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Art. XX.—An Account of the Country of Sindh; with Remarks on the State of Society, the Government, Manners, and Customs of the People

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CAMBRIDGE JOURNALS

ART. XX.—*An Account of the Country of Sindh; with Remarks on the State of Society, the Government, Manners, and Customs of the People, by the late Captain JAMES M'MURDO, of the Bombay Military Establishment. — Communicated by JAMES BIRD, Esq. M.R.A.S., F.R.G.S.*

Read 5th of July, 1834.

THE author of the *Tohfat-al-Giráni* states, that “ the country of Sindh takes its name from SIND, the brother of HIND, the son of NOAH. It is reckoned the forty-third of the sixty-one countries of the universe. The line of the second climate passes, from the north, directly through its centre; and although *Sindh* is situated in the five first climates, it nevertheless chiefly appertains to the second, and, consequently, lies in the region of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.” It would be difficult to discover where the author quoted has found these grandsons of the patriarch; indeed, as is usual in such genealogies, they are probably altogether imaginary. The Hindú writings may, perhaps, afford some more satisfactory explanation of the name; but I have not been so fortunate as to meet with it. As far as I can learn from such sources, this country was called *Sindhúdès*, or “ the country of the ocean,” alluding doubtless to the river Indus, which receives that dignified appellation in their sacred writings. The same authorities also state *Sindh* to have been governed by a *Xhuthi*, named JAYADRAT'HA, who was slain in the civil wars of the *Pandús*; and it has, in consequence, sometimes received the name of *Jayadrat'hadès*, after that chieftain.

I think it highly probable that *Sindh*, generally speaking, takes its name from the river,—an opinion which I formed from finding the same appellation used in ancient times; for such I take the *Sindomana* of the Greeks, which was the capital of a province, to be; and further investigation has confirmed me in the belief, that *Sindh* was the name originally of a small tract of a country lying upon the river, but whose precise boundaries are now lost, in the changes, both local and otherwise, to which this country has been subject in a remarkable degree; and I conceive that in this division, wherever it may have been, is to be found the site of the ancient *Sindomana*.

The limits of this country, as they may have existed at various periods of its history, and under different governments, cannot now be exactly defined; nor is it even possible to determine, with correctness,

the precise boundaries of the present province of *Sindh* proper. The fairest mode of ascertaining its extent would, perhaps, be to confine the term *Sindh* to the tract watered by the Indus, corresponding nearly with the territories at present held by the *Tálpúras*, the acknowledged rulers of the province; and the same method is, upon the whole, the safest for defining the limits of the country, at the earliest period. According to this plan, the province of *Sindh* will lie between the twenty-third and twenty-eighth degrees of north latitude, and sixty-seventh and seventieth degrees of east longitude: while, in general terms, it may be said to be bounded on the north by the territories of *Kábul*; by the *Dávuđpútras*, to the west and east of the Indus; and on the south by the district of Cutch and the ocean. The great sandy desert, and the territories which it embraces, separate *Sindh* from India, whilst a vast chain of rocky mountains forms a distinct and natural boundary along the whole western frontier.

If credit is to be given to the Greek historians, the country, included in the limits which I have just fixed for those of *Sindh*, was divided into several considerable sovereignties, possessed of powerful resources both in men and riches. Judging, however, from the extent of space allotted to them, I am inclined to believe that their importance has been much exaggerated, in order to enhance the exploits of an ambitious individual. Whatever changes may have occurred to them, either politically or statistically, in the course of a series of centuries, they cannot have been such, as in any respect to justify the accounts of so many sovereigns and nations being subdued by the army and policy of ALEXANDER, in the space between *Múltán* and the sea. Difference of name, habits, or language, may perhaps have given rise to this hyperbolical classification of the divisions of *Sindh*; for although we should never think of calling a portion of country, not equal in size to a province, by the name of a nation, yet if people were found living under distinct governments, and differing from each other in manners, customs, and language, the appellation would, in such case, become at least less ridiculous. No traces of such a variety however can be discovered, either in written documents or traditionary accounts; although, with the progress of society, it may fairly be supposed that certain changes must have been produced.

Passing over those obscure and unsatisfactory conjectures, let us proceed to consider the divisions of *Sindh*, as understood among the people themselves. The province has had, from time immemorial, two grand divisions, the northern and southern. The former, extending from the neighbourhood of Bhakar to the parallel of the modern *Hálakandi*, below *Shwán*, is styled *Sirra*; and the latter, including

the space to the ocean, is named *Lár*.* Of the etymology or origin of these names, I can find no trace; but that they are extremely ancient is probable, because the geographers, in the commencement of the Roman empire, I believe, applied the name of *Laryia* to the country lying near the mouth of the Indus; and in the same name we discover the origin of *Lári Bandar*, or the port of *Lár*, in whatever part of the *delta* that place may have at different times been situated.†

Each of these two divisions appears to have had its respective capital; viz. *Álór* in *Sirra*, and *Bráhmaábád* in *Lár*; at least we find no mention made of other cities on the same scale as those, in the earlier times of the Muhammedans. They were undoubtedly considered as the first and second cities in the empire of the *Raias*. *Sirra* and *Lár* were, in all probability, divided into a number of inferior districts, which, it is likely, were, in some instances, known under their present names, and, in others, by appellations now either totally lost, or so corrupted as not to be distinguished. *Súndra*, *Sehwán*, *Tehri*, *Lóhri*, *Gora*, or *Carnalla*, are, at all events, names of districts coeval with the Muhammedan conquest, and probably of a much earlier date; but the titles of a moiety of the present divisions are evidently modern, and have their origin in local or temporary circumstances. The districts into which *Sindh* is now divided, are generally said to be forty-four in number; and, perhaps, in the public records and accounts of the province, they are restricted to that number. The division is, nevertheless, subject to variation; for some modes of dividing the country increase the *parganahs* to above fifty.

The following is the most popular mode of dividing this country:

In the *delta* lie — *Cháchgám*, *Jhátí*, *Kakrálla*, *Sákra*, *T'hatta*, *Dhárája*, *Súndrá*, *Pallejar*, *Chakerhálla*, *Imámwah*, or *Tranda* of MUHAMMED KHÁN TALPÚRA.

East of the river—*Sirra*, *Jám Tumáchi*, *Battóra* (menpúr), *Rúpa*, *Odihjáhi*, *Sámawatti*, *Tránda*, *Mír Elláh Yárrkhán*, *Mattaloi*, *Sheh-*

* MR. POTTINGER, in his definition of the name *Lárkhána*, says it is derived from a word signifying saliva. This meaning, if authentic, would apply better to the *delta* of the Indus; for its oozy nature is greater than that of any other part of *Sindh*. *Ládkána* is spelt with a *d*, which makes it a different word from *Lár*, which, in *Sindhí*, signifies low.

† DR. VINCENT gives a *Láribandar*, and a *Bandar-Lári*, the one on the east, and the other on the west branch of the river. I have not been able to discover any foundation for such a distinction, nor, indeed, is the term *Láribandar* at all familiar to the natives. The name, however, might, with equal propriety, have been applied to any port in the *delta*.

dádpúr, Hálakandi, Dim, Kandiára, Ráni Gumbat, Lakáwat, Hállam, Behlani, Lóhri, Móraguchira, Khairpúr, Máttila (Mírpúr).

West of the river—*Kóteri, Khóntó, Sum, Schwán, Tehri, Bobuk, Samtaní, Khódábád, Kullah, Kácha, Bághbán, Tigger, Chandka, Gohrah* or *Cárnálá, Doába* or *Haiderábád*, and *Karáchí*, with its country to the westward of *T'hatta*, called *Chápper*, which is a modern addition to the *Sindh* territory.

Various, however, are the divisions in the *parganahs*, and to enumerate these would only be to confuse. *Jow* and *Baddin*, two large districts, are included in that of *Cháchgám*, as is the very ancient *Mandrá*. *Násirpúr* was at one time a large *sirkár*, and rose upon the ruins of *Mattáloi*. It has, however, in its turn again become dependant on its more fertile or favoured neighbours. Under the head of *T'hatta* are included several *parganahs*, but in particular that of *Druk*, supposed to be very ancient; also that of *Gúngra*, both of which are now separated from *T'hatta* by the river. The *Dirák* is another ancient district now not much known by that name.

The author of the *Tohfát-al-Giráni* states *Sindh* to be blessed with a fine climate. The mornings and evenings, he remarks, are truly delightful; the northern division warm, and the lower cool. The fact, however, I believe to be, that this province is, generally speaking, unhealthy; particularly in the neighbourhood of those parts subject to the annual inundation. "When it is considered," says a gentleman, who resided several years in *Lár*, "what an immense tract of land is laid under water, and afterwards exposed, with its vegetation, to the putrifying effects of a burning sun, it can hardly be supposed that this climate, farther corrupted by the stagnations which every where take place, can be very congenial to the human constitution; on the contrary, a numerous train of diseases are here prevalent, among which, as may be expected, intermittent fevers, asthma, and rheumatism take the lead." The northern division of the country, however, does not bear so bad a character in point of climate, although the hot winds blow, in some parts, with uncommon severity; and throughout the summer months, the heat surpasses, by all accounts, that of any part of India. So great is the estimated difference between the climate of *Lár* and *Sirra*, that all public servants receive superior salaries when on duty in the former division, where they seldom remain for any length of time (if not natives) without suffering in their health.

