that, deputed to represent the British Government at the Court of the Maharaja, you cannot suffer any subject of His Highness and least of all his Minister to hold in your presence language implying the existence of designs against the Maharaja's authority--that it would be your duty to communicate the existence of such designs to His Highness were you satisfied that they were really entertained--that you must insist upon having your communications with the Minister of Nepal strictly confined to official matters affecting the mutual interests and relations of the two Governments.

6. You will inform the General that you make this communication by the express direction of the Governor General, who is resolved not only to act loyally by the Maharaja, but that nothing shall occur which can by any possibility be misinterpreted as indicative of the existence on his part of any other than the most friendly disposition towards His Highness' person and Government.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 6 February 1844<sup>16</sup>

*Major Lawrence's references in this despatch to Hodgson are far from flattering. There are no indications that Hodgson ever made any sort of agreement with Mathabar Singh, and Hodgson's position outlined in paragraph seven is a clear indication of his thinking.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to enclose memoranda Nos. 1 and 2 of conversations with the Minister of Nepal on the 27th January and the 4th February on which latter date General Mathabar Singh, after leaving the Residency, tried to induce the assembled Chiefs and soldiery to force the Raja to come into his views; but without success, on which, however, he (the Minister) did not resign as he told me he would do.

2. Yesterday again there was a meeting of the Chiefs, but nothing was done, and the Minister is still openly caballing against the Raja and yet the latter seems not to interfere with his so doing.

3. The Crown Prince is reported to have been very violent yesterday and to have beaten several persons in open Darbar.

4. The object of the Minister on his two late visits and in his requesting me to call on him on the 2nd of February was evidently with a view of drawing me into taking some part in a proposed revolution; believing such to be the case it may appear to Government improper that I should hold intercourse with him, but as our interviews have been before witnesses, who would be sure to report what passed--it strikes me that thus openly communicating with him (the recognized Minister of Nepal) I am less likely to have my acts and speeches misrepresented than if holding off altogether, in which latter case, I probably should be reported to be in secret communication with the Minister.

5. Mathabar Singh is perhaps entitled to some consideration from me in as much as he appears to have returned to Nepal under some sort of pledge from my predecessor, who had frequent and private meetings with him here and who counselled him repeatedly and most impressively through the Collector of Gorakhpur previous to his return to look to the Rani and to beware of the Raja as the 'darkest and wiliest and most dangerous of deluders.' Mr. Hodgson added, 'Let Sir Marmaduke (Mathabar Singh's nickname) be assured that no mortal man can give himself to that person (the king) and live. This nation has lately pronounced aut Regina aut ruina and those who support the Queen will carry with them the voice and force of the nation, the only shield for a Nepalese statesman.'

6. The Governor General will have remarked that in my reported conversations with Mathabar Singh, he has more than once expressed such sentiments as the above, and dwelt in such times, as I have quoted, on the treatment experienced by former Ministers, and as often insisted on the necessity of setting aside the Raja and his Son and putting up the Rani.

7. Mr. Hodgson in his conversations with me did not particularly allude to Mathabar Singh and never in the least as to there being any understanding between them; he moreover told me (as reported at the time) that the Rani though a good woman was untried.



8. It is with reluctance that I thus allude to Mr. Hodgson, but I cannot but feel that to his conduct towards all the leading men of Nepal: the Gurus, the Chautarias, Pandeys and Thapas and the Raja himself, most of my present difficulties are to be attributed.

9. For it cannot be concealed that the late Resident was always considered as friend, or enemy, by each of these factions; and it is equally notorious that forgetting his position and the practice of his predecessors, the personal demeanour of Mr. Hodgson towards the Raja was rather that of a servant than of an ambassador.

10. When, then, it is remembered that Mr. Hodgson was 10 years Resident, that for the last four years especially he identified himself with the Darbar, and that during that period he took part in what were called two great movements of the people, the difficulty of my position will be understood and how hard a task it is at once to convince the Chiefs that I will be neutral; and to satisfy the Raja that while I will treat him with all respect and will not interfere in his concerns, my duty requires that I shall uphold the dignity of my Government as well in the form as in the matter of such communications as I may have occasion to make to him.

11. What is now being attempted by Mathabar Singh appears to me to be a movement of the same kind as was reported by Mr. Hodgson a twelvemonth ago; that is, that the military and the Chiefs about the Court (who alone are affected) are tired of the vagaries of the Raja, and of the violence of his son; but while they would gladly, on their own accounts, have had but one Ruler, they are averse that the Minister's hands should be strengthened; while the Raja, confident in the Loyalty of his followers, allows his headstrong Minister to ensnare himself.

12. The Raja is said to consider himself suffering under incantation and to be bound by a solemn oath; the latter I should think would sit lightly on him; but as a scrupulous Hindu, it is not inconsistent with good sense and ability on other matters that he should believe himself as regards his son spellbound, to whatever the delusion however may be attributed; as this Raja is unable or disinclined to put down the Crown Prince, who must by his present training be rendered permanently unqualified to govern, any arrangement would be desirable that could secure the present and future good government of Nepal; but let the Rani be as virtuous as most ruling Ranis are the contrary, she must either as Regent fall into the hand of the Minister of the time being; or if possessing the masculine qualities and ability that would render her independent, it is but natural to expect that she would destroy her stepchildren and raise her own to the throne.

13. It is to me a novelty to see the soldiery, for more than a month appealed to, and the Chiefs urged to set aside the reigning Sovereign and His Crown Prince with little or no violence committed on either side; and all the time the affairs of the country carried on as usual; to account for such conduct would be as difficult as to re-

concile the Raja's bearing towards his son with the ability he displays on other questions.

It is the more difficult for me to fathom the thought and intent of this Darbar, as almost any native about the Residency appears to be in the interest of the Minister; I have however less endeavoured to pry into their acts than by plainly reporting what has at different times come before me to enable Government to give me such instructions as the anomalous state of affairs may appear to require.

I have, etc.

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Memorandum of a Conference at the Nepal Residency, 27 January 1844<sup>17</sup>

*This 'group-search' for a solution to the problem of the two rulers in Kathmandu is illuminating. Principally, it shows how difficult it was to contend with the King when he buried his true intentions in the fog of political confusion with which he tended to surround himself as a defence against political pressures.*

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Memorandum No. 1

Memorandum of a conference at the Nepal Residency on the 27th January 1844 between the persons as undermentioned

Major Lawrence, Resident	General Mathabar Singh, Minister
Lt. Smith, Assistant Resident	Kazi Jung Bahadur, Member of Ministry
Dr. Christie, Residency Surgeon	Kazi Kalu Shahi
	Kana Kazi

The three kazis are those who have one or other been always deputed with Darbar messages during the last two months. The Darbar Munshi accompanied them today to the Residency, but was not present during the conference.

1. After a few words of compliments and on ordinary subjects, General Mathabar Singh addressed the Resident saying that the conduct of the Crown Prince during the last four years, was well known. It had come to such a pitch, and the Maharaja, being unable to control his son, was now desirous of making over the chief authority to the Rani for such time as he (the Raja) should remain in his present state of imbecility and the Crown Prince persevere in his disposition to violence. Neither of their rights were to be affected by the temporary arrangement, but as soon as either should be pronounced recovered from the spell that binds him, the Rani Regency should cease.

The General said that Father and Son required medicine, but after the atrocities of the last days of Bhim Sen, the astrologers and physicians feared to prescribe, lest they should suffer under false accusations. The Rani, who was one and the same as the Raja, should be the Director, and under her orders whatever might be prescribed for the Raja should first be given to ten or twelve persons and when proved harmless be tendered to the Raja.

Rana Kazi was, next to Mathabar Singh, the chief speaker, but all echoed the General's words and all said it was the general opinion that the scheme now discussed is the only one that can preserve the peace and integrity of the country; that the Raja himself is sensible of its necessity and has voluntarily entered on it; that the papers are prepared and tomorrow will be signed; and that the army and all the Chiefs absent and present of all parties are of one mind on the subject.

2. The Resident observed that Rajas did not usually give up their authority of their own pleasure; and that even if the Maharaja is now induced to do so, what security is there that a week hence he will not change his mind; that the Prince will not break forth? Then the chief sufferer will be the Rani herself.

The Resident further observed that the Chiefs, Chautarias, Thapas, and Pandeys are now said to be of one mind. Who can say how long they will be so and that if, as is now said, the Raja's authority is to be restored on his recovering his senses on the one question of his son's conduct, who is to be the judge? Who to decide on his sanity? All know he is wise on most other subjects. Who is to determine when he can and will restrain his son?

3. The Minister asked if such is not British custom. If England's King should be mad, would not his Queen take his place? Is not the Minister the proper person to be the umpire on such questions as might arise? And he added that all had agreed that the troops were to plunder the houses of any Chiefs who should fall off from the present league. Kazi Jung Bahadur also observed that the troops would be the judges.

4. The Resident replied that an English King had not long since been insane. The authority then was temporarily made over to his Eldest Son and not to the Queen. Moreover with us, a document once signed and sealed by the King or peasant could not be negatived. Here, however, matters were differently arranged. The present Minister was armed with all sorts of documents, and yet they seemed to be as blank paper in his hands. Another difficulty arose in the Rani not being the Mother of the Crown Prince and having sons of her own.

The Resident further observed that he thus plainly spoke for the good of all, the Rani included. If two rulers were found hard to bear, three would be harder. If for a day the Crown Prince should be put down and then recover his position, the Rani would probably be the chief sufferer. It was not fit to allow the army to interfere in such a question. Once the soldiery took to themselves such power there would be no holding them.

5. The Minister showed that in several instances Nepal had been governed by Regent Ranis. All, especially the Rana Kazi, assured the Resident that what was being done was by the express desire of the Raja.

6. The Resident replied: if it is so, and a copy of the agreement with the several signatures affixed be furnished him, he can offer no objection.

7. The Chiefs then took leave; the Minister saying that they would bring the documents to the Resident when signed and sealed.

H.M. Lawrence

Resident

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Memorandum of an Interview between the Resident and Mathabar Singh,  
5 February 1844<sup>18</sup>

*General Mathabar Singh continues to struggle with the political confusion created by the two rulers and reveals his own fears.*

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Memorandum No. 2

Memorandum of an interview between General Mathabar Singh-- accompanied by Kazi Jung Bahadur, a Captain, and a young Chief, Tilbikram Thapa, his (Mathabar Singh's) cousin-- with the Resident in presence of Dr. Christie on the 4th February.

General Mathabar Singh sent at 8 a.m. to say he was coming shortly; and arrived at 10 a.m.

After some general conversation, the Minister took from a case a dozen or more Lal Mohars given to him by the Raja and Crown Prince. He had some of them read by Jung Bahadur and then gave a copy of the whole in Persian to the Resident, requesting that he would at leisure read them and judge how far the Raja was treating him according to the many and sacred pledges given by himself and the Crown Prince and attested by the signatures of every Chief of note in Nepal, the whole army, and the merchants of the capital.

The documents showed that the guarantee given to General Bhim Sen was renewed to Mathabar Singh, and that full authority as Minister and Commander-in-Chief was conceded to him. Impressions in vermilion of the Raja's right hand and that of the Crown Prince were affixed to documents exonerating the Minister from obeying unlawful orders.

General Mathabar Singh apologized for having asked the Resident to call on the 2nd and then putting him off, saying it was because the Chiefs and Raja were at his house. He then told the Resident that his own position was become intolerable. He had three rulers all giving opposing orders. He had tried to carry on the duties of his office, but finding it impossible, he intended this day to tell the assembled Chiefs and the soldiery to give him one Master. If they refused he should on the spot resign and retire from the Capital to a house three stages from Kathmandu. The Minister added that immediately he resigned, there would be an outbreak among the soldiery.

The Resident replied that the state of the palace was not a matter of today. When he (the General) took office he was perfectly aware of the position of the Crown Prince and of the Rani. It was unfortunate that he had not then, when called to the Ministry (by what appeared to have been the universal suffrage of the Court, the Chiefs, and soldiery) made his conditions, and to resign in the manner he stated and in the knowledge that such an act would be followed by a military insurrection did not appear proper.

The Minister replied with warmth, 'Is not a man to look to his own life' and went on to show the duplicity with which he had been treated; and the little faith that was to be placed in the Raja's Lal Mohars.

He then showed a slip of paper said to have been written by the Raja with his own hand on the 3rd of February and given by him to the Rani making over the Government to her in case the Crown Prince should a third time commit violence towards Brahmans or cows (having twice already done so).

Mathabar Singh and his associates said that the paper was a true one, and more binding than a Lal Mohar, but added there was not faith in the Raja. One day and one hour he said one thing, the next another. He was under a spell, one hour quite sensible, the next senseless.

The Resident at some length explained to the party present the orders of his Government and his own views as to non-interference and asked them if a contrary line of conduct had benefitted Bhim Sen or the Chautarias.

They allowed it had not, and affecting to be satisfied, took leave with a view of proceeding to carry the General's intentions of resigning into effect.

H.M. Lawrence,

Resident.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 19 February 1844<sup>19</sup>

*Major Lawrence's explanation of his conduct indicates the sensitivity of the Resident to the charge of interference and the Governor General's strong opposition to anything that even hinted at interference. The continued reinforcement of this attitude will explain in great part the attitude of the Acting Resident on the night of the Kot Massacre.*

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th February, and while I request that you will inform the Governor General that his instructions shall be strictly attended to, I beg to offer the following explanation of my late conduct.

2. Had Mathabar Singh disclosed to me any secret scheme of intended violence, or had I supposed that, after what I had said, he would have used violence, I should most probably have considered it right to warn the Raja. But the last words of my letter of the 23rd of January are, 'The Minister's visit to me of yesterday was doubtless with a view to ascertaining my sentiments. Had I encouraged him in the slightest, violence would have been probably today committed...' implying that I considered what I had said to him to have proved a sedative.

3. In offering this explanation I am quite aware that, under ordinary circumstances, it would have been preferable to have at once silenced the Minister when he entered on an improper line of conversation. But, with reference to past events at Nepal and to Mathabar Singh's character, it seemed to me at the time more useful to talk to him as a friend, and to warn him of the danger to himself of his proposed proceedings, than by abruptness to drive him to desperation.

4. In judging of my conduct on the 27th and on the 4th February, as reported, I beg it may be remembered that Mathabar Singh is Minister. He came on the first day accompanied by three kazis, who have always been employed by the Darbar on messages to the Residency. One of them (Kalu Shahi) came next day on a special complimentary mission regarding Gwalior. And on the 4th February the Minister was also accompanied by one of the same kazis (Jung Bahadur) and on both occasions by the Darbar Munshi, the constituted medium of intercourse. I therefore could not well take the message they each day brought me otherwise than as sent by the Government of the country.

5. To prevent, however, any misconception on my part in the future, I request instructions as to the line I should pursue in the event of the Raja either voluntarily resigning or being forced into doing so. Although matters are just now quiet, it is unlikely that they will long remain so.

6. The Governor General will have observed that, in the late conference, the Raja is spoken of as a party to the arrangements for setting aside his own authority, and that there was nothing like a secret conspiracy mooted. It will also be seen by a reference to existing records

that the present anomalous state of the Darbar is nothing new. It seems the custom to discuss conditions here and to prepare for great changes, without any definite intention to carry them through. Such play has, however, now been so long and so openly continued that men's minds may have become reconciled to the silent setting aside of one ruler and the substitution of another.

7. Much such game as the present was played forty years ago when Raja Rana Bahadur was persuaded by the astrologers that he would soon die. He accordingly resigned the government to his infant son, making his mistress, a slave girl, the Regent. The Raja had scarcely done so, than he repented the step, and endeavoured to resume the Government. But Damodar Pandey, the Minister of the day, and the other Chiefs, who had sworn allegiance to the young Raja, refused to make a second change. Arms were resorted to, and Rana Bahadur obliged to fly to Banaras, whence he soon returned and recovered his authority, but was shortly afterward cut down in open Darbar.

... ..

9. Perfect non-interference and straight-forwardness will, I hope, keep me in my right position here, but I can hardly expect at once to be understood at a Darbar, many of the practices of which are not only at variance with those of other Governments, but of common sense, making it difficult even to report proceedings without the appearance of absurdity and contradiction.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Lawrence, 9 March 1844<sup>20</sup>

Sir,

I am directed by the Governor General in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 6th February reporting the purport of two conferences with the Minister, and am also desired in reply to refer you to the instructions conveyed to you in my letter of the 8th February and to enjoin your adherence thereto.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 23 September 1844<sup>21</sup>

*Major Lawrence reports the last phase in the suppression of the Pandey party. The charge is almost meaningless, and the punishment, though not as severe as could have been meted out, is far in excess of what prudent judgement would dictate. For details of the punishment, see below, 19 November 1844.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Governor General in Council that about 50 adherents of the Kala Pandey party have been seized and confined, eighteen of them in irons, and the others confined with more or less severity. (It will be recalled that the leaders of the Kala Pandey party were beheaded last August). They have been charged with forging letters from the Governor of Lhasa, offering certain (supposed) gold mines and other advantages to the Raja of Nepal. The letters are reported to have been brought by the last Ambassador to China, Kazi Jagat Bam Pandey, now in exile somewhere in the British plains, who, returning last November, fled on hearing the news of the execution of his kinsmen.

2. Jagat Bam Pandey has been, I believe, in frequent communication with the Maharaja during the last ten months, but for some reason the tide has now turned strongly against the Pandey party, whose destruction is said to have been determined on by the Maharaja, and that the Crown Prince is also so inclined, though he does not the less continue his vagaries as to the throne.

3. Yesterday evening General Mathabar Singh was seen accompanying the Maharaja and Crown Prince to the grand parade in the centre of the Lines, where a Council was held in which the sepoys joined. Several of the accused were examined and are said to have confessed their guilt and to have implicated the majority of the Chiefs of Nepal.

4. Guru Krishna Ram, the Raj Guru, brother of the late well-known Gajraj Misra, and himself notorious in the Residency records as an adherent as well as spiritual advisor of the black Pandey party, is said to be at the bottom of what is called the conspiracy, and to have confessed his crime.

5. Confession before punishment is requisite by the Law of Nepal.

6. General Mathabar Singh has sent several messages to me saying that it was intended to murder him, as being a friend of the British Government; and that there was a grand conspiracy to mislead the Maharaja.

7. On each occasion I have told the Subedar in attendance, as well as Mathabar Singh's own confidential Subedar, that even supposing there was a scheme to murder him, which I much doubted as quite unusual at Nepal, it would be bad policy as well as cruel to shed more of the Pandey blood, and thereby perpetuate the feud between the families. As to punishing as a serious crime the making of false promises of gold mines, and treasure, from Lhasa and China, it would be absurd. Such idle talk had been the fashion for years, and that no one could better understand their value than the Maharaja. To punish men capitally or cruelly now for writing or talking of such things, would be very wrong and would neither save Mathabar Singh nor his family hereafter from the charge of having destroyed his political opponents under false pretences.



8. Except by such general expressions of abhorrence which are sure to reach the Darbar, I do not consider it advisable to interfere in a place where all direct interference is suspected and therefore likely to induce the very steps one tries to prevent.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 14 October 1844<sup>22</sup>

*The crisis in government that was precipitated when Mathabar Singh resigned from the Prime Ministership in May of this year heightens, and Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah has been summoned. Mathabar Singh's anxiety to see the Resident is a hint, however, of his own plan to do something about the crisis.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Governor General in Council that I am now in hopes that no sanguinary punishment will be inflicted by this Government on any of the Prisoners.

2. General Mathabar Singh affects that he has hitherto been the instrument of mercy to the Pandeys, but I have no doubt that he has exerted himself to the utmost to bring about their destruction.

3. Yesterday I received a message from General Mathabar Singh stating he was a little unwell, and having two words to say, begged I would call on him. I replied that I could not do so, while the present state of affairs lasted. When I should be officially informed of his being Minister,<sup>23</sup> I would be happy to call on him, but that it was against my orders to mix up in any intrigues.

4. Today the Subedar again came to me, saying that the Maharaja had been to see the General, when the latter requested to go to the Plains, as he was unwell, and unlikely to recover here. His Highness forbade his going, and urged his taking up the Ministry. Mathabar Singh then requested that he might be allowed to ask me to come and see him, and take my advice. To this the Maharaja assented. The Subedar added that the General's son would come for me in the afternoon.

5. The Maharaja's sanction may or may not have been asked, but under all the circumstances of the case, I desired the Subedar to tell Mathabar Singh I was surprised that after my answer of yesterday he should again trouble me. If he was Minister I would call on him, but that if he wished to go to the Plains it was a matter between the Maharaja and himself. My interfering would do him no good, and only get me a bad name. I had uniformly given one answer to his continued

attempts at drawing me into intrigue during the last ten months, and I was astonished at his continuing such appeals when he found them so distasteful to me.

6. Chautaria Fatted Jung Shah has been sent for from Palpa; his expected arrival, and Mathabar Singh's inability to effect the execution of the Pandeys appears to be stirring them up to extra exertion.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 19 October 1844<sup>24</sup>

*Major Lawrence's description of a military performance on the Tundikhel forms a backdrop for the dramatic conclusion in which the King promises that soon there will be one ruler.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council to the following effect.

2. Yesterday evening, hearing there was to be a review of the troops on the Tundikhel Parade, I went to see it. On arriving near the centre of the Parade, I learned that the Maharaja and Prince were seated on an upper balcony overlooking the ground. I could not see them, but when within a hundred yards of the building, Kazi Jung Bahadur and Sardar Dil Bikram Thapa came from the Maharaja to ask after my health, etc. They led me near the balcony, when the Maharaja and Prince rose and returned my salutation. The Chiefs then asked me to step forward and look at the Parade.

3. About seven thousand men with twelve guns, one at intervals of wings of Regiments, were on the ground. The troops kept up a running fire with occasional volleys, for more than an hour and until it was quite dark.

4. A Chief came down from the Maharaja and asked me if I was pleased. I answered yes. He then said that His Highness was indebted for the discipline of the army to General Mathabar Singh, and requested me to consider him as Minister, and to communicate with him freely. I replied that I would be happy to comply with His Highness' wish, and I congratulated Mathabar Singh on the Raja's message. 'Oh,' he replied, 'It is to keep the soldiery quiet; I am to be Minister until another is appointed.' I said nothing, and indeed had little opportunity of conversing with him as, during the evening he was constantly moving about among the troops, and backwards and forwards to the Maharaja.

5. When it was quite dark, two of the Regiments moved close up to the building where the Raja and Prince had been seated. These two then came down to the Parade, and I was asked to join them and take leave before they mounted their elephants to depart. I did so and was received very graciously. After a few words as to the Military display, the Maharaja and Prince, both speaking together, told me Mathabar Singh was Minister, that to him and his Uncle Bhim Sen they owed the good condition of the army, that the General was Commander-in-Chief and Minister and that as such, I was requested to communicate with him freely, both personally and by memorandum. I replied that I should be happy to do so, and was very glad that His Highness had appointed him Minister.

6. Mathabar Singh upon this observed, 'I cannot be Minister to two Rulers. Let there be one Master,' and turning to me, added, 'Ought there, Sahib, to be two Rulers?' I made no reply, and the Raja and his Son, both speaking together, said to the effect that no change could be made at present, but that some arrangement would be effected hereafter. The Prince added 'We are one house,' and the Maharaja said, 'Yes, we consult together But this did not satisfy Mathabar Singh, who repeated his question to me, adding, 'I cannot serve two Masters.' Thus again appealed to, I replied that it undoubtedly was very difficult to serve two Masters and that I had given my opinion on the subject, as a friend, on my arrival in Nepal. The Raja and the Prince both answered, 'Oh yes, there shall become one ruler, but not yet,' and on Mathabar Singh urging that it should be now, the Maharaja replied, 'After the Dassera ' On which Mathabar Singh, with a loud voice, two or three times proclaimed to the troops and officers who had crowded around, that after the Dassera there was to be but one Master.

7. During the last ten months I have frequently heard that such a promise had been made, but did not believe that it had been so openly proclaimed. Whether it will be fulfilled remains to be proved. I do not think it will, and it may be as usual a mere temporary device.

8. The pointed manner in which I was told to communicate with Mathabar Singh shows that my refusal to visit him was at least known to the Maharaja; and the desire to conciliate him appears owing to the refusal of any other Chief (now present) to take up the Ministry, under the existing absurd system of double or treble authority.

9. During the last week Mathabar Singh has been talking openly of going to the Plains, and has even had his camp equipages brought out. If I had never heard him talk of setting aside the Raja and Crown Prince too, I might have more warmly seconded his appeals yesterday. But considering all circumstances, and having on my arrival given my opinion in writing as to the advantages of unanimity and of having one Ruler and one Minister, I did not consider it advisable to do more than to refer to my previous advice.

10. If there was any unanimity among the Chiefs, they would have no difficulty in bringing the Maharaja to reason by legitimate means. But Mathabar Singh is the only one among them who has the courage to speak

freely, and he has not the temper and discretion to conciliate his brother nobles.

11. He has a certain influence over the troops, which may intimidate the Maharaja, but hitherto the army has proved a most loyal one.

12. I shall now consider the interdict of last May taken off, and shall communicate with Mathabar Singh as Minister.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 24 October 1844<sup>25</sup>

*If Major Lawrence had known at the time of this discussion the measures that Mathabar Singh was contemplating, it is doubtful if he would seem so unconcerned as he appears to be in this report.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that I yesterday complied with General Mathabar Singh's request that I would call on him. At his house I was met by the Darbar Munshi, who brought two official papers to read to me, in reply to references made within the last week.

2. Feeling assured that Mathabar Singh would, as usual, talk on prohibited subjects, it was with much reluctance I paid this visit, but after the Maharaja's expressed desire on the subject, I deemed it right to communicate with the General as the recognized Minister. After the Munshi had gone, Mathabar Singh said he was in a difficulty and wished for my advice. On the last day of the Dassera, the Crown Prince had given the tika to the Chiefs, etc., before the Maharaja, and that every Sardar except himself (the Minister) had in such manner propitiated the Prince and treated him in all respects as Sovereign (all which I have reason to believe is quite true). The General then reminded me that I had myself heard the Maharaja promise publicly, on the 19th October, to give the nation one ruler, but that he had neither fulfilled his pledge nor had any intention of so doing. It was impossible for any Minister to carry on business with both Father and Son, though he was ready to obey either. He had told the Maharaja that he would execute whatever decision he came to respecting the Prince, but that His Highness refused to give any order and was now virtually a prisoner in his Palace, the Prince driving away anyone who came near his father.

3. Mathabar Singh added he was impelled in four directions by the Raja, Prince, Rani, and British Government. If he acted against the Maharaja it would be called ingratitude and if against the Prince it would

draw down his wrath from which the Raja would not protect him. The Rani was anxious for herself and children. And he did not know what the British Government might say at any revolution. He therefore asked me to advise him how to act in his difficult position, that he (and he alone in Nepal) knew our strength, and that he was anxious in all respects to please the British Government.

4. I answered that I perceived his difficulties but that I could give no advice further than to eschew all violence. Nor would my Government interfere. Their negotiations were with the Maharaja and with him alone. As long as His Highness retained the throne, he was the only authority the British would recognize in Nepal.

5. Mathabar Singh then said he had a scheme which might be executed if he could be assured that Government would not disapprove, viz. that the Maharaja should retain the throne while the Prince held the authority, as was the case at Lahore when Khanak Singh was nominal and Nao Nehal Singh virtual ruler.

6. I replied that such an arrangement could not last, and in the instance adduced, very soon ended in the death of Khanak Singh.

7. The Minister rejoined that he and the Sardars would guarantee the Maharaja's safety, and added that, since His Highness would not keep his son under proper control, he saw no other feasible scheme. If, as I had said, my Government would hold aloof and would not interfere to prevent the destruction that threatened Nepal, he hoped, at least, that they would not refuse him an asylum in their territories, as he must abandon his country, unless some settlement of its Government could be devised. If he could obtain the farming of Ramnagar he would pay his dues regularly and be grateful. He had before been protected and fostered, and looked for continued favor. Once under British protection his family and property in Nepal would be safe.

8. I answered that I did not see how, as a refugee, he could, consistently with the treaty and friendship between the two States, receive an appointment from Government. He replied that the Gurus and others were protected at Banaras, and that Hira Lal, the farmer of the Nepal Tarai, was a large renter in the Purnea district.

9. To cut these speeches short I told the General that I was kindly disposed towards him, but that my work was simply to obey my orders and report occurrences. I hoped to see an arrangement of affairs at the Darbar. If, however, he continued desirous to visit the Plains I would represent his wishes to Government, but could offer no hope of a grant of lands (in farm) on the border.

10. As shown in the preceding paragraphs, I have given no manner of encouragement to the Minister. On the contrary my holding aloof as I have done, and at length refusing to visit him until requested by the Maharaja, contrasted with the measures adopted by my predecessor, probably

leads Mathabar Singh to fancy either my Government or myself individually opposed to his interests. When it is remembered that the late (Chautaria) Ministry was kept in power by the Segauli Brigade and that failing to coerce the Maharaja by what was called the 'great national movement,' they were abandoned by the Resident and Mathabar Singh taken by the hand, it may be understood that the Chiefs and Maharaja himself may look with distrust on a system of non-interference (the motives of which they cannot understand, and which they may possibly regard as an ambush), to watch for difficulties, and take advantage of them.

11. I have endeavoured, through friendly expressions and adherence to all I have said, to create confidence in the Maharaja's mind, but the system of years is not to be subverted in a day. If it was difficult for Mr. Gardner<sup>26</sup> in the first instance to sit and look on, that difficulty has been much enhanced by the transactions of the last ten years.

12. Mathabar Singh, more than once during our interview said that he alone kept the peace, that the army was at his back, and that, if he gave the word, he could in an hour seize every Chief at the Capital. From his manner both to the troops and to the Maharaja and Prince at the Review on the 19th October, it is probable that the army does take his part, in preference to that of other Chiefs, but it is another question how the troops would act in the matter between the Maharaja and his Son.

13. Had anything like violence been openly proposed at the interview under report, I should have instantly stopped Mathabar Singh. He, it will be observed, affects to consult the interests of the Maharaja as well as of the Crown Prince, and it must be admitted that he proposes little more than His Highness himself sanctioned, when he placed the Prince on an equality with himself, procured a Kharita from the British Government to him, caused him to be addressed on all occasions by the Chiefs as Maharajadhiraj, and allowed him to exercise authority over the Minister, Chiefs, and army. In like manner on all occasions, when receiving me, His Highness has permitted his son to take precedence. He asked me in December, and afterwards repeatedly sent to me, requesting that the Prince might receive a copy of my memorandum addressed to himself. As reported at the time, I invariably declined on principle yielding to these solicitations, and told the Prince on one occasion that it was for his own good, as well as that of Nepal that I so acted.

14. It will be remembered that in June last when Mathabar Singh visited me at Konlia after his resignation of the Ministry, he reiterated the Prince's solicitations on the subject, and that I again declined compliance. The Maharaja has since continued to uphold his son's equality. As far then as meets the eye there is nothing new, secret, or traitorous in the General's present proposition, which is only the natural result of the Maharaja's own conduct. How the measure would succeed, if permitted, there can be no doubt. How it will yet succeed, is scarcely problematical unless His Highness awakens from his infatuation. The longer the present system lasts, the more must the Maharaja's authority be weakened, and Mathabar Singh, who is a bold, incautious man may be tempted to cut the matter short by a military insurrection.

15. The precedent of Rana Bahadur is evidently kept in memory. He abdicated, retracted, and was obliged by force of arms to retire to Banaras, thence to return, to be soon after assassinated in open Darbar.

16. It is not from one but from a dozen quarters that I have heard within the last few months that the Lahore scenes will be repeated in Nepal before another year passes. Indeed I understand that in the Banaras (Native) Akhbar two months ago, there was a passage to the effect that war had commenced between the Raja and the Prince. Men's minds are becoming accustomed to the idea, and unless His Highness comes to a right understanding of his own and his son's position, the army--which during the last four years has been so consulted--will assume the right of dictation and, in putting an end to the double rule, will probably sacrifice both Raja and Prince in the struggle.

17. Adverting to your letter of the 5th October, I take this opportunity to assure the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that in all my conduct towards the Maharaja I have desired to act in the spirit of the instructions contained in that letter and have never wilfully deviated from those principles. My very words have been weighed. When I had to express unpalatable sentiments, I have always sought for the most friendly and courteous terms that would express my meaning. In pressing the question of dacoits and of Jay Kishen Puri, I only carried out the measures of my predecessors and acted on pledges given on those subjects by the Maharaja. That no misapprehension on my part might arise as to precedents, I lost no time, in taking charge here, in myself translating every letter to the Maharaja and Minister since the establishment of the Residency and have since kept them by me for reference.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 9 November 1844<sup>27</sup>

*In paragraph 3 of his report, Major Lawrence states accurately the plan that is being followed, but he is totally unable to evaluate it.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Governor General in Council that two Gorkha regiments are under orders to proceed to the Tarai to catch elephants after the Diwali, and that the Crown Prince says he will accompany them. To this the Maharaja objects, on which account several scenes of dissention are stated to have occurred in the Palace within the last few days.

2nd. I am given to understand that if the Prince insists on going, the Maharaja will do so too. If he does, I will propose to accompany His Highness. But I trust the movement will not take place as it would probably cause alarm on the frontier.

3rd. It is stated that the Crown Prince wishes to decoy his father to the Tarai with the purpose of there seizing him, but if he has the power of doing so below, he could equally well effect the measure at Kathmandu. Indeed, I am puzzled by the proceedings of the Darbar, and had not a long continuance of vagaries rendered any absurdity possible in Nepal, I should be disposed to believe that the Raja and his son are amusing themselves at the expense of their followers and with a view to drawing out their opinions.

4th. I understand that the Prince proposed to take General Mathabar Singh with him.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 11 November 1844<sup>28</sup>

*This report adds little of substance but the light it sheds on the Crown Prince's attitude is interesting, to say the least.*

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Extract

Sir,

... ..

3. The General /Mathabar Singh/ said little on Darbar affairs, but told me that on the previous day, the doors of all rooms and places being according to custom on the 9th November left open for the admission of Laxmi, goddess of riches, the Crown Prince had taken the opportunity to abstract the keys of the treasury and other depositories always kept by the Maharaja. His Highness was unable to recover them and is so grieved that he has not since eaten nor drunk. Mathabar Singh added that the Prince intended to go to the Tarai, contrary to the wishes of the Maharaja, who had countermanded the two regiments previously ordered. If however the Prince took the standard (worshipped by the troops) and set out, they would all follow.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 19 November 1844<sup>29</sup>

*The harshness of the sentence given the Pandey family cannot be accounted for in any normal assessment of their danger to the State. As Lawrence points out, this will solve nothing, but it will tend to increase the tensions within the Darbar.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to enclose for the information of the Governor General in Council a translation of a list of the Pandey dependents who were in confinement, and who are now banished from Nepal.

2. On the 17th of November the Subedar in attendance brought me a message from the Minister to the effect that he had saved the lives and limbs of the prisoners, but that they were to be expelled the country. He therefore hoped that I would write a note to him expressing my satisfaction at what had been done and promising that the exiles should not be employed in the British Army. I replied that assuredly I was glad there had been neither killing nor maiming, but, as any opinion I had given was as an individual well-wisher to Nepal and not as one concerned in the internal arrangements of the State, it was unnecessary for me to write on the subject. My writing would imply authority to counsel and might be construed into approval of the sentence of banishment, in a case, respecting the merits of which, I knew nothing. And as to the exiles being employed in the British army, this was very unlikely to happen, as the condition of most of them was above that of a private soldier. I could make no promise further than to report the Maharaja's wish to Government.

3. Yesterday (the 18th) the Darbar Munshi came to me from the Maharaja, with a list of the exiles and repeated much that the Subedar had said. I told him I would forward the list and had no doubt that whatever was proper would be done by the Government, but that an absolute guarantee of non-employment would be impossible, as individuals, might change their names and proceed to the Bombay or Madras Presidency, where they could not easily be traced. They will probably go to Lahore.

4. The two regiments, each 6 hundred strong, already reported as under orders, have proceeded to the Tarai. I told the Darbar Munshi it would be well to keep them within the forest, so as to prevent foolish or exaggerated reports. He yesterday replied that on my saying so on his previous visit, he had reported to the Maharaja, who had given orders to the effect that the sipahis were not to proceed into the open plain. The Crown Prince still talks of going, and it is said that Mathabar Singh wishes to make the same excursion, either with or without the Prince. The two Chiefs with the regiments, Jung Bahadur and Dil Bikram, are the Minister's nephew and cousin. The former is a dakria or person out of employ. He is a great sportsman and elephant catcher, but his being sent down is considered as connected with some scheme of the Minister's.

5. Catching elephants is doubtless partly the object of the large force sent to the forest, but it is equally clear that the move is connected with the Darbar intrigues. It is not impossible that some slight inroad may be made upon the British territory, with a view of calling down angry remonstrances on the Maharaja. Any Nepal Ministry is capable of acting thus. I therefore think it right to state my opinion. The event is, however, less likely to happen as the Commanders are the Minister's relatives, but in the event of such occurrence, he and they would say that they could not control their men. Mathabar Singh would repeat his assertion that all was wrong, because he had no authority, and that if he was supported, he could bring affairs back to the tranquil state they were in during Bhim Sen's Ministry.

I have, etc.

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List of the Kala Pandeys and others as furnished by the Darbar on  
November 18th, 1844<sup>30</sup>

Family of Kumedhan Biru Datt Pandey ..... .. 3 persons

Kumedhan Biru Datt Pandey  
Devi Prasad Pandey, son  
Puran Bahadur Pandey, son

Family of Kazi Karbir Pandey ..... .. 4 persons

Kazi Devi Prasad Pandey, son	22 years of age
Parsaram Pandey, son	16 "
Prasad Pandey, son	9 "
Bakra Bahadur Pandey, grandson	3 "

Family of Garbhu Pandey ..... .. 2 persons

Garbhu	47 years of age
Koal Prasad Pandey, son	15 "

Family of Captain Shamsher Jung Pandey ..... .. 2 persons

Captain Shamsher Jung Pandey	18 years of age
Lal Bahadur Pandey	15 "

Family of Captain Kanak Singh Pandey..... .. 5 persons

Captain Kanak Singh Pandey	62 years of age
Captain Megraj Pandey, son	32 "
Padam Raj Pandey, son	17 "
Rang Raj Pandey, son	6 "
Shiv Raj Pandey	3 "

Family of Koalya Pandey .....	3 persons
Tej Bahadur Pandey, son	14 years of age
Jwala Bir Pandey, son	10   "
Ganesh Bir Pandey, son	3½   "
Family of Kazi Randal Pandey .....	4 persons
Sur Jung Pandey, son	14 years of age
Ranadhoj Pandey, son	9   "
Kirti Jung Pandey, son	7   "
Kambhandh Pandey, son	2   "
Family of late Minister Ranjung Pandey .....	9 persons
Captain Shamsheer Jung Pandey, son	22 years of age
Summer Jung Pandey, son	12   "
Tek Ari Jung Pandey, son	9   "
Dabi Jung Pandey, son	4   "
Sherbhanjan Pandey, nephew	23   "
Kazi Babar Banjan Pandey, nephew	21   "
Kul Bahadur Pandey, nephew	17   "
Bhimal Jung Pandey, grandson	4   "
Nar Bahadur Pandey, grandson	4   "
Family of Kazi Jagat Bam Pandey .....	4 persons
Sumundar Bir Pandey, son	
Karnu Pandey, son	
Lahareah Pandey, son	
Bhemotoo Pandey, son	
Family of Kazi Kaldip Pandey .....	2 persons
Givaga Pandey, son	
Shoodeah Pandey, son	
Kapardar Dal Bahadur Pandey .....	6 persons
Purohit Kav Kul Kesari, son of Davig Kesari Purohit	
Captain Gaj Kesar Khattri, son of Jung Singh Subha	
Subedar Bir Mardan Bhandari	
Kumedhan Sher Mardan Hansmal, son of Bhavani Singh	
Kepu Mardan Bangesh, son of Bhim Sen Bangesh	

Total 44 persons

## Footnotes to Chapter Eight

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 6 January 1844, No. 32; not edited.
2. Foreign Secret Consultation 27 January 1844, No. 54; slightly edited.
3. The Governor General had taken advantage of the minority of the heir to the throne in Gwalior to impose his opinions on the Regency. To enforce these opinions, the Governor General then ordered the British army to march on Gwalior, and Gwalior submitted. This is the news that the Resident discussed with the King and the Crown Prince.
4. See above, the Memorandum at the end of Chapter Seven.
5. Foreign Secret Consultation 27 January 1844, No. 55; slightly edited.
6. See above, notes of an interview between the Resident and General Mathabar Singh Thapa, p. 224.
7. Foreign Secret Consultation 27 January 1844, No. 56; not edited.
8. Off-role: military personnel not on active duty, therefore unpaid reserves.
9. Bhim Sen Thapa's brother.
10. See 'A Visit of Prince Waldemar of Prussia to Nepal,' Kailash, 7 (1979, No. 1) 35-50, for an excellent description of Mathabar Singh's lifestyle and acquisitions.
11. Major Lawrence begins to learn that a policy of neutrality is easier to support in the abstract than it is when one knows personally those who will have to suffer as a result of that policy.
12. Apparently even Mathabar Singh had a healthy fear of the temperament and violence of the Crown Prince.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 17 February 1844, No. 10; slightly edited.
14. See below, Memorandum Two, 5 February 1844.
15. Foreign Secret Consultation 17 February 1844, No. 13; not edited.
16. Foreign Secret Consultation 16 March 1844, No. 29; not edited.
17. Foreign Secret Consultation 16 March 1844, No. 30; slightly edited.
18. Foreign Secret Consultation 16 March 1844, No. 31; slightly edited.
19. Foreign Secret Consultation 30 March 1844, No. 35; moderately edited.

20. Foreign Secret Consultation 16 March 1844, No. 32; not edited.
21. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 October 1844, No. 31; slightly edited.
22. Foreign Secret Consultation 23 November 1844, No. 110; slightly edited.
23. Mathabar Singh had resigned from the Prime Minister's post in May, as he had threatened, and the post had remained vacant until this time.
24. Foreign Secret Consultation 23 November 1844, No. 112; slightly edited.
25. Foreign Secret Consultation 23 November 1844, No. 113; slightly edited.
26. Mr. Gardner, Resident in Nepal after the Nepal-East India Company war (1814-16).
27. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 December 1844, No. 105; slightly edited.
28. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 December 1844, No. 106; slightly edited.
29. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 December 1844, No. 108; slightly edited.
30. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 December 1844, No. 109; not edited.

## CHAPTER NINE

### Prime Minister for Life

After Mathabar Singh's resignation from the premiership in May of 1844, the post remained vacant. A position that offered limited powers and had two masters to please interested no one. This situation continued throughout the long monsoon months until October. This was Pajani time, in any case, and a new appointment was in order. King Rajendra Bikram felt that Mathabar Singh was still the man for the post, and he prevailed on him to accept.

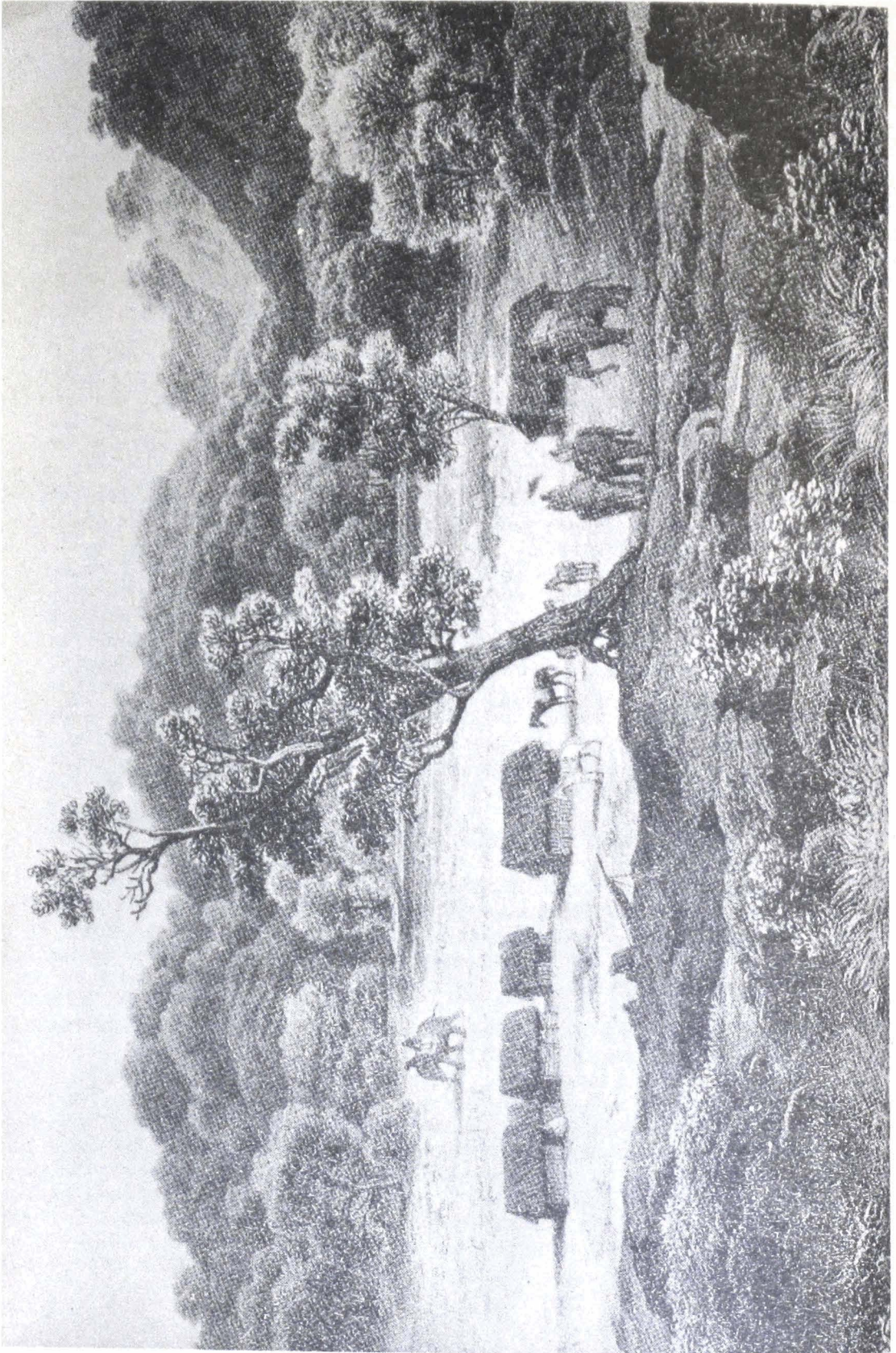
The letters included in this chapter tell the story, as Resident Lawrence saw it, of Mathabar Singh's acceptance of the Prime Minister's office and his grab for real power, the coup of the Crown Prince (on whose side Mathabar Singh placed himself) and the King's struggle to maintain intact the powers of the throne.

Knowing what we do of the King's character, we must necessarily ask ourselves what it was he really feared. One may be forgiven, perhaps, for suggesting that King Rajendra Bikram did not care about power in itself, though he seems to have enjoyed manipulating power. Without doing violence to the evidence, there seem to have been two very deep concerns that agitated the mind of the King--the opinion of the Residents notwithstanding. The first of these was the precarious state of Nepal's national revenues. Money had become a matter of real concern. There was never enough to go around, and the army continued to demand more than its share. To make matters worse, the army was not productive, and idle troops made a convenient constituency for any petty leader who could insinuate himself into their favour. At heart the army was loyal to the King and to those acting in the King's name, but few questions agitating the troops actually went deep enough to question their basic loyalties. Money, then, might be considered the first of the King's concerns.

Secondly, he was concerned about the British. He seems to have harboured the fear, planted in his mind by Hodgson, that the British might take away the Nepal Tarai. Without that fertile area, Nepal was economically not viable. The King therefore felt it imperative that he control Nepal's relations with the British. Evidence shows that he was willing to consider any scheme (no matter how madcap it might seem) that offered a possible use of the army as long as it carried no risk of arousing the British to this feared punitive action.

Had Mathabar Singh been a little less ambitious, he would have made the ideal Prime Minister for Rajendra Bikram. He knew the extent of British power, he was able to work with the British, and he could elicit a fair amount of trust. But Mathabar Singh was ambitious, and his ambitions threatened to put on the throne a boy not mature enough to realize the gravity of these two great fears. Therefore Mathabar Singh must go. It is quite in keeping with what we know of Rajendra Bikram that he could make a man Prime Minister for life, and, for policy reasons of his own, end that life prematurely.





BHI CHAKOE

Resident Lawrence to Government, 4 December 1844<sup>1</sup>

*The King goes to the Tarai! Mathabar Singh Thapa begins the final act of his political career. The play is hazardous, the stakes are high, and the General chooses to play.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Excerpt

Sir,

... ..

2. In the evening ... a deputation of four Kazis, viz. Abhiman Rana, Ranjore Thapa, Gagan Singh, and Dal Kesar Pandey, with the treasurer and the Darbar Munshi, waited on me with a message from the Maharaja that His Highness with the Crown Prince and the majority of the Chiefs and most of the regiments at the capital would start tomorrow, (today) for Hetaunda, where they purposed to catch elephants and amuse themselves with other sports.

... ..

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Lawrence to Government, 11 December 1844<sup>2</sup>

*Major Lawrence summarizes the main points of the report he has had from Hetaunda regarding the movements of the Crown Prince and the King. The exchange described between the King and his Prime Minister must have shocked the King as nothing else could have done.*

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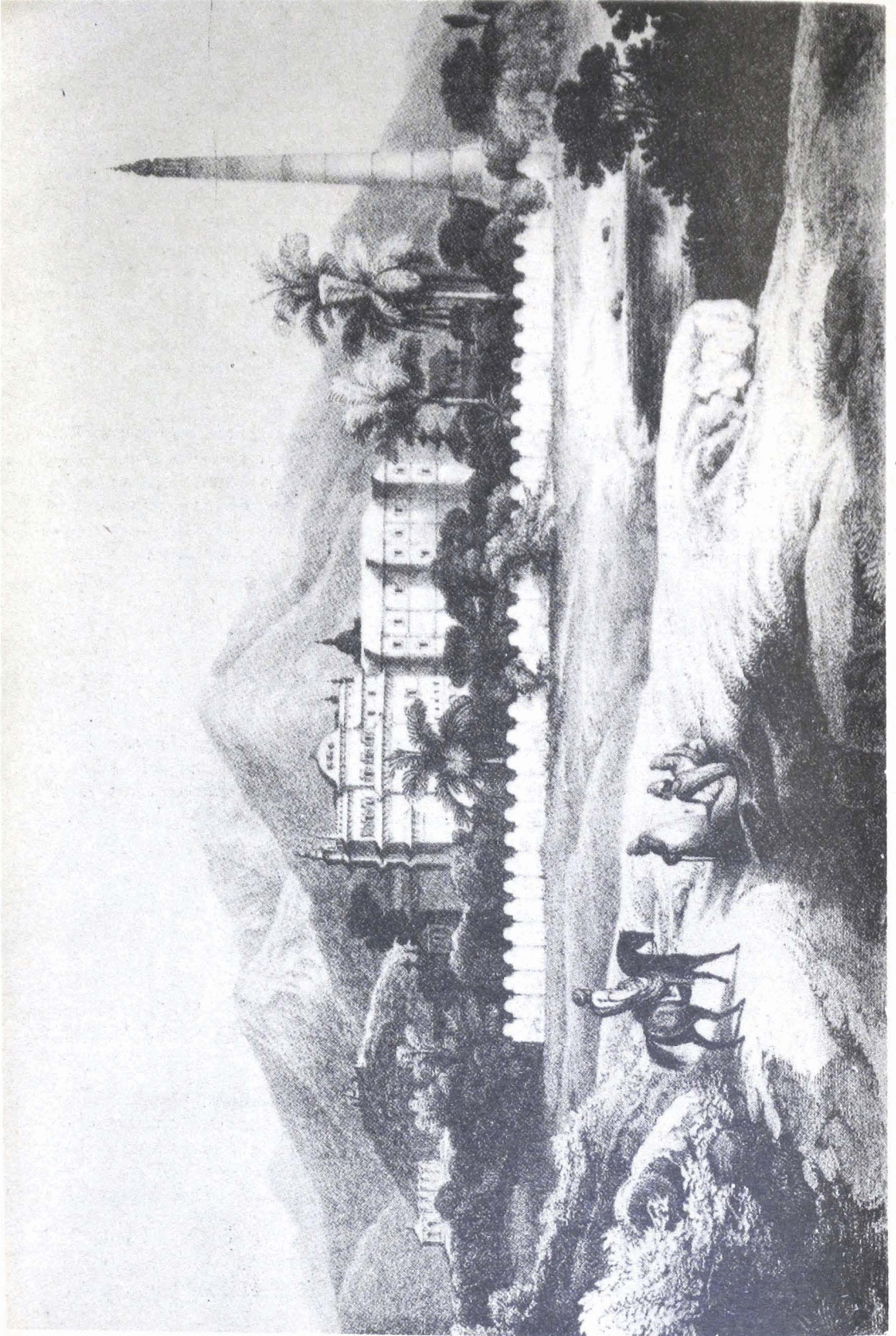
Excerpt

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that I have just heard from my Munshi to the following effect.

2. Yesterday morning (the 10th) the Crown Prince went to the Maharaja and told His Highness that having been promised the throne and it now being long refused, he (the Prince) was about to proceed with his army to Banaras. That he then ordered the bugles to be sounded and moved off with the troops and all the Chiefs to Bichekoh. The Maharaja tried to prevent the move, going about among the troops, endeavouring to detain the Standard bearers, but no one would listen to him. He then sent for the Minister, who was preparing to follow the Prince, and told him not to go, and tried to detain him by laying hold of his fur cloak.





MATHABAR SINGH THAPA'S HOUSE

The Minister replied in a loud tone, 'as you cannot keep your son in order and that the whole army obeys his orders I cannot obey yours,' and then followed the Prince.

3. The Maharani and her two sons were with the Maharaja at Hetaunda, wholly unattended when the Munshi wrote. They also appeared preparing to move to Bichekoh, the Maharani saying that as no one obeyed the Maharaja, she would depart for Banaras.

4. The Darbar Munshi has been with me each day since the Maharaja left Kathmandu, but affects to know nothing that is going on in the camp. I have told him in strong terms my sense of the conduct of the Darbar and desired him to report that I would proceed to join the Maharaja's camp. Tomorrow I will send my camp off two marches and follow next day to Bhimphedi, where it would be advisable that I should hear the army had at least returned to Hetaunda.

5. In reply to my expression of astonishment that the Minister and army should have gone to Bichekoh, although the former faithfully promised me that a guard would be placed at Cheria Ghati to prevent anyone crossing, the Munshi referred me to the Minister's memorandum of the 4th December which states that no one would cross the forest. He is right; it does so. But the Minister distinctly promised me by word of mouth that the Cheria Ghati would not be crossed.

6. There are reports in the City that four Chiefs have been placed in irons by the Prince and Minister, but my Munshi gives no hint on the subject. He (the Munshi) has reported daily to Captain Wheeler, who is requested to forward his letters to the Joint Magistrate of Champaran.

... ..

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Residency Munshi with the Crown Prince's Camp to Resident Lawrence,  
11 December 1844<sup>3</sup>

*The Munshi's language is wonderful, but the detail is too valuable to overlook in this report of the most shocking episode in this story of 'the two rulers'.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

This evening at 5:00 p.m. the Sahibzada<sup>4</sup> and the Minister returned from Dhupwabas to Hetaunda with all the troops, etc., and shall go up to Nepal tomorrow very early in the morning.

2. The Minister sent for me and, holding my hand, took me to the Sahibzada and desired me to give him a Nazzar,<sup>5</sup> but I denied to do so, then he pressed me to do so, and gave me a few gold and silver Mohars<sup>6</sup> from his own pocket in the presence of the Sahibzada, which I could not count in haste and was obliged to show it to the Sahibzada, and the Minister took those Mohars as usual and putting them again in his pocket, said that whatever the new Maharajadhiraj says, hear him and inform the Resident. Then the Sahibzada said that after my salam, inform the Resident that yesterday I have killed 16 hoodedars<sup>7</sup> of the army who intended to kill my Minister and have turned out three Brahmin hoodedars, shaving their heads as usual, to the plains; and shall govern in future as Maharajadhiraj and after this desired the Minister in his own language to take me in his tent to explain to me everything about their quarrel of the throne, to inform the Resident. I took leave of the Sahibzada and went accompanied with the Minister to his tent, when Captain Dilli Singh and Sardar Bhavani Singh were present.

3. The Minister desired me to inform you 'that on the 10th December in the morning, the Sahibzada went to his father and asked him for the throne' but the Maharaja did not reply to him and the Sahibzada being angry said to his father that (he was) going to Banaras with his wives, without any further delay and proceeded further, and though the Maharaja prevented me several times holding my hands and clothes, but I was obliged to go to the Sahibzada to make him return in any way I can and not let him go to Banaras and (at) the same time ordered the whole army and Bharadars, etc. to follow me with (all) possible haste. On the way some hoodedars (petty officers) ordered their under sepoy not to obey my commands and return to the Raja, saying if one son of the Raja should go away to Banaras we can take one of the other three of the throne, and these Bharadars were whispered (to) by Abhiman Rana Kazi, Kumedan Dal Mardan Thapa, and Gagan Singh who are on the part of the Maharani against the Sahibzada and so it was done, and one of these hoodedars came to assault me with his bayonet when I was on horseback as I saw him ready to do so, being careful, he could not hurt me, and I took up (raised) his bayonet and my orderlies seized him then I went directly to the Sahibzada at Dhupwabas, where I begged him, accompanied with (by) all the Bharadars and Sardars and hoodedars of the army, to return to Nepal and prevented him to proceed to Banaras without the permission of the Resident, but he never consented. Then all the Bharadars and the army agreed to make him Governor of all and call him Maharajadhiraj and taking an oath by touching the Nishan<sup>8</sup> wrote an agreement that they should never obey another order except his, then I was obliged to agree with them. When it was done I told the Maharajadhiraj to write an agreement regarding (to the effect) that he should always take an advice from his father in the Raj affairs, which he wrote and having no seal, stamped it by red ink with his own hand and delivered it to me. After this when he (the new Raja) heard that some hoodedars of the army had intended to kill (me) the Minister he proved their guilt, and having obtained the full power of governing his dominions he ordered sixteen (16 persons) hoodedars to be killed in his presence and to turn out 3 Brahman hoodedars to the plains after shaving their heads, which orders were obeyed instantly, and Kumedan Dal

Mardan Thapa is escaped away and I have not said anything to Abhiman Rana and Gagan Singh whom I wish to pardon their crime. Now the Maharajadhiraj shall govern the Government of Nepal and send the Kharitas to the Governor General and China and memoranda to the Resident and the whole army shall go up to Nepal tomorrow morning, and as I have not my Mir Munshi, and you are my friend's Mir Munshi, so you may write to the Resident as I have desired.

... ..

I have, etc.

Dabi Prasad

Note: The words in brackets have been added to make the sense clear.  
H.M. Lawrence, Resident.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Lawrence to Government, 16 December 1844<sup>9</sup>

*Those who have supported Mathabar Singh Thapa and the Crown Prince in this reckless 'grab' for power are desperate to gain the recognition of the Resident. Given the Governor General's determination to recognize only the King, their effort is doomed to failure, and the Resident can do nothing.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council to the following effect.

2. On the afternoon of the 13th December Kazi Jung Bahadur, accompanied by the Darbar Munshi, again visited me and urged me to meet the Prince at Thankot, if not as a recognition of his authority, at least as a friendly compliment, such as had been paid to myself when I first arrived in Nepal. I remarked that the cases were very different. The Kazi then asked if I would go in the event of the Maharaja being with the Prince. I replied that, under present circumstances I could not go out to Thankot, whether the Prince came alone or with the Maharaja.

3. Jung Bahadur had not left me a quarter of an hour before General Mathabar Singh, attended by Captain Dilli Singh, rode up to the Residency, direct from Bhimphedi (twenty miles). The General gave an account of what had happened at the Cheria Ghati, saying that his own life had been in great danger, and apologizing for having gone two or three miles beyond the low range of hills, by assuring me that he had only followed the Prince with the view of bringing him back, the Prince having expressed his determination to proceed to Banaras.



4. A few minutes after the General was seated, Jung Bahadur returned. Much the same conversation passed at this interview as with Jung Bahadur the previous day; the Chiefs urging me to recognize, or at least not to oppose the Prince--I replied as I had already done to Jung Bahadur. The General did not ask me to go to Thankot, which reserve I attribute to his having met Jung Bahadur on the road as the latter was returning from the Residency, just before his own arrival. They however both affected not to have met. The General showed me four documents, of which he said I should have copies; one was a paper given by the Maharani, another by her sons, a third by the widow of Rana Bahadur Shah, and a fourth by the Chiefs and the Army, all calling on the Prince to assume the Government. I replied that I would send translations to Government. Mathabar Singh admitted that the Raja is averse to abdication, but added that the Prince's assumption of power arises wholly from the Raja's own voluntary act, in giving all authority to his son, after which he has no right to deny him the throne. In reply to Mathabar Singh's questions as to how I should act respecting the conflicting claims of the Father and Son, I said I had referred to Government, and that until my instruction arrived I should prefer remaining aloof, carrying on (urgent) business through the Darbar's officers as usual.

5. During the evening of the 13th, sometime after Jung Bahadur's departure, the Subedar in attendance came in a mysterious manner, and, affecting to be afraid to speak his mind, hinted at the probability of violence unless I met the Prince's views. I told him not to talk nonsense. This is a very old and favorite trick. It was played more than once last January and February, but, being only met with ridicule, I thought would not be renewed.

6. I hear that all the soldiery and Chiefs present have signed the paper in favor of the Prince, and that it has been sent to the out-stations for signatures.

7. On the evening of the 14th the Royal Family, Chiefs, and army returned to Kathmandu, having been met at Thankot by a large portion of the population of the Valley. All the morning the road swarmed with men and rice to throw before the Prince; others had flansheem and pastilles to burn before him. The dancers and musicians had proceeded early in the morning. A salute of artillery announced the arrival of the cavalcade on the Tundikhel at 3 p.m. General Mathabar Singh, his cousin Dil Bikram Thapa and a son of Ranbir Thapa (the old Fakir brother of Bhim Sen) sat on the same elephant with the Prince, moving chauries and fans over him. On the next elephant sat Ranbir Thapa, being his first public appearance since my arrival. He wore his Fakir's dress, but, with his eldest son, occupied the second place in the procession. Next came the Maharaja, looking sad, and (in the words of my informant) twisting his thumbs. Behind him were seated Kazi Dal Kesar Pandey and Sher Jung Thapa, the first an old (white) Pandey Chief, the maternal uncle of Mathabar Singh, and the last the nephew and adopted son of the late Bhim Sen. The Chiefs followed, mixed up with the troops. The Darbar party adjourned to a tent on the Tundikhel, and there waited their propitious moment for entering

the Darbar at an hour after night-fall. Among those who went out on the Thankot road to meet the procession were the wives of the Younger Princes, carried in covered dandies (litters) and attended by women on foot.

8. From Mathabar Singh's demeanour and his evident anxiety for support, he appears quite aware of the danger of the game he is playing. I now see clearly what I before more than surmised. From the day of his return to Nepal, he has sought to force the Maharaja to abdicate. It is difficult however to account for the infatuation of His Highness, who has allowed matters to advance for the last three years, seeing, as he might have done, their inevitable termination in his own or his son's destruction, perhaps that of both.

9. I am far from satisfied of the permanence of the present arrangement. Were I so, I should consider that it promised an improvement on the foreign policy of the Darbar. The conduct of the Maharaja, though amiable towards the mass of his subjects, is detestable as regards the Chiefs. He has been accustomed for so many years to petty intrigue, both domestic and foreign, he could never, by any possibility, be weaned from such a line of proceeding. He has for years been his own foreign minister, and has certainly been for years successful in his policy. With the Prince nominally at the head of affairs, Mathabar Singh will be the Minister, and headstrong as he is, I do not know a man in Nepal likely to carry on business with the Residency more satisfactorily. He remembers his uncle Bhim Sen, who, though a Gurkha at heart, had yet sense and discretion to keep on fair, if not friendly terms with his powerful neighbour; Mathabar Singh's aim has been to obtain from the British Government some sort of guarantee in the office of Minister, some pledge such as the Chautarias never actually got, but which they were supposed partially to have obtained. The move to Cheria Ghati was one of the many schemes to effect this object, he and others believing that the step would alarm me into interference; on reckoning possibly that by the Prince actually violating British Territory, such angry remonstrances from Government would follow as would frighten the Maharaja into a surrender of the throne. These continued appeals to me, notwithstanding a year's standing aloof, show how deep-rooted is the notion that the British Government can be brought to interfere, and to take by the hand one or other of the contending parties.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Lawrence to Government, 18 December 1844<sup>10</sup>

*The report that the King has signed an agreement handing over power to his son seems to indicate success in this coup d'etat. Major Lawrence remains sceptical.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that the Bharadars and Darbar Scribes: Bir Bindra Bikram Shah, son of Ranodyat Shah, the eldest son (illegitimate) of Raja Rana Bahadur, Rana Sher Shah, brother of Fatted Jung Chautaria, Kazi Abhiman Rana, Kazi Kalu Shahi, Umakant Upadhyaya Taksali, and Laxman Das, Darbar Munshi--called on me this morning with a message from the Maharaja that His Highness had made over all authority to His son, reserving to himself the throne, the mint, and the direction of British and Chinese correspondence.

2. From two leading Chautarias at Kathmandu as well as Abhiman Rana being of the deputation, it would seem that all parties have been gained over to the present arrangement. If the Maharaja is content to sit as a cipher on the throne, there may be peace in the Darbar, but any attempt on his part to recover his authority must cause bloodshed, which for the present will be prevented by His Highness having succumbed to his son.

3. I told the deputation that if the Maharaja and themselves are satisfied, I cannot be otherwise than pleased. My sole anxiety is that the conduct of the Darbar shall be such as not to disturb the peaceable relations between the two States by such movements as the late one to the Cheria Ghati. The Darbar Munshi, who was the chief spokesman throughout, replied that now there would be no cause for such acts. The Maharaja had redeemed his promises and given the authority to the Prince, who would in the future have no reason for desiring to go to Banaras.

4. At ten o'clock a salute of fifty-five guns announced the arrangement. The annual Pajani is to commence immediately.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Lawrence to Government, 26 December 1844<sup>11</sup>

*Major Lawrence reports further details of the machinery for making the new political arrangement work. He also reports the steps that are being taken to regularize the boundary and to solve outstanding disputes.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor herewith to report the occurrences of the last few days, and to enclose a Lal Mohar written with his own hand, and given by the Maharaja to the Crown Prince.

2. On Friday, the 20th December, the Minister called on me and asked if I wanted to go to Darbar and express my satisfaction at the peaceable settlement of Darbar affairs. I replied that, if affairs were really settled and the Maharaja wished to see me, I should be happy to attend; but I would not go, except to the Maharaja. Mathabar Singh assured me that His Highness would be on the throne, and would himself tell me of the arrangement he had made. The Minister then went on to say that he (himself) had no intention of holding the Ministry, but that his son (a very dull young man) would probably take the appointment. The Ministry was too dangerous an office for him to aspire to, and the yearly income it would give him would not compensate for the toil, vexation, and positive danger of the post. I looked astonished, and remarked that he meant perhaps to say there are to be two Ministers as well as two Maharajas. 'Yes, why not?' was the reply. 'My honor will be the greater in being the Minister's father.' I did not disguise my disapproval of such conversation, and expressed my regret at having said I would go to Darbar, which promise, I added, was made on the understanding that affairs were amicably settled. Mathabar Singh then changed his tone, and told me that in ten days he proposed to accept the Ministry, which Father, Step-mother, and Son were all pressing on him, but which he was positively refusing until he should be able to procure from them and from the Chiefs, etc., a solemn security bond.

3. The 23rd being fixed for my visit to Darbar, I went accompanied by Dr. Christie. The Maharaja advanced a few steps to me, took my hand, and, throughout the interview, came more forward than he had done on any former occasion. He told me that there was reconciliation between his son and himself; that he was to remain as before, but would consult with the Prince and issue orders through him. The Crown Prince frequently interrupted his father, and on two occasions moved his hand before the Maharaja's face saying, 'You will not speak, I will tell the Sahib.' The gist of the Prince's argument was that he was the ruler, but that he would consult with his father; while the Maharaja as often repeated that he would remain on the throne, conjointly with his son, and issuing orders through him. I replied that I understood a paper had been given by the Maharaja to the Prince; that, if I was furnished with a copy, I would send it to Government. The Raja said, 'Yes, you shall have a copy, send it,' but the Prince did not seem to approve, and said to me, 'write what I tell you.' Father and son continued to speak together, and occasionally the Minister, by desire of one or the other, joined so that I had difficulty to catch all that passed. On one occasion, the Prince said rather sharply, 'Listen to me, pay attention to what I say,' and altogether seemed annoyed at my listening to the Maharaja.

4. I was well pleased when the three Chiefs appointed for the boundary settlement were asked to stand up. Again an altercation took place; the boy telling me that he had given them instructions, the Maharaja insisting that they had orders from himself, on which the Prince put the palm of his hand, with the fingers extended, close to his Father's face, saying 'what is the use of your speaking?' and thus silenced His Highness.



5. When I was to take leave both the Raja and the Prince gave me attar, but, on the father happening first to present me with pan, the son drew back his hand declining to give any.

6. On the 24th the Minister brought all the Chiefs deputed for the several boundaries and after some preliminary conversation and reading to me the original of the Lal Mohar given by the Maharaja to the Prince, the Darbar Munshi produced their copy of the Ramnagar map. Then the Minister, in a set speech, explained how Mr. Gardner, the first Resident, had effected the restoration of all the Tarai, except Ramnagar; how owing to the lateness of the season no Nepal officers were present at the demarcation of that portion of the boundary; and how, until four years ago, the Darbar had retained Joora Pani and several places south of Someshwar, when it foolishly made a further encroachment, and was consequently deprived of all, up to the very ridge of the hills. The Minister went on to say that they laid no positive claim to Joora Pani, but hoped that, following Mr. Gardner's example, my kindness would obtain it for them, on the plea of long occupancy and of the estate having been originally given by the Darbar to the late Ramnagar family. I let the Minister finish his speech and then pointed out its many errors and inconsistencies, showing that as a dozen or more villages north of Someshwar had been yielded by the British Commissioner (Mr. Clark) for the express purpose of having a well-defined boundary, it was rather trusting too much to my ignorance to assert that the boundary was marked without concurrence of the Nepal Commissioners. I then distinctly told all present that Government would not forego the Someshwar ridge, and that the very plea urged by the Minister would be the strongest argument against the claims of this Darbar, for, if wrongful occupation was thus rewarded, there would be no end to encroachments. I told them, however, that the British officers now employed would carefully and conscientiously examine the boundary, and that on any doubtful point the Darbar should have the benefit of a liberal construction. In the presence of the Commissioners I wrote introductory notes for each of them to deliver to the Frontier Magistrates, and the deputation took leave with expressions of satisfaction and of good will.

7. The translation of the document given by the Maharaja to the Prince, herewith enclosed, shows the latter has gained a step, but that his victory is far from as complete as I had been led to suppose. It seems to me that the Raja could not have adopted a more unwise plan than that he is pursuing. Its termination must be violent.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

King Rajendra Bikram Shah to the Crown Prince, 10 December 1844<sup>12</sup>

*This Lal Mohar represents the official statement of the transfer of power, such as it was. Although King Rajendra has put the arrangement in writing, there is nothing to prevent him from replacing this Lal Mohar with another that is more to his liking. He remains King.*

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## TRANSLATION

I have given the title of Maharajadhiraj to my son Sri Maharajadhiraj Surendra Bikram Shah. I retaining my throne and its authority, he (my son) will exercise authority over the Minister and the Chiefs and carry on the Government. I retain the dignity and honors of the throne and the exercise of authority as was the practice of my ancestors. But he (my son) will refer to me, and receiving my orders, will issue them to the Minister and Chiefs and carry on the business of the state in the manner I have been accustomed to do.

(True translation)

H.M. Lawrence, Resident

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Government to Resident Lawrence, 28 December 1844<sup>13</sup>

*The Governor General's violent objections to the new arrangement in Nepal is clear indication that even he could not remain as neutral as he continually urged his Residents to be. They reported their objections as arrangements were being worked out. The Governor General saw only the finished product.*

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Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of 16 December and 18 December reporting the return to Kathmandu of the Court and Chiefs and the portion of the army that accompanied them to the Cheria Ghati.

2. The Governor General in Council is glad that the folly of crossing the British frontier with an armed force has not been committed, and that the Court and Troops have returned without any occurrence having taken place to call for your interference.

3. The arrangement described in your letter of the 18 December as having taken place between the Father and Son appears to the Governor General in Council a very anomalous one. If an independent Sovereign chooses to divest himself of his powers, with certain reservations, and the measure have the concurrence of all the constituted authorities of the State, it is an act with which we have no further concern than to see that our interests are not affected by the measure. But it would appear from the statement contained in your letter that all the authority of the Government with plenary powers of Sovereignty are to be vested in one party while the control of the foreign negotiations and affairs is to appertain to another. This is a state of things which cannot, for obvious reasons, be permitted. The foreign relations of a State must be

vested in the Government of that State, and we can only recognize as the party with whom our affairs are to be conducted, and our correspondence carried on, the de facto Ruler of the country.

4. This you should distinctly state to the Nepal Darbar, explaining that the Governor General in Council has no desire to interfere with the internal affairs of the country or to take part in any way in the differences between the Father and Son, but a distinct avowal is required formally announcing who is the ruler of Nepal, since the Governor General in Council cannot recognize the divided authority of two Rulers such as that which would virtually be created by the arrangement explained to you.

5. You should further state that if, as was communicated to you by the deputation of Chiefs enumerated in your letter of the 18th that the Maharaja has voluntarily abdicated in favour of his Son, and the communication is made to you at His Highness' request, it is necessary that a document in writing to that effect, signed and sealed in the usual manner by the Maharaja be given to you for transmission to the Governor General in Council.

6. On the receipt of such a document from the hand of the Government, the Governor General in Council will take into his immediate consideration the terms and conditions thereof, and will communicate to you instructions for your future guidance.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 4 January 1845<sup>14</sup>

*Resident Lawrence reports that Mathabar Singh Thapa has accepted the Prime Minister's post after the return of the Crown Prince to Kathmandu and to apparent power. He has been appointed Minister for life! One ought also to note the appointment of Bam Bahadur as vakil to Calcutta.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that, on the 29th of December General Mathabar Singh received a Khillat as Minister of Nepal. On leaving Darbar he came, attended by about three thousand soldiers and twenty or more Chiefs, to the Residency, by order, he said, of the Maharaja and the Crown Prince, to inform me that he owed his good fortune to me. I contented myself with looking surprized when informed that I had any part in raising him to the Ministry, and merely replied as impressively as I could, that I must be guided by the regulations and by my instructions; but that, as far as they permitted, I should not be found wanting in friendliness.

2. Though the Khillat was received on the 29th, Mathabar Singh declined formally taking up the turban as Minister until yesterday, having

delayed until he could secure some security bonds. Whether he has received any worth having, I am not aware, but yesterday evening a deputation (Kazi Jung Bahadur, Kazi Kalu Shahi, Umakant Upadhyaya--lately appointed treasurer --and Laxmi Das, the Darbar Munshi) came from the Darbar to announce that the General had in the morning been formally installed, and that, trusting to his zeal and honor, as well as remembering past services, the Maharaja and Crown Prince had appointed him Minister for life. The deputation added that the Maharaja and his son would consult together on small matters, when the Prince would give orders to the Minister, who would see to their execution.

3. Kazi Jung Bahadur then told me that the Vakil to Calcutta is to be changed, but that it is not yet determined who is to take the place of the present one. It is generally reported that a brother of Jung Bahadur is to be the new Vakil, though Umakant, who was for ten years employed as Vakil in Calcutta, is again a candidate for the office. Umakant has probably been made treasurer by the Minister to clear the way for his own nephew, Jung Bahadur's brother, by name Bam Bahadur. If this arrangement takes effect it will be a conclusive proof of Mathabar Singh's strength.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 29 January 1845<sup>15</sup>

*Major Lawrence reports the Prime Minister's first official visit to the Residency and describes the sword denoting the power of life and death.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report that on the 21st of January I received a message from the Minister to the effect that on the next day he would pay me one of the bi-annual visits of ceremony that were customary when Mr. Gardner was Resident. Next morning General Mathabar Singh, accordingly, came. He was attended by Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey, Jung Bahadur, Bhim Bikram Shah, and five Captains.

2. Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey is one of the oldest Chiefs in the Darbar, he was coadjutor of General Bhim Sen, and is considered a respectable man, but is now nearly superannuated.

3. General Mathabar Singh on this occasion brought all the Captains as well as the Chiefs into my reception room. Remarking that the visit was only one of compliment, he no further alluded to Darbar affairs than to call my attention to a naked sword he held in his hand (besides wearing one at his side) and observe that he had been entrusted with the extra weapon and desired to keep it unsheathed in token of the powers of

life and death committed to him over all but Brahmans. The Chiefs and Captains echoed his words.

4. I took the opportunity to inform the Minister that Mr. Farquharson had written to me (semi-officially) from Ramnagar mentioning that the Nepal Commissioners hesitated to complete the settlement of the boundary until they could communicate with the Darbar. I observed that I had before requested that full powers might be given to the several officers so deputed and that constant references would delay the definition of the boundary and probably prevent its completion this season. I therefore requested that instructions might be sent to the Kazis at Ramnagar, Champaran, Tirhut and Purnea, desiring them not to refer to the Darbar, but to adjust all disputes with the British Officers according to the directions they had already received and the agreement made between me and the Minister. Next day copies of letters to the above effect were sent to me, but as they contained an expression which might be construed into our having yielded all claim to disputed lands, I returned the letters for correction and on the 24th was furnished with others. Number one (1) enclosure is the letter to the Kazi and Sardar employed at Ramnagar, the others are to the same purport. Number two (2) enclosure is the agreement concluded between the Minister and myself referred to in No. 1. In my last diary I remarked that the Minister had signed two agreements which I had offered to him, leaving it to my choice to take the one I preferred.

5. The deputation of three Kazis, a Sardar, a Subha and a Captain to the boundary settlement, as well as the orders now given, evince a creditable desire to meet the view of the British Government.