The whole of the *delta*, as far west as *T'hatta*, is exposed, in some degree, to the effects of the south-west monsoon, which, consequently, brings the temperature of this portion nearly to that of the west coast

of *Gujerát*. Much inconvenience is, however, felt to the westward of that city, where the monsoon but partially extends; and, indeed, I believe that in *Chápper*, and the country inhabited by the Jogiás, several years occasionally elapse without any rain whatever. I have already said that the heat of the climate of *Sirra*, in the months of March, April, and May, is excessive; and the hot winds prevail in *Sewí* to such a degree, as to render travelling not only dangerous, but, in the desert which lies between that province and the northern frontier of *Sindh*, absolutely impossible. Rain, however, falls in *Sirra* generally in June, which, with the floods in the river, tend materially to relieve the oppressive heat. In the winter season, that is, in December and January, the trees and vegetation generally suffer from the frost, and are deprived of their leaves, — a circumstance which does not occur in *Lár*.

The soil of *Sindh* is of various descriptions; that which is subject to the inundation of the river is often of a rich clay, sometimes a fine loam, and elsewhere a loose sand. The land in question is extremely fertile, and produces the most luxuriant crops of grain without tillage, when the soil is yet moist from the recent floods. The grain is scattered over the surface, and the produce is yielded without further trouble. Towards the mountains of *Bellúchistán*, on the western frontier of the province, the soil is rocky, and considerably impregnated with iron ore. Here it is poor and scanty, the rock generally approaching the surface, which circumstances, combined with the uncertainty of the season, render it better adapted for pasturage than agriculture; to the former of which habits its people also naturally tend. On the north of *Sehwán*, almost to the vicinity of the hills, the soil is the richest and most productive in *Sindh*, and is nowhere interspersed with a rock until we reach the neighbourhood of *Lárkhána*, and north of that place.

The soil of the eastern parts of *Sindh* partakes in some degree of the qualities of the neighbouring desert, but near the river, throughout the greatest part, the sand is mixed with a white clay which seems favourable for vegetation. In the eastern parts of *Lár*, that is in the vicinity of the river, the soil partakes chiefly of this clay; which, in the hot and dry months, yields a dust so fine as to elude all common precautions for escaping from its unpleasant effects, and the natives have recourse to ventilators in the roofs of their houses, which they keep in other respects shut up in the closest manner. A peculiarity in the soil of *Sindh* is worthy of remark, and this is, that a traveller may journey for days in the eastern parts without meeting with a rock or stone of any kind.

The fertility of this province, in those parts which are exposed to the floods of the Indus, is exceeded by that of no tract of country on the earth. On the regularity and abundance of these, however, depend the wealth, and, in a great measure, the supply of the absolute necessities of life, of the inhabitants. In tracts remote from the river, where the rise of the waters does not naturally extend, and where this defect is not remedied by the labour and skill of man, the produce of the soil is often scanty and always precarious. A few districts in *Sindh* yield three crops of grain in the year; they are, however, generally confined to two, and, in some cases, where the waters of the Indus, either from natural obstacles, or from the indolence of the people, have not been introduced, the soil yields but one crop and that of the poorest description.

Throughout the whole of the lower part of *Lár*, where the country is one entire sheet of water for three months in the year, the quantities of rice produced is beyond any thing I ever heard of. The *pargana*hs of *Kakrálla* and *Kácha*, in particular, yield rice in great abundance. The seed is sown with the first appearance of the inundation; the plants rise with the waters, and the crop is sometimes reaped in boats. An inferior division of the *Kakrálla pargana*h, is ascertained to have yielded no less than 1000 *khirwárs** of rice as the share of the government, which, making the usual allowances, is equal to about one-third of the whole produce.

In the lower *pargana*hs the dry grains are rarely cultivated; nevertheless in those of *Jhát*ti, *Imámwah*, and *Baddin*, crops of wheat, barley, *jowári*, Indian corn, sugar-cane, and tobacco, are produced by irrigation in the cold months.

The great portion of *Cháchgám*,† which lies to the eastward of the *Góni* branch of the river, not being exposed to the floods, produces in the natural course of the seasons, *bájeri* and *múng* (a kind of pulse), besides wheat, Indian corn, &c. &c., by irrigation from the cuts made from the *Púrán* and *Góni*.

The more northern districts produce abundant crops of wheat, barley, *jowári*, *múng*, and other common grain; almost exclusively, however, in many parts by irrigation, or in the moist beds of extensive *d'hínds* or lakes which, formed by the annual floods, gradually but quickly evaporate. Cotton is also cultivated in small quantities, and the tree is represented as being tall, with many branches, and not

* A *khirwár* of *Sháhbandar* is about equal to one and a half Surat *candies*.—The *candy* is a weight which varies very much in the different provinces where it is used; the Bombay *candy* is 560 lbs.—ED.

† This *Sirkár* takes its name from the *Cháchak* tribe who inhabited it at one period.

perennial. Sugar-cane is cultivated everywhere in this province to a very great extent, and coarse sugar made annually, part of which is exported by sea, but the largest portion either consumed in the country, or carried to the northern provinces, which are less favoured by climate. The cane produced here is larger than that of western India, but the sugar which it yields is of an inferior quality. The vegetables common to India are found throughout *Sindh*, where, as elsewhere, they require to be irrigated. The sweet potato seems to be peculiarly adapted to the soil. It is most abundant of all vegetables, and, in some parts, forms an essential article in the food of the people.

The indigo plant is reared with much care in the north of *Sindh*, and forms the standing die for the cloths of the majority of the population, besides furnishing a large supply for foreign markets. The cultivation of this plant is confined almost exclusively to the *parganahs* of *Sásti*, *Tiggir*, *Bághbán*, *Chándka*, *Lóhri*, and *Samtaní*; in these, however, it is carried on to a great extent, and is found the most lucrative both to government and the people, of all productions of the earth. A space of ground nearly eight yards square, which is equal to a *Sindh bígá*, employed for the cultivation of indigo, yields an annual revenue to the government of eighty rupees. This plant is entirely produced by irrigation; on the judicious management of which branch of agriculture, indeed, depends the success of every crop in *Sindh*.

The country round *T'hatta*, and various other parts, yields abundance of saltpetre. This article was formerly prepared in great quantities for exportation, and furnished the markets of western India. Of late years, however, it has been driven out of use by the extensive and cheaper manufacture of the same article in Bengal, where also more science is displayed and greater pains are taken to render the quality better. Saltpetre is nevertheless very largely prepared for home consumption and for land exportation in *Sindh*, which has the reputation of manufacturing the best native gunpowder in India. The shores of the *delta* yield a never failing supply of common salt, which is annually carried inland to a considerable amount.

In the valuable article of timber, *Sindh* appears to be nearly destitute, as far as I can discover. There are no forest-trees that can assume the name of timber. Throughout the *delta* marshes are covered with a brush-wood, of little use but to split and dry for firewood. The most common tree in the province is the *lye*, which is, I believe, the tamarisk.* Near the sea-shore it never attains to any

* *Tamarix Indica*.—WILLD.

remarkable dimensions, but between *Haiderábád* and *Sehwán*, on the banks of the river, I am told that the *lye* is seen in forests, and the trees are of a large size.

Fruits do not appear to be in any variety, the mangoe, pomegranate, and melon, are all that are worthy of notice; but grapes, apples, pears, and plums, annually arrive from *Kábul* and the north. The plum is dried, but the others are packed in cotton and keep fresh for six months. Mineral waters are frequently met with, some of which have high reputation for medicinal qualities. Hot springs are found to the westward of *T'hatta* in the hills; and alkali is prepared in the northern *Khairpúr* district, and exported to India, where it is used in making soap and lie.

The foremost of the animals of *Sindh*, both in numbers and utility, is the camel. It is bred everywhere throughout the province; and, what is a subject of surprise, as RENNELL observes, the marshes in the *delta* of the river are favourable for rearing this animal, although camels, bred on moist soils, are neither considered so hardy nor so strong as those from hilly and sandy countries. In the *delta* of the river, however, this animal is to be seen, sunk to the middle in mud and water, feeding on the stunted shrubs which grow below high-water mark. Here hundreds browse together in herds, and seem to improve on this food as much as on the driest leaves of trees.†

The utility of the camel in a country like *Sindh* is incalculable. The whole of the land-carriage of merchandise is performed by that animal; and the long and tiresome journey from the sea-shore to *Kandahár* is travelled by the camel with a load equal to twelve stone on his back. They travel during the night in these long journeys by stages of sixteen or twenty miles; halting during the day, and feed plentifully where most other animals would starve. Young camels selected for spirit are trained to the saddle, and become as fleet as the horse. Incredible journeys are thus performed; and although their paces are rough and uneasy to the rider, yet in *Sindh*, where people of the first rank do not consider it beneath their dignity to ride on the camel, so much attention is paid to the comfort and, indeed, elegance of the saddle, that the motion is rendered more tolerable than it is in other countries where the animal is in less repute. On the saddles, which are often made of embroidered broad cloth, are two seats, the foremost of which is occupied by the person who manages the camel, which he effects by means of a string attached to a piece of wood about two inches in length, with a knob at each end, passed through

† Camels fed on this forage emit an insufferable stench when in the act of ruminating.

a perforation in the nostril: the seat in the rear is filled by an armed person, who acts as an attendant and guard. Fire-arms and even swivels are constantly used upon camels in Asiatic warfare, and are so employed to a great extent in *Sindh*.

Some other uses to which this animal is applied still remain to be noticed. They are yoked in harness; made to draw water for irrigation; and are occasionally seen at the plough or attached to a mill for expressing oil. Those who breed the camel drink the milk of the female, and consider it wholesome and nutritious. It is necessary to use it almost immediately after taking it from the animal, for, when exposed to the air, it spoils sooner than any other kind of milk.

The horse of *Sindh* is hardy and capable of performing long journeys with ease both to himself and rider, by means of an ambling pace to which they are all trained. Horses are procurable in considerable numbers; and as the soil and climate in the northern districts have from experience been found favourable for breeding, the supply might be increased by care and attention.