6. On the 24th Colonel Ram Ujjwal Singh, the Minister's son, accompanied by the Darbar Munshi, came to congratulate me on the birth of a son. The Munshi gave me the letters above noted, and also put into my hands another draft of a Lal Mohar, the translation of which forms No. 3 enclosure. It will be observed that the document is exactly to the same effect as the Lal Mohar enclosed with my letter of the 14th January, but in that now forwarded the words 'whereby I shall be highly pleased, and the friendship between the two Governments will be increased,' have been substituted for 'and accordingly you are to increase the friendship between both Governments,' doubtless with the view of convincing Government and myself that the deed is voluntarily given by the Maharaja. In presenting it, the Munshi remarked that the Minister had told him to say that, as all Nepal was of one mind, it was hoped that I would not continue to separate myself from them. I replied that the former draft had been sent to Calcutta, whither the present one would likewise be forwarded and orders requested.

7. Darbar affairs are going on with unusual smoothness. The Minister seems to be acting with considerable prudence. He ingratiates himself with the Maharaja by asserting his general acquaintance with influencing 'Sahib Log' and persuading His Highness that he possesses unbounded influence over me. By providing for some Chiefs and intimidating others, he has for the present brought over all who are at Kathmandu.

The Gurus at Banaras having written excusing their attendance, the Minister is said to have replied telling them by all means to remain where they are, as plenty more Gurus are to be found. As a sop to the army, Mathabar Singh has advised the raising of three new regiments. They are being formed partly by drafts from the old regiments, the numbers of which are to be reduced, so that not above six hundred men will be added to the strength of the army. The Maharaja is stated to have been averse to the increase, remarking that it is a needless expense, but the Minister persuaded him that the measure is one of wisdom, for that it is not known when troops will be required and that when they are wanted, that will not be the time to raise regiments, which should be well-drilled and kept in constant strict discipline. The Maharaja then assented and on the 20th proceeded to Pasupatinath with all his sons, the Minister, and the Chiefs to consecrate the banners of the three new regiments. On that occasion, I understand, the naked sword, alluded to in paragraph 3, was given to the Minister with a Lal Mohar declaring him Minister for life, with authority to shed the blood of seven men.

8. In reference to the suggestions contained in paragraphs 19 and 20 of my letter of the 14th January, it seems to me unnecessary for Government to recognize the present status further than to permit me to pay attention to the Crown Prince required by the Maharaja. The arrangement is anomalous and absurd, but scarcely more so than the system which has prevailed during the last three years, and I conceive that, the object of Government being to avoid all interference, we have no other course to follow than that proposed by His Highness.

9. The Maharaja's present expression of his wishes may or may not be voluntary. It is at least certain that of his entire free will he several times asked me to give his son a document which the Prince claimed in virtue of his equality with his Father. It is also well known that His Highness has committed many acts as little reconciled to reason as the scheme now proposed. I have in vain striven against the stream for one year. Did I see any chance by further opposition and becoming conduct, I should not hesitate to recommend a non-recognition of the proposed arrangement, but whatever we may do, short of military interference, the Prince and the Minister will be the de facto rulers. My resistance might endanger the Maharaja. I cannot see how it would assist him, even if he is not in earnest in his request to me. If he wished for my support, he has had a hundred opportunities during the last twelve months to use it to its utmost legitimate extent. I have told him, his son, and the Chiefs verbally and in writing that I am commissioned to the Maharaja, and as long as he is on the throne can recognize no one else without express orders from Calcutta.

10. The evening before yesterday (the 27th) General Mathabar Singh joined me and Dr. Christie, while walking on the Tundikhel. He talked of the Prince and of his desire to smooth all matters at Darbar; and concluded by saying in a few days he would send me a Lal Mohar authorizing the gentlemen of the Residency to proceed in any direction about Nepal that they may desire. The Minister assured me how often Mr. Hodgson had pressed the question and how much bad feeling had been

engendered by the permission being refused. I replied that I was quite aware of the correspondence that had passed on the subject. For my part, though I had no great curiosity to extend my travels, I should consider--and doubted not my Government would consider--this permission a symptom of increased good understanding and of a desire on the part of the Darbar to forego former jealousies, and to return our good faith with the confidence it deserved.

11. Without being unmindful that the Darbar has in the past made its loudest professions when it was wilfully minded, it is only fair to assert that this voluntary proposal of the Minister's is of a piece with the present style of carrying on British affairs which are attended to with unusual alacrity. If the system lasts we shall gain by the present Darbar arrangement. If it does not, we can then call on the Maharaja, either to assert his rights or to abdicate. I have expressed my sentiments freely, as my duty requires, and will I trust stand excused if I have misinterpreted the views of Government. It appears to me that its objects can be best obtained by non-interference, and that, the Prince's proceedings having advanced so far, it would be virtual intolerance to oppose them, especially as I am asked not to do so by the Maharaja.

12. I must apologise for my prolixity in this perplexing question, to the conflicting absurdities of which I am quite alive.

I have, etc.

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An Agreement between the Minister of Nepal and the Resident, 16 January 1845<sup>16</sup>

#### TRANSLATION

It has been agreed between General Mathabar Singh on the part of the Nepal Darbar and Major H.M. Lawrence, the Resident, that in all cases where rivers marked by pillars have been the boundary between Nepal and the British territory and /the rivers/ have changed their courses that the boundary will henceforward be marked by straight lines between pillars, so placed that there shall be no loss to either Government. This rule is only to apply to cases in which Rivers have changed their courses, but at all points where the boundary is doubtful, or may become so, pillars are to be erected at such distance from one another as will prevent future dispute. The rules are to be in force throughout the Nepal and British frontier, and the Officers deputed by each Government to examine the boundary will abide by them.

Any new pillars that may be erected will be all one kind in each Jilla and of a different shape and size from the old pillars. Any of the latter requiring repair will be renewed in their former shape and

size. A Kaiphiat<sup>17</sup> in Persian and Hindi will be written explaining the exact position of each pillar, old and new. An attached copy will be kept by each commissioner and one will be sent to the Minister another to the Resident.

True Translation

H.M. Lawrence, Resident

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## II

General Mathabar Singh Thapa to Kazi Abhiman Rana and Sardar Bhavani Singh, 24 January 1845<sup>18</sup>

### TRANSLATION

You were deputed to arrange the boundary business. The letter you wrote reporting Mr. Farquharson's non-arrival has been received. Do you settle the affair as the Company's Commissioners desire and don't look to me for further orders, for the affair has been discussed with the Resident here, and the Nepal Government is much pleased with his ability and straightforwardness in this matter, and will be satisfied with whatever he may do to prevent doubt and dispute hereafter.

Where there is no dispute, there will be no change. Where a doubt exists, an arrangement will be made so that neither side shall suffer loss, and a copy of an agreement to this effect has been sent to you. From it you will learn all that is necessary. In future you are to act agreeably to the instructions forwarded by the Resident to the Company's Commissioner, so do not look to me for other orders. Wherever there may be any disputed ground, obey the orders the Resident may send in writing. The line of boundary he may decide on will be approved here. Quickly bring the business to a conclusion and return.

True Translation

H.M. Lawrence, Resident

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## III

King Rajendra Bikram Shah to Resident Lawrence, 29 January 1845<sup>19</sup>

I have given the title of Maharajadhiraj to my son, Sri Maharajadhiraj Surendra Bikram Shah; I retaining my throne and its authority; He (my son) will refer to me, and, receiving my orders, will issue them to the Minister and the Chiefs and carry on the Government. I retain the dignity and honor of the throne and the exercise of authority as was the practice of my ancestors. But he (my son) will refer to me,



and, receiving my orders, will issue them to the Minister and Chiefs and carry on the business of the State in the manner I have been accustomed to do; and as was formerly the custom, the Kharitas addressed to the Governor General will be sent in my name by (my son) the Maharajadhiraj, and those of the Governor General's to my address should be given to the Maharajadhiraj by you (the Resident) whereby I shall be highly pleased and the friendship between the two Governments will be increased.

True Translation

H.M. Lawrence, Resident

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 18 May 1845<sup>20</sup>

*Major Lawrence reports the death of Mathabar Singh Thapa and the precautions taken the following day to maintain peace in the City. One has to imagine the impression this assassination had on the Bharadara of Nepal.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council that General Mathabar Singh was last night murdered within the Darbar precincts. The event occurred about 11 p.m., and at 2 a.m. the intelligence was brought to the Residency. Shortly after sunrise today, Kazi Jung Bahadur (nephew of the deceased) and Chautaria Bhim Bikram Shah, accompanied by the Darbar Munshi and the treasurer's son, came to me from the Maharaja with a message to the effect that Mathabar Singh had been put to death by the Raja for arrogating to himself the powers of Sovereignty, for killing (last December near Hetaunda) nineteen soldiers; for threatening to resume the lands of Brahmins; for employing the soldiers as labourers; and for proposing to set up the second prince upon the throne; that for these and other offences he had been put to death in the Palace as His Highness feared to execute him publicly, owing to his influence with the soldiers. The deputation added that the transaction would not affect the friendship between the two States.

2. I simply replied that I was sorry more blood had been shed, and hoped that the Maharaja and his advisers would be satisfied with the death of the Minister, and not visit his offences upon his helpless family; and I especially endeavoured to impress on the Chautaria that what I had often told Mathabar Singh had now occurred, that I had repeatedly warned him against shedding blood, foretelling its inevitable consequences, and that I now counselled whoever might occupy his place to be warned by his fate.

3. Parties of soldiers with guns are stationed at the Darbar and at all the City outlets, but all is quiet. It is supposed that some Chiefs and Officers will suffer, but I trust not. Mathabar Singh's (legitimate) son has fled; his youth and insignificance may save him, if he keeps out of the way for a few days. A brother of Jung Bahadur has also absconded; he (Jung Bahadur) seemed ill at ease this morning, though he was nearly as long on the demerits of his uncle as a month ago he was on those of the Chautarias.

4. There are many reports on the mode of Mathabar Singh's death; the deputation this morning stated that the Raja had himself shot him, but this I do not credit, as I much doubt His Highness having had the courage to fire a gun much more to face his late Minister. I rather believe that fitting instruments awaited Mathabar Singh's arrival at the Palace, where he was suddenly called on pretence of an accident having occurred to the Maharani; and that he was at once cut down. His body was then lowered from a window by an elephant rope, and before daylight sent under charge of a party of soldiers to Pasupatinath to be burned.

5. The Chautarias will now, doubtless, return from Gorakhpur, as well as the other refugees at present in the Plains. It is difficult to say who will be Minister; Fatteh Jung Chautaria is timid; and indeed, unless the Crown Prince is effectually put down, there are not likely to be many aspirants for the dangerous office. Guru Rangnath is perhaps the most probable.

6. Though the event of last night can excite no surprise, it is not the less disgusting that a Chief should be, as it were, encouraged in insubordination; should be overwhelmed with honors and guaranties, should carry round his neck the solemn pledges of his safety, should be ensnared into offending the military, and then be cut down like a dog. It was doubtless a struggle between the Maharaja and the Minister; both could not expect long to live, but the mind revolts from seeing the contest decided by an act of midnight assassination, which the Maharaja not only avows, but wishes us to believe that he committed with his own hand.

7. Impetuous and incautious, Mathabar Singh was a man of considerable ability, and, if kept to his place by a plain dealing sovereign, was capable of creditably conducting the affairs of Nepal.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 24 May 1845<sup>21</sup>

*Major Lawrence reports further details on the slaying of Mathabar Singh Thapa. Particular note should be made of the details found in paragraph eight regarding the government of Nepal for the immediate future.*

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Sir,

In continuation of my letter of the 18th May, I have the honor to report that on that afternoon the guards were removed from the City outlets and the Maharaja came out to the Tundikhel where, addressing the troops, he told them that in future he alone would order and that no one should interfere with the direction of affairs. He did not, however, explain how he proposed to restrain the Crown Prince. The Raja seems at first, after the murder of his Minister, to have been under some alarm, and to have made arrangements against a possible revolt, but on this occasion, as when General Bhim Sen and his friends, including Mathabar Singh, were treated with every indignity and cruelty, and also when the Pandeys were executed, not a finger or a voice was raised in favor of those who had so recently carried all before them.

2. In my last despatch I reported that the son of Mathabar Singh had absconded; I have since ascertained that his illegitimate son, Captain Ranjore Thapa, as also his nephew, Kazi Sher Jung, one Captain, four Commandants, and several Subedars and personal attendants have also fled. Orders were sent to seize Sardar Sarvajit Thapa, the Killadar of Chisapani Garhi, but he had escaped to the Plains, as I hope has Kazi Thir Bikram Thapa, Governor of Palpa, to seize whom a Company of Soldiers was despatched. Colonel Narayan Singh, the younger brother of Thir Bikram is under restraint at Kathmandu.

3. The day before the assassination, several of the Chautarias, who for some time had been absent from Darbar, visited the Maharaja, as did Mathabar Singh's uncle the Fakir, Ranbir Singh, and Kazi Narsingh Thapa. It is therefore surmised that they were in the Raja's confidence. Several Chiefs and officers must have been in the conspiracy as the troops were under arms at the Darbar immediately after the murder. It is still given out that the Maharaja with his own hand committed the murder. The executioners, however, are supposed to have been Kazi Gagan Singh, Kazi Kulman Singh, Sardar Rabi Dhoj.<sup>22</sup> As already reported, Mathabar Singh was suddenly called about 11 p.m. on pretence that the Rani had fallen and was seriously hurt. He immediately proceeded to the Darbar accompanied by his maternal uncle Kazi Dal Kesar Pandey and Captain Shamsheer Bahadur. At the foot of the steps the two latter were stopped, and the Minister alone permitted to ascend to an anteroom, where he found the Beds (physicians) who reiterated that the Rani had met with an accident. Mathabar Singh then proceeded to a room adjoining the Rani's and was there conversing with the Raja when from behind a trellaced

screen the assassins shot him, one ball entering his head and two or more, besides small shot, his body. One of the balls was that of a large rifle.

4. It is still confidentially reported, and I fear with truth, that the Rani was in the room when the murder took place. Part of what occurred is said to have been seen through the crevices of the trapdoor above the staircase, and Mathabar Singh's voice, which was always loud, is reported to have been distinctly heard. The first shot seems to have been fired as he approached the Raja. The Minister then asked for mercy for his Mother and his children, but as he spoke someone struck him from behind and at the same time, as his hands were stretched out in supplication, one of the attendants cut him with a sword across the wrists. The affair was quickly over, and the mangled remains were then let down into the street, as already related, and before daylight despatched to Pasupatinath for cremation. The road to the temple for two miles was sprinkled with the blood that trickled from the corpse.

5. It may be remembered that Gagan Singh is the confidential attendant of the Rani and her two sons; that he was accused of criminal connection with his Mistress; that Mathabar Singh last November renewed the accusation in conversation with me; and that in the affair at Hetaunda in December last, Gagan Singh was considered as marked for a victim. Once or twice after the return from Hetaunda, Mathabar Singh imputed what he called the attempt on his life at Hetaunda to the machinations of Gagan Singh; and it struck me that the Minister had every inclination to destroy him. In my diary three months ago I reported one of Mathabar Singh's singular conversations, during which he told me that on his return to Nepal two years ago, he came with the purpose of setting up the Rani, that Gagan Singh and Abhiman Rana (who fled from Nepal last February) were in league with him in this matter, but that although they conceded to him the post of Minister, they proposed to take all authority themselves, and that he therefore abandoned the scheme. Thus may the enmity of the Rani and her friends be accounted for.

6. On the 21st a deputation: Kazi Nar Singh Thapa, Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey, Captain Karbir Khatri, Harinath Upadhyaya, the treasurer's son from the Darbar waited on me. They had no business and were evidently sent to pick up my sentiments on the late transaction, but as they did not in anything allude to the subject, I entirely avoided it. The composition of the deputation surprised me. For the first time since my arrival, the Darbar Munshi was not of the party. Dalbhanjan Pandey was a friend of the late Minister. Captain Karbir Khatri was his protege. This last person, it will be remembered, was the envoy who was seized with jewels at Banaras four years ago, and regarding whose return to Nepal Mathabar Singh so often importuned me during the first six months after my arrival. He returned to Kathmandu four or five months ago, but yesterday's was our first meeting.

7. If my voice could have saved Mathabar Singh's life, I should, most probably, have remonstrated with the Raja; but as the whole affair

was over before I heard of his danger, I restricted myself to the representation in favour of his family and friends, noted in my last despatch, and purpose when the subject is referred to, or opportunity offers, to repeat such general remarks and opinions. I shall be glad to be authorized to express the special abhorrence of the Government at acts of assassination generally and to be allowed to state that it is repugnant to the feelings of the Governor General that the relations and friends of the late Minister should be persecuted. I offer this suggestion in the full belief that a direct expression of the opinion of His Excellency will have much weight with the Raja. Even mine influenced Mathabar Singh, who, I have every reason to believe, could have executed many of the Pandeys whom he banished, and some of the Chiefs who have aided in his fall, if I had not invariably warned him against shedding blood. It had been well for him if he had altogether taken my advice, though had he disregarded it entirely his own life might have been prolonged. He acted only by halves. After all, it is only a question of time between certain families in Nepal; so much blood has been shed in the last half century, and there is so much to avenge, that sooner or later each individual must look to judicial murder or assassination as his probable fate.

8. Urgent orders have been sent to the Chautarias and Gurus in the Plains to return immediately and I understand that the Pandeys have also been recalled. The Raja is reported to say that if Fatteh Jung Chautaria will not accept the Ministry, he will place the Crown Prince on the throne, and himself be his son's Minister. Kazi Jung Bahadur is at present doing the duty; while I am writing he has sent to inform me that the Raja wishes him to be Minister, but that he has advised that the office should be given to Fatteh Jung Chautaria, and expressed his own willingness to take command of the army. The messenger was desired to assure me that the report of his (Jung Bahadur's) having been concerned in the murder was false; on the contrary, that Ran Ujjwal Singh (Mathabar Singh's legitimate son) took refuge with him on hearing of his father's death, that he immediately armed and accompanied by all his (six) brothers proceeded to the Darbar for the purpose of dying with the General, and was only stayed when he found that the act was the Maharaja's. That he then went with the sons to their late Father's house and aided them in breaking open his treasure boxes and carrying off his jewels and other valuables, and then sent off one of his own brothers with them as far as Bhimphedi. So far Jung Bahadur's story is born out, that his brother, who was reported to have absconded, has returned, and, poor as is my opinion of his moral character, I do believe him guiltless of the act of which he is accused, though the very morning he came to report the murder, it was observed to me that he had been a party to the transaction. In former despatches I have given my opinion of Jung Bahadur. The Vakil in Calcutta is his brother.

9. The Guns have been removed from the Darbar, but the guards are still doubled. There is much fear and doubt abroad, and further disturbances are expected. I heard that the old farce is being renewed, and that a Lal Mohar is under preparation to the effect that 'the Raja's order is above the Crown Prince's and the latter's above the Rani's.'

But after the piles of Lal Mohars and panegyrics and safeguards given to the late Minister, four of them being engraved on gold, and worn constantly round his neck by Mathabar Singh, the man will be confidently bold who is future will rely on the Maharaja. In short in the words of Jung Bahadur's messenger, the Subedar in attendance, the Darbar has thrown off not only all dharam but all sharam.

10. My first impression is confirmed that no new cause of offence had arisen; but that the Raja, who had dissembled ever since the Hetaunda affair, took advantage of the discontent caused among the soldiers by their being employed as labourers to carry out the scheme he had long meditated.

11. It is not improbable that the Maharaja will waylay me on the road some evening; if he does and refers to Mathabar Singh's affair, I shall, of course, give him my opinion; but until the orders of Government are received I shall, as far as possible, hold aloof from the Darbar.

12. Enclosed is an extract from a note this day received from Captain Wheeler acquainting me of the arrival of Mathabar Singh's sons at Segauli. Yesterday /sic/ I desired the Subedar in attendance to report to the Darbar their arrival at Segauli and my having desired my people to treat them with respect.

I have, etc.

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Captain Wheeler to Resident Lawrence, 22 May 1845

Extract

Two of Mathabar Singh's sons have arrived at Sagauli--I believe without anything but the clothes on their backs, not having had time to put on their shoes...'

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Government to Resident Lawrence, 30 May 1845<sup>23</sup>

*The Governor General's calm acceptance of the death of Mathabar Singh speaks volumes for his attitude towards the political confusion in Kathmandu.*

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Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th reporting the murder of General Mathabar Singh.

2. The Governor General in Council has learnt the circumstances connected with the violent death of Mathabar Singh with much regret, but while proceedings of this nature can only be regarded by us with feelings of disgust, His Excellency in Council does not consider them as likely to lead to any result which can affect our political relations with the Nepal State.

I have, etc.

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#### Footnotes to Chapter Nine

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 December 1844, No. 111; not edited.
2. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 December 1844; No. 117; slightly edited.
3. Foreign Secret Consultation 28 December 1844; No. 120, not edited.
4. Sahibzada: Crown Prince or Heir Apparent.
5. Nazzar: a present, an offering, especially one from an inferior to a superior, to a holy man, or to a prince.
6. Mohars: coins.
7. Hoodedar: an officer, a functionary, one holding any office.
8. Nishan: an ensign, a flag.
9. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 January 1845, No. 115; slightly edited.
10. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 January 1845; No. 116; slightly edited.
11. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 January 1845; No. 118; slightly edited.
12. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 January 1845, No. 118; not edited.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 January 1845, No. 117; not edited.
14. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 January 1845; No. 121; not edited.
15. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 February 1845; No. 110; slightly edited.
16. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 February 1845, No. 112; not edited.

17. Kaiphiat: statement, description, report, account particulars.
18. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 February 1845, No. 111; not edited.
19. Foreign Secret Consultation 21 February 1845, No. 113; not edited.
20. Foreign Secret Consultation 13 June 1845, No. 15; not edited.
21. Foreign Secret Consultation 13 June 1845, No. 17; slightly edited.
22. Later it was commonly accepted that Jung Bahadur had been the leading marksman. See below, p. 361, Rajendra Bikram to the Governor General, 15 August 1847, and p. 333, the Darbar to Rajendra Bikram, 12 May 1847, para. 2.
23. Foreign Secret Consultation 13 June 1845, No. 16; not edited.



## FOUR

### Jung Bahadur's Book

The year 1846 marked a turning point in the history of Nepal. The change was neither unexpected nor without profound social and economic causes. Domestic problems had increased in severity from the time of the Nepal-East India Company war (1814-16). The loss of one-third of Nepal's total land holdings to the East India Company by the Treaty of Sagauli (1816) and the consequent loss of revenues to the State had dictated a reduction in the size of Nepal's army. However, for political reasons this reduction had never been made. The added burden of supporting the army fell on the small farmers of Nepal and drove them into debt, into bonded labour, and even into slavery. Poverty had increased, and the scramble for a means of earning a livelihood had intensified.

The army, also, had suffered as a result of the Treaty. From 1744 to 1816 the army had been an alternative career to many in Nepal and a means of escaping the social stratification of village life. For the simple soldiers the army provided increased prestige and additional income, both of which were welcome in the Hills. The Bharadar families, however, had found in the army a continually expanding career. As long as Nepal's territorial expansion continued, the ranks of the army and the officers corps also expanded. There were thus new opportunities for promotion, for entry into the military administration of the country, and for wealth. Sagauli ended this expanding field of opportunity. If the army was not reduced in size, neither was it increased. The result was a stagnation all along the line in recruitment, advancement, and career opportunities.

This led directly to fierce competition among the Bharadar families for the posts that were available. As long as Bhim Sen Thapa controlled the administration, promotions were made more or less according to rule. But when King Rajendra Bikram came of age in 1831, the avenues for currying favour increased in proportion to the size of his household. His wives had their favourites, and they had enthusiastic supporters who expected rewards. Political competition was thus complicated by the introduction of random promotions and appointments on the basis of favour rather than service. The advent of the so-called Kala Pandeys to power after the downfall of Bhim Sen Thapa in 1837 opened the way for the appointment and promotion of many of their adherents, and stressed the importance of belonging to a faction. The Kala Pandeys, however, overreached themselves and brought down upon their heads a demand from the Governor General that they be removed from office. The history of what followed has been the story told by these Letters from Kathmandu.

In 1846 the situation was remarkably tense. In theory the King gave orders through the Queen, who passed them on to the Ministry. In the opinion of many, she consulted rarely and entrusted Gagan Singh with most tasks she wanted done. The Ministry itself was made up of

Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah (Mukhtiyar), General Abhiman Singh Rana, General Gagan Singh, General Jung Bahadur, and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey. Fatteh Jung was timid. Dalbhanjan was too old to be effective. The remaining three members were not the alliance that some have suggested but three contestants for power locked in a temporary stalemate. Gagan Singh had the support of the Queen, Abhiman Singh Rana had some support from the Crown Prince, and Jung Bahadur had in addition to his own three Regiments the general support of the army (excluding the official bodyguards of the other members of the Ministry).

Most analyses ignore the fact that Rajendra Bikram was King, and the King alone enjoyed the support of the Governor General. Regardless of how he might appear, he was the most powerful figure in Nepal as long as he remained on the throne. The Residents had repeatedly been told that they were deputed to the King alone, and they were forbidden to give even the semblance of support to any other person in the power sweepstakes of Kathmandu.

Though not directly involved (after the time of Hodgson), the Residents were keen and well-informed observers. Major Lawrence and I.R. Colvin, as had Hodgson before them, warned that the political atmosphere in Kathmandu inevitably had to lead to bloodshed unless some change were made within the Royal family itself. King Rajendra, though more than intelligent enough to govern the nation, preferred to work through others, and in this very process gave them powers that fed the political rivalry rather than subduing it.

Looking back, one is forced to recognize the fact that in the series of Prime Ministers beginning with Bhim Sen Thapa; (Bhim Sen, Fatteh Jung Shah, Ranjung Pandey, Fatteh Jung Shah, and Mathabar Singh Thapa), all except Fatteh Jung had died of violence.

One must also recognize the fact that King Rajendra did not tolerate for long any Minister who used a member of the Royal family to increase his personal power. Though Fatteh Jung Shah was nominally Mukhtiyar in the 1846 Ministry, the effective power (as long as he represented the Queen) was General Gagan Singh. It was further reported that the basis of this power was more than mutual admiration. One would be inclined to say, then, that Gagan Singh was marked for a violent end. The Resident did in fact predict this, and it comes as no surprise that on the night of 14 September 1846 Gagan Singh was murdered.

The Kot Massacre that followed this event should be no great surprise either. Violence was in the air; the Residents had predicted that it would lead to the shedding of blood; and the contestants for power were keyed to react swiftly when the occasion arose.

There is mystery about the Kot Massacre simply because of the great confusion that reigned. One need not expect there to be any timely photographs or detailed eye-witness reports. What we have are a few records based on the information available at the time. These documents are provided here. One might suggest to the reader that the documents

be read for what they say before comparing them with the traditional accounts that have been handed down. The time for comparison arises after the documents have been allowed to speak. The message they present is subtle but fascinating.

### CHRONOLOGY

1845

- 17 May -- Mathabar Singh Thapa killed
- 18 May -- Jung Bahadur appointed General
- 14 August -- Fattah Jung Shah returns to Kathmandu
- 22 September -- New Ministry formed, Fattah Jung Mukhtiyar

1846

- 9 February -- I.R. Colvin presents credentials as Resident
- 14 February -- Jung goes to Hetaunda to meet brother returning from assignment as Vakil in Calcutta
- 13 September -- Resident Colvin and Dr. Login leave Kathmandu
- 14-15 September -- Gagan Singh murdered;
- (night) KOT MASSACRE; JUNG BAHADUR PRIME MINISTER
- 15 September -- Queen orders exile of wives and children of many fallen Bharadars
- Further executions (no details)
- 21 September -- Jung Bahadur recalls exiled wives and children (most refuse to return)
- 31 October -- Bhandarkhal coup attempt, 12 killed
- 23 November -- King and Queen to Banaras
- 30 December -- Major Thoresby presents credentials as Resident

1847

- 3 January -- King and Queen arrive at Banaras
- 23 February -- King leaves Banaras

- 15 March -- King arrives at Govindganj near border, delays return
- 7 April -- Jung Bahadur seeks auspicious day for installation of Surendra Bikram on throne
- 24 April -- Arrest of one group of assassins
- 12 May -- Discovery of Lal Mohar ordering Jung Bahadur's death
- Jung Bahadur confronts troops with Lal Mohar
- SURENDRA BIKRAM DECLARED KING OF NEPAL
- 23 July -- Rajendra Bikram arrives at Alao in Nepal Tarai
- 28 July -- Rajendra Bikram taken captive
- 8 August -- Rajendra Bikram confined in Bhadgaon
- 3 September -- Governor General recognizes Surendra Bikram as King of Nepal.

## CHAPTER TEN

### The Kot Massacre

After the death of Mathabar Singh, the leading politicians of the Valley urgently pressed their causes with the King. There was no immediate appointment to the vacant post of Prime Minister, but in May Kazi Jung Bahadur secured for himself an appointment as General with the command of three regiments. On 22 September a new ministry was installed, with Chautaria Fatteh Jung named as Mukhtiyar.

This ministry was a strange and unlikely amalgam of forces. The leading figure by all accounts was General Gagan Singh, who owed his influence to the patronage of Queen Laxmi Devi. General Abhiman Singh seems to have enjoyed some support from the Crown Prince, though the Crown Prince himself was extremely subdued at this time. Of the three remaining members of the ministry, Fatteh Jung was timid and appeared to have accepted rather than sought the Mukhtiyarship; Dalbhanjan Pandey was an old man (a colleague of Bhim Sen Thapa's), who was brought into the ministry as a reward rather than for the strength he could contribute; and the last member, General Jung Bahadur, was an ambitious, talented, and calculating politician. Though enjoying no real patronage, he made it his business to keep in touch with the King, with the Queen, and with the Crown Prince.

The massacre took place on the night of 14-15 September. The story of the massacre tells itself, but it seems important to note that Jung played a leading role in all the events of that fateful night. He seems to be everywhere and to discuss what should be done with everyone. It is this fact, which stands out so clearly in the long account presented below, that suggests that the source of this account was Jung himself, that Jung indeed tells his own story. Further credence is given to this possibility by the fact that the points Jung later stresses in his own defence are the very points that this account stresses. Lastly, there is the fact that this account is a translation. In theory one might argue that one of the Residency scribes prepared the document in his own language and then made the translation. Militating against this is the fact that many details in this account do not agree with details in the official Residency correspondence, which would have been the source for any Residency-originated narrative. Whether Jung Bahadur was in fact the source of this account or not, it heightens one's interest to read it with this possibility in mind.

Resident Lawrence to Government, 28 May 1845<sup>1</sup>

*Major Lawrence reports the changes in the Darbar that have followed on the death of Mathabar Singh Thapa. It is interesting to note that as Jung Bahadur advances he always allows others to take a nominal position above him. The Resident foresees a struggle between Jung and Gagan Singh. Whether he has correctly read Jung's character remains to be seen.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report that Kazi Jung Bahadur, Captain Bir Bikram Shah, and the Darbar Munshi yesterday waited on me for the purpose of stating that the Lal Mohar given by the Maharaja to the Crown Prince some months ago is cancelled. A new one has been issued, decreeing that the Maharaja is to give his orders to the Prince, and the latter is to pass them on to the Maharani, who is to issue the same to the Ministers. I told the deputation that the arrangement was no concern of mine. However, as it was thus officially announced I must repeat what I had so often said, that nothing but mischief could be expected under a divided rule, and added that if two rulers had been found inconvenient, three would be still more difficult to obey. Jung Bahadur assented to the truth of what I said, but remarked that there never could be but one ruler. The fact is that by putting to death Mathabar Singh, the courageous partizan of the Crown Prince, the Raja has revived the pretensions of the less bold, but more numerous, party who support the Rani's interests. My despatches in the early part of last year explained the Maharani's position.

2nd. Kazi Jung Bahadur informed me that it was proposed to make him a General, give him three regiments, and the chief command of the troops. These dangerous honors will be gained because of his coalition with the murderers of his uncle, if indeed, he is altogether guiltless of having taken a part against him. Jung Bahadur's conduct is now as indecorous as it is injudicious, for by accepting the rank of General he will give offense not only to the Chautaria but to Gagan Singh, who aspires to the command of the army himself. This last named person has just now the chief power in the Darbar. In fact, he holds a court, himself, at which most of the Chiefs attend. In the present state of affairs I very much doubt the Chautarias' returning to Kathmandu, though they may go to Palpa. Fattah Jung at least will not; the next brother, Guru Prasad, more probably may.

3rd. Should Jung Bahadur be made a General I should not be surprised at his being the next victim. Young as he is, he is decidedly the best qualified Chief in Nepal to command the army.<sup>2</sup> He is active and intelligent and possesses many soldierly accomplishments; but it is impossible any party can trust him. Yesterday he again began to dilate on the mischief Mathabar Singh had done, and in his having sown dissension between the Raja and his son. I begged to differ and to recall to his memory certain occurrences of dates long before his uncle's return from the Plains; and reminded him that the late Minister's acts were not always thought so mischievous. In my presence on the Tundikhel he had asked the Maharaja for one ruler and was promised that there should be one, and that whatever evil he had done, his acts appeared to have been approved of, or at least were acquiesced in by the Maharaja and all the Chiefs up to the very day of his death. The young man probably spoke for the purpose of having his words reported by his Chautaria companion; but for his own sake as well as from respect to the memory of Mathabar Singh, who, with all his faults, was at least

the best man in Nepal, I thought it right to say what is above reported. Such men, however, as Jung Bahadur and Gagan Singh will not hesitate to grasp at honors whatever may be the consequences. Each will say that a man has only one life to yield and may as well die a General as a Captain or Kazi. But I much doubt if Fatteh Jung Chautaria will so argue, and if he will not altogether hold aloof or at least decline the office of Minister. The probability will then be that as there are three authorities, there will be as many Ministers, under the form of a commission for the management of affairs. I can see no possible termination to the present intrigues until some members of the Raja's family are cut off.

I have, etc.

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Government to Resident Lawrence, 6 June 1845<sup>3</sup>

*The Governor General takes a peculiar stance in this letter. If asked, the Resident may express an abhorrence of the shedding of blood, but he need not volunteer this information.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of the 24th and 28th of May reporting the present state of the Darbar occasioned by the death of the Minister.

2nd. In reference to the 7th paragraph of your first mentioned letter, I am directed to observe that if the Maharaja or any accredited agent of His Highness should seek the opinion of the Government of India, the Governor General in Council will not fail to strongly express his abhorrence to the spilling of blood as repugnant to our principles. But His Excellency in Council does not think the Government called upon to volunteer an opinion stigmatizing, however justly, the conduct of the Maharaja on this occasion.

3rd. When the spilling of blood can be prevented by the expression of the Governor General's hope that a resort to such means will not be pursued, the Governor General in Council will be most ready to authorize you to state that hope, but it is not considered expedient that the Government of India should denounce as an unwarranted assassination an act of the Maharaja which is reported to you by His Highness to be a judicial execution, merited by the crimes of his late Minister, Mathabar Singh.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 26 August 1845<sup>4</sup>

*Fatteh Jung Shah has returned to Kathmandu in response to the Royal summons, and eventually will again become Prime Minister. The Ministry, to which Major Lawrence refers in paragraph four is the Prime Minister's post. The reader will recall that Residents use the titles Prime Minister, Premier, and Minister almost synonymously.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report that, accompanied by my staff, I yesterday waited upon the Maharaja for the purpose of delivering the presents noted in your despatch of the 26th May.

2. The Maharaja was gracious, but said little beyond enquiring after the health of the Right Honorable the Governor General. The several presents were examined by the Crown Prince, who seemed much pleased with them, and spoke and acted as if they were all intended for himself. The Maharaja in no way checked his son but rather appeared gratified at the pleasure displayed by him.

3. Neither Chautaria Fatteh Jung nor any of his family were present at Darbar. Fatteh Jung is still at Balaju, an unhealthy place at this season, but, though within two miles of his own house, he has not yet been permitted to enter it, the Crown Prince declaring that his brother (the Second Prince) shall retain possession, and the Maharaja giving no order on the subject.

4. General Jung Bahadur and Kazi Gagan Singh and Abhiman Rana are all struggling for the Ministry. Jung Bahadur is, I believe, favoured by the Crown Prince, while the Maharani advocates the cause of Gagan Singh, and the Maharaja himself desires the promotion of Fatteh Jung Chautaria. The latter, however, will only accept office with full power and under special guarantee, while the three other candidates, though each declares he does not aspire to the Ministership, will seize any proposition that may raise them to temporary power. Abhiman Rana may have the discretion to decline the dangerous office. Neither of the other two will hesitate a moment.

5. Although Fatteh Jung Chautaria has now been at Balaju nearly a fortnight, yesterday, shortly previous to my going to Darbar, was his first interview with the Maharaja. A regiment went to meet him and then escorted him back from Darbar to Balaju. I have not yet heard what occurred at the interview. The common reply when I ask my Gurkha 'when the Chautaria will enter his new house?' is 'Soon. He is waiting for a lucky day.' Nevertheless though the 2nd Prince does not actually live in the house, some of his servants and baggage are there and he goes occasionally to the place.



6. Sardar Bhavani Singh, for many years Killadar of Chisa Ghari on the Segauli frontier, who was exiled by Mathabar Singh and fled with Abhiman Rana to the Plains, has been reinstated in his border command.

I have, etc.

7. Since closing my letter the Darbar Munshi has come to me with a message that the Maharaja wishes to send Sardar Bhavani Singh to see the Right Honorable the Governor General on his way to the Upper Provinces, and requesting that I should inform him at what station on his route it will be convenient to His Excellency to receive the Sardar.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 23 September 1845<sup>5</sup>

*Major Lawrence reports the composition of the new Ministry in Kathmandu and the patronage enjoyed by the Ministers.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report that yesterday afternoon Sardar Bhavani Singh, accompanied by the Darbar Munshi, waited on me by order of the Maharaja to report that a Ministry had been that day formed, consisting of Chautaria Fatted Jung and Kazis Gagan Singh, Abhiman Rana, and Dalbhanjan Pandey.

2. The Chautaria is nominally Minister and the others are his assistants, but while he has received command of three regiments, Gagan Singh has obtained seven, with the rank of General; and Abhiman Rana two, with a similar title. Bhavani Singh stated that the Chautaria is Mukhtiyar, implying, I consider, President rather than Supreme authority. His family is to have under their charge the Gorkha territory west of, and including, Palpa, and he is to conduct the foreign (British and China) negotiations. Abhiman Rana is to be Mulki Dewan managing all internal affairs east of Palpa, while Gagan Singh is entrusted with all Darbar affairs and the charge of the magazines and army supplies. The regiments under his command are those usually employed about the Darbar. Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey, who is a respectable old man, a contemporary and friend of Bhim Sen's, appears to have been brought into the coalition for appearance's sake. He is entrusted with one regiment and on great occasions is to consult with the other three Ministers. General Jung Bahadur retains the three regiments he received some months ago with his rank of General and also the office of Chief Judge, which he held under his uncle Mathabar Singh, but his name is not included in the Council. Sardar Bhavani Singh in addition to his old command of Chisa Garhi has obtained charge of the whole frontier from Gorakhpur eastward, lately under Dillu Singh--now in exile.

3. All these appointments except the Chautaria's and Dalbhanjan Pandey's have evidently been effected by the Maharani's influence; and, as the Crown Prince's influence appears for the present to have sunk before that of his step-mother. The Chautaria is a quiet, unambitious Chief and may possibly submit to hold nominally the first but really only the third place in the Ministry. The materials, however, of the coalition are so incongruous, and there is so much jealousy of the sudden elevation of Gagan Singh, who was a few years ago only a Darbar menial, as, added to the hostility of the Crown Prince, will make the position of the new Ministry far from secure. The several members sent their compliments to me by Sardar Bhavani Singh with a message that an early day would be fixed for their visiting me. I replied that I should be glad to see them forego petty jealousies and work together for the good of the country, which course alone could ensure the permanence of their authority, as assuredly a different line of conduct would terminate in the fall of all.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Government, 30 September 1845<sup>6</sup>

*Major Lawrence's description of the demeanour of the new members of the Ministry provides an interesting background for the events so soon to overtake the Ministry.*

\*\*\*\*\*

EXCERPT

Sir,

... ..

7. On the 29th the Ministers attended by 5 Captains and a guard of honor visited me. General Jung Bahadur was of the party and seems to be considered as the 5th and Military member of the Ministry. Little or nothing passed at the interview. The Chautaria looked thin and in sad spirits and scarcely said a word after the first complimentary enquiries. General Abhiman Rana took the second place and was the chief spokesman. Gagan Singh took the lowest seat and was silent. Modesty is his game.

8. This day (the 30th) I returned the Ministers' visit. None but kinsmen including four brothers and five sons, four of them children, were present, the whole amounting to about 20 adults. As on the previous day, the Chautaria was dressed in a plain suit of white linen, in remarkable contrast to the gaudy attire of his predecessor.<sup>7</sup> His conversation was as different as his dress from that of Mathabar Singh. On this occasion Fattah Jung appeared in good spirits, talked mildly and rationally

on several subjects, and then proposed that if I desired to give him any admonition we should retire to a private room. I asked him to bring two or three of his party, but he said he could not take one without giving offense to the others, so he alone led the Residency party to a small room off the reception hall. Then in very moderate terms he entered on his own late troubles, assuring me that he had told Kazi Thir Bikram at Palpa and had repeatedly informed the Maharaja that he had no vengeance to inflict on any, that his enemy was dead, and that he forgave all who had said Ha Ha and for their own safety had echoed the late Minister's words and accusations. He added that he had sent a message to the same effect to Mathabar Singh's mother. I replied I rejoiced to hear him so express himself, that such sentiments redounded to his credit, and that I had been anxious he should so commence his administration. 'Yes' he replied 'my brother and son delivered your message the day you met them on our way to Nepal at Jitpur.' He did not during our conversation allude to his coadjutors in the Ministry but spoke of the temper of the Crown Prince being much improved and of his own ability to keep the Prince in humour. I remarked on the absence of all the Ministers on the 25th and mentioned that I was here for the purpose of continuing, and if possible increasing, the friendship between the two States. I was at all times at the disposal of the Maharaja but that it was on every account desirable that business should not be transacted in a corner and that I hoped whenever His Highness desired to see me it would be in the presence of his Ministers. I particularly requested the Chautaria to take a favourable opportunity of repeating what I said to the Maharaja, as it seemed to me to be essential to a good understanding and to the proper conduct of affairs between the two Governments.

I have, etc.

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Resident Lawrence to Captain Wheeler, 7 February 1846<sup>8</sup>

*This short memorandum is one of the most important documents dealing with Residency affairs at this period. The occasion for this document was the departure of the Resident and the newly appointed Resident Colvin's delay in arriving in Kathmandu. Normally the outgoing Resident handed over his office and introduced the incoming Resident to the King and Darbar before his departure. Note the stress Major Lawrence places on non-interference.*

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Segauli

Memorandum from Major H.M. Lawrence to Captain Wheeler:

1. Read the Government letters of the last two years; and then my letters of that period. You can then read the correspondence of Mr. Hodgson's last three years.

2. You will perceive that the object of Government is, in no way to interfere with Nepal domestic affairs, but simply to watch British interests.

The Raja and Minister (Fatteh Jung Chautaria) are the only persons with whom to have official communication. You address the latter and receive and talk to such persons as are sent by the Maharaja.

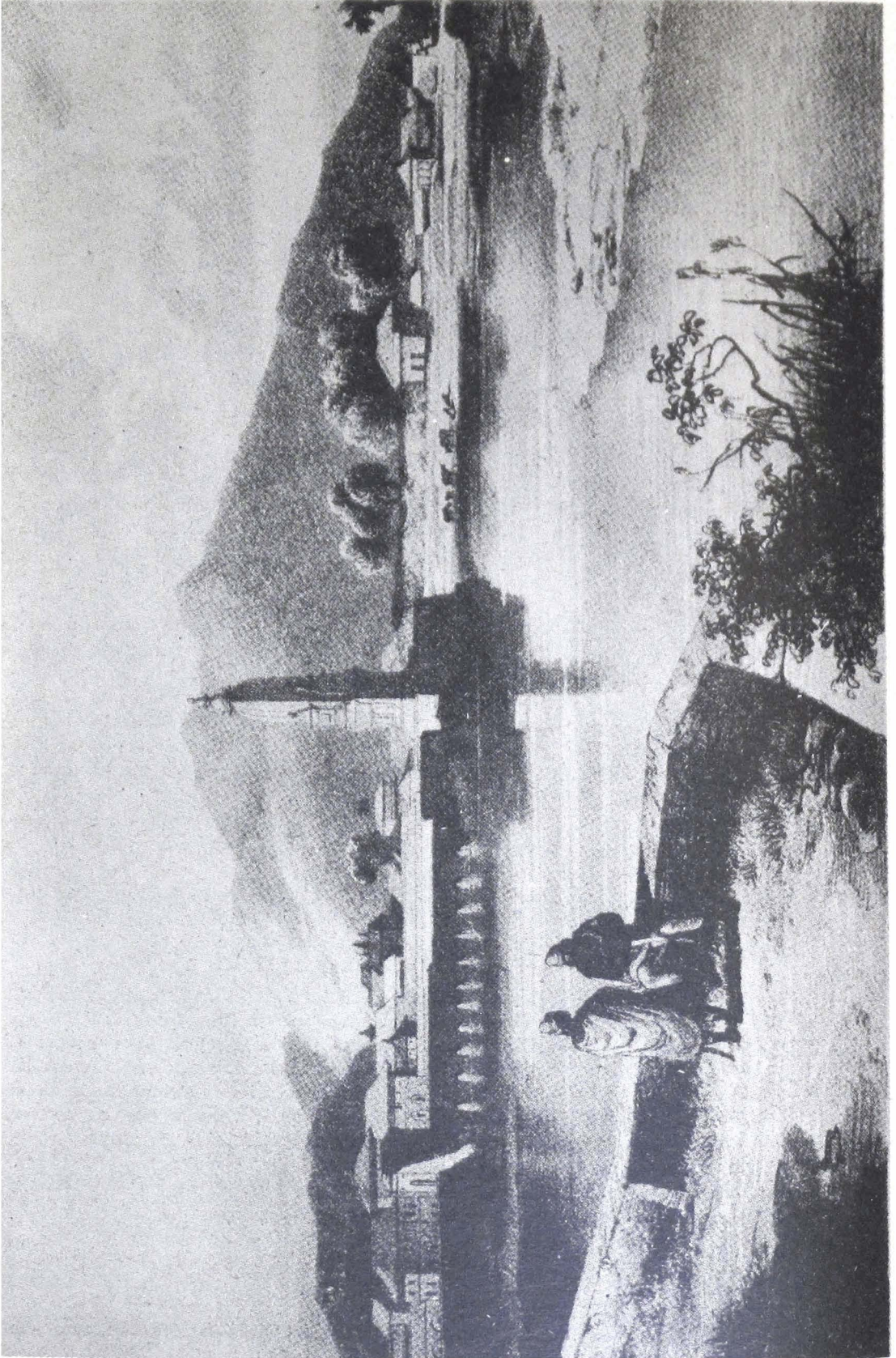
Be civil to the Crown Prince and all others--but have no official, and as little as possible other communication with any but the Raja and His Chief Minister--you probably will be tempted--be very civil but very firm in holding aloof from them.

3. The Minister is respectable but timid--the real power is in the hands of General Gagan Singh and the Maharani (whose attendant he is)--he will most probably send to you--be civil to the messenger, but, as far as possible, only see him before the Assistant or Director. The same indeed with all. Let all that is said be before witnesses or you are liable to be belied.<sup>9</sup>
4. Write briefly but plainly to Government. All forms and ceremonies are known to the Head Writer and Mir Munshi, whom inform that they are, of course, responsible in such matters.
5. Captain Ottley has the key to the treasury and of the almirah with the office books. The last book and diaries are in the almirah, the key of which I have sent to the Head Writer. Count the treasure and Tosha Khana on your arrival.
6. I have verbally told you as to information.<sup>10</sup>
7. The Raja is suspicious and full of intrigue. Be patient and polite--but firm to him. Respect, coolness, and unconcern as to all that is going on is perhaps the best course.
8. Above all remember that at all times peace is the object of the Government, and that now especially it will be desirable. This can best be effected by the course above mentioned.
9. The most fruitful sources of disturbance are women and cows. Warn your servants against offence, and, on your arrival, remind the Residency people of the orders regarding women.

I have the honor to make over charge of the Nepal Residency to you until such time as the orders of Government can be received. The above memo will perhaps assist your judgement as to the nature of your duties.

I have, etc.

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RANI POKHARI (KATHMANDU)



I.R. Colvin, the new Resident, arrived in Kathmandu on 8 February and presented his credential on the 9th. Captain Wheeler left Kathmandu the same day.

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Resident Colvin to Government, 6 March 1846<sup>11</sup>

*This long report of Resident Colvin's is important because it provides the first impression of a newly arrived Resident. Of course, by the time Colvin wrote this he had read through the files in the Residency. However, his own initial reaction is important.*

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Sir,

Little has occurred at this Court worthy of special mention since my despatch of 12th February.<sup>12</sup>

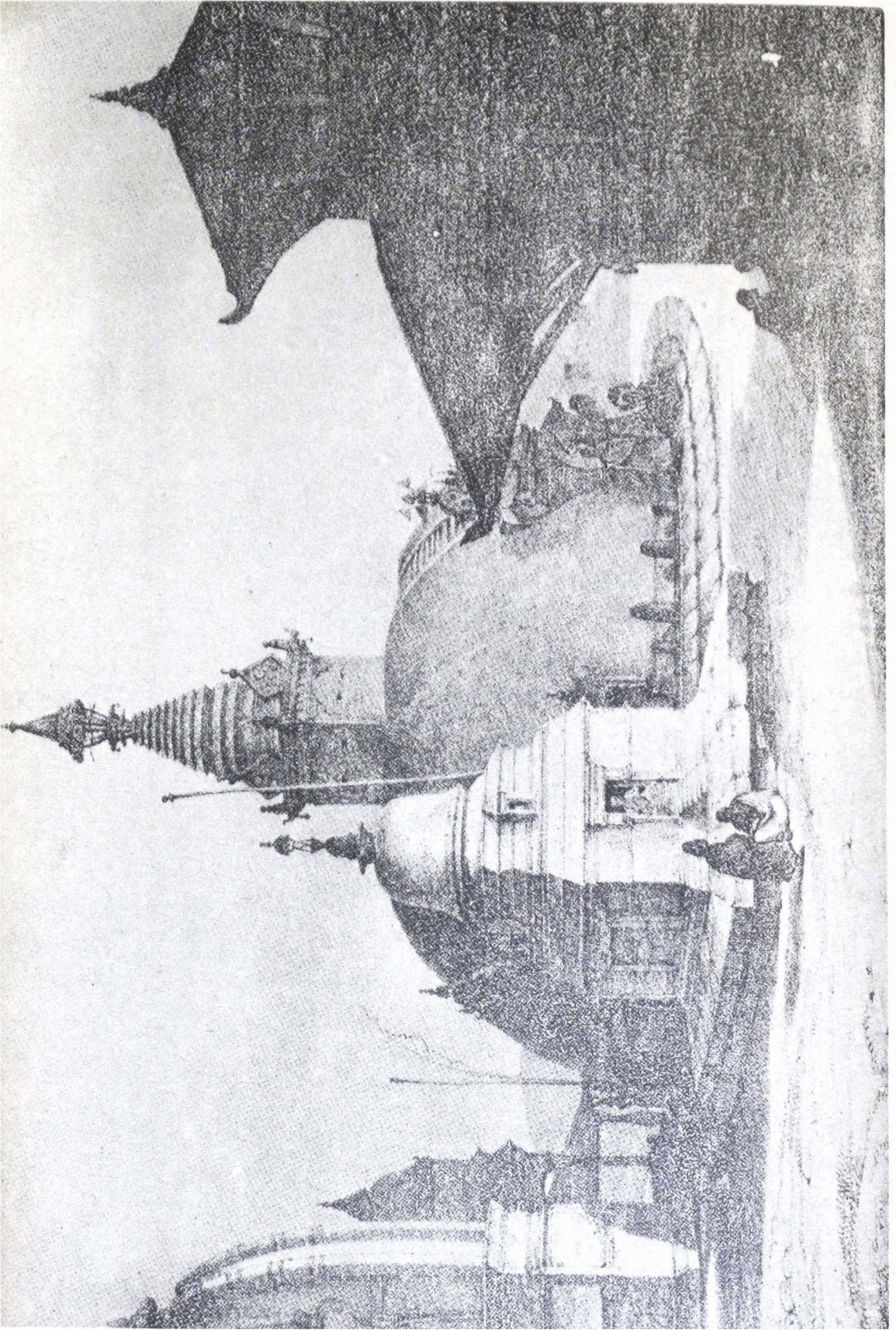
2. There are in fact, though not in avowed form, three leading parties in it, the Maharani, in whose hands the chief power now is, the Crown Prince, who has sought to seize power prematurely but is at present comparatively acquiescent and quiet, and the Raja, who has appeared at different times to yield now to one party and now to another, but has hitherto succeeded in directing in the end all parties and interests to his own safety and profit.

3. The Maharani's secret wish has been, and no doubt is, to secure the succession if possible for her own children, and in the meantime the Regency for herself.

4. General Gagan Singh, the Member of the Ministry in whose hands all leading authority is, is her creature, and was a Chobdar, or Khawassea (the latter, a name given here to male menial attendants permitted to enter the female apartments, as servants in care of minor princes, etc.) on her staff. It is natural that the elevation of such a person to the highest station and influence should prove often grating to the feelings of the old Chiefs of the Darbar. But all power in Nepal is with the Central Administration and whoever for the time wields that power must be deferred to and flattered.

5. The personal manner of General Gagan Singh is not arrogant, but he uses always the name and authority of the Maharani, whose agent he professes to be, and upon whom he is constantly in attendance.

6. The Crown Prince, since the outbreak of suspicion alluded to in my despatch of the 12th February, has fallen back into the sort of sullen retirement or abstinence at least from any violent display of his irritated feelings, in which he has for several months been. My diary from February 9th to 23rd will show that the persons upon whose



SWAYAMBHU STUPA

information he is said to have then acted were placed, as they still remain, in confinement by order of the Raja--but it is to be remarked, as in keeping with the Raja's general balancing and artful policy, that he has not yet permitted them to be subjected to any further punishment.

7. No Chief of note acts at present as the open partisan of the Crown Prince. He is understood, in his late anger and alarm, to have sent a special summons to the Capital to Guru Prasad Chautaria, Governor of Palpa, and brother of the Minister Fatted Jung Chautaria. He was, I should say, specially committed to the care and protection of Guru Prasad Chautaria by his Mother, the late Chief Maharani, before her death. But Guru Prasad Chautaria has not obeyed this summons, following doubtless the advice of his brother Fatted Jung, who, though neither his ambition nor his prudence are satisfied with the present state of things, confines himself to taking as little part as possible in any other affairs than those of his own, the Foreign (British and Chinese) department, and is evidently waiting for events.

8. The Member of the Ministry who is most usually in personal attendance on the Crown Prince is the second, General Abhiman Rana, who is described as a sensible and well-disposed man, following privately, in a great measure, the lead of Fatted Jung Chautaria.

9. The Raja takes, and has always taken, but little part in the ordinary details of Government, though he has placed himself properly forward in such intercourse with the Residency as has yet passed under my observation. A deep, patient, and unscrupulous cunning, dashed by extreme timidity and bigotted superstition, seems to be the marked quality of his character. His favour to leading Ministers is regarded as fatal, and his apparent abandonment of check on them as but the snare by which they may be the more certainly betrayed.

10. It is supposed that sooner or later, and perhaps at no very distant date, General Gagan Singh will share the fate which has befallen so many of his predecessors in power at Kathmandu.<sup>13</sup> The Raja keeps, notwithstanding, on excellent terms with the Maharani, by whom Gagan Singh was put forward, and is supported. Yet he cannot, of course, be ignorant of the plans which were at first formed by the late Minister, General Mathabar Singh, and were, indeed, spoken of by him almost without disguise, for putting aside both himself (the Raja) and the Crown Prince, and setting up the Rani as Regent.

11. It is part of the Raja's policy, as much probably as of his personal tastes, that he usually goes about very slightly attended and (as recently on the occasion of several religious festivals) orders Chiefs, troops, and all prominent signs of State to accompany the Crown Prince.

12. The general daily business of the country is transacted mainly by the Generals Gagan Singh and Abhiman Rana (the former having nominal



charge of the army and the latter of the Civil Department) in the presence of the Chiefs (Chautarias, Kazis, and Sardars) who being of these families or raised to these titles, have, by the custom of Nepal, the right of attending administrative meetings and giving opinions at them. But the real authority is with General Gagan Singh or with his Mistress, the Maharani, where they care to interfere. The Chiefs, though prone to secret intrigues, very seldom act as any open check on the Favourite of the day.

13. The prospects of any stable administration are not favourable. The Raja will not stand forward, directly and properly, to superintend the Government and control its members and agents. The Maharani's trust has been in a manial like Gagan Singh. The temper of the Crown Prince is described as having considerably improved; but, though what I have myself as yet seen of his demeanour has been perfectly becoming, he has certainly the appearance of being haughty and wayward.

14. I have entered into these particulars because I have thought it my duty to state the impressions which I have received of the general aspect of affairs in the Nepal Darbar. But I consider, as the strict rule by which I am to be guided, that I am to hold aloof from all concern in the shifts and struggles of parties in Nepal, and to confine myself to transacting the proper business of the British Government with the Sovereign to whom I am accredited, and with his regularly appointed Minister for such affairs.

15. The course followed by my predecessor was in habitual conformity to this rule, and I do not anticipate difficulty in adhering to it.

16. Up to the present, only one attempt has been made to elicit any opinion from me upon domestic matters.

17. The Darbar Munshi, when regularly sent one day to wait upon me with an official memorandum on an ordinary subject, said during the interview, apologetically, that he was but a servant, and that, whether proper or not, it was his duty to deliver the messages with which he was entrusted. He then referred to my having been engaged in getting a Buddhist Pundit, whom Mr. Hodgson is anxious to have for his private researches. He added that the Maharani and General Gagan Singh had desired him to say that they supposed from this that I was a friend of Mr. Hodgson's, and must have heard from him what a good opinion he had of the Maharani. That I must see how well things were going on now, and that all had been done without further bloodshed or evil to anyone, after the death of Mathabar Singh. They hoped I would, therefore, give my countenance and support to existing arrangements.

18. I think it extremely probable that this message, brought not by any personal agent but by the established official channel of the Munshi who attends the Residency from the Darbar, was not really directed by the Maharani or General Gagan Singh, but was dictated by others, perhaps by the Raja himself, merely to see what kind of reply I should give.

19. My answer was brief, that the Munshi had himself stated the impropriety of his message, I had no concern with internal arrangements and that my functions were solely with the Maharaja either personally or in the regular form through his Chief Minister.

20. That such is the nature of my position and instructions is, I am well satisfied, perfectly understood here. The object was only to try a new Resident. The interview was over ten days ago, and the subject has not since been renewed in any manner.

21. Of the proceedings directly concerning British interests or agents I have but few particulars to state.

22. My object is to be firm, but friendly and moderate in manner, on all ordinary current matters. I meet with nothing but the utmost friendliness in tone, but cannot yet say whether I may not experience a tendency to delays arising either from the habits of the Darbar or from the number, and real though unavowed jealousies, of the Ministers. Nothing is pending of much importance.

23. It is my strong persuasion, as far as I can venture to use such words of opinions formed on scarcely a month's observation, that neither the Sovereign, nor the Crown Prince, nor any one of weight in the Nepal Darbar, has, or has had, a serious thought of venturing on a collision with the British Power.

24. I do not judge, of course, by professions or by the feelings caused by our recent glorious successes over the Sikh armies. But Kathmandu is a place (and all authority is at the Capital) where the extreme disparity between the means and resources of the Nepal State and of the British Government is, I believe, thoroughly appreciated.

25. Nepalese Chiefs and Officers may be in the habit of talking arrogantly, and the position of the Nepalese army, mainly assembled in Kathmandu, is certainly disquieting, at any time of excitement, to our subjects in the neighbouring provinces in the Plains. But, though I would express an opinion in favour of having always a respectable force of all arms looking towards Nepal on the Bihar and Gorakhpur frontier, I should have very great confidence in our not having to apprehend actual attack or important injury from this State, unless on the occurrence of circumstances, which cannot be foreseen, of extraordinary confusion and recklessness at home, or of the utmost distress to us on our own soil.

26. I imagine, indeed, that the timid and suspicious Raja is much haunted by fears as to British intentions towards Nepal after arrangements at Lahore shall have been completed to the satisfaction of the Governor General. No active sympathy has been shown with the Sikhs, and no unusual military preparations have been made in this country. But it is natural that the Raja and the Darbar should feel that, the Sikh military power effectually reduced, Nepal could look nowhere for aid in any struggle with the British arms.

27. The Raja and Chiefs are, however, quite aware of the dis-organization and military anarchy and arrogance at Lahore, which led to the unprovoked invasions of the British territories. I need not say that I shall do everything I can to maintain in the minds of all a just confidence which some, I doubt not, sincerely feel in our steady moderation and good faith.

28. I delivered in Darbar to the Maharaja, on the 26th February, the Kharita from the Right Honorable the Governor General of the 13th February, replying to the Kharita of His Highness, which offered the services of Nepal troops to the British Government, and announcing the utter defeat of the Sikh army at Subraon, and the British advance upon Lahore. His Highness particularly begged me to say how delighted he was to hear of every fresh instance of our triumphs, and to add that upon any occasion on which we might require aid from his troops, we might reckon on their being in readiness. He said he had heard from his own Vakil to the Governor General, Sardar Bhavani Singh, of the particulars of our entire success, and he expressed his gratification at the kind and honorable reception which the Sardar had met with from the Governor General in person, and from the principal officers in camp.

29. The Crown Prince was not present at this Darbar, having had some differences with his Father in the morning. The Minister, Fatteh Jung, asked me before the Raja, to go and pay a visit to the Crown Prince, who would show me the room in which he usually sat. I said, by all means, if the Raja wished me to call upon his son. The Raja said it was his wish that I should pay the visit. I went accordingly with the Residency party to a separate building, where we were received with much civility by the Crown Prince. I made no allusion to matters of business, or to the Governor General's Kharita. Nor did the Prince, though he too expressed his pleasure at the news, which Sardar Bhavani Singh had written of our victories. Our conversation was very short, and referred, after the above remarks by the Prince, to visits to the different sights of the Valley, which I had made with Mr. Ravenshaw, the Commissioner of Patna, who had been for a few weeks in Nepal, and took leave, receiving a few presents from the Maharaja on this occasion.

30. General Jung Bahadur was in attendance on the Maharaja at this Darbar. He did not go with us to the Prince. We found with the Prince General Abhiman Rana, whom I have mentioned as being now most usually in attendance on him, and General Gagan Singh, who had probably been sent to him with some message from the Maharani.

31. I have mentioned in my diary from February 9 to 23 that General Jung Bahadur obtained leave on the 14th February to go on his hunting party to Hetaunda, and the supposed purpose with which he there met his brother, the ex-Vakil at Calcutta, then on his return via Patna to Nepal. Whatever the motive with which General Jung Bahadur was permitted to go to Hetaunda, he took with him only the 200 or 300 soldiers usually accompanying a Chief of his rank on a hunting expedition, and came back to the City in 8 or 10 days. He said at the Darbar to one of the Residency

party that he had been ordered to come back, because it was not a time at which any Nepal troops should appear to be stationed in the direction of the British frontier.

32. Yesterday a complimentary visit was paid to me with apologies for a few days delay, by the Chief Minister, Fatteh Jung Chautaria, Generals Abhiman Rana and Gagan Singh, and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey, attended by other inferior officers. The four Chiefs named form the ostensible Council of Ministers, with the addition of General Jung Bahadur, whose absence it had been previously explained, was caused by his having lost his wife two days before. The conversation was quite brief and General. The Chautaria and General Abhiman Rana were the spokesmen on their side, General Gagan Singh took the place of the third of the party, and said nothing.

I have, etc.

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*Resident Colvin and Dr. Login left the Kathmandu Residency on the morning of the 13th September. The Resident was ill, and the Residency surgeon accompanied him as far as the Nepal-India border. Captain Ottley was left in charge of the Residency, the only European there.*

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Acting Resident Ottley to Government, 15 September 1846<sup>14</sup>

*Captain Ottley reports the death of Gagan Singh and the Kot Massacre. Though the account is hurriedly written, the details given are important in view of the individual roles assigned by historians to almost everyone present in Kathmandu at the time.*

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Sir,

I lose no time in acquainting you, for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General, with the following particulars, which I consider sufficiently important to warrant my sending by express in anticipation of the regular dak.

2. This morning at 2 a.m. I was suddenly called up by the Subedar in attendance at the Residency on the part of the Darbar. In a great state of excitement, he announced that General Gagan Singh had been assassinated, and that the Maharaja was at that moment, with a small retinue only, a few hundred yards from the Residency, and had sent him to give me the information. He said that His Highness expressed great regret at the death of his Minister and had immediately summoned a Council of all the Chiefs to inquire into the matter; that the troops had been called out at the moment of the murder, and are there under

arms. The Maharaja, I believe, expected that I would have gone out at that hour in the morning to have an interview, but suffering from a rheumatic attack, I sent the Mir Munshi to hear what His Highness had to say. The message brought by him was little more than a recapitulation of the above.

3. Soon after 7 o'clock this morning a cousin of General Jung Bahadur, accompanied by the Darbar Mir Munshi, brought from the Maharaja the following astounding intelligence, that the Council which had been called together had come to blows among themselves and that the Chief Minister Fattah Jung Shah, General Abhiman Singh Rana, also a member of the Ministry, and several other Chiefs, not less than 20 or 30, had been killed. The Maharaja regretted much, they said, that such things should have occurred, but that unfortunate as they were, as they had been confined to themselves, he hoped that the friendly relations existing between the English Government and himself would not be interrupted. The intelligence was so startling and the visit so unexpected that I was hardly prepared for a reply. I answered generally that it was sincerely to be hoped that the former good understanding would continue between the two Government, but that I could not help expressing the deepest regret at such events, and that I was sure no one would regret them more than the Right Honorable the Governor General himself. I was informed that business with the Residency would be conducted for the present through General Jung Bahadur, who is almost the only remaining member of the late Ministry left alive.

4. The greatest consternation prevails in the City, which is filled with troops, with guns at all the gates.

5. The strife in the Council arose, it is said, from the revelation of a plot, in which some of the principal sufferers are accused of having been concerned, to put to death the younger Princes, sons of the present Maharani, but the particulars I have received as yet, on which I can rely, are very meagre, and only the names of a few of the Chiefs who have fallen can be given with certainty. I believe that of Kazi Narsingh Thapa may be added to the list.

6. This account has been hurriedly prepared, but I have every reason to think that it is correct in the main,

I have, etc.

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Acting Resident Ottley to Government, 15 September 1846<sup>15</sup>

*Captain Ottley reports that Jung Bahadur has been placed in charge of all government business.*

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My Dear Sir,

The accompanying intelligence is nearly all I can furnish in a hurried report. General Jung Bahadur I have just been told has received the orders of the Maharani as well as the Maharaja to conduct all public business. Rumours of every kind are rife, and the tales of bloodshed like water are fearful, but rumours only as they are, at present I will not enlarge.

According to a letter from Mr. Colvin and Dr. Login, at 8 a.m. yesterday they were at Chisagarhi, 2 marches on the way to the plains, waiting the arrival of Elephants from Bettiah. They will then proceed to Hetaunda. From Hetaunda the Resident continues his route to Segauli, and Dr. Login returns to Kathmandu. They expected to move today.

Yours truly,  
G.O.B. Ottley

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Acting Resident Ottley to Government, 15 September 1846<sup>16</sup>

*Captain Ottley's third letter of 15 September indicates his own unsettled state of mind and recounts some of the rumours spreading through the City. In his excitement Ottley adds a name to a list that he has in fact not sent at all.*

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My Dear Sir,

My letter by express of this morning will have informed you, generally, of the leading particulars of the eventful tragedy that has been enacted in the city of Kathmandu this day. In addition to the few names of slain therein reported, Sardar Bhavani Singh is now included, and indeed I am told almost every Chief of note. However, little that we hear can be relied on just now. Some executions have taken place during the day, but up to this hour no further tumult has occurred that I am aware of. It is given out that the Maharaja has fled towards the Plains, almost unattended, but one report late this evening, not since confirmed however, has it that he is at Patan near Kathmandu. Of the Crown Prince, two different rumours are afloat, some that he is prisoner, others contradicting it. Such a state of things has been I believe unprecedented at this Capital. And what may be that final result it is impossible yet to guess. The Maharani seems to rule at this moment, and General Jung Bahadur to manage affairs under her orders. I trust to be able to send you further particulars tomorrow.

Yours truly,  
G.O.B. Ottley

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Acting Resident Ottley to Government, 16 September 1846<sup>17</sup>

*Without reporting any of the details of the meeting, Captain Ottley writes of Jung Bahadur's first official visit to the Resident. The Captain says that Jung offered an explanation of what had happened, but this most valuable information is not included here.*

\*\*\*\*\*

My Dear Sir,

Affairs here are still very unsettled, but I sincerely trust that the worst has passed. I have heard of no further executions today, and the Maharaja has returned to Kathmandu.

This afternoon a deputation from the Darbar, of General Jung Bahadur and other members of his family, with the Darbar Mir Munshi, visited me. It was said that they came on behalf of the Maharaja, the Crown Prince, and the Maharani to explain how the late catastrophe occurred, to give formal intimation of General Jung Bahadur's appointment as sole Minister and Commander-in-Chief, and to express a hope that the friendship between the two Governments might continue unabated. I hope to give the particulars of this interview in an official despatch from tomorrow.

Dalbhanjan Pandey, the fifth member of the late Ministry, I hear, is one of the killed, so that Jung Bahadur has scarcely a rival left, being the sole survivor of the late coadjutors.

I have heard nothing certain of the Crown Prince, most if not all of his former abettors are now no more.

By a letter from Mr. Colvin of the 14th and a single word added by Dr. Login on the envelope on the 15th I make out that they could not have made their final start towards the Plains before today.

Yours truly,  
G.O.B. Ottley

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Acting Resident Ottley to Government, 17 September 1846<sup>18</sup>

*Captain Ottley adds some critical information to his earlier reports. The account given here was the one provided by Jung Bahadur on the 16th afternoon. The action taken against the families of the fallen (totally inexplicable) is worth noting. Perhaps more importantly, one should note that Jung here says that a son of Fatteh was the first to use his weapon. This should be compared with what is said in the detailed report under date 18 March 1847 below.*

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Sir,

In continuation of my letter of the 15th of September, I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General that soon after its despatch I learnt that the Maharaja had left his Palace at Kathmandu and had gone to Patan, about two miles off, in great distress of mind, accompanied by only a few followers. Before evening it was reported that he had proceeded further on the road to the Plains, and that on his way out Sardar Bhavani Singh, who met the Governor General at Ferozepur last February, and who was escorting His Highness, was cut down by a party of soldiers sent in pursuit. The Sardar is doubtless killed, but that he met his death in exactly this way is not so certain. By night it was commonly rumoured that the Maharaja had gone to Chisapani on his way to the Plains. But whether or not he ever proceeded beyond Patan, he had not returned to the Darbar by an early hour yesterday.

2. During the 15th the whole of the families (wives and children) of the late Chautaria Fattah Jung Shah, and of all his brothers and sons (as well as of others of the Chiefs who had fallen) were turned out of their houses, and desired to make the best of their way to Chisapani; each individual was allowed to take one bundle, and the rest of the Chautaria's property was taken possession of by 3 Companies of soldiers, who were kept on guard around the extensive premises so lately occupied by the different members of this large and respectable family, whose designation of Chautaria implies their connection by blood with the Royal family of Nepal, and who have now been nearly exterminated.

3. The night of the 15th passed over quietly. Yesterday at 2 p.m. the Darbar Munshi came to say that General Jung Bahadur would pay me a visit in the course of an hour. He accordingly came soon after 3 p.m. in an English carriage, accompanied by Kazi Jaya Bahadur Kunwar, Captain Jagat Shamsher Jung Kunwar, Captain Bhagat Bir Kunwar, and the Darbar's Munshi, and escorted by a large crowd of mounted attendants and soldiers, all heavily armed. The Kazi is a cousin and the two Captains brothers of General Jung Bahadur.

4. The General began by saying that he had been deputed by the Maharaja, the Crown Prince, and the Maharani (Tinau Sarkar) to announce formally his own appointment as sole Minister and Commander-in-Chief; to make a relation of the late occurrences, and to request that none of the Residence Party would venture abroad for 2 or 3 days. He added that he had received the Maharaja's commands to do all in his power to keep up and improve the friendly relations between his own and the British Government.

5. As a matter of course, I offered my congratulations on the General's appointment to the sole management of affairs, Civil and Military, and had begun to express my regret at the late unhappy occurrences, when General Jung Bahadur interrupted me by saying he had more to communicate, and proceeded with his narrative as follows. That



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General Gagan Singh was assassinated late on the night of the 14th or early in the morning of the 15th by some person or persons unknown. On the Maharani's learning of the fate of her favorite Minister, she insisted that his death had been planned by no mean person, but probably by some rival in the Ministry, the members of which, and all the Bharadars, were immediately summoned to the palace, and the troops called out. On their meeting, the Maharani accused the Ministers by name of being accessory to the plot, and called out to Gagan Singh's Regiment, which was at hand, to seize them. Great confusion followed. The Ministers themselves mutually recriminating one another, swords were drawn, and a son of Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah, it was stated, was the first to use his weapon in wounding a brother of General Jung Bahadur. The fight then became general, and 26 or 27, mostly principal Chiefs, fell in the melee, including Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah, General Abhiman Singh Rana, Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey, all three members of the late Ministry, and several of the Chautaria's relations. After this occurrence, the Maharaja retired in great grief to Patan, but subsequently returned to Kathmandu, which was still occupied by troops.

6. After the above recital, General Jung Bahadur said as that was all he had to communicate he would, with my permission, take leave for the present. It would have been hardly etiquette to have renewed the conversation; therefore, on the General's hint we rose together, and I conducted him to his carriage.

7. I learnt afterwards that during this interview the Maharaja was waiting with a few attendants on the parade ground, separated only by a field or two from the Residency, which may perhaps account for the abrupt way in which it terminated. The General was probably in a hurry to rejoin His Highness, whose object in this unusual proceeding I cannot divine.

8. This account of events, thus formally tendered in a verbal communication, corresponds in many of the main facts with what I have heard from other sources, but it should be borne in mind that the speaker was a personal and principal actor in the scenes themselves, and evidently no friend of the Chautarias, who, with the other members of the late Ministry and their families, have been the principal sufferers. At present I would make no further comment.

9. The names of about a dozen of the killed were given at the time, many of them Chautarias. Not being able to recollect all, I requested that a complete list might be furnished, which was promised.

10. Allusion was made to Bhim Bikram Shah, cousin of Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah and Governor of Doti, near the Kumaon frontier. It was requested that the Commissioner of that province might be put on his guard against any evil representation he might make, should he flee in that direction. A brother of the late Chautaria is Governor of Palpa, and another, I believe, in the neighbourhood of Butwal near the Gorakhpur frontier. These will doubtless flee the country if they have the opportunity given them.

11. I have been informed this morning that soon after General Jung Bahadur left the Residency yesterday evening he was presented with a Khillat by the Maharaja. Nothing further of moment has been reported.

I have, etc.

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Acting Resident Ottley to the Commissioner of Kumaon, 17 September 1846<sup>19</sup>

*Captain Ottley here adds pertinent details. Jung Bahadur has made an official request that those members of the Chautaria party who had been holding posts as Governors of different districts of Nepal be put under restraint if they should seek asylum in the Company's territories.*

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Sir,

It is with regret that I have to inform you of a fearful tragedy which occurred here two days ago, the leading events of which are as follows.

2. Late at night on the 14th or early in the morning of the 15th of September, General Gagan Singh, a member of the Ministry, was assassinated. A Council was immediately summoned, the members of which, unhappily, soon came to blows among themselves, when nearly 30 of the principal Chiefs, including three other Ministers, fell in the struggle that took place.

3. The Chief Minister, Chautaria Fattedh Jung Shah, and many of his relations at this capital were killed at the time or subsequently put to death, and their families (wives and children) have been turned adrift as beggars. They are accused of having entered into plots against the children of the Maharaja's second and only remaining wife. The truth of this may now never be known, but I may confidentially inform you that they were, in my opinion, the last people to enter such traitorous intrigues.

4. Yesterday General Jung Bahadur was nominated sole Minister and Commander-in-Chief (he is the only surviving member of the last administration and almost the only Chief of note at present left at Kathmandu) and himself had an interview with me to announce the event. The General took the opportunity of requesting that I would put you on your guard against any evil representations that might be made by Chautaria Bhim Bikram Shah, a cousin (I believe) of the late Prime Minister and Governor of Doti near the Kumaon frontier and who, it is supposed, may flee in that direction.

5. I have accordingly so notified the wishes of this Darbar as conveyed to me by the Minister, who is, however, I must add, no friend of the Chautarias. At the same time I must express my belief that your

Government would desire to see any member of the family, who may be a refugee in our Provinces, treated with all respect, provided that nothing be done to give umbrage to this Darbar.

6. I need hardly remind you that the Chautarias of Nepal are distantly connected with the reigning royal family, whence their right to the title. This is not the first time they have fallen into disgrace, but their misfortunes hitherto have never lowered them in the eyes of their countrymen, nor prevented their subsequent restoration to favour.

I have, etc.

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Resident Colvin to Government, 20 September 1846<sup>20</sup>

*Resident Colvin here presents some of his views on the dramatic changes that have taken place in Kathmandu. Colvin's estimate of what Jung Bahadur might do is badly off the mark, but his assessment of the Residency's position is accurate.*

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Segauli, 20 September 1846

My Dear Currie,

I hear today from Captain Ottley that Jung Bahadur has been appointed sole Minister and Commander-in-Chief. I conclude this has been done in a formal manner, in the Maharaja's name at least, if not with his real approval.

2. The Maharaja is believed to have employed Jung Bahadur in the murder of Mathabar Singh, but this will not of course have the effect of making him less afraid of his unprincipled and violent character and the very name of sole Minister and Commander-in-Chief must be full of alarm to the Maharaja.

3. The Crown Prince has always shown an extreme aversion to Jung Bahadur on account of his supposed share in Mathabar Singh's death, whom the Crown Prince looked on as his Minister. It is probable therefore that Jung Bahadur may lean entirely on the Maharani, with whose party he has heretofore been connected, and all her anxiety will be to get rid of the obstacles that stand in the way of the succession, and the safety of her own children.