The Sindhian men of rank being chiefly military are remarkably fond of horses, and spare neither money nor trouble to possess the finest animal in *Quilál*,* *Khandahár*, and even Persia; all of which produce breeds far superior to any found in *Sindh*. This country has a very excellent breed of mules, which animal is not considered in the disreputable light that it is in India. The mules in *Sindh* are large, strong, and handsome; very useful in the carriage of baggage on a journey; and convenient for the use of a servant, who can thus always be present with his master on the longest marches.

The country more remote from the river feeds vast herds of oxen, particularly the tract on the eastern border, where extensive plains are allotted solely to the pasturage of cattle of all kinds. In *Sindh*, they are used for food by the Muhammedans, and numbers are annually carried off by merchants from *Cutch*, *Kattiwár*, and *Gujarát*. The ox is rather undersized, but broad, strongly made, and well adapted for labour. Buffaloes are in great abundance, and form part of the property of rich and poor; in fact, a man's wealth is estimated by the number of buffaloes, camels, and goats, which he possesses. The domestic animals of India are plentiful in *Sindh*, and the fields are well supplied with the common species of game. There is perhaps no country in the world where water-fowl are more numerous. The large lakes and marshes are literally covered with them, and they serve as food to all the labouring classes of natives. Of

* *Kelaul* of Mr. ELPHINSTONE'S map.

beasts of prey, the wolf and jackal are, I believe, alone to be met with, unless in some parts of the country subject to MÍR SÓHRÁB, where tigers are found. The creeks and rivers abound with alligators, which are venerated by the natives; and badgers and other animals are hunted for the sake of their skins, which are sold in the northern provinces to advantage. The wild hog, as may be supposed from the nature of the country, inhabits every quarter of *Sindh*, and the chase of this animal is the principal amusement of the sovereigns and their nobility; all of whom, though strict Muhammedans, keep packs of a large ferocious breed of dogs for the sole purpose of hunting the boar. The river Indus, and the *d'hínds* or lakes formed by its waters absolutely swarm with fish, which is the principal article of food among the natives. Here is to be had the sable-fish, so much celebrated by Europeans. It is called *palwáh* by the natives, and resembles the salmon in taste, but is filled with forked bones, which are troublesome and disagreeable.

The original capital of *Sindh* was *Álór*, situated on the old river, nearly in the parallel of latitude of *Bhakír*. It was ruined in the second century of the *hejira*, and has been ever since a dependency of *Bhakír*. During the government of the Khálifat, which lasted for three centuries, *Múltán* appears to have been fixed on by their governors as the capital; but at the same time other independencies sprung up throughout *Sindh*, each of which had its capital town, but not one of them is now, I believe, to be met with. Their names and situations it may be proper to enumerate in order to illustrate the history of the country.

The city next in repute to *Álór* was *Báhmána* or *Bhámána*, also called *Bráhmańábád*.* It was situated on or near the *Púrán*, in what was subsequently called the *Shehdádpúr parganah*: *Bhámána* was afterwards called *Díbal Kángara*.

Nerúnkót was a city on the site of which, or nearly so, stands the modern *Haiderábád*. It was distinguished for its defence, and its submission to the Muhammedan arms on their first entering *Sindh*. *Bhambór*, was a city situated on a branch of the Indus, which joined the sea between *T'hatta* and *Karáchi*. It was deserted in consequence of a failure in the stream; and its inhabitants occupied the *T'hatta* and *Sákiá parganahs*, from what I can collect, about the middle of the seventh century of the *hejira*.

Kállankót (or *Kállakót*) afterwards *Tóghlakábád*, was situated on

* I shall enter into no particulars with respect to ancient cities here, as I propose to prosecute the subject elsewhere. (Vide Capt. M'MURDO's former paper in the present volume, p. 20.—ED.)

the hills a few miles west of *T'hatta*. It was a fort without inhabitants, and was considered as the work of Hindú gods. *Súndra* was an ancient city, the ruins of which are in the *parganah* still bearing that name; and *Himakót* was an old fort in its vicinity, also supposed to be the work of the gods. Its inhabitants were transferred to *T'hatta*. *Dibal* was the principal sea-port in *Sindh* as early as the first discoveries of the Arabians on the Indian coasts. It took its name from a celebrated *déwala*, or temple of the Hindús, which it contained, and which was destroyed by the Arabs. With regard to the situation of this city there are many different opinions, and I have endeavoured to settle it in another place.* The inhabitants were undoubtedly removed to *Láribandar*, and subsequently to *Dhárroja*.

Mándrópat was a large town situated near the present *Góni* branch of the Indus, a little above the parallel of *Lakpat*. It was deserted in the eighth century of the *hejira*. *Túr* was a city of the *Súmras* in the same tract; and *Vijehkót* was the capital of the same people, lying on the *Púrán*, now in the desert. It was destroyed by *Sultán ALLÁ-UD-DÍN* in the beginning of the eighth century of the *hejira*. *Mánkatára* or *Mánhatára*, was a city situated in the *Rúpa parganah*. It flourished about the middle of the sixth century of the *hejira*. *Minagar* was a city subject to a chief, by caste an *Agri*. It flourished so late as the seventh century of the *hejira*; but of its antiquity nothing is known further than that the *Agris* were the descendants of *ALEXANDER*, according to the author the *Tohfát-al-Giráni*. *Minagar* was situated on the *Lóhánna* river, in the present *Shehdádpur parganah*. It is needless to enumerate more of these ancient towns in this place; I shall, therefore, now concisely state what is known of the modern towns mentioned in the history of *Sindh*.

According to native historians, the ground on which the celebrated city of *T'hatta* is situated was formerly covered by the sea, which however retired, and left a desert destitute of fresh water, in which state it remained until the change in the river Indus rendered it as fertile as it had before been barren. At the period of *Sultán ALLÁ-UD-DÍN*'s visit to *Sindh* in about A.H. 700, the *Sammás* founded the town of *Sámói* and the fort of *Mandrása* to the north of the *Mákali* hills, about five miles from *T'hatta*. Towards the close of A.H. 900, *JÁM NANDA* (*Nizám-ud-dín*) selected a spot occupied by a fishing village for the site of a new capital, which he named *T'hatta*, a term which some say is derived from the word *T'hab*, implying closeness of population, while others find its origin in the common word *T'hatta*, a crowd or assembly of people. Some persons think

* See the present volume of the Journal, p. 29.

that the country was named *T'hatta* long before the city was founded; this, however, appears quite uncertain. The *Ságára* branch of the river runs to the north of *T'hatta*; and its inhabitants were drawn from *Díbal*, *Bhambóra*, *Bagar*, and *Terra*, which were large and populous cities on the *Ságára* river, and deserted in the course of time either from choice or necessity. It is stated by MÍR ABDUL RIZÁK ISFAHÁNI, surnamed MASHRAB, that this district was originally peopled from *Yúman*,* from which circumstance it is that *T'hatta* has been so celebrated for the learned and able men it has produced.

The city of *T'hatta* continued to thrive in a surprising manner until it was destroyed by MÍRZA JÁNI BEG, about A.H. 1000, on the occasion of the invasion of the troops of AKBÁR. It never fairly recovered itself afterwards, and although it had the reputation of being the first city in *Sindh*, it gradually declined in consequence until the accession of the *Kalhóra* dynasty; and as this family did not make it their capital, *T'hatta* never afterwards improved. The city has still further declined under the present rulers, and, by the most authentic accounts, does not now contain more than 18,000 inhabitants; although from its size, being, by all accounts, upwards of four miles and a half in circumference, it must at one time have held four times that number.

The city is situated on a rising ground about four miles west of the river, which, till within these forty years, sent a large branch off to the westward, above *T'hatta*, placing the town in a *delta* which does not now exist. *T'hatta* had originally no fortifications, but after it was sacked by the Portuguese, MÍRZA ISA surrounded it with a brick wall which is now in ruins. The houses of the rich and respectable inhabitants are of brick; but those of the lower classes are of straw and wood, plastered with mud, and consequently are not durable. The trade of *Díbal*, by which name alone *T'hatta* is still known to the Arabs, was formerly very extensive, and in this view *T'hatta* will be considered hereafter. The capital is governed by a nobleman who has the title of *Naváb*, but the military force at his command is very limited.

Haiderábád, the present capital of *Sindh*, is situated in latitude 25° 22' N. and longitude 68° 41' E., nearly on the site of the ancient *Nerunkót*. It was founded in its modern state by MÍR GHÓLÁM SHÁH KÁLHÓRA in A.H. 1182, and was defended by a wall and towers.†

* *Yúman* is generally supposed to be Greek; and, according to Dr. ROBERTSON, this country was conquered by the Greek government of Bactria after the division of ALEXANDER's conquests.

† In digging for the foundation of the walls, vast numbers of human bones and entire bodies were found in a wonderful state of preservation.

Its position is on a rocky hill, which is in some parts remarkably steep, and the foot of the precipice is washed by the *Falili* branch of the Indus. The *Máni* river runs three miles to the west of *Haider-ábád*, but both streams are navigable.

The next city in fame, though, perhaps, not in consequence, in *Sindh*, is *Sehwán*. It is reckoned extremely ancient; and is known under the various names of *Séwistán*, *Séwán*, and *Sehwán*, the last of which however is correct. It has been sometimes called *Baghdád*; and the natives have a fable of its having been inhabited previously by a race of men who were cannibals. The fortifications of *Sehwán* were, it is believed, first founded in a regular form by one of the *Jáms* of *T'hatta*. SHÁH BEG ARGHÚN took it from JÁM FIRÓZE to whom it was restored. It was situated upon a rock rising abruptly from the Indus, was of small extent, and is now in ruins. The town is a miserable collection of huts, but contains about eight thousand people, and is divided from the castle by a ravine filled with water during the floods. In fact, *Sehwán* could only have been a place of importance when under a distinct authority, and it must have ceased to be so when it became a part of the general government of *Sindh*. The town and castle are on the west bank of the river, which is now at some distance.