4. It may therefore be perhaps the object of Jung Bahadur to aid her to her purposes, and to remain for a number of years sole administrator of Nepal. This policy will menace serious danger to the Crown Prince, and probably to the Raja also whom Jung Bahadur cannot trust. But Jung Bahadur is, I think, too rash and too vicious to play success-

fully the part of a second Bhim Sen, and I can look only for more successive murders and more confusion, a little sooner or later.

5. Meanwhile I have not the least apprehension of the position of the Residency, or of our interests, being in any way immediately affected. Jung Bahadur will rather, I should expect, seek to appear to be very well with us.

6. I scarcely know where a Chief could be found elsewhere of sufficient rank to take the lead in the Nepal Government. One of the old troublesome Pandeys (Jagat Bam Pandey, I think, is the name) still, however, survives, a refugee in our territory.

7. My halt here will be for 5 or 6 days more till I can have had full communication with Captain Ottley. I am naturally strongly tempted to wish that the intelligence of these events could have reached me while I was still in Nepal, and could have hastened back to Kathmandu. It is better for me, I fancy, as it is. The Medical Officer here says that he is sure that I must make up my mind to a long trip to sea.<sup>21</sup>

8. I shall continue, for the present, to send you in this form any impressions of what may strike me as important in the reports from Kathmandu.

Yours truly,

I.R. Colvin

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Acting Resident Ottley to Government, 24 September 1846<sup>22</sup>

*Captain Ottley presents a list of those who were killed at the Kot. The spellings he has provided are inaccurate. The list has been edited to present spellings more recognizable to Nepalis.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to enclose a list that was brought to me a few days ago by the Darbar Munshi, of Chiefs and others killed in the affray of the 15th September. The list, the Munshi said at the time, was an imperfect one, but no other names have yet been communicated to me. He added that many others had fled, or were secreting themselves, of whom nothing could yet be positively stated.

2. A few days ago, as reported in my last diary, the Maharaja directed the recall of the families and dependents of the fallen Chiefs who had seen so summarily ejected on the 15th September.<sup>23</sup> I have since been informed that these unfortunate people have refused to return to Kathmandu, deeming perhaps the implied guarantee of the Maharaja's protection insufficient in such troublous times.

3. A proclamation was made yesterday by order of the Minister, commanding all persons who might be now in concealment to leave the country in ten days, under the severest penalties. It is consequently supposed that many hundreds, perhaps thousands, will immediately repair to the plains.

4. I am sorry to say that affairs here are still very unsettled. Quarrels and separate interests in the Palace help to keep up this unpleasant state of things. Appointments are made one day, and unmade the next. No public business goes on, except the Pajani of the troops under the sole direction of General Jung Bahadur, who takes the opportunity of ousting all men not decidedly in his own interest. Alarm generally prevails still, and many more would doubtless flee if they could do so undetected. The troops were removed from the City some days ago, but this was, I believe, in consequence of the difficulty of providing proper shelter for them during the late heavy rain.

5. It is reported that no one has access to the Maharaja except by permission of the Minister, and that the Maharani's counsels have chiefly prevailed from the moment of General Gagan Singh's assassination. The Crown Prince and his Brother (the 2nd Prince) are much dejected at the loss of their principal friends, most of whom have been killed or expelled the country.

6. On Sunday last, the 20th September, General Jung Bahadur sent a message to the Residency, requesting the medical services of Doctor Login in behalf of two of his brothers, who had been wounded on the 15th. Doctor Login has since paid them 2 or 3 visits at the General's house. One is described as suffering from a rather severe wound across the back of his hand, which requires much care and attention.

I have, etc.

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List of Bharadars who were killed on the 15th September 1846<sup>24</sup>

1. Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shaha
2. Chautaria Narhari Bikram Shah
3. Chautaria Khurg Bikram Shah
4. Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey
5. Kazi Ran Gambir Pandey
6. Kazi Ranjore Thapa
7. Kazi Narsingh Thapa
8. Kazi Goprasad Shah

9. Kazi Dal Bahadur Shah
10. Kazi Bhaktawar Bhandari
11. General Gagan Singh
12. General Abhiman Singh Rana
13. Sardar Bhavani Singh
14. Sardar Ras Singh
15. Sardar Samar Bahadur Shah
16. Sardar Gun Prakash Shah
17. Sardar Shatru Bhanjan Shahi
18. Sardar Juddharanjan Shahi
19. Sardar Arjun Thapa
20. Captain Mohan Bir Shahi
21. Capt. ----- (a son of Mohan Bir Shahi)
22. Captain Bir Bahadur Shah
23. A son of Badriban Shahi
24. Dada Dand Kesar
25. Dware Jog Raj
26. Kumedan Gainda Mal
27. Kapardar Bir Kishore Pandey
28. Kapardar Kirti Dhoj Pandey
29. Jamedar Katru
30. Havaldar Kalu Khabas
31. Orderly Indra Bir Raut

(A true translation)  
George O.B. Ottley  
Acting Officiating  
Resident Incharge



plus

32. Jydrath Adhikari, Sardar<sup>25</sup>

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Acting Resident Ottley to Government, 20 October 1846<sup>26</sup>

*Captain Ottley informs the Governor General of the accuracy of the list of names of those killed at the Kot. This confirmation is important for the historical validity of the letter of the 24th September.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th October, desiring me to furnish a correct list of all the persons of note who fell in the late tumult, and the names of the survivors who now form the Ministry.

2. I regret much that I should have given cause to the Right Honorable the Governor General to remark upon the delay which took place in furnishing this information. My letter of the 24th September will have put you in possession of the list of names of persons killed on that occasion, as furnished to me by the Minister. Had it not been allowed by the Darbar Munshi to have been an imperfect one, I should have transmitted it sooner for His Lordship's information. I now beg to state that no additional names have been sent to me, and I have reason to believe that the list is upon the whole pretty correct. It tallies exactly, I have since learnt, with one that was posted up for public information in the City, with the exception of one name, that of Sardar Jydrath Adhikari, the omission of which must, I think have been accidental.

3. My letter of the 17th September reported in paragraph 4 that General Jung Bahadur had been appointed sole Minister and Commander-in-Chief. This appointment still holds, nor has any other Chief been since associated with him in the Ministry. I mentioned in my letter of the 17th September of the Commissioner of Kumaon, a copy of which was forwarded to you on the 19th September, that General Jung Bahadur 'is the sole surviving member of the last administration.' That administration, you are aware, consisted of 5 individuals, namely Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah, General Jung Bahadur, General Abhiman Singh Rana, General Gagan Singh, and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey. Of these, General Gagan Singh was assassinated, and the other members, except General Jung Bahadur, the present Minister, fell in the catastrophe that followed.

4. I hope I have now, by putting together these items, scattered through my former correspondence, made the matter more clear for His Lordship's information.

I have, etc.

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Acting Resident Ottley to Government, 31 October 1846<sup>27</sup>

*Captain Ottley reports the Bhandarkhal massacre. The situation that Hodgson, Lawrence, and Colvin predicted has come about with frightening consequences.*

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My Dear Sir,

About 4 p.m. today I heard that there was an uprising in the City. I have since learnt that several persons, perhaps 10 or 12, all supporters of the Maharani, have met their death and that others are in confinement. No further particulars that I can depend on have yet reached me. Some names have been reported, none of great note except General Uzir Singh, lately raised to that rank, a son of General Gagan Singh, who is said to be in irons. As far as I can guess, on so imperfect information, the Maharaja, Crown Prince, and Minister have betrayed no grief or alarm at what has taken place, but rather the contrary, and probably it may have been a premeditated plan on their part to lessen the influence of the Maharani. Whether she has friends left to attempt a counter game does not yet appear.

I am, etc.

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Captain Ottley, in a letter dated 2 November 1846<sup>28</sup> listed those killed.

Kazi Bir Dhoj Basnyat (son of Sardar Bakhat Singh Basnyat)

Capt. Umed Singh Basnyat (son of Dariyal Singh Basnyat)

Capt. Bir Kishore Basnyat (son of Bakhat Singh Basnyat)

Capt. Umed Singh Basnyat (son of Kahar Singh Basnyat)

Sardar Dalmardan Thapa

Captain Kookil Singh

Kumedan Purindar Thapa

Kumedan Bhaktu Hamal

Subedars, 2, names not given

Sepoys, 2, names not given.

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Government to the Commissioner of Banaras, 19 December 1846<sup>29</sup>

*The Governor General informs the Commissioner of Banaras of the journey of the King of Nepal to Banaras and instructs him regarding the facilities he wishes to have prepared for the King.*

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Sir,

I am directed by the Right Honorable the Governor General to forward for your information the copy of a letter received from the Resident at Nepal dated 7th December.

2. You have already been informed by my letter of the 16th November of the probability of His Highness the Raja of Nepal proceeding to Banaras on a religious pilgrimage and of the desire of the Governor General in that case that every attention should be paid to His Highness.

3. The Governor General is of opinion that as the Senior Civil Officer in the Banaras Division, you should join His Highness' camp when it enters your jurisdiction and march with His Highness to Banaras. You should be accompanied by an escort of at least one Risala of Cavalry<sup>30</sup> for which you should apply to the officer commanding the 4th Regiment at Sultanpur. There will be a Risala of Irregular Cavalry also with the Maharaja.

4. You will see that the Maharaja and party are supplied with all necessaries at each halting place and with the requisite carriage, for all which His Highness' officers will pay at the usual rates.

5. It will not be necessary for you to march with His Highness on his return from Banaras, but you should direct the Magistrates of the districts to do so, while His Highness may be in their respective jurisdictions.

6. You are requested to report your having joined His Highness and the progress you may make enroute to Banaras.

I have, etc.

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Acting Resident Thoresby to Government, 28 December 1846<sup>31</sup>

*Major Thoresby, the newly appointed Resident to Nepal, reports to Government on his arrival in Kathmandu. His report of the tranquillity he found in Kathmandu is an interesting note, as is his report on the progress of the King and Queen on their journey to Banaras.*

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Sir,

Referring to my letter to your address reporting my return to Segauli from a visit to the Maharaja of Nepal in his camp near the frontier, and that I should proceed to Kathmandu in company with Dr. Login when that gentleman had taken leave of His Highness within the British Territory, I now do myself the honor to state for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General that I arrived at the Nepal capital yesterday, the 27th December.

2. The customary forms and ceremonies connected with the reception of a Representative of the British Government were duly observed on the occasion, and I passed through the City seated upon the roomy platform of a low elephant howdah which also accommodated the Minister Jung Bahadur and the Right Honorable Lord Elphinstone, who in the course of his extensive tour of India availed himself of an opportunity to visit the Valley of Nepal for a few days. Besides the guards of honor, the streets were lined on either side with Gurkha troops, in their undress or half-dress clothing, and every part of the procession was marked by the most precise order and regularity.

3. Wednesday next, the 30th December, is the day fixed for my introduction to His Highness the Crown Prince, and on that occasion I fancy there will be a grand review of the troops, and exhibition with which it is particularly wished to honor the visit of Lord Elphinstone to the Country and Capital.

4. I am happy in having it in my power to conclude this despatch with saying that I have found all the symptoms of immediate tranquillity and order on my first arrival.

5. The Maharaja, accompanied by the Maharani and her two sons, reached Chopra on the 22nd December and halted there on the 23rd before continuing their progress to Banaras.

I have, etc.

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Resident Thoresby to Government, 18 March 1847<sup>32</sup>

*Major Thoresby forwards an account of the events of September 1846. It is important to note that this account is a translation. Who prepared it? How did the Resident acquire the information? Was the account prepared by the Residency staff or did the Nepalese administration present this copy?*

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Sir,

As but few particulars respecting the subsidiary occurrences connected with the sanguinary events which transpired at this capital in September and October last seem to have been communicated to Government at the time, in a manner that would show their place in, and bearing upon, the general train of the transactions, I have the honor to submit the accompanying narrative for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General.

2. It comprises all the main points known relating to the several affairs, and will serve to open out and render somewhat intelligible a course of proceedings, to account for which some such detailed explanatory statement was required.

3. In perusing this account, it will be remarked that the origin of the first few shots fired, by which Fattah Jung Chautaria and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey were killed, and General Abhiman Singh Rana was wounded is left in uncertainty. At that juncture General Jung Bahadur was not in the Dalan of general assembly below, whence the firing emanated;<sup>33</sup> and the source of this fatal discharge of firearms is still generally unknown. The most plausible conjecture, however, may be that it originated in the excitement and consequent rash conduct of one or more of the General's younger brothers, or other relatives or friends.

4. The conduct of the individual who had previously disposed of his authority [the Maharaja] appears to have been marked throughout by the extreme of weakness and folly. Some sort of exertion on his part, properly directed, might doubtless have prevented all the mischief that was done.

I have, etc.

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Some Particulars Relating to the Massacre which Occurred at Kathmandu in the Building called the Kot, in the Night between the 14th and 15th September 1846<sup>34</sup>

TRANSLATION

About 10 o'clock on the night of Monday the 14th September 1846, General Gagan Singh was shot in a chamber of his own house, whilst in the performance of his devotions. His son, Captain Uzir Singh, immediately carried the intelligence to the Maharani, who was in her own apartment in the Hanuman Dhoka Palace. On the announcement of this melancholy event, the Maharani wept bitterly. Taking Ganga jal, Tulsi leaves, and gold in her hands, she hastened to the General's house on foot, accompanied by four female attendants. When she viewed the General's body her exclamations of grief became loud; but after an interval she placed the Ganga jal, Tulsi, and gold in the mouth of the corpse; then forbidding the three widows to perform sati, she consoled with and comforted the three sons, Captain Uzir Singh, Sher Singh, and Khadga Bir Singh, desiring them to attend properly to their father's obsequies; all the expenses of which should be defrayed by the Sarkar. The Rani afterwards, with her hair dishevelled, and weeping aloud, took the drawn sword from the hands of her Kotha Manche (female servant appointed to the duty of bearing her sword and shield) and walked on foot to the Kot, a hall of public business. Sending for General Abhiman Singh Rana, whose house was near at hand, she ordered him to have the bugle sounded for the attendance of all the civil functionaries and the troops with their officers. Then sitting down in the second storey of the Kot, she repeated sorrowfully that until the man who had assassinated so faithful a Minister should be discovered and put to death, she would neither take food nor taste water. Meanwhile, General Jung Bahadur, with his brothers and the three Regiments under his command, arrived at the Kot. On learning that General Gagan Singh had been assassinated, he went before the Rani, and addressing her said that he and General Gagan Singh were known to act together as her special servants. One of them had been treacherously murdered by their enemies, and it was probable that he himself would not be long spared. In the end her two sons would also probably suffer. The Maharaja had invested her with full authority as to all State affairs, and it was therefore incumbent on her to inquire searchingly into this affair, and punish severely those who should be found guilty;<sup>35</sup> in order that her sons might not become victims in the sequel, and himself might continue to serve her zealously in future, without sacrificing his life. When the General had conversed with the Maharani for some time, he went out and desired the officers of his three Regiments to remain on the alert. In the meantime, or during the interval that Jung Bahadur was with the Maharani, General Abhiman Singh Rana went to inform the Maharaja of what had occurred, and brought His Highness to the Kot, whilst all the Sardars and officers of the State, for the most part unarmed, assembled in the Kot, in pursuance of the Maharani's orders, with the exception of Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah and his relatives. Seeing that these were not present, the Maharani desired Kazi Bam Bahadur (Jung Bahadur's brother) to go and bring Fatteh Jung Shah. At the same time, she ordered Abhiman Singh Rana to put Kazi Bir Kishore Gora Pandey in irons. This was accordingly done, and the prisoner was then questioned as to who had assassinated Gagan Singh, and whether he had not abetted the transaction. Bir Kishore Pandey denied all knowledge of the matter, and the Maharani finding that he would confess nothing, gave her own naked sword to Abhiman Singh Rana, desiring him to kill the Pandey. The General taking

the sword passed into the Court, upon the raised centre of which the Pandey had been placed in irons, and turning to a small Dalan or open apartment on its north side, in which the Maharaja and several of the public officers were collected, asked for the Raja's orders in regard to the execution of the prisoner. The Raja somewhat angrily replied that without enquiry and proof and recording the confession of the accused, it would be unjust to put to death such an old, long employed, able and highly descended servant of the State. General Abhiman Rana returned to the Maharani, and laying down the sword at her feet, said that as one Sarkar ordered the execution on suspicion, and the other ordered that it should not take place without the proof of guilt, he could do nothing. The Maharani observed that as the Maharaja had given her full power to act on all occasions, it was unnecessary to take his special order for everything that was to be done. Abhiman Rana replied that, to yield obedience to the Rani when the Raja was present was not in accordance with the rules of good government, and left her presence.<sup>36</sup>

The Maharani then sent for General Jung Bahadur and asked if Kazi Bam Bahadur had brought the Chautarias. He answered that they had not yet come. The Maharani, without waiting longer, gave orders that all the Sardars and officers should assemble together in the large western hall below, to consult with one another and ascertain who was the murderer of Gagan Singh, and that, until they could name the individual, none of them should be permitted to go away. At that moment the Raja, considering that without the aid of Fattah Jung Shah, who was an experienced and able man, no full and satisfactory investigation could be made, mounted his pony, and taking with him Badri Narsingh, brother of General Jung Bahadur, and a few servants, rode, by the way of the Tundikhel parade ground, to Fattah Jung Chautaria's house, whence he sent the Chautaria and Khadga Bikram Shah, his son, Sher Shah, and other relatives, in company with Bam Bahadur to the Kot. He then went to the parade of the Sher Battalion, the time being about 2 hours after midnight, and sent Subedar Manu Singh, who was attached to the British Residency, to request an interview with Captain Ottley, for the purpose of conversing with him respecting the event of the murder of Gagan Singh. In consequence of its being night time, the Officiating Resident did not think proper it to go out and meet the Raja,<sup>37</sup> but sent the Mir Munshi Debi Prasad back with the Subedar. The Maharaja said to the Munshi, 'See things are turning out here as they have done at Lahore, and the Ministers are continually put to death. Today someone has murdered General Gagan Singh, the faithful servant of my Rani, by treacherously shooting him in his Chamber of Prayer: at this moment all the Civil and Military functionaries, and the troops are assembled at the Kot, and the Maharani engaged in investigating the matter. We shall see to whom the crime is brought home; and, as the Maharani is greatly distressed at the death of the said General, I am determined to use every possible exertion towards discovery and punishment. Let there be a good lookout kept tonight about the Residency premises. The Raja then asked the Munshi to accompany him to the Kot in order to see and hear what passed there and be able to report the issue of the investigation to the Officiating Resident. But the Munshi represented that there would be some delay in making his horse ready, and that as His Highness' business at the Darbar was of an urgent nature, not to

be deferred, it would be better that he himself should follow in the morning. The Raja agreed, and went away, desiring the Munshi to be sure to come the next morning. When he got back to the Kot, the gutter of the street was flowing with the blood which came from it, and His Highness being prevented from entering, by the people about, proceeded to the Hanuman Dhoka Palace.

On the approach of Fatted Jung Shah Chautaria and his party, General Jung Bahadur advanced from the Kot to meet them; and, after relating what had occurred, said to the Chautaria, the Maharani violently suspects Bir Kishore Pandey, and she caused him to be ironed and then ordered General Abhiman Singh Rana to put him to death. But the General would not obey the order, and notwithstanding that her authority and rule are in full force, made so many excuses that she is highly incensed: wherefore, to appease her, and to bring matters round, it will be necessary to make away with both these persons; which course with your approval, I will effect. Then you may administer the affairs of the revenue and territorial departments (in their place) whilst I remain in my post of Jungi General (Commander of the Forces) and act under your orders. In reply to this Fatted Jung Shah said that nothing should be done without due enquiry and deliberation. If the Maharani suspected Bir Kishore Pandey, strict investigation should be made, and if found guilty, punishment would be inflicted; but General Abhiman Singh Rana was a very respectable man and a trusted servant of the Raj of long standing, who appeared to have committed no fault deserving of the fate which was proposed for him. They ought rather to exert themselves strenuously to discover the assassin of Gagan Singh than to destroy innocent persons, from which course no good would ensue. The Chautaria then passed into the small Dalan on the north side of the Kot, where General Abhiman Singh Rana was sitting, and General Jung Bahadur went to attend the Maharani. It may be inferred that Fatted Jung Shah repeated all he had heard from General Jung Bahadur to General Abhiman Singh Rana, for the latter, by way of preparation, sent for the officers of his regiments, and desired them to load their muskets with balls and cartridges, for which they immediately gave the necessary orders. When General Jung Bahadur saw, from the second floor of the Kot, that the soldiers of General Abhiman Singh's corps were loading, he represented the circumstance to the Maharani, who left him, and descending with the drawn sword in her hand entered the large western Dalan below, where calling for Chautaria Fatted Jung Shah, Chautaria Nar Hari Bikram Shah, General Abhiman Singh Rana, and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey, she said to them and the other Sardars and officers assembled: 'Who has killed my faithful General? Name him quickly.' No one answered, but Fatted Jung Shah requested her not to be precipitate, and that he would sift the matter well, to her satisfaction. On hearing these words the Maharani became still more excited and angry and attempted to use her own sword upon Bir Kishore Pandey; but Fatted Jung Shah, Abhiman Singh Rana, and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey stopped her and trying to pacify her attended her from the Dalan towards the second storey. The Maharani mounted the staircases, which was in darkness and the three afore-named persons were slowly following, when shots were fired,<sup>38</sup> from which Fatted Jung Shah and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey fell dead, and General Abhiman Singh Rana was wounded. The latter



returned to the Dalan exclaiming that Jung Bahadur had done this treacherous act, and endeavoured to get out and join his regiment; but Colonel Krishna Bahadur Kunwar (brother of General Jung Bahadur) with one stroke of his sword, nearly cut him in twain, and he fell dead. At that time Chautaria Khadga Bikram Shah, the eldest son, and Sardar Bir Bahadur Shah, a younger brother of Fattah Jung Shah with many more Chautarias, Kazis, and Sardars, Captains, Kumedans, etc. were present in the Dalan. Khadga Bikram Shah hearing of the death of his father, and seeing Krishna Bahadur cut down Abhiman Rana, sought for Subba Bishnu Das, who always carried about the sword of Fattah Jung Shah. Not being able to find him, he drew a small Khukari from his guide, with which he had wounded Bam Bahadur and Krishna Bahadur, and a third person, a soldier, when he fell killed by a shot. A party of soldiers armed with double barrelled guns, usually attendants on General Jung Bahadur, then entered and commenced firing into the Dalan, whilst the Regiment of General Jung Bahadur, named after Kali Baks, formed within the Court. About the same time, the General receiving from the Maharani the grant of the Vizarate and of the command of the 16 Regiments at the Capital, presented his nazar of acknowledgement. The Maharani also at this moment called out in an energetic voice to the soldiers--kill and destroy my enemies.<sup>39</sup> Most of the Chiefs and Sardars in the Dalan were shot or cut down, though some were saved by the brothers of General Jung Bahadur, who took them by the hand and put them out of the Kot through a small doorway at its back.

When the following morning came, the General conducted the Maharani to the Hanuman Dhoka Palace. As they passed through the adalat,<sup>40</sup> Kanak Singh Mahat, Sardar of the establishment, reported that twenty-two men, amongst whom was Lal Jha, had been arrested by the several night patrols on suspicion. Jung Bahadur, by order of the Rani,<sup>41</sup> directed that these prisoners should be expelled from the City. The Maharani then went to her own apartments, where she put on a plain white dress suited to mourning, saying that the death of Fattah Jung Shah Chautaria must be observed with customary rites. General Jung Bahadur proceeded to offer his nazar of Vizarate to the Maharaja and the Prince. Sardar Bhavani Singh and Captain Karbir Khatri were with the Maharaja who, when the nazar was presented, said angrily, by whose order have so many Chiefs and Officers of the State been slaughtered? Jung Bahadur answered that all which had been done had been ordered by the Maharani, to whom his Highness had made over the Sovereign power. The Maharaja being displeased and sorrowful, immediately went to the Maharani for an explanation, but the latter, who was absorbed in grief and regret for the death of Gagan Singh, after some words had passed, declared that if he did not place the eldest of her two sons upon the throne, and invest him with the Tika, more calamities would ensue.<sup>42</sup> As the conversation did not come to any satisfactory conclusion, the Maharaja mounted his horse and taking Sardar Bhavani Singh and Captain Karbir Khatri with him proceeded towards Patan, intending as he said, to go to Khasi--Banaras. The Maharani sent for Jung Bahadur and Kazi Bir Dhoj Basnyat and ordered them to confiscate the property of all the Sardars and officers who had been killed or had fled, and to expell their families from the country; also to put the Crown Prince and his brother under strict surveillance, and permit no one to approach them.

Shortly afterwards a servant of Captain Karbir Khatri brought from his Master a message to the effect that Sardar Bhavani Singh had held a private conversation with the Maharaja upon the Tundikhel parade ground enroute to Patan, at which he himself was not allowed to be near enough to hear what passed.<sup>43</sup> The Maharani, on hearing this, ordered that a Subedar and 50 sepoyes should be forthwith despatched to cut off and bring back the head of the said Sardar.<sup>44</sup> This order was obeyed, and Sardar Bhavani Singh was killed on the road to Patan. The Maharaja, saying and doing nothing to prevent this outrage, continued his course to Patan accompanied by Karbir Khatri. At night General Jung Bahadur sent one of his brothers after the Maharaja, and after much persuasion His Highness was induced to return to his palace.

During the space of eight days all the troops and guns at the capital were kept in position around the Darbar while hundreds of people connected with those who had been killed or had absconded were turned out of the City. On the eighth day, General Jung Bahadur having made efficient arrangements as to the protective guards, etc., removed the troops and turned his attention to the regular transaction of all the duties of Minister. The Crown Prince and his brother, however, were still in confinement. Two of General Jung Bahadur's brothers attended constantly at their Palace of Basantapur, as well as for their protection as in obedience to the injunction of the Maharani. The General himself visited them daily.

Although the Maharani was continually urging<sup>45</sup> General Jung Bahadur to put these two princes to death and place the eldest of her two sons upon the throne, he made various excuses for deferring to obey her in this respect, and used his best efforts to preserve their lives from danger. In consequence of this state of things, Bir Dhoj Basnyat at last told the Maharani that General Jung Bahadur had been long attached to the Crown Prince and would never deal treacherously by him now he had become Minister. It was therefore advisable to destroy General Jung Bahadur in the first instance and then to take the other matter into consideration; by which means her son would obtain the throne; and she herself would be safe from all risks. The Maharani, after some deliberation, had a Lal Mohar grant of the Vizarate to Bir Dhoj drawn out and sealed in the presence of Bijaya Raj Pandit. Bir Dhoj was put in possession of this Lal Mohar, and Uzir Singh, the eldest son of the late Gagan Singh, who had been raised to the rank of General, was appointed to his confidence. This secret transaction, however, was disclosed to General Jung Bahadur by Bijaya Raj Pandit, and the General redoubled his precautionary measures for the safety of himself and the Crown Prince.

On the morning of Saturday the 30th October, General Uzir Singh having made up his mind to kill Jung Bahadur, in pursuance of the Maharani's order,<sup>46</sup> took a regiment loaded with balled cartridges to the Kot and marched it into the interior of the building, while the Maharani, as preconcerted, sent Bir Dhoj to desire General Jung Bahadur to wait upon her, and was prepared to go herself to the Kot. But the

General had obtained information of the scheme planned for his destruction, and immediately collecting all his relations, friends, and attendants, armed with doublebarrelled guns loaded, had left his own house and was proceeding towards the Darbar, when he met Bir Dhoj Basnyat in the street. The latter, greatly alarmed, put his hands together and said that the Maharani wished the General to attend at the Kot without delay. Jung Bahadur replied to him, 'Mr. Minister, as you have been appointed Vazir, what can I be wanted for?' Bir Dhoj then began to tremble with fear and gave no answer. The General made a sign to one of his party who instantly shot him dead.

After this, proceeding with his party to the Basantapur Palace, General Jung Bahadur placed his turban at the feet of the Maharaja and Crown Prince, who happened to be together at the time, by reason that the former had come there from his own Palace of Nolchhe to visit his son; and requested either to be dismissed immediately or to be vested with full authority to put to death all the enemies of the Crown Prince. The Maharaja wrote an order granting the power proposed with his own hand, and affixed to it his private seal.<sup>47</sup> Giving this to General Jung Bahadur he embraced him, and declaring that the enemies of his beloved son were firstly his own enemies, desired him to destroy all such persons, and to do whatever might be requisite for the welfare of the rightful Crown Prince of the throne; adding that he himself was going to Khasi.

General Jung Bahadur then quitted the Palace, and ordered the bugles to be sounded for the troops to get under arms; after which all those who had taken part in the counsels and plots of Bir Dhoj Basnyat were sought for and put to death, some fourteen or fifteen Basnyats and four or five petty military officers. General Uzir Singh could not be found, though diligently searched after, for he had taken timely flight on hearing of the death of Bir Dhoj Basnyat and escaped by the Sindhuli Garhi road leading to Janakpur.

In the evening General Jung Bahadur waited upon the Maharani by order of the Crown Prince,<sup>48</sup> from whom he delivered to her a message purporting that since she has become his bitter enemy, even to death, if she wishes well to herself, she and her two sons would instantly quit the Palace and proceed to Hilmoor, a village about 100 miles distant from Kathmandu to the south-east, or go to the Plains. The Maharani, who was in a state of great alarm from the failure of her schemes and the aspect of affairs, made no demur, but removed with her two sons to the house of the late Krishna Ram Pandit, and commenced preparations for going to Banaras. In the course of time, she succeeded in fixing the irresolute Maharaja in the resolve to go to Banaras and thereby accompany her, and on the 23rd November they both set out for the journey. End.

Translated

C. Thoresby, Resident Nepal

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## Footnotes to Chapter Ten

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 13 June 1845, No. 19; slightly edited.
2. Cf. Major Lawrence to Government, 30 September 1844, who then described Jung Bahadur thus: 'Kazi Jung Bahadur is Mathabar Singh's nephew, but though clever and soldier-like, indeed more so than any man in Nepal, he is a time-server and warmly joined the Chautarias during the exile of his uncle and the disgrace of the Thapas.'
3. Foreign Secret Consultation 13 June 1845, No. 20; slightly edited.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 October 1845, No. 1; slightly edited
5. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 November 1845, No. 38; slightly edited.
6. Foreign Secret Consultation 29 November 1845, No. 40; slightly edited.
7. See above, Chapter Eight, Note 6.
8. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 July 1846, No. 113; not edited.
9. 'Belied': falsely quoted.
10. 'Information': intelligence arrangements, spying.
11. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 July 1846, No. 142; slightly edited.
12. I.R. Colvin arrived in Kathmandu as Resident-designate on 8 February and presented his credentials on the 9th. Captain Wheeler officially took his leave on 9 February 1846. See Foreign Secret Consultation 25 July 1846, No. 141, Colvin's letter to Government, dated 12 February 1846.
13. A frighteningly accurate prediction.
14. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 151; not edited.
15. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 150; moderately edited.
16. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 152; slightly edited.
17. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 153; slightly edited.

18. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 154; slightly edited.
19. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 156; slightly edited.
20. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 167; not edited.
21. 'Long trip to sea': return to England.
22. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 160; slightly edited.
23. See above, 17 September 1846, paragraph 2.
24. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 October 1846, No. 161; names edited for spelling.
25. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 December 1846, No. 143; this name is added to make the list complete, though it was not on Ottley's original list.
26. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 December 1846, No. 143; not edited.
27. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 December 1846, No. 154; slightly edited.
28. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 December 1846, No. 156; excerpted.
29. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 December 1846, No. 167; slightly edited.
30. Risala: troops of horse, a Company of cavalry.
31. Foreign Secret Consultation 30 January 1847, No. 195; not edited.
32. Foreign Secret Consultation 27 March 1847, No. 112; not edited.
33. How Thoresby acquired this information is not clear.
34. Foreign Secret Consultation 27 March 1847, No. 113; slightly edited.
35. Does Jung 'plant' the idea of this official investigation in the Maharani's mind?
36. Laxmi Devi must surely have seen this reply as a challenge to her authority and further cause for anger.
37. In view of the Governor General's orders about neutrality in Nepal's internal politics, the Residents had adopted a policy of

meeting with Nepalis only in the presence of at least one European witness. At this time Captain Ottley was the only European at the Residency.

38. This report does not say from which direction the shots were fired.
39. Note the order of the Maharani.
40. Adalat: court, courtroom.
41. Again, this report insists on the order of the Maharani.
42. The Maharani does not deny that she gave the order.
43. Does this suggest that the Maharani used the servants of the leading Bharadars to spy on them?
44. Again, the Maharani's order.
45. 'Urging': in this context this chronicler avoids the word 'order'.
46. Again, the Maharani's order.
47. Jung Bahadur gains the confidence of the King and, without disclosing names, demands the authority (i.e. order) to put to death the 'enemies' of the Crown Prince. The King gives the required order.
48. This time, by order of the Crown Prince.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### We Obey Surendra

King Rajendra Bikram's journey to Banaras with Queen Laxmi Devi and her two sons was a leisurely trip, and Rajendra spent an additional month with her in the Holy City before beginning the return journey. He travelled with official recognition of the British government and with all the fanfare that this implied. Returning slowly, Rajendra was in no haste. His son was in control of the administration in Kathmandu until his return, and he needed time to think.

During this time he was approached by several of the exiled Nepali Bharadars and prevailed upon to sign Lal Mohars ordering the death of Jung Bahadur. Most likely, the King affixed his seal to blank sheets of paper on the understanding that an order such as that described would be written on these officially signed blank sheets. In any event, various groups of assassins began to appear in Nepal seeking to accomplish the death of the Prime Minister and his brothers by a variety of means.

Jung seems to have been extremely well informed of all that Rajendra did, and the apprehension of these assassins seems not to have been a very difficult achievement. They did bring home to him, however, the fact that his position would remain insecure as long as Rajendra was in the Plains. Yet the King made no haste to return to the capital, and one began to wonder what the King really intended.

What Jung intended in response very rapidly became public. He began to agitate the problem of the absentee King, and even assigned a group of astrologers the task of determining a suitably auspicious date for the inauguration of Surendra as King of Nepal, since Rajendra did not seem to intend to return.

The idea that Surendra should succeed his father was not new. The King had called his son 'Maharajadhiraj' for years, and the lad had actually attempted a coup d'etat at one time. This was, of course, history. More recently, Jung had freshened up the old idea and planted the succession as a very distinct possibility in the minds of the military and the few remaining Bharadars. This took very little effort, since Jung had conducted a very rigorous Pajani of the army shortly after he had become Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief. The army was his and the Bharadars were either his supporters or his own relatives.

When a Lal Mohar arrived in Kathmandu addressed to the military at large, commanding that Jung be either killed or brought prisoner to Rajendra, the die was cast. The military and Bharadars urged Surendra to ascend the throne, and he acceded to their request. Surendra was King, and Rajendra was officially declared to have abdicated.

The interested historian cannot but mark the similarity in all the arguments advanced to Rajendra in defence of the action that had taken place--regardless of who the authors were supposed to be. There is a strong probability that these letters all emanated from the same hand. Thus the various arguments need not necessarily indicate that all parties thought the same. However, if Jung did indeed author all of these letters, it says much that he was able to do so without any noticeable outcry. The Resident is firm about this. Tranquillity ruled in Nepal.

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*King Rajendra Bikram reached Banaras with Queen Laxmi Devi and her sons late in the evening of the 3rd January 1847<sup>1</sup>*

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Major Carpenter, Agent of the Governor General at Banaras, 23 February 1847<sup>2</sup>

EXCERPT

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General, that His Highness the Raja of Nepal left Banaras this morning en route to his country via Segauli accompanied by his followers. The Maharani and her two sons however remain in Banaras...

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 22 March 1847<sup>3</sup>

*Major Thoresby reports the progress of King Rajendra Bikram on his return journey to Nepal. The hesitation he reports is the beginning of a very critical period in the King's life.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

On the 17th of March I had the honor to report the arrival of the Maharaja of Nepal's camp at Govindganj, one stage from Segauli. The circumstances of all the Nepal exiles having left him gave me reason to think he would probably return to Kathmandu after making a visit of a few days to the Raja of Bettiah.

2. But I have since received a letter from Captain Phillips, dated the 18th of March, informing me that the Maharaja himself did not reach Govindganj until the 15th. The visit to Bettiah was still unpaid, adding, moreover, that His Highness had said that he was expecting to be joined by the Maharani and purposed to halt at Govindganj or Segauli till she arrived, or until he obtained intelligence of a positive character as to her decision or her movements.



3. It may be presumed that the Maharani is not likely to join His Highness for the purpose of accompanying him onward to Nepal. Indeed there is little probability, or none at all, of her quitting Banaras at present. The irresolution therefore manifested in His Highness' conduct is calculated to produce the impression that the sequel of his remaining below during several months, or until the road becomes open after the next rainy season, is by no means unlikely.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 23 March 1847<sup>4</sup>

*The King's demand that the pajani of the military be handed over to him before he returns to Kathmandu seems strange. He knows, of course, that Jung Bahadur has screened the military and retained only those loyal to himself. But given the situation in the Darbar, did the King think it likely that Jung would hand over this power without a struggle?*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

Since my letter of yesterday's date I have heard again from Captain Phillips, with the camp of the Maharaja of Nepal at Govindganj. He had an interview with His Highness on the 19th March, at which the necessity of awaiting a reply to a communication made to, or through, the Guru at Banaras some 5 or 6 days before was alleged as a reason for continuing to remain some time longer at Govindganj. But His Highness also subsequently mentioned that he had written to Kathmandu proposing that the command of the troops should be made over to his own person, and stating that his return was contingent upon compliance with the requisition.

2. From circumstances connected with the meetings held yesterday at the Minister's house and at the Palace, I am inclined to believe that some such proposition has been received here. However, though it seems to be wished that the Maharaja should come back to his own country, yet it is hardly to be supposed that his return would be purchased by a sacrifice of this magnitude, which must place in imminent peril the lives of those now in power. Under such an arrangement the Maharani would not hesitate long to rejoin her infatuated and docile spouse.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 3 April 1847<sup>5</sup>

*Major Thoresby reports on the positions of the King at Bettiah and the Kathmandu Darbar. Paragraphs four and five are extremely important in the light of later events.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

The Maharaja of Nepal is still residing in the house of the Bettiah Raja at Segauli. It would appear that he has no intention of moving within the next few days, for carts and coolies have been discharged, and elephants have been sent to a distance for the greater facility of procuring their forage.

2. His Highness has lately received a communication from the Maharani at Banaras, the exact purport of which is not yet known. It is generally rumoured and believed that the Lady had indicated her intention to commence a journey in some direction that will bring her nearer to Nepal a few days after the lunar eclipse, which occurred early in the morning of April 1st. Whether she may come to Segauli or go elsewhere is purely matter of conjecture at present. It is thought likely however, that she may proceed to a town, or large village, called Karnaul, between Mazaffarpur and Chapra, which is situated on an estate belonging to Lok Raman Upadhyaya, late Vakil of the Nepal Raj in Calcutta; and that His Highness will eventually join her there, or else make arrangements for passing some months at Katarban, upon the Bagmati River within the Nepalese frontier.

3. His Highness' camp at Segauli is plentifully supplied with all requisites through the instrumentality of the Bettiah Raja's officials, and I believe that there is no inconvenience arising from its detention there.