Bhakír, or *Bakar*, was founded by the Arabs, and built from the ruins of *Álór*. It was originally *Ferishta*. The *Tohfat-al-Giráni* states, that this town did not exist in the time of the Hindú *Raj*, and that it got its name *Bakar* ("the dawn") from SAÍYÍD MUHAMMED MAKI, of religious memory, some years after its foundation. The city of *Bhakír* was, in the time of SHÁH BEG ARGHÚN, surrounded by water, being on a small island in the Indus. Whether it originally was so or not seems doubtful, and I should be inclined to think not. At present, the water to the west of the town, during the dry season, entirely disappears. The *Argghúns* made it their capital; and SHÁH BEG built a brick wall round the town for its defence. At this time, also, it was that the *Saiyíds*, who were anciently possessed of great power here, excited the jealousy of the *Argghúns*, and were compelled to leave the town and occupy *Lóhri*, which has already been considered as a suburb of *Bhakír*, though divided from it by the easternmost channel of the river, and containing six times the number of inhabitants. On the opposite bank also is *Seikhar*, or *Seiggar*, a suburb of the city. In the precincts of *Bhakír* were the *Bhirálú* gardens, which were, with their magnificent and elegant buildings, destroyed by SULTÁN MUHAMMED KHÁN, on the report being spread of BÍRAM KHÁN, the *Khán Khánan* of AKBÁR, being about to visit *Sindh*. Under

the celebrated MUHAMMED KHÁN, *Bhakír* was the seat of an independent government; but on his death it became a dependency of Dehli, and was made the head of a district. On NÁDIR SHÁH's visit to *Sindh*, he destroyed its fortifications. This city is at present in the possession of MÍR SOHRÁB TÁLFÚRA, and has lost much of its importance. It is, however, still of consequence, as a frontier town between *Sindh* and *Kandahár* on one side, and serving as a barrier to MÍR SOHRÁB, towards the *Dáudpútra* country on the other. *Bhakír*, in a religious point of view, is of some repute among the followers of MUHAMMED; for it possesses in a golden box, two hairs and a-half of the prophet, to which peculiar properties are ascribed, and which are held in high veneration. *Bhakír* has always been the seat of old Muhammedan families, among whom much learning has been preserved; and I think that a considerable addition to our stock of knowledge regarding ancient *Sindh* might be made, if the libraries and records of these families were open to research.

Bhakír at present contains only five thousand inhabitants, who are said to be remarkable for their cheerful and social dispositions.*

Násirpúr, now in ruins, was once the most beautiful and flourishing city in *Sindh*. Although I agree with some geographers in believing this to be the *Al Mánshura* of the Arabs, as is elsewhere explained,† it is well established that the modern *Násirpúr* was founded by an officer named NÁSIR, who was left by Sultán FIRÓZE SHÁH, of Dehli, to command in *Sindh* after that sovereign's attack on *T'hatta* in A. H. 751. *Násirpúr* was situated on the *Sángra* branch, at that time the main stream of the Indus, and its suburbs were highly ornamented by rich gardens, and pleasure-grounds filled with temporary or permanent villas for recreation. It was *Násirpúr* that the *Terkhán* dynasty, and that tribe in general, took so much trouble to embellish and improve. The precise date of the decay of *Násirpúr* is unknown; but it was coincident with the change of the stream to the westward of *Haiderábád*, which was prior to the entrance of the Dehli army in A.H. 1000.

Independently of the cities which I have here enumerated, there have been, and still are, a vast number of towns of importance in *Sindh*; but many of them are temporary, and all of them subject to change of name or situation. I have, therefore, thought it needless to enter into any description of them, because what is correct regarding them at the time I am writing, may be very different by the time this history

* *Lóheri*, or *Róhri*, as it is erroneously called, is an ancient city, at least it is believed to have been built at the same time as *Bhakír*.

† See p. 34.

meets the public eye. The map will convey, in my opinion, sufficient information on the subject of the towns, ancient and modern, to render intelligible the allusions made to them in the course of the work.*

The commerce of *Sindh*, both external and internal, has been subject to great vicissitudes. The country is by nature admirably adapted to benefit by commerce, and that it did so to the utmost extent under the ancient Hindú government, there is ample proof; but from the time of its subversion by the power of the Khálifs, society was dismembered, the consolidated authority, which secured quiet and confidence to the people, was broken up, and an aristocracy formed on its ruins, which threw *Sindh* back, in point of political situation, to that of a country in the first stage of its emerging from barbarism,—a situation from which it has never entirely extricated itself. Such a state of things, it may be readily supposed, was not very favourable for commercial transactions. Were we to form a judgment of the former of the periods just referred to, from the accounts which still exist both in Europe and Asia, we should justly infer that the commerce of *Sindh* with Persia and Arabia was rich and extensive, and that *Díbal*, the sea-port of the Indus, was the emporium for the goods, both of India and of Arabia, and conferred a degree of wealth and splendour on the country and government that has never since been equalled.

During the period that *Sindh* was subject to NÁSIR-UD-DÍN KABACHI of *Múltán*, when the province was divided among seven tributary chiefs, over whom NÁSIR's authority was but partially established, and during the whole period of the *Sumrá* rule, there appears to have been a great defect in the system of government; and although we do not know from good authority the state of trade during these times, yet we may, nevertheless, assume, that it was not in a very flourishing condition; for besides the internal state of *Sindh* itself, the entire or partial dismemberment of the Hindú sovereignties in that part of India bordering on this province, must have tended materially to check speculations in commerce.

With the *Jám Sammá* dynasty trade once more assumed a promising aspect, and under the encouragement of some individuals of that family, the country seems to have been rescued from a state deplorable in the highest degree. The succeeding government of the *Arghúns* was not injurious to the prosperity of *Sindh*; but the manner of their establishment, and the circumstances consequent on a

* It is to be regretted, that the map referred to by Capt. M'MURDO in this and other places, has not yet reached the Society.

revolution of authorities, caused more attention to be directed to the military than to the civil branches of policy. In MÍRZA ISA TER-KHÁN the industrious of all classes and descriptions found a warm friend and protector; and the MÍRZA himself engaged deeply in commerce, both before and subsequent to his elevation to the rank of a sovereign. It was this MÍRZA who improved and regulated the sea-ports; and he spared no expense or trouble to render the conveyance of goods through his dominions safe and easy.

The tyranny and frenzy of MUHAMMED KHÁN, followed, as they shortly were, by the annexation of *Sindh* to the crown of Dehli, were injurious to the prosperity of the province. From the tyranny of the former, the lives of his subjects were never safe; and the latter gave rise to a contest which, short as it was, was productive of great distress to the country, and was succeeded by an annual change of *subadárs*, who farmed the revenue, and possessed exclusive authority in every department of the government; while their views and dispositions probably assimilated in no respect but in that of amassing wealth,—circumstances which must of necessity have been inimical to industry of all kinds, but particularly so to the safe and profitable employment of capital. Under the *Kalhóras* commerce regained, in some degree, its natural importance; for an English factory was established, which was doubtless productive of mutual advantages, and the country was now also under one head, capable of improving its situation in every respect. The jealousy and narrow-minded disposition of some of that family, however, by endangering the safety of the individuals and property of the English establishment, put an end to those prospects, by causing the factory to be withdrawn; and it was only re-established, to be finally broken up in consequence of an open outrage committed on its chief member.

The present government of *Sindh* has left nothing undone to destroy this branch of its revenue, with regard to which it pursues a most barbarous line of policy; for, by appropriating to itself an unfair proportion of the profits of the trader, it effectually checks commercial enterprise, without affording any compensation by personal security, or by a just and energetic rule which might render the property of the subject secure. That trade of any kind has survived the disadvantages and lawless exactions to which it has been so long subjected, must be attributed to the improvements in other parts of India, where the introduction of European goods, capital, and industry, have been particularly felt; and perhaps a great portion of the success still experienced in trade in *Sindh*, may be placed to the account of the introduction of that equitable and enlightened system

of government in other Asiatic countries, which not only benefits the dominions in which it prevails, but has a tendency indirectly to ameliorate the condition of all the states with which a connexion, even though purely commercial, is maintained.

The principal sea-ports are *Karáchi* and *Dhárāja*. The former is a very ancient town, known in the Hindú *púrānas* by the name of *Rāmbāgh*, an appellation still commonly in use. It lies in lat. $24^{\circ} 51'$ N., and long. $67^{\circ} 16'$ E. The town is situated on a creek at the head of a bay formed by Cape *Monze*, and carries on a brisk trade with Bombay, Malabar, and Arabia. The entrance of the creek or harbour is narrow, and, at low water, has only one foot and a-half water on the bar, but, at spring-tides, vessels of 400 tons find shelter here from September to May. The bay cannot be approached at other seasons without danger. *Karáchi* originally belonged to an independent chief in *Makrán*, but was conquered by the Sindhians. The revenues fall short of a lak of rupees per annum; but under a wise and well-regulated government, there is little doubt that they might be considerably increased. The description of vessels used here in the trade is chiefly the *D'hinji*, which is an awkward boat of from fifty to two hundred tons' burden, and can only keep the sea during the favourable monsoon, as it runs the risk of foundering should it meet with bad weather.

Dhárāja is the sea-port of *T'hatta*, and is the same as *Láribandar* the site of which town is near the present *Dhárāja*. This place is situated about twenty miles up the large mouth of the Indus, and is conveniently situated for trade. It is only within these few years that *Dhárāja* has superseded *Sháhbandar*, which has been subject to vicissitudes, owing to the fickleness of the stream.

The chief articles exported from *Sindh* of its own produce are grain, particularly rice; hides, shark-fins, saltpetre, potash, assafoetida, cotton and silk cloths, horses, and indigo. Its imports are coco-nuts, dates, iron, tin, lead, and copper; but a particular list of the articles forming the trade of *Sindh* will be given in a table of the appendix.*

The commerce by sea is almost exclusively carried on by Hindús of the *Bhátí* and *Lóhánna* castes, both of which are ancient inhabitants of *Sindh*. There are likewise some Muhammedans called *Memans*, who participate in the trade in some degree. Inland speculations are made indiscriminately by all descriptions of people of the country, besides whom, a numerous body of merchants from *Múltán*, called *Múltánís*, are settled in *Sindh*, where their command of money gives

* This appendix, owing to some mistake, did not accompany the paper.—ED.

them a place of the first rank. They are the principal bankers, and possess a good deal of influence both with government and with the people. These *Múltánis* carry on a trade with *Kabúl*, *Kandahár*, *Kuelát*, *Múltán*, and *Bahámálpúr*, both by the river and by land carriage; and by them indeed are consumed the imports which would otherwise find no sale in the province.

There is little doubt but that the commerce of *Sindh* is capable of being increased to a great extent. The natural advantages it possesses are very important, particularly as regards the circulation of European goods. Hence lies a short and easy route to the northern countries of India and Persia, the climate of which, as well as the manners and usages of the inhabitants, approach nearest those of Europe, and, of course, their respective necessities and wants resemble each other more than those of Europe and southern India. The wretched governments of the district provinces here alluded to, however, preclude the hope that the state of security, comfort, and confidence, so requisite to the encouragement of trade, can for a long time be established.

The revenues of *Sindh* are differently collected in the different districts. In some, particularly in those of the southern parts, they are realised in kind, in others by *jammá*, or land rent. In general irrigated lands are rented, whilst those which yield three crops with the seasons, pay in kind a third, a fourth, and even so little as the fifth of their produce, according to a valuation made on the grounds. These rates are regulated by the valuation of labour, or by natural obstacles (in the land) to agriculture. Irrigated land is rented from the government generally at the following rates:—

Sugar cane, per <i>bigá</i> , rupees 12 per annum,				
Tobacco,	do.	—	7½	do.
Vegetables	do.	—	7½	do.
Opium,	do.	—	21	do.
Indigo,	do.	—	80	do.
Grain,	do.	—	6	do.

The *bigá* contains a square of about forty paces, with the exception of the indigo *bigá*, which is twice that extent; and on comparing this assessment with that paid in other parts of India, it will, I believe, be found tolerably moderate. It is, however, merely a nominal value put upon the land; for the collection of the revenues is, in many instances, left to rapacious farmers, who cover their contracts and benefit themselves besides, at the expense of the ryot. Independently of this hardship, it is not uncommon in *Sindh* for the government to collect vast

quantities of grain for the supply of troops, when any military expedition is on foot, in which case the rulers make no scruple of seizing a half of the produce of the whole country, leaving the farmer to settle with the cultivator the best way he can. The present *Ámírs* are in the habit of purchasing vast quantities of grain, which, with the government share, in cases where the revenues are not farmed, they deposit in store-rooms, and afterwards retail to their subjects at an advanced price; a practice of which the evil consequences are severely felt; more particularly as the custom originates in avarice, and the purchase-money is turned into gold or jewels, which are deposited in the treasuries of the different members of the government, and, consequently, as these are looked on as private hordes, the money is totally withdrawn from circulation.

In the appendix will be found a table exhibiting the names of districts with their respective revenues, both of the land and in other branches; which table, although it was framed from the statements of men who had themselves farmed many of the districts, may be perhaps a little in excess of the actual produce, as it refers to a period a few years prior to the present time; and there is reason to believe that the revenues of *Sindh* are rather on the decrease than otherwise.

In the table alluded to, it will be seen that the total revenue available to the *Haiderábád* rulers, including those of *Mírs Sohráb*, *Thársa*, and others of the *Tálpúra* family, does not amount to half a crore of rupees. To this amount, however, must be added the produce of lands held in *jághír* by chieftains for the support of feudal followers, of which the whole military force of *Sindh* is composed, as also the lands of whole tribes of *Zemíndárs*, who have held their patrimonies from the earliest ages, and who pay nothing whatever, either in money or service, to the government of the country.

There still remains to be taken into consideration the lands and other sources of revenue alienated for the support of *Saiyíds* and other religious establishments attached to the Muhammedan faith. The amount of these there is no possibility of ascertaining correctly; but no country in Asia can boast of a like number of ecclesiastical establishments. Perhaps it would not be beyond the truth if the revenue appropriated to these purposes was calculated at one-third of what is enjoyed by the government. Some of these settlements are coeval with the introduction of Islámism, and nearly all the rest are prior to the fourth century of that era. Almost the whole of the Arabs who first entered *Sindh* received grants of land; and although it is recorded that few of the families of rank then settled in this province, yet vast numbers appear to have afterwards visited and settled in it, when

they found themselves respected, and, as being related to the venerated founders of their religion, they derived an ample provision from assisting in its propagation.

Before an opinion can be hazarded as to the population of a country, it is requisite to possess a much more intimate knowledge of it than any European has yet had an opportunity of acquiring with reference to *Sindh*. Natives are never in the habit of making particular observations on this subject, so that information derived from them is likely to prove extremely erroneous. The modern capital *Haiderábád* is said to contain upwards of 30,000 inhabitants, the city of *T'hatta* not quite 20,000, and *Karáchí*, the principal sea-port and trading town, has a population somewhat less than either. It has been a very frequent and natural remark, that whilst we observe the banks of all the large rivers in the old continents thickly studded with cities, towns, or villages, those of the Indus are observed to be, in all maps, nearly destitute of inhabitants; but although there are few or no cities, or even towns or villages, immediately on the banks of the river, it is not therefore to be taken for granted that they are uninhabited. The map prefixed to this work will, I believe, shew a variety of small towns and villages that have never before been known to exist; and it should be further remarked, that the habits and manners of the people in many parts of *Sindh* are inimical to living in towns. The nature of the banks of the Indus, the uncertainty of the position of its stream, and the danger occurring annually and throughout its whole course, from its rise, are circumstances which are in a manner peculiar to this river, at least to the extent in which they are there found to exist, and which will account for the thinness of the population on its banks.

Any attempt to calculate the population of *Sindh*, without some reasonable data, which we do not possess, would be equally vain and fruitless; but though generally speaking I am inclined to consider this province, as below the medium standard of Indian population, it is, nevertheless, surprising that a country in which the necessaries of life are more easily procured than in any other part of India, should send forth such multitudes of adventurers in every profession, and contain that vast number of beggars, for which it is so remarkable. In those parts of the country inhabited by *Bellúches*, or by the various erratic, or pastoral tribes of *Sammás*, the population, as might be expected, is certainly scanty; but in other situations, perhaps, *Sindh* is not more deficient than most countries of India.

The people of *Sindh* are, for the most part, a strong and hardy race of men, with a complexion similar to that of the natives of western India. The higher ranks are corpulent to a proverb; and

this habit of body is here even more than in other Asiatic countries looked up to as no less adding to the respectability than to the beauty of its possessor. Those, therefore, who are wealthy, or of consequence in the scale of society, encourage this tendency to corpulency, by indolence and full diet, and every other means in their power. The *Bellúches* and many of the *Sammá* tribes have, in a remarkable degree, those features commonly called Jewish, and which are strikingly different from those of the other inhabitants. An oval contour of face, aquiline nose, arched eyebrows, and high forehead, with expressive eyes, are the characteristic features of the Sindhians above alluded to. The people of both sexes are certainly extremely handsome, if a judgment can be formed from the opinions of several gentlemen who have visited the country, and from an acquaintance with the people on the immediate borders of *Sindh*, who are chiefly natives of that country.

The Hindús who reside in *Sindh* have much the same countenance as their brethren who inhabit the towns in the western coast of India, but they are generally more filthy in their clothes and persons than the latter, as will be afterwards more particularly mentioned.

There are here, as in other Asiatic countries, two descriptions of inhabitants, totally differing from each other in character; the military part of the population, and those who follow trade or agriculture. The military, including the whole of those *Bellúche* tribes which have descended into *Sindh*, together with the various ancient *Zemindárs* now known under different denominations, are, as a race of men, jealous, proud, knavish, and mean. They are, however, remarkable for a fund of good nature in their disposition, which, in the low and uneducated classes, approaches to silliness or stupidity. It may, however, be fairly questioned whether this seeming easiness of temper does not originate in a slowness of perception and an unsusceptible turn of mind rather than in any inherent quality, for if once irritated, the Sindhian remains irascible and unforgiving. The meanness and knavery of this class of men are proverbial; and so strong and natural is their disposition to theft, that those who are otherwise respectable in character and situation, do not hesitate to practise the profession of a night robber; or to lay aside their dress, and with a wallet on their shoulders, make a circuit of many miles for the sake of asking alms. A propensity to begging and stealing is inherent in the *Sindh* soldier, and to the class from which he is drawn; and no loss of character accrues from the practice of either.

The mercantile classes, both Hindú and Muhammedan, are a different race of people. They are as industrious as the former are

indolent, and seem to think of nothing but their professions. They neglect their persons and their comforts for activity in business, in the transaction of which, however, they are not remarkable for fair dealing; but they are enterprising in trade, and bear the exactions and tyranny of oppressive governors without complaint.

With most, if not all of the vices common to Asiatics, the Sindhians appear to possess few or none of their virtues. The ignorance in which the greater part of the population is involved surpasses what can well be imagined. There assuredly does not exist on the face of the earth a people, among whom the use of letters is known, where so little attention is paid to the acquirement of learning; and that of a religious kind is confined to the *Saiyids* and *Pirzádehs*, whose knowledge, in nine cases out of ten, extends no further than the repetition of a few common prayers and *ayíts* from the *Korán*.