4. Yesterday afternoon at a general parade of the troops, intimation was given that there appeared little prospect of the Maharaja's immediate return to the Capital. Some further communication was made by the Minister and Commander-in-Chief to Corps through their officers, on the expediency and propriety of looking upon the Crown Prince, who had been invested with full powers by the Maharaja previously to his departure, as the Supreme and sole authority during the prolonged absence of the latter, rather than to receive any orders from His Highness himself when not present.

5. There is a rumour that a man--who is well-known here--is endeavouring to reach the Capital from below, with the design of assassinating the Minister, and strict orders have been issued in regard to his detection and apprehension.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 5 April 1847<sup>6</sup>

*Major Thoresby notifies the Governor General of another fateful delay in King Rajendra Bikram's return to his capital. The Major's final comment surely reflects the attitude of the Darbar.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

Since addressing you on the 3rd of April, I have received intelligence from Segauli of dates the 2nd and 3rd, apprising me that the Maharaja of Nepal had not made up his mind to move either of those days.

2. The petty officers and soldiers of the guard had become urgent, and pressingly clamorous, for the nomination of day on which the march towards Nepal should be commenced, which had drawn from His Highness a promise that he would make known his final determination as to returning to his Capital this season, or remaining below until after the ensuing rains, on Sunday the 4th of April.

3. The Sardars about His Highness have been urging most strenuously the expediency of making an immediate move towards Nepal, and it appears to be likely that if he does not adopt this step very soon, he will be quitted by a large portion of his retinue of Chiefs, officers and guards.<sup>7</sup> His Highness had acted most unwisely in staying such a length of time out of his own dominions, and so conducting himself as to afford valid grounds for the entertainment of suspicions and mistrust in regard to his sentiments and designs.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 8 April 1847<sup>8</sup>

*The activity Major Thoresby described in his second paragraph is of primary importance in trying to assess the role the Jung Bahadur played in maneuvering the Kathmandu Darbar into a demand that Surendra Bikram ascend the throne as King of Nepal.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

Nothing has transpired here which might indicate with any certainty which course the Maharaja of Nepal is most likely to take. Captain Phillips seems to think it more probable that he will reside for some months at Karnaul. But it appears to be doubtful whether the Maharani, who was ill at Banaras a short time since, will agree to this arrangement. The authorities administering the Government still hope that he will leave the Lady and the refugees below, and return to his capital at an early date. This morning three letters were received from His Highness, enclosed in a letter to me by Captain Phillips, addressed to the two Princes and the Minister. I have just been informed they contained the announcement of His Highness' intention to contract another marriage, with the request that a suitable bride might be selected for the occasion. This communication, however, may be merely a ruse, designed to mislead, and to divert attention from real projects in contemplation, whatever those may be.

2. Referring to the item of intelligence in my last diary, concerning the alleged expediency of providing for the vacancy caused by the indefinitely protracted absence of the Maharaja, I have the honor to report that yesterday many astrologers and other Brahmins were assembled at the Residence of the Minister, and directed to name within eight days the most auspicious of the next twenty days for the ceremony of placing the Crown Prince upon the throne.

3. I believe there is no wish or intention to have recourse to this extreme measure, if the Maharaja can be persuaded to return on any terms deemed consistent with the safety of those now composing the Government of Nepal.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 29 April 1847<sup>9</sup>

*The assassination attempt reported here is well documented. Whether the King ordered this or one of the exiled Bharadars did it in his name is quite another question. It was not unusual at this period for high ranking officers of the Court to have in their possession blank paper embossed with the Red Seal of the King.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

Referring to the last paragraph of my letter to your address of the 24th April, in which was noticed the arrest of a man, an ex-Subedar of the Nepal service named Sevak Ram, on a charge of having recently entered the country commissioned to take away the life of the Minister General Jung Bahadur, I have the honor to submit the following particulars.

2. Four men were apprehended, namely Sevak Ram, the former Subedar, two men of the Gurung tribe who had been soldiers with the Sher Regiment and a Newar. An examination of the parties, disclosed as had been previously understood that they were employed by Chautaria Guru Prasad Shah and his servant Bhaktawar Kharka. Sevak Ram, however, has not entered into the scheme, as he was concluded to have done from his leaving Guru Prasad about the same time with the others. He was fully aware of the scheme, though, which he acknowledged at once, and gave a detail of the particulars that proved useful in incriminating the other three. At first they denied the charge, but in the end made confessions from which their design was shown to be the accomplishment of the Minister's death by shooting him from behind a bank at some convenient time when he should be passing along on horseback. The two men who had been in the army were known to be good marksmen.

3. There seems to be no ground for doubting the guilt of these men, thus confirmed by their own confessions from which they did not afterwards attempt to swerve. The two Gurungs were put to death, by order of the Crown Prince, upon the Tundikhel Parade, but the Newar was let off by the Minister with the loss of one of his hands.

4. In consequence of a representation from the Prince and Minister, and under the impression that it is highly desirable to prevent, if practicable, the despatch of any more men from the British territories on similar missions of assassination, I have addressed the Magistrates of Gorakhpur and Champaran, and beg to enclose copies of my letters to them for the information of Government.<sup>10</sup>

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 30 April 1847<sup>11</sup>

*Jung's line of defense is clear. He excuses his taking part in the Kot Massacre by pointing out that the Queen had ordered it. How specific were her orders?*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

The Maharaja of Nepal still remains at Segauli, and there is the same uncertainty as heretofore in regard to his movements. He had come to no decision two days ago; though the intelligence which will have since reached him, of the discovery and failure of one of the plans devised by Guru Prasad for creating a vacancy in the Government at the Capital, may possibly have some effect in helping him choose a definite line of conduct very soon.

2. In the afternoon of the 28th April I received a visit from the Minister, General Jung Bahadur, who was accompanied by only a small party of his military staff. After a brief interval, he requested a few minutes conversation in private. He then told me that he had been made acquainted by his friends at Segauli, with the contents of a letter addressed to me by the Maharaja, the tenor of which had surprised and grieved him. Touching upon several of the charges brought against him in the name of His Highness in this letter, he explained that their gist rose entirely from misrepresentation and false coloring, by which facts were made to appear otherwise than their true bearing. Respecting the bloodshed in the Kot, he stated that it originated altogether in the violent and outrageous conduct of the Maharani, who at that time held the supreme power, and vaguely suspecting that Chautaria Fatteh Jung Shah, Abhiman Rana, and many others had prompted the assassination of General Gagan Singh and determined to be avenged, ordered their destruction in a mass;<sup>12</sup> likewise, that she would have gone further, and did actually command the death of the two

elder Princes and the imprisonment of the Raja, when he succeeded in appeasing her, promising to place the Princes in confinement and keep them in sure custody until they could be disposed of safely in some way. To pretend to lay the charge of the bloodshed on that night at my door is, said the General, a gross perversion of the truth.

3. The General's statements did not seem to call for anything more than commonplace remarks on my part, and with reference to the position of affairs here, and the obvious expediency of preserving a demeanor and line of conduct calculated to produce the impression of strict neutrality, I deemed it prudent not to say much. Yet, to prevent misconceptions, I thought it right that the General should hear read my reply to the letter from the Maharaja, a copy of which he had received from Segauli.

4. In the course of the interview, the Minister told me that it was still thought the Maharaja would come to Nepal before the communication was entirely obstructed, and that he had promised the Princes to settle the Maharani somewhere below.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 12 May 1847<sup>13</sup>

*King Rajendra Bikram finds it difficult to deny that Jung acted under orders (paragraph two). That such orders were given, then, can probably be accepted as fact. The great question that remains is whether Jung seized upon orders hastily given to do what he thought had to be done, with a thoroughness and violence totally unexpected.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

On the 8th of May I had the honor to report that the Maharaja of Nepal had declared his intention of moving from Segauli to Ghusot, after the lapse of a few days. I have now to state that His Highness has changed his mind and has determined to remain where he is some time longer. The reason given by His Highness for not making the change announced is taken from the occurrence of rather a violent storm at Segauli, in the evening of the 7th, which was deemed an unfortunate omen that should deter him from executing his purpose. There would seem to be, however, very little weight in this argument. It is most probable that the natural inconstancy of His Highness' mind has operated in the matter, or that he never seriously intended to go to Ghusot and finds it more convenient to his purposes to remain at Segauli, though induced by some passing motive to talk of moving.

2. The two Princes at Kathmandu, and the Minister, have again written urgently to His Highness on the subject of returning to his Capital without delay. The last replies to the Princes were sent to me for perusal, through the Subedar at the Residency. In them His Highness acquits, circumstantially, the Minister General Jung Bahadur of having ever acted without orders, and from his own interested motives: in reference to the death of Mathabar Singh, and the affairs of the Kot, and of the execution of the Basnyats. His Highness also acknowledges the obligations owing to the Minister by the Princes for the preservation of their lives from the designs of the Maharani, and declares that the Minister, confirmed in his post by himself, has his confidence. In conclusion, he says that it is now late in the season and the aul fever is to be dreaded, and that he therefore intends to remain below, and is about to proceed to Ghosot.<sup>14</sup>

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 13 May 1847<sup>15</sup>

*Major Thoresby reports the accession of King Surendra Bikram to the throne of Nepal. The circumstances of this unique event in the history of Nepal and the justification for it are also indicated.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to report for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General that about 8 o'clock yesterday evening, the 12th May, the Crown Prince and head of the existing Government of Nepal was inaugurated as Sovereign of the Country in full Dārbar and amidst a large concourse of people. The usual ceremonies of application of Panchamrit and Tilak, the coining of medals or model pieces of money, and the presentation of nazars, were performed. A proclamation was made to the effect that since Maharaja Rajendra Bikram Shah had taken up his residence abroad and also exhibited manifest indications of aberration of mind (by the inconsistencies of his conduct in numerous instances) which rendered it impossible that confidence could be longer reposed in him, he was to be considered to have abdicated the throne, and Maharaja Surendra Bikram Shah had accordingly succeeded him as Ruler of Nepal.

2. The discharges of small arms and field pieces on the occasion gave the first indication to the Residency that some event of importance was in course of celebration. A few minutes before 10 o'clock Kazis Bam Bahadur and Badri Narsingh, brothers of the Minister, with the Darbar Munshi and one or two more gentlemen came to announce to me what had taken place. From the communication they made, it appeared that the measure had been determined upon late in the afternoon and originated in the discovery about 5 p.m. of another plot against the Minister and all those now in office and authority with him

3. Two men named Sher Mardan and Dambar Singh, formerly a Kumedan and Jamadar in the army, who had been discharged and banished the country by General Mathabar Singh two years ago, were arrested in a house in the City, when they produced a Lal Mohar Parwana received by them from Chautaria Guru Prasad and Kazi Jagat Bam Pandey somewhere near Ghazipur, in which the Maharaja calls on his 8,000 troops and 52 lakhs of subjects to rise up and seize or kill the Minister and all connected with him. This document was to be used to stir up the troops to mutiny against their Superior Officers and the Government as it now exists, by which means the object contemplated was to be accomplished.

4. The bugles were immediately sounded, and as many of the troops as were in the neighbourhood of the City collected. The Parwana was then shown and read to them. After which General Jung Bahadur spoke, to the effect that most of them were acquainted with the merits of past events. They had now received orders direct from the Maharaja, and he himself stood before them, wherefore they might act as they thought proper. Upon this the troops declared that they possessed a Lal Mohar Parwana of the Maharaja of a very different tendency, given to them by himself when he was among them, and that they could not acknowledge the reasonableness of the one now produced.

5. The Prince was appealed to, and the whole Darbar urged him, for his own and brother's safety and for the security and welfare of all, to seat himself upon the throne. On learning all the circumstances connected with the case, he consented, and was proclaimed amidst general acclamations of approbation.

6. This sudden event does not appear to bear any immediate reference to the occurrence reported in my letter of the 21st April. The period of 20 days had passed away without any further proceedings in the matter of seating the Prince on the throne, and I am inclined to think that the former demonstrations made openly and not followed by any steps tending towards the proposed result, had for their chief purpose the design of producing an impression upon the Maharaja's mind favorable to his speedy return.

Concluding for the present.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 14 May 1847<sup>16</sup>

*Major Thoresby clarifies the position that ex-king Rajendra Bikram is expected to occupy, should he decide to return to Nepal.*

\*\*\*\*\*



Sir,

In continuation of my letter to you of yesterday's date, reporting that the Crown Prince has taken his seat upon the throne, as the Sole Ruler of the Nepal Principality, I have the honor to state that it is not intended to exclude Maharaja Rajendra Bikram Shah from the Country if he choose to return, in which case it is to be represented to him that he will meet with every demonstration of respect and attention, equal to that which he has been shown hitherto. But he is not to expect to have any share in the administration of affairs, or to possess any authority of public nature in the State. Should His Highness prefer remaining beyond the limits of the Nepal country, it is proposed that a handsome income be assigned to him for expenditure at his own discretion.

2. Within the next few days I shall receive full communications, embracing all the particulars of this singular transaction, which shall be submitted for the information and consideration of the Right Honorable the Governor General without any unnecessary delay. In the meantime our relations remain exactly as they were, and I have intimated to the Minister that I cannot notice officially the change which has been made, until I receive an answer to my reports from my own Government.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 17 May 1847<sup>17</sup>

*Major Thoresby reports that all is calm in Kathmandu after the accession of King Surendra Bikram. One notices that no popular reaction is reported throughout this whole series of episodes that led to the commencement of Rana rule in Nepal. There is simply no reference to the people, one way or the other.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to state that since I last addressed you on the 14th of May, the aspect of affairs here has been perfectly tranquil and steady. Nothing has transpired to indicate the existence of any unusual excitement in the general community from any cause. The late transactions indeed, barring the resumption of authority hereafter by the Maharaja Rajendra Bikram Shah, appears to be viewed with the coolness and indifference which may be supposed to result from the habit of having long looked upon it as a very probable event. There is reason to believe that the recovery of power by an individual who had proved himself so little capable of exercising it beneficially was hardly considered to be desirable by any persons now in Nepal who thought at all on the subject. Had the Maharaja simply made a pilgrimage to Banaras, and returned to his own country in due course, after

settling the Maharani, bona fide, somewhere below, he might probably have resumed a considerable degree of authority. But the natural consequence of his ill-judged infatuated conduct must have been that, on his long deferred return he would have met with distrust and suspicion to an extent that could not but have rendered his position one of restraint, with only the shadow of power.

2. I am now in possession of a copy of the communication to His Highness from the various Sardars, Officers, and servants of the Nepal Government, containing a representation of the late measure, adopted at the capital, and the reasons thereof, which was forwarded to Segauli yesterday evening. This and other papers, as likewise a Kharita from the Darbar to the address of the Right Honorable the Governor General, shall be transcribed as soon as translations can be completed.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 21 May 1847<sup>18</sup>

*Major Thoresby forwards for the Governor General's information both a copy of the statement made by members of the Darbar on the reasons for Crown Prince Surendra Bikram's ascending the throne and a copy of Rajendra Bikram's Lal Mohar which prompted the Darbar to persuade the Crown Prince to take this unusual step.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

In my despatch to our address under date the 17th May was mentioned that I had received a copy of the representation forwarded to the Maharaja at Segauli by those whose signatures were affixed relative to the ceremony of putting the Crown Prince on the throne to the exclusion of His Highness, and the reasons for the adoption of this measure. This copy was forwarded to me by the Darbar. I have now the honor to submit a translation of its contents in English, together with a translation of the Lal Mohar Parwana from the Maharaja, brought to Kathmandu by the two men Sher Mardan and Dambar Singh, the discovery of which induced the resolution that was so promptly carried into effect. A Kharita to the address of the Right Honorable the Governor General, from the Crown Prince and Head of the Nepal Government sent to me subsequently with a request for its transmission shall be forwarded with a translation of the copy by the post of tomorrow.

2. In a former letter I noticed that the event which had occurred here had not occasioned any alteration in our relations with the Darbar. Previously to quitting his own Dominions to proceed to Banaras, the Maharaja conferred upon the Crown Prince all the powers of the Government, without reservation of any sort. Since that period the public business has been transacted without any reference to His Highness, so

that there is no immediate inconvenience arising from the late innovation to the intercourse between the Residency and the Nepal Government. There has been no call for its recognition on my part in a formal way, nor have I indicated any marks of approbation or disapprobation, or gone further than to intimate my intention of not participating in such ceremonial observances as may be deemed incident to the occasion, at present.

3. Before coming to a satisfactory opinion as to the expediency and propriety of what has been done, the effect upon the Maharaja and the line of conduct he is prepared to take must be known. But I doubt much his capability of devising or acting in such a way as to acquire a fair prospect of recovering the position which he has lost only after a long series of misconduct, proving his total unfitness for its occupation.

I have, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

King Rajendra Bikram to the Kampu, Regiments, Companies, and Others<sup>19</sup>

ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

Jung Bahadur, with his brothers and friends, massacred Fattch Jung Shah and the other loyal Bharadars of rank, in the Kot, without any order from me or the Crown Prince, and setting aside our authority acted according to his own will, for which reason it became necessary that I should visit Banaras. At that time he represented to me that the said Bharadars were put to death because they had conspired to supersede me and put up the Crown Prince, and also to effect the ruin of the Maharani and her two sons, as I proclaimed to you upon the Tundikhel Parade Ground<sup>20</sup> and now he is telling you that the fugitive Bharadars are concerting the means of putting down the Crown Prince and placing the eldest of the Maharani's two sons upon the throne. All that the wretch says is false, and these Bharadars have not proposed so to act. Whosoever shall think evil to the person or throne of the Crown Prince, I will destroy him and all his posterity. Wherefore, taking care for the preservation of the lives of the Crown Prince and his brother, seize Jung Bahadur and all his brothers and cousins if you can, and bring them to me as Prisoners; or, if this be impracticable kill them all. Whatever persons shall bring this matter to pass, shall be rewarded to their heart's content, as likewise shall all their children; and whoever shall not obey this order, but shall take part with Jung Bahadur, shall be destroyed, with his children and his property. Understanding this, act as ordered.

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The Darbar to Rajendra Bikram on the Reasons for Surendra Bikram's Ascending the Throne of Nepal, 12 May 1847<sup>21</sup>

ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

Whereas it was ordered by Your Highness, in presence of the Crown Prince Maharajadhiraj, that the Maharani should be obeyed in all matters relating to State affairs, therefore, on her giving the orders to that effect, the Bharadars were put to death in the Kot. This result was not caused by the treacherous contrivance of the Minister Jung Bahadur. And whereas Your Highness invested the Crown Prince with all the authority of the State, before you set out for Banaras, and the Crown Prince issued an order, under Lal Mohar, to the effect that Your Highness should be met in the Tarai and conducted with every demonstration of respect to the Capital, but that whoever, from among these who were the enemies of the General, attempted to force his way should be opposed; we therefore marched to Hetaunda for the purpose of so acting. In this matter the General did not act on his own authority, and committed no treasonable conduct.<sup>22</sup>

At the time when Mathabar Singh gave out injurious reports as to the unsound state of mind of Your Highness and the Crown Prince, and deliberated upon the mode of applying a remedy, this is the man who put a stop to his designs. After that when the said Mathabar Singh conspired to confine Your Highness in the Cantonment, and had obtained from Your Highness a promise that 7 murders should be pardoned but afterwards put to death 16 men, and had also in a disrespectful and indecent manner told Your Highness that when the Second Prince was Raja and he himself Minister, this is the individual who put to death even his own maternal uncle at your command.

When the Massacre at the Kot occurred, the Maharani ordered the confinement of Your Highness, which order was given in the hearing of us now present, belonging to the Army. Had this individual been disposed to act treasonably, he might have done so at that time, but he remained faithful and gave proof of his loyalty in not fulfilling the Maharani's wish. After this, when Bir Dhoj and other wretches had conspired against the lives of Your Highness and your two eldest sons, it was this man who, with true fidelity, taking your orders first, caused the conspirators to be put to death, and thus saved all three. On account of this faithful conduct, when about to depart for Banaras, Your Highness presented him with a Lal Mohar Parwana purporting in solemn form that he should forever continue to administer the affairs of the country, under the control of the Crown Prince. And he has, in every respect, touching all Military and Civil matters, conducted the administration and executed his trust for the welfare of the Country since that time.

At this period, however, Kumbedan Sher Mardan and Jamadar Dambar Singh have brought a Lal Mohar Parwana addressed to all classes, Militant and non-Militant, stating that Jung Bahadur killed the

Bharadars in the Kot, acting of his own accord; and through the commission of this crime of ill omen to the Raj, obliged Your Highness to make the pilgrimage to Banaras; that he consults not the good of Your Highness, for which reason it is desired that he and all his kinsmen should be seized and forwarded as prisoners, or, in case of resistance, should be put to death. Had this individual offended in regard to Your Highness' person, throne, or treasury, or with respect to the relations of amity established with the Emperor of China and the British Government, we would perform your orders and destroy the Minister. Since we cannot see that he has in any way offended, we find it impossible to obey Your Highness' instructions, and cut off violently one who has acted like a faithful Minister, with all his relatives and friends.

For as much as the Lal Mohar Parwana now received sets forth that the Crown Prince has been vested with sole authority of the State, and whoever wished him ill shall be severely punished, it would seem that Your Highness suspects the Minister Jung Bahadur of setting at naught the authority of the Crown Prince, and in that way practically wishing him ill. Therefore, seeing that Your Highness had already vested all the powers of Government in the Crown Prince, and bestowed on him the title of Maharajadhiraj, causing coins and weights to be stamped in his name; that there is no one whose claim to the throne is preferable; that Your Highness promised to return in the month of Magh,<sup>23</sup> whereas the month of Jeth<sup>24</sup> has arrived and Your Highness is still absent, sojourning in a foreign territory, and there entering into schemes of fugitive, discorded servants, transmitting here orders for the murder of a good and faithful Minister while so situated; that in former days Your Highness uniting with the Kala Pandeys caused that worthy Minister Bhim Sen Thapa to be murdered; then joining the party of the Thapas had the Pandeys put to death; and afterwards in conjunction with the Maharani doomed to death the Thapa Mathabar Singh; that contrary to all precedent in Your Highness' dynasty of 14 generations, you gave absolute power to the Maharani and thus caused the massacre of all the high Bharadars at the Kot, and that you are now sending orders for the murder of the present Minister, for no offense whatever: and considering that by the destruction of all those of rank and station in the Country, anarchy and ruin must eventually accrue to the Raj; we have deemed it expedient and proper to raise the Maharajadhiraj upon the throne which Your Highness have over and over again granted to him; and accordingly on the 13th of the first Jeth 1904, being Wednesday, about 4 gharis after sunset, we all joined in the elevation of the Prince to the Singhasan,<sup>25</sup> with the due observance of the customary forms and ceremonies; from which instant Sri Panch Maharajadhiraj Surendra Bikram became the Sovereign of the Mint and the legal weights and measures, and of the relations with the Emperor of China and the British Indian Government. Sri Maharajadhiraj Surendra Bikram Shah therefore being now ruler of the Raj with the aid of the Prime Minister, we cannot hereafter act under Your Highness' orders and authority. But should Your Highness desire to return, the same respect and attention shall be shown to your person as ever evinced since the period of Bhim Sen Thapa.

The Signatures of Civilians:

Gurus and Purohita -----	5	
Chautarias -----	2	
Kazis -----	5	
Kapardar -----	1	
Sardars -----	5	
Khajanchies -----	3	
Mint Master -----	1	
Head Khardar -----	1	
Raj Physicians -----	3	
Subbas -----	11	
Officers of the Adalat -----	10	
	<u>47</u>	47

Military Officers:

Colonels -----	5	
Captains -----	18	
Lieutenants -----	23	
Subedars -----	19	
Khardars -----	13	
Officers of the Military Adalat -----	3	
Jamadars -----	170	
Store Keepers -----	17	
Adjutants -----	17	
Majors -----	17	
Paymasters -----	3	
Line Havalgars -----	18	
	<u>323</u>	$\frac{323}{370}$

N.B. The above list comprises all of the several classes present at the Capital, to the exclusion only of the few who are absent.<sup>26</sup>  
12 May 1847.

\*\*\*\*\*

Resident Thoresby to Government, 22 May 1847<sup>27</sup>

*Major Thoresby forwards a Kharita of the new king in the first move towards gaining official recognition of his accession to the throne. That the Major approves is evident from his second paragraph.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose the Kharita from the Maharajadhira to the address of the Right Honorable the Governor General adverted to in my letter of yesterday's date with a translation of its contents in English. This announcement by the Prince of his having assumed the throne, on the representations made to him by many of those to whom the Lal Mohar of the Maharaja was addressed, and at their urgent solicitation, will not, I conclude, receive immediate answer, or be noticed at all, until the progress of affairs in Nepal shall indicate clearly the result of the step that has been taken.

2. The strongly complicated state of things and the protracted perseverance of the Maharaja in the line of conduct he has been persuaded to follow since he left his own country, to the imminent risk of those now in power--not excepting perhaps the Prince and his brother--and generally distasteful to that portion of the community which is possessed of any sort of influence in public affairs, may leave it doubtful whether the measure resorted to in such an emergency, is not justifiable and expedient; and indeed, to some extent, one which has been in a manner forced upon the parties concerned in its adoption.

I have, etc.

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King Surendra Bikram Shah to the Governor General, 16 May 1847<sup>28</sup>

*This official notification of King Surendra's accession is an interesting statement of Jung Bahadur's innocence of any wrong-doing. The author, whoever he might be (Jung?), makes this quite clear and also that the Crown Prince was strongly urged by 'the officers and soldiers' to ascend the throne. Recalling the Crown Prince's activities in December 1844, one wonders how strongly he had to be urged to take this step.*

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#### ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

(after the usual ceremonious form of address)

Your Lordship is aware from the Kharita written by my Father, that before setting out for Banaras, he conferred on me all the powers

appertaining to ruler of this country, and declared his intention of returning speedily to the Capital of his Raj. The same was also intimated by him personally to Captain Ottley, Officiating Resident, as will have been reported to Your Lordship by that officer, and the written orders of His Highness, addressed to me and to the servants of Government, and the public at large, on the subject, have been perused by Major Thoresby, Resident. At this time a Lal Mohar from my Father has been received, directing the officers and soldiers of the army to arrest and bring to him the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief General Jung Bahadur and all his brothers and cousins, or if there be no means of seizing them, to kill them; but to take due care of the throne and the person of the Maharajadhiraj; and that those who act not according to the tenor of the order should be destroyed with their sons and their sons' sons. On hearing this, the officers and soldiers and others came to me and represented that the General had saved the lives of the Maharaja and me and my brother when immediately endangered by family discord; and that he had since administered affairs in a most satisfactory manner, preserving the relations of amity with the British and Chinese Governments, and acting equitably in all his internal arrangements and his general management; wherefore they could not obey the order come to them, and put to death a Minister who had in all things acted so well. They also urged that, when the Maharaja was leaving Nepal, he gave them orders orally and in Lal Mohar, writing that they were to consider themselves entirely under the authority of the Maharajadhiraj, and they therefore now prayed that I would ascend the throne. In reply to this, I stated that for all the purposes of Government I was already ruler, but that my Father being still present I could not take his seat on the throne. They answered that there were not two suns in the heavens, nor two swords in one scabbard, nor two Rulers in the same Country; that they entreated me to mount the throne, when all things would be right; and even the Maharaja, putting aside any suspicion he may entertain towards the Minister, might return to live in the country. At length I consented, and on the 13th of Jeth Wednesday, 12th May, with the observance of all the customary solemnities, I took my seat upon the throne of Nepal as the sole ruling Raja hereafter.

Although Your Lordship will have received intelligence of this event from the Resident, yet in reference to the relations of friendship subsisting between the two governments, I have deemed it desirable and proper to make the announcement through the medium of a Kharita. The intelligence will, I trust, give satisfaction of all friends, and especially to Your Lordship, who may rest assured that my best endeavours shall be ever directed to the strengthening of the ties of amity and cordiality between the two States; and it is my earnest hope that Your Lordship will, in the manner heretofore observed, continue to show consideration and friendship.

True Translation

C. Thoresby, Resident Nepal

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Resident Thoresby to Government, 24 May 1847<sup>29</sup>

*Major Thoresby reports calm in Kathmandu but continued activity among the exiles. Government servants accompanying the ex-king are reported to be abandoning him, and the ex-king's plight is presented as helpless.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

On the 21st and 22nd of May I had the honor to submit a translation of the representation forwarded to the Maharaja Rajendra Bikram Shah, on the occasion of his supercession on the throne, and a Kharita from the Maharajadhiraj to the Right Honorable the Governor General with its English translation relative to the same event. Nothing of importance or interest has transpired at the Capital of Nepal within the last few days, and the usual sobriety of conduct has prevailed among all classes of people. But I regret to add that a report has been received from a distance to the effect that some thirty men have been arrested in a part of the Country opposite the Ramnagar frontier, which they had crossed in pursuance of one of Chautaria Guru Prasad's schemes for disposing of General Jung Bahadur and his friends. This party must have been dispatched some time ago, and no doubt there are many more men in the country similarly commissioned; but the decisive measure lately adopted here may probably have the effect of preventing further missions of the kind, and also of deterring most of those who had previously set out from attempting to execute the mischief they purposed, since there is an impression now prevailing that the Crown Prince is the real sovereign of the Raj, whose rule is not likely to be overborne by any proceedings on the part of his father.

2. The Maharaja at Segauli has been some days in possession of the intelligence of his deposition, but I have not yet learnt what course he intends to take, and it may be presumed that he is much puzzled at the turn of affairs, by which he is placed in a predicament that he seems never to have contemplated, as the possible result of his protracted absence and injudicious and exasperating conduct.

On first hearing of the transaction he was highly incensed, and threatened vengeance against all concerned. He also set off in person after some Sardars and sepoys, who had left his camp to return to Nepal without his permission, overtook them at the frontier and brought them back to Segauli. In this excursion of His Highness, one of our discharged sowars, whom he had employed as an orderly, inflicted two sword wounds on a Gurkha sepoy, with whom he had a scuffle on being told to stop him. The wounds are not of a dangerous nature, and His Highness made both parties give a Rajinama, or written record of satisfaction; but I thought it advisable to request Captain Phillips to procure the sowar's discharge from His Highness's service, and to have him sent away

from Segauli. I have also instructed Captain Phillips to take proper measures for preventing the resort to immoderate violence or ill-treatment towards any persons by His Highness--representing to him that such mode of proceeding could not be attended with any advantage to his interests, and would be improper while he is a guest in the British Provinces.

I have, etc.

C. Thoresby, Resident Nepal

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Government to Resident Thoresby, 26 May 1847<sup>30</sup>

*Although the Governor General seems to agree with Major Thoresby that the change in Kathmandu is probably for the better, he still counsels the Resident to strict neutrality. Ex-king Rajendra, however, is to be prevented from launching any attack against Nepal or against the authorities in Kathmandu from the Company's territories.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your several despatches (21, 22, 24, 29, 30 April and 6, 8, 12, 13, and 14 May, 1847)

2. The continued vacillation of the Maharaja and his neglecting to return to his own dominions has had the effect of inducing the Ministers and Chiefs to adopt the extreme measure of declaring the throne vacant and of installing the Crown Prince in the place of his Father.
3. The Governor General was prepared for this measure, which is, under the peculiar circumstances, probably the best that could have been adopted for securing the tranquillity of the Country, and His Lordship is under no apprehensions that the change in the ruling authority will affect in any degree the present friendly relation existing between this Government and that of Nepal.
4. I am further instructed to apprise you of His Lordship's intention to adhere strictly to the neutral policy hitherto observed. You will therefore carefully abstain from any interference with parties in Kathmandu.
5. So long as the ex-Maharaja continues to reside in our territories, care will be taken to pay him the attention due to his rank, but it will be necessary to keep a watchful eye over his proceedings, with a view to prevent his collecting within our territories any body of followers for the purpose of endeavouring to regain his lost position in Nepal.

I have, etc.

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## Footnotes to Chapter Eleven

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 30 January 1847, No. 204.
2. Foreign Secret Consultation 24 April 1847, No. 115.
3. Foreign Secret Consultation 24 April 1847, No. 103; slightly edited.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation 24 April 1847, No. 105; not edited.
5. Foreign Secret Consultation 24 April 1847, No. 108; slightly edited.
6. Foreign Secret Consultation 24 April 1847, No. 109; not edited.
7. The guard of Nepal troops in camp as of the 8th April was estimated at less than 300 men. Foreign Secret Consultation, 24 April 1847, No. 110.
8. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 177; slightly edited.
9. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 180; slightly edited.
10. These letters have not been included in this collection.
11. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 183; slightly edited.
12. Jung Bahadur bases his defense on his claim that the Queen ordered him to kill her enemies.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 186; slightly edited.
14. Near Ghusot was the estate of Kazi Subba Hira Lal Jha, where the Raja apparently planned to spend the rainy season. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 185.
15. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 187; slightly edited.
16. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 188; not edited.
17. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 July 1847; No. 188; slightly edited.
18. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 192; not edited.
19. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 193; slightly edited.
20. 'Note: This communication was never made by His Highness, it is said.'
21. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 194; slightly edited.

- 22, 'Note: When in March last it was reported that the Maharaja was returning from Banaras accompanied by most of the Nepal fugitives, and the Minister proceeded to Hetaunda to meet His Highness, he took an escort of 2 Regiments.' C.T.
23. Magh: January-February.
24. Jeth: May-June.
25. Singhasan: throne.
26. Thoresby did not provide the actual names in his translation.
27. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 195; not edited. .
28. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 196; not edited.
29. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 197; not edited.
30. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 189; not edited.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### The Royal Captive

Rajendra Bikram rejected the announcement that the Crown Prince had been installed as King of Nepal and had received the submission of the whole of the Darbar and the military. He simply refused to accept as fact the report that the army of Nepal was no longer loyal to him.

In late July Rajendra crossed the Nepal-Company border and settled down at Alao. Five days later a surprise attack in the early hours of the morning caught his camp unaware and the ex-king was taken captive. This ended what many historians have considered an invasion of Nepal by an army of dissidents under the leadership of ex-King Rajendra.

Resident Thoresby was convinced this version was true and wrote a letter in this vein to the Joint Magistrate of Champaran, within whose jurisdiction such an invading army must have been assembled. The Magistrate was absolutely insistent that this did not take place. He placed on record a very strong argument to the effect that Rajendra had crossed the border with no more than his own camp retainers and a small body of well-wishers. He stated as fact that, after months of waiting on the frontier, Rajendra decided to cross the border into Nepal only after he had received a letter from someone in Nepal.

When the captive Rajendra reached Kathmandu, he wrote a letter to the Governor General in which he admitted to having led an army across the border. Even the Governor General, however, felt inclined to reject this letter as bearing too many signs of having been written under compulsion.

One may indeed ask the very pertinent question: 'Did Jung Bahadur entice the ex-king across the border precisely that he might take him captive, end the confusion about the throne, and secure at last the Governor General's recognition of King Surendra Bikram?' The answer to this question may indeed not be known with any degree of certainty.

For Rajendra the answer made little difference. He was taken captive, sent to Bhadgaon (Bhaktapur) to be confined in the old Malla palace, and retained there until he no longer presented any danger to the administration.

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Rajendra Bikram to General Jung Bahadur, 4 June 1847<sup>1</sup>

*Refusing to accept the fact that a permanent change has been made, Rajendra offers to maintain Jung in power on the condition that he hand over the Pajani (which represented the real power of government) and negotiate rights to Sikkim with the Resident. An amazing offer really, and one that Jung handles in his reply with the ease of one sure of his position.*

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## ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

The representations of all connected with the Government that they are acting under you and cannot receive orders from me, has displeased me greatly. If you will deny all knowledge of this matter, give up the Pajani<sup>2</sup> of the 17 Regiments entirely to me, and talk over the Resident in regard to the Sikkim road<sup>3</sup>--provided you do these three things, you shall be my left arm, and I will overwhelm you with favours. But if you do not agree, it will be the worse for you, and you shall know me to be your determined enemy.

I am not angry that you caused Sher Mardan and Dambar Singh, who sought your life with a false Lal Mohar, to be executed, on confession of their crime. You only did as I had before authorised you by Lal Mohar to do. You are aware that there have been many instances wherein Lal Mohars have been obtained surreptitiously and abused. I questioned Kazi Jagat Bam Pandey and Kazi Shamsher Jung Pandey, and they protested that they have never plotted your death and knew nothing of Sher Mardan and Dambar Singh. I also sent them to the Magistrate at Motihari to certify to that effect. Whatever they tell me hereafter shall be communicated to you, so rest satisfied. You may rely on my taking every care for the preservation of the lives, property, and honor of you and your brothers, and all connected with you. As the administration of affairs has been solemnly given to you there, in like manner I will bestow the grant of it upon you for five years, on the condition that you obtain from the Resident there a letter to my address stating that the Sikkim Province, east of the Mechi and west of the Tista, is at the disposal of the Nepal Raj. If you can manage to have an agreement executed between the Sarkar Company and the Sarkar Nepal, to the effect that in lieu of this Province, land of equal value upon the frontier shall be given to the Ruler of Sikkim by the Nepal State, I will confirm you in the Pajani of the 17 Battalions; but if you cannot do this much, I will take away the command of the said 17 Corps and make the Pajani myself. I promise to you and your brothers, and all your friends, life, property, and honor. On this point entertain not the least doubt.

True Translation

C. Thoresby, Resident Nepal

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Jung Bahadur to Rajendra Bikram, 14 June 1847<sup>4</sup>

## ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

(Acknowledges receipt of the Lal Mohar, repeating contents)

Your Highness has not taken into consideration that the office of Minister was bestowed on me by yourself and the Maharajadhiraj. This appointment was confirmed by the latter after his accession. In accordance with this arrangement, the officers of Government, etc., in their

letter to Your Highness, declared that they would hereafter yield obedience to the orders of the occupant of the throne, as received from the Minister. They did not state that they were inclined to obey orders given by the Minister and not emanating from the occupant of the throne, or opposed to such. Pray attend to this distinction, and you will perceive that there is nothing for me to deny the knowledge of. I am merely acting as Minister and do nothing on my own authority. The new occupant of the throne, having put under me the 17 Regiments with their Pajanies and directed me to make the Pajani arrangements in reference to the ensuing Sambat year 1905, it is not in my power to set aside that order and suggest that the said Pajani be made in Your Highness' name. In regard to opening the road in the Sikkim country, or rather appropriation of that Province, the consent of the Resident would never be given, and the Maharajadhiraj would never sanction a measure by which must be compromised the relations of amity subsisting with the British and the Chinese. Your Highness cannot have forgotten the answer which was given to your former attempts on this point. I have not become Minister under a promise that I will open the Sikkim Road, or bring Gold mines, or fix the boundary at the Ganga, or obtain 17 crores of rupees.<sup>5</sup> I can do nothing that will disturb the present good understanding with the British Resident and Chinese Government. Though, if the Country were invaded without cause, I would then do my utmost for the preservation of the Raj. Those who were to open the Sikkim Road, bring gold mines, fix the boundary at the Ganges, and procure 17 crores of treasure are now, in their own persons or through their heirs, present with Your Highness; but such feats depend on more than mere words for existence.

(There is much more in the original which need not be translated. Among other points, the Maharaja is upbraided for attempting the life of one to whom he owed his and his two sons' lives. C. Thoresby)

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Rajendra Bikram to the Kathmandu Darbar, 4 June 1847<sup>6</sup>

*This is an important letter. Rajendra Bikram asks a number of penetrating questions in this letter that are truly germane. However, the time when the Darbar was willing to listen to such questions has long passed, as their answer to Rajendra Bikram clearly indicates.*

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#### ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

Your petition has been received and the contents duly noted. As you state, it is true that the villains Bir Dhoj and Dalmardan did seek the lives of myself and two sons, and that the Minister, General Jung Bahadur saved us by putting them to death, whereto he was authorized by my Lal Mohar. Out of gratitude for his conduct on this occasion, I bestowed on him the title of Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief General

Jung Bahadur Kunwar and, appointing him Mukhtiyar-Minister, departed for Banaras. In the matter of the proceedings at the Kot, I desired the Maharani to enquire into the murder of General Gagan Singh and on conviction to punish the offenders, according to their rank and caste, by putting them to death, blinding them, or, in the case of Brahmans, turning them out of the Country with disgrace; but not to inflict punishment without the confession of the parties. Why, after my departure from the Kot, did she cause 31 persons, some of them my kinsmen and others high Servants of the State, to be killed? Why did she exile the Gurus? Why did she exalt those who had taken part in the destruction of the guiltless Bharadars? Why did the Maharani and General Jung Bahadur and the other Bharadars tell me on my return from Patan that they and the troops were all implicated in the execution of the Kot, and there was no help for it? Surely you were not all active parties in the business, and I do not call you all to account on that score. Neither do I question the conduct of those who by my orders put to death Bir Dhoj and Dal Mardan, and then placed the Maharani in restraint. What I want is to ascertain who among the Bharadars were killed by order of the Kanchi Maharani, and how many were sacrificed by those engaged, without orders; and for this purpose I want to confront the former and the latter and do justice impartially. I did not conspire with the Maharani to have my kinsmen killed in the Kot. My grant to her of the powers of life and death and of giving and taking in all matters, was intended to be exercised under my concurrence, so that she should execute justice, and not perform her own will in a capricious manner. I am abiding at Segauli for the purpose of doing justice in regard to the deaths, in the Kot, and to the expulsion of families and the Gurus from the Country at an ungenial time of the year. Not until I can perform this act, will I proceed on to Nepal. I know nothing about the affair in which Sher Mardan and Dambar Singh were concerned, and for which they are said to have been deservedly executed. They were not sent by me to assassinate General Jung Bahadur, and the Lal Mohar was forged. What you have addressed to me may be attributed to depravation of mind, caused in some by the share they took in the slaughter of the Kot, and the effect in others of the sin of keeping company knowingly with the former. In forwarding to me the paper received, you have set up the flag of treason and your petition is rejected.

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The Kathmandu Dardar to Rajendra Bikram, 17 June 1847<sup>8</sup>

#### ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

We have received Your Highness' Lal Mohar, and have heard with respect its contents as follows--etc. You upbraid us with raising the standard of treason, etc., wishing us to act violently towards a Minister, whom you formerly appointed to the office out of gratitude for the service he performed in saving the lives of yourself and sons, which appointment has been confirmed and renewed by the new



Sovereign Maharajadhiraj, and in whose public conduct we see nothing to condemn, or that is calculated to do aught than benefit the general welfare. In receiving and obeying the lawful orders of your appointed Minister, or the Minister of the reigning Sovereign, we cannot have acted treasonably at any time; though we might justly incur that censure by now adopting conduct of defiance towards him and his present Master, under whose authority he is acting. With respect to all that Your Highness has said touching the affair at the Kot, etc., and your desire to have justice done: you gave supreme power into the hands of the Maharani as is known to all; the orders that issued from her mouth at the Kot were heard by the officers of the troops present, who are ready to certify them; Your Highness yourself stated in a Lal Mohar given to Jung Bahadur some time afterwards, and the Maharani alone was to blame, since she had ordered the massacre; the guilt of murder therefore does not attach to us, but to the person who gave the orders of death and expulsion. In regard to the question of presenting nazars for the ranks confirmed on us by the Maharani, as she was absolute and made the grants, the return of offerings were given as matter of course. As for Your Highness' wish to do justice by confronting us and the Maharani, in order to ascertain who were killed with her orders and who without--We did not put to death anyone of our own accord and on our own responsibility, and we are ready to obey any orders issuing from the Maharajadhiraj upon the throne in the matter of the enquiry proposed. But Your Highness can hardly have forgotten that the Maharani stated to you and the Maharajadhiraj in the Ranga Mahal of Bhandar Khal that those who were dead had been killed by her order; and the Lal Mohar in which is commanded that the Maharani shall be implicitly obeyed in all things, both in your presence and in your absence can be shown to the refugees if they choose to call for it. That Your Highness should be the first of your race to vest such power in his Rani, is indeed a subject worthy of your highest regret; and the friends and relatives of the deceased have to regret that their fathers and uncles and elder brothers did not make proper representations on the occasion and cause the Lal Mohar to be cancelled, instead of counter-signing it. But it is useless to be angry and upbraid us for the result.

When the Bharadars were massacred there were two Rajas, a Rani supreme, and four Mukhtiyar Ministers in the country. A repetition of this state of things would have caused the final ruin of the Kingdom of Sri Maharaja Prithvinarayan Shah. From which consideration, with the general concurrence, we have raised the rightful heir to the throne, whereon he had already been seated by Your Highness. In so doing we have acted in good faith and not in a spirit of treason. This arrangement shall stand, or shall only fall with the ruin of the State, Your Highness may be fully assured. Hereafter we cannot consent to receive or reply to any communication from Your Highness.

True Translation

C. Thoresby, Resident Nepal

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Government to Resident Thoresby, 7 June 1847<sup>9</sup>

*The Governor General expresses approval of the change in Kathmandu, but declines to extend official recognition to King Surendra Bikram until it becomes clear what line of conduct Rajendra Bikram will take.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of the 17, 21, 22, 24, and 28th of May.

2. The apprehension of two emissaries sent to Kathmandu by the ex-Maharaja with a document signed by His Highness authorizing any of his subjects to seize, and if necessary to put the Minister to death, seems to have hastened the event of substituting the Son for the Father.

3. The notoriety of the ex-Maharaja's weakness of character, the baneful influence exercised by the Rani over His Highness, and her attempts to bring about the death of the Crown Prince for the purpose of placing her own sons on the throne, are facts which would have rendered it extremely hazardous for the Prince and the Minister to have deferred any longer taking this decisive step. Delay would probably have led to the risk of renewed struggles for power, and although the accession of the new Sovereign is an event, owing to his defects of character, which affords slender grounds for expecting any marked improvement in the Government of Nepal, the Governor General is nevertheless confirmed in his opinion, that the course pursued is under all circumstances the best that could have been adopted for the tranquillity of the country.

4. It is not the intention of the Governor General to recognize the new Sovereign until the line which the ex-Maharaja may be disposed to take shall have been ascertained. There is no point of policy which renders it inexpedient to defer the recognition, nor on the other hand, is there any inconvenience in the delay. It is moreover desirable that the British Government should show no haste in recognizing changes brought about by the family quarrels of independent States.

5. The Governor General need not press upon you the policy of abstaining from any marks of approbation--and His Lordship entirely approves of your refusal to attend the usual ceremonies on the occasion of the Prince's accession.

6. These internal dissensions will unavoidably tend to keep the Nepal Government in a state of weakness for some time to come, but the Governor General will take an early opportunity to inform the ex-Maharaja of his determination to prevent on his part any resort to force or hostile demonstration whilst His Highness remains on our frontier.

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I have, etc.

Rajendra Bikram to Resident Thoresby, May 1847<sup>10</sup>

*The ex-king writes to the Resident to oppose the change that has taken place in the Nepal Darbar. The ex-king's objective was clearly to block the granting of official British recognition of the change.*

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ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

(after the address)

The presence of a person of your judgement and experience will, I am assured, afford protection to both the Maharajadhiraj and the Mahila Sahib Second Prince. Whatever authority they now, or shall hereafter have can only give me satisfaction. General Jung Bahadur has ousted my authority and introduced his own. This shall nowise be. I will put it aside and bring everything under my own authority. I gave authority to the Maharani that, taking instructions from the Maharajadhiraj, she should give her orders in all matters. In the absence of orders from me and the Maharajadhiraj, she acted in concert with General Jung Bahadur, giving him orders in pursuance of which he and his brothers and other bad men killed all the officers of high rank at the Kot. Wherefore I have set her aside and will never more give her authority. In like manner Jung Bahadur has taken all authority to himself by which many have suffered and myself have been put to trouble and inconvenience. Such a Minister is not approved by me. I will not give authority to him or his brothers or to any Kunwars, but pushing all aside will myself exercise authority in the command of the army and other matters. Pray write to me in detail of what is passing, and respecting your health, by which I shall be much gratified.

True Translation

C. Thoresby, Resident Nepal

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Resident Thoresby to Rajendra Bikram, May 1847<sup>11</sup>

*Major Thoresby takes great pains to maintain a neutral posture in his reply to Rajendra Bikram, but he cannot resist telling the ex-king that his tardiness in returning to Nepal from Banaras has caused the change in the Darbar.*

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## ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

(The complimentary address, etc.)

The Maharajadhiraj and 2nd Prince are both well and happy; and in conformity with the usage of the Darbar, all the public business is transacted by the orders of the Maharajadhiraj. It would appear that although Your Highness' return, agreeably to your engagement, was earnestly expected by all classes of people in Nepal, Your Highness has been misled and induced to remain below by the representatives of those who were exiles and fugitives. Had Your Highness acted differently, your return might have been of benefit to these persons below, and here there would have been no motive prompting any sort of change, but all would have gone well. This observation is made in the spirit of friendship and good will. Further, there are no events of very recent occurrence here to be communicated to Your Highness, etc., etc., etc.

True Translation

C. Thoresby, Resident Nepal

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Government to Major Thoresby, 24 July 1847<sup>12</sup>

*The Governor General explains clearly the critical question that must be answered before the British government can recognize Surendra Bikram as King of Nepal.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your letters of the 17th May, 7th, 16th, 26th, and 29th June, and the 1st and 5th of July, and to inform you that the precautionary measures taken by you for preventing the assemblage of large bodies of men within the British territories for the purpose of aiding the ex-Maharaja to regain power are satisfactory, being in accordance with the neutral policy laid down by this Government.

2. You have rightly understood your instructions in considering yourself authorized in all the Darbar ceremonies to show the Prince all the courtesies usual on such occasions.

3. In reference to the 7th paragraph of your letter of the 29th June, in which you state your opinion that although you have hitherto taken a neutral line, the time has arrived for the Governor General to recognize the Crown Prince as Maharaja, I am directed to communicate to you His Lordship's sentiments on this point to the following effect.

4. As a general principle it is desirable that in all cases of disputed succession or of family struggles for power amongst Indian Princes who are by treaty independent of the British Government and in whose internal affairs we have no desire to meddle, the British Government should be in no haste to recognize the successful party.

5. In the present instance the son has supplanted the father whilst the latter was absent on a pilgrimage to Banaras, escorted by British troops. The position in which the Crown Prince appears to have been placed, after he had been left by his father with full authority at Kathmandu, was such as to justify the adoption of the advice given to him by the Minister, by the Chiefs, and by the officers of the army to ascend the throne, having apprized the ex-Maharaja of the inevitable consequences of further delay. The justification rests very much in the necessity of the step taken, by which in all probability the Crown Prince saved his own life and preserved the tranquillity of the Country.

6. Under ordinary circumstances the decision on such a question would rest simply on these grounds--has sufficient time been given to enable the deposed father to ascertain the temper of his subjects and to come to an arrangement with his son? The Governor General is disposed to agree with you that our acknowledgement need not be any longer deferred if there were no other circumstances connected with this change of sovereigns. But the circumstances to which His Lordship alludes are very remarkable. The Prince is at this moment in the power of the Minister Jung Bahadur. That individual has obtained power by means the most revolting to humanity, in point of fact it is the terror of his sanguinary proceedings which is the cause of the ex-Maharaja's not daring to return to his own Capital. Without doubt much is to be attributed to the Maharaja's own weakness of character, and the change of rulers may be advantageous to the State. But the Governor General cannot exclude from view the conduct of the Minister. First he acts as the instrument of the Maharani's vengeance, or of her ambitious projects for placing her son on the throne, and upwards of 30 Chiefs are massacred in the Hall of Audience, the friends and adherents of the Maharaja and the Crown Prince. For this atrocious act he is rewarded by the Maharani, being appointed by her to be Minister and nominated to the command of the 16 Regiments at Kathmandu. During the next 8 days he declines to obey the Maharani's orders to put the Crown Prince to death, and applies to the Maharaja to destroy 16 or 18 persons of influence, the friends of the Maharani, which act under his personal directions is carried into effect. Then followed the order to send the Maharani to Banaras, the General remaining as Minister at Kathmandu.

7. The Minister therefore is deeply implicated in these transactions and the alarm which these acts of violence has excited as the real motive of the ex-Maharaja in not venturing to return to Kathmandu. The early recognition of the Prince whose ascension to the throne has been preceded by such crimes had better be avoided by the course already indicated-- viz. to afford time for the father and the son to come to an arrangement. If the ex-Maharaja had accepted the proposal of a pension of 3 lakhs a

year, an acknowledgement of the de facto ruler would have followed as a matter of course.

8. On the other hand it is impossible to permit the ex-Maharaja to remain on the frontier within our territory, concerting plots for the assassination of the Minister, or for carrying on other designs by which a neighbouring and friendly power is kept in a state of suspense and agitation. The Governor General therefore directs that you will explain to the ex-Maharaja that by our laws he cannot be allowed to remain on the frontier for such purposes, and that he must withdraw either to Banaras or to any other place which His Highness may select, at a distance of not less than 100 miles from the Nepalese frontier. You will add that you had hoped that some arrangement between His Highness and his son might have been made, rendering any interference on the part of the Governor General unnecessary; if however His Highness should think proper to persevere in declining the proposals which you are given to understand have been made by the Prince, in that case, affording to His Highness a further delay of 14 days after the receipt of your communication, it will, you will further intimate, be the duty of the British authorities, under the Governor General's orders, now addressed to you, to escort His Highness from the frontier with such attendants as he may be pleased to select--assuring him of every attention from those to whom the duty may be entrusted.

9. The retirement of the ex-Maharaja from the frontier, you will observe, must be the act of the Resident under the instructions of the Governor General, and in no respect originate in any solicitation on the part of the Nepal Government. The same explanation as is given to the ex-Maharaja, will of course be tendered to the Prince. Pending the result of this communication to the ex-Maharaja, and until His Highness' determination is known, the Governor General will defer, as mentioned in a preceding paragraph, the formal recognition of the Prince's succession.

10. This mode of proceeding, His Lordship remarks, cannot fail to be appreciated at Kathmandu. You will continue to persevere in the same judicious course by which your whole conduct has been marked since your arrival at Kathmandu, of firmly but courteously making the Nepal Government understand that it is their interest to seek to be on friendly terms with the Government of India--and if an opportunity should occur by any allusion being made to objects such as those contained in the translated paper enclosed in your despatch of 26 June relating to Sikkim, you will deprecate in the most peremptory terms the entertainment of such views of encroachment, as being highly improper and offensive. A firm tone is to be reconciled with the most conciliatory manner. The Governor General makes this observation now, because a few years ago the language and demeanor of the British Resident on some occasions at Kathmandu almost approached to a submissive tone, calculated to impress the Rulers of a Native State with an erroneous opinion of their own importance in our estimation.

11. The Governor General approves of your communications with the Magistrate of Gorakhpur.

I have, etc.

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Resident Thoresby to Government, 30 July 1847<sup>13</sup>

*Major Thoresby reports the capture by Nepalese forces of Rajendra Bikram and supplies a few details of the encounter.*

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Sir,

This morning's post brought me a letter from the ex-Raja of Nepal, dated: Alao Kachahari, Monday 26th July, and forwarded through Captain Phillips, via Segauli. His Highness states that he left Segauli and reached Alao on Friday the 23rd, and intends to proceed on to Nepal in a few days; that with reference to the friendship subsisting between the British and Nepal Governments, there is no fear of anything, and 'our persons' will be taken care of; that the Governor General commissioned me to Nepal to preserve the ties of amity, and I have in all points hitherto acted as could be wished; and will no doubt continue to care for the safety of the Maharajadhiraj and his brother; that His Highness hears Jung Bahadur Kunwar is abstracting money from the Darbar treasury and forwarding it to the low country;<sup>14</sup> wherefore he writes to request that Jung Bahadur may not be allowed to do anything so flagrantly wrong, and that I will be so good as to look after him.

2. This is the last letter I can receive from the wrong-headed, misguided Maharaja, who is now a prisoner at Makwanpur. In the evening of the 28th July a report was received here from Captain Sanak Singh, to the effect that he had that day, the 26th, reached Simrahasa, between Bichakoe and Bisaulia with from 300 to 400 men of his Regiment, and had obtained intelligence of the enemy amounting to 1500 or 1600 men of all sorts, in the vicinity of Alao village. That he hoped to be joined the next day by a party of 100 men, for which he had applied to Makwanpur, and should then march on the attack on the evening of the 29th. His report of the 27th stated that the reinforcement from Makwanpur had not arrived, but that he had proceeded to Bisaulia, whence he planned to march about 10 o'clock at night, to reach the enemy's position before daybreak of Wednesday the 28th, adding that in a night attack all errors in regard to casualties among the opponents must be pardoned. At 10 o'clock last night, the 29th, a few lines written soon after day-break on Wednesday announced that the attack had been made, that Guru Prasad, Bir Bikram Shah, and Jagat Bam Pandey had fled across the frontier, and it was not known what had become of the Maharaja. The last report, written a few hours afterward on the same day and read this morning, gave intelligence of the capture of the Maharaja, whom it was

proposed to escort to Makwanpur forthwith, and stated that the bodies of the following individuals had been found among the slain: Captain Kirti Bir Thapa, Kumedan Amar Satra, Subedar Buddhiman Karki, the Raja of Gopalpur in the British territory, Kumedan Sri Bhagat Khabas, and Subha Kalu, with those of 60 or 70 private men. On the side of the attackers no men were killed, and only 5 or 6 were wounded.

3. The affair appears to have been well arranged, and very successful, with the exception of the escape of Guru Prasad and Jagat Bam Pandey. These men, after beguiling the Maharaja and leading him into danger, seem to have been culpably negligent of his preservation, and to have basely deserted him at the hour of need.<sup>15</sup> Though they had succeeded in deceiving His Highness as to the inviolability of his person and the feeling towards him in Nepal, and especially among the soldiery, it is scarcely to be imagined that they could have deceived themselves. Yet they allowed their position to be surprised by a Regiment marched all the way from Kathmandu to oppose them, and then took to flight, when every tie of honor and duty called upon them strongly to fight to the death, either for complete success or to ensure the safe escape of the Maharaja.

4. The fate of the Gopalpur Raja, who had brought aid in men, will not be considered entirely undeserved.

I have, etc.

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Resident Thoresby to Government, 3 August 1847<sup>16</sup>

*Major Thoresby provides greater detail on the engagement between the Nepalese forces and Rajendra Bikram's camp and provides information on Rajendra Bikram's progress towards Kathmandu.*

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Sir,

I have the honor to report that all the troops detached from Nepal, in consequence of the reports received as to the incursion of the refugees into the Nepalese Tarai, have returned to the Capital within the last two days, inclusive of the Corps which had reached the Tarai and there made the attack at Alao.

2. By the accounts written subsequently to the hurried reports of Captain Sanak Singh, it would seem that this attack was made about 3 o'clock a.m. of the 28th July, and that it was chiefly aimed at the small village of Alao, in the Kachahari of which the ex-Maharaja was known to have taken up his quarters, and where it was supposed the principal refugees also would be found. The firing of the Maharaja's sentries, placed outside the village, gave the first warning of the approach of



the assailants, after which confusion prevailed on both sides. But as there was no determined opposition made, the attacking party pressed on to surround the kachahari buildings, killing all who came in their way, and eventually made the Maharaja prisoner; though at first not aware that they had captured him, as appeared from Sanak Singh's first despatch from Alao.

3. The number of killed has been reduced to between 50 and 60 in the total. It has turned out that the Raja of Gopalpur effected his escape, whilst Babu Ram Bakhsh Singh of Belaghat, Gorakhpur, not before named, who was maternal uncle to the Maharaja, was among the slain. In the confusion there were several persons killed whose fate is regretted, and the uncle is one of them.

4. The ex-Maharaja has been escorted from Makwanpur to Chisa Garhi. I am informed by the Darbar that it is intended to lodge him for the present at Kewalpur village, situated about 10 miles west of Kathmandu, where there are large houses suitable for his accommodation.

I have, etc.

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Resident Thoresby to Government, 9 August 1847<sup>17</sup>

*Rajendra Bikram returns to Kathmandu and meets many old friends and well-wishers. He is thereafter escorted to Bhadgaon (Bhaktapur) where he is to be detained.*

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Sir,

For the information of the Right Honorable the Governor General, I have the honor to report that the ex-Maharaja was escorted yesterday to the town of Bhadgaon, where he had expressed a desire to be located. The procession passed close to the city of Kathmandu, and on its arrival near the parade ground en route, a royal salute was fired in front of the artillery shed. At Bhadgaon His Highness is to occupy the large Darbar building, which was formerly the palace of the Newar Rajas of the place, as a retired Sovereign under surveillance. He has publicly declared his agreement to the accession of his son, calling him the Maharaja and saying that when he has occasion to write, agreeably to custom, he shall place his /son's/ name above his own, and use the Kesari or yellow seal in place of the Lal Mohars.

2. His Highness' late interview with his former subjects must have been rather an interesting scene. There were above two hundred of them in attendance, a great many of whom were admitted to pay their respects and present their nazars, though, as the apartment was confined, at different times. The summary of what passed appears to have been: on the

part of His Highness: enquiries after health, expressions of pleasure at meeting again, and finding they were not the ingrates he had been told; with repetitions of his having been kept back by bad persons from returning to them as he had promised, under which circumstance they had acted properly. On their part, they were glad to see His Highness looking so well; had long anxiously expected his return, until at last, seeing no prospect of that event, they had become the subjects of the Maharajadhiraj, now their Maharaja.

3. In the more private Darbar, His Highness talked a good deal, and with much sang froid. He abused his late friends below very liberally for having imposed on him in the way they had done; thanked General Jung Bahadur for the care which the soldiers had taken of his person, when he was deserted by the party that had persuaded him to come to Alao; said that Guru Prasad and Jagat Bam Pandey told him they had raised several regiments,<sup>18</sup> and introduced some of the officers to him to pay their nazars; that when it was known that troops were coming down to the Tarai from Kathmandu, he wished to cross the frontier, and had actually set out on the 27th and proceeded some distance with that intention, when he met Bhim Bikram Shah coming from Bettiah with 200 or 300 men, who, with Guru Prasad and Jagat Bam Pandey, induced him to retrace his steps to Alao, by the language they held. These three men, the Guru Rangnath, Hira Lal Subha, and Shamsheer Jung Pandey, were, he stated the persons who had the most influence in misleading him throughout. He had been persuaded to grant five Lal Mohar parwanas of similar import to the one forwarded to Nepal by Jagat Bam Pandey and Shamsheer Jung Pandey through Dal Mardan and companion; that four of them had been given to Guru Prasad, Kan Ujwal Singh, Thir Bikram Thapa, and Sing Bir Pandey, from whom he wished them to be recovered if practicable through the Resident, together with a Kharita which Rangnath Pandit had procured from him at Segauli. He likewise observed that he ought not to have allowed himself to be dissuaded from acting on the advice he had received from the Resident on two different occasions, when in either case all could have been well.

4. The foregoing are some of the numerous remarks which I have been informed His Highness made. He appeared to be perfectly at ease, and the talk was of course chiefly on his side, for he was treated with as much courtesy as if he had been still on the throne. Moreover, he seems to have offered so many explanations and told so much of his own accord, that the most inquisitive persons in regard to His Highness' motives for his proceedings below, and what passed there, would have found but little to say, without going to the extent of questioning the sincerity or truth of what he heard.

5. The events which have recently taken place within the Nepal territory render inapplicable the instructions contained in your letter of the 24th July, received a few days ago, in reference to the conduct to be held towards the ex-Maharaja residing upon the frontier. On the whole, though it is to be regretted that many lives were lost in the affair at Alao village, yet the attempt made by His Highness and the

refugees, in spite of all that was done to discourage and prevent such a line of proceeding, may be considered so far satisfactory, that it has served to remove all doubt as to the stability, under the present circumstance, of the new order of Government. In the issue there is, I think, no ground for a shadow of disappointment. The day of the return of His Highness, with the party he had espoused below, to be followed by the Maharani, would have been a dark day for Nepal. And there is no reason for supposing that those who could have got into office are in any respect preferable to the men they would have supplanted, and whose places they had already begun to dispute for among themselves.

6. I never saw cause to believe that dread had anything to do with His Highness' reluctance to return to Nepal in a peaceable way. He has never assigned such reason, and he once told Captain Phillips that it had no existence. The present Maharaja may doubtless, in some points of view, be considered to be in the power of the Minister; but in what degree the latter could venture, if inclined, to abuse his ascendancy, may probably be deemed a very questionable point, with due reference to the spirit of the Prince and the public feeling.

7. The massacres were assuredly such acts of atrocity as could only have occurred in a barbarous country, and under a very weak or wicked ruler. The assassination of Gagan Singh, which gave rise to the first of them, might possibly be ascribed, without any great violence to inferential reasoning, to the individual who was most interested in the honor of the Lady with whom he was too intimate;<sup>19</sup> and if credit be given to the assassin Lal Jha, the business was arranged in the most natural way through the other Ministers. In the massacre of the Basnyats, it would appear that the then critical state of matters urged prompt action. Though it may be impossible to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to the absolute necessity that existed for the precise course that was pursued, at all events, the outcome was thought to be so doubtful, that the horses of the ultimately successful party were held in readiness to convey their owners to the plains in case of failure.

I have, etc.

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Joint Magistrate, Champaran, to Resident Thoresby, 13 August 1847<sup>20</sup>

*Smarting under the accusation that he has not done his duty well, the Joint Magistrate of Champaran offers a long explanation of what has been done. He also severely challenges the argument that Rajendra Bikram was leading an attack on Jung Bahadur's government. If what the Magistrate says is true, this could seriously change the interpretation of events regarding the transfer of power from Rajendra Bikram to Surendra Bikram.*

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Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 27th July, I have the honor to inform you that in conformity with your desire for the arrest of Bhim Bikram Shah, I immediately sent an officer in search of him, but learned that on his return from the ex-Maharaja's camp at Alao, he left this district, en route, he said, for Banaras. Of the other refugees of note, Jagat Ram Pandey and his brother Shamsher Jung (which latter did not cross the frontier) are at present at Joogeea, in my Bettiah Thanah, and Guru Prasad Shah has gone down, I am informed, to Calcutta.

2. You will readily believe that I have been equally astonished and grieved at the degree of reliance you appear to have given to the reports you received about the collection of bodies of armed men in this District. I have not been a careless, though calm, observer of the proceedings of the ex-Maharaja and his party amongst the refugees, as well as amongst those of our subjects who are said to have favored him. Being upon the spot, and hearing both sides of the question, I have had a fair opportunity of learning what has been done, though I profess to know little or nothing of what has been secretly planned by people so very close and reserved as the Nepalese. And I have no hesitation in declaring that the reports alluded to were fabrications.

3. I am sorry to say that the Maharaja of Bettiah is by no means what I would desire in a person of his high rank and far-extended influence, but I was unfeignedly surprised at the ground on which he was charged with aiding in the invasion of Nepal! as per extract from your letter:

'A considerable force is in progress towards the frontier to oppose the invaders. It would appear that this expedition was finally arranged at Bettiah and that many elephants have been furnished by the Raja of that place both to the refugees and the ex-Raja for its facilitation.'

When the ex-Maharaja was returning from Banaras through Saran, the Collector of that District issued most stringent orders, I believe, to the Maharaja of Bettiah, desiring him to exert himself to the very utmost in supplying His Highness with everything he could possibly require. I also called upon him for aid shortly afterwards. He saw that my Nazir,<sup>21</sup> and, latterly, a special Amin<sup>22</sup> were deputed by me to attend His Highness' wants, and that every intimation of a desire to move his camp was followed by a collection through my subordinates of bearers, coolies, and carts. Above all, he saw an European Officer with 200 sowars,<sup>23</sup> appointed by the highest authority in the country, as a guard of honor, and he knew that any proved want on his part of attention to His Highness' reasonable demands might by law subject him to a fine of Rs. 1,000. Yet, on the strength of his having conformed to His Highness' wish for some elephants (14 was, I believe, the exact number sent) to carry his heavy baggage, at a time when carts were next to useless, he is reported to you to have facilitated the invasion of the Nepalese territory. A hard case truly;

especially since the general belief here was that the present Government of Nepal, far from opposing, was most anxious for His Highness to recross the boundary.

4. So far was the Bettiah Raja from intriguing with the refugees last cold season, that for a long time, if not up to this time, some point of Native Etiquette in which neither party would give way prevented all personal communication with those residing in Bettiah. His intercourse with Jagat Bam Pandey and others at Joogeea it would be difficult to adduce in proof of his connection with or knowledge of any plots in which they have been or are supposed to have been engaged, inasmuch as they have been on friendly terms with him for some time past, and hold some of his villages in farm.

Of his intriguing with the ex-Maharaja, I have been unable to obtain the slightest trace. On the other hand, I was told that when His Highness visited Bettiah, he expected an invitation to stay in the Raj Baris, but the Raja, though he made him a noble present (which got a very shabby return) was not inclined to have him as his guest, and did not even admit him into the Sheesah Umkhul, which is his usual reception room.

All this I state subject to correction--but if your opinion of his conduct prove just, I shall be much surprised. Other considerations apart, he has for several months been so seriously ill, that he has been unable to attend to his own affairs; and would, I believe, most gladly have been spared the trouble and expense he has incurred on His Highness' account.

5. Of the Raja of Gopalpur, too I am bound to say that it is a well known fact that he left most of his attendants at Segauli, and was attended only by his bearers and 4 sowars. He once, as a connection of the ex-Maharaja, received a present of Rs. 90,000 and told me that he expected to be dismissed with a handsome present on this occasion--which expectation alone led him across the border. It may be presumed that he did not go to fight with the escort above stated.

6. That the idea of the present Nepalese Government desiring the ex-Maharaja's return was not without foundation appears from your letter of the 16th July. In expressing to you my disbelief of the report sent to you from Tirhut that men and arms had been despatched from Ghusat to Kururban,<sup>24</sup> I mentioned those bungalows, and you replied, 'some buildings have been erected at Kururban by orders from Nepal for the accommodation of His Highness and suite, I am aware. Should he determine on going to that quarter, he will meet with every demonstration of respect due his position, though I could not answer for the sort of reception some of those, who have been in attendance on him below, would find.' The belief above adverted to is yet further confirmed by the first (if it be, as I imagine, a fact) that the sudden departure of the ex-Maharaja from Segauli on the 23rd July was the immediate consequence of a letter from Nepal begging him to return--whether that letter was written by friend or foe, it is not for me to say.

7. That there have been bodies of men collected in this District I well know and can have no wish to deny--but they are totally different from the assemblies or levies of which you have heard. It was computed that about 6,000 refugees entered this District at the commencement of last cold season, after the disturbances in Nepal. Some few of these went into my Mussoura Thannah. A larger portion into the Motihari Thannah--and yet a larger portion into the Bettiah jurisdiction. More than 600 were for a time encamped together near Adapur--and the resort of some of the higher classes to the town of Bettiah led a great number of the poorer ones to the same place. Beside these, many others have, as you must be aware, been living in various parts of this district for 3 or 4 years and even more. Thus, whatever refugees have assembled together here, were assembled before the ex-Maharaja entered our territories; and in consequence of his orders or those of his Ministers, while he was yet sovereign of his country. Amongst these men, as well as amongst our own subjects, there has been no assembling for war or raising of armed men. Their outward conduct, with which alone I have to do, has been peaceable and quiet. I can, with all confidence, contradict the reports which have been made to you on this point, having adopted measures to learn what has been doing on my side of the frontier and having as yet seen no reason to distrust the information I obtained.

8. But I am perhaps wasting time in contradicting reports of what was to be, when the result of these alleged armaments itself furnishes a clear proof of their utter groundlessness. Captain Sanak Singh, who commanded the attacking force on the 28th July, would not have reported the number of invaders below the mark--and according to him, the immense preparation of some 4 months past mustered '1500 or 1600 men of all sorts' --My own private information gave the number as about 1,100--of whom about 400 were bearers and coolies furnished by my subordinates, and from 500 to 700 Nepalese, including the ex-Maharaja and his relations and friends and Sardars and private servants and armed men and followers! And it is my firm belief that, could the military portion of that body have been numbered, it would have fallen very far short of the 300 required to use the muskets which His Highness' bodyguard brought with him from Nepal. And, if it be conceded that the total number of refugees amounts to at least 6,000--if it be remembered that the Maharaja's camp, when he came from Nepal, consisted of about 3,000 men--and if it cannot be denied that the return of His Highness was a sufficient inducement to lead many poor and inoffensive men to follow him, in the simple hope of his cause prospering and their being allowed to return to the homes from which they have so long been banished, I think the sole remark that can be made will be one of amazement that the number who recrossed the frontier was so very small.

9. I believe that the ex-Maharaja's followers did not fight, because they were not prepared to fight and had not the remotest intention of fighting. From all I could gather during his stay at Segauli, I felt convinced that your apprehensions of his collecting an army here were needless--that it was his belief that a large portion of the Nepal army was on his side--and his purpose to remain quietly here till he could

hope that a declaration would be made in his favor on his return to his Kingdom--that he knew, as well as any one, the utter folly of any attempt to raise an army in this district--and that his dependence was upon that army which had once been his own. Feeling satisfied on this point, I knew that he would give me no trouble, and quietly looked on. It was not for me to enquire into the grounds of the general belief that he would be welcomed on his return. That he did return on the receipt of a letter from Nepal favoring his view is, as I have above said, on all hands admitted--and that, in playing so desperate a game he proved the loser in no way invalidates (whilst the fact of his return without the expected armament indisputably confirms) my opinion of what has been going on in my district.

10. I need only add, regarding the few who returned with him, that it was not my province without special directions from the Government I serve, to decide which of his friends and servants should accompany him and which should not. I seriously persuaded and seriously warned them against any proceedings hostile to the existing Nepalese Government, and I would instantly have put down with a high hand any illegal assembly or overt act in defiance of my authority. But, so long as they were within my jurisdiction, their conduct was correct--and when they crossed into Nepal, they rendered themselves answerable to the pains and penalties which that Government seems equally able and ready to inflict.

11. With reference to paragraph 3 of your letter of the 3rd August:

'Considering the proximity of Bettiah to the frontier, it seems to be desirable that those among the refugees who have forfeited their pledges to refrain from acting in any way against the peace of the Nepal Country should not be permitted to reside there hereafter. Perhaps some arrangement for their removal can be effected when they are called upon to answer for proceeding as they have apparently done in breach of their agreement.'

I beg to state that as the crossing of the frontier is not in itself a crime cognizable by me, and as no definite charge with offer of evidence has been alleged upon which I could try them for transgressing the condition of their recognizances, I am at present unable to proceed against them. But if it be the intention of our Government to take notice of any statement that may be made by the present or future Government of Nepal as to the plots and conspiracies of refugees in our territory against that Government, further notice, I mean, than may be necessary for the peace and welfare of our own subjects--in such case, I think that not only Bettiah but the whole of this and the adjoining frontier Districts should be forbidden ground to refugees from Nepal.

12. I am sorry to have taken so much of your time and attention--but your letter regarding the rumours above refuted has indicated a distrust of me, which, although my reputation as a Magistrate has not now to be made, it is but a duty I owe myself to endeavor to remove from your mind.

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I have, etc.

Rajendra Bikram to the Governor General, 15 August 1847<sup>25</sup>

*Rajendra Bikram writes to the Governor General explaining his own errors and exonerating Jung Bahadur. The explanation he gives for Jung's activities is very interesting. The same basic justification: Jung acted under orders.*

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ABSTRACT TRANSLATION

(after compliments)

My friend, formerly on General Mathabar Singh's misbehaving himself I sent for General Jung Bahadur, the present Minister, and ordered him to kill Mathabar Singh, threatening him with death if he refused. He did according to my orders.

Some months after, some person shot General Gagan Singh. At that time I gave the Maharani all power by a Lal Mohar, and by her orders Fattah Jung Shah, General Abhiman Rana and others were killed. In the month of Kartik 1903 Bir Dhoj and others conspired against my own life and those of my family. On my hearing of this, by my order the Minister had them executed. After this I gave orders that my son should be obeyed in everything by all people, and informed Captain Ottley, Officiating Resident, of the same. I then placed my son on the throne and departed myself on a pilgrimage to Banaras, and on my return from that place, on arriving at Ranjit Das's tank I was joined by several of the refugee Chiefs, who told me that the Minister had agreed to give to the British Government one-fourth of the revenue of the country, as well as that accruing from the city of Patan--also that he had appropriated the public money.

After this the refugee Chiefs conveyed me to Alao, near the boundary, having procured arms, ammunition, etc. The party was then attacked by the Gorakh Regiment, which had been sent for that purpose by my son, Surendra Bikram Shah. The cowardly Chiefs immediately deserted me, and the officers of the attacking party waited on me. I was much alarmed at first, as I had formerly sent several orders to Nepal to the soldiery to make the Minister a prisoner or kill him. But I was escorted here with comfort and respect, and the Chiefs who deserted me are a cowardly, disloyal set. I trust you will pay no attention to my former Kharitas as they are full of false statements. From the manner I was treated on the road to this place, I was so pleased that I presented the Minister with a Khillat. I trust I may be occasionally favored with your friendly letters and that the friendship of the two Governments may increase.

(True abstract translation)

I.M. Cripps, Assistant Resident

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The Governor General's Comment on Rajendra Bikram's Letter<sup>26</sup>

## EXTRACT

This letter of His Highness in my opinion has every appearance of having been written at the dictation of other parties, for the purpose of relieving the Minister Jung Bahadur from the odium of the assassination of Mathabar Singh, and the other murders perpetrated by Jung Bahadur either by the order of the ex-Maharaja or the Maharani. The degree of guilt which may attach to each of the three parties will continue to be involved in doubt.

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The Governor General's Authorization of Recognition<sup>27</sup>

## EXTRACT

Sir,

.....

If nothing should have occurred between the date of the 21st August and the receipt of this despatch, the Resident is authorized to present the enclosed letter signed by me observing the usual forms. I should prefer this course herein indicated: of explaining the steps taken and then of incidentally presenting the letter containing my recognition of His Highness rather than to adopt the more usual and public course of holding a Darbar expressly for this purpose. My letter to the Maharaja will contain no congratulations.

Hardinge

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Governor General to Surendra Bikram, 3 September 1847<sup>28</sup>

*The Governor General extends recognition to Surendra Bikram as the King of Nepal.* ↵

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(after compliments)

I have had the honor of receiving Your Highness' friendly letter dated 16th May announcing that Your Highness in accordance with the urgent and reiterated solicitations of the Chiefs and People had ascended the throne as sole Ruler of Nepal.

I earnestly participate in the hope expressed by Your Highness that the event may prove fortunate for the country which you have been called

upon to rule over, that peace and internal security will be thus ensured, and all sources of dissension removed.

I cordially join also in Your Highness' hope that Your Highness' accession will prove conducive to strengthening the bonds of friendship existing between the two Governments.

And I have to assure Your Highness that it is my desire that the alliance which has for so many years existed between this Government and that of Nepal to the mutual advantage of both, may remain unimpaired in time to come.