With the ignorance, their bigotry, arrogance, and self-pride keep equal pace; and an intelligent gentleman, Mr. N. CROW, to whom a long residence in *Sindh* gave abundance of opportunities for forming a just opinion on this subject, has truly and expressively observed, that in *Sindh* there is no zeal but in propagating the faith—no spirit but in celebrating the *Ede*—no liberality but in feeding lazy *Saiyids*—and no taste but in ornamenting old tombs. Such a picture as is here displayed in a few words, affords a just insight into the character of the Muhammedans, and into the state of society. They are certainly the most bigoted, the most self-sufficient, and the most ignorant people on record.

The Sindhian, among other bad qualities, is accused of treachery, at least as a national vice. On the contrary, although there are frequent instances of assassination, which is common to all military governments in a state little above barbarism, the natives of this country are nevertheless much less addicted to this detestable practice than their neighbours on the north and on the east. They have (in particular the *Bellúche* tribes) a high idea of the duties of hospitality, the rights of which are rarely infringed by those who have not been corrupted by ambitious temptations, or who have not otherwise lost their original manners, by mixing in the intrigues of courts and struggles for power and place. The *Bellúches*, likewise, have the highest respect for their females, who possess much influence over their mind and actions. Their adherence to any agreement or stipulation to which their women are parties may be implicitly relied on, and more confidence may be safely placed on engagements of this kind than if they had been sworn to on the *Korán*.

No Asiatic country, in proportion to the number of its population, sends forth so many needy vagrants as *Sindh*. All the provinces around it are overrun with a wandering and idle race of men, alternately soldiers, beggars, and thieves, who being too indolent to labour for a scanty subsistence (which in the centre of a most productive country appears unaccountably to be the lot of the greater portion of its inhabitants), prefer the uncertain but more congenial proceeds of the employment above-mentioned, and that even in foreign countries. As mercenaries in the pay of the western countries of India, the Sindhian holds the next place to the Arab, a race of men who have of late years rendered themselves remarkable for a continued though unintentional, and brave though unfortunate, opposition to the English troops throughout those territories.

The *Sindh* soldier is entertained by the native powers at the rate of from six to ten rupees per month. He is individually brave, but inferior to the Arab in coolness in action; neither does he possess that sense of honour which is manifested by the Indian soldier. The Sindhian is bold in his attack, but feels less hesitation in turning his back than almost any other man who carries arms. He differs much from the Arab in his absurd boasting, and equally so in the irregularity and meanness of his conduct, being under none of those severe and orderly regulations which exist among the Arab troops, and which have doubtless tended to inspire the Indians with so high an opinion of the military powers of this class of men.

The military tribes in *Sindh* are, however, generally expert marksmen, and are trained to the use of the matchlock from their youth, which gives them a fondness that is national for feats of arms. They consider the sabre indeed as the national weapon, but although the swords of *Sindh* are in high repute, I suspect that the country would derive little military renown if reduced to depend upon that arm. Fire-arms are undoubtedly the natural and most efficient power of *Sindh*; and it is ridiculous pride and ostentation that induces this nation to hold out that its sabre is irresistible. As soldiers, however, they are remarkably peaceable, faithful, and persevering; but are totally destitute of those ideas of dignity which generally accompany the military character, and hesitate not to steal in their own camp when they can do so with impunity. It would be almost impossible to enumerate the various tribes of Sindhians; they are numerous beyond belief, and are divided and subdivided into families, which are known by distinct names. The manners of the whole are, however, much alike; and, considered as a people, they have few peculiarities either in customs or religion.

They are a homely race of men,* whose first question when they meet after a short absence is invariably concerning the health of the children and the cattle, which last (as a man's wealth and respectability is esteemed according to the number of his camels, buffaloes, or goats,) are considered not the least important branch of the family.

The people who live on the eastern borders of *Sindh* are mostly shepherds, who reside in *wándhs* or herds, and lead their cattle from place to place as suits their convenience. They do not, however, reside in tents like other erratic people, but form huts of grass of a very simple and poor appearance. The principal food of these wanderers is milk and butter, with bread made of *bájeri* flour, which is almost the only grain produced in their country, and its cultivation is confined to the supply of their absolute wants. They eat the flesh of goats, but indulge in this only on particular occasions of feasting. The men are all armed, for they live in a desert which is infested by banditti, who drive off their flocks; and their own society, simple as it appears, is liable to the troubles consequent on ambition and jealousy.

The dress of these men, particularly of the Muhammedans (for there are also Rájápút tribes†), is generally loose trousers of bad cloth dyed blue, with a long frock of the same stuff and colour. The *kammer-band* or waistband of the better sort is generally a *lungi* of silk and cotton of *T'hatta* manufacture, and of the poorer class, any common stripe of cloth they can meet with, and which serves either for the waist, or, if occasion requires, for the head-dress, by being twisted round a cotton quilted cap which they all wear. In the dress of their women these Musalmáns have retained the ancient Hindú custom, that is, the petticoat of coarse cloth, with an upper garment of goats-hair loosely thrown round the person and suspended from the head. The bosom dress covers the bosom distinctly, and tying above and below with strings round the shoulders and breast, leaves the back exposed. The Muhammedans who have any claim to descent from the founders of the faith, and who are not converts from the Hindú creed, have in general adopted the trousers and frock for their women's dress, which, with the same people, is often of a green colour, indicating their sacred origin.

The people who live on the Indus, or on the plains near that river, are a very different race from those now described. Their lives are

* In the appendix, I have endeavoured to class the different inhabitants of *Sindh* under their respective names, as being in that form more intelligible and explicit than if introduced into the body of the work.

† On the skirts of the desert alone.

devoted to agriculture and to trade, and their habitations are of course more fixed and in larger societies, although in many parts they are frequently found in small detached bodies on the borders of their fields. In the west parts of the *delta*, and to the north-west of *Thatta*, the *Jáquíás*, as a tribe of *Bellúches*, live in huts of reeds, which are moveable at pleasure, and so well and compactly made as to resist all kinds of weather. Those who live in this way are called by the Sindhians the *Pak'hírúja*, which, I believe, signifies as much as "kings of the wilds."

The food of the greatest portion of the natives of *Sindh* is fish and rice, although there are some particular sects whose customs do not admit of fish as an article of food. These are, however, very few, and confined to a very small number of *Bráhmans* and *Bháttias*, the generality of both of whom do not scruple to eat fish. The sweet potato forms no inconsiderable part of the food of the people. It is not a pleasant vegetable, but is very cheap and reckoned a nourishing root.

The Hindú part of society in *Sindh* still adhering to their original religion and manners is composed of *Bháttias*, *Lóhánnas*, with their respective *gúrús* or priests, and the *Pokarna* and *Sársat Bráhmans*. The *Bháttias* and *Lóhánnas* are mentioned at the time of the Arabian conquest as numerous races of people. These castes of men were exclusively natives of *Sindh*, until the spirit of trade and speculation scattered them, and they now are to be found all over western India and Arabia. The *Bháttia* of *Sindh* is not, by the rules of his caste, restricted to vegetable diet, and fish has been always an article of his food; but his brethren who have migrated to India having all adopted the worship of *Viṣṇú*, and assumed the cleanliness of person and strictness in diet peculiar to this sect, many of those remaining in *Sindh* have, in the same respects, deviated from their original customs.

The *Lówánnas* or *Lóhánnas* compose the great body of Hindús in *Sindh*, where they follow the meanest modes of gaining subsistence, and rise to the highest offices under the government. Those of them who are attached to the chiefs and sovereigns are compelled to dress in the Muhammedan style, and to appear particularly clean; but others are so remarkably the opposite, that "as dirty as a *Sindhi Lówánna*" is a common expression. Both *Bháttias* and *Lówánnas* wear the *Bráhman's* string and the Musalmán's beard; at least the latter is common, although some affect to shave it. Those in the service of government are compelled to wear the beard, and much

attention is bestowed upon it, as is generally the case wherever the beard is worn. The *Lówánna* customs admit of polygamy, of their females contracting second marriage engagements, and of divorce from that state. Those of the *Bháltias* do not. The *Sársat Bráhma*n is the priest of the *Lówánnas*, and differs very little from the people of that caste. He eats fish and flesh, drinks spirituous liquors, and lives upon his receipts at the marriages, births, and deaths of his followers. They worship the Hindú goddesses in particular; and have many small pagodas, dedicated to the worship of the ocean, or rather the river Indus, for a pot of fresh water is indispensable in the ceremonies of worship. The *Pókarna Bráhmans* are the original priests of the *Bháltias*, and are somewhat more Hindú in reality than the *Sársat*, although still inferior in that respect to their Indian disciples.

The language of *Sindh* is a written language, and has a character peculiar to itself. It is written from left to right, and has other signs of its Indian origin. The character is easily and expeditiously formed, and the letters run much into each other. To a cursory observer the *Sindhi* approaches nearer to the Malabar character than any other I have seen; but on breaking up the letters and examining them they have no resemblance. In the province there are two distinct languages. The first and original is the *Sindhi*, the other the *Bellúchi*, which can scarcely be called a written tongue, although it is commonly met with in the Arabic character. The *Sindhi*, as I have said, is a written tongue, and seems to me, from the little acquaintance I have with it, to be a branch of the Sanskrit stock, which has supplied India with languages. That it is of Sanskrit origin, I advance on the opinion of scholars of the country; and on the same authority I may state, that the *Sindhi* has fewer modern innovations and a greater number of Sanskrit words than the *Gujarátí*, which is a pure Hindú dialect. There is some affinity between the two—at least the radicals of words are alike, though the entire words have no resemblance. There is undoubtedly, however, a great portion of *Panjábi* in the *Sindhi*; and, in fact, it is by many considered as only a dialect of that language.

The *Sindhi* is the language used by the Hindú inhabitants, and, indeed, by the mass of the population of *Sindh* Proper, those of the southern desert, and, with a little variation, by the *Jhárejás* of Cutch. It is worthy of remark, that the *Jhárejás*, *Bháltias*, *Lówánnas*, and other *Sindhi* tribes now inhabiting Cutch, have brought with them their language, which they still continue to speak in that country; but the *Gujarátí*, which is spoken by the *Abírs*, *Cháras*, and shepherds, who,

if not the aborigines, are certainly many centuries prior to the others, as inhabitants of Cutch, has maintained its superiority, and continues to be the only written tongue in the province.

The *Bellúche* is spoken by the different tribes of that name, who are, in fact, foreigners to *Sindh*. Their language appears to be a mixture of Arabic, Persian, Panjábi, and Sanskrit, and is spoken by them in various dialects. I subjoin in the appendix the numerals, with a few of the most common words both of the *Sindhi* and *Bellúchi*, which have a strong resemblance to each other.

Under the *Kalhóra* dynasty the government of *Sindh* was patriarchal. Every Muhammedan, from his religious principles, obeyed the sovereign; and the Hindú, at all times ready to imbibe every superstition, whether of his own or another faith, became, from the same cause, attached to his rule. A course of conduct replete with treachery, violence, and folly, alienated the affections of many of the military tribes from the later princes of this race, and ultimately gave rise to the revolution which placed the present *Tálpúra* family on the throne.

The system of government pursued by this family is purely military, and, when examined, appears extremely superficial and temporary. All their views are directed to the accumulation of wealth, which they acquire by extortion and cruelty, and have thus reduced the revenues by one-third within the last thirty years. The districts are generally farmed to revenue officers, who are compelled to levy from the subject, over and above the fair dues of the public, a sum to indemnify themselves for the fine which their masters frequently impose.*

The *Ámírs* hold courts of justice in their own presence every Friday; but they are rendered subordinate to the acquisition of money, both plaintiff and defendant being made to pay to the utmost extent of their means. There are, however, some singular instances of disinterested justice afforded by these venal judges towards foreigners against natives of *Sindh*, and the excellence of the government which existed under the authority of MÍR GHÓLÁM ALI is frequently spoken of. The power of life and death is centred in two of the principal chiefs and governors only, and other officers send their prisoners to their presence.

As the government exists at present, it must be considered, in the true sense of the appellation, a military despotism; and although the annals of Asiatic countries seldom record any other kind of rule, yet

* I am acquainted with a respectable *Lówánna* who farmed some of the districts, and was plundered by the *Ámírs* and compelled to become Muhammedan.

it may be fairly questioned if any instance of such a despotic government is to be met with in their pages. The light in which the *Tálpúras* stand, as usurpers of a popular government, may, perhaps, be the cause of their tenacity of a military reputation; and to this circumstance, and to the divided state of the reigning family in *Kandahár*, alone is to be attributed the success of the *Tálpúras* in holding the supreme authority for so long a time. That they do not possess the good wishes of the inhabitants, and that their rule has always been in a very precarious state, is universally allowed; and that they themselves are aware of the circumstance may be inferred, as well from the steadiness with which they persevere in destroying the revenues of the province, for the sake of accumulating private wealth, as from the extraordinary favours conferred on the military tribes at the expense of their other subjects, and contrary to the rules of a good and systematic government.

We have seen that the deposed race of sovereigns possessed a double tie upon the affections of the natives of *Sindh*. The latter were attached to the *Kalhóras*, as a family which long held the sway, and under whose guidance the province had attained a considerable degree of prosperity. The sacred stock from which these chiefs were descended, and the respect and reverence which were their due from the Muhammedan part of their population, likewise weighed in their favour. The severe and illiberal treatment which the *Hindús* experienced under a few of the latter princes of the family may be considered as an obstacle to the eventual restoration of the *Kalhóras* to the throne; but as the *Hindús* almost exclusively follow the peaceable walks of life, their voice would not be heard among a nation of armed men. It is also remarkable how little the people of Asiatic countries have to do in the revolutions of their governments. They are never guided by any great and common impulse of feeling, and take no part in events the most interesting and important to their country and their own prosperity. Thinking not of consequences beyond a day, they follow blindly, like slaves, whoever may be able to afford them a momentary gratification, by pay or plunder.

If, what is not probable, it should ever occur that an organised attempt were made by a *Kalhóra* to recover the authority of the family, it could hardly fail of success. The Muhammedan families are, many of them, jealous of the success of a tribe with which they consider themselves as on an equality in every respect; whilst the treatment of every caste and description of natives has been more harsh and inconsiderate than has been their lot under any other of the various forms of government to which *Sindh* has been subjected.

The western Hindú has for many centuries known no other government but that of Islám. Shut out from intercourse with their Indian brethren, and surrounded by Musalmáns, the Hindús of *Sindh* have lost those fine feelings of caste and distinction which characterise the same race elsewhere; for in the worst of times, and under the most bigoted Muhammedan sovereigns, there has always been some favoured spot, some happy corner, where the principles of Hindú government have been maintained, and the prejudices of religion and the caste kept warmly alive. Hence there have, in the course of centuries, occasionally burst forth active and ambitious individuals, who have laid the foundations of powerful and independent states, or restored the vital spark to those which were languishing under the yoke of Islám.

How different is the picture which *Sindh* presents! In the course of a thousand years there is not an instance of a Hindú having attempted to rescue himself or fellow-countrymen from a state of the vilest slavery; nor, since the fall of the Hindú dynasty, has any aboriginal native of the province raised himself to independence, if we except the *Sammá* family, who had, however, changed their religion before they succeeded to sovereignty.

The original Hindú tribes who were lords of the soil are all now ranged under the faith of MUHAMMED, or have become assimilated to his followers; and the peculiar custom of portions of tribes becoming proselytes to Islám, but retaining the name, dress, and, in some measure, the manners and prejudices of their origin, tended much to the removal of the distinction which religion had established.

Branches of the same family were at the same time professing different religious tenets, and maintaining their accustomed familiarity of intercourse. Muhammedan converts retained Hindú names, and Hindús openly avowed their belief in and respect for the Muhammedan faith. In such a state of society, and where such manners prevailed, it cannot be doubted but that there must have been a tendency to the extinction of all feeling in regard to difference of religion and caste. That such has been the result, the present state of Hindúism in *Sindh* and the south-west part of India, among the tribes who are original natives of the country, bears ample testimony.

This short digression was necessary to shew, that, if even the Hindú part of the population had the power to influence the fate of the government of *Sindh*, it would not be guided in any degree by motives of religion, and that the restoration of the *Kalhóras* would not be impeded by any feelings derived from that quarter.

We are somewhat surprised to discover, that notwithstanding the

unpopular government of the *Tálpúras*, they have few or no prejudices against those who profess a different faith. Hindús possess the confidence of the rulers, equally, and perhaps in a greater degree than do the followers of Muhammed; and they compose the most valuable and trustworthy part of their establishment, as officers and servants. In *Sindh*, also, the *Shía* and the *Sunní* among the Musalmáns are equally protected. The chiefs themselves adhere to the doctrines of the former sect, whilst those of the *Sunní* are more prevalent in the province.

Although the *Amírs* are thus liberal towards those who worship idols, they are, nevertheless, eager in making converts to the true faith, and avail themselves of the smallest opening or colouring to compel the poorer class of inhabitants to conform to it. If an unfortunate *Lowáanna* happens to say to a Musalmán, "You are my brother," or "I will accompany you on your journey," he is liable to feel the folly of his cordiality in circumcision. Still, however, no advantage is taken of their difference in religion to the detriment of their persons or property. The misfortunes which marked the latter years of their predecessors in power may have afforded the *Tálpúras* a lesson on the score of the impartiality which governments owe to their subjects; or the more powerful consideration of pecuniary benefit may have dictated toleration as the best policy.

In other respects, the oppression and exorbitant exactions of these governors are the subject of well-founded and universal discontent. Their avarice is so unbounded, and so illegally gratified, as to prove an effectual check to trade and manufacture: both of which are fast declining, and must soon reach the lowest ebb, if not saved by a timely revolution. The immediate produce of this short-sighted policy has been enormous; but the increase must naturally become every year less with the deficiency of revenue. It is well ascertained that the *Amírs* had deposited many crores of their accumulated wealth in their fortresses within the great desert, where it was long considered safe from the attempts of the northern invaders, who constantly threatened *Sindh* with their inroads. The rapid strides of the British arms, however, towards their eastern frontier, have alarmed them for their power as well as treasure. The latter was some years ago removed to a position in the mountains to the north-west of *Haiderábád*, where a fort* is now nearly completed, which they consider, from its natural and artificial defences, as impregnable. The treasure is all in gold and jewels, into which the annual revenues are quickly

* *Ranni* is the name of the place alluded to.

transformed and deposited in their hoard, to the great injury of the trade and industry of the country.

The quantity of specie and bullion thus annually subtracted from the circulating medium, and, indeed, the capital of the country, it would be difficult exactly to calculate; but if we refer to the revenue of the government, and to the schedule of the expenses of the state, as given in the Appendix, we shall find that the latter are uncommonly small in comparison, and it is therefore probable that the sums amassed are very considerable.