That health and strength may be granted Your Highness prosperously to govern your country for Your Highness' own glory and the happiness of your people, is the sincere wish of Your Highness' well-wishers.

sd. Hardinge

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Resident Thoresby to Government, 23 September 1847<sup>29</sup>

*Thoresby reports that because of the cholera epidemic in Kathmandu he has not been able to deliver the Kharita by which the Governor General recognizes Surendra Bikram as King of Nepal. Thoresby also adds interesting details on the confinement of the ex-King Rajendra Bikram.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

I have had the honor to receive your letter dated the 3rd of September with its enclosures: Kharitas to the addresses of the Maharaja and the ex-Maharaja of Nepal, copies of these Kharitas, and English translations.

2. About the middle of August cholera broke out in the city of Kathmandu and has prevailed there more or less ever since. Recently its ravages have been alarming. In consequence the Darbar has been closed. The Maharaja meets only his personal attendants, who live upon the palace premises and are not permitted to leave the palace grounds. A few superior officers of Government are also permitted to see the Maharaja, but they are obliged to bathe and change their clothes before appearing in his presence. In view of this it will be necessary to postpone the presentation of the Kharita to the Maharaja for a few more days, when it will be presented in the manner described in your despatch.

3. In the meanwhile I shall observe the course of affairs and adapt my conduct to the circumstances in the event that any change takes place or seems likely to affect the position of the Maharaja on the throne or the situation of the ex-Maharaja as a state prisoner. If things remain

as they are, it would perhaps be expedient to hold back the Kharita intended for the ex-Maharaja for a while. It is possible that the ex-Maharaja would misinterpret it and give out that the Right Honorable the Governor General wishes him to be placed in a situation which will enable him to take part in the administration for the benefit of the country. Although any attempt to interpret His Lordship's letter in this way would probably result in nothing of importance, still (in view of the contents of the Kharita) it would seem more appropriate to present it when the ex-Maharaja shall be less a prisoner than he is at present.

4. The ex-Maharaja continues to reside in a portion of the old Palace at Bhadgaon Town. He is now under stricter surveillance than at first. This is a consequence of his having unwisely attempted to tamper with some of those who were permitted to see him and to enter into a secret correspondence with others. About a fortnight ago the Maharaja went out for the first time to visit him. The Minister and some 50 or 60 Sardars were in attendance on the occasion. The ex-Maharaja is said to have given much dissatisfaction by some of his remarks. It is said that he proposed either that he be given a share in the administration or that the Minister should retire to Banaras with some 15 lakhs of rupees. If neither of these measures were approved, he suggested the immediate disbandment of eight Regiments, naming some of the oldest in the service, as being no longer required. The Maharaja's and the Minister's replies indicated that all such propositions were out of place and impracticable. The Sardars then came forward and declared to the ex-Maharaja their determination that he should not again have any sort of control or influence in the country. This put an end to the conversation, and I imagine the visit will not be repeated by the Maharaja.

5. The result of this visit and the failure of the attempt to open correspondence clandestinely may have had some influence in depressing the ex-Maharaja's spirits. A few days ago he seemingly made an effort to commit suicide by strangulation, which was frustrated by his attendants. I can hardly think he had a serious design upon his own life, and the probability is that he had no other intention than that of causing a sensation by acting as he did.

6. The Chinese Government have acknowledged receipt of the announcement made from here regarding the late accession to the throne of Nepal, expressing hopes that the new Maharaja will manage better than his father who has been superseded, and will ever consult the peace and prosperity of his subjects.

7. The father has certainly much to answer for from the time of the persecution to death of General Bhim Sen; and it is scarcely possible that a worse ruler or one with greater defects of character should sit upon the throne again. Nothing has transpired to indicate the existence of any wish or intention to restore him to any share or influence in the Government.

I have, etc.

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Resident Thoresby to Government, 1 October 1847<sup>30</sup>

*Thoresby reports the presentation of the Kharita of recognition to King Surendra Bikram and records the King's unusual admission that he had personally had a hand in the plot against Gagan Singh. The Resident's reaction indicates that this secret had been well kept until this time.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Sir,

In continuation of my letter of the 23rd of September, I have now the honor to report that the Kharita from the Right Honorable the Governor General to the Maharaja Surendra Bikram Shah was presented yesterday. There seemed no reason for delaying delivery any longer, since the cholera has abated considerably, the Darbar has consequently been more accessible, and the state of affairs has continued relatively unchanged. However, the Kharita to the ex-Maharaja shall remain for the present unmentioned, to be made use of in case matters should ever take the turn that will accord with the spirit of its contents. The date would then show when it was written, and the delay in delivery could be easily explained by the want of an earlier opportune time for delivering the Kharita.

2. After sitting a few minutes in the Darbar apartment yesterday afternoon, the Maharaja and his brother with the Minister, Jung Bahadur, and his brother Bam Bahadur retired with the Residency party to an inner room, where I presented the letter. Before putting the letter into the Raja's hands, I commented on the course that had been taken, in accord with the instructions contained in your letter of the 3rd of September.

3. His Highness expressed himself much gratified by the receipt of the Kharita, which was read and translated into Urdu. He declared it to be his earnest wish to have the friendship and good opinion of the British Government, which he would always strive to retain by all the means in his power.

On the conclusion of my preliminary remarks, the Maharaja adverted at some length to past transactions, and in the course of his address stated rather abruptly that he himself had caused Gagan Singh to be put to death, through the medium of his younger brother, who was sitting beside him.

5. There can be scarcely any doubt that Gagan Singh's death was the result of his intimacy with the Rani and the disgrace those connected with her suffered in consequence. Therefore it is not very improbable that the sons may have been in concert with Rajendra Bikram for the object of getting rid of a man who must have had the ill will of all three. The Prince, Mahila Saheb he is called, was often at the house of Fatteh Jung Chautaria, with whose sons he was in daily company. It is possible that he may have been employed in some way to promote the cutting off of Gagan Singh through the assassin Lal Jha, who confessed to the act, it may be remembered, and mentioned the Chautaria etc. as those

who had engaged him. I may soon learn more on this subject, if the Raja's words were anything more than a rhetorical flourish and were really grounded in fact. Considering the offence for which Gagan Singh is said to have suffered, I thought it well to let the matter pass without further notice yesterday.

I have, etc.

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Resident Thoresby to Government, 4 October 1847<sup>31</sup>

*True to his word, Thoresby presents further details in this report of the Maharaja's involvement in the assassination of Gagan Singh. Though fresh details are given, it is well to remember that whereas the King's involvement was something that he himself admitted, the additional details have no such authority, though Thoresby learned these further details from those who questioned the Maharaja on the subject.*

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Sir,

In my despatch of 1st October I mentioned that the Maharaja of Nepal had incidentally declared himself to have been the author of the death of Gagan Singh.

2. Having said so much, which was more than seems to have been known or suspected before, the Maharaja has since been asked to explain his meaning, which he has done, I am informed and believe, to the following purport.

3. The ex-Maharaja addressed himself to the two brothers, pointing out that disgrace which had incurred to them as a result of the close intimacy (generally reported and believed to subsist between the Maharani and Gagan Singh) and also telling them that she, with the aid of Gagan Singh, planned to have her own eldest son proclaimed Heir to the Throne-- they might guess at their own fate if this should happen. He added that he himself was powerless and could do nothing to prevent her from succeeding. They must therefore act and get Gagan Singh put out of the way.

4. It was then settled that the Mahila Saheb, who had the liberty of going about visiting as a boy without incurring suspicions should take advantage of his frequent visits to Fattah Jung Chautaria's house to arrange Gagan Singh's death. He acted accordingly and the assassination of Gagan Singh by the hand of Lal Jha, who was previously well known to the parties, was the result.

5. There is reason to conclude that the three Ministers (Fattah Jung Chautaria, Abhiman Rana, and Dalbhanjan Pandey) as likewise Bir Kishore Pandey were all privy to the scheme. This explanation also satisfactorily

accounts for the subsequent conduct of the ex-Raja in slinking away under the pretext of going to give information of the murder of Gagan Singh to the Officiating Resident, whom the event in no way concerned.

6. I am fully inclined to give credit to this very probable explanation of the affair of Gagan Singh's assassination, and therefore communicate it as information which may have some interest.

I have, etc.

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#### Footnotes to Chapter Twelve

1. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 July 1847, No. 192; slightly edited.
2. 'Meaning the actual power to confirm, dismiss, and entertain in the army.' C.T.
3. 'In other words, to make over the small principality of Sikkim to Nepal.' C.T.
4. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 July 1847, No. 193; edited.
5. All these are references to outlandish promises made by former Prime Ministers and candidates for that post.
6. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 July 1847, No. 194; not edited.
7. This point is not mentioned in most studies of the Kot Massacre. Rajendra Bikram raises an interesting question.
8. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 July 1847, No. 195; slightly edited.
9. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 201; slightly edited.
10. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 199; not edited.
11. Foreign Secret Consultation 26 June 1847, No. 200; not edited.
12. Foreign Secret Consultation 31 July 1847, No. 204; not edited, but emphasis added.
13. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 September 1847, No. 189; slightly edited.
14. 'Note: The Refugees told His Highness that the Minister was sending treasure into our territory as preparation for flight.' C.T.
15. See below, letter of the Joint Magistrate of Champaran, 13 August 1847.

16. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 September 1847, No. 164; slightly edited.
17. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 September 1847, No. 170; slightly edited.
18. Cf. below, 13 August 1847.
19. I.e., the King, as some accounts suggest.
20. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 September 1847, No. 189; slightly edited.
21. Nazir: an officer of the court sent to make enquiry into any branch of law or the peace.
22. Amin: a confidential agent.
23. Sowar: a rider, a horseman, a soldier in the cavalry.
24. 'This appeared to me highly improbable: 1st because Kururbân is the station of a Subha (Indra Lal Upadhyaya) favorable to Jung Bahadur; 2nd because it is within the beat of another Subha (Rattan Man Singh) even more completely on Jung Bahadur's side; and 3rd, because it was the place selected by the present Government for the building of bungalows for the temporary accommodation of the ex-Maharaja; a place therefore on which his opponents might be presumed to keep a sharp watch, and which could hardly be found convenient for his party.'  
C.T.
25. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 September 1847, No. 173; not edited.
26. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 September 1847, No. 174; not edited.
27. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 September 1847, No. 174; not edited.
28. Foreign Secret Consultation 25 September 1847, No. 175; not edited.
29. Nepal Residency Papers, No. 65 of 1847; moderately edited.
30. Nepal Residency Papers, No. 66 of 1847; moderately edited.
31. Nepal Residency Papers, No. 67 of 1847; moderately edited.

## EPILOGUE

Many voices have spoken in these pages. They have spoken clearly or in clever diplomatic accents or in the harsh, rumbling tones of discontent. They have spoken about ambition and fear and deep, dark deeds and death. But they have spoken. In this review of the contribution of Jung Bahadur and Queen Laxmi Devi, of King Rajendra Bikram and Surendra, and of course of Brian Hodgson, there are no more witnesses to speak.

Who was responsible? Who was guilty? Who caused the Kot Massacre? These are questions each reader must answer as he or she thinks best. To assess the evidence and decide for oneself the answers to questions that have such far-reaching significance is the right of every Nepali and of every student and friend of Nepal.

It is not to deny the reader that right that I put these last lines on paper. Rather it is to fulfil my own personal obligation as an historian. The scenario I present here is meant only to indicate how I think the testimony of our witnesses might be interpreted, not to make the final decision. That remains the prerogative of each reader.

### Preliminary Observations

The obvious is the best place to begin. Did Jung Bahadur perpetrate the Kot Massacre? Yes. He was accused of this many times, and never once did he deny it. What Jung did deny--and denied repeatedly--was responsibility for the Massacre. That responsibility he consistently laid at Queen Laxmi Devi's door. 'She was the legally constituted authority and she ordered it, therefore I did it,' summarizes the answer Jung gave when accused of responsibility for the Kot Massacre. That the actual deed was his, he never denied.

The great debate among historians about who struck the first blow is not very significant. Far more important is it to decide who ordered the first blow to be struck. This we will discuss in the pages below.

There is one caution I would make. If one demands direct evidence as a basis for a verdict, the reader will never be able to decide the issue of responsibility for the Kot. There is simply not enough clear information about some very crucial points to enable one to establish a verdict on the basis of direct evidence. Of circumstantial evidence there is an abundance. In the courts of Nepal in 1846 circumstantial evidence could not convict anyone unless the evidence were accompanied by a confession. In the court of history, most cases are decided on the basis of circumstantial evidence alone.

### The Evidence

Most of the documents presented in Letters from Kathmandu were intended to show background, motivation, and bias. The amount of detail



provided is more than adequate for these purposes. As for the events of the Kot Massacre itself, the key document on which this scenario is based is the translated report submitted to the Governor General by Major Thoresby on 18 March 1847.

What was the origin of this document? It does not appear to have been prepared by the Residency Munshi, since it differs in many respects from the reports submitted by Ottley at the time of the massacre and immediately afterwards, to which a Residency report should at least have referred. None of the British members of the staff prepared the report, since no translation would then have been necessary. The report itself bears a striking similarity to the arguments presented in two subsequent letters, one sent by the Bharadars to Rajendra Bikram on 21 May 1847 and the other, also by the Bharadars to Rajendra Bikram, of 17 June 1847. One ought also to note the very strong relationship between most of the events described in this document and those described by Pudma Jung in his biography of his father, Jung Bahadur.<sup>1</sup> In fact, Pudma Jung's account differs from Thoresby's translated report only on questions that touch on Jung's share in responsibility, the very points on which Pudma Jung's bias might reasonably be expected to influence his narrative. In view of all this, it is my assumption that Jung Bahadur himself provided this report to the Resident through the Residency Munshi. I take it therefore to represent Jung Bahadur's own defence of his conduct. My assumption is based on the similarity between Jung's defence in this report and his defence in the two letters cited above. I assume that Jung Bahadur was responsible for these letters because I do not believe it possible for a group as large as the one which signed these letters<sup>2</sup> to have reached a decision about what should be included in their letter within the time limit that the chronology places on this action. The first letter, after all, is dated the very day that Surendra Bikram ascended the throne, and he did this, it must be remembered, at 8:00 p.m. I assume that the Bharadars were presented an already prepared letter and they signed it.

### Assumptions

Some may well think it awkward to begin a scenario with assumptions. However, one is obliged to make some assumptions in order to proceed, even if the assumptions are not explicitly stated. Pudma Jung made several quite interesting ones. In summarizing the conduct of Jung Bahadur at the Kot, he wrote, 'The struggle for power was over, and nature had selected the fittest.'<sup>3</sup> A few pages later, and in a much more poetic vein, he wrote of Jung's appointment as Prime Minister:

No selection could be more just, no appointment more popular than that of him who had by force made his merit known, and grasping the skirts of happy chance, and breasting the blows of circumstance, had asserted the indubitable supremacy of his genius over the weak intellects of all his contemporaries.<sup>4</sup>

Assumptions are part of the historical reasoning process and can be tested the same as any part of that process: Are they reasonable (or far-fetched)? Do they explain? Do they fit the flow of action?

I will make one more explicit assumption before beginning the scenario. I do not think it is possible to evaluate Jung Bahadur's performance at the Kot only within the frame of reference provided by Gagan Singh's murder and the events that took place at the Kot itself. I think that long before these events took place Jung had devised his long-term strategy. I also think that he had in mind a vague plan of action when he approached the Kot on the night of 14 September 1846.

### Jung's Long-term Strategy

We have it on the authority of three British Residents that Jung Bahadur was a very ambitious man.<sup>5</sup> If Jung was ambitious, however, he was also shrewd. He alone of the contestants for power seemed to realize that the Residents meant exactly what they said. That they would not give 'countenance' to anyone. That they were deputed to the King alone. That what happened in Nepal's domestic politics was Nepal's affair as long as it had no direct bearing on Nepal-Company relations. While Jung's rivals for power either attempted to secure 'countenance' or worried about the secret deals that might have been made, Jung Bahadur accepted the Residents' statement at face value.

Jung also understood that the British were committed to support the King regardless of what he did or what he ordered. The Queen, largely because of Major Lawrence's despatches, had the reputation among the British of being overly emotional. Nevertheless, as long as the arrangement lasted by which the King's orders to the Ministry were mediated through the Queen, and the Queen directed the day-to-day administration, the British would accept her orders as legitimate. Thus, no Minister or Bharadar who carried out any order of the King or Queen need fear the opposition of the British, provided that such an order did not affect Nepal-Company relations. The extent of what was possible under such orders had been dramatically demonstrated in the execution of Mathabar Singh Thapa.

Jung Bahadur also realized that the Queen was not a safe patron. Since the British actually recognized only the King, any power base set up in real or potential competition with the King was a very weak base indeed. The Queen's patronage could be used for specific and limited purposes, but as a power base it was hazardous. Gagan Singh's connection with the Queen gave Gagan Singh great immediate power, but over the long term he was clearly playing a very, very dangerous game. Jung's task was clear. He must cultivate Laxmi Devi and Gagan Singh for what they could do for him, but he must not become enmeshed in their gamble. It was perfectly clear to Jung that if he could see that they ultimately wanted the throne for Laxmi Devi's eldest son, then surely the King was also aware of this.

The sons were the key. King Rajendra Bikram might himself feel secure, but he was very easily thrown off balance by any threat to his son Surendra. Awkward as the boy's political adolescence had been, he was the rightful heir, and any effort to unseat him would be dangerous

to the State. King Rajendra Bikram saw this and protected the boy with exaggerated care. On the other hand, Laxmi Devi's ambitions for her son made her susceptible to any threat to the boy's welfare and open to any plot that promised to make her son King of Nepal. The sons indeed were the key. But how was one to use that key? For that Jung Bahadur had to await a suitable opportunity. Meanwhile, in Kathmandu he continued to press whatever advantage fell to him, and he double-checked his conclusions. When his brother returned from an assignment as Vakil to the Governor General in Calcutta, Jung went to Hetaunda to meet him on his return journey and to reconfirm his impressions of the 'hands-off' policy that the Residents had been following as well as to gather whatever information he could about the attitude in Calcutta towards the King and especially the Queen.<sup>6</sup> Sure of his assessment, Jung was ready. On 14 September 1846 Gagan Singh was murdered, the Queen summoned the Bharadars and officers to the Kot for a midnight Darbar, and Jung had his opportunity.

### Jung's Plan for the Kot

When Jung went to the Kot that night his plan was simple. Be prepared for anything. Focus the Queen's attention on some specific person. And divert all suspicion from himself. He need achieve nothing more at the Kot to improve his own political fortune. Merely being rid of Gagan Singh had removed the only real check to his career. But to enjoy that career he must survive the night. He must manage the Queen by supporting her in her suspicions and focusing those suspicions on some specific person or persons. By every means possible he must keep himself well away from the centre of the action and divert suspicion from himself, for he well knew that the Queen would suspect anyone she fancied, and as a rival to Gagan Singh for power he might well be the one she fancied.

### The Scenario

When Jung Bahadur went to the Kot on the night of 14 September 1846 in answer to the Queen's summons, he went prepared. He had already warned his brothers that the night held danger for them, but, though the risks were great, the possibilities were even greater. Jung had also told the officers of his regiments to be prepared. A midnight march under arms to the Kot (next to the Royal Palace) had already made them alert. The report that the Queen's favourite had been murdered followed by this special warning from their commander suggested there might well be work for them to do before the night was out.

What that work might be not even Jung Bahadur could have told them. He knew it was a dangerous situation, and he intended to make it even more dangerous before he was through. First, though, he had to see the situation.

At the Kot he stationed his men in a commanding position and assumed control of the approaches to the Kot as any good general would do. His regular troops were armed and ready, and his special bodyguard of picked

men with double-barrelled guns were asked to keep a sharp eye for his signal. If anything happened, it would happen fast.

Inside the Kot Jung Bahadur met the Queen. Abhiman Singh Rana had already been with her and had gone off to escort the King to the Kot. If Pudma Jung is correct, both the King and Abhiman had something to be worried about. According to his account, the King set the plot in motion (a statement that seems quite reasonable in the light of the Mathabar Singh Thapa experience) and Abhiman Singh was one of the conspirators.<sup>7</sup>

Jung Bahadur went first to the Queen and spoke to her. His comments at this time to the Queen, who was already emotionally disturbed and who was recognized to be unpredictable when under the strain of emotion, strike one as strange. As the Thoresby report says:

On learning that General Gagan Singh had been assassinated, Jung Bahadur went to the Rani, and addressing her said that he and General Gagan Singh were known to act together as her special servants. One of them had been treacherously murdered by their enemies, and it was probable that he himself would not be long spared. In the end her two sons would also probably suffer. The Maharaja had invested her with full authority as to all State affairs, and it was therefore incumbent on her to inquire searchingly into this affair, and punish severely those who should be found guilty; in order that her sons might not become victims in the sequel, and himself might continue to serve her zealously in future, without sacrificing his life. When the General had conversed with the Maharani for some time, he went and desired the officers of his three Regiments to remain on the alert.

Strange indeed unless Jung intended to stir up the Queen as well as to impress upon her his own loyalty. In effect, Jung had said, 'This plot encompasses more than the death of Gagan Singh. It is reaching out for you and your sons as well. I am your protector. I will prevent this. But you also must use your authority to cut off the plot before more damage is done.'

Almost immediately after this conversation, Laxmi Devi made a direct accusation against Bir Kishore Pandey. Her choice of Bir Kishore as the chief suspect is surprising. Pudma Jung, of course, insists that Bir Kishore had long been known as an enemy of Gagan Singh. The same might be said, however, of almost everyone in the Darbar. The one opinion that is clear from the Residents' reports about Gagan Singh was the intensity of the dislike the Bharadars held for him. Pudma Jung says Bir Kishore was a member of the conspiracy that killed Gagan Singh. That very well might be. I suggest, however, that Jung told the Queen that Bir Kishore was involved immediately after he had urged her to do her

duty. At this point it was Jung's intention to end this investigation as quickly as possible. To do this he had to fix the Queen's attention on a specific line of investigation and goad her to the point where she would press that investigation home recklessly and quickly. He therefore deliberately aroused the Queen and then pointed her at Bir Kishore as surely as he might point a gun at a target.

But then we might well ask, 'If the Queen chose Bir Kishore because Jung told her Bir Kishore was involved, why did Jung choose Bir Kishore?' For two reasons: because Bir Kishore was involved and because he was not a Minister. Lal Jha later said that he had killed Gagan Singh because the whole Ministry had made a special arrangement with him. Despite Pudma Jung's later statement that his father had never been a member of this Ministry,<sup>10</sup> Major Lawrence, I.R. Colvin, and Captain Ottley (two Residents and one Acting Resident) had all dealt with Jung Bahadur regularly at this time in his capacity as Minister. Pudma Jung, of course, was not even born until eleven years later. We can then accept Jung as a member of the Ministry. Thus, according to Lal Jha's statement, Jung knew Bir Kishore was involved, because he himself had been involved. Jung focused attention on Bir Kishore because Bir Kishore was not a Minister and would therefore draw attention away from the Ministers as a group. He was counting on precisely the reaction that the Thoresby report describes. The Queen accused Bir Kishore. Bir Kishore was too stunned to reply. And the Queen in her fury ordered him killed. What Jung had not counted on was Abhiman Singh Rana's reaction to the Queen's order.

Abhiman Singh flatly refused to act under the Queen's orders. The King was present, and Abhiman went to him to ask what should be done. Abhiman, of course, could not know what Jung Bahadur had in mind, and even if he had known, it is not certain that he would have seconded Jung's action. Thus his consulting the King to learn what he should do was quite natural. The net result of his refusal, however, was to drive the Queen almost berserk. She became so agitated that not even Jung Bahadur dared to try to manipulate her, and when the Queen was in that frame of mind quite literally anything could happen.

At this point Jung was informed that the Mukhtiyar, Fatted Jung, had arrived outside the Kot. With Laxmi Devi in such an unmanageable state, Jung moved easily and quickly. If he could use this situation to bring about the death of Abhiman Rana, he would then in one night be rid of both his rivals in the Ministry, Gagan Singh and Abhiman Rana. This would put himself out of danger and leave him the most powerful Minister in Nepal, since neither Fatted Jung Shah nor Dalbhanjan Pandey were serious contenders for power. With this in mind, Jung offered Fatted Jung a proposition:

On the approach of Fatted Jung Shah Chautaria and his party, General Jung Bahadur advanced from the Kot to meet them; and, after relating what had occurred, said to the Chautaria, the Maharani violently suspects Bir Kishore Pandey, and she caused him to be ironed and then ordered General

Abhiman Singh Rana to put him to death. But the General would not obey the order, and notwithstanding that her authority and rule are in full force, made so many excuses that she is highly incensed: wherefore, to appease her, and to bring matters round, it will be necessary to make away with both of these persons; which course with your approval, I will effect. Then you may administer the affairs of the revenue and territorial departments (in their place) whilst I remain in my post of Jungi General (Commander of the Forces) and act under your orders.<sup>11</sup>

One notices several interesting points in this statement. Jung Bahadur does not tell Fattah Jung that it was the King who had ordered Abhiman Singh Rana not to execute Bir Kishore. Nor does Jung Bahadur state the obvious, that the Queen cannot be managed in her present state of mind and therefore they must find some viable excuse for ending this meeting and get everyone home to safety. Instead, Jung proposes an immediate decision, 'wherefore, to appease her and to bring matters round, it will be necessary to make away with both of these persons.'

Jung Bahadur, however, had blundered. The proposition he offered Fattah Jung Shah, and Fattah Jung's answer, suggest that Jung Bahadur had misjudged the Chautaria and the Chautaria's reaction to crisis. When Fattah Jung proceeded into the Kot to discuss the situation with Abhiman Singh Rana, Jung Bahadur knew that his proposition would likely be discussed as well. His blunder threw him into great personal danger. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to assume that it was at this time, while he was still standing at the entry-way to the Kot and while Fattah Jung and Abhiman Rana were still talking, that Jung alerted his men for the third time and warned them that this was the time of danger. He identified his victims and warned his men to watch for his signal. Once Fattah Jung had shrugged off his proposition, Jung Bahadur realized that he might be forced to kill both Abhiman Singh Rana and Fattah Jung Shah if he himself were to survive. This conviction became a certainty when Jung Bahadur saw Abhiman Singh give the order to his own men to load their weapons and to be on the alert.

Jung then hurried to the Maharani to report this new development. Abhiman Singh Rana, who refused to obey her command, had now ordered his troops to load their weapons. (Was the plot moving to its final solution?) The Maharani's reaction was unexpected and explosive. She charged down the stairs:

with the drawn sword in her hand, entered the large western Dalan below, where calling for Chautaria Fattah Jung Shah, Chautaria Nar Hari Bikram Shah, General Abhiman Singh Rana, and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey, she said to them and the other Sardars and officers assembled: "Who has killed my faithful General? Name him quickly." No one answered, but

Fatteh Jung Shah requested her not to be precipitate, and that he would sift the matter well, to her satisfaction. On hearing these words the Maharani became still more excited and angry and attempted to use her own sword upon Bir Kishore Pandey; but Fatteh Jung Shah, Abhiman Singh Rana, and Kazi Dalbhanjan Pandey stopped her and, trying to pacify her, attended her from the Dalan to the second storey.'12

For Jung Bahadur this was the moment to act. Fatteh Jung Shah had surely discussed his proposal with Abhiman Rana. Abhiman could therefore be expected to seize any opportunity to turn the tables on him. Jung's attempt to fix the blame on Bir Kishore had not succeeded. The Queen was even more seriously disturbed, and she was beginning to lash out without thought for the consequences, just as Jung had feared. If Fatteh Jung, Abhiman, and Dalbhanjan--all members of the Ministry--were alone with the Queen for any length of time, his own life was in jeopardy.

Jung gave the signal. His men below fired. And anything Fatteh Jung and Abhiman Singh Rana might do against him died with them. Then with horror, Jung stared failure in the face. His marksmen had killed Fatteh Jung Shah and Dalbhanjan Pandey. Abhiman Singh Rana lived. Wounded, he staggered into the Dalan shouting that 'Jung Bahadur had done this treacherous act, and endeavoured to get out and join his regiment; but Colonel Krishna Bahadur Kunwar (brother of General Jung Bahadur) with one stroke of his sword nearly cut him in twain, and he fell dead.'13 A general melee then broke out in the Dalan, into which a second unplanned interruption burst. Jung's personal bodyguard rushed into the hall with their double-barrelled guns and began to fire into the Dalan. The havoc this created could not be disguised, and it destroyed Jung's hope that he might survive the night politically stronger. This was exactly the situation that his long-range strategy had demanded that he avoid. And events happened so quickly there was nothing he could do either to stop them or to control them. But he could try. Back he went to the Queen to put the best light he could on events. I think he told her then that only his own timely intervention had broken up the plot to do away with her and her sons. At any rate, confused and unquestioning, she rewarded him with the Prime Ministership.14 Jung had hardly shown her his nazar of acknowledgement, when Laxmi Devi shouted out to Jung Bahadur's troops below, 'Kill and destroy my enemies.'15 The massacre then took place, and no one was really safe as long as the firing continued. When Jung finally got it under control, the fight was all over. He was one of the few top-ranking Bharadars left alive, and the only one of the Ministers. Somehow he had come through the whole series of events unscathed, and he still had a chance to control the interpretation of what had actually happened. This he proceeded to do in the days that followed, as the Thoresby report records.

That Jung Bahadur had almost been undone by his own cleverness and his premature proposition to Fatteh Jung Shah seems evident. I think it is also evident that Jung Bahadur was directly responsible for the death

of Fatted Jung and Dalbhanjan Pandey. His marksmen could not really be blamed for killing Dalbhanjan Pandey in place of Abhiman Singh Rana, because the night was very dark and the stairway but poorly lighted. At this point Jung Bahadur was trapped by events. He might well have succeeded in explaining away both deaths, had Abhiman Singh been one of the victims. However Jung could not have foreseen the consequence of only wounding Abhiman, nor could he possibly have foreseen that his men, warned repeatedly to keep on the alert, would move into action so spontaneously, nor that Abhiman's accusation would spark off such a reaction among Jung's brothers, who also had been tense and alert throughout the night. The result of his action thus sparked a whole chain of reactions that in themselves defied explanation.

I say Jung might have convinced the Queen that he had acted to defend the Queen and her sons. He would never have convinced the Resident that this had been so, nor would he have been able to satisfy King Rajendra Bikram that his action had been necessary. To kill in defence of Surendra would have been acceptable to the King, but never killing in defence of Surendra's rival.

The Queen's totally unexpected, loud, general order to 'Kill my enemies!' was the one major stroke of luck that Jung Bahadur experienced that night. This blanket order gave him the excuse he needed for his own actions and for the spontaneous, decisive intervention of his body-guard.<sup>16</sup> He clung to the excuse and he exploited it. By insisting from the very first that the Queen had ordered the killing and he had only obeyed her legitimate order, Jung imposed his own time-table on the Queen's hazy memory of events, and when King Rajendra Bikram demanded to know why she had done such a thing, she bridled at his effrontery at asking her to explain her actions and stubbornly insisted that she would do all this and more if it suited her mind to do so.<sup>17</sup> Thus Jung had his excuse. But, insofar as any one person could be held responsible for a series of events that were the natural culmination of years of frustration, bitterness, fear, and senseless manipulation, Jung was responsible.

#### Footnotes to the Epilogue

1. General Pudma Jung Bahadur, Life of Maharaja Sir Jung Bahadur, G.C.B., G.C.S.L. of Nepal (Allahabad, 1909).
2. Three hundred and seventy Bharadars and officers signed this first letter.
3. Pudma Jung, Jung Bahadur, p. 78.
4. Ibid., p. 81.
5. Brian Hodgson, Major Lawrence, and I.R. Colvin.
6. See above, Colvin to Government, 6 March 1846, para. 31.



7. Pudma Jung, Jung Bahadur, pp. 66-7.
8. Thoresby Report.
9. Pudma Jung, Jung Bahadur, p. 69.
10. Ibid., p. 64.
11. Thoresby Report.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Had this interruption not taken place there was a very good chance that Jung and his brothers would have been overwhelmed or killed outright by those within the Kot.
17. Thoresby Report.

## GLOSSARY

adalat: court; courtroom

amin: confidential agent

arzi: petition; memorial; a respectful statement, written or oral

Ashad, Asar: Nepali month, mid-June to mid-July

Aswin, Asoj: Nepali month, mid-September to mid-October

aul: malaria, a virulent form of malaria

Baishakh, Baishak: Nepali month, mid-April to mid-May, first month of Bikram Sambat year

Bhadra, Bhadau: Nepali month, mid-August to mid-September

Bhandar Khal: Royal gardens for special feasts, banquets

Bharadar: noble, one who carries the burden of the State

Bed: physician, Baidya

chaprassi: a messenger or courier wearing a chapras or metal badge of office

Chaitra, Chait: Nepali month, mid-March to mid-April

Chautaria: Royal collateral; not in line of succession. 'The Chautaria', Fatteh Jung Shah

Chobdar: see Khabas

chowki, chauki: station of police or of customs, a guard, a watch, or the post where they are placed

cos: a unit of measure, approximately two miles

countenance: official recognition with support

daftar: an office in which public records are kept; the paymaster general's office

dak: mail, mailrunner

dakria: off-roll, unemployed

dalan: inner courtyard; a porch overlooking a courtyard

dandi: a litter, a simple conveyance

darkhasta: a contract; a tender; a representation; an application; a petition

dharma: duty; religious sentiment; religion

Dharmadhikar: a judge; a magistrate; a superior over Brahmans invested with power to investigate and chastise breaches of custom, violations of caste, and the like

dharmasala: a building for any legal or pious purpose

Dittha: a civil servant ranking above a Mukhiya and lower than a Subba

dhukuti: treasury; strong box

Dware: an official in a village who can arrest petty offenders and try petty cases

'Eugenius': Pandit Raj Krishna Ram, nickname

Fakir: holy man; renunciate

Falgun, Fagun, Phalgun: Nepali month, mid-February to mid-March

Feringi: a European

Ganga jal: water from the Ganges

ghari: a unit of measurement of time equivalent to 24 minutes

ghat: pass; a landing-place or steps on the bank of a river

Ghoraits: used here of traditional policemen in north Bihar

Guru: religious preceptor; teacher

Havaldar: a non-commissioned officer equivalent to a sergeant

hazoor, hajur, hazur: a term of respectful address; Your Honor; Sir

Hoodedar: an officer; a petty officer; a functionary; general term for non-commissioned officer

hukum nameh, hukum-nama: a written order; a written award or judgement

jagir: literally, land assignment; the post for which a land assignment is made

Jagir Kotiya Kazi: the officer in charge of land-assignment records

Jamadar: the lowest-ranking commissioned officer

Jeth, Jyestha: Nepali month, mid-May to mid-June

Jethi Maharani: Senior Queen, i.e. the one married first

Jyotishi: astrologer

kaiphiat: record; statement; description; report

kampu: Cantonment; the Kathmandu garrison

Kanchhi Maharani: the youngest or Junior Queen, i.e., the one married last

Kapardar: a Royal assistant in charge of the King's personal effects

Kartik: Nepali month; mid-October to mid-November

Kazi, Kaji: a high ranking civil servant; also at times given military command

Kausi: one of the chief offices at Kathmandu, somewhat equivalent to the Accountant General's office

Kesari Mohar: a yellow seal, used by Rana Bahadur Shah and Rajendra Bikram Shah after abdication as their own official seals

Khabas, Khawas, Khawassea: an aide to the Royal family with permission to enter the women's section of the palace

Khachahari, Kachahari: a court; a hall; an office

Khajanchi: treasurer

Khardar: an official scribe

kharita: the envelope of letter, especially the ornamental or silk covering of a letter addressed to, or by, a person of rank: hence the letter itself, particularly one between the Governor General and a Prince

khillat: any article of costume presented by the ruling authority to an inferior as a mark of distinction

Killadar: commandant of a fort or killa

kora: (properly korra): whip; lash; scourge

Kot: literally a fort; a special building in Kathmandu, near the Hanuman Dhoka palace

Kotha Manchhe: attendant

Kothia: a follower

Kumari Chowk: equivalent of the Revenue Board

lakh: 100,000 especially 100,000 rupees

Lal Mohar: the red seal; the official seal of the King of Nepal

Magh: Nepali month, mid-January to mid-February

Maharajadhiraj: official title of King of Nepal

Marg, Mangsir: Nepali month, mid-November to mid-December

Mir Munshi: chief writer, especially of Persian

Mohar: coin; seal

Mukhtiyar: the chief minister or president of a council of ministers

Mulguzari, malguzari: revenue assessment; the person owing such an assessment

Munshi: writer, especially of Persian

Mulki Dewan: Chief Officer of the State

Nazir, Najir: and officer of the court sent to make an enquiry into any breach of law or the peace

nishan, nisan: an ensign; a flag

nazar, nazzar: a present, an offering, usually of money, shown a superior at the time of one's appointment in recognition of the superior's authority

Pajani: the annual reassignment of office

paji: a term of abuse; literally worthless, mean, low character

Panchamrit: (the five nectars), a mixture of milk, curds, ghee, honey, and sugar

Panchayat: a court of arbitration consisting of five or more members chosen by the parties themselves for the determination of petty disputes among the people

Pandit: teacher; learned man; 'The Pandit': usually Krishna Ram, a member of Fatteh Jung Shah's ministry

Panjnameh: an agreement to present a case for arbitration

pardah: curtain; veil; screen

parwana, parwana: an order; a written precept or command

patti: military term, used for Company or Platoon

puja: worship; sacrifice

Purohit: priest, one qualified to perform religious rites

Raj: State

Raj Guru: The Royal Preceptor

rajinama: written agreement

res gestae: judicial term; the facts that form the environment of a litigated issue and are admissible in evidence

Risala: a troop of horse; a Company of cavalry

Sahibzada: Prince; esp. the Crown Prince

sair: all duties other than land tax

sanad: a grant; charter; a document conveying to an individual emoluments, titles, privileges, offices, under the seal of the ruling authority

Sardar: a high-ranking government official, below Kazi but above Subba

Sarkar: Government; also the Head of Government or King

sati: ritual self-immolation of a widow on her deceased husband's funeral pyre

sharma: shame

Singhasan: the throne, the Lion Throne

sipahi: soldier

Sowar: a soldier in the Cavalry, a rider, a horseman

Srawan, Saun: Nepali month, mid-July to mid-August

Subba, Subha: an official with rank higher than a Mukhiya, but lower than a Sardar

Subedar: a subordinate commissioned officer; the second highest

tappa: a revenue division comprising one or more villages, for the revenue of which only one engagement is made with the Government

Tehsildar: a revenue collection officer functioning under a zamindar

Thanadar: an officer in charge of a Thana, or police post

tika, tilak: a sectarian mark on the forehead

tosha khana: Government treasury

Tulsi: a plant used in religious ceremonies

Vakil: representative, lawyer

Yuvaraj: Prince; Crown Prince

zamindari: the tract of land and rights belonging to a zamindar or landlord

zenana: feminine; hence accommodations for women, party of women.

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The morning of 15 September 1846. Captain Ottley, the lone European at the British Residency in Kathmandu, wrote in a fever of excitement to the Governor General:

Soon after 7 o' clock this morning a cousin of General Jung Bahadur, accompanied by the Darbar Mir Munshi, brought from the Maharaja the following astounding intelligence:

*The Council which had been called together to inquire into the assassination of General Gagan Singh had come to blows among themselves. The Chief Minister Fatteh Jung Shah, General Abhiman Singh Rana, and several other Chiefs, not less than 20 or 30, had been killed. . .*

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