The policy of the *Amírs* appears to be equally simple and ridiculous. Their principal anxiety is to keep aloof from intercourse with foreigners, whom they treat with a jealousy and suspicion approaching to insult. By these means they expect to conceal the resources of the country and the disposition of its inhabitants, and by an overbearing and haughty behaviour they expect to impress strangers with a high opinion of their rank and power. Never was there such an erroneous line of policy adopted; for, in the first place, their jealousy invites attention and inquiry, when their threats are at once discovered to be empty boasting, and are contradicted by the personal fears of the *Amírs*, who have so little command over their feelings that they have become notorious far beyond the limits of their kingdom. The treasure that has been collected is stated by these chiefs to be intended for the public use, in cases of exigent danger from foreign enemies. But it is the general belief, that they are so sensible of the feeble nature of their authority, that it is their intention to ship their riches for *Muscat* in case of any serious threat or invasion of an enemy.

No foreign power has excited such uneasiness in the breasts of the *Amírs* as the British, of whom they have always been extremely suspicious; but the events which have occurred within the last fifteen years have presented to them a nation hitherto only partially known in the capacity of conquerors of princes and nations, approaching with rapid strides in all directions towards their frontier, and have created a sensation which these boasters cannot conceal. These sentiments of fear and suspicion have on frequent occasions been made evident; but since the British government was forced by circumstances to support an influence in *Cutch*, they have known no bounds. It is well ascertained that they have long since ceased to fear or respect the authority of the King of *Kandahár*; yet in the moment of alarm, and on the advance of an English army into *Cutch*, the *Amírs* cunningly endeavoured, by false and exaggerated representations, to urge the already distracted councils of the north into a dispute with our government solely to satisfy their own fears, and at

the same time intrigued with the petty states of *Cutch* to renounce the friendship of that power, which had only a few months previously called them into existence.

As the *Amírs* certainly contemplated the probability of an attempt on the part of some foreign power to dispossess them of *Sindh*, it perhaps may not be considered irrelevant to offer a few observations on the means which they possess of repelling such an attack, if made. These, however, I propose to offer in as concise a manner as the subject will admit, since it possesses but little interest with the generality of readers.

The military force of the *Amírs* of *Sindh* is composed of levies from the Muhammedan tribes, which are more remarkable for their numbers and variety than for their prowess in war. These tribes are subject to chieftains of the same family, holding a certain quantity of land for the support of those followers who reside upon it. The *Jághírs* are exposed to change with the pleasure of the *Amírs*, who frequently make transfers annually, and in some cases not for ten years. The names of the soldiers belonging to the chieftains, at least those of the *Bellúchís*, are registered with their descent, which is carefully preserved as a mark of distinction among that caste of people; by which means, if any of them are discharged by the *Jághírdár*, they have only to complain to the *Darbár*, which redresses their grievances; and at the same time this usage enables them to check the abuses consequent on the system of never mustering their retainers.

The *Jághírdárs* seldom or never pay their followers in cash, but each man has a certain quantity of grain allotted to him, which he receives at the different periods of harvest. Under the *Kalhóra* government a bad principle existed of *Jághírdárs*, who were the heads of different military tribes, viz. the *Tálpúras*, *Jáquíás*, *Leckis*, and *Khósábs*, having all the military force of the state included under their respective banners. The *Tálpúras*, however, have adopted another, and better system; for they cautiously prohibit any excessive *Jághír*, and no *Sirdár* of that description has now more than a thousand or twelve hundred followers. The *Khósábs* are excluded entirely, as are the *Leckis*, from their supposed attachment to the *Kalhóras*; and the number of *Jághírs* retained as servants are reduced to an officer and a hundred or two hundred men, with three hundred of the tribe of *Námurdí*, of both of which the *Tálpúras* are exceedingly jealous.

The number of household troops, which compose the only force on permanent duty, does not exceed four thousand men. They are quartered in *Haiderábád*; and about half the number are mounted

on government horses. Their duty is to attend the *Amírs*, both as servants and soldiers. They are paid half-yearly, and receive principally grain in lieu of wages.

On occasions of necessity, when an army is requisite, orders are despatched throughout the province for the *Jághírdárs* to assemble at stated places and periods, with their armed followers. Three days are sufficient to spread the intelligence, and fifteen to effect the assembly of about thirty-five thousand men; two-thirds and upwards of which are cavalry. The country people boast that the *Sindhí* levies amount to a hundred thousand; but there is every reason to believe that, including twelve thousand of *Mír SÁHRÁBS* and five thousand of *Mír THÁIRÁS*, who are not federals of *Haiderábád*, the state of *Sindh* could not levy above fifty or fifty-five thousand fighting men.

This military assembly is composed of different tribes of Muhammedans amounting to several hundreds, but generally commanded by *Bellúchís*, and in particular by *Tálpúras*, in whom the *Amírs* naturally confide, and whom they have until lately favoured to the injury of all their other subjects. The troops are armed with swords and shields, and matchlocks; and, independent of the established allowances from their immediate chief, they receive from the *Amír's* treasury each foot-soldier three *Dohrás*, and each horseman double that sum per day, as long as they are employed. The *Sirdárs* also receive a daily allowance correspondent with the rank which they hold in the list of officers. The artillery of the *Sindhís* is notoriously wretched—they seldom have more than three or four guns with the army; and as this powerful arm is looked down upon by these soldiers, the equipments of these few pieces are uncommonly bad.

The cavalry are mounted on various descriptions of horse. The *tattú*, or pony, is, however, the most common. Numbers are seen on mules; and from the *Amír* to the beggar a camel is in use. The horses, even of the best breeds, are not adapted to form good cavalry, for they are generally heavy in hand—a fault which is increased to such a degree by the ambling pace to which they are universally trained, as to render it difficult to urge them to a gallop. Their matchlock-men are excellent, and, as before observed, are trained to the use of this weapon from their infancy.

The pay of a *Sindhí* soldier, calculating on the rate at which he receives grain, may amount to two and a half rupees per month, or perhaps a trifle more, with the additional allowance already mentioned, when on actual service. His food when at home has before been described; and when abroad he still adheres to a simple diet.

The foregoing cursory remarks will suffice to shew that little effort

could be made by the military resources of *Sindh*; and that even admitting that the rulers were capable of bringing into the field the numbers of which they boast, the system by which they are organised would nevertheless prohibit any vigorous military measures. The feudal services of the most warlike nations in the world have been found calculated only to check or quell the intestine broils which they themselves create, and have always been deficient when opposed to an army organised like those of modern times. They are badly armed; are without order or discipline; and constantly disperse on suffering a defeat, however trivial.

Unlike other countries, *Sindh* has few or no fortified places, the attack of which might retard the motions of an invading army. The few forts that are to be met with are extremely insignificant; and although there are some strong natural positions on the western bank of the Indus, it has never been the policy of the government in such cases to defend them; for to do so, would still leave the fertile country an easy prey to the enemy. The custom hitherto has been for the people of *Sindh* to fly with their property to the desert, where they remain in perfect safety, under the protection of the desert tribes, whose hospitality has frequently been put to a severe test, but has never failed.

If the danger is very urgent, an order is issued for the destruction of all property, and the *Bellúchís* and other barbarous tribes commence a system of plunder and rapine among each other on the goods of their neighbours, which is justified on the principle that the enemy might benefit by it, in a public point of view; or at all events, that it is better for friends to plunder their own country, than that it should fall to the lot of foreigners. The history of the country affords abundance of instances of this line of proceeding; and the province has often been overrun, and generally fallen an easy conquest. The devastating system was adopted by the *Sunrás*, when ALÁ-AD-DÍN invaded *Sindh*. When HUMÁYÚN sought an asylum here, MÍRZÁ SHÁH HUSAIN followed the same plan; and in the attack of the KHÁN KHÁNÁN, MÍRZÁ JÁNÍ BEG reduced the province to the condition of a wilderness, and permitted his capital city to be burnt and sacked by his own subjects. The same policy was frequently adopted by the *Kalhóras*, whose early history is one continued description of flight to the desert and returns to re-occupy the abandoned province.

The government of *Kandahár*, as it has existed since the time of AHMED KHÁN DURRÁNÍ, has never been sufficiently united to effect (if it seriously desired it) the conquest of *Sindh*. If we refer to the Afghán history of this period, we shall find that they have either been engaged in wars of tribes, with dissensions in their royal family,

or in defending themselves from the attacks of their neighbours. Nevertheless, they appear to have desolated the country on more occasions than one; but have either been bribed by a pecuniary present, or compelled by domestic circumstances, to return, without making a settlement either for themselves or for the unfortunate *Kalhóra*, whose battles they pretended to fight.

Of late years the government of *Kandahár* has fallen a prey to the ambition of its different members, and to their enemies the *Síkhs*, now an aspiring nation of soldiers, who are likely to turn their arms against *Sindh* in the course of a few years; and there cannot be a doubt but that they will obtain an easy conquest, unless the policy of some other powers shall interfere with this system of aggrandisement.

The British government has, in the course of events, become a neighbour of *Sindh*, and our possessions extend so near to the borders of the territory of the *Amírs*, that our frontier is exposed to depredations from their banditti. Much mischief has already been committed by these plunderers; and representations have been made to the *Amírs*, without succeeding in checking the evil. As the *Pindárrí* hordes have been broken and dispersed in *Hindústán* by a wise policy, the execution of which was perhaps delayed too long, it is not improbable that some steps may ultimately be taken for the extirpation of the banditti who find an asylum in countries composing part of the *Sindh* territory. Should such a measure ever be contemplated, and were a war with the *Amírs* to be the consequence, it ought not to excite any uneasiness. The success of any attack on *Sindh* cannot be doubted, provided the proper season of the year is chosen. The policy of such a measure is more problematical. In our present situation, we cannot be provided with a better frontier than that which we have in the desert; and the independence of the *Jhárejá* chieftains in Cutch ought to be particularly cherished by us. The only advantage which we can hope to attain, and by far the most important, is by a commercial connexion with *Sindh*, to which our views should be restricted; unless appearances in European policy should be such as to dictate the propriety of establishing some degree of influence at the court of a state possessed of great resources for the supply and convenience of armies.
